LET'S WATCH HENRY THOREAU PAY ATTENTION TO

DOGS AND CATS

"Domesticable animals are all alike; every undomesticable animal is undomesticable in its own way."

— Jared Diamond, GUNS, GERMS, AND STEEL: THE FATES OF HUMAN SOCIETIES (NY: W.W. Norton, 1997, page 157)

WALDEN: Why do precisely these objects which we behold make a world? Why has man just these species of animals for his neighbors; as if nothing but a mouse could have filled this crevice? I suspect that Pilpay & Co. have put animals to their best use, for they are all beasts of burden, in a sense, made to carry some portion of our thoughts.

HITOPADESA
ÆSOP
XENOPHANES
PEOPLE OF WALDEN

If you are a book person rather than a computer person, there is no reason whatever that you need to continue with this file. You can instead consult:

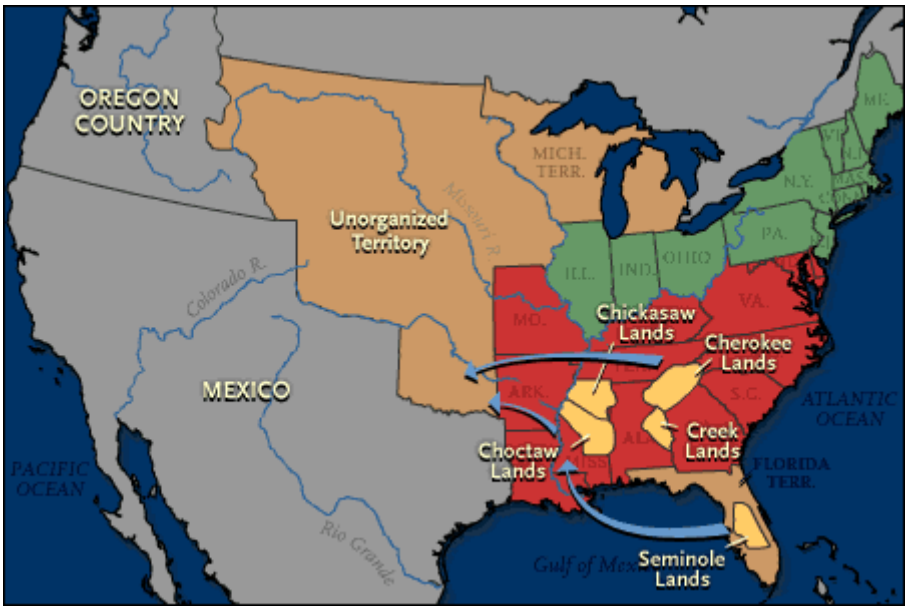
- BONDS OF AFFECTION: THOREAU ON CATS AND DOGS / EDITED BY WESLEY T. MOTT / FOREWORD BY ELIZABETH MARSHALL THOMAS / ENGRAVINGS BY BARRY MOSER. (University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst & Boston; Published in cooperation with The Thoreau Society 2005)
- Howard M. Chapin, DOGS IN EARLY NEW ENGLAND (Providence, Rhode Island, 1920)
- William Pferd, III, DOGS OF THE AMERICAN INDIANS (Fairfax, Virginia: Denlinger's Publishers, Ltd., 1987)
- Maxwell Riddle, DOGS THROUGH HISTORY (Fairfax, Virginia: Denlinger's Publishers, Ltd., 1987)
- Eva L. Butler and Wendell S. Hadlock, DOGS OF THE NORTHEASTERN WOODLAND INDIANS. Robert Abbe Museum Bulletin, 13 (Bar Harbor, Maine, 1994), originally published in the Bulletin of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society, 10 (1949), 17-35

1839

August 31, Saturday: "Fall of 1839 up Merrimack to White Mountains." As Lucy Maddox has unsympathetically pointed out in her REMOVALS: NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICAN LITERATURE AND THE POLITICS OF INDIAN AFFAIRS, "The journey that is recorded in WEEK took place in 1839, the year after the Trail of Tears (although Thoreau did not publish his book until ten years later).

JOHN THOREAU, JR.

Thoreau knew where the real Indians were and what was happening to them, and he looked for ways to justify what was happening.



He also sought out some of the Indians remaining in the East; he just didn't like them much when he found them."[1] Well, it does appear that this adventure of the brothers was in fact Henry Thoreau's first overnight outing after a number of years of he and his brother playing Indian, and that despite many day excursions it was his first night in a tent: "I shall not soon forget my first night in a tent –how the distant barking of dogs

1. NY: Oxford UP, 1991, pages 176-7.

for so many still hours revealed to me the riches of the night.– Who would not be a dog and bay the moon? —"[2]

Ross/Adams commentary

Cruickshank commentary

TIMELINE OF A WEEK

We note that at this point in time there was no "Old North Bridge" whatever, only the abutments of that historic structure still being available for view on the banks of the river:

A WEEK: We were soon floating past the first regular battle-ground of the Revolution, resting on our oars between the still visible abutments of that "North Bridge," over which in April, 1775, rolled the first faint tide of that war, which ceased not, till, as we read on the stone on our right, it "gave peace to these United States." As a Concord poet has sung:—

"By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.

"The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps."

A WEEK: (August 31, Saturday, 1839) At length, when we had made about seven miles, as far as Billerica, we moored our boat on the west side of a little rising ground which in the spring forms an island in the river. Here we found huckleberries still hanging upon the bushes, where they seemed to have slowly ripened for our especial use. Bread and sugar, and cocoa boiled in river water, made our repast, and as we had drank in the fluvial prospect all day, so now we took a draft of the water with our evening meal to propitiate the river gods, and whet our vision for the sights it was to behold.

COCOA

2. At about this same time, Waldo Emerson was setting off with George Bradford on a sightseeing tour of the White Mountains, and Emerson was shipping off a bushel of potatoes for his brother William on Staten Island.

DOG

A WEEK: Late in the afternoon we passed a man on the shore fishing with a long birch pole, its silvery bark left on, and a dog at his side, rowing so near as to agitate his cork with our oars, and drive away luck for a season; and when we had rowed a mile as straight as an arrow, with our faces turned towards him, and the bubbles in our wake still visible on the tranquil surface, there stood the fisher still with his dog, like statues under the other side of the heavens, the only objects to relieve the eye in the extended meadow; and there would he stand abiding his luck, till he took his way home through the fields at evening with his fish. Thus, by one bait or another, Nature allures inhabitants into all her recesses. This man was the last of our townsmen whom we saw, and we silently through him bade adieu to our friends.

A WEEK: For the most part, there was no recognition of human life in the night, no human breathing was heard, only the breathing of the wind. As we sat up, kept awake by the novelty of our situation, we heard at intervals foxes stepping about over the dead leaves, and brushing the dewy grass close to our tent, and once a musquash fumbling among the potatoes and melons in our boat, but when we hastened to the shore we could detect only a ripple in the water ruffling the disk of a star. At intervals we were serenaded by the song of a dreaming sparrow or the throttled cry of an owl, but after each sound which near at hand broke the stillness of the night, each crackling of the twigs, or rustling among the leaves, there was a sudden pause, and deeper and more conscious silence, as if the intruder were aware that no life was rightfully abroad at that hour. There was a fire in Lowell, as we judged, this night, and we saw the horizon blazing, and heard the distant alarm-bells, as it were a faint tinkling music borne to these woods. But the most constant and memorable sound of a summer's night, which we did not fail to hear every night afterward, though at no time so incessantly and so favorably as now, was the barking of the house-dogs, from the loudest and hoarsest bark to the faintest aerial palpitation under the eaves of heaven, from the patient but anxious mastiff to the timid and wakeful terrier, at first loud and rapid, then faint and slow, to be imitated only in a whisper; wow-wow-wow-wow — wo — wo — w — w. Even in a retired and uninhabited district like this, it was a sufficiency of sound for the ear of night, and more impressive than any music. I have heard the voice of a hound, just before daylight, while the stars were shining, from over the woods and river, far in the horizon, when it sounded as sweet and melodious as an instrument. The hounding of a dog pursuing a fox or other animal in the horizon, may have first suggested the notes of the hunting-horn to alternate with and relieve the lungs of the dog. This natural bugle long resounded in the woods of the ancient world before the horn was invented. The very dogs that sullenly bay the moon from farm-yards in these nights excite more heroism in our breasts than all the civil exhortations or war sermons of the age. "I would rather be a dog, and bay the moon," than many a Roman that I know. The night is equally indebted to the clarion of the cock, with wakeful hope, from the very setting of the sun, prematurely ushering in the dawn. All these sounds, the crowing of cocks, the baying of dogs, and the hum of insects at noon, are the evidence of nature's health or **sound** state. Such is the never-failing beauty and accuracy of language, the most perfect art in the world; the chisel of a thousand years retouches it.

DOG

Sat. Aug 31st 1839. A warm drizzling rain obscured the morning and threatened to delay our voyage, but at length the leaves and grass were dried, and it came out a mild afternoon, as serene and fresh as if nature were maturing some greater scheme of her own– After this long dripping and oozing from every pore, she began to respire again more healthily than ever. So with a vigorous shove we launched our boat from the bank, while the flags ad bullrushes curtsey'd a Good-speed, and dropped silently down the stream.

It had been loaded at the door the evening before, half a mile from the river — and provided with wheels against emergencies but with the bulky cargo which we stevedores had stowed in it — it proved but an indifferent land carriage– For water and water casks there was a plentiful supply of muskmelons from our patch which had just begun to be ripe — and chests and spare spars and sails and tents and guns and munitions for the galleon– And as we pushed it through the meadows to the river's bank we stepped as lightly about it as if a portion of our own bulk and burden was stowed in its hold — we were amazed to find ourselves outside still

Some of our neighbors stood in a recess of the shore — the last inhabitants of Ithaca — to whom we fired a parting salute, and conferred the welfare of the state. {*One-fifth page blank*}

Gradually the village murmur subsided, and we seemed to be embarked upon the placid current of our dreams, and floating from past to future, over billows of fresh morning or evening thoughts. {*Four-fifths page blank*}

Our boat which had cost us a week's labor in the spring was what the Lynn fishermen call a dory — 15 feet long by 3 in breadth at the widest part — a little forward of the centre. It was green below with a border of blue, out of courtesy to the green sea and the blue heavens. Stout and servicable but consequently heavy and difficult to be dragged over shallow places or carried around falls.

A boat, when rightly made and once launched upon its element has a sort of life of its own– It is a kind of amphibious animal — a creature of two elements — a fish to swim and a bird to fly — related by one half of its structure to some swift and shapely fish, and by the other to a strong-winged and graceful bird. The fins of the fish direct where to set the oars, and the tail gives some hints for the form and position of the rudder. So also we learn where should be the greatest breadth of beam and depth in the hold. The bird shows how to rig and trim the sails, and what form to give to the prow that it may best balance the boat and divide the air and water. In the present case our boat took readily to the water, since from of old there had been a tacit league struck between them, and now it gladly availed itself of the old law that the heavier shall float the lighter.

One of our masts served for a tent pole at night, and we had other long and slender poles for shoving in shallow places. A buffalo-skin was our bed at night and a tent of twilled cotton our roof — a snow white house 8 feet in height and as many in diameter.…

Faint purple clouds began to be reflected in the water, and the cow-bells tinkled louder along the banks. Like sly water rats we stole along nearer the shore — looking out for a place to pitch our camp.

It seemed insensibly to grow lighter as the night shut in, and the farthest hamlet began to be revealed which before lurked in the shadows of the noon. *{One-fourth page blank}* To-day the air was as elastic and crystalline as if it were a glass to the picture of this world– It explained the artifice of the picture-dealer who does not regard his picture as finished until it is glassed.

It was like the landscape seen through the bottom of a tumbler, clothed in a mild quiet light, in which the barns & fences chequer and partition it with new regularity, and rough and uneven fields stretch away with lawn-like smoothness to the horizon. The clouds (in such a case) are finely distinct and picturesque– The light blue of the sky contrasting with their feathery whiteness.– They are a light etherial Persian draperry — fit to hang over the Persia of our imaginations– The Smith's shop resting in this Greek light seemed worthy to stand beside the Parthenon. The potato and grain fields are such as he imagines who has schemes of ornamental husbandry. So may you see the true dignity of the farmer's lie.

A little bread and sugar and Cocoa boiled in river water made our repast– As we had drank in the fluvial prospect all day so now we took a draught of the water with our evening meal, to propitiate the river gods, & whet our vision of the sights it was to behold.

The building a fire and spreading our buffalo skins was too frank an advance to be resisted. The fire and smoke seemed to tame the scene– The rocks consented to be our walls and the pines our roof. *{One-third page blank}* I have never insisted enough on the nakedness and simplicity of friendship — the result of all emotions — their subsidence a fruit of the temperate zone. The friend is an unrelated man, solitary and of distinct outline.

On this same river a young maiden once saild in my boat — thus solitary and unattended but by invisible spirits– As she sat in the prow there was nothing but herself between me and the sky — so that her form and lie itself was picturesque as rocks and trees– She was not child to any mortal, and has no protector she called no mortal father. No priest was keeper of her soul no guardian of her free thoughts. She dared ever to stand exposed on the side of heaven.

Our life must be seen upon a proper back ground– For the most part only the life of the anchorite will bear to be considered. Our motions should be as impressive as objects in the desert, a broken shaft or crumbling mound against a limitless horizon.

I shall not soon forget the sounds which I heard when falling asleep this night on the banks of the Merrimack. Far into night I hear some tyro beating a drum incessantly, preparing for a country muster — in Campton as we have heard — and think of the line

"When the drum beat at dead of night"

I am thrilled as by an infinite sweetness, and could have exclaimed —

Cease not thou drummer of the night — thou too shalt have thy reward– The stars hear thee, and the firmament shall echo thy beat, till it is answerd, and the forces are mustered. Fear not, I too will be there. While this darkness lasts heroism will not be deferred.

But still he drums on alone in the silence & the dark.[3] *{One-fifth page blank}*
We had made 7 miles, and moored our boat on the west side of a little rising ground which in the spring forms an island in the river. The sun was setting on the one hand while the shadow of our little eminence was rapidly stretching over the fields on the other. Here we found huckleberries still hanging on the bushes and palatable, which seemed to have slowly ripened for our especial use, and partook of this unlooked for repast with even a devout feeling.
When we had pitched our tent on the hill side a few rods from the shore, we sat looking though its triangular door in the twilight at our lonely mast on the shore, just seen above the alders, the first encroachments of commerce on this land– Here was the incipient city and there the port — it was Rome & Ostia– That straight geometrical line against the water — stood for the last refinements of civilized life. Whatever of sublimity there is in history was there symbolized. It was the founding of Tyre and Carthage.
For the most part there seemed to be no recognition of human life in the night– No human breathing was heard. Only the wind was alive and stirring. And as we sat up awakened by the novelty of the situation, we heard at intervals foxes stepping about over the dead leaves and brushing the dewy grass close to our tent; and once the the musquash fumbling among the potatoes and melons in our boat, but when we hastened to the shore to reconnoitre, we could see only the stars reflected in the water scarcely disturbed by a distant ripple on its surface. After each sound which near at hand broke the stillness of the night each crackling of the twigs or rustling of leaves there seemed to be a sudden pause and deeper silence, as if the intruder were aware that no life was rightfully abroad at that hour.
But as if to be reminded of the presence of man in nature as well as of the inferior orders — we heard the sound of distant alarm bells come to these woods not far from mid night probably from the town of Lowel But a most constant and characteristic sound of a summer night, which we did not fail to hear every night afterwards though at no time so incessantly and musically as now — was the barking of the house dog– I thought of Shakspeare's line "I had rather be a dog and bay the moon" Every variety of tone and time nearer and more remote from the patient but anxious mastiff to the timid and wakeful terrier — even in a country like this where the farm houses were few and far between –was a sufficiency of sound to lull the ears of night
WOW-WOW-WOW-WOW–WO–W
I have heard the voice of a hound just before dawn while the stars were still shining from over the woods & river far off in the horizon when it sounded sweet & melodious like an instrument
The night is almost equally indebted to a less constant and more musical interruption from the cock — who at intervals from the very shutting of nigh — prematurely ushers in the day.
The hounding of a dog pursuing a fox in the horizon seems naturally to have first suggested the harmonious notes of the hunting horn, to alternate with and relieve the lungs of the dog. How long this natural bugle must have rung in the woods of Attica and Latium before the horn was invented. (2, 11-15)

> "Few people except those who arise with the sun have the good fortune to see such perfect reflections as Thoreau describes. For a short time after sunrise, broad expanses of water often reflect the surroundings perfectly, but as the earth warms unevenly a movement of the air shatters the image." -Cruickshank, Helen Gere. THOREAU ON BIRDS (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964)

 September 12, Thursday-13, Friday: The brothers made a rapid return voyage downstream before the wind.

3.See June 19, 1840 entry:

September 13, Friday: At the annual convention of the Middlesex County education Association, in Concord, Horace Mann, Sr. was orating about "the modern gloomy view of our democratical institutions," and drawing out some obvious inferences about "the importance of Schools." Waldo Emerson sat there ruminating on the fact that the dreary evening of oratory was emblematic of the dreary daytime learning experiences being provided by these people to their charges, and contrasting this in his mind with the sort of learning experiences which he fancied that the adventurous Thoreau brothers were currently providing themselves with in their boat upon the waters of the Concord River and the Middlesex Canal and the Merrimack River.

It was on this day that the adventurous Thoreau brothers began to retrace their path, back toward their family's home in Concord, Massachusetts. Why would you suppose Henry would spend so many of the pages in Week describing the journey out, and so few describing the return trip? It seems this is a known characteristic of all exploration literature:

Coming back is not only essential to the traveller's personal survival: it is also essential to his historic future. For, in so far as the journey has to become a journal, a map or a drawing in order to enter spatial history, going back is the traveller's opportunity to check his facts. It is analogous to the process of revision. Indeed, these two processes are very closely related. If, for instance, we look at the journals of Sturt or Stuart or Mitchell, all of which recount double journeys, outwards and backwards, we find that a very small proportion of the text is given over to describing the return journey. The larger part of their journals is taken up with a narrative of the journey out. If, as I have suggested, the journal is not primarily a description of the country, but a symbolic representation of track-making, this is understandable. But it does not mean that the return journey has been left out: rather, it has been incorporated into the account of the outward journey as a series of marginal interpolations, erasures and name changes which, at a yet later stage of revision, can be woven into the narrative to increase its dramatic interest. The seamlessness of the journals is a literary illusion. Unfortunately, though, it has too often been taken at face value, with the result that the **reflective** attitude the explorer and settler literature embodies has been overlooked. Instead, the historical experience it records has been subjected to an "I came, I saw, I conquered" mythologizing, as if the explorers did not ride in elaborate circles, taking hours and sometimes days to get back where they had last begun; as if pioneers did not reconnoitre, did not go back to town, stake legal claims, take out loans, buy supplies and (perhaps only after half a dozen journeys, and even perhaps after rejecting half a dozen other places) eventually set about the business of making a home for themselves. And not only have the backtrackings implicit in such spatial experiences been ironed out, but the **order** of them has been linearized, subjected to a one-way imperial chronology. But spatial history does not advance. Or, better, it only advances by reflection, by going back and looking again at already trodden ground. The ground is not virgin: it already has a history. It is not a question of correcting what is already there, of replacing it with a better route. It is a question of interpretation, of attempting to recapture and evoke more fully "the world of the text" — not just the

biographical and stylistic history of the journals, but the "world" they refer to. If this process is not to become a tyranny, effacing what it attempts to describe, if it is to avoid falling into the positivist fallacy of supposing its own account of event decisively replaces the original one, then it is essential that it respect the **difference** of the historical tests it deals with. We can illustrate this by the journey analogy: however many times an explorer's biographer takes the route first taken by the explorer, he can never take it for the first time. The route has already been constituted for him. In this sense, his journey is always a return journey; and, if he ignores this, imagining himself in the explorer's place, the result may be good fiction, but not good history. For, by a too zealous and unreflective imitation, the explorer's experience has been rendered infinitely repeatable. It has been translated into an experience anyone can have: it is but a matter of time before the television crews and the motorcyclists will be there.

 September 13, Friday: Rowed and sailed to Concord — about 50 miles. I shall not soon forget my first night in a tent — how the distant barking of dogs for so many still hours revealed to me the riches of the night. — Who would not be a dog and bay the moon? —

 September 13th we sailed along as gently and steadily as the clouds through the atmosphere over our heads — watching the receding shores and the motions of our sails. The north wind stepped readily into the harness we had provided for it — and pulled us along with good will– We were not tired of watching the motions of our sail — so thin and yet so full of life, now bending to some generous impulse of the breeze. And then fluttering and flapping with a kind of human suspense. We watched the play of its pulse as if it were our own blood beating there.
It was a scale on which the varying temperature of distant atmospheres was graduated. It was some attraction that the breeze it played with had been out of doors so long. Our lives are much like a sail alternately steady and fluttering — and always at the mercy of the breeze.

 We had gone to bed in summer, and we awoke in autumn; for summer passes into autumn in some unimaginable point of time, like the turning of a leaf.... As the mist gradually rolled away, and we were relieved from the trouble of watching for rocks, we saw by the flitting clouds, by the first russet tinge on the hills, by the rushing river, the cottages on shore, and the shore itself, so coolly fresh and shining with dew, and later in the day, by the hue of the grape-vine, the goldfinch on the willow, the flickers flying in flocks, and when we passed near enough to the shore, as we fancied, by the faces of men, that the fall had commenced....

1840

 June 24: When I read Cudworth I find I can tolerate all, — atomists, pneumatologists, atheists, and theists, — Plato, Aristotle, Leucippus, Democritus, and Pythagoras. It is the attitude of these men, more than any communication, which charms me. It is so rare to find a man musing. But between them and their commentators there is an endless dispute. But if it come to that, that you compare notes, then you are all wrong. As it is, each takes me up into the serene heavens, and paints earth and sky. Any sincere thought is irresistible; it lifts us to the zenith, whither the smallest bubble rises as surely as the largest.
Dr. Cudworth does not consider that the belief in a deity is as great a heresy as exists. Epicurus held that the gods were "of human form, yet were so thin and subtile, as that, comparatively with our terrestrial bodies, they might be called incorporeal; they having not so much *carnem* as *quasi-carnem*, nor *sanguinem* as *quasi-sanguinem*, a certain kind of aerial or ethereal flesh and blood." This, which Cudworth pronounces "romantical," is plainly as good doctrine as his own. As if any sincere thought were not the best sort of truth!

There is no doubt but the highest morality in the books is rhymed or measured, — is, in form as well as substance, poetry. Such is the scripture of all nations. If I were to compile a volume to contain the condensed wisdom of mankind, I should quote no rhythmless line.

Not all the wit of a college can avail to make one harmonious line. It never *happens*. It may get so as to jingle, but a jingle is akin to a jar, — jars regularly recurring.

So delicious is plain speech to my ears, as if I were to be more delighted by the whistling of the shot than frightened by the flying of the splinters, I am content, I fear, to be quite battered down and made a ruin of. I outgeneral myself when I direct the enemy to my vulnerable points.
The loftiest utterance of Love is, perhaps, sublimely satirical. Sympathy with what is sound makes sport of what is unsound.

Cliffs. Evening. — Though the sun set a quarter of an hour ago, his rays are still visible, darting half-way to the zenith. That glowing morrow in the west flashes on me like a faint presentiment of morning when I am falling

asleep. A dull mist comes rolling from the west –as if it were the dust which day has raised– A column of smoke is rising from the woods yonder, to uphold heaven's roof till the light comes again. The landscape, by its patient resting there, teaches me that all good remains with him that waiteth, and that I shall sooner overtake the dawn by remaining here, than by hurrying over the hills of the west.
Morning and evening are as like as brother and sister. The sparrow and thrush sing and the frogs peep for both. The woods breathe louder and louder behind me. With what hurry-skurry night takes place! The wagon rattling over yonder bridge is the messenger which clay sends back to night; but the dispatches are scaled. In its rattle the village seems to say, This one sound, and I have done.
Red, then, is Day's color; at least it is the color of his heel. He is 'stepping westward.' We only notice him when he comes and when he goes.
With noble perseverance the dog bays the stars yonder — — I too like thee walk alone in this strange familiar night — My voice like thine beating against its friendly concave, and barking I hear only my own voice. 10 o'clock.

DOG


July 16: We are as much refreshed by sounds, as by sights — or scents — or flavors — as the barking of a dog heard in the woods at midnight, or the tinklings which attend the dawn.
As I picked blackberries this morning by starlight, the distant yelping of a dog fell on my inward ear, as the cool breeze on my cheek.

DOG


July 31: The very dogs that sullenly bay the moon from farm yards o' these nights, evince more heroism than is tamely barked forth in all the civil exhortations and war sermons of the age.

Our actions should make the stars forget their sphere music, and chant an elegaic strain — that heroism should have departed out of their ranks, and gone over to humanity.

If want of patriotism be objected to us, because we hold ourselves aloof from the din of politics, I know of no better answer than that of Anaxagoras to those who in like case reproached him with indifference to his country because he had withdrawn from it, and devoted himself to the search after truth— "On the contrary" he replied pointing to the heavens, "I esteem it infinitely."

The very laughter and jokes of a sober man are sober in their effects— They shake the firmament.

DOG

Any melodious sound apprises me of the infinite wealth of God.

1841


March 3: It is a strangely healthy sound for these disjointed times.– It is a rare soundness when cow-bells and horns are heard from over the fields– And now I see the beauty and full meaning of that word sound. Nature always possesses a certain sonorousness, as in the hum of insects –the booming of ice –the crowing of cocks in the morning and the barking of dogs in the night –which indicates her sound state. God's voice is but a clear bell sound. I drink in a wonderful health –a cordial– in sound. The effect of the slightest tinkling in the horizon measures my own soundness. I thank God for sound it always mounts, and makes me mount. I think I will not trouble myself for any wealth, when I can be so cheaply enriched, Here I contemplate to drudge that I may own a farm –and may have such a limitless estate for the listening. All good things are cheap –all bad are very dear.[4]

DOG

4. William M. White's version of the above journal entry is:

Nature always possesses a certain sonorousness,
As in the hum of insects,
The booming of ice, the crowing of cocks in the morning,
And the barking of dogs in the night,
Which indicates her sound state.

God's voice is but a clear bell sound.
I drink in a wonderful health,
A cordial, in sound.

The effect of the slightest tinkling in the horizon
Measures my own soundness.
I thank God for sound;
It always mounts,
And makes me mount.

April: A “winged cat” came to Gilian Baker’s farm in Lincoln near Walden Pond.

WALDEN: Many a village Bose, fit only to course a mud-turtle in a victualling cellar, sported his heavy quarters in the woods, without the knowledge of his master, and ineffectually smelled at old fox burrows and woodchucks’ holes; led perchance by some slight cur which nimbly threaded the wood, and might still inspire a natural terror in its denizens; –now far behind his guide, barking like a canine bull toward some small squirrel which had treed itself for scrutiny, then, cantering off, bending the bushes with his weight, imagining that he is on the track of some stray member of the gerbille family. Once I was surprised to see a cat walking along the stony shore of the pond, for they rarely wander so far from home. The surprise was mutual. Nevertheless the most domestic cat, which has lain on a rug all her days, appears quite at home in the woods, and, by her sly and stealthy behavior, proves herself more native there than the regular inhabitants. Once, when berrying, I met with a cat with young kittens in the woods, quite wild, and they all, like their mother, had their backs up and were fiercely spitting at me. A few years before I lived in the woods there was what was called a “winged cat” in one of the farm-houses in Lincoln nearest the pond, Mr. Gilian Baker’s. When I called to see her in June, 1842, she was gone a-hunting in the woods, as was her wont, (I am not sure whether it was a male or female, and so use the more common pronoun,) but her mistress told me that she came into the neighborhood a little more than a year before, in April, and was finally taken into their house; that she was of a dark brownish-gray color, with a white spot on her throat, and white feet, and had a large bushy tail like a fox; that in the winter the fur grew thick and flatted out along her sides, forming strips ten or twelve inches long by two and a half wide, and under her chin like a muff, the upper side loose, the under matted like felt, and in the spring these appendages dropped off. They gave me a pair of her “wings,” which I keep still. There is no appearance of a membrane about them. Some thought it was part flying-squirrel or some other wild animal, which is not impossible, for, according to naturalists, prolific hybrids have been produced by the union of the marten and domestic cat. This would have been the right kind of cat for me to keep, if I had kept any; for why should not a poet’s cat be winged as well as his horse?

DOG

CAT

CATS WITH WINGS

1843

May 21, Sunday: We learn, from a letter that published author Ellery Channing wrote to Margaret Fuller on this date, that Emerson had taken, as a new amanuensis, the 20-year-old resident of Concord and graduate of Dartmouth College Benjamin West Ball, to make a genius out of — now that "oakum-brained Thoreau," "Pick-character Thoreau," had been passed along to Emerson's brother Judge William Emerson on Staten Island.[5]

THOREAU RESIDENCES

On this same day, this "Pick-character Thoreau" was being written to by Waldo Emerson in a letter addressed to "Henry D. Thoreau, care of Mr. Emerson, Esq., 64 Wall Street, New York":

> *Concord, Sunday Eve, 21 May, 1843.*
> *My Dear Friend, — Our Dial is already printing, and you must, if you can, send me something good by the 10th of June, certainly, if not before. If William E. can send by a private opportunity, you shall address it to "Care of Miss Peabody, 13 West Street," or, to be left at Concord Stage Office. Otherwise send by Harnden, — W.E. paying to Boston and charging to me. Let the pacquet bring letters also from you, and from* [Giles] *Waldo and Tappan, I entreat.*
> *You will not doubt that you are well remembered here, by young, older, and old people; and your letter to your mother was borrowed and read with great interest, pending the arrival of direct accounts and of later experiences, especially in the city. I am sure that you are under sacred protection, if I should not hear from you for years.*
> *Yet I shall wish to know what befalls you on your way.*
> *Ellery Channing is well settled in his house, and works very steadily thus far, and our intercourse is very agreeable to me. Young* [Benjamin West] *Ball has been to see me, and is a prodigious reader and a youth of great promise, — born, too, in the good town. Mr. Hawthorne is well, and Mr. Alcott and Mr. Lane are revolving a purchase in Harvard of ninety acres.*
> *Yours affectionately, R.W. Emerson.*

5. Would this Ball family have been residing on a farm in the vicinity of Ball's Hill (Gleason D9)? Would Benjamin be the son or the grandson of Nehemiah Ball?

CAPE COD: I used to see packs of half-wild dogs haunting the lonely beach on the south shore of Staten Island, in New York Bay, for the sake of the carrion there cast up; and I remember that once, when for a long time I had heard a furious barking in the tall grass of the marsh, a pack of half a dozen large dogs burst forth on to the beach, pursuing a little one which ran straight to me for protection, and I afforded it with some stones, though at some risk to myself; but the next day the little one was the first to bark at me. Under these circumstances I could not but remember the words of the poet:–

"Blow, blow, thou winter wind
Thou art not so unkind
As his ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.

"Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
Thou dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot;
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remembered not."

DOG

Sometimes, when I was approaching the carcass of a horse or ox which lay on the beach there, where there was no living creature in sight, a dog would unexpectedly emerge from it and slink away with a mouthful of offal.

October 1, Sunday: Henry Thoreau wrote from Staten Island to Cynthia Dunbar Thoreau in Concord, telling of his publication effort at The United States Magazine and Democratic Review:

> As for Eldorado that is far off yet. My bait will not tempt the rats; they are too well fed. The Democratic Review is poor, and can only afford half or quarter pay —which it will do— and they say there is a Lady's Companion that pays — but I could not write anything companionable.... The Mirror is really the most readable journal here. I see that they have printed a short piece which I wrote to sell in the Dem. Review, and still keep the review of Paradise that I may include in it a notice of another book by the same author, which they have found, and are going to send me.

"PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED"

(John L. O'Sullivan's magazine was currently at its October issue.)

US MAG & DEM. REV.

Contrary to the very thing that every person on the street thinks they know about Thoreau, he never lived the life of a hermit. At Walden Pond, a retired place but open and public, he set up an inn for all pilgrims without distinction, being himself the landlord, a "spheral" man, "a man of such universal sympathies, and so broad and genial nature, that he would fain sacrifice the tender but narrow ties of friendship, to a broad, sunshiny, fair-weather-and-foul friendship for his race; who loves men, not as a philosopher, with philanthropy, nor as an overseer of the poor, with charity, but by a necessity of his nature, as he loves dogs and horses; and standing at his open door from morning till night, would fain see more and more of them come along the highway, and is never satiated." Not considering himself to be a man of genius, but instead a genial man, he could afford to live without privacy:

DOG

> The man of genius, like a dog with a bone, or the slave who has swallowed a diamond, or a patient with the gravel, sits afar and retired, off the road, hangs out no sign of refreshment for man and beast, but says, by all possible hints and signs, I wish to be alone –good-bye –farewell.

Staten Island Oct 1st 43

Dear Mother,
I hold together remarkably well as yet, speaking of my outward linen and woolen man, no holes more than I brought away, and no stitches needed yet. It is marvellous. I think the Fates must be on my side, for there is less than a plank between me and–Time, to say the least. As for Eldorado that is far off yet. My bait will not tempt the rats; they are too well fed. The Democratic Review is poor, and can only afford half or quarter pay–which it will do–and they say there is a Lady's Companion that pays — but I could not write anything companionable. However, speculate as we will, it is quite gratuitous, for life never the less, and never the more, goes steadily on, well or ill fed and clothed, somehow, and "honor bright" withal. It is very gratifying to live in the prospect of great successes always, and for that purpose, we must leave a sufficient foreground to see them through. All the painters prefer distant prospects for the

H. S. McKean

greater breadth of view, and delicacy of tint.— But this is no news, and describes no new condition. Meanwhile I am somnambulic at least – stirring in my sleep – indeed, quite awake. I read a good deal and am pretty well known in the libraries of New York. Am in with the Librarian, one Dr Forbes, of the Society Library–who has lately been to Cambridge to learn liberality, and has come back to let me take out some un-take-out-able books, which I was threatening to read on the spot. And Mr Mackean, of the Mercantile Library, is a true gentleman – a former tutor of mine – and offers me every privilege there. I have from him a perpetual stranger's ticket, and a citizen's rights besides – all which privileges I pay handsomely for by improving.

A canoe-race "came off" on the Hudson the other day, between Chippeways and New Yorkers, which must have been as moving a sight as the buffalo hunt which I witnessed. But canoes and buffaloes are all lost, as is everything here, in the mob. It is only the people have come to see one another. Let them advertise that there will be a gathering at Hoboken – having bargained with the ferry boats, and there will be, and they need not throw in the buffaloes.

I have crossed the bay 20 or 30 times and have seen a great many immigrants going up to the city for the first time–Norwegians who carry their old fashioned farming tools to the west with them, and will buy nothing here for fear of being cheated.— English operatives, known by their pale faces and stained hands, who will recover their birth-rights in a little cheap sun and wind, – English travellers on their way to the Astor House, to whom I have done the honors of the city.— Whole families of imigrants cooking their dinner upon the pavements, all sun-burnt–so that you are in doubt where the foreigner's face of flesh begins — their tidy clothes laid on, and then tied to their swathed bodies which move about like a bandaged finger–Caps set on the head, as if woven of the hair, which is still growing at the roots–each and all busily cooking, stooping from time to time over the pot, and having something to drop into it, that so they may be entitled to take something out, forsooth. They look like respectable but straightened people, who may turn out to be counts when they get to Wisconsin–and will have this experience to relate to their children.

Seeing so many people from day to day one comes to have less respect for flesh and bones, and thinks they must be more loosely {MS torn} of less firm fibre, than the few he had known. It must have a very bad influence upon children to see so many human beings at once–mere herds of men.

I came across Henry Bigelow a week ago, sitting in front of a Hotel in Broadway, very much as if he were under his father's own stoop. He is seeking to be admitted into the bar in New York, but as yet, had not succeeded. I directed him to Fuller's store, which he had not found, and invited him to come and see me, if he came to the island. Tell Mrs & Miss Ward that I have not forgotten them, and was glad to hear from George, with whom I spent last night, that they had returned to C.— Tell Mrs Brown that it gives me as much pleasure to know that she thinks of me and my writing as if I had been the author of the piece in question; but I did not even read the papers I sent. The Mirror is really the most readable journal here. I see that they have printed a short piece which I wrote to sell in the Dem. Review, and still keep the review of Paradise that I may include in it a notice of another book by the same author, which they have found,

and are going to send me.— I dont know when I shall come home— I like to keep that feast in store— Tell Helen that I do not see any advertisement for her–and I am looking for myself— If I could find a rare opening, I might be tempted to try with her for a year till I had payed my debts; but for such I am sure it is not well to go out of N. Eng. Teachers are but poorly recompensed even here.— Tell her and Sophia (if she is not gone) to write to me— Father will know that this letter is to him as well as to you— I send him a paper which usually contains the news–if not all that is stirring–all that has stirred–and even draws a little on the future. I wish he would send me by and by the paper which contains the results of the Cattleshow. You must get Helen's eyes to read this–though she is a scoffer at honest penmanship — yr affectionate son Henry D. Thoreau

November: John Adolphus Etzler's THE PARADISE WITHIN THE REACH OF ALL MEN, WITHOUT LABOR, BY POWERS OF NATURE AND MACHINERY. AN ADDRESS TO ALL INTELLIGENT MEN. IN TWO PARTS. BY J.A. ETZLER. PART FIRST, originally

PARADISE WITHIN REACH

published in the USA in 1833, had been reissued by a London publisher for the English audience in 1842, owing, Henry Thoreau supposed, "to the recent spread of Fourier's doctrines." (To capitalize on his current popularity there, Etzler left the USA for Britain late in this year.)

FUTURE-WORSHIP

Thoreau's review of this effort appeared in The United States Magazine and Democratic Review under the title "PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED":

> The chief fault of this book is that it aims to secure the greatest degree of gross comfort and pleasure merely.

> Many examples there are of a grosser interference, yet not without their apology. We saw last summer, on the side of a mountain, a dog employed to churn for a farmer's family, travelling upon a horizontal wheel, and though he had sore eyes, an alarming cough, and withal a demure aspect, yet their bread did get buttered for all that. Undoubtedly, in the most brilliant successes, the first rank is always sacrificed. Much useless travelling of horses, in extenso, has of late years been improved for man's behoof, only two forces being taken advantage of,—the gravity of the horse, which is the centripetal, and his centrifugal inclination to go a-head. Only these two elements in the calculation. And is not the creature's whole economy better economized thus? Are not all finite beings better pleased with motions relative than absolute? And what is the great globe itself but such a wheel,—a larger tread-mill, —so that our horse's freest steps over prairies are oftentimes balked and rendered of no avail by the earth's motion on its axis? But here he is the central agent and motive power; and, for variety of scenery, being provided with a window in front, do not the ever-varying activity and fluctuating energy of the creature himself work the effect of the most varied scenery on a country road? It must be confessed that horses at present work too exclusively for men, rarely men for horses; and the brute degenerates in man's society.

DOG

(A review of Thoreau's review appears on the following page.)

DEMOCRATIC REVIEW

1845

After December 23: I wish to say something tonight not of and concerning the Chinese and Sandwich Islanders as *to* and concerning those who hear me –who are said to live in New England. Something about your condition –especially your outward condition or circumstances in this world –in this town. what it is –whether it is necessarily as bad as it is –whether it can't be improved as well as not.

CHINESE

It is generally admitted that some of your are poor find it hard to get a living –haven't always something in your pockets, haven't paid for all the dinners you've actually eaten –or all your coats and shoes –some of which are already worn out. All this is very well known to all of you by hearsay and by experience.

It is very evident what –a mean and sneaking life you live always in the hampers –always on the limits –trying to get into business –and trying to get out of debt –a very ancient slough called by the Latins aes alienum anothers brass –some of their coins being made of brass –and still so many living and dying and buried today by anothers brass –always promising to pay –promising to pay –with interest tomorrow perhaps and die –to day –insolvent.

Seeking to curry favor to get custom –lying –flattering voting –contracting yourselves into a nutshell of civility– or dilating into a world of thin and vaporous generosity –that you may persuade your neighbor –to let you make his {*Nineteen leaves missing*} {*One-fifth page missing*}

him to be –that these "Letters & Speeches" now for the first time we might say –brought to light –edited –& published together with the elucidations, have restored unity and the wanting moral grandeur to his life. So that we can now answer for ourselves and other wherefore–, by what means, and in what sense he came to be protector in England.

We learn that his actions are to be judged of as those of a man who had a steady religious purpose unparalled in the line of kings Of a remarkable common sense and practicalness yet joined with such a divine madness, though {*One-fifth page missing*}

There is a civilization going on among brutes as well as men– Foxes are Indian dogs. I hear one barking raggedly, wildly demoniacally in the darkness to night –seeking expression laboring with some anxiety –striving to be a dog –struggling for light. He is but a faint man –before pigmies –an imperfect –burrowing man.– Goules are also misformed, unfortunate men. He has come up near to my window attracted by the light, and barked a vulpine course at me –then retreated. {*Six leaves missing*}

DOG

Reading suggested by Hallam's Hist. of Literature.[6]

1 Abelard & Heloise

2 Look at Luigi Pulci –his Morgante Maggiore (published in 1481 "was to the poetical romances of chivalry what Don Quixote was to their brethren in prose."

3 Lionardo da Vinci –the most remarkable of his writings still in manuscript –for his universality of Genius – "the first name of the 15th century."

LUDOVICO ARIOSTO

4 Read Boiardo's Orlando Innamorato –published between 1491 –& 1500 –for its influence on Ariosto –and its intrinsic merits– Its sounding names repeated by Milton in Paradise Regained {*One-fourth page blank*}

RICHARD HENRY HORNE

Landor's works are

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

1st A small volume of poems 1793 out of print

next Poems of "Gebir" "Chrysaor", the "Phocaeans" &c

The "Gebir" eulogized by Southey & Coleridge

Wrote verses in Italian & Latin.

The dramas "Andrea of Hungary" "Giovanna of Naples" and "Fra Rupert."

"Pericles & Aspasia"

"Poems from the Arabic & Persian" 1800 pretending to be translations.

6. Henry Hallam's INTRODUCTION TO THE LITERATURE OF EUROPE IN THE FIFTEENTH, SIXTEENTH, AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES (4 volumes; London: John Murray, 1837-1839).

HALLAM'S LITERATURE, I
HALLAM'S LITERATURE, II
HALLAM'S LITERATURE, III
HALLAM'S LITERATURE, IV

The ideas about working time from Brownson and Thoreau appear relatively modest when compared with J.A. Etzler's idea of an entirely workless world. Thoreau wrestles with that idea and finally rejects it in an 1843 review of Etzler's THE PARADISE WITHIN THE REACH OF ALL MEN, WITHOUT LABOR BY POWERS OF NATURE AND MACHINERY. A German-American utopian, Etzler in his book set out "to show the means of creating a paradise within ten years, where everything desirable for human life may be had by every man in superabundance, without labor, without pay; where the whole face of nature shall be changed into the most beautiful forms and man may live in the most magnificent palaces, and in all imaginable refinements of luxury, and in the most delightful gardens; where he may accomplish without labor, in one year, more than could hitherto be done in a thousand years" (ME, 57-58). Thoreau's review of Etzler's book is largely sympathetic. Devoted as he was to a program of self-culture, Thoreau nevertheless grants that the efforts of the individual and the social reformer may be complementary. "While one scours the heavens, the other sweeps the earth. One says he will reform himself, and then nature and circumstances will be right.... The other will reform nature and circumstances, and then man will be right" (ME, 58). Then Thoreau momentarily goes beyond the thought that the two ways of change are complementary and approaches the view that man makes himself as he changes the world, the view Karl Marx expresses in "Theses on Feuerbach." As Thoreau phrases the thought, "Undoubtedly if we were to reform this outward life truly and thoroughly, we should find no duty of the inner omitted. It would be the employment of our whole nature; and what we should do thereafter would be as vain a question as to ask a bird what it will do when its nest is built and its brood reared." These two sentences imply no priority for internal change over external change, or vice versa. They say that if we change the world, we shall not find ourselves unchanged and that a thorough transformation of human nature and its environment will leave us with nothing to do in the world. Yet if Thoreau could be entirely happy with this reading, he would not be the philosophical idealist he usually is. So he adds, "But a moral reform must take place first, and then the necessity for the other will be superseded, and we shall sail and plow by its force alone" (ME, 74). The effect of **But** is to cancel the sympathetic concession Thoreau has made to Etzler, and, by extension to all who suppose that the expansion by technology of the productive forces is necessary if human needs are to be met. Thoreau goes on to cite Hindu scripture in support of the priority of moral reform: "'It is not the same to one whose foot is enclosed in a shoe as if the whole surface of the earth were covered with leather?'" (ME, 74). Intended by Thoreau to clinch the argument for the priority of individual moral reform over the transformation of the objective world, this rhetorical question can as well illustrate the limitations of a subjective view of reality. If the well-shod observer is aware that most of his fellow human beings are barefoot, the observer will possibly recognize that the surface of the earth is strewn with many objects potentially painful to the unprotected feet of other mortals.*

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* Herreshoff, David Sprague. LABOR INTO ART: THE THEME OF WORK IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICAN LITERATURE. Detroit MI: Wayne State UP,

"A Satire upon Satirists, and Admonition to Detractors" printed 1836 not published
Letters called "High & Low Life in Italy"
"Imaginary Conversations"
"Pentameron & Pentalogia"
"Examination of William Shakspeare before Sir Thomas Lucy, Knt., touching Deer-stealing." {*One-fourth page blank*}
Vide again Richard's sail in "Rich. 1st & the Abbot"
Phocion's remarks in conclusion of "Eschines & Phocion"
"Demosthenes & Eubulides"
In Milton & Marvel speaking of the Greek poets –he says
"There is a sort of refreshing odor flying off it perpetually; not enough to oppress or to satiate; nothing is beaten or bruized; nothing smells of the stalk; the flower itself is half-concealed by the Genius of it hovering round."
Pericles & Sophocles
Marcus Tullius Cicero & his Brother Quinctus in this a sentence on Sleep and Death.
Johnson & Tooke for a criticism on words. {*Three-fifths page blank*}
It is worth the while to have lived a primitive wilderness life at some time –to know what are after all the necessaries of life –and what methods society has taken to supply them– I have looked over the old day Books of the merchants with the same view to see what it was that men bought– They are the grossest groceries –salt is perhaps the most important article of all.– most commonly bought at the stores. Of articles commonly thought to be necessaries –salt –sugar –molasses –cloth &c by the Farmer.– You will see why stores or shops exist / not to furnish tea and coffee –but salt &c here's the rub then. {*One-fifth page blank*}
Have you seen my hound sir– I want to know What –Lawyer's office –law Books if you've seen anything of a hound about here– why, what do you do here? I live here. no I have'nt haven't you heard one In the woods anyplace O yes I heard one this morning– What do you do here– but he was someway off– Which side did he seem to be– Well I should think there this other side of the pond.– This is a large dog makes a large track –he's been out hunting from Lexington for a week. How long have you lived here– Oh about a year Some body said there was a man up here had a camp in the woods somewhere and he'd got him Well I dont know of any body– There's Brittons camp over the other road– It may be there– Is'nt there anybody in these woods– Yes they are chopping right up here behind me– how far is it– only a few steps –hark a moment –there dont you hear the sound of their axes.

DOG

Therien the wood chopper was here yesterday –and while I was cutting wood some chicadees hopped near pecking the bark and chips and the potatoe skins I had thrown out– What do you call them he asked– I told him –what do *you* call them asked I– *Mezezence* I think he said. When I eat my dinner in the woods said he sitting very still having kindled a fire to warm my coffee –they come and light on my arm and peck at the potatoes in my fingers– I like to have the little fellers about me–
Just then one flew up from the snow and perched on the wood I was holding in my arms and pecked it and looked me familiarly in the face. Chica-a-dee–dee-dee-dee-dee, –while others were whistling phebe–phe-bee – in the woods behind the house. {*Three-fifths page blank*}
"It is related that the ancient Loeri, a people of Greece, were so charmed with the sound of the Cicada, that they erected a statue to its honor."
Davis' notes to Morton's Memorial.

1846

Sept 2nd Cold stream lake –Apple trees Lincoln –Indians dogs –Salmon spear rum –moose –No 4?, burnings –trees like frnt year –larch –ball spruce –cedar hemlock –fir –beach birch Norway pine &c. shop pencils –Mattawamkeag –bridge point –relics –Shallowness of river –60 miles up –Houlton road to Aroostook do –Potatoes & turnips Molunkus house –stage –Province man – –Pasture –oiled map –Flash novels and statistical reports –companions

[From THE MAINE WOODS] Early the next morning we had mounted our packs, and prepared for a tramp up the West Branch.... Leaping over a fence, we began to follow an obscure trail up the northern bank of the Penobscot. There was now no road further, the river being the only highway, and but half a dozen log huts, confined to its banks, to be met with for thirty miles. On either hand, and beyond, was a wholly uninhabited wilderness, stretching to Canada. Neither horse nor cow, nor vehicle of any kind, had ever passed over this

ground; the cattle, and the few bulky articles which the loggers use, being got up in the winter on the ice, and down again before it breaks up. The evergreen woods had a decidedly sweet and bracing fragrance; the air was a sort of diet-drink, and we walked buoyantly in Indian file, stretching our legs. Occasionally there was a small opening on the bank, made for the purpose of log-rolling, where we got a sight of the river, -always a rocky and rippling stream. The roar of the rapids, the note of a whistler duck on the river, of the jay and chickadee around us, and of the pigeon woodpecker in the openings, were the sounds that we heard. That was what you might call a bran-new country; the only roads were of Nature's making, and the few houses were camps. Here, then, one could no longer accuse institutions and society, but must front the true source of evil.

[From THE MAINE WOODS, describing the Indian village near Lincoln, Maine] As we walked up to the nearest house, we were met by a sally of a dozen wolfish-looking dogs, which may have been lineal descendants from the ancient Indian dogs, which the first voyageurs describe as "their wolves." I suppose they were. The occupant soon appeared, with a long pole in his hand, with which he beat off the dogs, while he parleyed with us. A stalwart, but dull and greasy-looking fellow, who told us, in his sluggish way, in answer to our questions, as if it were the first serious business he had to do that day, that there **were** Indians going "up river" — he and one other — to-day, before noon. And who was the other? Louis Neptune, who lives in the next house. Well, let us go over and see Louis together. The same doggish reception, and Louis Neptune makes his appearance, — a small, wiry man, with puckered and wrinkled face, yet he seemed the chief man of the two; the same, as I remembered, who had accompanied Jackson to the mountain in '37. The same questions were put to Louis, and the same information obtained, while the other Indian stood by. It appeared that they were going to start by noon, with two canoes, to go up to Chesuncook to hunt moose, — to be gone a month.

DOG

[From THE MAINE WOODS, describing a white settlement in Maine] The chickens here were protected by the dogs. As McCauslin said, "The old one took it up first, and she taught the pup, and now they had got it into their heads that it would n't do to have anything of the bird kind on the premises." A hawk hovering over was not allowed to alight, but barked off by the dogs circling underneath; and a pigeon, or a "yellow-hammer," as they called the pigeon-woodpecker, on a dead limb or stump, was instantly expelled. It was the main business of their day, and kept them constantly coming and going. One would rush out of the house on the least alarm given by the other.

DOG

1849

March 21, Wednesday: Henry Thoreau repeated Lecture One "Life in the woods"/"Where I lived" from "Economy" at Exchange Hall in Portland, Maine, and in so doing he generated a fascinating newspaper response. I reprint it on the following pages, in its entirety, from the Portland Transcript of March 31, 1849 as edited by Bradley P. Dean in Thoreau Research Newsletter 1:3 of July 1990. Dean points out that this was Thoreau's "first appearance as a public lecturer outside Massachusetts and proved relatively momentous because it sparked a national controversy[7] that seems to have drawn considerable attention –most of it unflattering– to Thoreau." I would point out, in addition, that in this newspaper report we have a valuable record of how one person, the reporter, received the parable of the hound, the bay horse, and the turtle-dove:

7.Kenneth Walter Cameron, "Damning National Publicity for Thoreau in 1849," ATQ 2 (1969): 18-27.

UNITED STATES MAGAZINE,

AND

DEMOCRATIC REVIEW.

VOL. XIII. NOVEMBER, 1843. No. LXV.

PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED.*

We learn that Mr. Etzler is a native of Germany, and originally published his book in Pennsylvania, ten or twelve years ago; and now a second English edition, from the original American one, is demanded by his readers across the water, owing, we suppose, to the recent spread of Fourier's doctrines. It is one of the signs of the times. We confess that we have risen from reading this book with enlarged ideas, and grander conceptions of our duties in this world. It did expand us a little. It is worth attending to, if only that it entertains large questions. Consider what Mr. Etzler proposes:

"Fellow Men! I promise to show the means of creating a paradise within ten years, where everything desirable for human life may be had by every man in superabundance, without labor, and without pay; where the whole face of nature shall be changed into the most beautiful forms, and man may live in the most magnificent palaces, in all imaginable refinements of luxury, and in the most delightful gardens; where he may accomplish, without labor, in one year, more than hitherto could be done in thousands of years; may level mountains, sink valleys, create lakes, drain lakes and swamps, and intersect the land everywhere with beautiful canals, and roads for transporting heavy loads of many thousand tons, and for travelling one thousand miles in twenty-four hours; may cover the ocean with floating islands movable in any desired direction with immense power and celerity, in perfect security, and with all comforts and luxuries, bearing gardens and palaces, with thousands of families, and provided with rivulets of sweet water; may explore the interior of the globe, and travel from pole to pole in a fortnight; provide himself with means, unheard of yet, for increasing his knowledge of the world, and so his intelligence; lead a life of continual happiness, of enjoyments yet unknown; free himself from almost all the evils that afflict mankind, except death, and even put death far beyond the common period of human life, and finally render it less afflicting. Mankind may thus live in and enjoy a new world, far superior to the present, and raise themselves far higher in the scale of being."

It would seem from this and various indications beside, that there is a transcendentalism in mechanics as well as in ethics. While the whole field of the one reformer lies beyond the boundaries of space, the other is pushing his schemes for the elevation of the race to its utmost limits. While one scours the heavens, the other sweeps the earth. One says he will reform himself, and then nature and circumstances will be right. Let us not obstruct ourselves, for that is the greatest friction. It is of little importance though a cloud obstruct the view of the astronomer compared with his own

* The Paradise within the Reach of all Men, without Labor, by Powers of Nature and Machinery. An Address to all intelligent Men. In two parts. By J. A. Etzler. Part First. Second English Edition. pp. 55. London, 1842.

[1]We all receive our impressions of men from their clothing. [2]We do not know so many men, as we do coats. [3]Who did not know that if he placed his last shift upon a scarecrow, himself standing shiftless by, more deference would be paid to his shift, than to himself? [4]The feet, too, must be clothed, but bare feet were the oldest shoes. [5]Coats should at least be turned as often as their wearers turn in them. [6]Take a youth clad in simple homespun, with his cow hide shoes, and cap made of a woodchucks skin, and why should we not do him reverence?

[7]We laugh at the old fashions while we scrupulously follow the new.

[8]The beaux of the time of Henry the 8th, and Queen Elizabeth, would now be looked upon as scarecrows. [9]There was much in our factory system to be objected to. [10]The object was not so much to clothe mankind, as to enrich the stockholders, and in the long run men hit what they aim at.

[11]He now spoke of shelter. [12]The savages lived in wigwams made of bark, and every family owned one. [13]But now men live in houses, and but very few of them owned one. [14]We had some splendid palaces, but to support them we had many miserable huts. [15]Was this a real advance? [16]We called that better, which was more costly. — [17]Many men delve half their lives to pay for their farms, one third of the cost of which is for their houses. [18]It would be better to live, as did the ancients, in caves and holes of the earth, but then suitable caves were not always to be found.

[19]But it was time to give his own experience. — [20]In the month of March, 1845, he took an axe upon his shoulder, and started into the woods. — [21]Upon the shore of a small pond he commenced cutting down the trees, in order to build him a cabin. [22]The earth was just beginning to arouse from its wintry slumber, and his own spirits were fresh and vigorous.

1.WALDEN 21.35-22.1.
2.WALDEN 22.20-
3.WALDEN 22.21-23. 21.
4.WALDEN 23.18.
5.WALDEN 23.20-21.
6.WALDEN 24.30-25.2.
7.WALDEN 26.7-8.
8.WALDEN 26.8-10.
9.WALDEN 26.32-33.
10.WALDEN 26.36-27.3.
11.WALDEN 27.8.
12.WALDEN 30.15-16.
13.WALDEN 30.20-21.
14.Not in WALDEN or Clapper.
15.WALDEN 31.9-10.
16.WALDEN 31.10.
17.WALDEN 31.22-24, 32.17-23.
18.WALDEN 40.14-22.
19.WALDEN 40.28-29.
20.WALDEN 40.32-33.
21.WALDEN 40.34-35.
22.WALDEN 41.9-22.

[1]He worked on, much at his ease, for he determined to make the most of it. — [2]When he felt hungry he seated himself upon a log, and eat [*sic*] his bread with great relish, notwithstanding his hands were fragrant with the odor of pine boughs and besmeared with pitch. [3]By the middle of April his frame was done, and assisted by a few friends, more for the sake of sociability than from necessity, it was raised and ready for boarding. [4]Not far off, James Collins, an operator on a railroad building in the neighborhood, owned and occupied a shanty, which he had heard was for sale. [5]He accordingly proceeded to inspect the building.[6] He found it surrounded by a flock of hens, who upon his approach ran under a perennial hole under the door board, and preceded his entrance. [7]He was met by Mrs. Collins, who proceeded to show him the beauties of the place, taking care to inform him that the floor ran under the bed, and warning him not to fall into the cellar, a dust hole of two feet deep. [8]She also called his attention to the window, which once boasted of two squares of glass, but latterly the cat had passed out that way! [9]James now came in, and a bargain was soon struck. [10]He was to give $4,25 for the building as it stood, James to guarantee him against all other claims, to vacate at five the next morning, and he to take possession at six. [11]Accordingly on his way thither the next morning, he met James with all his goods, bed, chairs and hens, tied up in one immense bundle. [12]All but the cat. [13]She escaped to the woods, and thus became a wild cat; and, as he afterwards learned, was caught in a trap set for woodchucks, and thus became a dead cat!

[14]Taking his purchase to pieces, he conveyed it by small loads to his own unfledged domicil [*sic*], and thus finished a new building with the remains of an old one. [15]By the fourth of July his house was completed, and he took possession. [16]The interior was 10 feet wide by 15 feet long, and 8 feet high, and the whole cost him about $28.

1.WALDEN 42.34-35.
2.WALDEN 42.23-28.
3.WALDEN 42.34-36, 45.3-6.
4.WALDEN 42.36-43.2.
5.WALDEN 43.4.
6.WALDEN 43.12-15.
7.WALDEN 43.13-14, 19-21.
8.WALDEN 43.23-25.
9.WALDEN 43.28-30.
10.WALDEN 43.30-33.
11.WALDEN 43.36-44.2.
12.WALDEN 44.2-3.
13.WALDEN 44.3-5.
14.WALDEN 44.6-8.
15.WALDEN 45.9-10.
16.WALDEN 48.29-35, 49.18.

[1]The cracks he filled with a composition of sand and mud, and during the summer he had no fire place, but cooked his food out doors. [2]He, however, built him a fire place of stones for the winter. [3]He intended to build him a luxurious mansion on the main street of Concord, just as soon as he was convinced that he could do it as cheap, and should like it as well as he did his present abode! [4]The rent of a room for a student at Cambridge, was $30 per year, notwithstanding the managers had the privilege of building as many rooms as they liked. [5]The students had no hand in the building of their rooms, and therefore had to pay high for the privilege of occupying them. [6]But perhaps it would be said, you surely would not have them work with their hands, and not with their heads! [7]He did not mean that, but he meant what they would perhaps consider very near it, he meant that they should work with their hands and their heads.

[8]He spoke of the improvements of the day, and said many of them were delusions. [9]He could travel faster on foot than on a railroad. [10]Suppose you start with him from Concord to Fitchburg, a distance of thirty miles. [11]He could travel it in a day. [12]If you go in the cars, you must first spend the greater part of the day in earning 75 cents, with which to pay your fare, and he should therefore get there before you.

[13]He might travel around the world in this way, and always keep ahead of you.

[14]He did not own the land around his cabin, but was a squatter. [15]He planted on the sandy soil beans and potatoes, and a little corn, although the farmers told him the land was fit only to raise chirping squirrels. [16]At the end of the year he found he had cleared $13,21, which he verily believed was better than any farmer in Concord had done. [17]By laboring for others he earned $13,34; his food cost him $8,74, and his clothing, $8,40. [18]His total expenses for the year were $41,28; and at its close he found himself in possession of $19,71, and an unincumbered [*sic*] estate.

1.WALDEN 45.15-19.
2.WALDEN 45.13-15, 48.23-25.
3.WALDEN 49.23-26.
4.WALDEN 50.4-9.
5.WALDEN 50.16-19.
6.WALDEN 51.6-8.
7.WALDEN 51.9-10.
8.WALDEN 52.11-13.
9.WALDEN 53.6-7.
10.WALDEN 53.8-9.
11.WALDEN 53.11-12.
12.WALDEN 53.13-18.
13.WALDEN 53.18-20.
14.WALDEN 54.28-29.
15.WALDEN 54.20-23.
16.WALDEN 55.10-24.
17.WALDEN 58.34-36, 59.21, 60.3.
18.WALDEN 60.17-31.

[1]His bread he at first made of Indian meal, and baked it on a shingle, or the end of a pine log, sawed off. [2]It tasted somewhat piney, and he tried flour, but afterwards adopted a mixture of rye and Indian meal. [3]He spent much time in the study of bread, and at last discovered that he could make it without yeast, that soul of bread, of which the first bottle-full must have been brought over in the Mayflower. [4]He was glad to be able to do without it, for otherwise he was obliged to carry a bottle-full in his pocket, and it would sometimes pop off, causing him great inconvenience. [5]However, man could adopt himself to any circumstances.

[6]He was obliged to labor but six weeks in a year, to pay all his expenses, which left him much leisure for study and reflection.[7]He had formerly tried school keeping, but lost his labor, because his object was not so much to instruct the young, as to gain a living. [8]He had been in trade, but was afraid if he continued in it, he should soon be in the broad road to the devil, as he certainly would had he gone so far as to do a "good business."

[9]The laborer only was truly independent. — [10]When his days work was done his mind was free from care, and the hours were his own. [11]But his employer was ever the slave of his own schemes. [12]He must be always planning and looking anxiously ahead. [13]He wanted no man to adopt his mode of living, but would have every one live in his own way. [14]He had been told that it was his duty to support some poor family, but he had observed that whenever he had made the offer, the poor family invariably preferred remaining poor! [15]Much was said about doing good. [16]He had tried it, and it did not agree with his constitution! — [17]Those who go about doing good, should rather set about doing [*sic*] good. [18]Should he hear that a man was coming to his dwelling to do him good, he would run for his life!

[19]The lecturer closed by exhorting all to live the true life, and whether they bore fruit or not, like the stately cypress, they should be admired.

1.WALDEN 62.1-4.
2.WALDEN 62.5-7.
3.WALDEN 62.14-29.
4.WALDEN 63.4-9.
5.WALDEN 63.10-12.
6.WALDEN 69.9-14.
7.WALDEN 69.14-20.
8.WALDEN 69.20-25.
9.WALDEN 70.24-26.
10.WALDEN 70.28-30.
11.WALDEN 70.30-32.
12.WALDEN 70.31-32.
13.WALDEN 71.6-13.
14.WALDEN 72.24-35.
15.WALDEN 73.3-4.
16.WALDEN 74.5-7.
17.WALDEN 73.25-30.
18.WALDEN 74.16-19.
19.WALDEN 78.32-79.19.

[1]It had been his wish, previous to adopting his present mode of life, ever to catch the nick of time, to make his mark on the passing moment. [2]He had wished to stand on the meeting of two eternities, the past and the future, and gathering wisdom from the one, push forward to the other.

[3]His occupations had been various. [4]He had considered it necessary to be up before the sun, altho he did not know that he had ever assisted that luminary in rising. [5]He was always anxious to know "what was in the wind," and climbed hill tops, that he might catch a glimpse of the sky. [6]He was for several years reporter to a newspaper, whose editor never saw fit to publish his communications. [7]He was self-appointed inspector of storms, and looked after the farmers wild stock in the out-of-the-way nooks and corners of the farm. [8]He watered the red berries, and in fact kept on steadily minding his business, until his business turned him into the woods. [9]To be a merchant on the sea coast it was necessary to keep informed of the state of the markets, to take advantage of new discoveries, to calculate the chances of war and peace, and to anticipate new demands. [10]He had thought that a good business might be done on the banks of Walcott [*sic*] Pond. [11]At least he could there transact a little private business.

[12]It was the object of clothing to keep in the animal heat, and to screen our nakedness. [13]A bank bill will pass, although torn in two, if we patch it together, and retain the essential signatures. — [14]Do not therefore discard your coat on the first rent, but clout it on the back.

1.WALDEN 17.1-5.
2.WALDEN 17.3-5.
3.Not in WALDEN or Clapper.
4.WALDEN 17.26-28
5.WALDEN 17.29-18.5.
6.WALDEN 18.6-8.
7.WALDEN 18.12-21.
8.WALDEN 18.24-33, 19.27-31.
9.WALDEN 20.5-21.3.
10.WALDEN 21.7-8.
11.WALDEN 19.29-20.1.
12.WALDEN 21.25-28.
13.Clapper 100, n 11.
14.Clapper 100, n 11.

MR. THOREAU'S LECTURE.

A man engaged in the fore-front of a battle can afterwards give but a poor description of the contest. He who gazes from a safe eminence may hope to do better, but if his vision be rendered indistinct by distance, rising exhalations or vapory mists, he may imagine triumphs where none have occurred, or disasters where victory has been secured. In his lecture Mr. Thoreau took us with him to his lonely retreat, and pointed out some of the principal features of the great battle of life, of which the earth is the scene. — But he saw them in the colorings given by his own mental vision — sometimes clear and lifelike, sometimes picturesque, and anon grotesque, sometimes humorous and playful, but always genial, and without misanthropy or malice. It was refreshing to go out of the beaten track, and follow an original mind in its wanderings among lifes labyrinths, and it was amusing to witness the play of fancy and strokes of wit which were scattered along its course. The lecture was the pepper, salt, and mustard of the course, and certainly gave an excellent relish to the whole.

[1]Mr. Thoreau commenced by stating that the lecture he was about to read was the first of a course entitled "Life in the woods," delivered before his fellow townsmen of Concord, Mass. — [2]The subject of it might be called Economy. [3]He had for something more than two years lived alone, a mile from any inhabitants, in a cabin of his own construction, on the banks of a small pond, near Concord. [4]Many of his townsmen had been curious to know how he lived; had asked him if he was not lonesome, afraid, or sometimes sick, or why he did not devote his life to charitable purposes? [5]In his lectures he endeavored to answer these questions. [6]He should make frequent allusion to himself, which he should not have done, had there been any one else whom he knew as well. [7]His remarks would apply especially to poor students, who were doing penance like Hindoo Brahmins, that they might acquire a little of the worlds knowledge. [8]He saw all around him young men, born in the wilderness, ever pushing before them a great barn and delving in the tillage of the land, that they might keep in cultivation a few cubic feet of flesh. — [9]The finer fruits of the tree of knowledge could not be plucked by their coarse fingers. [10]They had no time to be anything but machines. [11]Many of them, after years of labor, were unable to pay for their lands.

1.Not in WALDEN or Clapper.
2.WALDEN 1 (Title).
3.WALDEN 3.1-6.
4.WALDEN 3.8-18.
5.WALDEN 3.19-21.
6.WALDEN 3.21-27.
7.WALDEN 4.2-3, 15-30.
8.WALDEN 5.3-9, 15-23.
9.WALDEN 6.7-12.
10.WALDEN 6.16.
11.Not in WALDEN or Clapper.

[1]He knew the mean and sneaking lives which many of his audience lived. [2]They were in debt for the very suppers which they had just eaten, and had come there to spend an hour of borrowed time, which belonged to their creditors. [3]Many spent their whole lives seeking to curry favor, lying in a nutshell of servility, that they might hoard up a few rusty dollars in an old stocking. [4]He had sometimes thought that we were over solicitous concerning negro slavery, when we had so much slavery in our own midst. [5]For it was the worst of slavery to be your own slave-driver.

[6]Old deeds must give place to new deeds. [7]Here we walked cautiously about the earth, but in Typee trees grew to the height of 60 feet, and the natives easily ran up to their tops. [8]He had been told by a farmer that he could not live upon vegetables because there was no matter in them to form the bones, while at the very moment the farmer was walking behind his oxen, whose vegetable-made bones were knocking the plough deep into the earth! [9]Confucius had said that the greatest knowledge was to know what one knows, and to know what one does not know. [10]Where everything is cared for, even to the paring of the nails, what need we be troubled about? [11]Why should life be worn out, when the gross necessaries of life may be had at the groceries [*sic*]? [12]The great necessaries of life were formerly food and shelter, but modern civilization demanded food, shelter, clothing and fuel. [13]We had accustomed ourselves to sit by warm fires, and dogs and cats were now learning to do the same. [14]Man is a box stove. [15]The warmer he keeps himself the less animal heat he has. — [16]Heat is life. [17]Men scramble for gold that they might keep comfortably warm. [18]But the rich and luxurious are not comfortably warm, they are uncomfortably hot. [19]They are cooked. [20]The wise poor have not this hindrance. [21]If we can keep warm what need we more?

1.WALDEN 6.25-26
2.WALDEN 6.26-32.
3.WALDEN 7.5-15.
4.WALDEN 7.17-21.
5.WALDEN 7.23-24.
6.WALDEN 8.30-31.
7.Clapper 61, n 19.
8.WALDEN 9.19-25.
9.WALDEN 11.20-23.
10.WALDEN 10.2-4, 11.29-32.
11.WALDEN 11.34-12.3.
12.WALDEN 12.17-21.
13.WALDEN 12.24-29.
14.WALDEN 13.8 .
15.WALDEN 13.11-13.
16.WALDEN 13.16-18.
17.WALDEN 14.9-13.
18.WALDEN 14.13-15.
19.WALDEN 14.15.
20.WALDEN 14.20-22.
21.WALDEN 15.18-19.

What associations would this reference to the "stately cypress" have evoked from an audience in New England in the middle of the 19th Century? Here is an interpretation of the meaning given to the symbol of the cypress, found in an article that had been published eight years earlier, in 1831, on the manufacture of the popular "cachemire" shawls:

> About three weavers were kept at work in each shop, and when the pattern was especially fine they could not make more than a quarter of an inch a day, so that the most elaborate shawls were made in pieces. The weaver was seated on a bench and a child placed a little below him with its eyes fixed on the pattern, who every time the frame was turned told the weaver the colours wanted. The wages of first-rate workmen were from four to five pence, and the child labour it is to be feared counted for nothing. The pattern familiar to us as the palm-leaf is not a palm of the desert, but the cypress, the lover's tree among the orientals, which is sculptured on the ruins of the palace of Persepolis exactly as it is figured on the shawl borders. The cypress adorns the border of a shawl, even as the tree itself overshadows the bank of a stream; and is considered by the Easterns as the image of religion and moral freedom, as Saadi has expressed in verse:
>
> Be thou fruitful as the palm, or be
> At least as the dark cypress, high and free,
>
> because its branches never incline to the earth, but all shoot upward towards heaven.

I had been speaking of the great significance of what this newspaper reporter jotted down about Thoreau's parable of the hound, horse, and turtledove on the early date of March 21, 1849. What this auditor jotted down during the lecture, excerpted from the full account above, was:

> It had been his wish, previous to adopting his present mode of life, ever to catch the nick of time, to make his mark on the passing moment. He had wished to stand on the meeting of two eternities, the past and the future, and gathering wisdom from the one, push forward to the other.

This is utterly fascinating because we know that the parable had already reached virtually its final form two years before, as of 1847, so we know that the deviations from its canonical form found in this account are entirely due to the receiver's difficulties of reception of such unacceptable and utterly unanticipated ideas. Note that the receiver has cast the attitude being expressed into the past tense, interpreting the lecturer as if he

had been attempting to describe a previous, unacceptable, replaced attitude “previous to adopting his present mode of life,” as subsequently altered by things he learned during his solitude in the woods. Since the parable as it existed in 1847 most definitely suggested no such thing, it is clear that this supposition was the newspaper person’s attempt to distance himself or herself from what Thoreau was offering. If this were a mere description of past attitudes then it would not need to be seriously thought about by the audience, for it would not be being seriously recommended to them by the speaker! And notice how closely the terminology that was recorded in this contemporary newspaper maps over the prevailing un-Thoreauvian sentiments of what is known as “progressism”: notice, for instance, how close “make his mark on the passing moment” is to civilization’s preferred tombstone “leave his mark on the world” and how close “push forward to the other” is to civilization’s wet dream “march forward into the future”! This is fantasization being passed off as journalism.

March 31, Saturday: Here is the 1st known interpretation of the hound/horse/turtledove parable of Henry Thoreau as it was offered by an anonymous newspaper correspondent far in advance of the publication of WALDEN:

WALDEN: In any weather, at any hour of the day or night, I have been anxious to improve the nick of time, and notch it on my stick too; to stand on the meeting of two eternities, the past and future, which is precisely the present moment; to toe that line. You will pardon some obscurities, for there are more secrets in my trade than in most men's, and yet not voluntarily kept, but inseparable from its very nature. I would gladly tell all that I know about it, and never paint "No Admittance" on my gate.

I long ago lost a hound, a bay horse, and a turtle-dove, and am still on their trail. Many are the travellers I have spoken concerning them, describing their tracks and what calls they answered to. I have met one or two who had heard the hound, and the tramp of the horse, and even seen the dove disappear behind a cloud, and they seemed as anxious to recover them as if they had lost them themselves.

To anticipate, not the sunrise and the dawn merely, but, if possible, Nature herself! How many mornings, summer and winter, before yet any neighbor was stirring about his business, have I been about mine! No doubt many of my townsmen have met me returning from this enterprise, farmers starting for Boston in the twilight, or woodchoppers going to their work. It is true, I never assisted the sun materially in his rising, but, doubt not, it was of the last importance only to be present at it.

We have a record in the Portland Transcript, page 5 column 4 and page 6 columns 1 and 2, of how one newspaper correspondent received the parable of the hound, the bay horse, and the turtle-dove. What this auditor had jotted down during the lecture of March 21 was:

> It had been his wish, previous to adopting his present mode of life, ever to catch the nick of time, to make his mark on the passing moment. He had wished to stand on the meeting of two eternities, the past and the future, and gathering wisdom from the one, push forward to the other.

This is utterly fascinating because we know that the parable had already reached virtually its final form two years before, as of 1847, so we know that the deviations from its canonical form found in this account are entirely due to the receiver's difficulties of reception of such unacceptable and utterly unanticipated ideas. Note that the receiver has cast the attitude being expressed into the past tense, interpreting the lecturer as if he had been attempting to describe a previous, unacceptable, replaced attitude "previous to adopting his present mode of life," as subsequently altered by things he learned during his solitude in the woods. Since the parable as it existed in 1847 most definitely suggested no such thing, it is clear that this supposition was the newspaper person's attempt to distance himself or herself from what Thoreau was offering. If this were a mere description of past attitudes then it would not need to be seriously thought about by the audience, for it would not be being seriously recommended to them by the speaker! And notice how closely the terminology that was recorded in this contemporary newspaper maps over the prevailing un-Thoreauvian sentiments of what is known as "progressism": notice, for instance, how close "make his mark on the passing moment" is to civilization's preferred tombstone "leave his mark on the world" and how close "push forward to the other" is to civilization's wet dream "march forward into the future"! This is fantasization being passed off as journalism.

In A WEEK Thoreau had quoted Mencius, Book XI, 1-4:

> A WEEK: Mencius says: "If one loses a fowl or a dog, he knows well how to seek them again; if one loses the sentiments of his heart, he does not know how to seek them again.... The duties of practical philosophy consist only in seeking after those sentiments of the heart which we have lost; that is all."

CHINA

THOREAU AND CHINA

On page 879 of the Reverend James Legge's THE FOUR BOOKS, this is translated as:

> Mencius said, "Benevolence is man's mind, and righteousness is man's path.
>
> "How lamentable it is to neglect the path and not pursue it, to lose this mind and not know to seek it again!
>
> "When men's fowls and dogs are lost, they know to seek for them again, but they lose their mind, and do not know to seek for it.
>
> "The great end of learning is nothing else but to seek for the lost mind."

LIGHT FROM CHINA

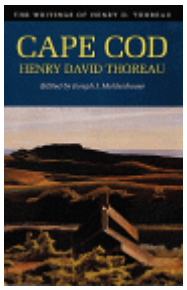
I would gather from this reference to "a fowl or a dog" in what is officially Thoreau's 1st book, WEEK, that interpretations of his references to a hound and a turtledove in what is officially his 2d book, WALDEN,

must be somewhat restricted. They must be restricted in a manner so as not to conflict with his previous reference to the animal totems of Mencius, who used them to refer to "the sentiments of the heart." (However, an interpretation of the hound as **problematic hounding recollections**, and of the turtledove as **problematic hopeful anticipations**, is well within this restrictive stipulation.)

Please note that according to James Lyndon Shanley's THE MAKING OF WALDEN, WITH THE TEXT OF THE FIRST VERSION (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1957), page 113, in the first preserved MS variant of Thoreau's text he had been using dashes: "I long ago lost a hound — and a turtle dove and a bay horse — and am still on their trail."

1850

May: On some date during this month, Henry Thoreau lectured at Worcester, probably about Cape Cod.



CANIS

DOGS

CAPE COD: Sometimes we met a wrecker with his cart and dog, –and his dog's faint bark at us wayfarers, heard through the roaring of the surf, sounded ridiculously faint. To see a little trembling dainty-footed cur stand on the margin of the ocean, and ineffectually bark at a beach-bird, amid the roar of the Atlantic! Come with design to bark at a whale, perchance! That sound will do for farmyards. All the dogs looked out of place there, naked and as if shuddering at the vastness; and I thought that they would not have been there had it not been for the countenance of their masters. Still less could you think of a cat bending her steps that way, and shaking her wet foot over the Atlantic; yet even this happens sometimes, they tell me. In summer I saw the tender young of the Piping Plover, like chickens just hatched, mere pinches of down on two legs, running in troops, with a faint peep, along the edge of the waves.

DOG

CAT

Thoreau took notes, not from Waldo Emerson's copy of the Mrs. Sabine translation of Alexander von Humboldt's *ANSICHEN DER NATUR* book of essays, published in the previous year, but from E.C. Otté and Henry G. Bohn's new translation, titled VIEWS OF NATURE, OR CONTEMPLATIONS ON THE SUBLIME PHENOMENA OF CREATION, WITH SCIENTIFIC ILLUSTRATIONS, just published in London. (Was there a great deal of difference among these editions?)

A gang under the direction of Isaiah Rynders disrupted meetings of the American Anti-Slavery Society in New-York. It was reported in the newspapers that an incident had occurred in New-York, involving Frederick Douglass. We can see from Douglass's dignified reply in his own paper, The North Star, that in our land 142 years ago, a taunting assault on a non-white man minding his own business on the street could be followed by a taunting assault on that man in the newspapers:

> Like most of the statements which emanate from the American press, this one (though partly true) is false in several particulars. It is not true that I walked down Broadway with two white females resting on my arm.... It is not true that the ladies in company with me placed themselves under the care of the gentleman (ruffian?) who assaulted me, nor any of the villainous party, nor of anybody else. It is not true that I sneered or spoke to the loafing assailants.... I felt no indignation toward the poor miserable wretches who committed the outrage. They were but executing upon me the behests of the proslavery church and the clergy of the land; doing the dirty work of the men who despise them, and who have no more respect for them in reality than they have for me.


THE NORTH STAR.

After April: the spring–which the frost has loosened– It is old mortality {*MS torn*} it is fastening

After April: instantly dies. A page with as true & inevitable & deep a meaning as a hill-side. A book which nature shall own as her own flower her own leaves–with whose leaves her own shall rustle in sympathy imperishable & russet–which shall push out with the skunk cabbage in the spring
I am not offended by the odor of the skunk in passing by sacred places–I am invigorated rather. It is a reminiscence of immortality borne on the gale O thou partial world, when wilt thou know God?
I would as soon transplant this vegetable to Polynesia or to heaven with me as the violet.
Shoes are commonly too narrow. If you should take off a gentleman's shoes you would find that his foot was

wider than his shoe. Think of his wearing such an engine–walking in it many miles year after year. A shoe which presses against the sides of the foot is to be condemned– To compress the foot like the Chinese is as bad as to compress the head–like the Flat heads–for the Head & the foot are one body. A sensible man will not follow fashion in this respect but reason. Better moccasins or Sandals or even bare feet, than a tight shoe.
A wise man will wear a shoe wide & large enough shaped somewhat like the foot & tied with a leather string. & so go his way in peace letting his foot fall at every step. When your shoe chafes your feet put in a mullein leaf. When I ask for a garment of a particular form my tailoress tells me gravely `They do not make them so now," and I find it difficult to get made what I want–simply because she cannot believe that I mean what I say– It surpasses her credulity– Properly speaking my style is as fashionable as theirs. "They do not make them so now"! as if she quoted the Fates. I am for a moment absorbed in thought–thinking wondering who they are & where *they* live. It is some Oak Hall O Call– O K all correct establishment which she knows but I do not. Oliver Cromwell– I emphasize & in imagination italicize each word separately of that sentence to come at the meaning of it
I conclude it is the French on either

 After April: Or you may walk into the foreign land of Bedford–where not even yet after 4 or 5 or even 7 or 8 miles does the sky shut down–but the airy & crystal dome of heaven arches high over all–where you did not suspect that there was so much day light under its crystal dome–and from the hills eastward perchance see the small town of Bedford standing stately on the crest of a hill like some city of Belgrade with 150 000 inhabitants. I wonder if Mr Fitch lives there among them.

circa June 25, Tuesday: Henry Thoreau made a 2d brief visit (of a total of four) to Cape Cod.

He took a steamer from Boston to Provincetown, to walk the outer shore to Chatham and spend time at the Highland Lighthouse.

CAPE COD: All sailors pause to watch a steamer, and shout in welcome or derision. In one a large Newfoundland dog put his paws on the rail and stood up as high as any of them, and looked as wise. But the skipper, who did not wish to be seen no better employed than a dog, rapped him on the nose and sent him below. Such is human justice! I thought I could hear him making an effective appeal down there from human to divine justice. He must have had much the cleanest breast of the two.

DOG

In the illustration of Provincetown given, the windmills are pumping sea water into evaporation ponds, for the curing of fish. In CAPE COD, Thoreau would provide some information about these windmills:

> CAPE COD: The most foreign and picturesque structures on the Cape, to an inlander, not excepting the salt-works, are the wind-mills –gray looking octagonal towers, with long timbers slanting to the ground in the rear, and there resting on a cart-wheel, by which their fans are turned round to face the wind. These appeared, also, to serve in some measure for props against its force. A great circular rut was worn around the building by the wheel. The neighbors, who assemble to turn the mill to the wind, are likely to know which way it blows, without a weathercock. They looked loose and slightly locomotive, like huge wounded birds, trailing a wing or a leg, and reminded one of pictures of the Netherlands. Being on elevated ground, and high in themselves, they serve as landmarks –for there are no tall trees, or other objects commonly, which can be seen at a distance in the horizon; though the outline of the land itself is so firm and distinct, that an insignificant cone, or even precipice of sand is visible at a great distance from over the sea. Sailors making the land, commonly steer either by the wind-mills or the meeting-houses. In the country, we are obliged to steer by the meeting-houses alone. Yet, the meeting-house is a kind of wind-mill, which runs one day in seven, turned either by the winds of doctrine or public opinion, or more rarely by the winds of heaven –where another sort of grist is ground, of which, if it be not all bran or musty, if it be not plaster, we trust to make bread of life.

"A YANKEE IN CANADA": When we inquired here for a *maison publique* we were directed apparently to that private house where we were most likely to find entertainment. There were no guide-boards where we walked, because there was but one road; there were no shops nor signs, because there were no artisans to speak of, and the people raised their own provisions; and there were no taverns because there were no travellers. We here bespoke lodging and breakfast. They had, as usual, a large old-fashioned, two-storied box stove in the middle of the room, out of which, in due time, there was sure to be forthcoming a supper, breakfast, or dinner. The lower half held the fire, the upper the hot air, and as it was a cool Canadian evening, this was a comforting sight to us. Being four or five feet high it warmed the whole person as you stood by it. The stove was plainly a very important article of furniture in Canada, and was not set aside during the summer. Its size, and the respect which was paid to it, told of the severe winters which it had seen and prevailed over. The master of the house, in his long-pointed, red woollen cap, had a thoroughly antique physiognomy of the old Norman stamp. He might have come over with Jacques Cartier. His was the hardest French to understand of any we had heard yet, for there was a great difference between one speaker and another, and this man talked with a pipe in his mouth beside, a kind of tobacco French. I asked him what he called his dog. He shouted *Brock!* (the name of the breed). We liked to hear the cat called *min* — min! min! min! I inquired if we could cross the river here to the Isle of Orleans, thinking to return that way when we had been to the Falls. He answered, "*S'il ne fait pas un trop grand vent,*" If there is not too much wind. They use small boats or pirogues, and the waves are often too high for them. He wore, as usual, something between a moccasin and a boot, which he called *bottes Indiennes*, Indian boots, and had made himself. The tops were of calf or sheep skin, and the soles of cow hide turned up like a moccasin. They were yellow or reddish, the leather never having been tanned nor colored. The women wore the same. He told us that he had travelled ten leagues due north into the bush. He had been to the Falls of St. Anne, and said that they were more beautiful, but not greater, than Montmorenci, *plus beau mais non plus grand que Montmorenci*. As soon as we had retired the family commenced their devotions. A little boy officiated, and for a long time we heard him muttering over his prayers.

DOG

Nov. 26th An inch of snow on ground this morning –our first
Went tonight to see the Indians who are still living in tents– Showed the horns of the moose, the black moose they call it, that goes in low lands horns 3 or 4 feet wide (The red moose they say is another kind runs on *Mts* & has horns 6 feet wide) can move their horns. The broad flat side portions of the horns are covered with hair and are so soft when the creature is alive that you can run a knife through them, They color the lower portions a darker color by rubbing them on alders &c to harden them. Make Kee-nong-gun or pappoose cradle of the broad part of the horn, putting a rim on it. Once scared will run all day. A dog will hang to their lips and be carried along and swung against a tree & drop off. Always find 2 or three together. Can't run on glare ice but

DOG

can run in snow four feet deep. The caribou can run on ice. Sometimes spear them with a sharp pole –sometimes with a knife at the end of a pole. Signs good or bad from the turn of the horns. Their caribou horns had been gnawed by mice in their wigwams. The moose horns & others are not gnawed by mice while the creature is alive. Moose cover themselves with water all but noses to escape flies. about as many now as 50 years ago.
Imitated the sounds of the moose caribou & deer with a birch bark horn which last they sometimes make very long. The moose can be heard 8 or ten miles sometimes a loud sort of bellowing sound clearer more sonorous than the looing of cattle– The caribou's a sort of snort –the small deer, –like a lamb.
Made their clothes of the young moose skin. Cure the meat by smoking it –use no salt in curing it, but when they eat it.
Their spear very serviceable. The inner pointed part of a hemlock knot –the side spring pieces of hickory. Spear salmon pickerel –trout –chub &c also by birch-bark light at night using the other end of spear as pole.
Their sled Jeborgon or Jebongon? 1 foot wide 4 or 5 long of thin wood turned up in part draw by a strong rope of bass-wood bark–
Canoe of moose hide. One hide will hold 3 or 4 –can be taken apart and put together very quickly. Can take out cross bars and bring the sides together a very convenient boat to carry & cross streams with. They say they did not make birch canoes till they had edge tools. The birches the lightest– They think our birches the same only second growth.
Their kee-nong-gun or cradle has a hoop to prevent the child being hurt when it falls– Cant eat dirt –can be hung up out of way of snakes.
A boak-henjo a birchbark vessel for water –can boil meet in it with hot stones– Takes a long time. Also a vessel of birch bark shaped like a pan both ornamented by scratching the bark, which is wrong side out –very neatly made. Valued our kettles much
Did not know use of eye in axe. Put a string through it & wore it round neck –cut toes.
Did not like gun killed one moose; scared all the rest.
The squaw-heegun for cooking –a mere stick put through the game & stuck in the ground slanted over the fire –a spit– Can be eating one side while the other is doing.
The ar-tu-e-se a stick –string & bunch of leaves, which they toss & catch on the point of the stick –make great use of it. Count with it– Make the clouds go off the sun with it
Snow shoes of two kinds, one of same shape at both ends so that the mohawks could not tell which way they were going. (Put some rags in the heel-hole to make a toe-mark?)
Log trap to catch many kinds of animals. side view Some for bears let the log fall 6 or 7 feet First there is a Frame then the little stick which the animal moves presses down as he goes through under the log. Then the crooke stick is hung over the top of the frame & holds up the log by a string the weight of the log on this keeps the little stick up.
A drizzling & misty day this has been melting the snow. The mist divided into a thousand ghostly forms was blowing across Walden. Mr Emerson's Cliff-hill seen from the RR through the mist looked like a dark heavy frowning N Hampshire *Mt*– I do not understand fully why hills look so much larger at such a time –unless being the most distant we see & in the horizon we suppose them farther off and so magnify them. I think there can be no looming about it.

1851

May 30, Friday: There was a Concord man once who had a fox hound named Burgoyne –he called him Bugīne. A good name

DOG

May 31, Saturday: Henry Thoreau delivered "Walking" at Worcester.

TIMELINE OF ESSAYS

"WALKING": When looking over a list of men's names in a foreign language, as of military officers or of authors who have written on a particular subject, I am reminded once more that there is nothing in a name. The name Menschikoff, for instance, has nothing in it to my ears more human than a whisker, and it may belong to a rat. As the names of the Poles and Russians are to us, so are ours to them. It is as if they had been named by the child's rigmarole — *Iery-wiery ichery van, tittle-tol-tan.* I see in my mind a herd of wild creatures swarming over the earth, and to each the herdsman has affixed some barbarous sound in his own dialect. The names of men are of course as cheap and meaningless as **Bose** and **Tray**, the names of dogs.

DOG

 May 31: Pedestrium solatium in apricis locis. –nodosa

 June 29, Sunday: There is a great deal of white clover this year. In many fields where there has been no clover seed sown for many years at least, it is more abundant than the red and the heads are nearly as large. Also pastures which are close cropped and where I think there was little or no clover last year are spotted white with a humbler growth– And everywhere by road sides garden borders &c even where the sward is trodden hard –the small white heads on short stems are sprinkled every where– As this is the season for the swarming of bees –and this clover is very attractive to them, it is probably the more difficult to secure them –at any rate it is the more important to secure their services now that they can make honey so fast. It is an interesting inquiry why this year is so favorable to the growth of clover!

I am interested to observe how old-country methods of farming resources are introduced among us. The irish laborer for instance seeing that his employer is contemplating some agricultural enterprise –as ditching –or fencing suggests some old country mode with he has been familiar from a boy –which is often found to be cheaper as well as more ornamental than the common– And Patrick is allowed to accomplish the object his own way –and for once exhibits some skill and has not to be shown –but working with a will as well as with pride – does better than ever in the old country. Even the Irish man exhibits what might be mistaken for a Yankee knack –exercising a merely inbred skill derived from the long teachings and practice of his ancestors.

I saw an Irish man building a bank of sod where his employer had contemplated building a bank wall –piling up very neatly & solidly with his spade & a line the sods taken from the rear & coping the face at a very small angle from the perpendicular –intermingling the sods with bushes as they came to hand which would grow & strengthen the whole. It was much more agreeable to the eye as well as less expensive than stone would have been –& he thought that it would be equally effective as a fence & no less durable. But it is true only experience will show when the same practice may be followed in this climate & in Ireland –whether our atmosphere is not too dry to admit of it. At any rate it was wise in the farmer thus to avail himself of any peculiar experience which his hired laborer possessed, That was what he *should* buy.

Also I noticed the other day where one who raises seeds when his ropes & poles failed had used ropes twisted of straw to support his plants –a resource probably suggested & supplied by his foreign laborers. It is only remarkable that so few improvements or resources are or are to be adopted from the old world.

I look down on rays of prunella by the road sides now– The panicled or privet Andromeda with its fruit-like white flowers– Swamp-pink I see for the first time this season.

–The Tree Primrose (Scabish) Oenothera biennis a rather coarse yellow flower with a long tubular calyx naturalized extensively in Europe.– The clasping bellflower –Campanula perfoliata from the heart shaped leaves clasping the stalk an interesting flower–

The Convolvulus Sepium Large Bindweed –make a fresh morning impression as of dews & purity– The Adder's tongue Arethusa a delicate pink flower.

How different is day from day! Yesterday the air was filled with a thick fog-like haze so that the sun did not once shine with ardor but every thing was so tempered under this thin veil that it was a luxury merely to be out

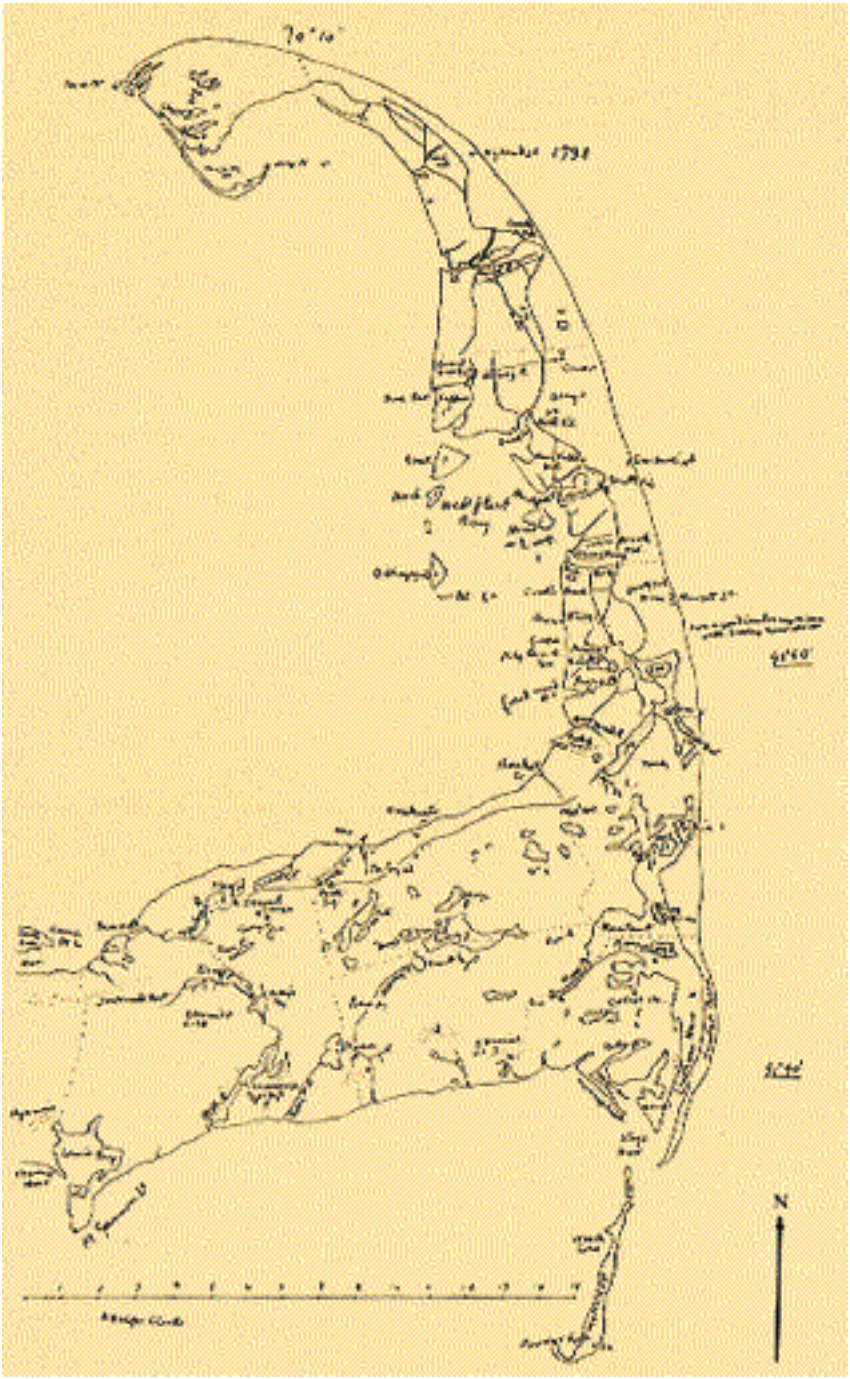
doors– You were less out for it. The shadows of the apple trees even early in the afternoon were remarkably distinct The landscape wore a classical smoothness– Every object was as in picture with a glass over it. I saw some hills on this side the river looking from Conantum on which the grass being of a yellow tinge, though the sun did not shine out on them they had the appearance of being shone upon peculiarly.– It was merely an unusual yellow tint of the grass. The mere surface of water was an object for the eye to linger on.
The panicled cornel a low shrub in blossom by wall sides now.
I thought that one peculiarity of my "Week" was its *hypæthral* character –to use an epithet applied to those Egyptian temples which are open to the heavens above –*under the ether*– I thought that it had little of the atmosphere of the house about –but might wholly have been written, as in fact it was to a considerable extent – out of doors. It was only at a late period in writing it, as it happened, that I used any phrases implying that I lived in a house, or lead a *domestic* life. I trust it does not smell of the study & library –even of the Poets attic, as of the fields & woods.– that it is a hypæthral or unroofed book –lying open under the *ether* –& permeated by it. Open to all weathers –not easy to be kept on a shelf.
The potatoes are beginning to blossom
Riding to survey a woodlot yesterday I observed that a dog accompanied the wagon– Having tied the horse at the last house and entered the woods, I saw no more of the dog while there; –but when riding back to the village I saw the dog again running by the wagon –and in answer to my inquiry was told that the horse & wagon were hired & that the dog always accompanied the horse. I queried whether it might happen that a dog would accompany the wagon if a strange horse were put into it –whether he would ever attach himself to an inanimate object. Methinks the driver though a stranger as it were added intellect to the mere animality of the horse and the dog not making very nice distinctions yielded respect to the horse and equipage as if it were human If the horse were to trot off alone without wagon or driver –I think it doubtful if the dog would follow –if with the wagon then the chances of his following would be increased –but if with a driver though a stranger I have found by experience that he would follow.

DOG

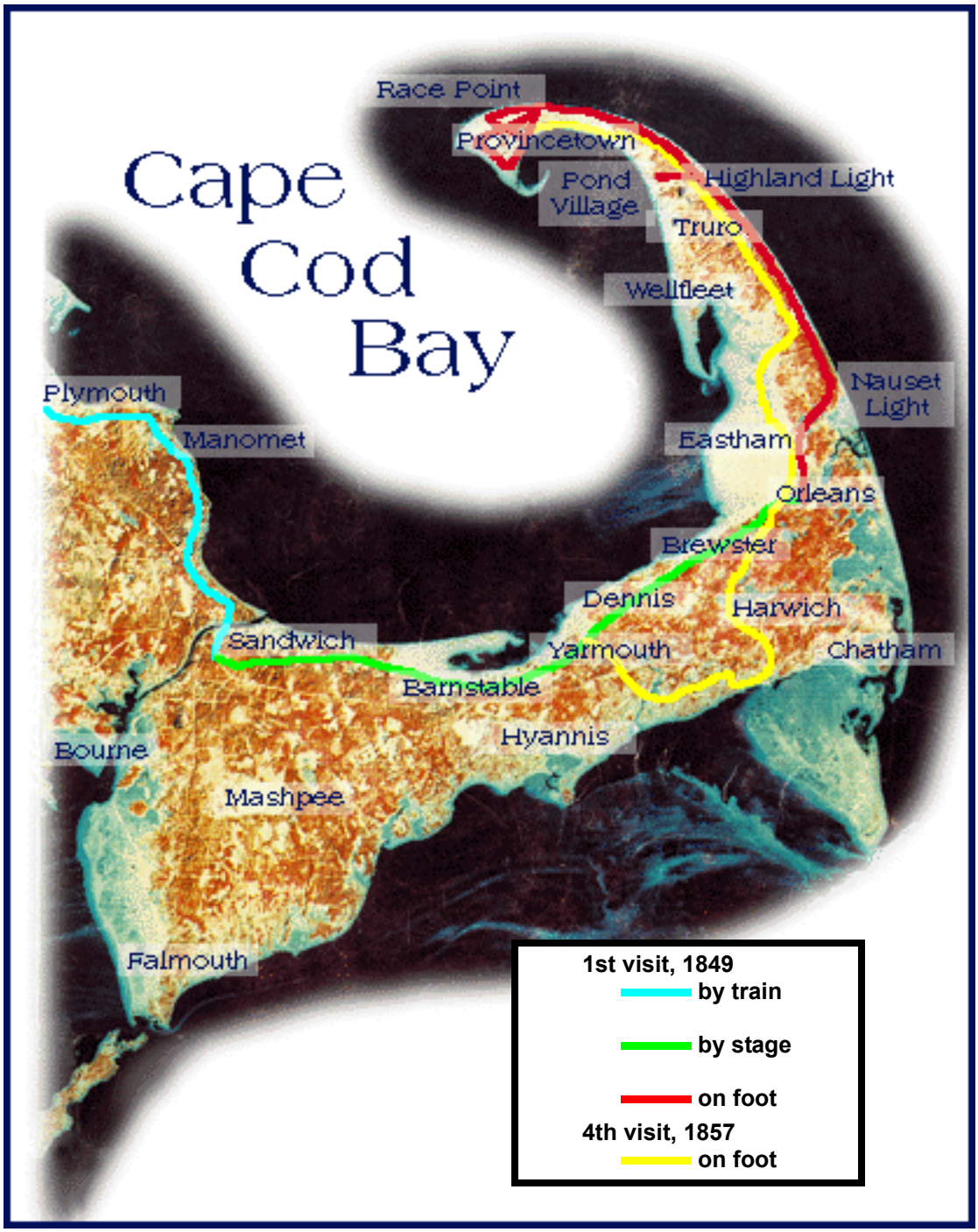
At a distance in the meadow I hear still at long intervals the hurried commencement of the bobolink's strain the bird just dashing into song –which is as suddenly checked as it were by the warder of the seasons –and the strain is left incomplete forever. Like human beings they are inspired to sing only for a short season.
That little roadside –pealike blossomed blue flower is interesting to me. The mulleins are just blossoming.
The voice of the crickets heard at noon from deep in the grass allies day to night– It is unaffected by sun & moon. It is a mid-night sound heard at noon –a midday sound heard at mid night.
I observed some mulleins growing on the western slope of the sandy railroad embankment –in as warm a place as can easily be found –where the heat was reflected from the sand oppressively at 3 o clock P M this hot day– Yet the green & living leaves felt rather cool than other-wise to the hand –but the dead ones at the root were quite warm. The living plant thus preserves a cool temperature in the hottest exposure. as if it kept a cellar below from which cooling liquors were drawn up.
Yarrow is now in full bloom. & elder –and a small many-head white daisy like a small white weed. The epilobium too is out.
The night warbler sings the same strain at noon. The song-sparrow still occasionally reminds me of spring.
I observe that the high water in the ponds –which have been rising for a year –has killed most of the pitch pines & alders which it had planted & merely watered at its edge during the years of dryness– But now it comes to undo its own work.
How aweful is the least unquestionable meanness –when we cannot deny that we have been guilty of it– There seems to be no bounds to our unworthiness

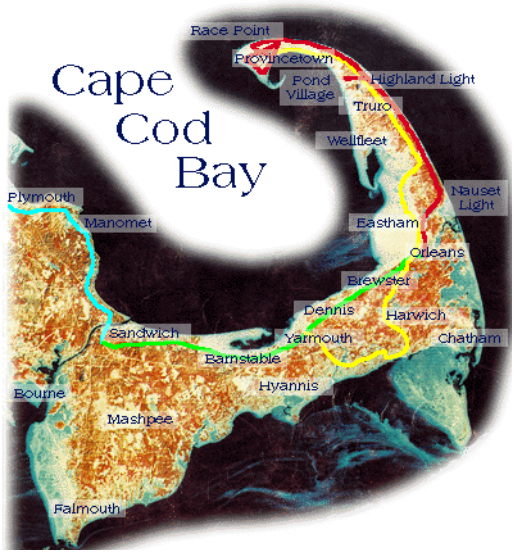
July 25, Friday-August 1: During this period, soon after the “Wild/Walking” lectures, Henry Thoreau went on an excursion by getting aboard a 7AM train to Boston, then catching the 9AM boat to Hull, then on foot via Nantasket, Cohasset, Duxbury, Scituate MA, and Marshfield to Plymouth along the Massachusetts “South Shore,” where he visited his friends Benjamin Marston Watson and Mary Russell Watson, and returned home via Boston.

CAPE COD



It would appear that this was traced by Thoreau himself.


Cape Cod Bay
Race Point
Provincetown
Pond Village
Highland Light
Truro
Wellfleet
Nauset Light
Eastham
Orleans
Brewster
Dennis
Harwich
Chatham
Yarmouth
Barnstable
Hyannis
Sandwich
Plymouth
Manomet
Bourne
Mashpee
Falmouth
1st visit, 1849
by train
by stage
on foot
4th visit, 1857
on foot



1st visit, 1849

by train

by stage

on foot

4th visit, 1857

on foot

View Cornell University Library's webpage of an 1869 history of this Cape Cod town by Frederick Freeman:

http://historical.library.cornell.edu/cgi-bin/cul.cdl/docviewer?did=cdl447&view=50&frames=0&seq=17

Note that he initially stopped at Cohasset in order to visit Mrs. Ellen Sewall Osgood and her husband, the Reverend Osgood, and also called at Ellen's parents' home in Scituate. Note also that while attempting to wade out to Clark's Island in Plymouth Harbor he almost drowned, but made no comment on this in his JOURNAL.[8]

TIMELINE OF ACCIDENTS

The owner and inhabitant of the island, Edward Winslow "Uncle Ned" Watson, was an original well worth one's attention: a poet, a sea farmer, a sailer and philosopher whom everyone knew as "Uncle Ned,"[9] who had inherited the island from remote ancestors. Thoreau had become impatient while waiting for conveyance to the island, had misjudged the distance and the changing tides, and had tried to wade across mud flats to the island. He got caught in the rip tide and was saved by one Sam Burgess who happened by in a small lobster-pot boat. Some people saw and recorded this incident, or we would not know of it.[10] It was just after this incident, in which Thoreau almost "became a dead poet at last," that an infamous exchange in regard to

8. He also made no allusion to the fact that the island had been used as a detention facility for Native Americans. Was Thoreau aware that he was walking on the site of a former concentration camp, exactly as if he had been walking on Deer Island in Boston Harbor where the Praying Indians of the Concord region had been held during "King Philip's War"?
9. As opposed to "Uncle Bill" Watson, who lived in a schooner.
10. See page 53 of Geller, Lawrence D. BETWEEN CONCORD AND PLYMOUTH: THE TRANSCENDENTALISTS AND THE WATSONS (Concord MA: Thoreau Lyceum, 1973).

the hound/horse/turtledove parable of WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS occurred.

> WALDEN: In any weather, at any hour of the day or night, I have been anxious to improve the nick of time, and notch it on my stick too; to stand on the meeting of two eternities, the past and future, which is precisely the present moment; to toe that line. You will pardon some obscurities, for there are more secrets in my trade than in most men's, and yet not voluntarily kept, but inseparable from its very nature. I would gladly tell all that I know about it, and never paint "No Admittance" on my gate.
>
> I long ago lost a hound, a bay horse, and a turtle-dove, and am still on their trail. Many are the travellers I have spoken concerning them, describing their tracks and what calls they answered to. I have met one or two who had heard the hound, and the tramp of the horse, and even seen the dove disappear behind a cloud, and they seemed as anxious to recover them as if they had lost them themselves.
>
> To anticipate, not the sunrise and the dawn merely, but, if possible, Nature herself! How many mornings, summer and winter, before yet any neighbor was stirring about his business, have I been about mine! No doubt many of my townsmen have met me returning from this enterprise, farmers starting for Boston in the twilight, or woodchoppers going to their work. It is true, I never assisted the sun materially in his rising, but, doubt not, it was of the last importance only to be present at it.

When questioned, Thoreau said only

> *"Well Sir, I suppose we have all had our losses,"*

and "Uncle Ned" Watson commented in return

> *"That's a pretty way to answer a fellow."*

Just after September 19, 1850 Thoreau had met a widow who had lost a child:

> *Those have met with losses, who have lost their children. I saw the widow this morning whose son was drowned.*

I think it interesting that

- this conversation occurred just after Thoreau had visited the woman to whom he had proposed marriage
- this conversation occurred just after Thoreau himself almost drowned
- this conversation occurred on the grounds of a former racial concentration camp where an entire group of people had had their losses

and I find it interesting also that **no commentator previous to me has brought those three intriguing factoids before the reading public**. Why not? Why not, indeed!

Perhaps Thoreau's reluctance to explain the parable he had propounded may be attributed to a defect which he perceived in the question which he was being asked, the defect of eagerness to substitute, for all the influence to be derived from cultivating such a symbolic allusion in one's mind, a specious preoccupation with a dismissable "meaning" for these symbols. After all, the agenda of the person who seeks to establish such "meaning" is ordinarily to thus dispose of the symbolic allusion and the preoccupation with it, not to distance oneself from such symbolic allusions but merely to move toward other mental preoccupations with other

symbolic allusions which may well be less than innocent:

> The gnostic is not one who, when making a symbolic allusion, finds God nearer to himself than his symbolic allusion. Rather, the gnostic is the one who, because of his self-extinction in His being and self-absorption in contemplating Him, has no symbolic allusion.

The WALDEN parable | The other analyses

Instead of this sort of careful analysis, what we have received from the Thoreau-watchers has been more on a level with the following supercilious material, which Waldo Emerson wrote into his journal in the July-October period of this year of 1851 so he would have something to use in Thoreau's funeral oration and then sell to the magazines — should the opportunity arise for him to deliver such a performance.

> *Henry Thoreau wants a little ambition in his mixture. Fault of this, instead of being the head of American Engineers, he is captain of a huckleberry party.*
>
> * * *
>
> *H.T. will not stick — he is not practically renovator. He is a boy, & will be an old boy. Pounding beans is good to the end of pounding Empires, but not, if at the end of years, it is only beans. I fancy it an inexcusable fault in him that he is insignificant here in the town. He speaks at Lyceum or other meting but somebody else speaks & his speech falls dead & is forgotten. He rails at the town doings & ought to correct & inspire them.* [After a period of speaking of other topics, such as the genius of Shakspeare, which Emerson compares to the facility in calculating and memorizing of a super-smart schoolchild, he returned to the topic of Thoreau with:] *One chamber more, one cell more is opened in this* [Shakspeare's] *brain, than is opened in all the rest, & what majestic results. I admire Thoreau, too, with his powerful arithmetic, & his whole body co-working. He can pace sixteen rods more accurately than another man can measure it by tape.*

July 25, Friday: Started for Clark's Island at 7 A.M.
At 9 Am took the Hingham boat and was landed at Hull. There was a pleasure party on board, apparently boys & girls belonging to the South end going to Hingham. There was a large proportion of ill-dressed and ill-mannered boys –of Irish extraction– A sad sight to behold Little boys of 12 years prematurely old sucking cigars I felt that if I were their mothers I should whip them & send them to bed. Such children should be deallt with as for stealing or impurity. The opening of this valve for the safety of the city! Oh what a wretched resource! What right have parents to beget –to bring up & attempt to **educate** children in a city– I thought of infanticide among the orientals with complacency– I seemed to hear infant voices lisp – "give us a fair chance parents." There is no such squalidness in the country– You would have said that they must all have come from the house of correction and the farm-school –but such a company do the boys in Boston Streets make. The birds have more care for their young –where they place their nests– What are a city's charities –? She could be charitable perchance if she had a resting place without herself. A true culture is more possible to the savage than to the boy of average intellect born of average parents in a great city– I believe that they perish miserably. How can they be kept clean physically or morally? It is folly to attempt to educate children within a city –the first step must be to remove them out of it. It seemed a groping & helpless philanthropy – that I heard of.
I heard a boy telling the story of Nix's Mate to some girls as we passed that spot –how he said "If I am guilty this island will remain, but if I am innocent it will be washed away –& now it is all washed away" this was a

simple & strong expression of feeling suitable to the occasion by which he committed the evidence of his innocence to the dumb-isle– Such as the boy could appreciate –a proper sailors legend –and I was reminded that it is the illiterate and unimaginative class that seizes on & transmits the legends in which the more cultivated delight. No fastidious poet dwelling in Boston had tampered with it –no narrow poet –but broad mankind Sailors from all ports sailing by. They sitting on the deck were the literary academy that sat upon its periods.

On the beach at Hull, and afterwards all along the shore to Plymouth –I saw the Datura –the variety (red stemmed) methinks, which some call *Tatula* instead of *Stramonium*– I felt as if I was on the highway of the world at sight of this cosmopolite & veteran traveller– It told of commerce & sailors yarns without end. It grows luxuriantly in sand & gravel. This Capt. Cook among plants– This norse man or sea pirate –Vikingrs King of the bays –the beaches. It is not an innocent plant– It suggests commerce with its attendant vices.

Saw a public House where I landed at Hull made like some barns which I have seen of boards with a cleet nailed over the cracks, without clapboards or paint– Evidently very simple & cheap –yet neat & convenient as well as airy. It interested me –as the New House at Long Island did not –as it brought the luxury & comfort of the sea shore within reach of the less wealthy– It was such an exhibition of good sense as I was not prepared for and do not remember to have seen before. Ascended to the top of the hill where is the old French Fort with the well said to be 90 feet deep now covered. I saw some horses standing on the very top of the ramparts the highest part of Hull, where there was hardly room to turn round –for the sake of the breeze. It was excessively warm, and their instincts –or their experience perchance guided them as surely to the summit as it did me. Here is the Telegraph 9 miles from Boston whose state House was just visible –moveable signs on a pole with holes in them for the passage of the wind. A man about the Telegraph Station thought it the highest point in the harbor –said they could tell the kind of vessel 30 miles off –the no at mast head 10 or 12 miles –name on hull 6 or 7 miles. They can see furthest in the fall. There is a mist summer and winter when the contrast bet. the temperature of the sea & the air is greatest. I did not see why this Hill should not be fortified as well as George's Island, it being higher & also commanding the main channel– However an enemy could go by all the forts in the dark –as Wolfe did at Quebec They are bungling contrivances.

Here the bank is rapidly washing away –on every side in Boston Harbor– The evidences of the wasting away of the islands are so obvious and striking that they appear to be wasting faster than they are– You will sometimes see a springing hill showing by the interrupted arch of its surface against the sky how much space must have occupied where there is now water as at Pt Allerton –what Botanists call premorse

Hull looks as if it had been two islands since connected by a beach– I was struck by the gracefully curving & fantastic shore of a small island (Hog I.) inside of Hull – where every thing seemed to be gently lapsing into futurity

as if the inhabitants should bear a ripple for device on their coat of arms

–a wave passing over them with the Datura growing on their shores– The wrecks of isles fancifully arranged into a new shore. To see the sea nibbling thus voraciously at the continents.– A man at the Telegraph told me of a White oak pole $1\frac{1}{2}$ ft in diam. 40 feet high & 4 feet or more in the rock at Minots ledge with 4 guys –which stoood only one year – – Stone piled up cob fashion near same place stood 8 years.

Hull pretty good land but bare of trees only a few cherries for the most part & mostly uncultivated being owned by few. I heard the voices of men shouting aboard a vessel half a mile from the shore which sounded as if they were in a barn in the country –they being between the sails. It was not a sea sound. It was a purely rural sound. Man needs to know but little more than a lobster in order to catch him in his traps. Here were many lobster traps on the shore. The beds of dry seaweed or eel grass on the beach reminds me of narrow shavings On the farther hill in Hull I saw a field full of Canada thistles close up to the fences on all sides while beyond them there was none So much for these fields having been subjected to diff. culture. So a diff. culture in the case of men brings in diff. weeds. Weeds come in with the seeds –though perhaps much more in the manure. Each kind of culture will introduce its own weeds.

I am bothered to walk with those who wish to keep step with me. It is not necessary to keep step with your

companion as some endeavor to do.

DIFFERENT DRUMMER

They told me at Hull that they burned the **stem** of the kelp chiefly for potash– Chemistry is not a splitting hairs when you have got half a dozen raw Irishmen in the laboratory.
As I walked on the beach (Nantasket) panting with thirst a man pointed to a white spot on the side of a distant hill (Strawberry Hill he called it) which rose from the gravelly beach, and said that there was a pure and cold and unfailing spring –and I could not help admiring that in this town of Hull of which I had heard but now for the first time saw a single spring should appear to me and should be of so much value. I found Hull indeed but there was also a spring on that parched unsheltered shore –the spring, though I did not visit it, made the deepest impression on my mind. Hull the place of the spring & of the well. This is what the traveller would remember. All that he remembered of Rome was a spring on the Capitoline Hill!

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rocks and the perfectly clean & rich looking rockweed –greatly enhance the pleasure of bathing here– It is the most perfect sea shore I have seen. The rockweed falls over you like the *tresses* of mermaids –& you see the propriety of that epithet– You cannot swim among these weeds and pull yourself up by them without thinking of mermen & mermaids. I found the

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water & fresh if you taste high enough up are all convenient to bathe your extremities in.– The barnacles on the rocks which make a whitish strip a few feet in width just above the weeds remind me of some vegetable growth which I have seen –surrounded by a circle of Calyx-like or petal-like shells like some buds or seed vessels. They too clinging to the rocks like the weeds. Lying along the seams of the rock like buttons on a waistcoat.
I saw in Cohasset –separated from the sea only by a narrow beach a very large & handsome but shallow lake, of at least 400 acres –with five rockly islets in it –which the sea had tossed over the beach in the great storm in the spring and after the alewives had passed in to it –stopped up its outlet and now the alewives were dying by thousands –& the inhabitants apprehended a pestilence as the water evaporated. The water was very foul.
The rockweed is considered the best for manure. I saw them drying the Irish moss in quantities at Jerusalem village in Cohasset– It is said to be used for sizing calico. Finding myself on the edge of a thunder storm I stopped a few moments at the Rock House in Cohasset close to the shore. There was scarcely rain enough to wet one & no wind. I was therefore surprised to hear afterward through a young man who had just returned from Liverpool that there was a severe squawl at Quarantine ground only 7 or 8 miles north-west of me such as he had not experienced for 3 years –which sunke several boats & caused some vessels to drag their anchors & come near going ashore.– Proving that the gust which struck the water there must have been of very limited breadth for I was or might have been overlooking the spot & felt no wind. This Rocky shore is called Pleasant cove on large maps –on the map of Cohasset alone the name seems to be confined to the cove where I first saw the wreck of the St John alone.
Brush island opposite this with a hut on it –not permanently inhabited– It takes but little soil to tempt men to inhabit such places. I saw here the Am. Holly *Ilex Opaca* which is not found further north than Mass. but S & west– The yellow gerardia in the woods.

CAPE COD: I heard a boy telling the story of Nix's mate to some girls as we passed that spot. That was the name of a sailor hung there, he said. — "If I am guilty, this island will remain; but if I am innocent, it will be washed away," and now it is all washed away!

 August 5, Tuesday: 7 1/2 P.M. Moon half full.[11]

I sit beside Hubbards grove.– a few level red bars above the horizon –a dark irregular bank beneath –with a streak of read sky below on the horizon's edge. This will describe many a sunset. It is 8 o clock –the farmer has driven in his cows & is cutting an arm full of green corn fodder for them. Another is still patching the roof of his barn making his hammer heard afar in the twilight as if –he took a satisfaction in his elevated work – sitting astride the ridge –which he wished to prolong. The robin [**American Robin** ***Turdus migratorius***] utters a sort of cackling note as if he had learned the ways of man. The air is still– I hear the voices of loud talking boys in the early twilight it must be a mile off. The swallows go over with a watery twittering.

When the moon is on the increase & half full it is already in mid heavens at sunset –so that there is no marked twilight intervening– I hear the whipporwill [**Whip-Poor-Will** ***Caprimulgus Vociferus***] at a distance –but they are few of late

It is almost dark. I hear the voices of berry-pickers coming homeward from Bear garden.[12] Why do they go home, as it were defeated by the approaching night? Did it never occur to them to stay over night? The wind now rising from over Bear Garden Hill falls gently on my ear & delivers its message the same that I have heard passing over bare & stoney mt tops– So uncontaminated & untamed is the wind. The air that has swept over caucasus & the sands of Arabia comes to breathe on New England fields. The dogs bark they are not as much stiller as man. They are on the alert suspecting the approach of foes. The darkness perchance affects them – makes them mad & wild– The mosquitoes hum about me. I distinguish the modest moon light on my paper As the twilight deepens and the moonlight is more & more bright –I begin to distinguish myself who I am & where –as my walls contract I become more collected & composed & sensible of my own existence –as when a lamp is brought into a dark apartment & I see who the company are. With the coolness & the mild silvery light I recover some sanity –my thoughts are more distinct moderated & tempered– Reflection is more possible while the day goes by. The intense light of the sun unfits me for meditation makes me wander in my thought – my life is too diffuse & dissipated –routine succeeds & prevails over us –the trivial has greater power then & most at noon day the most trivial hour of the 24. I am sobered by the moon light– I bethink myself– It is like a cup of cold water to a thirsty man. The moonlight is more favorable to meditation than sun-light.

DOG

The sun lights this world from with out shines in at a window –but the moon is like a lamp within an apartment. It shines for us. The stars themselves make a more visible & hence a nearer & more domestic roof at night– Nature broods us –and has not left our germs of thought to be hatched by the sun.

We feel her heat & see her body darkening over us. Our thoughts are not dissipated but come back to us like an echo.

The different kinds of moonlight are infinite. This is not a night for contrasts of light & shade –but a faint diffused light in which there is light enough to travel and that is all

A road (the Corner road) that passes over the Height of land –between earth & heaven –separating those streams which flow earthward from those which flow heavenward–

Ah what a poor dry compilation is the Annual of Scientific Discovery. I trust that observations are made during the year which are not chronicled there. That some mortal may have caught a glimpse of Nature in some corner of the earth during the year –1851. One sentence of Perennial poetry would make me forget –would atone for volumes of mere science. The astronomer is as blind to the significant phenomena –or the significance of phenomena as the wood-sawyer who wears glasses to defend his eyes from sawdust– The question is not what you look at –but how you look & whether you see.

I hear now from Bear Garden Hill– I rarely walk by moonlight without hearing the sound of a flute or a horn or a human voice– It is a performer I never see by day –should not recognise him if pointed out –but you may hear his performance in every horizon– He plays but one strain and goes to bed early –but I know by the character of that single strain that he is deeply dissatisfied with the manner in which he spends his day. He is a slave who is purchasing his freedom. He is apollo watching the flocks of Admetus on every hill –& this strain he plays every evening to remind him of his heavenly descent– It is all that saves him –his one redeeming trait– It is a reminiscence –he loves to remember his youth– He is sprung of a noble family– He is highly related I have no doubt –was tenderly nurtured in his infancy.– poor hind as he is –that noble strain he utters instead of any jewel on his finger or prescious locket pasted to his breast –or purple garments that came with him– The elements recognize him & echo his strain– Ah the dogs know him their master –though lords & ladies – rich men & learned know him not– He is the son of a rich man –of a famous man who served his country well –he has heard his sire's stories– I thought of the time when he would discover his parentage –obtain his

DOG

11. Actually, it had been half full on the night of the 3rd.

12.In recent years Bear Garden Hill has been proposed for a condo complex, to accompany the office development proposed for Brister's Hill.

inheritance –& sing a strain suited to the morning hour. He cherishes hopes.
The distant lamps in the farm house look like fires. The trees & clouds are seen at a distance reflected in the river as by day. I see Fair Haven Pond from the Cliffs –as it were through a slight mist –it is the wildest scenery imaginable –a Lake of the woods I just remembered the wildness of St Anne's –that's the ultima Thule of wildness to me. I never see the man by day who plays that claironet.
What an entertainment for the traveller –this incessant motion apparently of the moon traversing the clouds – whether you sit or stand it is always preparing new developments for you– It is event enough for simple minds. You all alone the moon all alone overcoming with incessant victory whole squadrons of clouds above the forests & the lakes & rivers & the mountains– You cannot always calculate which one the moon will undertake next.
I see a solitary firefly over the woods.
The moon wading through clouds –though she is eclipsed by this one I see her shining on a more distant but lower one. The entrance into Hubbards wood above the spring coming from the hill is like the entrance to a cave but when you are within –there are some streaks of light on the edge of the path.
All these leaves so still none whispering no birds in motion– how can I be else than still & thoughtful?

August 18, Monday: Henry Thoreau was reading about Canada in George Warburton's HOCHELAGA; OR, ENGLAND IN THE NEW WORLD.... (two volumes republished as one in New-York by Wiley & Putnam in 1845), which reading maybe would become his source for material he would insert into his "Quebec and Montmorenci" section of AN EXCURSION TO CANADA (Huntington HM 949).

> At mid-afternoon we made haste down *Sault au Matelot* Street towards the Falls of Montmorenci, about eight miles down the St. Lawrence on the north side, leaving the further examination of Quebec till our return. On our way we saw men in the streets sawing logs pit-fashion, and afterward with a common wood-saw and horse cutting the planks into squares for paving the streets. This looked very shiftless, especially in a country abounding in Water-power, and reminded me that I was no longer in Yankee land. I found on inquiry that the excuse for this was, that labor was so cheap, and I thought with some pain, – how cheap men are here! I have since learned that the English traveller Warburton, remarked soon after landing at Quebec, that every thing was cheap there but men. That must be the difference between going thither from New and from Old England. I had already observed the dogs harnessed to their little milk-carts, which contain a single large can, lying asleep in the gutters, regardless of the horses, while they rested from their labors, at different stages of the ascent in the Upper Town. I was surprised at the regular and extensive use made of these animals for drawing, not only milk, but groceries, wood, &c. It reminded me that the dog commonly is not put to any use. Cats catch mice; but dogs only worry the cats. Kalm, a hundred years ago, saw sledges here for ladies to ride in drawn by a pair of dogs. He says, "A middle-sized dog is sufficient to draw a single person when the roads are good," and he was told by old people that horses were very scarce in their youth, and almost all the land carriage was then effected by dogs. They made me think of the Esquimaux, who, in fact, are the next people on the north. Charlevoix says that the first horses were introduced in 1665.

DOG

READ WARBURTON TEXT

TIMELINE OF CANADA


August 18, Monday: It plainly makes men sad to think. Hence pensiveness is akin to sadness.

DOG

Some dogs I have noticed have a propensity to worry cows –they go off by themselves to distant pastures & ever and anon like four legged devils they worry the cows –full of the devil. They are so full of the devil they know not what to do. I come to interfere between the cows & their tormentors. Ah I grieve to see the devils escape so easily by their swift limbs imps of mischief– They are the dog state of those boys who pull down hand bills in the streets. Their next migration perchance will be into such dogs as these –ignoble fate. The dog whose office it should be to guard the herd turned its tormentor. Some courageous cow endeavoring in vain to toss the nimble devil.

Those soldiers in the Champ de Mars at Montreal convinced me that I had arrived in a foreign country under a different government –where many are under the control of one. Such perfect drill could never be in a republic Yet it had the effect on us as when the keeper shows his animals claws– It was the English leopard showing his claws. The Royal something or other– I have no doubt that soldiers well drilled as a class are peculiarly destitute of originality & independence. The men were dressed above their condition had the bearing of gentlemen without a corresponding intellectual culture.

The Irish was a familiar element –but the Scotch a novel one –the St Andrew's Church was prominent – & sometimes I was reminded of Edinburg –indeed much more than of London–

Warburton remarked soon after landing at Quebec –that Everything was cheap in that country but men– My thought when observing how the wooden pavements were sawed by hand in the streets instead of by machinery because labor was cheap – – how cheap men are here.

It is evident that a private man is not worth so much in Canada as in the U. S. & if that is the bulk of a man's property i.e. the being private & peculiar he had better stay here– An Englishman methinks, not to speak of other nations –habitually regards himself merely as a constituent part of the English nation –he holds a recognized place as such –he is a member of the Royal regiment of Englishmen. & he is proud of his nation– But an American cares very little about such & greater of freedom & independence are possible to him. He is nearer to the primitive condition of man– Government lets him alone & he lets government alone.

I often thought of the tories & refugees who settled in Canada at the revolution– These English were to a considerable extent their descendants–

Quebec began to be fortified in a more regular manner in 1690

The most modern fortifications have an air of antiquity about them –they have the aspect of ruins in better or worse repair –ruins kept in repair from the day they were built though they were completed yesterday –because they are not in a true sense the work of this age. I couple them with the dismantled spanish forts to be found in so many parts of the world –they carry me back to the middle ages –. & the siege of Jerusalem & St Jean D'acre –& the days of the Buccaniers Such works are not consistent with the development of the intellect. Huge stone structures of all kinds –both by their creation & their influence rather oppress the intellect than set it free A little thought will dismantle them as fast as they are built. They are a bungling contrivance– It is an institution as rotten as the church– The soldiers –the sentinel with his musket beside a man with his umbrella is spectral. There is not sufficient reason for his existence– My friend there with a bullet resting on half an ounce of powder –does he think that he needs that argument in conversing with me? Of what use this fortification to look at it from the soldiers point of view– General Wolfe sailed by it with impunity –& took the town of Quebec – without experiencing any hindrance from its fortifications. How often do we have to read that the enemy occupied a position which commanded the old. & so the post was evacuated.

How impossible it is to give that soldier a good education –without first making him virtually a deserter.

It is as if I were to come to a country Village surrounded with palisadoes in the old Indian style –interesting as a relic of antiquity & barbarism. A fortified town is a man cased in the heavy armor of antiquity & a horse load of broad swords & small arms slung to him. endeavoring to go about his business.

The idea seemed to be that sometime the inhabitants of Canada might wish to govern themselves and this was to hinder– But the inhabitants of California succeed well without any such establishment. There would be the same sense in a man's wearing a breast plate all his days for fear somebody should fire a bullet at his vitals. The English in Canada –seem to be everywhere prepared & preparing for war in the U S they are prepared for anything –they may even be the aggressors–

This is a ruin kept in a remarkably good repair –there are some 800 or 1000 men there to exhibit it. One regiment goes bare-legged to increase the attraction– If you wish to study the muscles of the legs about the knee repair to Quebec.

September 4: 8 A M. A clear & Pleasant day after the rain. Start for Boons Pond in Stow with C. Every sight & sound was the more interesting for the clear atmosphere. When you are starting away –leaving your more familiar fields for a little adventure like a walk –you look at every object with a travellers or at least with historical eyes –you pause on the first bridge.– where an ordinary walk hardly commences, & begin to observe & moralize like a traveller– It is worthe the while to see your native Village thus sometimes –as if you were a traveller passing through it –commenting on your neighbors as strangers.

We stood thus on woods bridge the first bridge in the capacity of Pilgrims & strangers to its familiarity, giving it one more chance with us – though our townsmen who passed may not have perceived it.
There was a pretty good sized pickerel poised over the sandy bottom close to the shore–& motionless as a shadow– It is wonderful how they resist the slight current of our river. & remain thus stationary for hours. He no doubt saw us plainly on the bridge. In the sunny water –his whole form distinct & his shadow– motionless as the steel trap which does not spring till the fox's foot has touched it.
John Hosmer's dog sprang up, ran out, & growled at us – and in his eye I seemed to see the eye of his master. I have no doubt but that as is the master such in course of time tend to become his herds & flocks as well as dogs– One man's oxen will be clever & solid –anothers mischievous –another's mangy –in each case like their respective owners. No doubt man impresses his own character on the beasts which he tames & employs – they are not only humanized –but they acquire his particular human nature. How much oxen are like farmers generally, and cows like farmers' wives! and young steers & heifers like farmers boys & girls! The farmer acts on the ox & the ox reacts on the farmer– They do not meet half way it is true –but they do meet at a distance from the centre of each– proportionate to each ones intellectual power. The farmer is oxlike in his thought in his walk– in his strength, in his trustworthiness – in his taste.

DOG

Hosmers man was cutting his millet – & his buckwheat already lay in **red** piles in the field.
The first picture we noticed was where the road turned among the pitch pines & showed the Hadley house with the high wooded hill behind with dew & sun on it –the gracefully winding road path –& a more distant horizon on the right of the house
Just beyond on the left it was pleasant walking where the road was shaded by a high hill – as it can be only in the morning. Even in the morning that additional coolness & early dawn like feeling of a more sacred and earlier season are agreeable.
The lane in front of Tarbel's house which is but little worne & appears to lead no where though it has so wide & all ingulfing an opening –suggested– that such things might be contrived for effect in laying out grounds– (Only those things are sure to have the greatest & best effect, which like this were not contrived for the sake of effect). An opened path which would suggest walking & adventuring on it –t he going to some place strange & far away. It would make you think of or imagine distant places & spaces greater than the estate.
It was pleasant looking back just beyond – to see a heavy shadow (made by some high birches) reaching quite across the road. Light & shadow are sufficient contrast & furnish sufficient excitement when we are well.
Now we were passing the vale of Brown & Tarbel –a sunshiney mead pastured by cattle –& sparkling with dew –the sound of crows **[American Crow** ***Corvus brachyrhynchos*****]** and swallows heard in the air –and leafy columned elms seen here & there. shining with dew The morning freshness & unworldliness of that domain! The vale of Tempe and of Arcadey is not farther off – than are the conscious lives of men from their opportunities– Our life is as far from answering to its scenery as we are distant from Tempe & arcadia. That is to say they are far away because we are far from living natural lives. How absurd it would be to insist on the vale of Tempe in particular – when we have such vales as we have.
In the Marlborough road in the woods I saw a purple streak like a stain on the red pine leaves & sand under my feet – which I was surprised to find was made by a dense mass of purple fleas – somewhat like snow fleas – a faint purple stain as if some purple dye had been spilt.
What is that slender pink flower that I find in the Marlborough road – smaller than a snap Dragon–?
The slender stems of grass which hang over the ruts & horses path in this little frequented road are so laden with dew that I am compelled to hold a bush before me to shake it off.
The jays **[Blue Jay** ***Cyanocitta cristata*****]** scream on the right & left–& are seen flying further off as we go by.
We drink in the meadow at 2nd Division Brook – then sit awhile to watch its yellowish pebbles & the cress? in it & other weeds The ripples cover its surface like a network & are faithfully reflected on the bottom. In some places the sun reflected from ripples on a flat stone looks like a golden comb– The whole brook seems as busy as a loom –it is a woof & warp of ripples –fairy fingers are throwing the shuttle at every step –& the long waving brook is the fine product. The water is wonderfully clear.
To have a hut here & a foot path to the brook. For roads I think that a poet cannot tolerate more than a foot-path through the fields– That is wide enough & for purposes of winged poesy suffices. It is not for the muse to speak of cart-paths. I would fain travel by a foot-path round the world. I do not ask the railroads of commerce – not even the cartpaths of the farmer. Pray what other path would you have than a foot-path?– what else should wear a path? This is the track of man alone – what more suggestive to the pensive walker? One walks in a wheel track with less emotion –he is at a greater distance from man –but this footpath –was perchance worne by the bare feet of human beings & he cannot but think with interest of them. The grapes though their leaves are withering and falling are yet too sour to eat.
In the summer we lay up a stock of experiences for the winter. as the squirrel of nuts. Something for conversation in winter evenings. I love to think then of the more distant walks I took in summer.

CHARCOAL

At the Powder mills – the carbonic acid gass in the road from the building where they were making charcoal made us cough for 20 or 30 rods
Saw some grey squirrels whirling their cylinder by the roadside. How fitted that cylinder to this animals–

A squirrel is easily taught to turn his cylinder – might be a saying frequently applicable. And as they turned one leaped over or dodged under another most gracefully & unexpectedly with interweaving motions– It was the circus & menagerie combined– So human they were – exhibiting themselves.
In the marlboro Road, I forgot to say we brushed the Polygonum articulatum with its spikes of reddish white flowers a slender & tender plant which loves the middle of dry & sandy not much travelled roads– To find that the very atoms bloom – that there are flowers we rudely brush against which only the microscope reveals!!
It is wise to write on many subjects to try many themes that so you may find the right & inspiring one. Be greedy of occasions to express your thought. Improve the opportunity to draw analogies. There are innumerable avenues to a perception of the truth. Improve the suggestion of each object however humble –however slight & transient the provocation –what else is there to be improved? Who knows what opportunities he may neglect. It is not in vain that the mind turns aside this way or that. Follow its leading – apply it whither it inclines to go. Probe the universe in a myriad points. Be avaricious of these impulses. You must try a thousand themes before you find the right one – as nature makes a thousand acorns to get one oak. He is a wise man & experienced who has taken many views– To whom stones & plants & animals and a myriad objects have each suggested something – contributed something.
And now methinks this wider wood-path is not bad – for it admits of society more conveniently– 2 can walk side by side in it in the ruts aye and one more in the horse track– The Indian walked in single file more solitary – not side by side chatting as he went. The woodman's cart & sled make just the path two walkers want through the wood. by 2nd Div. Brook
Beyond the Powder Mills we watched some fat oxen –elephantine– behemoths –one Rufus Hosmer eyed with the long lash & projecting eye-ball
Now past the Paper mills – by the westernmost road east of the river – the first new ground w'eve reached.
Not only the Prunella turns **lake** but the hypericum virginicum in the hollows by the road side – a handsome blush. A part of the autumnal tints. ripe leaves Leaves acquire red blood. Red colors touch our blood, & excite us as well as cows & geese.
And now we leave the road & go through the woods & swamps toward Boon's pond – crossing two or three roads & by Potter's House in Stow. still on East of river. The fruit of the Pyrola rotundifolia in The damp woods. Larch trees in stow about the houses. Beyond Potters we struck in to the extensive wooded plain where the ponds are found in Stow – sudbury & Marlboro. Part of it called Boon's Plain– Boon said to have lived on or under Baileys Hill at west of pond– Killed by Indians between Boon & Whites Pond as he was driving his oxcart– The oxen ran off to Marlboro Garrison house. His remains have been searched for. A sandy plain a large level tract. The pond shores handsome enough – but water shallow & muddy looking. Well wooded shores. The maples begin to show red about it– Much fished– Saw a load of sunflowers in a farmers Such is the destiny of this large coarse flower the farmers gather it like pumpkins
Returned by RR.–down the Assabet. A potatoe field yellow with wild radish– But no good place to bathe for 3 miles– Knights new dam has so raised the river. A permanent freshet as it were– he fluviatile trees standing dead for fish hawk **[Osprey** ***Pandion haliaetus*****]** perches & the water stagnant for weeds to grow in–
You have only to dam up a running stream –to give it the aspect of a dead stream –& to some degree restore its primitive wild appearance. Tracts made inaccessible to man & at the same time more fertile. Some speculator comes & dams up the stream flow & low the water stands over all meadows making impassible morasses & dead trees for fish hawks a wild stagnant fenny country – the last gasp of wildness before it yields to the civilization of the factory. To cheer the eyes of the factory people & educate them. It makes a little wilderness above the factories.
The woodbine now begins to hang red about the maples & other trees.
As I look back up the stream from the near the bridge (I suppose on the road from Potters' house to stow) I on the RR. I saw the ripples sparkling in the sun – reminding me of the sparkling icy fleets which I saw last winter – and I saw how one corresponded to the other – ice waves to water ones – the erect ice flakes were the waves stereotyped. It was the same sight – the reflection of the sun sparkling from a myriad slanting surfaces at a distance – a rippled water surface or a crystalized frozen one.

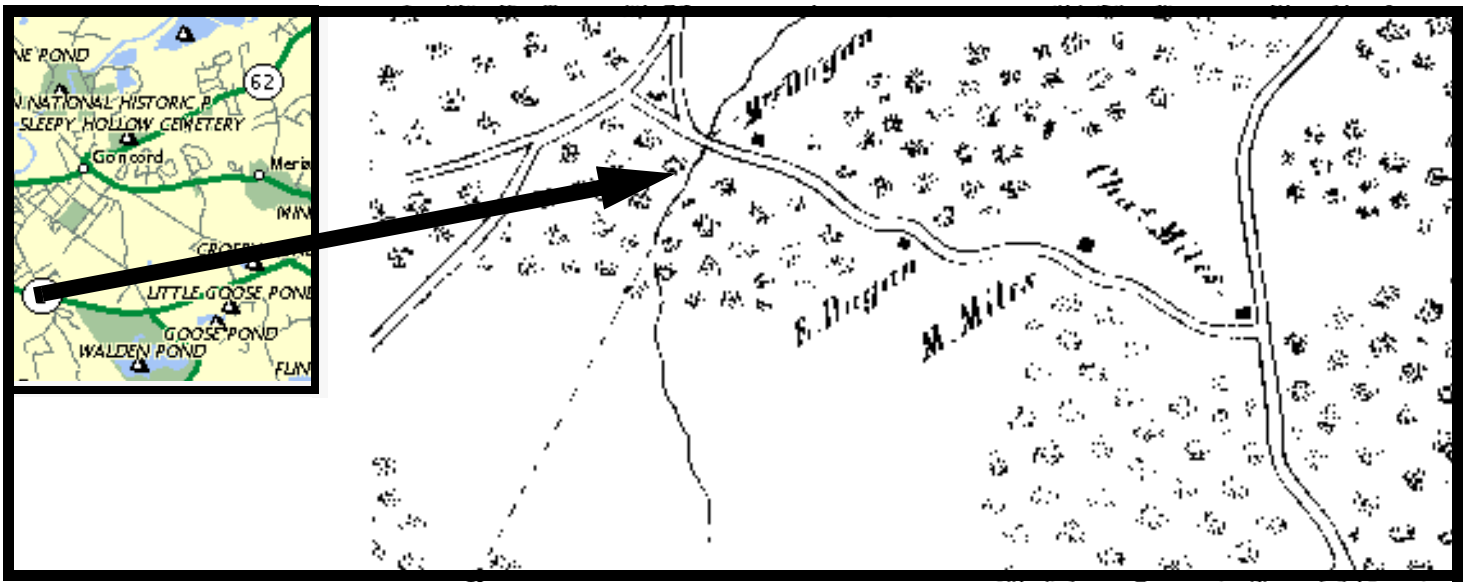
Here crossed the river & climbed the high hills on the west side. The walnut trees conformed in their branches to the slope of the hill – being just as high from the ground on the upper side as on the lower.
On all sides now I see & smell the withering leaves of brush that has been cut to clear the land– I see some blackened tracts which have been burnt over– It is remarkable, for it is rare to see the surface of the earth black. And in the horizon I can see the smokes of several fires. The farmers improve this season which is the dryest – their haying being done & their harvest not begun to do these jobs –burn brush –build walls –dig ditches cut turf. This is what I find them doing all over the country now – also topping corn & digging potatoes.
Saw quite a flock for the first time of Gold finches **[American Goldfinch** ***Carduleis tristis*****]**.
On the high round hills in the east & S E of Stow– Perchance they are called the Assabet Hills – rising directly from the river – they are the highest I know rising thus. The rounded hills of Stow. A hill & valley country. Very different from Concord.
It had been a warm day, especially warm to the head. I do not perspire as in the early summer – but am sensible

of the ripening heat – more as if by contact. Suddenly the wind changed to east & the atmosphere grew more & more hazy & thick on that side obstructing the view while it was yet clear in the west. I thought it was the result of the cooler air from over the sea – meeting & condensing the vapor in the warm air of the land– That was the haze or thin dry fog – which some call smoke.
It gradually moved westward & affected the prospect on that side somewhat. It was a very thin fog invading all the east. I felt the cool air air from the ocean & it was very refreshing I opened my bosom & my mouth to inhale it. very delicious & invigorating.
We sat on the top of those hills looking down on the new brick ice house.
Where there are several hills near together you can not determine at once which is the highest. whether the one you are on or the next. So when great men are assembled– each yields an uncertain respect to the other –as if it were not certain whose crown rose highest.
Under the nut trees on these hills the grass is short & green as if grazed close by cattle who had stood there for shade – making a distinct circular yard. Yet as there is no dung – & the form corresponds so closely to the tree– I doubt it that can be the cause.
On hill side N of river above Powder Mills the Pycnanthemum Incanum Mountain Mint (Calamint) & the Lespedeza violacea.
Saw what I thought a small red dog in the road – which cantered along over the bridge this side the Powder mills – & then turned into the woods. This decided me –this turning into the woods –that it was a fox. The dog of the woods The dog that is more at home in the woods than in the roads & fields. I do not often see a dog turning into the woods.

DOG

Some large white? oak acorns this side the last named bridge. A few oaks stand in the pastures still great ornaments. I do not see any young ones springing up to supply their places. Will there be any a hundred years hence. These are the remnants of the primitive wood methinks. We are a young people & have not learned by experience the consequence of cutting off the forest. One day they will be planted methinks. & nature reinstated to some extent.
I love to see the yellow knots & their lengthened stain on the dry unpainted Pitch-pine boards on barns & other buildings The Dugan house for instance– The indestructible yellow fat –it fats my eyes to see it –worthy for art to imitate.– telling of branches in the forest once.

JENNY DUGAN
GEORGE DUGAN



October 5, Sunday: I noticed on Friday Oct 3d that the Willows generally were green & unchanged
The red-maples varied from green through yellow to bright red.
The black-cherry was green inclining to yellow
(I speak of such trees as I chanced to see) The apple trees green but shedding their leaves like most of the trees Elm a dingy yellow. White ash from green to dark purple or Mulberry White-oak green inclining to yellow Tupelo reddish yellow & red– Tree bushed about the head, limbs small & slanting downward.
Some maples when ripe are yellow or whitish yellow –others reddish yellow –others bright red –by the accident

of the season or position –the more or less light & sun –being on the edge or in the midst of the wood– Just as the fruits are more or less deeply colored.
Birches green & yellow. Swamp white oak a yellowish green– Black ash – greenish yellow & now sered by frost– Bass sered yellowish.
Color in the maturity of foliage is as variable & little characteristic as naturalists have found it to be for distinguishing fishes & quadrupeds &c.
Observed that the wood-chuck has two or more holes –a rod or two apart– One or the front door –where the excavated sand is heaped up– another not so easily discovered –very small round without any sand about it being that by which he emerged– smaller directly at the surface than beneath – on the principle by which a well is dug making as small a hole as possible at the surface to prevent caving. About these holes is now seen their manure apparently composed chiefly of the remains of crickets which are seen crawling over the sand.
Saw a very fat woodchuck on a wall – evidently prepared to go into winter quarters.
Still purplish asters – & late golden rods – & fragrant life everlasting – & purple gerardia – great Bidens &c &c
The Dogwood by the Corner road has lost every leaf – its bunches of dry greenish berries hanging straight down from the bare stout twigs as if their peduncles were broken. It has assumed its winter aspect. A Mithridatic look
The Prinos berries are quite red.
The panicled hawkweed is one of those yellowish spherical or hemispherical fuzzy seeded plants –which you see about the wood-paths & fields at present– which however only a strong wind can blow far.–
Saw by the path-side beyond the Conant Spring that singular jelly like sort of Mushroom –which I saw last spring while surveying Whites farm– now red globular ¾ inch in diameter, covering the coarse moss by the ruts on the path side with jelly-covered seeds(?)

2 P M to the high open land between Batemans' Pond & the lime kiln.
It is a still cloudy afternoon rather cool As I go past Cheney's Boathouse –the river looks lighter than the sky– The butternuts have shed nearly all their leaves, and their nuts are seen black against the sky. The White oaks are turned a reddish brown in some valleys. The Norway cinquefoil and a smaller cinquefoil are still in blossom & also the late buttercup My companion remarked that the land (for the most part consisting of decayed orchards – huckleberry pastures and forests) on both sides of the Old Carlisle road, uneven and undulating like the road appeared to be all in-motion like the traveller – travelling on with him. Found a wild russet apple very good – of peculiar form flattened at the poles. Some red maples have entirely lost their leaves– The black birch is straw colored.
The rocks in the high open pasture are peculiar & interesting to walk over – for though presenting broad & flat surfaces – the strata are perpendicular producing a grained & curled appeareance – this rocky crown like a hoary head covered with curly hair – or it is like walking over the edges of the leaves of a vast book. I wonder how these rocks were ever worn even thus smooth by the elements. The strata are remarkably serpentine or waving. It appears as if you were upon the axis of elevation geologically speaking. I do not remember any other pasture in Concord where the rocks are so remarkable for this.
What is that fleshy or knot-fleshy root which we found in the soil on the rocks by Bateman's pond – which looked so edible? All meadows and swamps have been remarkably dry this year & are still notwithstanding the few showers and rainy days. Witch hazel now in bloom I perceive the fragrance of ripe grapes in the air, and after a little search discover the ground covered with them where the frost has stripped the vines of leaves – still fresh & plump & perfectly ripe. The little conical burrs of the agrimony stick to my clothes. The pale lobelia still blooms freshly– The rough hawkweed – holds up its globes of yellowish fuzzy seeds as well as the panicled. The clouds have cleared away the sun come out & it is warmer & very pleasant. The declining sun falling on the willows &c below Mrs Ripleys & on the water –produces a rare soft light– such as I do not often see– a greenish yellow. The milk weed seeds are in the air. I see one in the river – which a minnow occasionally jostles. (stood near a small rabbit hardly half grown by the old carlisle road) I hear the red wing black-birds

[**Red-winged Blackbird** ***Agelaius phoeniceus***] by the river side again as if it were a new spring.

They appear to have come to bid farewell. The birds appear to depart with the coming of the frosts which kill the vegetation & directly or indirectly the insects on which they feed. The American bittern *Ardea Minor* **[American Bittern** ***Botaurus lentiginosus*****]** flew across the river trailing his legs in the water scared up by us– This according to Peabody is the boomer– [stake driver] In their sluggish flight they can hardly keep their legs up. Wonder if they can soar

8 Pm to Cliffs: Moon $^{3}/_{4}$ full.[13] The nights now are very still for there is hardly any noise of birds or of insects. The whipporwill **[Whip-Poor-Will** ***Caprimulgus Vociferus*****]** is not heard –nor the mosquito– only the occasional lisping of some sparrow. The moon gives not a creamy but white cold light – through which you can see far distinctly. About villages You hear the bark of dogs instead of the howl of wolves– When I descend into the valley by Wheelers grain field I find it quite cold. The sand slopes in the deep Cut gleam coldly as if covered with rime. As I go through the **Spring** woods I perceive a sweet dry scent from the underwoods like that of the fragrant life everlasting. I suppose it is that. To appreciate the moonlight you must stand in the shade & see where a few rods or a few feet distant it falls in between the trees. It is a "milder day" made for some inhabitants whom you do not see. The fairies are a quiet gentle folk invented plainly to inhabit the moonlight. I frequently see a light on the ground within thick & dark woods – where all around is in shadow & haste forward expecting to find some decayed & phosphorescent stump – but find it to be some clear moon light that falls in between some crevice in the leaves. As moonlight is to sunlight so are the fairies to men

DOG

Standing on the Cliffs no sound comes up from the woods. The earth has gradually turned more northward – the birds have fled south after the sun–& this impresses me as well by day or by night as a deserted country – there is a down-like mist over the river and pond – and there are no bright reflections of the moon or sheeniness from the pond in consequence – all the light being absorbed by the low fog.

October 9, Thursday: Heard 2 Screech owls in the night Boiled a quart of acorns for breakfast–but found them not so palateable as raw–having acquired a bitterish taste perchance from being boiled with the shells and skins, yet one would soon get accustomed to this.

DOG

The sound of fox-hounds in the woods heard now at 9 Am in the village–reminds me of mild winter mornings. 2 P M to Conantum In the maple woods the ground is strewn with new fallen leaves. I hear the green locust again on the alders of the causeway–but he is turned a straw color. The warm weather has revived them. All the acorns on the same tree are not equally sweet– They appear to dry sweet. From Conantum I see them getting hay from the meadow below the Cliffs. It must have been quite dry when cut. The black ash has lost its leaves & the white here is dry & brownish yellow–not having turned mulberry. I see half a dozen snakes in this walk green & striped (one very young striped one)–who appear to be out enjoying the sun. They appear to make the

13. The full moon would be on the night of the 8th.

most of the last warm days of the year. The hills & plain on the opposite side of the river is covered with deep warm red leaves of shrub-oaks– On Lee's hill-side by the pond the old leaves of some pitch pines are almost of a golden Yellow hue seen in the sun light–a rich autumnal look. The green are as it were set in the yellow. The witch hazel here is in full blossom–on this magical hill-side–while its broad yellow leaves are falling–some bushes are completely bare of leaves, and leather-colored they strew the ground. It is an extremely interesting plant–October & November's child–and yet reminds me of the very earliest spring– Its blossoms smell like the spring–like the willow catkins–by their color as well as fragrance they belong to the saffron dawn of the year.– Suggesting amid all these signs of Autumn–falling leaves & frost–that the life of nature–by which she eternally flourishes, is untouched. It stands here in the shadow on the side of the hill while the sun-light from over the top of the hill lights up its topmost sprays & yellow blossoms. Its spray so jointed and angular is not to be mistaken for any other. I lie on my back with joy under its boughs. While its leaves fall–its blossoms spring. The autumn then is in deed a spring. All the year is a spring. I see two blackbirds high over head going south, but I am going north in my thought with these hazel blossoms
It is a faery-place. This is a part of the immortality of the soul. When I was thinking that it bloomed too late for bees or other insects to extract honey from its flowers–that perchance they contained no honey–I saw a bee upon it. How important then to the bees this late blossoming plant.
The circling hawk steers himself through the air–like the skater–without a visible motion.
The hoary cinquefoil in blossom. A large sassafras tree behind Lee's 2 feet diam. at ground. As I return over the bridge I hear a song-sparrow [**Song Sparrow** ***Melospiza melodia***] singing on the willows exactly as in spring. I see a large sucker rise to the surface of the river. I hear the crickets singing loudly in the walls as they have not done (so loudly) for some weeks–while the sun is going down shorn of his rays by the haze.
There is a thick bed of leaves in the road under Hubbards elms.
This reminds me of Cato–as if the ancients made more use of nature–he says Stramenta si deerunt, frondem iligneam legito, eam substernito ovibus bubusque. If litter is wanting, gather the leaves of the holm oak and strew them under your sheep & oxen. In another place he says circum vias ulmos serito, et partim populos, uti frondem ovibus et bubus habeas. I suppose they were getting that dry meadow grass for litter. There is little or no use made by us of the leaves of trees–not even for beds–unless it be sometimes to rake them up in the woods & cast into hog-pens or compost heaps.
Cut a stout purple cane of poke weed.


October 12: Yesterday after noon saw by the brookside above Emerson's the dwarf primrose in blossom – the norway Cinquefoil – & fall dandelions which are now drying up. the houstonia – buttercups – small golden-rods & various asters more or less purplish. The seeds of the bidens – without florets or beggar ticks with 4 barbed awns like hay-hooks now adhere to your clothes – so that you are all bristling with them Certainly they adhere to nothing so readily as to woolen cloth, as if in the creation of them the invention of woolen clothing by man had been foreseen. How tenacious of its purpose to spread and plant its race– By all methods nature secures this end whether by the balloon or parachute or hook or barbed spear like this – or mere lightness which the winds can waft. What are those seeds big as skunk cabbage seeds amid leafless stalks like Pontederia in the brooks – now bending their stems ready to plant themselves at the bottom?
The swamp pink buds begin to show
Black birds & larks [**Eastern Meadowlark** ***Sturnella magna***] are about. And the Flicker or Yellow hammer [**Yellow-shafted Flicker** ***Colaptes auratus***] so beautifully spotted (in the hand) & the Goldfinches [**American Goldfinch** ***Carduleis tristis***]. I see a cow in the meadow with a new dropt calf by her side.
The anemone nemorosa in bloom & the Potentilla Sarmentosa or running cinquefoil which springs in April – now again springing.
I love very well this cloudy afternoon so sober – and favorable to reflection after so many bright ones – what if the clouds shut out the heavens provided they concentrate my thoughts and make a more celestial heaven below? I hear the crickets plainer – I wander less in my thoughts – am less dissipated.– am aware how shallow was the current of my thoughts before – deep streams are dark as if there were a cloud in their sky – shallow ones are bright & sparkling reflecting the sun from their bottoms– The very wind on my cheek seems more fraught with meaning.[14]
Many maples around the edges of the meadows are now quite bare like smoke
I seem to be more constantly merged in nature – my intellectual life is more obedient to nature than formerly – but perchance less obedient to Spirit– I have less memorable seasons. I exact less of myself. I am getting used to my meanness – getting to accept my low estate– O if I could be discontented with myself! If I could feel anguish at each descent!
The sweet fern is losing its leaves– I see where a field of oats has been cradled by the railroad – alternate white

& dark green stripes the width of a swathe running across the field– I find it arises from the stubble being bent a particular way by the cradle – as the cradler advanced – and accordingly reflecting the light but one way – and if I look over the field from the other side – the first swaths will be dark & the latter white.

GEORGE MINOTT

Minot shells all his corn by hand. He has got a box full ready for the mill. He will not winnow it for he says the chaff? makes it lie loose & dry faster. He tells me that Jacob Baker who raises as fair corn as anybody – gives all the corn of his own raising to his stock – & buys the flat yellow corn of the South for bread – & yet the northern corn is worth the most per bushel

Minot did not like this kind of farming any better than I– Baker also buys a great quantity of "Shorts" below for his cows – to make more milk.

EDMUND HOSMER

He remembers when a Prescott who lived where E. Hosmer does used to let his hogs run in the woods in the fall – and they grew quite fat on the acorns &c they found, but now there are few nuts & it is against the law.

He tells me of places in the woods which to his eyes are unchanged since he was a boy – as natural as life – he tells me then that in some respects he is still a boy. & yet the grey-squirrels were 10 then to 1 now. But for the most part he says the world is turned upside down.

TELEGRAPHY

P M To Cliffs: I hear Lincoln bell tolling for church At first I thought of the telegraph harp. Heard at a distance the sound of a bell acquires a certain vibratory hum, as it were from the air through which it passes – like a harp – All music is a harp music at length– As if the atmosphere were full of strings vibrating to this music. It is not the mere sound of the bell but the humming in the air that enchants me – just azure tint which much air or distance imparts delights the eye. It is not so much the object as the object clothed with an azure veil. All sound heard at a great distance thus tends to produce the same music – vibrating the strings of the universal lyre. There comes to me a melody which the air has strained.– which has conversed with every leaf and needle of the woods. It is by no means the sound of the bell as heard near at hand, and which at this distance I can plainly distinguish – but its vibrating echoes that portion of the sound which the elements take up and modulate. A sound which is very much much modified sifted and refined before it reaches my ear. The echo is to some extent an independent sound – and therein is the magic and charm of it. It is not merely a repetition of my voice – but it is in some measure the voice of the wood.

A cloudy misty day with rain more or less steady– This gentle rain is fast loosening the leaves– I see them

14. William M. White's version of the journal entry is:

I love very well this cloudy afternoon,
So sober and favorable to reflection
After so many bright ones.

What if the clouds shut out the heavens,
Provided they concentrate my thoughts
And make a more celestial heaven below!

I hear the crickets plainer;
I wander less in my thoughts,
Am less dissipated;
Am aware
How shallow was the current of my thoughts before.

Deep streams are dark,
As if there were a cloud in their sky;
Shallow ones are bright and sparkling,
Reflecting the sun from their bottoms.

The very wind on my cheek seems more fraught with meaning.

filling the air at the least puff – and it is also flattening down the layer which has already fallen. The pines on Fair Haven have shed nearly all their leaves– Butter & eggs still blooms – barrels of apples lie under the trees – The Smiths have carried their last load of peaches to market.
To day no part of the heavens is so clear & bright as Fair Haven Pond & the river. Though the air quite misty yet the island wood is distinctly reflected.
Ever & anon I see the mist thickening in the S– W– and concealing trees which were before seen, and revealing the direction and limits of the valleys – precursor of harder rain which soon passes again.
GEORGE MINOTT
Minot calls the stakes-driver belcher-squelcher – says he has seen them when making the noise– They go slug-toot, slug-toot, slug-toot.
Told me of his hunting grey squirrels with old Colnel Brooks's hound. How the latter came into the yard one day – & he spoke to him – patted him – went into the house took down his gun marked London – thought he would go a squirrel hunting. Went over among the ledges – away from Brooks's for Tige had a dreadful strong voice and could be heard as far as a cannon – & he was plaguey afraid Brooks would hear him. How tige treed them on the oaks on the plain below the cliffs. He could tell by his bark when he had treed one – he never told a lie. How tige told him from a distance that he had got one – but when he came up he could see nothing – but still he knew that Tige never told a lie – and at length he saw his head, in a crotch high up in the top of a very tall oak – and though he did'nt expect to get him – he knocked him over.
DOG


ELLERY CHANNING
October 15, Wednesday: $8^{1}/_{2}$ AM up the river in a boat to Pelham's Pond with W.E.C.
(But first a neighbor sent in a girl to inquire if I knew where worm-seed grew otherwise called "Jerusalem oak"– (so said the recipe which she brought cut out of a newspaper) for her mistress' hen had the "gapes"– But I answered that this was a southern plant & knew not where it was to be had. Referred her to the poultry book.– Also the next proprietor commenced stoning & settling down the stone for a new well–an operation which I wished to witness–purely beautiful–simple & necessary. The stones laid on a wheel–and continuually added to above as it is settled down by digging under the wheel.– Also Godwin with a partridge **[Ruffed Grouse *Bonasa umbellus*]** & a stout mess of large pickerel–applied to me to dispose of a mud turtle which he had found moving the mud in a ditch. Some men will be in the way to see such movements.)
The muskrat houses appear now for the most part to be finished– Some it is true are still rising– They line the river all the way. Some are as big as small hay cocks– The river is still quite low–though a foot or more higher than when I was last on it– There is quite a wind & the sky is full of flitting clouds–so that sky & water are quite unlike that warm bright transparent day when I last sailed on the river–when the surface was of such oily smoothness– You could not now study the river bottom for the black waves & the streaks of foam. When the sun shines brightest today–its pyramidal shaped sheen (when for a short time we are looking up stream–for we row) is dazzling & blinding– It is pleasant to hear the sound of the waves & feel the surging of the boat–an inspiriting sound as if you were bound on adventures It is delightful to be tossed about in such a harmless storm.– & see the waves look so angry & black. We see objects on shore, trees &c, much better from the boat–from a low point of View–it brings them against the sky–into a novel point of view at least– The other wise low on the meadows as well as the hills is conspicuous. I perceive that the bullrushes are nibbled along the shore as if they had been cut by a scythe–yet in such positions as no mower could of reached–even outside the flags. Probably the muskrat was the mower. In this cool sunlight Fair Haven Hill shows to advantage Every rock & shrub–& protuberance has justtice done it–the sun shining at angle on the hill & giving each a shadow. The hills have a hard & distinct outline & I see into their very texture. On Fair Haven I see the sun-lit light green grass in the hollows where snow makes water sometimes–and on the russet slopes. Cut three white pine boughs opposite Fair Haven and set them up in the bow of our boat for a sail– It was pleasant hear the water begin to ripple under the prow telling of our easy progress we thus without a tack made the S side of Fair haven–then threw our sails over board–and the moment after mistook them for green bushes or weeds which had sprung from the bottom unusually far from shore.– Then to hear the wind sough in your sail–that is to be a sailor & hear a land sound. The grayish whitish mikania all fuzzy–covers the endless button bushes which are now bare of leaves. Observed the verification of the scripture saying "as the dog returns to his vomit?"? Our black pup sole passenger in the stern, perhaps made sea-sick–vomited then cleaned the boat again most faithfully–and with a bright eye–licking his chops & looking round for more. We comment on the boats of different patterns–dories? punts–bread troughs–flat irons &c &c which we pass–the privailing our genuine dead-river boats–not to be matched by Boston carpenters– One farmer blacksmith whome we know whose boat we pass in Sudbury–has got a horse-shoe nailed about the sculling hole;–keeps off the witches too?–. The water carriages of various patterns & in various conditions–some for pleasure against the gentlemans seat?–some for ducking–small & portable–some for honest fishing broad & leaky but not cranky–some with spearing fixtures–
DOG

some stout & squareendsish for hay boats– One canal boat or mudscow in the weeds not worth getting down the stream. like some vast pike that could swallow all the rest.– proper craft for our river– In some places in the meadows opposite Bound Rock the river seemed to have come to an end it was so narrow suddenly.
After getting in sight of Sherman's bridge–counted 19 birches on the right hand shore in one whirl.
Now commenced the remarkable meandering of the river–so that we seemed for some to be now running up–then running down parallel with a long low hill–tacking over the meadow in spite of ourselves. Landed at Shermans bridge. An apple tree made scrubby by being browsed by cows.– Through what early hardships it may attain to bear a sweet fruit–no wonder it is provoked to grow thorns at last to defend itself from such foes. The pup nibbles clams, or plays with a bone no matter how dry– Thus the dog can be taken on a river Voyage– but the cat cannot. she is too set in her ways. Now again for the great meadows. What meandering– the Serpentine our river should be called–what makes the river love to delay here? Here come to study the law of meandering. We see the vast meadow studded with haycocks–we suspect that we have got to visit them all– it proves even so–now we run down one hay-cock–now another.– The distance gained is frequently not more than a third the distance gone Between Sherman's Br. & Causeway Br is about $1^{5}/_{4}$ mi in a straight line but we judged that we went more than 3 miles. Here the "pipes" (at first) line the shore–& muskrat houses still. A duck (a loon?) sails within gun-shot–unwilling to fly– Also a stake driver ardea minor rises with prominent breast or throat bone–as if badly loaded his ship–now no button bushes line the stream–the changeable? stream no rocks exist–the shores are lined with first in the water still green polygonums then wide fields of dead pontideria then great bulrushes–then various reeds sedges or tall grasses–also dead Thalictrum? or is it cicuta? Just this side the Causeway bridges a field like a tall corn-field of tall rustling reeds? 10 feet high with broadish leaves & large now seedy tufts–standing amid the button bushes & great bulrushes. I remember to have seen none elsewhere in this vicinity unless at Fresh Pond & are they not straighter? Also just beyond the bridges very tall flags from 6 to 8 feet high leaves like the cat-tail but no tail what are they? We pass under 2 bridges above the causeway bridge. After passing under the first one of **these two** at the mouth of Larnum Brook–which is fed from Blandfords Pond–comes from Marlboro–thro Mill-vil.–& has a branch Hop Brook from S of Nobscot–we see Nobscot very handsome in a purplish atmosphere in the west over a **very** deep meadow which makes far up– A good way to skate to Nobscot or within a mile or two.– To see a distant hill from the surface of water over a low & very broad meadow–much better than to see it from another hill. This perhaps the most novel & so memorable prospect we got– Walked across half a mile to Pelham's Pond. whose waves were dashing quite grandly. A house near with two grand elms in front– I have seen other elms in Wayland. This pond a good point to skate to in Winter–when it is easily accessible–now we should have to draw our boat.–
On the return as in going we expended nearly as much time & labor in counteracting the boat's tendency to whirl round–it is so miserably built. Now & then aye–aye–almost an everlasting **now**–it will take the bits in its mouth and go round in spite of us though we row on one side only–for the wind fills the after part of the boat which is nearly out of water–& we therefore get along best & fastest when the wind is strong & dead ahead–that's the kind of wind we advertise to race with (or in) To row a boat thus all the day with an hour's intermission–making fishes of ourselves as it were–putting on these long fins–realizing the finny life–surely oars & paddles are but the fins which a man may use. The very pads stand perpendicular (on their edges) before this wind which appears to have worked more to the north–showing their red under sides. The muskrats have exposed the clam shells to us in heaps all along the shore– –else most not know that a clam existed. If it were not for muskrats how little would the fisherman see or know of fresh water clam shells or clams! In the Great meadows again the loon? rises–and again alights–& a heron? too flies sluggishly away with vast wings–& small ducks which seem to have no tails–but their wings set quite aft– The crows **[American Crow** ***Corvus brachyrhynchos*****]** ashore are making an ado perchance about some carrion. We taste some swamp-white oak acorns at the south end of Bound rock meadow– The sun sets when we are off Israel Rices– A few golden coppery clouds– intensely glowing like fishes in some molten metal of the sky– –& then the small scattered clouds grow blue-black above–or one half–& reddish or pink the other half–& after a short twilight the night sets in. The reflections of the stars in the water are dim & elongated like the zodiacal light straight down into the depths, but no mist rises tonight– We think it is pleasantest to be on the water at this hour. We row across Fair Haven in the thickening twilight & far below it steadily & without speaking.– As the night draws on her vail the shores retreat–we only keep in the middle of this low stream of light–we know not whether we float in the air or in the lower regions. We seem to recede from the trees on shore–or the island very slowly–& yet a few reaches make all our voyage– Nature has divided it agreeably into reaches– It is pleasant not to get home till after dark–to steer by the lights of the villagers– The lamps in the houses twinkle now like stars–they shine doubly bright. Rowed about 24 miles going & coming In a straight line it would be $15^{1}/_{2}$

DOG
CAT

October 26, Sunday: I awoke this morning to infinite regret. In my dream I had been riding–but the horses bit the horses bit each other and occasioned endless trouble and anxiety & it was my employment to hold their heads apart. Next I sailed over the sea in a small vessel such as the Northmen used–as it were to the Bay of Funday & thence over land I sailed still over the shallows about the sources of rivers toward the deeper *channel* of a stream which emptied into the gulf beyond.
Again I was in my own small pleasure boat–learning to sail on the sea–& I raised my sail before my anchor which I dragged far into the sea– I saw the buttons which had come off the coats of drowned men–and suddenly I saw my dog–when I knew not that I had one–standing in the sea up to his chin to warm his legs which had been wet–which the cool wind numbed. And then I was walking in a meadow–where the dry Season permitted me to walk further than usual–& there I met Mr Alcott–& we fell to quoting & referring to grand & pleasing couplets & single lines which we had read in times past–and I quoted one which in my waking hours I have no knowledge of but in my dream it was familiar enough– I only know that those which I quoted expressed regret–and were like the following though they were not these–viz–

DOG

"The short parenthesis of life was sweet"
"The remembrance of youth is a sigh." &c

It had the word memory in it!! And then again the instant that I awoke methought I was a musical instrument–from which I heard a strain die out–a bugle–or a clarionet–or a flute–my body was the organ and channel of melody as a flute is of the music that is breathed through it. My flesh sounded & vibrated still to the strain–& my nerves were the chords of the lyre. I awoke therefore to an infinite regret–to find myself not the thoroughfare of glorious & world-stirring inspirations–but a scuttle full of dirt–such a thoroughfare only as the street & the kennel–where perchance the wind may sometimes draw forth a strain of music from a straw.
I can partly account for this. Last evening I was reading Laing's account of the Northmen–and though I did not write in my journal–I remember feeling a fertile regret–and deriving even an inexpressible satisfaction as it were from my ability to feel regret–which made that evening richer than those which had preceeded it.
I heard the last strain or flourish as I woke played on my body as the instrument. Such I knew I had been & might be again–and my regret arose from the consciousness how little like a musical instrument my body was now.

SAMUEL LAING

1852

January 25, Sunday: The snow has been for some time more than a foot deep on a level, and some roads drifted quite full. and the cold for some weeks has been intense–as low as 20 & 21° in the early morning–A Canadian winter. Some say that we have not had so long a spell of cold weather since '31, when they say it was not seen to thaw for 6 weeks. But last night & today the weather has moderated. It is glorious to be abroad this afternoon. The snow melts on the surface. The warmth of the sun reminds me of summer– The dog runs before us on the R R cause way & appears to enjoy it as much as ourselves. C. remarks truly that most people do not distinguish between a pup & a dog–& treat both alike though the former may not yet have a tooth in his head.

ELLERY CHANNING

DOG

SOPHIA THOREAU

When Sophia told R Rice that Dr B said that Foster was an infidel–and was injuring the young men &c "Did he?" He observed. "Well he is a great man. He swims in pretty deep water, but it is'nt very extensive." When she added Mr Frost says that Garrison had to apologize for printing Foster's sermon–He said–"Did he? Well they may set as many back fires as they please, they won't be of any use".
She said the selectmen were going to ask 7 dolls instead of 5 for the Hall. But he said that he would build them a hall if they would engage to give him 5 dolls steadily–. To be sure it would not be quite so handsome as the present, but it should have the same kind of seats.
The Clay in the Deep Cut is melting & streaming down–glistening in the sun. It is I that melts. While the harp sounds on high– And the snow drifts on the west side look like clouds.
We turned down the brook at Heywood's meadow. It was worth the while to see how the water even in the marsh where the brook is almost stagnant sparkled in this atmosphere–for though warm it is remarkably clear. Water which in summer would look dark & perhaps turbid now sparkles like the lakes in November. This water is the more attractive since all around is deep snow. The brook here is full of cat tails Typha latifolia Reed Mace–I found on pulling open or breaking in my hand, as one would break bread the still nearly perfect spikes of this fine reed–that the flowers were red or crimson at their base where united to the stem. When I rubbed off thus

what was at first but a thimble full of these dry flowerets, they suddenly took in air & flushed up like powder expanding like feathers & foam filling & over flowing my hand, to which they imparted a sensation of warmth quite remarkable. I was astonished to see how a small quantity was expanded and inflated on being released & given to the air–& I could not be tired with repeating the experiment I think a single one would more than fill a half peck measure if they lay as light as at first in the air. It is something magical to one who tries it for the first time like a puff of powder it flashes up You do not know at first where they all come from. It is the conjurer'ss trick in nature, equal to taking feathers enough to fill a bed out of a hat. When you had done–but still will scrape the almost bare stem–still they overflow your hand as before. See it again & try the combustibility of the pollen.

As the flowerets are opening & liberating themselves showing their red extremities, it has the effect of a **changeable** color

Ah then the brook beyond–its rippling waters & its sunny sands.– They made me forget that it was winter–where springs oozed out of the soft bank over the dead leaves & the green sphagnum they had melted the snow or the snow had melted as it fell perchance–and the rabbits had sprinkled the mud about on the snow. The sun reflected from the sandy gravelly bottom, sometimes a bright sunny streak no bigger than your finger reflected from a ripple as from a prism–& the sunlight reflected from a hundread points of the surface of the rippling brook–enabled me to realize summer. But the dog partly spoiled the transparency of the water by running in the brook. A pup that had never seen a summer brook.

I am struck & attracted by the parallelism of the twigs of the hornbeam, **fine** parallelism

ELLERY CHANNING

Having gone $^{1}/_{4}$ of a mile beyond the bridge–where C. calls this his Spanish Brook I looked back from the top of the hill on the S. into this deep dell. Where the white pines stood thick rising one above another reflecting the sunlight–so soft and warm by contrast with the snow–as never in summer–for the idea of warmth prevailed over the cold which the snow suggested–though I saw through & between them to a distant snow clad hill–& also to oaks red with their dry leaves. And maple limbs were mingled with the pines. I was on the verge of seeing something but I did not. If I had been alone & had had more leisure I might have seen something to report.

Now we are on Fair Haven, still but a snow plain. Far down the river the shadows on Conantum are bluish–somewhat like the holes in the snow perchance.

The sun is half an hour high perhaps Standing near the outlet of the pond I look up & down the river with delight–it is so warm & the air is notwithstanding so clear. When I invert my head & look at the woods $^{1}/_{2}$ mile down the stream they suddenly sink lower in the horizon and are removed full two miles off– Yet the air is so clear that I seem to see every stem & twig with beautiful distinctness– The fine tops of the trees are so relieved against the sky–that I never cease to admire the minute subdivisions. It is the same when I look up the stream. A bare hickory under Lees Cliff seen against the sky becomes an interesting even beautiful object to behold. I think where have I been staying all these days– I will surely come here again.

When I first paddled a boat on Walden it was completely surrounded by thick & lofty pine woods, and in some of its coves grape vines had run over the trees & formed bowers under which a boat could pass. The hills which form its shores are so steep & the woods on them were then so high, that as you looked down the pond from west to east–it looked like an amphitheater–for some kind of forest spectacle I have spent many an hour floating over its surface as the zephyr willed lying on my back across the seats of my boat, in a summer forenoon–& looking into the sky above dreaming awake–until I was aroused by my boat touching the sand and I arose to see what shore my fates had impelled me to– When idleness was the most attractive & productive industry. Many a forenoon have I stolen away thus–preferring thus to spend the most valued part of the day. For I was rich–if not in money, in sunny hours and summer-days & spent them lavishly. Nor do I regret that I did not spend more of them behind a counter or in the workshop or the teacher's desk, in which last two places I have spent so many of them.

January 29, Thursday: We must be very active if we would be clean & live our own life, and not a languishing and scurvy one. The trees which are stationary are covered with parasites–especially those which have grown slowly. The air is filled with the fine sporules of countless mosses algae lichens fungi which settle & plant themselves on all quiet surfaces. Under the nails & between the joints of the fingers of the idle flourish crops of mildew algae–& fungi and other vegetable sloths–though they may be invisible– The lichens where life still exists the fungi where decomposition has begun to take place. And the sluggard is soon covered with sphagnum. Algae take root in the corners of his eyes & lichens cover the bulbs of his fingers & his head–&c &c the lowest forms of vegetable life. This is the definition of dirt. We fall a prey to Others of natures tenants who take possession of the unoccupied house. With the utmost inward activity we have to wash & comb ourselves beside, to get rid of the adhering seeds. Cleanliness is by activity not to give any quiet shelf for the seeds of parasitic plants to take root on.

If he cuts pine, the woodchoppers hands are covered with pitch.

The names of plants are for the most part traced to Celtic & Arabian roots.
The forcible writer does not go far for his themes–his ideas are not far-fetched–he derives inspiration from his chagrins & his satisfactions– His theme being ever an instant one his own gravity assists him–gives impetus to what he says– He minds his business. He does not speculate while others drudge for him.
I am often reminded that if I had bestowed on me the wealth of Croesus, my aims must still be the same & my means essentially the same
It still melts. I observed this afternoon that the ground where they are digging for some scales near the depot–was frozen about 9 inches where the snow has lain most–and 16 inches where the road was.
I begin to see the tops of the grasses & stubble in the fields–which deceives me as if it were the ground itself.
That point where the sun goes down is the cynosure that attracts all eyes at sundown & half an hour before What do all other points of the horizon concern us– Our eyes follow the path of that great luminary. We watch for his rising & we observe his setting. He is a companion & fellow traveller we all have. We pity him who has his cheerless dwelling elsewhere–even in the N W or S W off the high road of nature.
The snow is nearly gone from the R.R causeway. Few are the days when the Telegraph harp rises into a pure clear melody Though the wind may blow strong or soft in this or that direction–nought will you hear but a low hum or murmur–or even a buzzing sound–but at length when some undistinguishable zephyr blows–when the conditions not easy to be detected arrive it suddenly & unexpectedly rises into melody as if a god had touched it–& fortunate is the walker who chances to be within hearing. So is it with the lyres of bards–and for the most part it is only a feeble & ineffectual hum that comes from them. Which leads you to expect the melody you do not hear–when the gale is modified–when the favorable conditions occur, and the indescribable coincidence takes place–then there is music. Of a thousand buzzing strings only one yields music. It is like the hum of the shaft or other machinery of a steamboat which at length might become music in a divine hand. I feel greatly enriched by this telegraph.
I have come to see the clay & sand in the Cut– A reddish tinge in the earth–stains– An Indiany hue is singularly agreeable even exciting to the eye– Here the whole bank is sliding. Even the color of the subsoil excites me as if I were already getting near to life & vegetation. This clay is foecoval in its color also. It runs off at bottom into mere shoals shallows vasa vagues sandbars–like the mammoth leaves–makes strands.
Perhaps those mother o' pearl clouds I described some time ago might be called rainbow flocks
The snow on the slope of the Cliffs is dotted with black specks–the seeds of the mullein which the wind has shaken out. When I strike the dry stalks the seeds fall in a shower & color the snow black like charcoal dust or powder.
The green mosses on the rocks are evidently nourished & kept bright by the snows lying on them–a part of the year.

CAT
DOG

Day before yesterday I saw the hunters out with a dozen dogs–but only 2 pussies one white & one little gray one did I see–for so many men & dogs who seem to set all the village a-stir, as if the fox's trail led through it.

ELLERY CHANNING

Heard C lecture tonight. It was a bushel of nuts. Perhaps the most original lecture I ever heard. Ever so unexpected–not to be foretold–& so sententious that you could not look at him & take his thought at the same time– You had to give your undivided attention to the thoughts. For you were not assisted by set phrases or modes of speech intervening– There was no sloping up or down to or from his points. It was all genius–no talent. It required mor close attention–more abstraction from surrounding circumstances than any lecture I have heard. For well as I know C he more than any man disappoints my expectation– When I see him in the desk–hear him I cannot realize that I ever saw him before. He will be strange unexpected–to his best acquaintance. I cannot associate the lecturer with the companion of my walks. It was from so original and peculiar a point of view–yet just to himself in the main that I doubt if 3 in the audience apprehended a tithe that he said. It was so hard to hear–that doubtless few made the exertion– A thick succession of mt passes and no intermediate slopes & plains. Other lectures even the best in which so much space is given to the elaborate development of a few ideas seemed somewhat meager in comparison.
Yet it would be how much more glorious if talent were added to genius– If there a just arrangement and development of the thoughts–& each step were not a leap–but be run a pace to take a yet higher leap–!
Most of the spectators sat in front of the performer, but here was one who by accident sat all the while on one side, and his report was peculiar and startling.

DOG

February 11: When the thermometer is down to 20° in the morning, as last month, I think of the poor dogs who have no masters.
If a poor dog has no master, every body will throw a billet of wood at him. it never rains but it pours
It now rains–a drizzling rain mixed with mist–which ever and anon fills the air to the height of 15 or 20 feet–
It makes what they call an old fashioned mill-privelege in the streets–i.e. I suppose a privelege on a small stream good only for a part of the year.
Perhaps the best evidence of an amelioration of the climate–at least that the snows are less deep than formerly–

is the snow-shoes which still lie about in so many garrets–now useless–though the population of this town has not essentially increased for 75 years past–and the travelling within the limits of the town accordingly not much facilitated. No man ever uses them now–yet the old men used them in their youth.
I have lived some 30 odd years on this planet and I have yet to hear the first syllable of valuable or even earnest advice from my seniors. They have told me nothing and probably can tell me nothing to the purpose. There is life–an experiment untried by me–& it does not avail me that you have tried it. If I have any valuable experience I am sure to reflect that this my mentors said nothing about. What were mysteries to the child, remain mysteries to the old man
It is a mistake to suppose that in a country where rail roads & steamboats the printing press and the church and the usual evidences of what is called civilization exists the condition of a very large body of the inhabitants cannot be as degraded as that of savages. Savages have their high & their low estate–& so have civilized nations. To know this I should not need to look further than the shanties which everywhere line our rail roads–that last improvement in civilization. But I will refer you to Ire Land, which is marked as one of the white or enlightened spots on the map– Yet I have no doubt that that nations rulers are as wise as the averaged of civilized rulers.

 February 24: PM R R causeway. I am reminded of spring by the quality of the air–the cock-crowing– & even the telegraph harp prophesies it.– though the ground is for the most part covered with snow– It is a natural resurrection an experience of immortality– Observe the poplar's swolen buds & the brightness of the willow's bark.
The telegraph harp reminds me of Anacreon. That is the glory of Greece–that we are reminded of her only when in our best estate, our elysian days, when our senses are young and healthy again. I could find a name for every strain or intonation of the harp from one or other of the Grecian bards–. I often hear Mimnermus–often Menander–

ANACREON

HISTORY OF TELEGRAPHY

I am too late by a day or two for the sand foliage on the E side of the deep cut. It is glorious to see the soil again–here where a shovel perchance will enter it and find no frost– The frost is partly come out of this bank and it is become dry again in the sun.
The very sound of men's work reminds advertises me of the coming of spring– – As I now hear at a distance the sound of the laborer's sledge on the rails.

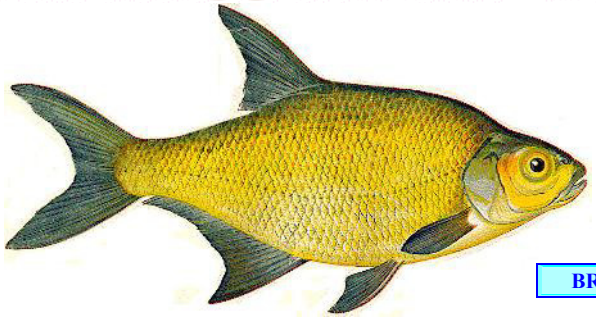
DOG

The empressement of a little dog when he starts any wild thing in the woods! The woods ring with his barking as if the tragedy of Actaeon were being acted over again.
Talked with two men and a boy fishing on Fair Haven–just before sunset– (Heard the dog bark in Baker's wood as I came down the brook) They had caught a fine parcel of pickerel and perch– The perch especially were full of spawn. The boy had caught a large bream which had risen to the surface in his hands– They had none of them ever seen one before in the winter–though they sometimes catch chivins. They had also kicked to death

BAKER FARM

a muskrat that was crossing the S W end of the Pond on the snow.

PICKEREL



BREAM

They told me of 2 otters being killed in Sudbury this winter–beside some coons near here.
As we grow older–is it not ominous that we have more to write about evening–less about morning. We must associate more with the early hours.

JAMES BAKER

March 16: Before Sunrise

DOG

With what infinite & unwearied expectation and proclamations the cocks usher in every dawn as if there had never been one before. & the dogs bark still–& the thallus of lichens springs– So tenacious of life is nature. Spent the day in Cambridge Library. Walden is not yet melted round the edge. It is perhaps more suddenly warm this Spring than usual. Mr Bull thinks that the Pine gross-beaks [**Pine Grosbeak** ***Pinicola enucleator***] which have been unusually numerous the past winter have killed many branches of his elms by budding them– & that they will die & the wind bring them down as heretofore. Saw a large flock of geese **[Canada Goose** ***Branta canadensis*****]** go over Cambridge. & heard the robins in the college yard.
The library a wilderness of books. Looking over books on Canada written with the last 300 yrs could see how one had been built upon another each author consulting & referring to his predecessors. You could read most of them without changing your leg on the steps. It is necessary to find out exactly what books to read on a given subject– Though there may be a thousand books written upon it, it is only important to read 3 or 4–they will contain all that is essential–& a few pages will show which they are. Books which are books are all that you want–& there are but half a dozen in any thousand. I saw that while we are clearing the forest in our westward progress we are accumulating a forest of books in our rear–as wild & unexplored as any of natures primitive wildernesses. The volumes of the 15th 16th & 17th centuries which lie so near on the shelf are rarely opened are effectually forgotten–& not implied by our literature & newspapers. When I looked into Purchas' Pilgrims– it affected me like looking into an impassable swamp–10 feet deep with sphagnum where the monarchs of the forest covered with mosses & stretched along the ground were making haste to become peat. Those old books suggested a certain fertility–an Ohio soil–as if they were making a humus for new literatures to spring in. I heard the bellowing of bull frogs & the hum of mosquitoes reverberating through the thick embossed covers when I had closed the book. Decayed literature makes the richest of all soils

March 21, Sunday: Thoreau checked out, from the Harvard Library, the four volumes of Sir John Richardson's FAUNA BOREALI-AMERICANA; OR THE ZOOLOGY OF THE NORTHERN PARTS OF BRITISH AMERICA.... that had been published in London by the firm of J. Murray between 1829 and 1837. Here is some of the material which he copied into his fact book #1:

DOG

Dogs baying the Moon
Says of the Canis Familiaris variety Canadensis (North American Dog) by which he means that "most generally cultivated by the native tribes of Canada, and the Hudson's Bay countries" – "All the dogs of a camp assemble at night to howl in unison, particularly when the moon shines bright."

READ RICHARDSON I

READ RICHARDSON II

READ RICHARDSON III

READ RICHARDSON IV

March 21, Sunday: RR Causeway at Heywood's meadow. The ice no sooner melts than you see the now red & yellow pads of the yellow lily beginning to shoot up from the bottom of the pools & ditches – for there they yield to the first impulses of the heat & feel not the chilling blasts of March.
This evening a little snow falls
The weather about these days is cold–& wintry again.

April 2, Friday: 6 Am. To the river side & Merrick's Pasture. The sun is up. The water on the meadows is perfectly smooth & placid reflecting the hills & clouds & trees. The air is full of the notes of birds – song sparrows **[*Melospiza melodia*]** – red-wings **[Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus*]** – robins (singing a strain) blue birds **[Eastern Bluebird *Sialia sialus*]**–& I hear also a lark **[Eastern Meadowlark *Sturnella magna*]**– As if all the earth had burst forth into song. The influence of this April morning has reached them for they live out of doors. all the night, and there is no danger that they will oversleep themselves such a morning. A few weeks ago before the birds had come their came to my mind in the night the twittering sound of birds in the early dawn of a spring morning – a semi prophecy of it – and last night I attended mentally as if I heard the spray-like dreaming sound of the mid summer frog – & realized how glorious & full of revelations it was. Expectation may amount to prophecy. The clouds are **white** watery not such as we had in the winter– I see in this fresh morning the shells left by the muskrats along the shore – & their galleries leading into the meadow–& the bright red cranberries washed up along the shore – in the old water-mark. Suddenly there is a blur on the placid surface of the waters – a rippling mistiness produced as it were by a slight morning breeze.– And I should be sorry to show it to the stranger now– So is it with our minds.

ELLERY CHANNING

As a fair day is promised–& the waters are falling decide to go to the Sudbury meadows with C. 9 AM. Started some woodcocks in a wet place in A Wheeler's stubble field– Saw 6 spotted tortoises (emys guttata) which had crawled to the shore by the side of the Hubbard bridge causeway. Too late now for the morning influence & inspiration.– The birds sing not so earnestly & joyously – there is a blurring ripple on the surface of the lake.– How few valuable observations can we make in youth– What if there were united the susceptibility of youth with the discrimination of age. Once I was part and parcel of nature – now I am observant of her.
What ails the Pewee's tail **[Eastern Phoebe *Sayornis phoebe*]**?– It is loosely hung.– pulsating with life. What mean these wag tail birds? Cats & dogs too express some of their life through their tails. The bridges are a station at this season– They are the most advantageous positions. There I would take up my stand morning & evening looking over the water.

DOG

CAT

The Charles Miles run full & rumbling– The water is the color of ale – here dark red ale over the yellow sand – there yellowish frothy ale where it tumbles down– Its foam composed of large white bubbles makes a kind of arch over the rill snow white & contrasting with the general color of the stream – while the latter ever runs under it carrying the lower bubbles with it & new ones ever supply their places– at least 18 inches high this stationary arch. I do not remember elsewhere such highly colored water. It drains a swamp near by & is dry the

greater part of the year. Coarse bubbles continually bursting – a striped snake by the spring – & a black one. The grass there is delightfully green – while there is no fresh green anywhere else to be seen– It is the most refreshing of all colors– It is what all the meadows will soon be. The color of no flower is so grateful to the eye. Why is the dog black & the grass green? If all the banks were suddenly painted green & spotted with yellow white red – blue purple &c we should more fully realize the miracle of the summer's coloring– Now the snow is off it is pleasant to visit the sandy bean fields covered with last years blue curls & sorrel & the flakes of arrowhead stone– I love these sandy fields which melt the snows & yield but small crops to the farmer.– Saw a striped squirrel in the wall near Lees.– Brigham the wheel-wright building a boat. At the prospect of all this water men build boats if ever. Are those large scarred roots at the bottoms of the brooks now 3 inches in diameter the roots of the pickerel weed.– what vigor what vitality The yellow spots of the tortoise (emys guttata) on his dark shell seen bright through clear water remind me of flowers the houstonias &c when there are no colors on the land– Israel Rices dog stood stock still so long that I took him at a distance for the end of a bench. He looked much like a fox–& his fur was as soft. Rice was very ready to go with us to his boat which we borrowed – as soon as he had driven his cow in to the barn where her calf was – but she preferred to stay out in the yard this pleasant morning– He was very obliging – persisted without regard to our suggestions that we could help ourselves in going with us to his boat – showed us after a larger boat & made no remark on the miserableness of it. Thanks & compliments fell off him like water off a rock. If the king of the French should send him a medal he would have to look in many dictionaries to know what the sending of a medal meant and then he would appreciate the abstract fact merely–& it would fail of its intended effect. Steered across for the oaks opposite the mouth of the Pantry– For a long distance as we paddle up the river we hear the 2 stanzaed lay of the Pewee on the shore– Those are the two obvious facts to eye & ear the river & the pewee. After coming in sight of Sherman's bridge we moored our boat by sitting on a maple twig on the east side to take a leisurely view of the meadow. The eastern shore here is a fair specimen of New Eng. fields & hills sandy & barren but agreeable to my eye– Covered with withered grass on their rounded slopes & crowned with low reddish bushes shrub oaks. There is a picturesque group of 8 oaks near the shore–& through a thin fringe of wood I see some boys driving home an ox-cart load of hay.– I have noticed black oaks within a day or two still covered with oak balls. In upsetting the boat which has been newly tarred I have got some tar on my hands – which imparts to them on the whole an agreeable fragrance. This exercise of the arms and chest after a long winters stagnation – during which only the legs have labored – this pumping off the Lincoln shire fens the Haarlem lakes of wintry fumes & damps and foul blood is perhaps the greatest value of these paddling excursions. I see far in the south the upright black piers of the bridge just rising above the water– They are more conspicuous than the sleepers & rails.– The occasional patches of snow on the hill-sides are unusally bright by contrast.– they are land-marks to steer by– It seems to be a part of the economy of nature to make dogs make water against upright objects that so her plants may get watered & manurred. It is a part of her husbandry.

DOG

DOG

It appears to me that to one standing on the heights of philosophy mankind & the works of man will have sunk out of sight altogether. Man is altogether too much insisted on. The poet says the proper study of mankind is man– I say study to forget all that – take wider views of the universe– That is the egotism of the race. What is this our childish gossipping social literature – mainly in the hands of the publishers? When the poet says the world is too much with us – he means of course that man is too much with us– In the promulgated views of man –in institutions –in the common sense there is narrowness & delusion. It is our weakness that so exaggerates the virtues of philanthropy & charity & makes it the highest human attribute– The world will sooner or later tire of philanthropy – and all religions based on it mainly. They cannot long sustain my spirit.

In order to avoid delusions I would fain let man go by & behold a universe in which man is but as a grain of sand– I am sure that my thoughts which consist or are contemporaneous with social personal connections – however humane are not the wisest & widest – most universal– What is the village – city state – nation – aye the civilized world – that it should so concern a man? It is a comfortable place to nestle no doubt & we have friends – some sympathizing ones it may be, & a hearth, there – but I have only to get up at midnight – aye to soar – or wander a little in my thought by day – to find them all slumbering– Look at our literature what a poor puny social thing seeking sympathy– The author troubles himself about his readers – would fain have one before he dies.– not satisfied with defiling one another in this world, we would all go to heaven together.– To be a good man (that is a good neighbor in the widest sense) is but little more than to be a good citizen. Mankind is a gigantic institution – it is a community to which most men belong. It is a test I would apply to my companion – can he forget man? Can he see this world slumbering?

I do not value any view of the universe into which man & the institutions of man enter very largely & absorb much of the attention– Man is but the place where I stand & the prospect (thence) hence is infinite. it is not a chamber of mirrors which reflect me – when I reflect myself – I find that there is other than me. man is a past phenomenon to philosophy – the universe is larger than enough for man's abode. Some rarely go outdoors – most are always at home at night – very few indeed have stayed out all night once in their lives – fewer still have gone behind the world of humanity – seen his institutions like toad-stools by the way-side. Now the author stands too near his printer. He corrects the proofs. Landed on Tall's Island. It is not cold nor windy enough perchance for the meadow to make its most serious impression. The staddls from which the hay has been

DOG

removed rise a foot or two above the water.– Large white gulls are circling over the water. The shore of this meadow lake is quite wild & in most places low & rather inaccessible to walkers. On the rocky point of this island where the wind is felt the waves are breaking merrily – and now for half an hour our dog has been standing in the water & ceaselessly snapping at each wave as it broke as if it were a living creature. He regardless of cold & wet thrusts his head into each wave to gripe it. A dog snapping at the waves as they break on a rocky shore. He then rolls himself in the leaves for a napkin. We hardly set out to return when the water looked sober & rainy– There was more appearance of rain in the water than in the sky – April weather look. And soon we saw the dimples of drops on the surface– I forgot to mention before the cranberries seen on the bottom as we pushed over the meadows & the red beds of pitcher-plants– We landed near a corn field in the hay on the W. side below Sherman's bridge in order to ascend Round Hill.– it still raining gently – or with drops far apart. From the top we see smoke rising from the green pine hill in the S part of Lincoln– The steam of the engine looked very white this morning against the oak clad hill sides. The clouds the showers & the breaking away now in the west all belong to the summer side of the year – & remind me of long past days.– The prospect is often best from $^{2}/_{3}$ the way up a hill – where looking directly down at the parts of the landscape – the fields & barns – nearest the base, you get the sense of height best–& see how the land slopes up to where you stand – From the top commonly you over look all this – and merely get a sense of **distance** merely – with a break in the landscape by which the most interesting part is concealed.

This hill with its adjuncts is now almost an island – surrounded by broad lakes. The South lakes reflect the most light at present – but the sober surface of the northern is yet more interesting to me.– How novel and original must be each new mans view of the universe – for though the world is so old – & so many books have been written – each object appears wholly undescribed to our experience – each field of thought wholly unexplored – The whole world is an America – a **New World**. The fathers lived in a dark age – & throw no light on any of our subjects. The sun climbs to the zenith daily high over all literature & science – astronomy even concerns us worldlings only – but the sun of poetry & of each new child born into the planet has never been astronomized, nor brought nearer by a telescope. So it will be to the end of time. The end of the world is not yet. Science is young by the ruins of Luxor – unearthing the sphinx – or Ninevah – or between the pyramids. The parts of the meadows nearly surrounded by water form interesting peninsulas & promontories.– Return to our boat– We have to go ashore & upset it every half hour. it leaks so fast – for the leak increases as it sinks in the water in geometrical progression. I see among the phenomena of spring – here and there a dead sucker floating on the surface – perhaps dropped by a fish hawk **[Osprey** ***Pandion haliaetus***] or a gull –f or the gulls are circling this way over head to reconnoitre us.– On making the eastward curve in the river we find a strong wind against us – pushing slowly across the meadow in front of the Pantry – the waves beat against the bows and sprinkle the water half the length of the boat. The froth is in long white streaks before the wind – as usual striping the surface.

We land in a steady rain & walked inland by R Rice's barn regardless of the storm toward White Pond. Overtaken by an Irishman in search of work. Discovered some new oaks & pine groves and more New Eng. fields. At last the drops fall wider apart–& we pause in a sandy field near the Great Road of the corner where it was agreeably retired & sandy – drinking up the rain– The rain was soothing – so still & sober – gently beating against & amusing our thoughts – swelling the brooks– The robin now peeps with scared note in the heavy overcast air – among the apple trees– The hour is favorable to thought– Such a day I like a sandy road– Snows that melt & leave bear the corn & grain fields – with Indian relics shining on them & prepare the ground for the farmer– Saw a cow or ox in a hollow in the woods – which had been skinned & look red & striped like those Italian anatomical preparations. Went through a reddish andromeda swamp – where still a little icy stiffness in the crust under the woods keeps us from slumping– The rain now turns to snow with large flakes – so soft many cohere in the air as they fall. They make us white as millers & wet us through Yet it is clear gain. I hear a solitary hyla for the first time– At Hubbards bridge count 8 ducks going over. Had seen one with outstretched neck over the Great meadows in Sudbury. Looking up the flakes are black against the sky. & now the ground begins to whiten. get home at $5^{1}/_{2}$ Pm.

At the bend of the river above the river – I noticed many ferns on the bank where there was much snow – very green.

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–Thoreau's JOURNAL, April 2, 1852

April 12, Monday: Gilpin says that our turkey was domesticated in Windsor Forest at one time & from its size was an object of consequence to lovers of the picturesque as most birds are not–& in its form & color & actions more picturesque than the peacock or indeed any other bird. Being recently reclaimed from the woods, its habits continue wilder than those of other domestic fowls– "It strays widely for its food–it flies well considering its apparent inactivity–and it perches, & roosts on trees." He says of the leaf of the beech "on handling, it feels as if it were fabricated with metallic rigor" – – "For this reason, I suppose, as its rigor gives it an elastic quality, the common people in France & Switzerland use it for their beds."
I have heard thus far 2 sounds from 2 kinds of frogs I suppose–the hyla's peep–& a rather faint croak in pond holes–
2 P M to the Powder Mills via Harringtons returning by RR. The road through the pitch pine woods beyond J. Hosmers is very pleasant to me curving under the pines –without a fence– the sandy road with the pines close abutting on it – yellow in the sun & low branched with younger pines filling up all to the ground.– I love to see a sandy road like this curving through a pitch pine wood where the trees closely border it without fences – a great cart path merely.
That is a pleasant part of the north river under the black-birches. The dog does not hesitate to take to the water for a stick but the current carries him rapidly down. The lines of saw dust left at different levels on the shore is just hint enough of a saw mill on the stream above. Saw the first blossoms (bright yellow stamens or pistils) on the willow catkins today– The spekled alders & the maples are earlier then. The yellow blossom appears

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first on one side of the ament and is the most of bright & sunny color the spring has showed.– the most decidedly flower like that I have seen Of flowers then I should say without regard to the skunk cabbage q.v. 1st the spekled alder –then the maple without keys –then this earliest perhaps swamp willow with its bright yellow blossoms on one side of the ament It is fit that this almost earliest spring flower should be yellow the color of the sun. Saw a maple **in the water** with yellowish flowers. Is it the water brings them forward? But I believe that these are all the barren flowers–& the perfect flowers appear afterward.– When I look closely I perceive the sward beginning to be green under my feet – very slightly. It rains with sleet & hail yet not enough to color the ground. At this season I can walk in the fields without wetting my feet in grass. Observed in the stonework of the R R. bridge I think it must be in acton– Many large stones more or less disintegrated & even turned to a soft soil into which I could thrust my finger – threatening the destruction of the bridge– A geologist is needed to tell you whether your stones will continue stones–& not turn to earth. It was very pleasant to come out on the RR in this gentle rain the track laid in grey sand looks best at such a time with the rails all wet– The factory bridge seen through the mist is agreeably indistinct seen against a dark greyish pine wood– I should not know there was a bridge there if I had not been there – he dark line made by its shaded underside is most that I see here spaning the road – the rails are quite indistinct. We love to see things thus with a certain indistinctness.

I am made somewhat sad this afternoon by the coarseness & vulgarity of my companion – because he is one with whom I have made myself intimate. He inclines latterly to speak with coarse jesting of facts which should always be treated with delicacy & reverence. I lose my respect for the man who can make the mystery of sex the subject of a coarse jest – yet when you speak earnestly & seriously on the subject is silent. I feel that this is to be truly irreligious. Whatever may befal me I trust that I may never lose my respect for purity in others. The subject of sex is one on which I do not wish to meet a man at all unless I **can** meet him on the most inspiring ground. If his view degrades, & does not elevate. I would preserve purity in act & thought as I would cherish the memory of my mother– A companion can possess no worse quality than vulgarity. If I find that **he** is not habitually reverent of the fact of sex– I–, even I, will not associate with. I will cast this first stone– What were life without some religion of this kind?

Can I walk with one who by his jests & by his habitual tone reduces the life of men & women to a level with that of cats & dogs? The man who uses such a vulgar jest describes his relation to his dearest friend. Impure as I am I could protect & worship purity.

DOG

I can have no really serious conversation with my companion. He seems not capable of it. The men whom I most esteem when they speak at all on this subject do not speak with sufficient reverence– They speak to men with a coarseness which they would not use in the presence of women–& I think they would feel a slight shame if a woman coming in should hear their remarks. A man's speech on this subject should of course be ever as reverent and chaste & simple as if it were to be heard by the ears of maidens.

In the New Forest in Hampshire they had a chief officer called the lord-warden–& under him two distinct officers, one to preserve the *venison* of the forest, another to preserve its *vert* (ie woods – lawns &c) Does not our Walden need such. The lord-warden was a person of distinction, as the Duke of Glocester.

Walden wood was my forest walk.

The English forests are divided into "walks" with a keeper presiding over each. My "walk" is 10 miles from my house every way. Gilpin says "It is a forest-adage of ancient date, *non est inquirendum unde venit venison*". i.e. whether stolen or not.

"The incroachments of trespassers, and the houses, and fences thus raised on the borders of the forest" – – by forest borderers – – were "considered as great nuisances by the old forest-law, and were severely punished under the name of *purprestures*, as tending *ad terrorem ferarum – ad nocumentum forestae*, &c"

There is this afternoon & evening a rather cool April rain – pleasant to hear its steady dripping.

April 15, Thursday: My face still burns with yesterday's sunning. It rains this morning, as if the vapor from the melting snow was falling again. There is so much sun & light reflected from the snow at this season that it is not only remarkably white & dazzling but tans in a few moments. It is fortunate then that the sun on the approach of the snows – the season of snow – takes his course so many degrees lower in the heavens – else he might burn us off even at that season.

The face comes from the house of winter tender & white to the house of summer – and these late snows convey the sun to it with sudden & scorching power. It was not the march winds or others. It was a still warm beautiful day. I was out but 3 hours It was the sun suddenly and copiously applied to a face from winter quarters

The broad flat brown buds on Mr Cheney's elm containing 20 or 30 yellowish green threads surmounted with little brownish-mulberry cups which contain the stamens & the two styles – these are just expanding or blossoming now. The flat imbricated buds which open their scales both ways – have had a rich look for some weeks past. Why so few elms so advanced – so rich now–? Are the stamenifereous & pistilliferous flowers ever on dif. trees.

It is according to Emerson the Dwarf Cassandra C. Calyculata of D. Don that is so common on the river meadows & in swamps & bogs – formerly called an Andromeda – of the Ericaceae or Heath family with the Uva Ursi (Arctostaphylos.)
Now well flower-budded. I had forgotten the aspen in my latest enumerations of flowers – v if its flowers have not decidedly appeared.
I think that the largest early catkined willow in large bushes in sand by water now blossoming – the fertile catkins with paler blossoms the sterile covered with polen a pleasant lively bright yellow – the brightest flower I have seen thus far–
Gilpin says of the stags in the New Forest (a hart is a stag in his 5th or 6th yr & upward – if one "be hunted by the king, and escape; or have his life given him for the sport he has afforded, he becomes from thence forward a **hart-royal**. – If he be hunted out of the forest, and there escape; the king hath sometimes honored him with a royal proclamation; the purport of which is, to forbid any one to molest him, that he may have free liberty of returning to his forest. From that time he becomes a **hart-royal proclaimed**." As is said of Richard the 1st that having pursued a hart a great distance– –"The king in gratitude for the diversion he had received, ordered him immediately to be proclaimed at Tickill, and at all the neighboring towns".
Think of having such a fellow as that for a king causing his proclamation to be blown about your country towns at the end of his day's sport – at Tickill or elsewhere – that your hinds may not molest the hart that has afforded him such an ever memorable day's sport– Is it not time that his subjects whom he has so sorely troubled and so long, be **harts royal proclaimed** – who have afforded him such famous sport? It will be a finer days sport when the hinds shall turn and hunt the royal hart beyond the bounds of his forest – & his kingdom – & in perpetual banishment alone he become a royal-hart proclaimed. Such is the magnanimity of royal hearts – that through a whimsical prick of generosity spares the game it could not kill – & fetters its equals with its arbitrary will. Kings love to say shall & will.
Rain rain, rain, all day – carrying off the snow. It appears then that if you go out at this season and walk in the sun in a clear warm day like yesterday – while the earth is covered with snow – you may have your face burnt in a few moments. The rays glance off from the snowy crystals & scorch the skin.
Thinking of the value of the gull to the scenery of our river in the spring when for a few weeks they are seen circling about so deliberately & heavily yet gracefully – without apparent object beating like a vessel in the air. Gilpin says something to the purpose – that water-fowl "discover in their flight some determined aim. They eagerly coast the river or return to the sea; bent on some purpose, of which they never lose sight. But the evolutions of the gull appear capricious, and undirected, both when she flies alone, and, as she often does, in large companies. – The more however her character suffers as a loiterer, the more it is raised in picturesque value, by her continuing longer before the eye; and displaying in her elegant sweeps through the air, her sharp-pointed wings, and her bright silvery hue. – She is beautiful also, not only on the wing, but when she floats, in numerous assemblies on the water; or when she rests on the shore, dotting either one, or the other with white spots; which, minute as they are, are very picturesque: – – giving life & spirit to a view."
He seems to be describing our very bird. I do **not remember** to have seen them over or in our river meadows when there was not ice there.
They come annually a-fishing here like royal hunters. to remind us of the sea – & that our town after all lies but further up a creek of the universal sea – above the head of the tide. So ready is a deluge to overwhelm our lands as the gulls to circle hither in the spring freshets. To see a gull beating high over our meadowy flood in chill & windy march – is akin to seeing a mackerel schooner on the coast. It is the nearest approach to sailing vessels in our scenery. I never saw one at Walden. O how it salts our fresh our Sweet watered Fair Haven all at once to see this sharp beaked greedy sea bird beating over it! For awhile the water is brackish to my eyes. It is merely some herring pond – and if I climb the eastern bank I expect to see the atlantic there covered with countless sails. whoever thought that walden's blue & emerald water was ever prophaned by wing of gull or cormorant– At most it tolerates one annual loon. We are so far maritime – do not dwell beyond the range of the sea going gull – the littoral birds. Does not the gull come up after those suckers which I see? He is never to me perfectly in harmony with the scenery – but like the high water something unusual.
–What a novel life to be introduced to a dead sucker floating on the water in the spring!– Where was it spawned pray? The sucker is so recent – so unexpected – so unrememberable so unanticipatable a creation– While so many institutions are gone by the board and we are despairing of men & of ourselves there seems to be life even in a dead sucker – whose fellows at least are alive. The world never looks more recent or promising – religion philosophy poetry – than when viewed from this point. To see a sucker tossing on the spring flood – its swelling imbricated breast heaving up a bait to not despairing gulls– It is a strong & a strengthening sight. Is the world coming to an end?– Ask the chubs. As long as fishes spawn – glory & honor to the cold blooded who despair – as long as ideas are expressed – as long as friction makes bright – as long as vibrating wires make music of harps – we do not want redeemers. What a volume you might on the separate virtues of the various animals – the black duck & the rest.
How indispensable our one or two flocks of geese [**Canada Goose** ***Branta canadensis***] in spring & autumn– What would be a spring in which that sound was not heard.– Coming to unlock the fetters of northern

ELLERY CHANNING

rivers. Those annual steamers of the air
Would it not be a fine office to preserve the *vert* of this forest in which I ramble?
Channing calls our walks along the banks of the river – taking a boat for convenience at some distant point – **riparial** excursions It is a pleasing epithet – but I mistrust such – even as good as this, in which the mere name is so agreeable, as if it would ring hollow erelong – and rather the thing should make the true name poetic at last. Alcott wished me to name my book **Sylvania**! But he & C. are 2 men in these respects. We make a good many prairial excursions
We take a boat 4 or 5 miles out then paddle up the stream as much further, meanwhile land & making excursions inland or further along the banks.
Walden is but little more melted than yesterday.
I see that the grass, which unless in the most favored spots, did not show any evidence of spring to the casual glance, before the snow, will look unexpectedly green as soon as it has gone. It has actually grown beneath it. The lengthened spires about our pump – remind me of flame – as if it were a kind of green flame – allied to fire, as it is the product of the sun.
The Aspen on the RR is beginning to blossom showing the purple or mulberry – in the terminal catkins – though it droops like dead-cat's tails in the rain. It appears about the same date with the elm.
Is it the chickweed so forward by our back door-step?

DOG

V that sentence in Gilpin about – A gentleman might keep a greyhound within ten miles of the forest if he was *lawed*– "*Lawing*, or *expeditation*, was a forest-term for disqualifying a dog to exert such speed, as was necessary to take a deer. It was performed either by cutting out the sole of his foot, or by taking off two of his claws by a chisel, and mallet."
It reminds me of the majority of human hounds that tread the forests paths of this world – they go slightly limping in their gait as if disqualified by a cruel fate to overtake the nobler game of the forest – their natural quarry– Most men are such dogs. Ever & anon starting a quarry – with perfect scent which from this cruel maiming & disqualification of the fates he is incapable of coming up with. Does not the noble dog shed tears?
Gilpin on the subject of docking horse's tails – thinks that leaving the tail may even help the racer to fly toward the goal
I notice that the sterile blossoms of that large catkin'd early willow begin to open on the side of the catkin – like a tinge of golden light – gradually spreading & expanding over the whole surface & lifting their anthers far & wide. The stem of these sterile catkins is more reddish smoother & slenderer than that of the female ones (pale flowered) which is darker & downy

April 18, Sunday: The ground is now generally bare of snow – though it lies along walls & on the north sides of vallies in the woods – pretty deep – We have had a great deal of foul weather this season – scarcely two fair days together.
Gray refers the cone-like excrescences on the ends of willow twigs to the punctures of insects. I think that both these & the galls of the oak &c are to be regarded as something more normal than this implies. Though it is impossible to draw the line between disease & health at last
Day before yesterday I brought home some twigs of that earliest large oval catkinned willow just over Hubbards Bridge on the right-hand – a male tree. The anthers just beginning to show themselves (not **quite** so forward as those above the Dea. Hosmer House which I have thought to be the same.) They looked much the worse for the rain. Catkins about 1 inch long. not being (much expanded yet) opening a little below the apex 2 stamens to a scale. There are smaller female bushes further on on the left – catkins about the same size with greenish ovaries, stalked & rather small & slightly reddish stigmas. 4 divided. I thought this the other sex of the same tree.
There is also the very gray-hard-wood-like willow at the bars just beyond Hubbards brook with long cylindrical caterpillar like catkins – which do not yet show their yellow – And 3dly opposite the 1st name i.e. the other side the way a smaller catkined willow not yet showing its yellow – – 4thly near the Conantum swamp sterile catkins **in blossom** on a bush willow $1^{1}/_{4}$ inches long – more forward than any – but the stamens 1 to a bract or scale & bifid or trifid or quatrifid toward the top!! 5thly what I should think the S. humilis i.e. of **Muhl**. shows its small catkins now – but not yet blossoms.
I still feel stiff places in the swamps where there is ice still. Saw yesterday on an apple tree in company with the fringilla hiemalis an olivaceous backed – yellow throated & yellow-brown spotted breast about the same size or a little less than they. – the first of the late coming or passing – or the summer birds? When we have got to these colors the olivaceous & yellow – then the sun is high in the sky. The fringilla hiemalis is the most common bird at present.
Was pleased to observe yesterday in the woods a new method (to me) which the wood chopper had invented to

keep up his corded wood – where he could not drive a stake on account of the frost. He had set up the stake on the surface – then looped several large birch withes once about it – resting the wood on their ends – as he carried up the pile – or else he used a forked stick – thus –

ELLERY CHANNING

2 Pm to River: A driving rain i.e. a rain with Easterly wind & driving mists. River higher than before this season – about 18 inches of the highest arch of the stone arch above water. Going through Dennis' field with C. saw a flock of geese [**Canada Goose** ***Branta canadensis***] on E. side of river near willows. 12 great birds on the troubled surface of the meadow delayed by the storm. We lay on the ground behind an oak & our umbrella 80 rods off & watched them. Soon we heard a gun go off but could see no smoke in the mist & rain. & the whole flock rose spreading their great wings & flew with clangor a few rods & lit in the water again – then swam swiftly toward our shore – with outstretched necks. I knew them first from ducks by their long necks. Soon appeared the man running toward the shore in vain in his great coat. But he soon retired in vain. We remained close under our umbrella by the tree – ever and anon looking through a peep hole between the umbrella & the tree at the birds – on they came, sometimes in 2 sometimes in 3 squads – warily – till we could see the steel blue & green reflections from their necks. We held the dog close the while C lying on his back in the rain had him in his arms – and thus we gradually edged round on the ground in this cold wet windy storm keeping our feet to the tree & the great calf of a dog with his eyes shut in our arms. We laughed well at our adventure. They swam fast. & warily – seeing our umbrella, occasionally one expanded a grey wing. They showed white on breasts. And not till after half an hour – sitting cramped & cold & wet on the ground did we leave them. Ducks also were on the meadow. I have seen more ducks within a few days than ever before. They are apparently delayed here by the backwardness of the season. Yesterday the river was full of them. It proves a serious storm The point of pines left by Britton on Hubbard's meadow. looks very dark in the mist. We cannot see more than 80 rods before as we walk. Saw a sizeable hawk in the meadow at N meadow crossing with a white rump – – (the hen-harrier (?)) The catkins of the Alnus incana at Jennie's are longer than ever – 3 or 4 inches. Somebody keeps his minnows there in a barrel – Observed a thistle just springing up in the meadow – a disk of green a few inches in diameter in the midst of the old decayed leaves – which now being covered with rain drops beaded – & edged the close packed leaves **with purple** made a very rich sight – The green leaves of the thistle in a dense disk edged with purple & covered with bead-like rain drops – just springing from the meadow It reminded me of some delicious fruit – all ripe – quite flat. – We sought the desert it is so agreeable to cross the sand in wet weather. You might dig into the sand for dryness. I saw where somebody appeared to have dug there for turtles eggs. The catkins of some willows – silvery & not yet blossomed – covered with rain – like dew look like snow or frost – sleet adhereing to the twigs. The andromeda in Tarbells swamp – does not look so fresh – nor red now – Does it require a sunny day? The buds of the balm of gilead coated with a gummy substance – mahogany (?) colored have already a fragrant odor – Heard the cackling of geese from over the ministerial swamp & soon appeared 28 geese [**Canada Goose** ***Branta canadensis***] that flew over our heads toward the other river we had left – we now near the Black birches. With these great birds in it the air seems for the first time inhabited. We detect holes in their wings. Their Clank expresses anxiety.

DOG

The most interesting fact perhaps at present is these few tender yellow blossoms these half expanded sterile aments of the willow – seen through the rain & cold signs of the advancing year – pledges of the sun's return. Anything so delicate both in structure in color & in fragrance contrasts strangely with surrounding nature & feeds the faith of man. The fields are acquiring a greenish tinge.

The birds which I see & hear in the midst of the storm are robins – song sparrows **[*Melospiza* *melodia*]** blackbirds and crows **[American Crow** ***Corvus Brachyrhynchos*]** occasionally.

This is the spring of the year – Birds are migrating northward to their breeding places; the melted snows are escaping to the sea. We have now the unspeakable rain of the Greek winter. The element of water prevails. The river has far overflown its channel. What a conspicuous place nature has assigned to the skunk cabbage – first flower to show itself above the bare ground! What occult relation is implied between this plant & man? Most buds have expanded perceptibly – show some greenness or yellowness. Universally nature relaxes somewhat of her rigidity – yields to the influence of heat. Each day the grass springs & is greener. The skunk cabbage is inclosed in its spathe but the willow catkin expands its bright yellow blossoms without fear at the end of its twigs. & the fertile flower of the hazel – has elevated its almost invisible crimson star of stigmas above the sober & barren earth.

The sight of the sucker floating on the meadow at this season affects me singularly. as if it were a fabulous or mythological fish – realizing my **idea** of a fish – It reminds me of pictures of dolphins or of proteus. I see it for what it is – not an actual terrene fish – but the fair symbol of a divine idea – the design of an artist – its color & form – its gills & fins & scales – are perfectly beautiful – because they completely express to my mind what they were intended to express – It is as little fishy as a fossil fish. Such a form as is sculptured on ancient monuments and will be to the end of time. – made to point a moral. I am serene & satisfied when the birds fly

& the fishes swim as in fable, for the moral is not far off. When the migration of the goose is significant and has a moral to it. When the events of the day have a mythological character & the most trivial is symbolical.
For the first time I perceive this spring that the year is a circle – I see distinctly the spring arc thus far. It is drawn with a firm line. Every incident is a parable of the great teacher. The cranberries washed up in the meadows & into the road on the causeways now yields a pleasant acid.
Why should just these sights & sounds accompany our life? Why should I hear the chattering of blackbirds – why smell the skunk each year? I would fain explore the mysterious relation between myself & these things. I would at least know what these things unavoidably are – – make a chart of our life – know how its shores trend – that butterflies reappear & when – know why just this circle of creatures completes the world. Can I not by expectation affect the revolutions of nature – make a day to bring forth something new?
As Cawley loved a garden, so I a forest. Observe all kinds of coincidences – as what kinds of birds come with what flowers.
An East Wind, I hear the clock strike plainly 10 or 11. Pm.

 April 22. It still rains. The water is over the road at Flints Bridge–and, as I am told, has been for some time over the J. Miles road in the corner–& near the further stone Bridge. So that there is now only the Boston road open–unless we regard the walden road as coming from wayland and not from Lee's bridge. At 9 Am it was $5^{1}/_{2}$ inches higher than the E end of the Eastern truss horizontal part on the S side of the stone Bridge. Up to the top of the lowest stone step on the N side E end of R R bridge. Mr stacy thinks it was higher 30 years ago when a man horse & sleigh were washed off the Red Bridge road & lodged against a tree in the meadow. And Sam. Barrett thinks it was about 1 foot higher some 35 years ago.– Water a foot deep on Woods Bridge road. Abel Hunt saw a flock of geese [**Canada Goose** ***Branta canadensis***] this morning
This flood tempts men to build boats I saw two on the stocks this morning. It is pleasant work to see progressing.

P.M. — up river–on E side: It takes this day to clear up gradually–successive sun-showers still make it foul. But the sun feels very warm after the storm. This makes 5 stormy days. Sunday–M–T. W. Thursday. The water slightly agitated looks bright when the sun-shines. Saw 4 hawks soaring high in the heavens over the swamp bridge brook– At first saw 3, said to myself there must be 4 & found the fourth. Glad are they no doubt to be out after being confined by the storm. I hear bees (?) humming near the brook, which reminded me of the telegraph harp.– I love to see the dull gravity even stolidity of the farmer opposed to the fluency of the lawyer or official person. The farmer sits silent not making any pretensions nor feeling any responsibility even to apprehend the other–while the judge or Governor talks glibly and with official despatch all lost on the farmer who minds it not but looks out for the main chance with his great inexpressive face & his 2 small eyes looking the first in the face & rolling a quid in the back part of his mouth. The lawyer is wise in deeds but the farmer who buys land puts the pertinent questions respecting the title. I observe the *Parmelia saxatilis* in many places now turned a pinkish red. The Yellow lily leaves appear no more advanced than when I first observed them.
A strange dog accompanied us today–a hunting dog–gyrating about us at a great distance–beating every bush & barking at the birds. with great spead–gyrating his tail too all the while. I thought of what Gilpin says, that he sailed & steered by means of his tail– Sat under Potter's oak, the ground thickly strewn with broken acorn shells & cups & twigs–the short close nibble sward of last year. Our dog sends off a partridge **[Ruffed Grouse** ***Bonasa umbellus*****]** with a whir far across the open field & the river like a winged bullet–

DOG

From Cliffs see much snow on the mts. The Pine on Lee's shore of the Pond seen against the light water this cloudy weather–from part way down the cliff is an agreeable object to me. When **the** outline & texture of white pine is thus seen against the water or the sky it is an affecting sight. The shadow of the cliff on Conantum in the semi-sunshine with indistinct edge & a reddish tinge from bushes here & there!
I want things to be incredible–too good to appear true. C. says "after you have been to the P.O. once you are dammed."– but I answer that it depends somewhat on whether you get a letter or not. If you would be wise learn science & then forget it.[15]
A boat on the river–on the white surface looks black–& the boatman like Charon. I see swarms of gnats in the air. What is that grass with a yellow blossom which I find now on the cliff–? Carex marginata (?) Early Sedge– the earliest grass that flowers. It is the contrast between sunshine & storm that is most pleasing– –the gleams of sunshine in the midst of the storm are the most memorable. Saw that winkle-like fungus *fresh & green* covering an oak stump today with concentric marks–spirally arranged sometimes in a circle. very handsome I love this apparent exuberance of nature.
The maples in the side swamp near well meadow are arranged nearly in a circle in the water. This strange dog has good habits for a companion he keeps so distant– He never trusts himself near us though he accompanies us for miles. On the most retired the wildest & craggiest hill side you will find some old road by which the teamster carted off the wood– It is pleasant some times looking 30 or 40 rods into an open wood where the

trunks of the trees are plainly seen & patches of soft light on the ground. The hylas peep now in full chorus, but are silent on my side of the pond. The water at 6 Pm is $1^{1}/_{2}$ inches higher than in the morning, *i.e.* 7 inches above the iron truss. The strain of the Red wing [**Red-winged Blackbird** ***Agelaius phoeniceus***] on the willow spray over the water to-night is liquid bubbling–watery–almost like a tinkling fountain in perfect harmony with the meadow– It oozes, trickles, tinkles, bubbles from his throat. *bob-y-lee-e-e* & then its shrill fine whistle.

AURORA

The villagers walk the streets & talk of the great rise of waters.

At 10 Pm the northern lights are flashing – like some grain sown broadcast in the sky. I hear the hylas peep on the meadow as I stand at the door.

The early sedge (?) grows on the side of the Cliffs in little tufts with small yellow blossoms – *i.e.* with yellow anthers low in the grass.

Mr Holbrook tells me he heard & saw martins **[Purple Martin** ***Progne subis***] yesterday.

15. Bradley P. Dean says that Henry Thoreau combined this with a reference to MARK 8:36 in the construction of his early lecture "WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT" paragraph number 73:

BRAD DEAN'S COMMENTARY

> [Paragraph 73] When our life ceases to be inward and private, conversation degenerates into mere gossip. I rarely meet a man who can tell me any news which he has not read in a newspaper, and for the most part the only difference between me and my fellow is that he has seen the paper and I have not. But the London Times is not one of the Muses. When a man's inward life fails he begins to go more constantly to the post office, and despatches couriers to the other side of the globe; and so again he gains the whole world and loses his own soul.

June 5, Saturday: Evelina E. Vannevar Slack wrote to Charles Wesley Slack about family matters.

Henry Thoreau made an entry in his journal that he was later to copy into his early lecture "WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT" as:

DOG

> [Paragraph 82] Pray let us live without being drawn by dogs —Esquimaux fashion— a scrambling pack tearing over hill and vale —— & biting each other's ears. What a despicable mode of progressing to be drawn by a pack of dogs —Why not by a flock of mice?

He also made an entry in his journal in regard to lupines which indicates some familiarity, picked up somewhere in some context of his life not yet documented, with the BOOK OF JOB:

> The lupine is now in its glory. It is the more important because it occurs in such extensive patches even an acre or more together — and of such a pleasing variety of colors, purple — pink or lilac — and white — especially with the sun on it, when the transparency of the flower makes its color changeable. It paints a whole hill side with its blue — making such a field — (if not meadow) as Proserpine might have wandered in. Its leaf was made to be covered with dew drops— I am quite excited by this prospect of blue flowers in clumps with narrow intervals— Such a profusion of the heavenly — the elysian color — as if these were the elysian fields. They say the seeds look like babies' faces and hence the flower is so named. No other flowers exhibit so much blue. That is the value of the lupine The earth is blued with them. Yet a third of a mile distant I do not detect their color on the hill side— Perchance because it is the color of the air. It is not **distinct** enough. You passed along here perchance a fortnight ago & the hill-side was comparatively barren — but now you come & these glorious redeemers appear to have flashed out here all at once. Who planted the seeds of lupines in the barren soil? Who watereth the lupines in the fields?

At about this point Orestes Augustus Brownson wrote to Father Isaac Hecker.

Harriet Beecher Stowe's UNCLE TOM'S CABIN.

June 5. The medcoia has blossomed in a tumbler. I seem to perceive a pleasant fugacious fragrance from its rather delicate but inconspicuous green flower. Its whorls of leaves of two stages are the most remarkable. I do not perceive the smell of the cucumber in its root.
To Harrington's, P.M. The silver cinquefoil (*Potentilla argentea*) now, a delicate spring-yellow, sunny-yellow (before the dog-days) flower; none of the fire of autumnal yellows in it. Its silvery leaf is as good as a flower. Whiteweed.
The constant inquiry which nature puts is: "Are you virtuous? Then you can behold me." Beauty, fragrance, music, sweetness, and joy of all kinds are for the virtuous. That I thought when I heard the telegraph harp to-day. Raspberry some days since. The leaves of young oaks are full-grown. The *Viburnum lentago*, if that edged petiole marks it enough. The *Veratrum viride*, with its green and yellowish flower. Umbelled thesium, which has shown its buds so long. The *Viola lanceolata* now, instead of the *V. blanda*. In some places the leaves of the last are grown quite large. The sidesaddle-flowers. The *Thalictrum anemonoides* still. The dwarf cornel by Harrington's road looks like large snowflakes on the hillside, it is so thick. It is a neat, geometrical flower, of a pure white, sometimes greenish, or green. The white spruce cones are an inch and a half long. The larch cones appear not so red yet as they will be. Can it be that. earliest potentilla that now stands up so high in open pine woods and wood-paths, -a foot high? The *simplex* variety? There is now froth on the white and pitch pines, at the base of the new shoots, which are from three to six inches long. Some meadows are quite white with the cotton-grass. White clover now. Some rye-fields are almost fully grown, where it appears to have sown itself. It is commonly two feet high. Those great roots belong to the yellow lily. Some poet must sing in praise of the

bulbous arethusa.

The lupine is now in its glory. It is the more important because it occurs in such extensive patches, even an acre or more together, and of such a pleasing variety of colors, -purple, pink, or lilac, and white, - especially with the sun on it, when the transparency of the flower makes its color changeable. It paints a whole hillside with its blue, making such a field (if not meadow) as Proserpine might have wandered in. Its leaf was made to be covered with dewdrops. I am quite excited by this prospect of blue flowers in clumps with narrow intervals. Such a profusion of the heavenly, the elysian, color, as if these were the Elysian Fields. They say the seeds look like babies' faces, and hence the flower is so earned. No other flowers exhibit so much blue. That is the value of the lupine. The earth is blued with them. Yet a third of a mile distant I do not detect their color on the hillside. Perchance because it is the color of the air. It is not *distinct* enough. You passed along here, perchance, a fortnight ago, and the hillside was comparatively barren, but now you come and these glorious redeemers appear to have flashed out here all at once. Who planted the seeds of lupines in the barren soil? Who watereth the lupines in the fields?

Distinguished the *Geum rivale*, water avens, in James P. Brown's meadow, a drooping, half-closed, purplish-brown flower, with a strawberry-looking fruit. The *Erigeron bellidifolius*, robin's-plantain (may it be the *E. Philadelphicus*?), that rather rose-purple flower which looks like an early aster. A rather delicate and interesting flower, flesh-colored.

Pray let us live without. being drawn by dogs, Esquimaux-fashion, a scrambling pack tearing over hill and vale and biting each other's ears. What a despicable mode of progressing, to be drawn by a pack of clogs! Why not by a flock of mice?

DOG

De Kay, of the New York Report, says the bream "is of no value as an article of food, but is often caught for amusement!" I think it is the sweetest fish in our river.

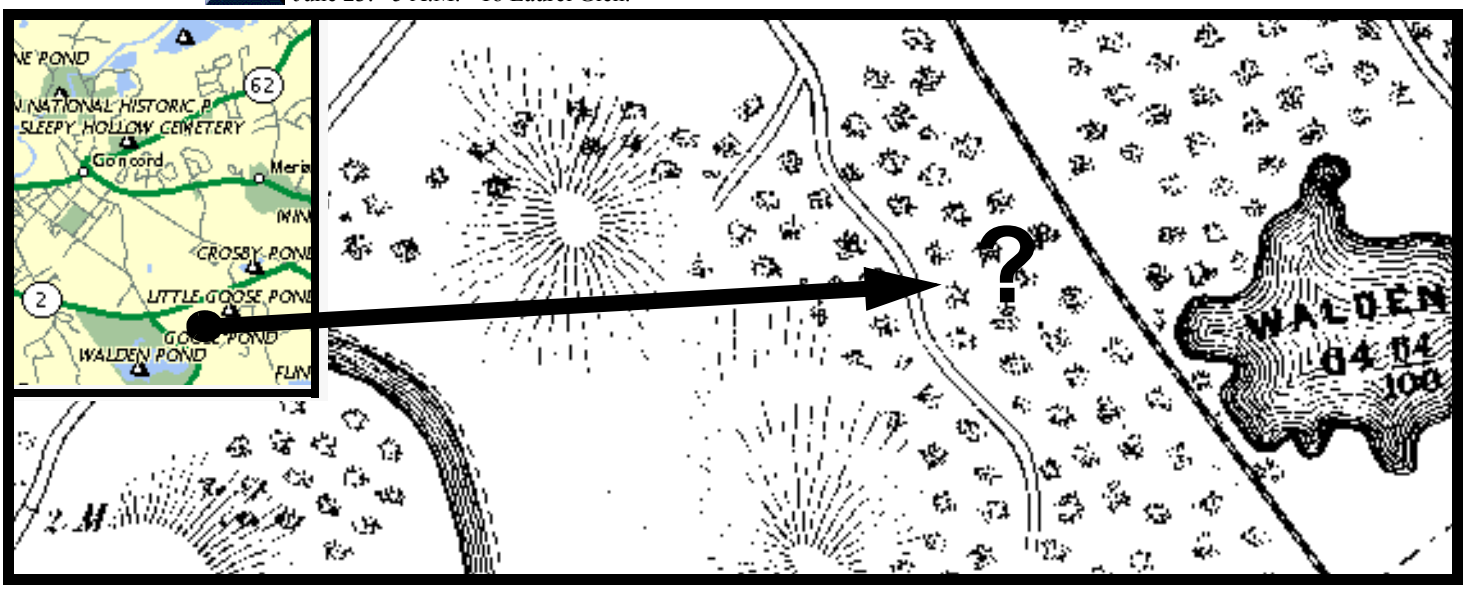
Richardson says that white bears and arctic foxes frequent the most northern land discovered.

JAMES ELLSWORTH DE KAY

Boys are bathing at Hubbard's Bend playing with a boat. (I at the willows) The color of their bodies in the sun at a distance is pleasing, the not often seen flesh color— I hear the sound of their sport borne over the water. As yet we have not man in nature. What a singular fact for an angel visitant to this earth to carry back in his note book, that men were forbidden to expose their bodies under the severest penalties.— A pale pink which the sun would soon tan. White men! There are no white men to contrast with the red & the black—they are of such colors as the weaver gives them. I wonder that the dog knows his master when he goes in to bathe & does not stay by his clothes.

DOG

June 23: 5 A.M. –To Laurel Glen.



The bobolink still sings, though not as in May. The tall buttercups do not make so much show in the meadows, methinks, as the others did. Or are they beaten down by last night's rain? The small Solomon's-seal is going out of flower and shows small berries. The pretty little *Mitchella repens*, with its twin flowers, spots the ground under the pines with its downy-petalled, cross-shaped flowers and its purplish buds. Gray's *Pyrola asarifolia* (?) for some days, with small roundish thick leaves, and his *P. secunda*, or one-sided pyrola, apparently a little later. Another ripe amelanchier berry, red inclining to purple, with a still downy peduncle, so I suppose it is Bigelow's *Pyrus ovalis*. This is the next fruit after the strawberry. I suppose the June berry (blue berry) [*sic*] will be the next. The first amelanchier berry I tasted corresponded in leaf to Bigelow's *P. sanginea*, which is a tree, though that was a low shrub. The grass is not nearly so wet after thunder-showers in the night as after an ordinary dew. Apparently the rain falls so swiftly and hard that it does not rest on the leaves, and then there is no more moisture to be deposited in dew. Yellow diervilla must have been in bloom about a week. Round-leaved cornel resembles the panicled in flower. The mountain laurel, with its milk-white flower, in cool and shady woods, reminds one of the vigor of nature. It is perhaps a first-rate flower, considering its size and evergreenness. Its flower-buds, curiously folded in a tenangled pyramidal form, are remarkable. A profusion of flowers, with am innocent fragrance. It reminds me of shady mountain-sides where it forms the underwood. I hear my old Walden owl. Its first note is almost like a somewhat peevish scream or squeal of a child shrugging its shoulders, and then succeed two more moderate and musical ones. The wood thrush [**Wood Thrush** ***Catharus mustelina***] sings at all hours. I associate it with the cool morning, sultry noon, and serene evening. At this hour it suggests a cool vigor.

What I have called the dwarf choke-cherry is the *Cerasus Pennsylvanica* of Gray, *i.e*. wild red cherry. We have also the *C. Virginiana* (or *obovata* of Bigelow), the true choke-cherry, with a raceme. Both their fruits are now the size of small peas. When does the last blossom? Bigelow says a fortnight before the *serotina*. The herd's-grass shows its tops.

DOG

P.M. — To the mountain laurel in Mason's pasture in Carlisle *via* old Carlisle road.

1 hear the trilled dream of many toads from a *roadside* pool, though not quite so loud, perchance, as in the spring, and from time to time, when very near, a sound somewhat like a hoarse chicken. It is what I call a *washing* day, such as we sometimes have when buttercups first appear in the spring, an agreeably cool and clear

and breezy day, when all things appear as if washed bright and shine, and, at this season especially, the sound of the wind rustling the leaves is like the rippling of a stream, and you see the light-colored under side of the still fresh foliage, and a sheeny light is reflected from the bent grass in the meadows. Haze and sultriness are far off. The air is cleared and cooled by yesterday's thunder-storms. The river too has a fine, cool, silvery sparkle or sheen on it. You can see far into the horizon, and you can hear the sound of crickets with such feelings as in the cool morning.

The Canada thistles begin to show their purple. What great thistle is that by the wall near Dakin's, not yet in bloom? In the Carlisle road, the rather slender veiny-leaved hawkweed. Rattlesnake-weed is in blossom quite commonly, like a small elevated dandelion on a slender stalk taking the place of the true. These slight yellow flowers to cheer the traveller here; also a *Hieracaeum scabrum* (rough) or else *Gronovii* (hairy) of Gray. I saw one of *these last the* 19*th*. These little hawkweeds are to me a rather interesting family, so unpretending, or if only because they make so distinct or marked a family by themselves. Also the barberry bushes sang now with small reddish-green fruit, and green huckleberries grow in this grassy road. Cheered by these promises, the traveller holds on his way. But I travel chiefly in the fields or pastures parallel with the road.

These are very agreeable pastures to me; no house in sight, no cultivation. I sit under a large white oak, upon its swelling instep, which makes an admirable seat, and look forth over these pleasant rocky and bushy pastures, where for the most part there are not even cattle to graze them, but patches of huckleberry bushes, and birches, and pitch pines, and barberry bushes, and creeping juniper in great circles, its edges curving upward, and wild roses spotting the green with red, and numerous tufts of indigo-weed, and, above all, great gray boulders lying about far and near, with some bayberry bush, perchance, growing halfway up them; and, between all, the short sod of the pasture here and there appears.

The beauty and fragrance of the wild rose are wholly agreeable and wholesome and wear well, and I do not wonder much that men have given the preference to this family of flowers, notwithstanding their thorns. It is hardy and more complete in its parts than most flowers, -its color, buds, fragrance, leaves, the whole bush, frequently its stem in particular, and finally its red or scarlet hips. Here is the sweet-briar in blossom, which to a fragrant flower adds more fragrant leaves. I take the wild rose buds to my chamber and put them in a pitcher of water, and they will open there the next day, and a single flower will perfume a room; and then, after a day, the petals drop off, and new buds open.

I am inclined to think that my hat, whose lining is gathered in midway so as to make a shelf, is about as good a botany-box as I could have and far more convenient, and there is something in the darkness and the vapors that arise from the head-at least if you take a bath-which preserves flowers through a long walk. Flowers will frequently come fresh out of this botany box at the end of the day, though they have had no sprinkling.

As I walk through these old deserted wild orchards, half pasture, half huckleberry-field, the air is filled with fragrance from I know not what source. How much purer and sweeter it must be than the atmosphere of the streets, rendered impure by the filth about our houses! It is quite offensive often when the air is heavy at night. The roses in the front yard do not atone for the sink and pigsty and cow-yard and jakes in the rear.

I sit on one of these boulders and look south to Ponkawtasset. Looking west, whence the wind comes, you do not see the under sides of the leaves, but, looking east, every bough shows its under side; those of the maples are particularly white. All leaves tremble like aspen leaves. Perhaps on those westward hills where I walked last Saturday the fields are somewhat larger than commonly with us, and I expand with a sense of freedom. The side of the hill commonly makes but one field. They begin to partake of the character of upcountry pastures a little more. Two or three large boulders, fifteen or twenty feet square, make a good foreground in this landscape, for the gray color of the rock contrasts well with the green of the surrounding and more distant hills and woods and fields. They serve instead of cottages for a wild landscape as perches or *points d'appui* for the eye.

The red color of cattle, also, is agreeable in a landscape; or let them be what color they may, — red, black, white, or mouse-color, or spotted, all which I have seen this afternoon. The cows which, confined to the barn or barn-yard all winter, were covered with filth, after roaming in flowery pastures possess now clean and shining coats, and the cowy odor is without alloy. Indeed they ina.ke such an impression of neatness (I think of a white cow, spotted with red, and her two sizable calves of like color, which I saw; this afternoon) that one who was unacquainted with etymology might be excused if he gave a new signification to the word neat as applied to cattle, and slid not refer it to *knittan*, to butt (*i.e.* horned cattle).

It seems natural that rocks which have lain under the heavens so long should be gray, as it were an intermediate color between the heavens and the earth. The air is the thin paint in which they have been dipped and brushed with the wind. Water, which is more fluid and like the sky in its nature, is still more like it in color. Time will make the most discordant materials harmonize.

I see the silk-green-abdomened fly on cow-dung in the road.

There are some very handsome white pines and pine groves on the left of the road just before you enter the woods. They are of second growth, of course, broad and perfect, with limbs almost to the ground, and almost as broad as they are high, their fine leaves trembling with silvery light, very different from the tall masts of the primitive wood, naked of limbs beneath and crowded together. So soft, and with such a mass of foliage through which the wind soughs. But you must be careful how you sit beneath them on account of pitch. Somewhat of a

conical form.
This grassy road now dives into the wood, as if it were entering a cellar or bulkhead, the shadow is so deep. June is the first month for shadows. How is it in July? And now I scent the pines. I plucked a blue geranium in a meadow near the Kibbe Place, which appeared to me remarkably fragrant, like lilies and strawberries combined. The path I cut through the swamp late last fall is much more grown up than I expected. The sweet fragrance of swamp-pinks fills all the swamps, and when I look down, I see commonly the leaf of the gold-thread. The mountain laurels in Mason's pasture have not a blossom. They appear to have been partly killed by the winter or else late frosts; the leaves many of them are turned red and dead. And yet they sometimes blossom, for 1 see the remains of former flowers. They grow in the open pasture. Here is another pasture, with fields of sweet-fern bushes, and the humble but beautiful red lambkill everywhere, alone or mingled with other shrubs. Ever the walker will be attracted by some deeper red blossom than usual. You cannot bring it home in good condition; else, perchance, it would be better known. With white pines and birches, beginning to prevail over the grass.
There are interesting groves of young soft white pines eighteen feet high, whose vigorous yellowish-green shoots of this season, from three to eighteen inches long, at the extremities of all the branches, contrast remarkably with the dark green of the old leaves. I observe that these shoots are bent and, what is more remarkable, all one way, *i.e.* to the east, almost at a right angle the topmost ones, and I am reminded of the observation in Henry's Adventures, that the Indians guided themselves in cloudy weather by this mark. All these shoots, excepting those low down on the east side, are bent toward the east. I am very much pleased with this observation, confirming that of the Indians. I was singularly impressed when I first observed that all the young pines in this pasture obeyed this law, without regard to the direction of the wind or the shelter of other trees. To make myself more sure of the direction, as it was not easy to determine it exactly, standing on one side, where so many shoots were bent in the air, I went behind the trees on the west till the bent shoot appeared as a straight line, and then, by observing my shadow and guessing at the time of day, I decided that their direction was due east. This gives me more satisfaction than any observation which I leave tirade for a long time. This is true of the rapidly growing shoots. How long will this phenomenon avail to guide the traveller? How soon do they become erect? A natural compass. How few civilized men probably have ever made oracle this observation, so important to the savage! How much may there have been known to his woodcraft which has not been detected by science! At first I remarked the shoots of a distinct yellowish green, contrasting with the rest of the tree, then that they were not upright but bent more or less, and next that they were all inclined one way, as if bent by the wind, and finally that they were all bent east, without regard to the wind.
On the side of this pasture, I hear the red-eye in the swamp and the cool peep of a robin who has young, amid the pines. How quick are cattle and horses to hear the step of a walker! I pass much nearer to men at work in a field without being observed than to cattle or horses feeding. The latter hear me or, perchance, scent me if they do not look up. I observed a bullock this afternoon, when all his companions on a side-hill were already looking at me, suddenly whirl round to stare, as if he had detected from their attitude that some object engaged them. Then how curiously a whole herd will leave off grazing, and stare till you have passed, and if you have a dog, will think of their calves and make demonstrations of tossing him!
I returned to the bridle road and thence over Hubbard's oak grove hill. We have few handsome open oak groves left, but holy handsome and cool and bosky they look in this breezy weather!
From N. Barrett's road I look over the Great Meadows. The meadows are the freshest, the greenest green in the landscape, and I do not (at thus hour, at any rate) see any bent grass light. The river is a singularly deep living blue, the bluest blue, such as I rarely observe, and its shore is silvered with white maples, which show the under sides of their leaves, stage upon stage, in leafy towers. Methinks the leaves continue to show their under sides some time after the wind has done blowing. The southern edge of the meadow is also silvered with (I suppose) the red maple. Then there is the darker green of the forest, and the reddish, brownish, and bluish green of grass-lands and pastures and grain-fields, and the light-blue sky. There are not clouds enough in the sky to attract you to-day.
The sweet-briar bud which I brought home opened in the night. Is that the habit of roses?
The wood thrush [***Catharus*** ***mustelina***] sings at all hours. I associate it with the cool morning, sultry noon, and serene evening. At this hour it suggests a cool vigor.

DOG


June 24. P.M. —To White Pond.
The keys of the white ash cover the trees profusely, a sort of mulberry brown, an inch and a half long, handsome.
The *Vaccinium macrocarpon*, probably for some days.
The *Calopogon pulchellus* (*Cymbidium* of Bigelow), grass pink of some, a, pretty purple arethusa-like flower in a shady low copse on Corner road, near the *Asclepias quadrifolia*, a rather striking flower with two umbels of small pink and white flowers standing above the surrounding herbage. *Spiræa salicifolia* by the roadsides. *Archangelica atropurpurea*, interesting for its great umbels and vigorous growth of its purplish

but ranksmelling stem. It is one of the most forward early leaves in warm springy places. I perceive excrescences on the grape leaves and vines, resembling in their form and disposition the grape clusters that are to be.
The drifting white downy clouds are to the landsman what sails on the sea are to him that dwells by the shore, — objects of a large, diffusive interest. When the laborer lies on the grass or in the shade for rest, they do not much tax or weary his attention. They are unobtrusive. I have not heard that white clouds, like white houses, made any one's eyes ache. They are the flitting sails in that ocean whose bound no man has visited. They are like all great themes, always at hand to be considered, or they float over us unregarded. Far away they float in the serene sky, the most inoffensive of objects, or, near and low, they smite us with their lightnings and deafen us with their thunder. We know no Ternate nor Tidore grand enough whither we can imagine them bound. There are many mare's-tails to-day, if that is the name. What would a man learn by watching the clouds? The objects which go over our heads unobserved are vast and indefinite. Even those clouds which have the most distinct and interesting outlines are commonly below the zenith, somewhat low in the heavens, and seen on one side. They are among the most glorious objects in nature. A sky without clouds is a meadow without flowers, a sea without sails. Some days we have the mackerel fleet. But our devilishly industrious laborers rarely lie in the shade. How much better if they were to take their nooning like the Italians, relax and expand and never do any work in the middle of the day, enjoy a little Sabbath in the middle of the day.
I still perceive that wonderful fragrance from the meadow (?) on the Corner causeway, intense as ever. It is one of those effects whose cause it is best not to know, perchance. Uncommonly cool weather now, after warm days and nights for a week or snore. I see many grasshoppers for the first time (only single ones before), in the grass in the White Pond road. They describe a thousand little curves as I walk, with an ominous dry rustling of their wings, about three quarters of an inch long. Come to eat the grass? It is the biggest game our dog starts. Much of the June grass is dead. Most of it in Dry fields.

White Pond very handsome to-day. The shore alive with pollywogs of large size, which ripple the water on our approach. There is a fine sparkle on the water, though not equal to the fall one quite. The water is very high, so that you cannot walk round it, but it is the more pleasant while you are swimming to see how the trees actually rise out of it on all sides. It bathes their feet. The pines now hold somewhat of a subordinate rank amid the flourishing evergreens. The dog worried a wood chuck half grown — which did not turn its back & run into its hole but backed into it & faced him & us gritting its teeth & prepared to die. But even this little fellow was able to defend himself against the dog with his sharp teeth. That fierce gritting of their teeth is a remarkable habit with these animals. DOG
I am disappointed to notice to-day that most of the pine-top incline to the west, as if the wind had to do with it. The paneled andromeda has froth on it. The *Linnæa borealis* just going out of blossom. I should have found it long ago. Its leaves densely cover the ground.

July 1: 9 1/2 Am to Sherman's Bridge by land & water.
A cloudy and slightly showery morning –following a thunder shower the previous afternoon. One object to see the white lilies in blossom. The trifolium arvense or rabbits Foot Clover is just beginning to show its color –& in the same state is the (I think) Lysimachia stricta or upright Loosestrife? by the Back Road. The mulleins generally now begin to show their pure yellow in road-side fields –and the white cymes of the elder are conspicuous on the edges of the copses. I perceive the meadow fragrance still– From the bridge I see a bream's nest in soft sand on the edge of deeper water — scooped out quite deep with very sharp edges sloping both ways. Some peetweets which probably have eggs in Conants cornfield make a great ado twittering & circling about the dog. DOG
The path by the woodside is red with the effoete staminiferous flowers of the white pine.
It is more agreeable walking this cloudy day with a few harmless sun showers – than it would be in a glaring sunny day – It is pleasant to behold so much of the landscape in the shadow of the clouds. – especially to look off from the top of conantum – under shady walnut boughs to larger shades in vallies – all Nine acre corner in the cool & shade of a cloud. Roses are in their prime now – growing amid huckleberry bushes – ferns – & sweet ferns – especially about some dry pond hole – some paler some more red. Methinks they must have bloomed in vain while only wild men roamed – Yet now they only adorn these cows' pasture – How well behaved are cows! – When they approach me reclining in the shade – from curiosity – or to receive a whisp of grass or to share the shade – or to lick the dog held up – like a calf – though just now they ran at him to toss him – they do not obtrude their company is acceptible for they can endure the longest pause – they have not got to be entertained[16] – They occupy the most eligible lots in the town. I love to see some pure white about them –they DOG

suggest the more neatness. Borrowed Brigham the wheel wright's boat at the Corner Bridge– He was quite ready to lend it –and took pains to shave down the handle of a paddle for me, conversing the while on the subject of spiritual knocking –which he asked if I had looked into –which made him the slower– An obliging man who understands that I am abroad viewing the works of Nature & not loafing –though he makes the pursuit a semi-religious one –as are all more serious ones to most men. All that is not sporting in the field –as hunting & fishing– is of a religious or else love-cracked character. Another hard featured but talkative character at the bridge –inquired as I was unlocking the boat –if I knew anything that was good for the rheumatism –but I answered that I had heard of so many & had so little faith in any that I had forgotten them all. (on Conantum I had found Krigia Virginica, one of the smallest compound flowers.) The white lilies were in all their splendor –fully open –sometimes their lower petals lying flat on the surface– The largest appeared to grow in the shallower water –where some stood 5 or 6 inches out of water –& were 5 inches in diameter– Two which I examined had 29 petals **each**. We pushed our boat into the midst of some shallow bays –where the water not more than a foot deep was covered with pads –& spotted white with many hundreds of lilies which had just expanded –yet perhaps there was not one open which had not an insect in it –and most had some hundreds of small gnats –which however we shook out without much trouble instead of drowning them out which makes the petals close. The freshly opened lilies were a pearly white, and though the water amid the pads was quite unrippled –the passing air gave a slight oscillating boat like motion to & fro to the flowers –like boats held fast by their cables. Some of the lilies had a beautiful rosaceous tinge –most conspicuous in the half opened flower –extending through the calyx to the 2nd row of petals –on those parts of the petals between the calyx leaves which were most exposed to the influence of the light. They were tinged with red –as they are very commonly tinged with green –as if there were a gradual transition from the stamenns to the petals. It seemed to be referred to the same coloring principle which is seen in the under-sides of the pads as well as the calyx leaves. Yet these rosaceous ones are chiefly interesting to me for variety –& I am contented that lilies should be white & leave those higher colors to the land– I wished to breathe the atmosphere of lilies –& get the full impression which lilies are fitted to make. The form of this flower is also very perfect the petals are so distinctly arranged at equal intervals & at all angles from nearly a perpendicular to horizontal about the centre. –And buds that were half expanded were interesting –showing the regularly notched outline of the points of the petals above the erect green calyx leaves–

Some of these bays contained a quarter of an acre –through which we with difficulty forced our boat. 1st there is the low smooth green surface of the pads –some of the Kalmianas purplish –then the higher level of the pickerel weed just beginning to blossom –& rising a little higher in the rear –often extensive fields of **pipes** (Equisetum) making a very level appearance.

Mingled with the white lilies were the large yellow ones & the smaller & here at least much more common Nuphar lutea (var Kalmiana), –and the floating heart also still in blossom –& the Brasenia petata water target or shield –not yet in bloom –the petiole attached to its teat –like a boys string to his sucking leather– The rich violet purple of the pontederias was the more striking as the blossoms were still rare– Nature will soon be very lavish of this blue along the river sides– It is a rich spike of blue flowers with yellowish spots.– Over all these flowers hover devils needles –in their zig-zag flight– On the edge of the meadow I see blushing roses –& cornels (probably the panicled) The woods ring with the veery –this cloudy day –& I also hear the red-eye –oven bird –maryland yellow throat &c– In shallow places the river is for long distances filled quite bridged over with the leaves of the potamogeton natans –the direction of whose stems at least may show which way the

16. William M. White's version is:

How well-behaved are cows!
When they approach me reclining in the shade,
From curiosity,
Or to receive a whisp of grass,
Or to share the shade,
Or to lick the dog held up, like a calf, —
Though just now they ran at him to toss him,—
They do not obtrude.
Their company is acceptable,
For they can endure the longest pause:
They have not got to be entertained.

DOG

sluggish water is inclined– You frequently see a blue devil's needle resting on a potamogeton flower– (raceme?) You will see one red wing in the midst of many dusky females making a great chattering over some particular part of the meadow –or else chasing a female in zig-**zag**? **curves**– What are those taller grasses –now beaded– in the meadow?
After eating our lunchion at Rice's landing –we observed that every white lily in the river was shut –and they remained so all the afternoon –though it was no more sunny nor cloudy than the forenoon –except some which I had plucked before noon & cast into the river –which floating down lodged amid the pondweed –which continued fresh –but had not the power to close their petals– It would be interesting to observe how instantaneously these lilies close at noon– I only observed that though there were myriads fully open before I ate my lunch at noon –after dinner I could not find one open anywhere for the rest of the day. Continuing up the river –we saw the Comarum palustre marsh cinquefoil in blossom– Its leaf is more noticeable than its flower– The last incloses a strawberry-like fruit. These leaves make very rich & rare looking beds alternating with the pontederia & button bush– It is so foreign looking a leaf– Oppisite the mouth of the pantry brook or a little more w. I saw the leaves & flower buds of the Peltandra Virginica– (Calla) Though Gray says its leaves have "shorter & more obtuse lobes" than the Sagittaria. Being made thirsty with our herring we left our boat at the great bend & went inland to the fine cool spring near the Jenkins House– Found the Polygonum sagitatum Scratch Grass just blossoming in the meadows. & an abundance of the marsh speedwell & of pogonias (adder's tongue arethusas) The erect scaped pyrola– The jersey tea almost in bloom and close by the Jenkins House in Wayland the privet ligustrum vulgare– At the spring where much forget me not grows now in bloom –I found ripe of a dark red color –what I think must be Grays rubus triflorus Dwarf raspberry –though it was in a **meadow** –a pleasant lively acid fruit– It was running over some sand cast out in digging a ditch –& I observed none so large or edible elsewhere– This is the 4th kind of berry I have found ripe this season. I must see it again. It tastes & looks like a cross between a raspberry & a blackberry. It may be this whose flowers I observed so early in Hubbard's Grove swamp–? I drank some high colored water from a little stream in the meadow –for I love to drink the water of the meadow or the river I pass the day on –& so get eyes to see it with– The potamogeton leaves redden the stream in shoal places & retard the progress of our boat– The lowest front ranks of the riparial plants beyond the pad are the smaller leaved polygonum beds not yet in bloom –then the Pontederia –or perchance (in some places the marsh cinquefoil— — then the meadow-grass –or pipes –or sweet flag –or button bushes –with their lower limbs & stems covered –is it with a parasitic moss-like plant? This might be called the potamogeton river. The leaves now both on land & in water are eaten by insects –& have been for some weeks. There is hardly a whole pad or potamogeton leaf– They are curiously eaten –often only half through –often in direct straight lines across the pads –as it were skippingly –or as if they had been raked with shot. Their under sides are covered with eggs of insects as on land. Counted 21 fishes nests by the shallow shore just beyond Sherman's bridge within less than 1/2 rod –edg to edge –with each a bream poised in it –in some cases the fish had just cleared away the mud or frog spitle exposing the yellow sand or pebbles –(16 to 24 inches in diameter)– My early rubus has a much wrinkled leaf. The morning glory which I bring home opens the next morning in a pitcher Is it the Hypericum spicatum now in blossom in the river meadows about a foot high. The Lobelia spicata pale L. like a snapdragon– (Is it the Erigeron annuum) (strigosum of Big) now beginning? Rice says the earliest flower the honey bee is found on is that of the skunk cabbage –before the frost is out of the meadows – also he gets his first honey from the maple & walnut stumps that have been cut in the winter as soon as the sap begins to flow.
A young man in Sudbury told me he had heard wood chucks whistle.

August 11, Wednesday: Thoreau recorded Ellery Channing as having remarked as part of his conversation that he kept "a dog for society — to stir up the air of the room when it becomes dead — for he experiences awful solitudes. — Another time thinks we must cultivate the social qualities — perhaps had better keep 2 dogs apiece." (Some of such conversation might be passed off as bantering, but in the case of Channing it seems an astute piece of observation for Thoreau to remark that his friend experienced "awful solitudes." Perhaps, in analyzing Thoreau's published comment about people who lead lives of confirmed desperation, we might note that within two months Channing's wife would announce that she was taking the children and leaving to live separately, and accept Thoreau's Concord walking buddy Channing to have been a type case of that sort of personality syndrome.)

DOG

 ... Richard Harlan M.D. in his Fauna Americana 1825 says of man that those parts are "most hairy,

which in animals are most bare, viz. the axilae and pubes."

Harlan says the vesperetilio catch insects during the crepusculum.

Harlan says that when white is associated with another color on a dog's tail it is always terminal — & that the observations of Desmarest confirm it. DOG

ABOUT THIS SOURCE

1853



February 9: At Cambridge to-day.
Dr Harris thinks the Indians had no real hemp but their apocynum — and he thinks a kind of nettle — & an asclepias. &c. He doubts if the dog was indigenous among them — Finds nothing to convince him in the history of N. England.[17] Thinks that the potato which is said to have been carried from Virginia by Raleigh was the ground-nut (which is described, I perceived, in Debry (Heriot?) among the fruits of Virginia), the potato not being indigenous in North America, and the ground-nut having been called wild potato in New England, the north part of Virginia, and not being found in England. Yet he allows that Raleigh cultivated the potato in Ireland. DOG

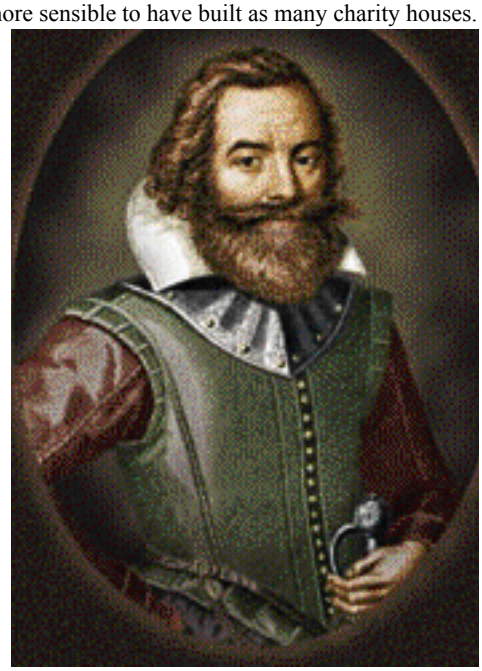
Saw the grizzly bear near the Haymarket to-day, said (?) to weigh nineteen hundred, — apparently too much. He looked four feet and a few inches in height, by as much in length, not including his great head, and his tail, which was invisible. He looked gentle, and continually sucked his claws and cleaned between them with his tongue. Small eyes and funny little ears; perfectly bearish, with a strong wild-beast scent; fed on Indian meal and water. Hind paws a foot long. Lying down, with his feet up against the bars; often sitting up in the corner on his hind quarters.

Two sables also, that would not be waked up by day, with their faces in each other's fur. An American chinchilla, and a silver lioness said to be from California.

17. Agassiz asked him what authority there was for it.

... To day the weather is severely and remarkably cold — ...
...
In the woods beyond Peter's we heard our dog, a large Newfoundland dog — barking at something — & going forward were amused to see him barking while he retreated with fear at that black oak with remarkable excrescence — which had been cut off just above it — leaving it like some misshapen idol about the height of a man. Though we set him onto it — he did not venture within 3 or four rods. I would not have believed that he would notice any such strange thing.
...
The *BerMudas* are said to have been first discovered by a spanish ship of that name, which was wrecked on them — "which till then for six thousand years had been nameless" Says John Smith — "no place known hath better walls, nor a broader ditch." The English did not stumble upon them in their voyages to Virginia & the first English man who was yet ever in them was wrecked on them in 1593— yet at the very first planting of them in 1612 with some 60 persons the first Governor the same year "built & laid the foundation of 8 or 8 forts"—!! to be Ready one would say to entertain the first ship company that should next be shipwrecked on to them— It would have been more sensible to have built as many charity houses.

DOG



June 16. Coming down the river, heard opposite the new houses, where I stopped to pluck the tall grass, a sound as of young blackbirds amid the button-bushes. After a long while gazing, standing on the roots of the button bushes, I detected a couple of meadow or mud hens (*Rallus Virginianus*) **[Virginia Rail** ***Rallus limicola***] gliding about under the button-bushes over the mud and through the shallow water, and uttering a squeaking or squawking note, as if they had a nest there or young. Bodies about the size of a robin; short tail; wings and tail white-edged; bill about one and a half inches long, orange beneath in one bird; brown, deepening into black spots above; turtle-dove color on breasts and beneath; ashy about eyes and cheeks. Seemed not willing to fly, and for a long time unwilling to pass me, because it must come near to keep under the button-bushes.
...
We sailed all the way back from the Baker Farm though the wind blew very nearly at right angles with the river much of the way — ... The dog swam for long distances behind us.... We taste at each cool spring with which we are acquainted in the bank — making haste to reach it before the dog — who otherwise is sure to be found cooling himself in it. We some times use him on board to sit in the stern & trim the boat while we both row — for he is heavy and other wise we sink the bows to much in the water — but he has a habit of standing too near

DOG

the rower — & each time recieving a fillip under the chin from the rowers fists — So at last he tumbles himself overboard & takes a riparial excursion — And we are amused to see how judiciously he selects his points for crossing the river from time to time in order to avoid long circuits made by bays & meadows & keep as near us as possible.

 June 18: Found the nest of a cuckoo [**Black-billed Cuckoo** ***Coccyzus erythropthalmus***], –a long, slender, handsome bird, prob. St. Domingo cuckoo.– at the edge of the meadow on a bent sallow not in a crotch, covered by the broad shining leaves of a swamp white oak whose boughs stretched over it — two feet or more from the ground– The nest was made of dry twigs & was small for the size of the bird and very shallow — but handsomely lined with an abundance of what looked like the dry yellowish-brown (?) catkins of the hickory — which made a pleasing contrast with the surrounding grayish twigs. There were some worm eaten green leaves inwoven– It contained a single greenish white elliptical egg an inch or more long. The bird flew off a little way & *clow clow clowed*.... Saw to-night Lewis the blind man's horse which works on the sawing machine at the Depot — now let out to graze along the road — but at each step he lifts his hind legs convulsively high from the ground — as if the whole earth were a tread-mill — continually slipping away from under him while he climed its convex surface. It was painful to witness — but it was symbolical of the moral condition of his master and of all artisans in contradistinction from artists — all who are engaged in any routine — for to them also the whole earth is a tread-mill, and the routine results instantly in a similar painful deformity– The horse may bear the mark of his servitude on the muscles of his legs — the man on his brow.

 The distant village sounds, are the barking of dogs, that animal with which man has allied himself, and the rattling of wagons — For the farmers have gone into to town ashopping this Saturday night — The dog is the tamed wolf — as the villager is the tamed savage

DOG

September 13, Tuesday-27, Tuesday: Henry Thoreau went on his 2d trip to Maine (Moosehead Lake, Chesuncook Lake, and the Penobscot River), by steamer on the outside route to and from Bangor, then by stagecoach to the town of Greenville on the shore of Moosehead Lake, then by steamer across the lake, then by ox cart to the Penobscot River, probably at the end of work on the E draft of WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS. He went with his cousin George Thatcher, and had Joseph Aitteon (or Atteon) as guide.

TIMELINE OF THE MAINE WOODS

Supplies included a tent, hard-bread, pork, smoked beef, tea, and sugar. When Thoreau reached the mouth of the Ragmuff, a small stream flowing into the Penobscot between Moosehead and Chesuncook, several birds attracted his attention. Purple finches and myrtle warblers can be seen there. Canada jays, now called gray jays, often visit camps for food. Ruffed grouse and spruce grouse may be flushed by hikers. A male spruce grouse (Thoreau's pinnated or black grouse) has been known to become so immobile when approached that you may make five-second exposures. Thoreau's observations about the familiarity between lumbermen and wilderness birds are similar to those made of the birds on the Galápagos Islands, where humans have made a very recent appearance. On those islands visitors have sometimes lifted a hawk from its perch in a tree. Darwin noted that to collect such species as finches, wrens, flycatchers, doves, and carrion buzzards, he did not need a gun but could use a switch or even his hat.

[From CHESUNCOOK] I asked Neptune if they had any of the old breed of dogs yet. He answered, "Yes." "But that," said I, pointing to one that had just come in, "is a Yankee dog." He assented. I said that he did not look like a good one. "O yes!" he said, and he told, with much gusto, how, the year before, he had caught and held by the throat a wolf. A very small black puppy rushed into the room and made at the Governor's feet, as he sat in his stockings with his legs dangling from the bedside. The Governor rubbed his hands and dared him to come on, entering into the sport with spirit. Nothing more that was significant transpired, to my knowledge, during this interview. This was the first time that I ever called on a governor, but, as I did not ask for an office, I can speak of it with the more freedom.

DOG

[From THE MAINE WOODS] While we were trying for trout, Joe, Indian-like, wandered off up the Ragmuff on his own errands, and when we were ready to start was far beyond call. So we were compelled to make a fire and get our dinner here, not to lose time. Some dark reddish birds with grayer females (perhaps purple finches), and myrtle-birds in their summer dress, hopped within six or eight feet of us and our smoke. Perhaps they smelled the frying pork. The latter bird, or both, made the lisping notes which I had heard in the forest. They suggested that the few small birds found in the wilderness are on more familiar terms with the lumbermen and hunter than those of the orchard and clearing with the farmer. I have since found the Canada jay, and partridges, **[Ruffed Grouse *Bonasa umbellus* (~~Partridge~~)]** both the black **[**Spruce Grouse *Dendragapus canadensis* (~~Black Grouse~~)**]** and common, equally tame there, as if they had not yet learned to mistrust man entirely. The chickadee, which is at home alike in the primitive woods and in our wood-lots, still retains its confidence in the towns to a remarkable degree.… We saw a few wood ducks, sheldrakes, and black ducks, but they were not so numerous there at that season as on our river at home. We scared the same family of wood ducks before us, going and returning. We also heard the note of one fish hawk, somewhat like that of a pigeon woodpecker, and soon after saw him perched near the top of a dead white pine against the island

where we had first camped, while a company of peetweets were twittering and teetering about over the carcass of a moose on a low sandy spit just beneath. We drove the fish hawk from perch to perch, each time eliciting a scream or whistle, for many miles before us.

THE MAINE WOODS: There was the usual long-handled axe of the primitive woods by the door, three and a half feet long, — for my new black-ash rule was in constant use, — and a large, shaggy dog, whose nose, report said, was full of porcupine quills. I can testify that he looked very sober. This is the usual fortune of pioneer dogs, for they have to face the brunt of the battle for their race, and act the part of Arnold Winkelried without intending it. If he should invite one of his town friends up this way, suggesting moose-meat and unlimited freedom, the latter might pertinently inquire, "What is that sticking in your nose?" When a generation or two have used up all the enemies' darts, their successors lead a comparatively easy life. We owe to our fathers analogous blessings. Many old people receive pensions for no other reason, it seems to me, but as a compensation for having lived a long [Page 690] time ago. No doubt our town dogs still talk, in a snuffling way, about the days that tried dogs' noses. How they got a cat up there I do not know, for they are as shy as my aunt about entering a canoe. I wondered that she did not run up a tree on the way; but perhaps she was bewildered by the very crowd of opportunities.

DOG

CAT

... On Saturday, the 26th, a dog on whose collar the words "Milton Hill," or equivalent ones, were engraved ran through the town, having, as the story went, bitten a boy in Lincoln. He bit several dogs in this town and was finally shot. Some of the dogs bitten have been killed, and rumor now says that the boy died yesterday. People are considerably alarmed. Some years ago a boy in Lincoln was bitten by a raccoon and died of hydrophobia. I observed to Minott to-night that I did not think that our doctors knew how to cure this disease, but he said they could cure it, he had seen a man bitten who was cured. The story is worth telling, for it shows ho much trouble the passage of one mad dog through the town may produce.

It was when he was a boy and lived down below the old Ben Prescott house, over the cellar-hole on what is now Hawthorne's land. The first he remembers a couple of men had got poles and were punching at a strange dog toward night under a barn in that neighborhood. The dog, which was speckled and not very large, would growl and bite the pole, and they ran a good deal of risk, but they did not know that he was mad. At length they routed him, and he took to the road and came on toward town, and Minott, keeping his distance, followed on behind. When the dog got to the old Ben Prescott Place, he turned up into the yard, where there were a couple of turkies, drove them into a corner — bit off the head of one, and carried the body off across the road into the meadow opposite. They then raised the cry of mad dog. He saw his mother and Aunt Prescott, two old ladies, coming down the road, while the dog was running the other way in the meadow, & he shouted to them to take care of them selves — for that dog was mad — The dog soon reentered the road at some bars and held on toward town. Minott next saw Harry Hooper — coming down the road after his cows ... & he shouted to him to look out for the dog was mad — but Harry, who was in the middle of the road, spread his arms out, one on each side, and, being short, the dog leaped right upon his open breast & made a pass at his throat, but missed it, though it frightened him a good deal; and Minott, coming up, exclaimed "Why, you're crazy, Harry; if he'd 'a' bitten ye, 't would 'a' killed ye." When he got up as far as the red house or Curtis place, the dog was about in the middle of the road, and a large and stout old gentleman by the name of Fay — dressed in small-clothes, was coming down the sidewalk. M. shouted to him also to take care of himself, for the dog was mad, and Fay said afterward that he heard him but he had always supposed that a mad dog would n't turn out for anything; but when this dog was nearly abreast of him, he suddenly inclined toward him, and then again inclined still more, and seized him

DOG

by the left leg just below the knee, and Fay, giving him a kick with the other leg, tripped himself up; and when he was down, the dog bit him in the right leg in the same place. Being by this time well frightened, and fearing that he would spring at his throat next, Fay seized the dog himself by his throat and held him fast, and called lustily for someone to come and kill him. A man by the name of Lewis rushed out of the red house with an old axe and began to tap on the dog's nose with it, but he was afraid to strike harder, for Fay told him not to hit him. Minott saw it all, but kept still his distance. Suddenly Fay, not knowing what he did, let go, and the man, giving the dog a blow across the back, ran into the house, but, it being a dull meat axe, the dog trotted along, still toward town.

He turned and went round the pond by Bowers's and, going down to the brook by the roadside, lapped some water. Just then, Peter coming over the bridge, the dog reared up and growled at him and he, seeing that he was mad, made haste through the bars out of his way and cut across the fields to Reuben Brown's. The dog went on, it being now between sundown and dark, to Peter Wheeler's, and bit two cows, which afterward died of hydrophobia, and next he went to where Nathan Snow now lives, and bit a goose in the wing, and so he kept on through the town. The next that was heard of him, Black Cato, that lived at the Lee place, now Sam Wheeler's, on the river, was waked up about midnight by a noise among the pigs, and, having got up, he took a club and went out to see what was the matter. Looking over into the pen, this dog reared up at him, and he knocked him back into it, and, jumping over, mauled him till he thought he was dead and then tossed him out. In the morning he thought he [would] go out and see whose dog he had killed, but lo! he had picked himself up, and there was no dog to be found.

Cato was going out into the woods chopping that day, and as he was getting over a wall lined with brush, the same dog reared up at him once more, but this time, having heard of the mad dog, he was frightened and ran; but still the dog came on, and once or twice he knocked him aside with a large stone, till at length, the dog coming close to him, he gave him a blow which killed him; and lest he should run away again, he cut off his head and threw both head and body into the river.

WALDEN: In any weather, at any hour of the day or night, I have been anxious to improve the nick of time, and notch it on my stick too; to stand on the meeting of two eternities, the past and future, which is precisely the present moment; to toe that line. You will pardon some obscurities, for there are more secrets in my trade than in most men's, and yet not voluntarily kept, but inseparable from its very nature. I would gladly tell all that I know about it, and never paint "No Admittance" on my gate.

I long ago lost a hound, a bay horse, and a turtle-dove, and am still on their trail. Many are the travellers I have spoken concerning them, describing their tracks and what calls they answered to. I have met one or two who had heard the hound, and the tramp of the horse, and even seen the dove disappear behind a cloud, and they seemed as anxious to recover them as if they had lost them themselves.

To anticipate, not the sunrise and the dawn merely, but, if possible, Nature herself! How many mornings, summer and winter, before yet any neighbor was stirring about his business, have I been about mine! No doubt many of my townsmen have met me returning from this enterprise, farmers starting for Boston in the twilight, or woodchoppers going to their work. It is true, I never assisted the sun materially in his rising, but, doubt not, it was of the last importance only to be present at it.

PEOPLE OF WALDEN

WALDEN: Sometimes, on Sundays, I heard the bells, the Lincoln, Acton, Bedford, or Concord bell, when the wind was favorable, a faint, sweet, and, as it were, natural melody, worth importing into the wilderness. At a sufficient distance over the woods this sound acquires a certain vibratory hum, as if the pine needles in the horizon were the strings of a harp which it swept. All sound heard at the greatest possible distance produces one and the same effect, vibration of the universal lyre, just as the intervening atmosphere makes a distant ridge of earth interesting to our eyes by the azure tint it imparts to it. There came to me in this case a melody which the air had strained, and which had conversed with every leaf and needle of the wood, that portion of the sound which the elements had taken up and modulated and echoed from vale to vale. The echo is, to some extent, an original sound, and therein is the magic and charm of it. It is not merely a repetition of what was worth repeating in the bell, but partly the voice of the wood; the same trivial words and notes sung by a wood-nymph.

At evening, the distant lowing of some cow in the horizon beyond the woods sounded sweet and melodious, and at first I would mistake it for the voices of certain minstrels by whom I was sometimes serenaded, who might be straying over hill and dale; but soon I was not unpleasantly disappointed when it was prolonged into the cheap and natural music of the cow. I do not mean to be satirical, but to express my appreciation of those youths' singing, when I state that I perceived clearly that it was akin to the music of the cow, and they were at length one articulation of Nature.

Regularly at half past seven, in one part of the summer, after the evening train had gone by, the whippoorwills chanted their vespers for half an hour, sitting on a stump by my door, or upon the ridge pole of the house. They would begin to sing almost with as much precision as a clock, within five minutes of a particular time, referred to the setting of the sun, every evening. I had a rare opportunity to become acquainted with their habits. Sometimes I heard four or five at once in different parts of the wood, by accident one a bar behind another, and so near me that I distinguished not only the cluck after each note, but often that singular buzzing sound like a fly in a spider's web, only proportionally louder. Sometimes one would circle round and round me in the woods a few feet distant as if tethered by a string, when probably it was near its eggs. They sang at intervals throughout the night, and were again as musical as ever just before and about dawn.

BEN JONSON
EURIPIDES
WHIPPOORWILL

When other birds are still the screech owls take up the strain, like mourning women their ancient *u-lu-lu*. Their dismal scream is truly Ben Jonsonian. Wise midnight hags! It is no honest and blunt *tu-whit tu-who* of the poets, but, without jesting, a most solemn graveyard ditty, the mutual consolations of suicide lovers remembering the pangs and the delights of supernal love in the infernal groves. Yet I love to hear their wailing, their doleful responses, trilled along the wood-side, reminding me sometimes of music and singing birds; as if it were the dark and tearful side of music, the regrets and sighs that would fain be sung. They are the spirits, the low spirits and melancholy forebodings, of fallen souls that once in human shape night-walked the earth and did the deeds of darkness, no expiating their sins with their wailing hymns or threnodies in their scenery of their transgressions. They give me a new sense of variety and capacity of that nature which is our common dwelling. *Oh-o-o-o-o that I never had been* bor-r-r-r-n! sighs one on this side of the pond, and circles with the restlessness of despair to some new perch on the gray oaks. Then –that I never had been bor-r-r-r-n! echoes another on the farther side with tremulous sincerity, and –bor-r-r-r-n! comes faintly from far in the Lincoln woods.

I was also serenaded by a hooting owl. Near at hand you could fancy it the most melancholy sound in Nature, as if she meant by this to stereotype and make permanent in her choir the dying moans of a human being, –some poor weak relic of mortality who has left hope behind, and howls like an animal, yet with human sobs, on entering the dark valley, made more awful by a certain gurgling melodiousness,– I find myself beginning with the letters gl and I try to imitate it, –expressive of a mind which has reached the gelatinous mildewy stage in the mortification of all healthy and courageous thought. It reminded me of ghouls and idiots and insane howlings. But now one answers from far woods in a strain made really melodious by distance, –*Hoo hoo hoo*, *hoorer hoo*; and indeed for the most part it suggested only pleasing associations, whether heard by day or night, summer or winter.

EURIPIDES
SHAKESPEARE
BEN JONSON
COLERIDGE

I rejoice that there are owls. Let them do the idiotic and maniacal hooting for men. It is a sound admirably suited to swamps and twilight woods which no day illustrates, suggesting a vast and undeveloped nature which men have not recognized. They represent the stark twilight and unsatisfied thoughts which all have. All day the sun has shone on the surface of some savage swamp, where the double spruce stands hung with usnea lichens, and small hawks circulate above, and the chicadee lisps amid the evergreens, and the partridge and rabbit skulk beneath; but now a more dismal and fitting day dawns, and a different race of creatures awakes to express the meaning of Nature there.

Late in the evening I heard the distant rumbling of wagons over bridges,-a sound heard farther than almost any other at night, -the baying of dogs, and sometimes again the lowing of some disconsolate cow in a distant barn-yard. In the mean while all the shore rang with the trump of bullfrogs, the sturdy spirits of ancient wine-bibbers and wassailers, still unrepentant, trying to sing a catch in their Stygian lake, -if the Walden nymphs will pardon the comparison, for though there are almost no weeds, there are frogs there,- who would fain keep up the hilarious rules of their old festal tables, though their voices have waxed hoarse and solemnly grave, mocking at mirth, and the wine has lost its flavor, and become only liquor to distend their paunches, and sweet intoxication never comes to drown the memory of the past, but mere saturation and waterloggedness and distention. The most aldermanic, with his chin upon a heart-leaf, which serves for a napkin to his drooling chaps, under this northern shore quaffs a deep draught of the once scorned water, and passes round the cup with the ejaculation *tr-r-r-oonk*, *tr-r-r-oonk*, *tr-r-r-oonk!* and straightway comes over the water from some distant cove the same password repeated, where the next in seniority and girth has gulped down to his mark; and when this observance has made the circuit of the shores, then ejaculates the master of ceremonies, with satisfaction, *tr-r-r-oonk*! and each in his turn repeats the same down to the least distended, leakiest, and flabbiest paunched, that there be no mistake; and then the bowl goes round again and again, until the sun disperses the morning mist, and only the patriarch is not under the pond, but vainly bellowing *troonk* from time to time, and pausing for a reply.

WALDEN: As I came home through the woods with my string of fish trailing my pole, it being now quite dark, I caught a glimpse of a woodchuck stealing across my path, and felt a strange thrill of savage delight, and was strongly tempted to seize and devour him raw; not that I was hungry then, except for that wildness which he represented. Once or twice, however, while I lived at the pond, I found myself ranging the woods, like a half-starved hound, with a strange abandonment, seeking some kind of venison which I might devour, and no morsel could have been too savage for me. The wildest scenes had become unaccountably familiar. I found in myself, and still find, an instinct toward a higher, or, as it is named, spiritual life, as do most men, and another toward a primitive rank and savage one, and I reverence them both. I love the wild not less than the good.

WALDEN: SOMETIMES I had a companion in my fishing, who came through the village to my house from the other side of the town, and the catching of the dinner was as much a social exercise as the eating of it.

Hermit. I wonder what the world is doing now. I have not heard so much as a locust over the sweet-fern these three hours. the pigeons are all asleep upon their roosts, –no flutter from them. Was that a farmer's noon horn which sounded from beyond the woods just now? The hands are coming in to boiled salt beef and cider and Indian bread. Why will men worry themselves so? He that does not eat need not work. I wonder how much they have reaped. Who would live there where a body can never think for the barking of Bose? And O, the housekeeping! to keep bright the devil's door-knobs, and scour his tubs this bright day! Better not keep a house. Say, some hollow tree; and then for morning calls and dinner-parties! Only a woodpecker tapping. O, they swarm; the sun is too warm there; they are born too far into life for me. I have water from the spring, and a loaf of brown bread on the shelf. –Hark! I hear a rustling of the leaves. Is it some ill-fed village hound yielding to the instinct of the chase? or the lost pig which is said to be in these woods, whose tracks I saw after the rain? It comes on apace; my sumachs and sweet-briars tremble. –Eh, Mr. Poet, is it you? How do you like the world to-day?

Poet. See those clouds; how they hang! That's the greatest thing I have seen to-day. There's nothing like it in old paintings, nothing like it in foreign lands, –unless when we were off the coast of Spain. That's a true Mediterranean sky. I thought, as I have my living to get, and have not eaten to-day, that I might go a-fishing. That's the true industry for poets. It is the only trade I have learned. Come, let's along.

Hermit. I cannot resist. My brown bread will soon be gone. I will go with you gladly soon, but I am just concluding a serious meditation. I think that I am near the end of it. Leave me alone, then, for a while. But that we may not be delayed, you shall be digging the bait meanwhile. Angle-worms are rarely to be met with in these parts, where the soil was never fattened with manure; the race is nearly extinct. The sport of digging the bait is nearly equal to that of catching the fish, when one's appetite is not too keen; and this you may have all to yourself today. I would advise you to set in the spade down yonder among the ground-nuts, where you see the johnswort waving. I think that I may warrant you one worm to every three sods you turn up, if you look well in among the roots of the grass, as if you were weeding. Or, if you choose to go farther, it will not be unwise, for I have found the increase of fair bait to be very nearly as the squares of the distances.

Hermit alone. Let me see; where was I? Methinks I was nearly in this frame of mind; the world lay about at this angle. Shall I go to heaven or a-fishing? If I should soon bring this meditation to an end, would another so sweet occasion be likely to offer? I was as near being resolved into the essence of things as ever I was in my life. I fear my thoughts will not come back to me. If it would do any good, I would whistle for them. When they make us an offer, is it wise to say, We will think of it? My thoughts have left no track, and I cannot find the path again. What was it that I was thinking of? It was a very hazy day. I will just try these three sentences of Con-fut-see; they may fetch that state about again. I know not whether it was the dumps or a budding ecstasy. Mem. There never is but one opportunity of a kind.

Poet. How now, Hermit, is it too soon? I have got just thirteen whole ones, beside several which are imperfect undersized; but they will do for the smaller fry; they do not cover up the hook so much. Those village worms are quite too large; a shiner may make a meal off one without finding the skewer.

Hermit. Well, then, let's be off. Shall we to the Concord? There's good sport there if the water be not too high.

PEOPLE OF WALDEN

WALDEN: While these things go up other things come down. Warned by the whizzing sound, I look up from my book and see some tall pine, hewn on far northern hills, which has winged its way over the Green Mountains and the Connecticut, shot like an arrow through the township within ten minutes, and scarce another eye beholds it; going

"to be the mast
Of some great ammiral."

And hark! here comes the cattle-train bearing the cattle of a thousand hills, sheepcots, stables, and cow-yards in the air, drovers with their sticks, and shepherd boys in the midst of their flocks, all but the mountain pastures, whirled along like leaves blown from the mountains by the September gales. The air is filled with the bleating of calves and sheep, and the hustling of oxen, as if a pastoral valley were going by. When the old bell-wether at the head rattles his bell, the mountains do indeed skip like rams and the little hills like lambs. A car-load of drovers, too, in the midst, on a level with their droves now, their vocation gone, but still clinging to their useless sticks as their badge of office. But their dogs, where are they? It is a stampede to them; they are quite thrown out; they have lost the scent. Methinks I hear them barking behind the Peterboro' Hills, or panting up the western slope of the Green Mountains. They will not be in at the death. Their vocation, too, is gone. Their fidelity and sagacity are below par now. They will slink back to their kennels in disgrace, or perchance run wild and strike a league with the wolf and the fox. So is your pastoral life whirled past and away. But the bell rings, and I must get off the track and let the cars go by;–

What's the railroad to me?
I never go to see
Where it ends.
It fills a few hollows,
And makes banks for the swallows,
It sets the sand a-blowing,
And the blackberries a-growing,

but I cross it like a cart-path in the woods. I will not have my eyes put out and my ears spoiled by its smoke and steam and hissing.
Now that the cars are gone by, and all the restless world with them, and the fishes in the pond no longer feel their rumbling, I am more alone than ever. For the rest of the long afternoon, perhaps, my meditations are interrupted only by the faint rattle of a carriage or team along the distant highway.

KING SOLOMON

PEOPLE OF WALDEN

WALDEN: Men of almost every degree of wit called on me in the migrating season. Some who had more wits than they knew what to do with; runaway slaves with plantation manners, who listened from time to time, like the fox in the fable, as if they heard the hounds a-baying on their track, and looked at me beseechingly, as much as to say,–

"O Christian, will you send me back?"

One real runaway slave, among the rest, whom I helped to forward toward the northstar. Men of one idea, like a hen with one chicken, and that a duckling; men of a thousand ideas, and unkempt heads, like those hens which are made to take charge of a hundred chickens, all in pursuit of one bug, a score of them lost in every morning's dew, –and become frizzled and mangy in consequence; men of ideas instead of legs, a sort of intellectual centipede that made you crawl all over. One man proposed a book in which visitors should write their names, as at the White Mountains; but, alas! I have too good a memory to make that necessary.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

MUMPERY

CANIS

DOGS

WALDEN: Many a village Bose, fit only to course a mud-turtle in a victualling cellar, sported his heavy quarters in the woods, without the knowledge of his master, and ineffectually smelled at old fox burrows and woodchucks' holes; led perchance by some slight cur which nimbly threaded the wood, and might still inspire a natural terror in its denizens; –now far behind his guide, barking like a canine bull toward some small squirrel which had treed itself for scrutiny, then, cantering off, bending the bushes with his weight, imagining that he is on the track of some stray member of the gerbille family. Once I was surprised to see a cat walking along the stony shore of the pond, for they rarely wander so far from home. The surprise was mutual. Nevertheless the most domestic cat, which has lain on a rug all her days, appears quite at home in the woods, and, by her sly and stealthy behavior, proves herself more native there than the regular inhabitants. Once, when berrying, I met with a cat with young kittens in the woods, quite wild, and they all, like their mother, had their backs up and were fiercely spitting at me. A few years before I lived in the woods there was what was called a "winged cat" in one of the farm-houses in Lincoln nearest the pond, Mr. Gilian Baker's. When I called to see her in June, 1842, she was gone a-hunting in the woods, as was her wont, (I am not sure whether it was a male or female, and so use the more common pronoun,) but her mistress told me that she came into the neighborhood a little more than a year before, in April, and was finally taken into their house; that she was of a dark brownish-gray color, with a white spot on her throat, and white feet, and had a large bushy tail like a fox; that in the winter the fur grew thick and flatted out along her sides, forming strips ten or twelve inches long by two and a half wide, and under her chin like a muff, the upper side loose, the under matted like felt, and in the spring these appendages dropped off. They gave me a pair of her "wings," which I keep still. There is no appearance of a membrane about them. Some thought it was part flying-squirrel or some other wild animal, which is not impossible, for, according to naturalists, prolific hybrids have been produced by the union of the marten and domestic cat. This would have been the right kind of cat for me to keep, if I had kept any; for why should not a poet's cat be winged as well as his horse?

DOG

CAT

CATS WITH WINGS

WALDEN: I wonder what the world is doing now. I have not heard so much as a locust over the sweet-fern these three hours. The pigeons are all asleep upon their roosts, –no flutter from them. Was that a farmer's noon horn which sounded from beyond the woods just now? The hands are coming in to boiled salt beef and cider and Indian bread. Why will men worry themselves so? He that does not eat need not work. I wonder how much they have reaped. Who would live there where a body can never think for the barking of Bose? And O, the housekeeping! to keep bright the devil's door-knobs, and scour his tubs this bright day! Better not keep a house. Say, some hollow tree; and then for morning calls and dinner-parties! Only a woodpecker tapping.

WALDEN: Sometimes I heard the foxes as they ranged over the snow crust, in moonlight nights, in search of a partridge or other game, barking raggedly and demoniacally like forest dogs, as if laboring with some anxiety, or seeking expression, struggling for light and to be dogs outright and run freely in the streets; for if we take the ages into our account, may there not be a civilization going on among brutes as well as men? They seemed to me to be rudimental, burrowing men, still standing on their defence, awaiting their transformation. Sometimes one came near to my window, attracted by my light, barked a vulpine curse at me, and then retreated.

WALDEN: In dark winter mornings, or in short winter afternoons, I sometimes heard a pack of hounds threading all the woods with hounding cry and yelp, unable to resist the instinct of the chase, and the note of the hunting horn at intervals, proving that man was in the rear. The woods ring again, and yet no fox bursts forth on to the open level of the pond, nor following pack pursuing their ActÒon. And perhaps at evening I see the hunters returning with a single brush trailing from their sleigh for a trophy, seeking their inn. They tell me that if the fox would remain in the bosom of the frozen earth he would be safe, or if he would run in a straight line away no fox-hound could overtake him; but, having left his pursuers far behind, he stops to rest and listen till they come up, and when he runs he circles round to his old haunts, where the hunters await him. Sometimes, however, he will run upon a wall many rods, and then leap off far to one side, and he appears to know what water will not retain his scent. A hunter told me that he once saw a fox pursued by hounds burst out on to Walden when the ice was covered with shallow puddles, run part way across, and then return to the same shore. Ere long the hounds arrived, but here they lost the scent. Sometimes a pack hunting by themselves would pass my door, and circle round my house, and yelp and hound without regarding me, as if afflicted by a species of madness, so that nothing could divert them from the pursuit. Thus they circle until they fall upon the recent trail of a fox, for a wise hound will forsake every thing else for this. One day a man came to my hut from Lexington to inquire after his hound that made a large track, and had been hunting for a week by himself. But I fear that he was not the wiser for all I told him, for every time I attempted to answer his questions he interrupted me by asking, "What do you do here?" He had lost a dog, but found a man.

WALDEN: One old hunter who has a dry tongue, who used to come to bathe in Walden once every year when the water was warmest, and at such times looked in upon me, told me, that many years ago he took his gun one afternoon and went out for a cruise in Walden Wood; and as he walked the Wayland road he heard the cry of hounds approaching, and ere long a fox leaped the wall into the road, and as quick as thought leaped the other wall out of the road, and his swift bullet had not touched him. Some way behind came an old hound and her three pups in full pursuit, hunting on their own account, and disappeared again in the woods. Late in the afternoon, as he was resting in the thick woods south of Walden, he heard the voice of the hounds far over toward Fair Haven still pursuing the fox; and on they came; their hounding cry which made all the woods ring sounding nearer and nearer, now from Well-Meadow, now from the Baker Farm. For a long time he stood still and listened to their music, so sweet to a hunter's ear, when suddenly the fox appeared, threading the solemn aisles with an easy coursing pace, whose sound was concealed by a sympathetic rustle of the leaves, swift and still, keeping the ground, leaving his pursuers far behind; and, leaping upon a rock amid the woods, he sat erect and listening, with his back to the hunter. For a moment compassion restrained the latter's arm; but that was a short-lived mood, and as quick as thought can follow though his piece was levelled, and *whang!* –the fox rolling over the rock lay dead on the ground. The hunter still kept his place and listened to the hounds. Still on they came, and now the near woods resounded through all their aisles with their demoniac cry. At length the old hound burst into view with muzzle to the ground, and snapping the air as if possessed, and ran directly to the rock; but spying the dead fox she suddenly ceased her hounding, as if struck dumb with amazement, and walked round and round him in silence; and one by one her pups arrived, and, like their mother, were sobered into silence by the mystery. Then the hunter came forward and stood in their midst, and the mystery was solved. They waited in silence while he skinned the fox, then followed the brush a while, and at length turned off into the woods again. That evening a Weston Squire came to the Concord hunter's cottage to inquire for his hounds, and told how for a week they had been hunting on their own account from Weston woods. The Concord hunter told him what he knew and offered him the skin; but the other declined it and departed. He did not find his hounds that night, but the next day learned that they had crossed the river and put up at a farm-house for the night, whence, having been well fed, they took their departure early in the morning. The hunter who told me this could remember one Sam Nutting, who used to hunt bears on Fair Haven Ledges, and exchange their skins for rum in Concord village; who told him, even, that he had seen a moose there. Nutting had a famous fox-hound named Burgoyne, –he pronounced it Bugine,– which my informant used to borrow. In the "Wast Book" of an old trader of this town, who was also a captain, town-clerk, and representative, I find the following entry. Jan. 18th, 1742-3, "John Melven Cr. by 1 Grey Fox 0-2-3;" they are not now found here; and in his ledger, Feb. 7th, 1743, Hezekiah Stratton has credit "by $^{1}/_{2}$ a Catt skin 0-1-$4^{1}/_{2}$;" of course, a wild-cat, for Stratton was a sergeant in the old French war, and would not have got credit for hunting less noble game. Credit is given for deer skins also, and they were daily sold. One man still preserves the horns of the last deer that was killed in this vicinity, and another has told me the particulars of the hunt in which his uncle was engaged. The hunters were formerly a numerous and merry crew here. I remember well one gaunt Nimrod who would catch up a leaf by the road-side and play a strain on it wilder and more melodious, if my memory serves me, than any hunting horn.

PEOPLE OF WALDEN

WALDEN: The hunter who told me this could remember one Sam Nutting, who used to hunt bears on Fair Haven Ledges, and exchange their skins for rum in Concord village; who told him, even, that he had seen a moose there. Nutting had a famous fox-hound named Burgoyne, –he pronounced it Bugine,– which my informant used to borrow. In the "Wast Book" of an old trader of this town, who was also a captain, town-clerk, and representative, I find the following entry. Jan. 18th, 1742-3, "John Melven Cr. by 1 Grey Fox 0-2-3;" they are not now found here; and in his ledger, Feb. 7th, 1743, Hezekiah Stratton has credit "by $^{1}/_{2}$ a Catt skin 0-1-4$^{1}/_{2}$;" of course, a wild-cat, for Stratton was a sergeant in the old French war, and would not have got credit for hunting less noble game. Credit is given for deer skins also, and they were daily sold. One man still preserves the horns of the last deer that was killed in this vicinity, and another has told me the particulars of the hunt in which his uncle was engaged. The hunters were formerly a numerous and merry crew here. I remember well one gaunt Nimrod who would catch up a leaf by the road-side and play a strain on it wilder and more melodious, if my memory serves me, than any hunting horn.

SAM "OLD FOX" NUTTING

WALDEN: Some are dinning in our ears that we Americans, and moderns generally, are intellectual dwarfs compared with the ancients, or even the Elizabethan men. But what is that to the purpose? A living dog is better than a dead lion. Shall a man go and hang himself because he belongs to a race of pygmies, and not be the biggest pygmy that he can? Let every one mind his own business, and endeavor to be what he was made.

1854

Sept. 7. Thursday. The rain of last night has brought down more leaves of elms and buttonwoods.

DOG

P. M. - To Moore's Swamp and Walden. See some hips of the moss rose, very large and handsome, bright-scarlet, very much flattened globular. On the Walden road heard a somewhat robin-like clicking note. Looked round and saw one of those small slatecolored, black-tipped, white-rumped hawks skimming over the meadows with head down, at first. thirty feet high, then low till he appeared to drop into the grass. It was quite a loud clicketing sound.

Paddled to Baker Farm just after sundown, by full moon.

I suppose this is the Harvest Moon, since the sun must be in Virgo, enters Libra the 23d inst.

The wind has gone down, and it is a still, warm night, and no mist.

It is just after sundown. The moon not yet risen, one star, Jupiter (?), visible, and many bats over and about our heads, and small skaters creating a myriad dimples on the evening waters. We see a muskrat crossing, and pass a white cat on the shore. There are many clouds about and a beautiful sunset sky, a yellowish (dunnish?) golden sky, between them in the horizon, looking up the river. All this is reflected in the water. The beauty of the sunset is doubled by the reflection.

Being on the water we have double the amount of lit and dun-colored sky above and beneath. An elm in the yellow twilight loops very rich, as if moss- or ivy-clad, and a dark-blue cloud extends into the dun-golden sky, on which there is a little fantastic cloud like a chicken walking up the point of it, with its neck outstretched. The reflected sky is more dun and richer than the real one. Take a glorious sunset sky and double it, so that it shall extend downward beneath the horizon as much as above it, blotting out the earth, and [let] the lowest half be of the deepest tint, and every beauty more than before insisted on, and you seem withal to be floating directly into it. This seems the first autumnal sunset. The small skaters seem more active than by day, or their slight dimpling is more obvious in the lit twilight. A stray white cat sits on the shore looking over the water. This is her hour.

CAT

A nighthawk dashes past, low over the water. This is what we had.

It was in harmony with this fair evening that we were not walking or riding with dust and noise through it, but moved by a paddle without a jar over the liquid and almost invisible surface, floating directly toward those islands of the blessed which we call clouds in the sunset sky. I thought of the Indian, who so many similar evenings had paddled up this stream, with what advantage he beheld the twilight sky. So we advanced without dust or sound, by gentle influences, as the twilight gradually faded away. The height of the railroad bridge, already high (more than twenty feet to the top of the rail), was doubled by the reflection, equalling that of a Roman aqueduct, for we could not possibly see where the reflection began, and the piers appeared to rise from the lowest part of the reflection to the rail above, about fifty feet.

We floated directly under it, between the piers, as if in mid-air, not being able to distinguish the surface of the water, and looked down more than twenty feet to the reflected flooring through whose intervals we saw the starlit sky.

The ghostly piers stretched downward on all sides, and only the angle made by their meeting the real ones betrayed where was the water surface.

The twilight had now paled (lost its red and dun) and faintly illumined the high bank. I observed no firefly this evening, nor the 4th. The moon had not yet risen and there was a half-hour of dusk, in which, however, we saw the reflections of the trees. Any peculiarity in the form of a tree or other object –if it leans one side or has a pointed top, for instance– is revealed in the reflection by being doubled and so insisted on. We detected thus distant maples, pines, and oaks, and they were seen to be related to the river as mountains in the horizon are by day.

Night is the time to hear; our senses took in every sound from the meadows and the village. At first we were disturbed by the screeching of the locomotive and rumbling of the cars, but soon were left to the fainter natural sounds, — the creaking of the crickets, and the little Rana palustris mole cricket (I am not sure that I heard it the latter part of the evening), and the shrilling of other crickets (?), the occasional faint lowing of a cow and the distant barking of dogs, as in a whisper. Our ears drank in every sound. I heard once or twice a dumping frog. This was while we lay off Nut Meadow Brook waiting for the moon to rise. She burned her way slowly through the small but thick clouds, and, as fast as she triumphed over them and rose over them, they appeared pale and shrunken, like the ghosts of their former selves. Meanwhile we measured the breadth of the clear cope over our heads, which she would ere long traverse, and, while she was concealed, looked up to the few faint

stars in the zenith which is ever lighted. C. thought that these few faint lights in the ever-lit sky, whose inconceivable distance was enhanced by a few downy wisps of cloud, surpassed any scene that earth could show. When the moon was behind those small black clouds in the horizon, they had a splendid silver edging. At length she rose above them and shone aslant, like a ball of fire over the woods. It was remarkably clear to-night, and the water was not so remarkably broad therefore, and Fair Haven was not clothed with that blue veil like a mountain, which it wore on the 4th, but it was not till we had passed the bridge that the first sheen was reflected from the pads. The reflected shadow of the Hill was black as night, and we seemed to be paddling directly into it a rod or two before us, but we never reached it at all. The trees and hills were distinctly black between us and the moon, and the water black or gleaming accordingly. It was quite dry and warm. Above the Cliffs we heard only one or two owls at a distance, a hooting owl and a screech owl, and several whip-poor-wills. The delicious fragrance of ripe grapes was wafted to us by the night air, as we paddled by, from every fertile vine on the shore, and thus its locality was revealed more surely than by daylight. You might have thought you had reached the confines of Elysium. A slight zephyr wafted us almost imperceptibly into the middle of Fair Haven Pond, while we lay watching and listening. The sheen of the moon extended quite across the pond to us in a long and narrow triangle, or rather with concave sides like a very narrow Eddystone Lighthouse, with its base in the southwest shore, and we heard the distant sound of the wind through the pines on the hilltop. Or, if we listened closely, we heard still the faint and distant barking of dogs. They rule the night. Near the south shore disturbed some ducks in the water, which slowly flew away to seek a new resting-place, uttering a distinct and alarmed quack something like a goose.

We walked up to the old Baker house. in the bright moonlight the character of the ground under our feet was not easy to detect, and we did not know at first but we were walking on sod and not on a field laid down and harrowed. From the upland the pond in the moonlight looked looked blue, — as much so as the sky. We sat on the window-sill of the old house, thought of its former inhabitants, saw our bandit shadows down the cellar-way (C. had on a red flannel shirt over his thin coat, –since he expected it would be cold and damp,– and looked like one), listened to each sound, and observed each ray of moonlight through the cracks. Heard an apple fall in the little orchard close lay, while a whip-poor-will was heard in the pines.

Returning to the boat, saw a glow-worm in the damp path in the low ground. Returning later, we experienced better the weird-like character of the night, especially perceived the fragrance of the grapes and admired the fair smooth fields in the bright moonlight. There being no mist, the reflections were wonderfully distinct; the whole of Bittern Cliff with its grove was seen beneath the waves.

 I am surprised to find how fast the dog can run in a straight line on the ice. I am not sure that I can beat him on skates, but I can turn much shorter. DOG

1855

 Very musical and even sweet, now, like a horn, is the hounding of a foxhound heard now in some distant wood, while I stand listening in some far solitary and silent field. DOG

 Minott ... [t]old how Jake Lakin lost a dog, a very valuable one, by a fox leading him on to the ice on the Great Meadows and drowning him.[18] DOG

GEORGE MINOTT

 May 3, 1855: P.M. — To Assabet Bath.

Small pewee; ***tchevet***, with a jerk of the head. Hardhack leafed two or maybe three days in one place. Early pyrus leafed yesterday or day before, if I have not named it. The skull of a horse, — not a mare, for I did not

18. Compare this entry with the entry for January 2, 1859: “Minott says that a fox will lead a dog on to the ice in order that he may get in. Tells of Jake Lakin losing a hound so, which went under the ice and was drowned below the Holt; was found afterward by Sted. Buttrick, his collar taken off and given to Lakin. They used to cross the river there on the ice, going to market, formerly.”

see the two small canine teeth in the upper jaw, nor in the under, — six molars on each side, above and below, and six incisors to each jaw. I first observed the stillness of birds, etc., at noon, with the increasing warmth, on the 23d of April. Sitting on the bank near the stone-heaps, I see large suckers rise to catch insects, — sometimes leap. A butterfly one inch in alar extent, dark, velvety brown with slate-colored tips, on dry leaves. On the north of Groton Turnpike beyond Abel Hosmer's, three distinct terraces to river; first annually overflowed, say twenty-five or thirty rods wide, second seven or eight feet higher and forty or sixty wide, third forty feet higher still. Sweet-fern opened apparently yesterday. ***Vaccinium Pennsylvanicum*** began to leaf yesterday. Young red maple leaf to-morrow; also some white birch, and perhaps sugar maple.

CAT
DOG

Humphrey Buttrick, one of eight who alone returned from Texas out of twenty-four, says he can find woodcock's eggs; now knows of several nests; has seen them setting with snow around them; and that Melvin has seen partridges' **[Ruffed Grouse** *Bonasa umbellus* (~~Partridge~~)**]** eggs some days ago. He has seen crows building this year. Found in a hen-hawk's nest once the legs of a cat. Has known of several goshawks' nests (or what he calls some kind of eagle; Garfield called it the Cape eagle); one in a shrub oak, with eggs. Last year his dog caught seven black ducks so far grown that he got sixty cents a pair for them; takes a pretty active dog to catch such. He frequently finds or hears of them. Knew of a nest this year. Also finds wood ducks' nests. Has very often seen partridges **[Ruffed Grouse** *Bonasa umbellus***]** drum close to him. Has watched one for an hour. They strike the body with their wings.

CURRENT YOUTUBE VIDEO

He shot a white-headed eagle from Carlisle Bridge. It fell in the water, and his dog was glad to let it alone. He suggested that my fish hawks found pouts in holes made by ice.

1856

January 24: A journal is a record of experiences and growth, not a preserve of things well done or said. I am occasionally reminded of a statement which I have made in conversation and immediately forgotten, which would read much better than what I put in my journal. It is a ripe, dry fruit of long-past experience which falls from me easily, without giving pain or pleasure. The charm of the journal must consist in a certain greenness, though freshness, and not in maturity. Here I cannot afford to be remembering what I said or did, my scurf cast off, but what I am and aspire to become.

WILSON

Reading the hymns of the Rig Veda, translated by Wilson,[19] which consist in a great measure of simple epithets addressed to the firmament, or the dawn, or the winds, which mean more or less as the reader is more or less alert and imaginative, and seeing how widely the various translators have differed, they regarding not the poetry, but the history and philology, dealing with very concise Sanscrit, which must almost always be amplified to be understood, I am sometimes inclined to doubt if the translator has not made something out of nothing, — whether a real idea or sentiment has been thus transmitted to us from so primitive a period. I doubt if learned Germans might not thus edit pebbles from the seashore into hymns of the Rig Veda, and translators translate them accordingly, extracting the meaning which the sea has imparted to them in very primitive times. While the commentators and translators are disputing about the meaning of this word or that, I hear only the resounding of the ancient sea and put into it all the meaning I am possessed of, the deepest murmurs I can recall, for I do not the least care where I get my ideas, or what suggests them.

I knew that a crow [**American Crow** *Corvus brachyrhynchos*] had that day plucked the cedar berries and barberries by Flint's Pond and then flapped silently through the trackless air to Walden, where it dined on fisherman's bait, though there was no living creature to tell me.

Holbrook's elm measured to-day 11 feet 4 inches in circumference at six feet from ground, the size of one of the branches of the Davis elm (call it the Lee elm, for a Lee formerly lived there). Cheney's largest in front of Mr. Frost's, 12 feet 4 inches, at six feet; 16 feet 6 inches, at one foot. The great elm opposite Keyes's land, near

19. Thoreau had in his personal library the two volumes of Horace Hayman Wilson's SELECT SPECIMENS OF THE THEATER OF THE HINDUS (London: Parbury, Allen & Co., 1835).

SELECT SPECIMENS, I
SELECT SPECIMENS, II

by (call it the Jones elm): 17 feet 6 inches, at two behind and one plus before; 15 feet 10 inches, at four; 15 feet 5 inches, at six; 16 feet at seven and a half, or spike on west side. At the smallest place between the ground and branches, this is a little bigger than the Davis elm, but it is not so big at or near the ground, nor is it so high to the branching, — about twelve feet, — nor are the branches so big, but it is much sounder, and its top broader, fuller, and handsomer. This has an uncommonly straight-sided and solid-looking trunk, measuring only two feet less at six feet from the ground than at two.

P. M. — Up Assabet.

Even the patches of shining snow-crust between those of dry white surface snow are slightly blue, like ice and water.

You may walk anywhere on the river now. Even the open space against Merrick's, below the Rock, has been closed again, and there is only six feet of water there now. I walk with a peculiar sense of freedom over the snow-covered ice, not fearing that I shall break through. I have not been able to find any tracks of muskrats this winter. I suspect that they very rarely venture out in winter with their wet coats.

I see squirrel-tracks about the hemlocks.

They are much like rabbits, only the toes are very distinct. From this they pass into a semicircular figure sometimes. Some of the first are six inches from outside to outside lengthwise, with one to two feet of interval.

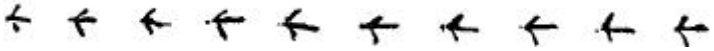
Are these the gray or red?

A great many hemlock cones have fallen on the snow and rolled down the hill.

Higher up, against the Wheeler Swamp, I see where many squirrels - perhaps red, for the tracks appear smaller- have fed on the alder cones on the twigs which are low or frozen into the ice, stripping them to the core just as they do the pine cones.

Here are the tracks of a crow, like those of the 22d, with a long hind toe, nearly two inches. The two feet arc also nearly two inches apart. I see where the bird alighted, descending with an impetus and breaking through the slight crust, planting its feet side by side.

How different this partridge-track, with its slight hind toe, open and wide-spread toes on each side, both fed: forming one straight line, exactly thus:—



(Five inches from centre to centre.) The middle toe alternately curved to the right and to the left, and what is apparently the outer toe in each case shorter than the inner one.

I see under a great many trees, black willow and swamp white oak, the bark scattered over the snow, some pieces six inches long, and above see the hole which a woodpecker has bored.

The snow is so deep along the sides of the river that I can now look into nests which I could hardly reach in the summer. I can hardly believe them the same. They have only an ice egg in them now. Thus we go about, raised, generally speaking, more than a foot above the summer level. So much higher do we carry our heads in the winter. What a great odds such a little difference makes! When the snow raises us one foot higher than we have been accustomed to walk, we are surprised at our elevation! So we soar.

I do not find a foot of open water, even, on this North Branch, as far as I go, i.e. to J. Hosmer's lot. The river has been frozen unusually long and solidly. They have been sledding wood along the river for a quarter of a mile in front of Merriam's and past the mouth of Sam Barrett's Brook, where it is bare of snow, - hard, glare ice on which there is scarcely a trace of the sled or oxen. They have sledded home a large oak which was cut down on the bank. Yet this is one of the rockiest and swiftest parts of the stream. Where I have so often stemmed the swift current, dodging the rocks, with my paddle, there the heavy, slowpaced oxen, with their ponderous squeaking load, have plodded, while the teamster walked musing beside it.

That Wheeler swamp is a great place for squirrels. I observe many of their tracks along the riverside there. The nests are of leaves, and apparently of the gray species.

There is much of the water milkweed on the little island just above Dove Rock. It rises above the deep snow there.

It is remarkable how much the river has been tracked by dogs the week past, not accompanied by their masters. They hunt, perchance, in the night more than is supposed, for I very rarely see one alone by day.

DOG

The river is pretty low and has fallen within a month, for there has been no thaw. The ice has broken and settled around the rocks, which look as if they had burst up through it. Some maple limbs which were early frozen in

have been broken and stripped down by this irresistible weight.
You see where the big dogs have slipped on one or two feet in their haste, sinking to the ice, but, having two more feet, it did not delay them.
1 walk along the sides of the stream, admiring the rich mulberry catkins of the alders, which look almost edible. They attract us because they have so much 0f spring in them. The elder red osiers, too, along the riverside in front of Merriam's on Wheeler's side.
I have seen many a collection of stately elms which better deserved to be represented at the General Court than the manikins beneath, — than the barroom and victualling cellar and groceries they overshadowed. When I see their magnificent domes, miles away in the horizon, over intervening valleys and forests, they suggest a village, a community, there. But, after all, it is a secondary consideration whether there are human dwellings beneath them; these may have long since passed away. I find that into my idea of the village has entered more of the elm than of the human being. They are worth many a political borough. They constitute a borough. The poor human representative of his party fell out from beneath their shade will not suggest a tithe of the dignity, the true nobleness and comprehensiveness of view, the sturdiness and independence, and the serene beneficence that they do. They look from township to township. A fragment of their bark is worth the backs of all the politicians in the union. They are free-sailers in their own broad sense. They send their roots north and south and east and west into many a conservative's Kansas and Carolina, who does not suspect such underground railroads, - they improve the subsoil he has never disturbed, -- and many times their length, if the support of their principles requires it. They battle with the tempests of a century. Sec what scars they bear, what limbs they lost before we were born! Yet they never adjourn; they steadily vote for their principles, and send their roots further and wider from the same centre. They die at their posts, and they leave a tough butt for the choppers to exercise themselves about, and a stump which serves for their monument. They attend no caucus, they make no compromise, they use no policy. Their one principle is growth. They combine a true radicalism with a true conservatism. Their radicalism is not cutting away of roots, but an infinite multiplication and extension of them under all surrounding institutions. They take a firmer hold on the earth that they may rise higher into the heavens. Their conservative heartwood, in which no sap longer flows, docs not impoverish their growth, but is a firm column to support it; and when their expanding trunks no longer require it, it utterly decays. Their conservatism is a dead but solid heart-wood, which is the pivot and firm column of support to all this growth, appropriating nothing to itself, but forever by its support assisting to extend the area of their radicalism. Half a century after they are dead at the core, they are preserved by radical reforms. They do not, like men, from radicals turn conservative. Their conservative part dies out first; their radical and growing part survives. They acquire new States and Territories, while the old dominions decay, and become the habitation of bears and owls and coons.

 Melvin floats slowly and quietly along the willows, watching for rats resting there, his white hound sitting still and grave in the prow, and every little while we hear his gun announcing the death of a rat or two. The dog looks on understandingly and makes no motion. DOG

 I go across lots like a hunting dog. With what tireless energy and abandonment they dash through the brush and up the sides of hills! I meet two white foxhounds, led by an old red one. How full of it they are! How their tails work! They are not tied to paths; they burst forth from the thickest shrub oak lot, and immediately dive into another as the fox did. DOG

 I am amused to see four little Irish boys only five or six years old getting a horse in a pasture, for their father apparently, who is at work in a neighboring field. They have all in a row got hold of a very long haler and are leading him. All wish to have a hand in it. It is surprising that he obeys such small specimens of humanity, but he seems to be very docile, a real family horse. At length, by dint of pulling and shouting, they get him into a run down a hill, and though he moves very deliberately, scarcely faster than a walk, all but the one at the end of the line soon cut and run to right and left, without having looked behind, expecting him to be upon them. They haul up at last at the bars, which are down, and then the family puppy, a brown pointer (?), about two-thirds grown, comes bounding to join them and assist. He is as youthful and about as knowing as any of them. The horse marches gravely behind, obeying the faint tug at the halter, or honestly stands still from time to time, as if not aware that they are pulling at all, though they are all together DOG

straining every nerve to start him. It is interesting to behold this faithful beast, the oldest and wisest of the company, thus implicitly obeying the lead of the youngest and weakest.

 Dec 12th Wonderful—wonderful is our life and that of our companions—! That there should be such a thing as a brute animal—not human—! & that it should attain to a sort of society with our race!! Think of cats, for instance; they are neither Chinese nor Tartars—; they do not go to school nor read the Testament— Yet how near they come to doing so—how much they are like us who do so What sort of philosophers are we who know absolutely nothing of At length—without the origin & destiny of cats?— having solved any of these problems, we fatten & kill & eat some of our cousins!! ...Yesterday morning I noticed that several people were having their pigs killed, not foreseeing the thaw. Such warm weather as this the animal heat will hardly get out before night— I saw Peter, the dexterous pig-butcher—busy in 2 or 3 places—& in the Pm I saw him with washed hands & knives in sheath—& his leather overalls drawn off—going to his solitary house on the edge of the Great Fields—carrying in the rain a piece of the pork he had slaughtered with a string put through it. Often he carries home the head, which is less prized taking his pay thus in kind—& these supplies do not come amiss to his outcast family. I saw Lynch's dog stealthily feeding at a half of his master's pig which lay dressed on a wheelbarrow at the door— A little yellow brown dog—with fore feet braced on the ice—& out-stretched neck—he {swif} eagerly browsed along the edge of the meat half a foot to right & left—with incessant short & rapid snatches which brought it away as readily as if it had been pudding. He evidently knew very well that he was stealing—but made the most of his time. The little brown dog weighed a pound or 2 more afterward than before. Where is the great natural historian—? Is he a butcher or the patron of butchers? As well look for a great anthropologist among cannibals.

CAT

DOG

 Dec. 25. P.M. — To Lee's Cliff.
A strong wind from the northwest is gathering the snow into picturesque drifts behind the walls. As usual they resemble shells more than anything, sometimes prows of vessels, also the folds of a white napkin or counterpane dropped over a bonneted head. There are no such picturesque snow-drifts as are formed behind loose and open stone walls. Already yesterday it had drifted so much, i.e. so much ground was bare, that there were as many carts as sleighs in the streets.
Just beyond Hubbard's Bridge, on Conant's Brook Meadow, I am surprised to find a. tract of ice, some thirty by seven or eight rods, blown quite bare. It shows how unstable the snow is.
Sanborn got some white spruce and some usnea for Christmas in the swamp. I thought the last would be the most interesting and *weird*.
On the north sides of the walls we go over boots and get them full, then let ourselves down into the shellwork on the south side, so beyond the brows of hills.
At Lee's Cliff I pushed aside the snow with my foot and got some fresh green catnip for Min.
I see the numerous tracks there, too, of foxes, or else hares, that have been running about in the light snow.
Called at the Conantum House. It grieves me to see these interesting relics, this and the house at the Baker Farm, going to complete ruin.
Met William Wheeler's shaggy gray terrier, or Indian dog, going home. He got out of the road into the field and went round to avoid us.
Take long walks in stormy weather or through deep snows in the fields and woods, if you would keep your spirits up. Deal with brute nature. Be cold and hungry and weary.

CAT

DOG

1857

 Jan. 28. Am again surprised to see a song sparrow sitting for hours on our wood-pile in the yard, in the midst of snow in the yard. It is unwilling to move. People go to the pump, and the cat and dog walk round the wood-pile without starting it. I examine it at my leisure through a glass. Remarkable that the coldest of all winters these summer birds should remain. Perhaps it is no more comfortable this season further south, where they are accustomed to abide. In the afternoon this sparrow joined a flock of tree sparrows on the bare ground west of the house. It was amusing to see the tree sparrows wash themselves, standing in the puddles and tossing

CAT

DOG

the water over themselves. Minott says they wade in to where it is an inch deep and then "splutter splutter," throwing the water over them. They have had no opportunity to wash for a month, perhaps, there having been no thaw. The song sparrow did not go off with them.

P.M. — To Walden.
Notice many heaps of leaves on snow on the hillside southwest of the pond, *as usual*. Probably the rain and thaw have brought down some of them.

March 20. Dine with Agassiz at R.W.E.'s. He thinks that the suckers die of asphyxia, having very large air-bladders and being in the habit of coming to the surface for air. But then he is thinking of a different phenomenon from the one I speak of, which last is confined to the very earliest spring or winter. he says that the *Emys picta* does not copulate till seven years old, and then does not lay till four years after copulation, or when eleven years old. The *Cistudo Blandingii* (which he has heard of in Massachusetts only at Lancaster) copulates at eight or nine years of we. He says this is not a *Cistudo* but an *Emys*. He has eggs of the *serpentina* from which the young did not come forth till the nexst spring. He thinks that the Esquimau dog is the only indigenous one in the United States. He had not observed the silvery appearance and the dryness of the lycoperdon fungus in water which I showed. He had broken caterpillars and found the crystals of ice in them, but had not thawed them. When I began to tell him of my experiment on a frozen fish, he said that Pallas had shown that fishes were frozen and thawed again, but I affirmed the contrary, and then Agassiz agreed with me. Says Aristotle describes the care the pouts take of their young. I told him of Tanner's account of it, the only one I had seen.
The river over the meadows again, nearly as high as in February, on account of rain of the 19th.

DOG

LOUIS AGASSIZ

April 7, Tuesday: Benjamin B. Wiley was writing to Henry Thoreau from Chicago:

> If it be not unfair to ask an author what he means I would inquire what I am to understand when in your list of employments given in Walden you say "I long ago lost a hound a bay-horse and a turtle-dove." If I transgress let the question pass unnoticed.

On either the 7th or the 9th, John ("Frank") Wheeler was born in Concord, Massachusetts, son of Seth Brooks Wheeler and Mary Adelaide Giddings Wheeler (he would hang himself in New Boston, New Hampshire on February 27, 1896 at the age of 38).

April 7. Tuesday. Went to walk in the woods. When I had got half a mile or more away in the woods alone, and was sitting on a rock, was surprised to be joined by R's large Newfoundland dog Ranger, who had smelled me out and so tracked me. Would that I could add his woodcraft to my own! He would trot along before me as far as the winding wood-path allowed me to see him, and then, with the shortest possible glance over his shoulder, ascertain if I was following. At a fork in the road he would pause, look back at me, and deliberate which course I would take. At sundown I went out to gather bayberries to make tallow of. Holding a basket beneath, I rubbed them off into it between my hands, and so got about a quart, to which were added enough to make about three pints. They are interesting little gray berries clustered close about the short bare twigs, just below the last year's growth. The berries have little prominences, like those of an orange, encased with tallow, the tallow also filling the interstices, down to the nut. They require a great deal of boiling to get out all the tallow. The outmost case soon melted off, but the most part I did not get even after many hours of boiling. The oily part rose to the top, making it look like a savory black broth, which smelled just like balm or other herb tea. I got about a quarter of a pound by weight from these say three pints of berries, and some yet remained. Boil a great while, let it cool, then skim off the tallow from the surface; melt again and strain it. What I got was more yellow than what I have seen in the shops. A small portion cooled in the form of small corns (nuggets I called them when I picked them out from amid the berries), flat hemispherical, of a very pure lemon yellow, and these needed no straining. The berries were left black and massed together by the remaining tallow. Cat-briar (Smilax) they call here "the devil's wrapping yarn." I see several emperor moth cocoons, with small eggs on the back, apparently of the ichneumon fly, that has destroyed the nymph.

DOG

April 26, Sunday: Henry Thoreau wrote to Benjamin B. Wiley and attempted to explicate his parable in WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS of the loss of the hound, horse, and turtle-dove.

> WALDEN: In any weather, at any hour of the day or night, I have been anxious to improve the nick of time, and notch it on my stick too; to stand on the meeting of two eternities, the past and future, which is precisely the present moment; to toe that line. You will pardon some obscurities, for there are more secrets in my trade than in most men's, and yet not voluntarily kept, but inseparable from its very nature. I would gladly tell all that I know about it, and never paint "No Admittance" on my gate.
>
> I long ago lost a hound, a bay horse, and a turtle-dove, and am still on their trail. Many are the travellers I have spoken concerning them, describing their tracks and what calls they answered to. I have met one or two who had heard the hound, and the tramp of the horse, and even seen the dove disappear behind a cloud, and they seemed as anxious to recover them as if they had lost them themselves.
>
> To anticipate, not the sunrise and the dawn merely, but, if possible, Nature herself! How many mornings, summer and winter, before yet any neighbor was stirring about his business, have I been about mine! No doubt many of my townsmen have met me returning from this enterprise, farmers starting for Boston in the twilight, or woodchoppers going to their work. It is true, I never assisted the sun materially in his rising, but, doubt not, it was of the last importance only to be present at it.

Curiously, he explicated it as if he were explicating his reference to Mencius's remark about the loss of the "sentiments of the heart" in A WEEK where he had quoted as follows:

> A WEEK: Mencius says: "If one loses a fowl or a dog, he knows well how to seek them again; if one loses the sentiments of his heart, he does not know how to seek them again.... The duties of practical philosophy consist only in seeking after those sentiments of the heart which we have lost; that is all."

So what he sent off to Wiley was:

> How shall we account for our pursuits if they are original? We get the language with which to describe our various lives out of a common mint. If others have their losses, which they are busy repairing, so have I **mine**, & their hound & horse may **perhaps** be the symbols of some of them. But also I have lost, or am in danger of losing, a far finer & more etherial treasure, which commonly no loss of which they are conscious will symbolize — this I answer hastily & with some hesitation, according as I now understand my own words.

I would infer, from this confusion, that in Thoreau's memory his quotation in THE DIAL and then in A WEEK of a parable from Mencius, a parable which referred to a fowl and a dog, and his invention of his own parable in WALDEN, which referred to a hound, a horse, and a turtle-dove, had, by 1857 at least, become commingled.

> THE SCHOLAR.
>
> Teen, son of the king of Tse, asked what the business of the scholar consists in? Mencius replied, In elevating his mind and inclination. What do you mean by elevating the mind? It consists merely in being benevolent and just. Where is the scholar's abode? In benevolence. Where is his road? Justice. To dwell in benevolence, and walk in justice, is the whole business of a great man.
>
> Benevolence is man's heart, and justice is man's path. If a man lose his fowls or his dogs, he knows how to seek them. There are those who lose their hearts and know not how to seek them. The duty of the student is no other than to seek his lost heart.
>
> He who employs his whole mind, will know his nature. He who knows his nature, knows heaven.
>
> It were better to be without books than to believe all that they record.

> A WEEK: Mencius says: "If one loses a fowl or a dog, he knows well how to seek them again; if one loses the sentiments of his heart, he does not know how to seek them again.... The duties of practical philosophy consist only in seeking after those sentiments of the heart which we have lost; that is all."

We should, therefore, limit the range of possible interpretations of Thoreau's parable to those which are not blatantly discordant with the more decipherable intention of the Mencius parable. And immediately we notice that a key to the Mencius parable is that "loss" can mean such different things, that we may know how to recover from one "loss" but may have no clue as to how to recover from another "loss."

THOREAU AND CHINA

There is a marked difference in the meaning of the word "my" when it is applied to my hound, my horse, and my turtledove.

Did we suppose that "my" means the same in the expression "Please get my hat" as in the expression "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" No, we did not suppose that, nor are we to suppose that the possessive pronoun is the same when it is applied to a family pet with whom we share a long-term and deep affectional relationship, to a barn animal we saddle in order to go somewhere, and to a wild bird we glimpse as it disappears behind a cloud. In the sense in which the dog is my dog, the horse is not my horse. In the sense in which the horse is my horse, the turtledove is not my turtledove. And there is not only a difference in the definition of the possessive pronoun "my" when it is applied to my hound, my horse, and my turtledove, there is also a difference in the meaning of the economic term "loss." For me to lose my hound is for this dog to run off after a scent and return when it chooses. For me to lose my horse is for this horse to be stolen by a horse thief, or for me to gamble it away, or for it to lie down and die. For me to lose a turtledove is — what? Thoreau didn't need to clutch a turtledove, so how could he lose it? What he said was "In Boston yesterday an ornithologist said significantly, 'If you held the bird in your hand–'; but I would rather hold it in my affections," and the bird of which he and the ornithologist spoke might as well have been a turtledove as an eponymous anonymous bird of some other species. When one gets to the turtledove part of the saying, one recognizes that Thoreau's parable of loss is a secret joke, a joke on the whole idea that in this world there could be such a thing as loss. We may well wonder how the idea of loss could have arisen in a world in which each instant of our lives is a gift to us, and is a gift over which we have no control whatever.

Note that if we interpret the parable of the "loss" of the hound, horse, and turtle-dove as a secret joke on the whole idea that in this world there could be such a thing as loss, then the parable becomes an intrinsic part of the chapter, for the chapter, according to Stanley Cavell's THE SENSES OF *WALDEN*, is, in its entirety, a parable about the unreality of loss and an attempt to subvert our customary deployment of economic terms such as loss when we attempt to deal with the affect of our lives:

> The writer comes to us from a sense of loss; the myth does not contain more than symbols because it is no set of desired things he has lost, but a connection with things, the track of desire itself.

Note also that if we interpret this parable of the "loss" of the hound, horse, and turtle-dove as a secret joke on the simpleminded presumption that "loss" is one single, unproblematic concept, then we are led directly back, full circle, to this citation of Mencius in A WEEK, the citation in which the "duties of practical philosophy" are specified.

> A WEEK: Mencius says: "If one loses a fowl or a dog, he knows well how to seek them again; if one loses the sentiments of his heart, he does not know how to seek them again.... The duties of practical philosophy consist only in seeking after those sentiments of the heart which we have lost; that is all."

Barbara Johnson, while agreeing that the parable has to do with losses, evidently disagrees with the idea that the chapter is intended to distance us from the easy application of such economic terms to the affect of our lives. Rather, she suggests, WALDEN wakes us up to our losses, evidently to the reality of our losses:

> WALDEN's great achievement is to wake us up to our own losses, to make us participate in the trans-individual movement of loss in its own infinite particularity, urging us passionately to follow the tracks of we know not quite what, as if we had lost it, or were in danger of losing it, ourselves. In order to communicate the irreducibly particular yet ultimately unreadable nature of loss, Thoreau has chosen to use three symbols [hound, bay horse, and turtledove] that clearly **are** symbols but that do not really symbolize anything outside themselves.

We may note also, here, that Johnson is attempting a pre-emptive strike at anyone and everyone who would make the three symbolic animals "symbolize anything outside themselves." My own attitude toward this is that a good reader is an active reader, and seeks to read meaning into what she is reading. We should judge each attempt on its merits, and make no pre-emptive strike against the attempt to actively engage with the presented material.

Concord April 26th
1857
Dear Sir
I have been spending a fortnight in New Bedford, and on my return find your last letter awaiting me.

I was sure that you would find Newcomb inexhaustible, if you found your way into him at all. I might say, however, by way of criticism, that he does not take firm enough hold on this world, where surely we are bound to triumph.
I am sorry to say that I do not see how I can furnish you with a copy of my essay on the wild. It has not been prepared for publication, only for lectures, and would cover at least a hundred written pages. Even if it were ready to be dispersed, I could not easily find time to copy it. So I return the order.
I see that you are turning a broad furrow among the books, but I trust that some very private journal all the while holds its own through their midst. Books can only reveal us to ourselves, and as often as they do us this service we lay them aside. I should say read Goethe's Autobiography by all means, also Gibbon's Haydon the Painter's– & our Franklin's of course; perhaps also Alfieris, Benvenuto Cellini's, & De Quincey's Confessions of an Opium Eater – since you like Autobiography.
I think you must read Coleridge again & further –skipping all his theology– i.e. if you value precise definitions & a discriminating use of language. By the way, read De Quincey's reminiscences of Coleridge & Wordsworth.
How shall we account for our pursuits if they are original? We get the language with which to describe our various lives out of a common mint. If others have their losses, which they are busy repairing, so have I mine, & their hound & horse may perhaps be the symbols of some of them. But also I have lost, or am in danger of losing, a far finer & more etherial treasure, which commonly no loss of which they are conscious will symbolize— This I answer hastily & with some hesitation, according as I now understand my own words.
I take this occasion to acknowledge, & thank you for, your long letter of Dec 21st. So poor a correspondent am I. If I wait for the fit time to reply, it commonly does not come at all, as you see. I require the presence of the other party to suggest what I shall say.
Methinks a certain polygamy with its troubles is the fate of almost all men. They are married to two wives – their genius (a celestial muse) and also to some fair daughter of the earth. Unless these two were fast friends before marriage, and so are afterward, there will be but little peace in the house.
In answer to your questions, I must say that I never made, nor had occasion to use a filter of any kind; but, no doubt, they can be bought in Chicago.
You cannot surely identify a plant from a scientific description until after long practice.
The "millers" you speak of are the perfect or final state of the insect.
The chrysalis is the silken bag they spun when caterpillars, & occupied in the nymph state.
Yrs truly
Henry D. Thoreau

EDWARD GIBBON
THOMAS DE QUINCEY
VITTORIO ALFIERI
BENVENUTO CELLINI
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN
BENJAMIN ROBERT HAYDON

READ ALFIERI'S TEXT

READ FRANKLIN'S TEXT

May 4. Rain. The barber tells me that the masons of New York tell him that they would prefer human hair to that of cattle to mix with their plastering.

Balm-of-Gilead pollen in house to-day; outdoors, say to-morrow, if fair.

Minott tells me of one Matthias Bowers, a native of Chelmsford and cousin of C. Bowers, a very active fellow, who used to sleep with him and when he found the door locked would climb over the roof and come in at the dormer-window. One Sunday, when they were repairing the old Unitarian church and there was a staging just above the belfry, he climbed up the lightning-rod and put his arm round the ball at the top of the spire and swung his hat there. He then threw it down and the crown was knocked out. Minott saw him do it, and Deacon White ordered him to come down. M. also told of a crazy fellow who got into the belfry of the Lincoln church with an axe and began to cut the spire down, but was stopped after he had done considerable damage.

When M. lived at Baker's, B. had a dog Lion, famous for chasing squirrels. The gray squirrels were numerous and used to run over the house sometimes. It was an old-fashioned house, slanting to one story behind, with a ladder from the roof to the ground. One day a gray squirrel ran over the house, and Lion, dashing after him up the ladder, went completely over the house and fell off the front side before he could stop, putting out one of his toes. But the squirrel did not put out any of his toes. DOG

Wyman told Minott that he used to see *black snakes* crossing Walden and would wait till they came ashore and then kill them. One day he saw a bull on the northerly side swim across to get at some cows on the south.

It has rained all day, and I see in the footpath across the Common, where water flows or has flown, a great many worms, apparently drowned. Did they not come out in unusual numbers last night because it was so warm, and so get overtaken by the rain? But how account for the worms said to be found in tubs of water?

Perhaps the most generally interesting event at present is a perfectly warm and pleasant day. It affects the greatest number, the well out of doors and the sick in chambers. No wonder the weather is the universal theme of conversation.

A warm rain; and the ring of the toads is heard all through it.

June 24, Wednesday: P.M. –To Farmer's Owl-Nest Swamp. Melvin thinks there cannot be many black ducks' nests in the town, else his dog would find them, for he will follow their trail as well as another bird's, or a fox. The dog once caught five black ducks here but partly grown. Farmer was hoeing corn with his Irishmen. The crows had got much of it, and when he came to a vacant hill he took a few beans from his pocket -- for each hoer had a pocketfull -- and dropped them there, so making his rows complete. Melvin was there with his dog, which had just caught a woodchuck. M. said that he once saw a fox jump over a wall with something in his mouth, and, going up, the fox dropped a woodchuck and a mouse, which he had caught and was carrying home to his young. He had eaten the head of the woodchuck. When M. looked there the next morning they were gone.Went to Farmer's Swamp to look for the screech owl's nest Farmer had found. You go about forty-five rods on the first path to the left in the woods and then turn to the left a few rods. I found the nest at last near the top of a middling-sized white pine, about thirty feet from the ground. As I stood by the tree, the old bird dashed by within a couple rods, uttering a peculiar mewing sound, which she kept up amid the bushes, a blackbird in close pursuit of her. I found the nest empty, on one side of the main stem but close to it, resting on some limbs. It was made of twigs rather less than an eighth of an inch thick and was almost flat above, only an inch lower in the middle than at the edge, about sixteen inches in diameter and six or eight inches thick, with the twigs in the midst, and beneath was mixed with sphagnum and sedge from the swamp beneath, and the lining or flooring was coarse strips of grape-vine bark; the whole pretty firmly matted together. How common and important a material is grape-vine bark for birds' nests! Nature wastes nothing. There were white droppings of the young on the nest and one large pellet of fur and small bones two and a half inches long. In the meanwhile, the old bird was uttering that hoarse worried note from time to time, somewhat like a partridge's, flying past from side to side and alighting amid the trees or bushes. When I had descended, I detected one young bird two thirds grown perched on a branch of the next tree, about fifteen feet from the ground, which was all the while staring at me with its great yellow eyes. It was gray with gray horns and a dark beak **[Long-eared Owl** ***Asio otus***]. As I walked past near it, it turned its head steadily, always facing me, without moving its body, till it looked directly DOG

the opposite way over its back, but never offered to fly. Just then I thought surely that I heard a puppy faintly barking at me four or five rods distant amid the bushes, having tracked me into the swamp, –*what what*, *what what what*. It was exactly such a noise as the barking of a very small dog or perhaps a fox. But it was the old owl, for I presently saw her making it. She repeated [*sic*] perched quite near. She was generally reddish-brown or partridge-colored, the breast mottled with dark brown and fawn-color in downward strings [*sic*] and had plain fawn-colored thighs.

EDWARD HOAR


July 23, Thursday, Morning: … Early the next morning … the stage called for us, the Indian having breakfasted with us, and already placed the baggage in the canoe to see how it would go. My companion and I had each a large knapsack as full as it would hold, and we had two large India-rubber bags which held our provision and utensils. As for the Indian, all the baggage he had, beside his axe and gun, was a blanket, which he brought loose in his hand. However, he had laid in a store of tobacco and a new pipe for the excursion. The canoe was securely lashed diagonally across the top of the stage, with bits of carpet tucked under the edge to prevent its chafing. The very accommodating driver appeared as much accustomed to carrying canoes in this way as bandboxes.…

DOG


[From THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH] At the Bangor House we took in four men bound on a hunting excursion, one of the men going as cook. They had a dog, a middling-sized brindled cur, which ran by the side of the stage, his master showing his head and whistling from time to time; but after we had gone about three miles the dog was suddenly missing, and two of the party went back for him, while the stage, which was full of passengers, waited. I suggested that he had taken the back track for the Bangor House. At length one man came back, while the other kept on. This whole party of hunters declared their intention to stop till the dog was found; but the very obliging driver was ready to wait a spell longer. He was evidently unwilling to lose so many passengers, who would have taken a private conveyance, or perhaps the other line of stages, the next day. Such progress did we make with a journey of over sixty miles, to be accomplished that day, and a rain-storm just setting in. We discussed the subject of dogs and their instincts till it was threadbare, while we waited there, and the scenery of the suburbs of Bangor is still distinctly impressed on my memory. After full half an hour the man returned, leading the dog by a rope. He had overtaken him just as he was entering the Bangor House. He was then tied on the top of the stage, but being wet and cold, several times in the course of the journey he jumped off, and I saw him dangling by his neck. This dog was depended on to stop bears with. He had already stopped one somewhere in New Hampshire, and I can testify that he stopped a stage in Maine. This party of four probably paid nothing for the dog's ride, nor for his run, while our party of three paid two dollars, and were charged four for the light canoe which lay still on the top.

CAT


November 25, Wednesday: P.M. –To Hubbard's Close and thence through woods to Goose Pond and Pine Hill.

A clear, cold, windy afternoon. The cat crackles with electricity when you stroke her, and the fur rises up to your touch.

This is November of the hardest kind, –bare frozen ground covered with pale-brown or straw-colored herbage, a strong, cold, cutting northwest wind which makes me seek to cover my ears, a perfectly clear and cloudless sky. The cattle in the fields have a cold, shrunken, shaggy look, their hair standing out every way, as if with electricity, like the cat's. Ditches and pools are fast skimming over, and a few slate-colored snowbirds, with thick, shuffling twitter, and fine-chipping tree sparrows flit from bush to bush in the otherwise deserted pastures. This month taxes a walker's resources more than any. For my part, I should sooner think of going into quarters in November than in the winter. If you do feel any fire at this season out of doors, you may depend upon it, it is your own. It is but a short time, these afternoons, before the night cometh, in which no man can walk. If you delay to start till three o'clock, there will be hardly time left for a long and rich adventure, –to get fairly out of town. November Eatheart, –is that the name of it?[20] Not only the fingers cease to do their office, but there is often a benumbing of the faculties generally. You can hardly screw up your courage to take a walk when all is thus tightly locked or frozen up and so little is to be seen in field or wood. I am inclined to take to the swamps

20.Channing, p. 107.

or woods as the warmest place, and the former are still the openest. Nature has herself become like the few fruits which she still affords, a very thick-shelled nut with a shrunken meat within. If I find anything to excite or warm my thoughts abroad, it is an agreeable disappointment, for I am obliged to go abroad willfully and against my inclinations at first. The prospect looks so barren, so many springs are frozen up, not a flower perchance and but few birds left, not a companion abroad in all these fields for me, I am slow to go forth. I seem to anticipate a fruitless walk. I think to myself hesitatingly, Shall I go there, or there, or there? and cannot make up my mind to any route, all seem so unpromising, mere surface walking and fronting the cold wind, so that I have to force myself to it often and at random. But then I am often unexpectedly compensated, and the thinnest yellow light of November is more warming and exhilarating than any wine they tell of; and then the mite which November contributes becomes equal in value to the bounty of July. I may meet with something which interests me, and immediately it is as warm as in July, as if it were the south instead of the northwest wind that blowed.

I do not know if I am singular when I say that I believe there is no man with whom I can associate who will not, comparatively speaking, spoil my afternoon. That society or encounter may at last yield a fruit which I am not aware of, but I cannot help suspecting that I should have spent those hours more profitably alone.

Pools under the north sides of hills are frozen pretty thick. That cold one of Stow's is nearly an inch and a half thick. It is already dusty, though the ice is but a day or two old. That of Jarvis's, opposite Breed's, is also skimmed over thinly, but Goose Pond very little way as yet. The main crystals of this new ice remind me where massed together sometimes of spiny cactus leaves. Meeting each other, they inclose figures of a more or less triangular form rather than squarish. Sometimes many are closely parallel, half an inch apart, and in favorable lights you see a resemblance to large feathers. Sometimes those large spiny crystals ray from a centre, star-like, somewhat like the folds of a garment taken up by a point. The plaited ice. Also you may say the waved ice, – still speaking of the first thin ice of the season.

I notice a thimble-berry vine forming an arch four feet high, which has firmly rooted itself at the small end.

The roar of the wind in the trees over my head sounds as cold as the wind feels.

I come to what seems an old ditch a dozen feet long, in Hubbard's Close. It is skinned over, but I see where a spring wells up from its bottom under the ice. When I come to it, small black-looking fishes (?), four or five inches long, apparently trout, dart about it with incredible velocity, trying to escape or to bury themselves in the mud. It is some time before all have succeeded in burying themselves to their minds, but when I shake the bog they start again.

Ascending the hill on the east of the Close, I find, in the pine wood on its top, some fragments of a frozen white fungus or toadstool, which apparently a squirrel has eaten, for he has also dropped some at the base of a pine. These look almost exactly like asbestos, so white and stringy to the eye.

Methinks there has been more pine-sap than usual the past summer. I never saw a quarter part so much. It stands there withered in dense brown masses, six or eight inches high, partly covered with dead leaves. The tobacco-pipes are a darker brown.

You see here and there, under pitch pines, bits of gray bark which have fallen, reminding you very strongly of the scaly armor, perhaps, of fossil fishes or other creatures. I see, under a large white pine, three quarts at least of scales in a heap, where a squirrel has sat on the instep of the tree and stripped the cones. Further in Ebby Hubbard's wood, I see a great two-storied mass of black spunk which has fallen.

I shiver about awhile on Pine Hill, waiting for the sun to set. Methinks the air is dusky soon after four these days. The landscape looks darker than at any season, –like arctic scenery. There is the sun a quarter of an hour high, shining on it through a perfectly clear sky, but to my eye it is singularly dark or dusky. And now the sun has disappeared, there is hardly less light for half a minute. I should not know when it was down, but by looking for [it] as I stand at this height.

Returning, I see a fox run across the road in the twilight from Potter's into Richardson's woods. He is on a canter, but I see the whitish tip of his tail. I feel a certain respect for him, because, though so large, he still maintains himself free and wild in our midst, and is so original so far as any resemblance to our race is concerned. Perhaps I like him better than his tame cousin the dog for it.

DOG

It is surprising how much, from the habit of regarding writing as an accomplishment, is wasted on form. A very little information or wit is mixed up with a great deal of conventionalism in the style of expressing it, as with a sort of preponderating paste or vehicle. Some life is not simply expressed, but a long-winded speech is made, with an occasional attempt to put a little life into it.

December 27. A clear, pleasant day. P.M. –To Goose Pond.

Tree sparrows about the weeds in the yard. A snowball on every pine plume, for there has been no wind to shake it down. The pitch pines look like trees heavily laden with snow oranges. The snowballs on their plumes are like a white fruit. When I thoughtlessly strike at a limb with my hatchet, in my surveying, down comes a sudden shower of snow, whitening my coat and getting into my neck. You must be careful how you approach and jar the trees thus supporting a light snow.

Partridges **[Ruffed Grouse** ***Bonasa umbellus*** (~~Partridge~~)**]** dash away through the pines, jarring down the snow.

Mice have been abroad in the night. We are almost ready to believe that they have been shut up in the earth all the rest of the year because we have not seen their tracks. I see where, by the shore of Goose Pond, one has pushed up just far enough to open a window through the snow three quarters of an inch across, but has not been forth. Elsewhere, when on the pond, I see in several places where one has made a circuit out on to the pond a rod or more, returning to the shore again. Such a track may, by what we call accident, be preserved for a geological period, or be obliterated by the melting of the snow.

Goose Pond is not thickly frozen yet. Near the north shore it cracks under the snow as I walk, and in many places water has oozed out and spread over the ice, mixing with the snow and making dark places. Walden is almost entirely skimmed over. It will probably be completely frozen over to-night.[21]

I frequently hear a dog bark at some distance in the night, which, strange as it may seem, reminds me of the cooing or crowing of a ring dove which I heard every night a year ago at Perth Amboy. It was sure to coo on the slightest noise in the house; as good as a watch-dog. The crowing of cocks, too, reminds me of it, and, now I think of it, it was precisely the intonation and accent of the cat owl's hoo-hoo-hoo-oo, dwelling in each case sonorously on the last syllable. They get the pitch and break ground with the first note, and then prolong and swell it in the last. The commonest and cheapest sounds, as the barking of a dog, produce the same effect on fresh and healthy ears that the rarest music does. It depends on your appetite for sound. Just as a crust is sweeter to a healthy appetite than confectionery to a pampered or diseased one. It is better that these cheap sounds be music to us than that we have the rarest ears for music in any other sense. I have lain awake at night many a time to think of the barking of a dog which I had heard long before, bathing my being again in those waves of sound, as a frequenter of the opera might lie awake remembering the music he had heard.

DOG

As my mother made my pockets once of Father's old fire-bags, with the date of the formation of the Fire Society on them, –1794, –though they made but rotten pockets, –so we put our meaning into those old mythologies. I am sure that the Greeks were commonly innocent of any such double-entendre as we attribute to them.

One while we do not wonder that so many commit suicide, life is so barren and worthless; we only live on by an effort of the will. Suddenly our condition is ameliorated, and even the barking of a dog is a pleasure to us. So closely is our happiness bound up with our physical condition, and one reacts on the other.Do not despair of life. You have no doubt farce enough to overcome your obstacles. Think of the fox prowling through wood and field in a winter night for something to satisfy his hunger. Notwithstanding cold and the hounds and traps, his race survives. I do not believe any of them ever committed suicide. I saw this afternoon where probably a fox had rolled some small carcass in the snow.

I cut a blueberry bush this afternoon, a venerable-looking one bending over Goose Pond, with a gray, flat, scaly bark, the bark split into long, narrow, closely adhering scales, the inner bark dull-reddish. At several feet from the ground it was one and five sixteenths inches in diameter, and I counted about twenty-nine indistinct rings. It seems a very close-grained wood. It appears, then, that some of those old gray blueberry bushes which overhang the pond-holes have attained half the age of man.

I am disappointed by most essays and lectures. I find that I had expected the authors would have some life, some very private experience, to report, which would make it comparatively unimportant in what style they expressed themselves, but commonly they have only a talent to exhibit. The new magazine which all have been expecting may contain only another love story as naturally told as the last, perchance, but without the slightest novelty in it. It may be a mere vehicle for Yankee phrases.

What interesting contrasts our climate affords! In July you rush panting into [a] pond, to cool yourself in the tepid water, when the stones on the bank are so heated that you cannot hold one tightly in your hand, and horses are melting on the road. Now you walk on the same pond frozen, amid the snow, with numbed fingers and feet, and see the water-target bleached and stiff in the ice.

21.Yes.

1858

 January 23: The wonderfully mild and pleasant weather continues. The ground has been bare since the 11th. This morning was colder than before. I have not been able to walk up the North Branch this winter, nor along the channel of the South Branch at any time.

P.M.–To Saw Mill Brook.

A fine afternoon. There has been but little use for gloves this winter, though I have been surveying a great deal for three months. The sun, and cock crowing, bare ground, etc., etc., remind me of March.

Standing on the bridge over the Mill Brook on the Turnpike, there being but little ice on the south side, I see several small water-bugs (Gyrinus) swimming about, as in the spring. I see the terminal shield fern very fresh, as an evergreen, at Saw Mill Brook, and (I think it is) the marginal fern and Lycopodium lucidulum.

I go up the brook, walking on it most of the way, surprised to find that it will bear me. How it falls from rock to rock, as down a flight of stairs, all through that rocky wood, from the swamp which is its source to the Everett farm! The bays or more stagnant parts are thickest frozen, the channel oftenest open, and here and there the water has overflowed the ice and covered it with a thickening mass of glistening spiculae. The white markings on the under side are very rich and varied,–the currency of the brook, the impression of its fleeting bubbles even. It comes out of a meadow of about an acre.

I go near enough to Flint's Pond, about 4 P. M., to hear it thundering. In summer I should not have suspected its presence an eighth of a mile off through the woods, but in such a winter day as this it speaks and betrays itself.

Returning through Britton's field, I notice the stumps of chestnuts cut a dozen years ago. This tree grows rapidly, and one layer seems not to adhere very firmly to another. I can easily count the concentric circles of growth on these old stumps as I stand over them, for they are worn into conspicuous furrows along the lines of the pores of the wood. One or more rings often gape an eighth of an inch or more, at about their twenty-fourth or twenty-fifth year, when the growth, in three or four cases that I examined, was most rapid. Looking toward the woods in the horizon, it is seen to be very hazy.

At Ditch Pond I hear what I suppose to be a fox barking, an exceedingly husky, hoarse, and ragged note, prolonged perhaps by the echo, like a feeble puppy, or even a child endeavoring to scream, but choked with fear, yet it is on a high key. It sounds so through the wood, while I am in the hollow, that I cannot tell from which side it comes. I hear it bark forty or fifty times at least. It is a peculiar sound, quite unlike any other woodland sound that I know.

Walden, I think, begins to crack and boom first on the south side, which is first in the shade, for I hear it cracking there, though it is still in the sun around me. It is not so sonorous and like the dumping of frogs as I have heard it, but more like the cracking of crockery. It suggests the very brittlest material, as if the globe you stood on were a hollow sphere of glass and might fall to pieces on the slightest touch. Most shivering, splintery, screeching cracks these are, as if the ice were no thicker than a tumbler, though it is probably nine or ten inches. Methinks my weight sinks it and helps to crack sometimes.

Who can doubt that men are by a certain fate what they are, contending with unseen and unimagined difficulties, or encouraged and aided by equally mysterious auspicious circumstances? Who can doubt this essential and innate difference between man and man, when he considers a whole race, like the Indian, inevitably and resignedly passing away in spite of our efforts to Christianize and educate them? Individuals accept their fate and live according to it, as the Indian does. Everybody notices that the Indian retains his habits wonderfully,–is still the same man that the discoverers found. The fact is, the history of the white man is a history of improvement, that of the red man a history of fixed habits of stagnation.

To insure health, a man's relation to Nature must come very near to a personal one; he must be conscious of a friendliness in her; when human friends fail or die, she must stand in the gap to him. I cannot conceive of any life which deserves the name, unless there is a certain tender relation to Nature. This it is which makes winter warm, and supplies society in the desert and wilderness. Unless Nature sympathizes with and speaks to us, as it were, the most fertile and blooming regions are barren and dreary.

Mrs. William Monroe told Sophia last evening that she remembered her (Sophia's) grandfather very well, that he was taller than Father, and used to ride out to their house–she was a Stone and lived where she and her husband did afterward, now Darius Merriam's–when they made cheeses, to drink the whey, being in consumption. She said that she remembered Grandmother too, Jennie Burns, how she came to the schoolroom (in Middle Street (?), Boston) once, leading her little daughter Elizabeth, the latter so small that she could not tell her name distinctly, but spoke thick and lispingly,–" Elizabeth Orrock Thoreau."[22]

DOG

The dog is to the fox as the white man to the red. The former has attained to more clearness in his bark; it is more ringing and musical, more developed; he explodes the vowels of his alphabet better; and beside he has

22. Vide February 7th.

made his place so good in the world that he can run without skulking in the open field. What a smothered, ragged, feeble, and unmusical sound is the bark of the fox! It seems as if he scarcely dared raise his voice lest it should catch the ear of his tame cousin and inveterate foe.

 April 1. White-bellied swallows.
P. 11. - Paddle up Assabet.
The river is at summer level; has not been up this spring, and has fallen to this. The lowermost willow at my boat is bare. The white maples are abundantly out to-day. Probably the very first bloomed on the 29th. We bold the boat beneath one, surprised to hear the resounding hum of honey-bees, which are busy about them. It reminds me of the bass and its bees. The trees are conspicuous with dense clusters of lightcolored stamens. The alders above the Hemlocks do not yet shed pollen. What I called yellow wasps, which built over my window last year, have come, and are about the old nest; numbers have settled on it.'
I observed night before last, as often before, when geese **[Canada Goose** ***Branta canadensis***] were passing over in the twilight quite near, though the whole heavens were still light and I knew which way to look by the honking, I could not distinguish them. It takes but a little obscurity to hide a bird in the air. How difficult, even in broadest daylight, to discover again a hawk at a distance in the sky when you have once turned your eyes away!
Pleasant it is to sec again the red bark of the Cornus ' Werr- thec not the common kind looking at it?
scricea shining in the warm sun at the hill swamp, above the spring. Walking through the maple [sic] there, I see a squirrel's nest twenty-three or twenty-four feet high in a large maple, and, climbing to it,-for it was so peculiar, having a basketwork of twigs about it, that I did not know but it was a hawk's nest, - I found that it was a very perfect (probably) red squirrel's nest, made entirely of the now very dark or blackish green moss such as grows on the button-bush and on the swampy ground, - a dense mass of it about one foot through, matted together, - with an inobvious hole on the east side and a tuft of loose moss blowing up above it, which seemed to answer for a door or porch covering. The cavity within was quite small, but very snug and warm, where one or two squirrels might lie warmly in the severest storm, the dense moss walls being about three inches thick or more. But what was most peculiar was that this nest, though placed over the centre of the tree, where it divided into four or five branches, was regularly and elaborately hedged about and supported by a basketwork of strong twigs stretched across from bough to bough, which twigs I perceived had been gnawed green from the maple itself, the stub ends remaining visible all around. Near by I saw another much smaller and less perfect nest of the same kind, which had fallen to the ground. This had been made in a birch, and the birch twigs had been gnawed off, but in this case I noticed a little fine broken grass within it, mixed with the moss.
I notice large water-bugs.
It is remarkable that the river seems rarely to rise or fall gradually, but rather by fits and starts, and hence the water-lines, as indicated now by the sawdust, are very distinct parallel lines four or five or more inches apart. It is true the wind has something to do with it, and might waft to a certain place much more dust than was left on another where the water stood much longer at the same level. Surely the saw-miller's is a trade which cannot be carried on in secret. Not only this sawdust betrays him, but at night, especially, when the water is high, I hear the tearing sound of his saw a mile or more off, borne down the stream.
I see six Sternotherrus odoratus in the river thus early.
Two are fairly out sunning. One has crawled up a willow. It is evident, then, that they may be earlier in other places or towns than I had supposed, where they are not concealed by such freshets as we have. I took up and smelt of five of these, and they emitted none of their peculiar scent!
It would seem, then, that this may be connected with their breeding, or at least with their period of greatest activity. They are quite sluggish now. At Hemlock Brook, a dozen or more rods from the river, I see on the wet mud a little snapping turtle evidently hatched last year. It does not open its eyes nor mouth while I hold it. Its eyes appear as if sealed up by its long sleep. In our ability to contend with the elements what feeble infants -we are to this one. Talk of great heads, look at this one! Talk of Hercules' feats in the cradle, what sort of cradle and nursing has this infant had? It totters forth confident and victorious -,when it can Hardly carry its shield. It looked so much like the mud or a wet muddy leaf, it was a wonder I saw it. I start, under the hemlocks there, a butterfly (call it the tawny-orange single-white-spotted) about the size of Vanessa Antiopa, tawny-orange, with black spots or eyes, and pale-brown about them, a white spot near the corner of each front wing, a dark line near the edge behind, a small sharp projecting angle to the hind wings, a green-yellow back to body.'
See wood turtles coupled on their edges at the bottom, where the stream has turned them up.
Far up in still shallows, disturb pickerel and perch, etc. They apparently touch the muddy bottom as they dart out, muddying the water here and there.
A Rana halecina on the bank.
When I started to walk that suddenly pleasant afternoon, the 28th of March, I crossed the path of the two brothers R., who were walking direct to the depot as if they had special business there that Sunday, the queer

DOG

short-legged dog running ahead. I talked with them an hour there in the hope that the one who is not a stranger to me would let something escape from his wise head. But he was very moderate; all I got out of him to be remembered was that in some town up-country where he lived when young, they called the woodchuck "squash-belly,"-with reference to his form I suggested, but so far he had not advanced. This he communicated very seriously, as an important piece of information with which he labored. The other told me how to raise a clog's dander, - any the gentlest dog's, - by looking sternly in his face and making a peculiar sound with your mouth. I then broke short the conference, continued my walk, while these gentlemen wheeled directly about and walked straight back again. It is evident that the (late of the first general revival of the turtles, excepting such as are generally seen in ditches, i. c. the yellow-spotted, depends on the state of the river, whether it is high or low in the spring.

May 20: P.M. –Up Assabet. A cloudy afternoon, with a cool east wind producing a mist. Hundreds of swallows are now skimming close over the river, at its broadest part, where it is shallow and runs the swiftest, just below the Island, for a distance of twenty rods. There are bank, barn, cliff, and chimney swallows, all mingled together and continually scaling back and forth, –a very lively sight. They keep descending or stooping to within inches of the water on a curving wing, without quite touching it, and I suppose are attracted by some small insects which hover close over it. They also stoop low about me as I stand on the flat island there, but I do not perceive the insects. They rarely rise more than five feet above the surface, and a general twittering adds to the impression of sociability. The principle note is the low grating sound of the bank swallow, and I hear the *vit vit* of the barn swallow. The cliff swallow, then is here. Are the insects in any measure confined to that part of the river? Or are they congregated for the sake of society? I have also in other years noticed them over another swift place, at Hubbard's Bath, and also, when they first come, in smaller numbers, over the still and smooth water under the lee of the Island wood. They are thick as the gnats which perhaps they catch. Swallows are more confident and fly nearer to man than most birds. It may be because they are more protected by the sentiment and superstitions of man. The season is more backward on account of the cloudy and rainy weather of the last four or five days and some preceding. The Polygonatum pubescens, not quite. The red oak is not out. Hear a quail whistle. I notice that the sugar maple does not bloom this year, nor does the Hemlocks bear sterile catkins. or less respect the alternate years. opposite Barrett's the canoe birch by Perhaps they more 3.30 Y. M.- To Brister's Hill. Going along the deep valley in the woods, just be fore entering the part called Laurel Glen, I heard a noise, and saw a fox running off along the shrubby side-hill. It looked like a rather small dirty-brown fox, and very clumsy, running much like a woodchuck. It had a dirty or (lark brown tail, with very little white to the. tip. A few steps further I came upon the remains of a woodchuck, yet warm which it had been eating. Head, legs, and tail, all remained, united by the skin, but the bowels and a good part of the flesh were eaten. This was evidently a young fox, say three quarters grown, or perhaps less, and appeared as full as a tick. There was a fox-hole within three rods, with a very large sand-heap, several cartloads, before it, much trodden. Hearing a bird of which I was in search, I turned to examine it, when I heard a bark behind me, and, looking round, saw an old fox on the brow of the hill on the west side of the valley, amid the bushes, about ten rods off, looking down at me. At first it was a short, puppy-like bark, but afterward it began to bark on a higher key and more prolonged, very unlike a dog, a very ragged half-screaming burar- r-r. I proceeded along the valley half a dozen rods after a little delay (the fox being gone), and then looked round to see if it returned to the woodchuck. I then saw a full-grown fox, perhaps the same as the last, cross the valley through the thin low wood fifteen or twenty rods behind me, but from cast to west, pausing and looking at in(, anxiously from time to time. It was rather light tawny (not fox-colored) with dusky-brown bars, and looked very large, wolf-like. The full-grown fox stood much higher on its legs and was longer, but the body was apparently not much heavier than that of the young. Going a little further, I came to another hole, and ten feet off was a space of a dozen square feet amid some little oaks, worn quite bare and smooth, apparently by the playing of the foxes, and the ground close around a large stump about a rod from the hole was worn bare and hard, and all the bark and much of the rotten wood was pawed or gnawed off lately. They had pawed a deep channel about one and in between the roots, perhaps for insects. There lay the remains of another woodchuck, now dry, the head, skin, and legs being left, and also part of the skin of a third, and the bones of another animal, and some partridge feathers. The old foxes had kept their larder well supplied. Within a rod was another hole, apparently a back door, having no heap of sand, and five or six rods off another in the side of the hill with a small sand-heap, and, as far down the valley, another with a large sand-heap and a back door with none. There was a well-beaten path from the one on the sidehill five or six rods long to one in the valley, and there was much blackish dung about the holes and stump and the path. By the hole furthest down the valley was another stump, which had been gnawed (?) very much and trampled and pawed about like the other. I suppose the young foxes play there. There were half a dozen holes or more, and what with the skulls and feathers and skin and bones about, I was reminded of Golgotha.

These holes were some of them very large and conspicuous, a foot wide vertically, by eight or ten inches, going into the side-hill with a curving stoop, and there was commonly a very large heap of sand before them, trodden smooth. It was a sprout-land valley, cut off but a year or two since. As I stood by the last hole, I heard the old fox bark, and saw her (?) near the brow of the hill on the northwest, amid the bushes, restless and anxious, overlooking me a dozen or fourteen rods off. I was, on doubt, by the hole in which the young were. She uttered at very short intervals a prolonged, shrill, screeching kind of bark, beginning lower and rising to a very high key, lasting two seconds; a very broken and ragged sound, more like the scream of a large and angry bird than the bark of a clog, trilled like a piece of vibrating metal at the end. It moved restlessly back and forth, or approached nearer, and stood or sat on its haunches like a dog with its tail laid out in a curve on one side, and when it barked it laid its ears flat back and stretched its nose forward. Sometimes it uttered a short, puppylike, snappish bark. It was not fox-colored now, but a very light tawny or wolf-color, dark-brown or dusky beneath in a broad line from its throat; its legs the same, with a broad dusky perpendicular band on its haunches and similar ones on its tail, and a small whitish spot on each side of its mouth. There it sat like a chieftain on his hills, looking, methought, as big as a prairie wolf, and shaggy like it, anxious and even fierce, as I peered through my glass. I noticed, when it withdrew, - I too withdrawing in the opposite direction, - that as it had descended the hill a little way and wanted to go off over the pinnacle without my seeing which way it went, it: ran one side about ten feet, till it was behind a small white pine, then turned at a right angle and ascended the hill directly, with the pine between us. The sight of it suggested that two or three might attack a man. The note was a shrill, vibrating scream or cry; could easily be heard a quarter of a mile. How many woodchucks, rabbits, partridges, etc., etc., they must kill, and yet how few of them are seen! A very wolfish color. It must have been a large fox, and, if it is true that the old are white on the sides of the face, an old one. They evidently used more than a half dozen holes within fifteen rods. I withdrew the sooner for fear by his barking he would be betrayed to some dog or gunner. It was a very wild sight to see the wolf-like parent circling about me in the thin wood, from time to time pausing to look and bark at me. This appears to be nearest to the cross fox of Audubon, and is considered a variety of the red by him and most others, not white beneath as the red fox of Harlan [Richard Harlan, Fauna Americana, 1825]. Emmons says of the red fox, “In the spring the color appears to fade,” and that some are “pale yellow,” but does not describe minutely. This was probably a female, for Bell says of the English fox that the female “loses all her timidity and shyness when suckling her young;” also that they are a year and a half in attaining their full size.' Hear the pepe. See tanagers, male and female, in t I find afterward three or four more fox-holes near by, and see where they have sat on a large upturned stump, which had heaved up earth with it. Many large pieces of woodchuck's skin about these holes. They leave the head and feet. A scent of carrion about the holes. the top of a pine, one red, other yellow, from below. We have got to these high colors among birds. Saw in the street a young cat owl, one of two which Skinner killed in Walden Woods yesterday. It was almost ready to fly, at least two and a half feet in alar extent; tawny with many black bars, and darker on wings. Holmes, in Patent Office Report, says they “pair early in February.” So I visited the nest. It was in a large white pine close on the north side of the path, some ten rods west of the old Stratton cellar in the woods. This is the largest pine thereabouts, and the nest is some thirty-five feet high on two limbs close to the main stem, and, according to Skinner, was not much more than a foot across, made of small sticks, nearly flat, “without fine stuff!” There were but two young. This is a path which somebody travels every half-clay, at least, and only a stone's throw from the great road. There were many white droppings about and large rejected pellets containing the vertebrae and hair of a skunk. As I stood there, I heard the crows making a great noise some thirty or forty rods off, and immediately suspected that they were pestering one of the old owls, which Skinner had not seen. It proved so, for, as I approached, the owl sailed away from amidst a white pine top, with the crows in full pursuit, and he looked very large, stately, and heavy, like a seventy-four among schooners. I soon knew by the loud cawing of the crows that he had alighted again some forty rods off, and, there again I found him perched high on a white pine, the large tawny fellow with black clashes and large erect horns. Away lie goes again, and the crows after him.

DOG

EMMONS

BELL

June 18. How dogs will resort to carrion, a dead cow or horse, half buried, no matter how stale, — the best-bred and petted village dogs, and there gorge themselves with the most disgusting offal by the hour, as if it were a season of famine! Surely they are foul creatures that we make cossets of.

DOG

P.M. — To Walden to see a bird’s nest, a red-eye’s, in a small white pine; nest not so high as my head; still laying. A boy climbs to the cat owl’s nest and casts down what is left of it, -a few short sticks and some earthy almost turfy foundation, as if it were the accumulation of years. Beside much black and white skunk-hair, there are many fishes’ scales (!) intimately mixed with its substance, and some skunk’s bones.
E. Bartlett has found three bobolinks’ nests. One or more of them lie thinks has been covered by the recent flood.

A little boy brings me an egg of Wilson's thrush, which he found in a nest in a low bush about a foot from the ground.
Coming across the level pasture west of E. Hubbard's swamp, toward Emerson's, I find a young *Emys insculpta*, apparently going to lay, though she had not dug a hole. It was four and a quarter inches long by three and a half wide, and altogether the handsomest turtle of this species, if not of any, that I have ever seen. It was quite fresh and perfect, without wound or imperfection; its claws quite sharp and slender, and the annual striæ so distinct on all the scales above and below that I could count them with case. It was nine years old, though it would be like an infant among turtles, the successive striæ being perfectly parallel at equal distances apart. The sternum, with a large black spot on the rear angle of each scale and elsewhere a rich brown color, even reminded me of the turtle-shell of commerce. While its upper shell was of a uniform wholesome brown, very prettily marked indeed, not only by the outlines of the scales, but more distinctly by the lines of prominences raying out from the starting-point of each scale, perfectly preserved in each year's growth, a most elaborate coat of mail, worthy the lifelong labor of some reptilian Vulcan. This must have been a belle among the *E. insculpta*. Nevertheless I did discover that all the claws but one of one hind foot were gone! Had not a bird pecked them off? So liable are they to injury in their long lives. Then they are so well-behaved; can be taken up and brought home in your pocket, and make no unseemly efforts to escape. The upper shell was remarkably spreading and curving upward on the rear edges.

 November 15: P. M.–To Grackle Swamp.
A very fine snow falling, just enough to whiten the bare spots a little. I go to look for evergreen ferns before they are covered up.l The end of last month and the first part of this is the time. I do not know that I find more than one kind now in that swamp, and of that the fertile fronds are mostly decayed. All lie flat, ready to be buried in snow.
Slight as the snow is, you are now reminded occasionally in your walks that you have contemporaries, and perchance predecessors. I see the track of a fox which was returning from his visit to a farmyard last night, and, in the wood-path, of a man and a dog. The dog must have been a large one. I see their shadows before me. In another place, where the snow is so slight and lifted up on the withered grass that no track is left, I see by the cakes or balls of snow that have dropped from 1 For ferns vide 17th.his shoes that a man has passed. This would be known for a man and a dog's track in any part of the world. Five toes in a bundle, somewhat diamond-shape, forming a sort of rosette, are the print of the dog, whether on the sands of Africa or the snow of New England. The track of his master is somewhat more variable, yet reducible within certain limits.

DOG

The Lycopodium dendroideum var. obscurum appears to be just in bloom in the swamp about the Hemlocks (the regular one (not variety) is apparently earlier), – later than the Lycopodium complanatum, which is don~ there.
Gossamer, methinks, belongs to the latter part of October and first part of November; also the frost-weed and evergreen ferns. Buds and twigs (like gossamer), and the mazes made by twigs, and the silvery light on this down, and the silver-haired andropogon grass to the first half of November.
The water andromeda leaves have fallen, and the persistent turned that red brown; how long?

 November 30: The shrike was very violent for a long time, beating itself against the bars of its cage at Stacy's. To-day it is quiet and has eaten raw meat. Its plain dark ash-colored crown and back are separated by a very distinct line from the black wings. It has a powerful hawk-like beak, but slender legs and claws. Close to, it looks more like a muscicapa than anything.
P. M.– To Walden with Channing, and Fair Haven Hill.
It is a pleasant day and the snow melting considerably. We stand on the Pout's Nest, now frozen, with snow ice added to the old, so that it will bear, –a coarse frozen white batter,– and the hills around are covered with snow, though Walden is open. It is a perfect winter scene. This withdrawn but ample recess in the woods, with all that is necessary for a human residence, yet never referred to by the London *Times* and *Galignani's Messenger*, as some of those arctic bays are. Some are hastening to Europe and some to the West Indies, but here is a bay never steered for. These nameless bays where the *Times* and *Tribune* have no correspondent are the true bays of All Saints for me. Green pines on this side, brown oaks on that, the blue sky overhead, and this white counterpane all around. It is an insignificant fraction of the globe which England and Russia and the filibusters have overrun. The open pond close by, though considerably rippled to-day, affects me as a peculiarly mild and genial object by contrast with this frozen pool and the snow-covered shore, and I sit down on the shore in the sun, on the bare

rocks. There seems to be a milder air above it, as the water within it is milder.
Going westward through Wheeler's Owl Wood toward Weird Dell, Well Meadow Field, I beheld a peculiar winter scene, seen many times before but forgotten. The sun, rather low, is seen through the wood with a cold, dazzling white lustre, like that of burnished tin reflected from the silvery needles of the pines. No powerful light streams through, but you stand in the quiet and somewhat sombre aisles of a forest cathedral, where cold green masses alternate with pale-brown but warm leather-colored ones, almost ruddy (you are inclined to call them red). [Reddish-tawny (?).] These are the internal decorations, while dark trunks, streaked with snow, rise on all sides, and a pure white floor stretches around, and perhaps a single patch of yellow sunlight is seen on the white shaded floor.
The short afternoons are come. Yonder dusky cloudmass in the northwest will not be wafted across the sky before yonder sun that lurks so low will be set. We see purple clouds in the east horizon.
But did ever clouds flit and change, form and dissolve, so fast as in this clear, cold air? For it is rapidly growing colder, and at such a time, with a clear air and wind and shifting clouds, I never fail to see mother-o'-pearl tints abundant in the sky.
DOG
We see the tracks of a hunter and his hounds who have gone along the path from the Dell to the Cliffs. The dog makes a genuine track with his five toes, an honest dog's track, and if his master went barefoot we should count five toe-prints in his track too, and they would be seen to resemble each other remotely; but now we see only I Reddish-tawny (?).the track of a boot, and I thought the dog must be disgusted to tread in it. Walking thus where a man and two dogs had recently passed along, making a trail only a few inches wide, treading in one another's tracks alternately, the impression was that they had constantly crowded on one another, though in fact the dogs may have been a quarter of a mile ahead [of] or behind their master. The dog rosette identical [with that] which is spotted all over Greece. They go making these perfect imperfect [sic] impressions faster than a Hoe's cylinder power-press.
Coming over the side of Fair Haven Hill at sunset, we saw a large, long, dusky cloud in the northwest horizon, apparently just this side of Wachusett, or at least twenty miles off, which was snowing, when all the rest was clear sky. It was a complete snow-cloud. It looked like rain falling at an equal distance, except that the snow fell less directly and the upper outline of a part of the cloud [was] more like that of a dusky mist. It was [not] much of a snow-storm, just enough to partially obscure the sight of the mountains about which it was falling, while the cloud was apparently high above them, or it may have been a little this side. The cloud was of a dun color, and at its south end, near where the sun was just about to set, it was all aglow on its under side with a salmon fulgor, making it look warmer than a furnace at the same time that it was snowing. In short, I saw a cloud, quite local in the heavens, whose south end rested over the portals of the day, twenty and odd miles off, and was lit by the splendor of the departing sun, and from this lit cloud snow was falling. It was merely an extensive flurry, though it may have lasted twenty minutes.
I have seen a dark cloud as wide as the sky rolling up from the northwest and blasting all my hopes, at sight of which I have dismissed the sun for three weeks and resigned myself to my fate. But when, after being absorbed in other meditations, I have looked round for that cloud half an hour after, I have distinguished only an indistinct white film far in the southeast which only added to the glory of the day by reflecting its light.
The river may be said to have frozen generally last night.
That was a remarkable prospect from the side of Fair Haven Hill just before the sun set, a strong cold northwest wind blowing, and as good a winter prospect as the arctic regions present, –the brilliant Blessed Isles already gathered about the portals of the day, and mother-o'-pearl clouds forming and dissolving in the crisped air between the zenith and the west horizon, while at least twenty miles off (at first thirty) in the northwest a vast dark dun-colored cloud whose southern end overlapped the setting sun, a glowing canopy, was snowing on the mountains seen dimly beneath it. It was a rare and strange sight, that of a snow-storm twenty miles off on the verge of a perfectly clear sky. Thus local is all storm, surrounded by serenity and beauty. The terrestrial mountains were made ridiculous beneath that stupendous range. I said to my companion, "There comes a storm which will cover the earth four feet deep. Make haste and do your necessary work before the night comes." But before we had got home I saw it in the east still further off, –not having seen it pass us,– a pale ethereal film, almost dissolved in the sky, as indistinct as a fabulous island. In these clear, cold days fear no cloud. They vanish and dissolve before thc cloud-consuming air. This air snaps them up like a dog his meat.
Bare hickories now seen over the shining surface of the snow suggest a cold equal to that of the Cold Friday.
As I go up the hill eastward while the sun is setting, I see a tinge of green reflected from its surface under my face, and the scattered clouds in the east are greener yet.
C. thought that if he lived in Weird Dell –which I talked of buying– he should come and sit on the northwest side every night and see the shadows steal gradually across it.
Just before the sun disappeared we saw, just in the edge of the horizon westward from Acton, maybe eight miles off, a very brilliant fire or light, just like a star of the first magnitude or a house burning without smoke, and this, though so far and so brilliant, was undoubtedly only the sun reflected from some gilt weathercock there.
So incredibly brilliant are all surfaces now. It was pure flame, larger than a house, precisely as if the planet Venus rested in the horizon's edge. Possibly the weathercock was nearer, but we both concluded that it was not.
VENUS

The sun seen setting through the snow-carpeted woods, with shimmering pine-needles or dark-green masses and warm brown oak leaves for screens. With the advent of snow and ice, so much cold white, the browns are warmer to the eye. All the red that is in oak leaves and huckleberry twigs comes out.

A cloud, then, which glows high above the portals of the day seven or eight minutes before the sun disappears, may be some twenty miles off only.

FERNE

Neither England nor America have any right to laugh at that sentence in the rare book called "The Blazon of Gentry," written by a zealous student of heraldry, which says after due investigation that "Christ was a gentleman, as to the flesh, by the part of his mother, ... and might have borne coat-armor. The apostles also were gentlemen of blood, and many of them descended from that worthy conqueror Judas Machabeus; but, through the tract of time, and persecution of wars, poverty oppressed the kindred and they were constrayned to servile workes." Whatever texts we may quote or commentaries we may write, when we consider the laws and customs of these two countries we cannot fail to perceive that the above sentence is perfectly of a piece with our practical commentary on the New Testament. The above is really a pertinent reason offered why Christianity should be embraced in England and America. Indeed, it is, accordingly, only what may be called "respectable Christianity" that is at all generally embraced in the two countries.

I read that a woman picked a pint of ripe red raspberries at Bunker Hill Cliff, where they get the Quincy granite, October 1st, this year.[23]

There is a late greenness accompanied by a few yellow flowers, a November greenness, methinks, corresponding to the early greenness of the spring and its blossoms. Early in November (and late in October) lycopodiums and evergreen ferns (the small botrychium sheds pollen then, as well as several lycopodiums) have their day, under the yellow flowers of the witch-hazel and amid a few lingering goldenrods, as in spring green radical leaves are associated with alder and willow blossoms. The cold greens have their day so late in the fall. I do not speak so much of a lingering verdure, but of one which then is most flourishing and, you may say, greenest before the lichen days have come.

I cannot but see still in my mind's eye those little striped breams poised in Walden's glaucous water. They balance all the rest of the world in my estimation at present, for this is the bream that I have just found, and for the time I neglect all its brethren and am ready to kill the fatted calf on its account. For more than two centuries have men fished here and have not distinguished this permanent settler of the township. It is not like a new bird, a transient visitor that may not be seen again for years, but there it dwells and has dwelt permanently, who can tell how long? When my eyes first rested on Walden the striped bream was poised in it, though I did not see it, and when Tahatawan paddled his canoe there. How wild it makes the pond and the township to find a new fish in it! America renews her youth here. But in my account of this bream I cannot go a hair's breadth beyond the mere statement that it exists, – the miracle of its existence, my contemporary and neighbor, yet so different from me! I can only poise my thought there by its side and try to think like a bream for a moment. I can only think of precious jewels, of music, poetry, beauty, and the mystery of life. I only see the bream in its orbit, as I see a star, but I care not to measure its distance or weight. The bream, appreciated, floats in the pond as the centre of the system, another image of God. Its life no man can explain more than he can his own. I want you to perceive the mystery of the bream. I have a contemporary in Walden. It has fins where I have legs and arms. I have a friend among the fishes, at least a new acquaintance. Its character will interest me, I trust, not its clothes and anatomy. I do not want it to eat. Acquaintance with it is to make my life more rich and eventful. It is as if a poet or an anchorite had moved into the town, whom I can see from time to time and think of yet oftener. Perhaps there are a thousand of these striped bream which no one had thought of in that pond, – not their mere impressions in stone, but in the full tide of the bream life.

Though science may sometimes compare herself to a child picking up pebbles on the seashore, that is a rare mood with her; ordinarily her practical belief is that it is only a few pebbles which are not known, weighed and measured. A new species of fish signifies hardly more than a new name. See what is contributed in the scientific reports. One counts the fin-rays, another measures the intestines, a third daguerreotypes a scale, etc., etc.; otherwise there's nothing to be said. As if all but this were done, and these were very rich and generous contributions to science. Her votaries may be seen wandering along the shore of the ocean of truth, with their backs to that ocean, ready to seize on the shells which are cast up. You would say that the scientific bodies were terribly put to it for objects and subjects. A dead specimen of an animal, if it is only well preserved in alcohol, is just as good for science as a living one preserved in its native element.

What is the amount of my discovery to me? It is not that I have got one in a bottle, that it has got a name in a book, but that I have a little fishy friend in the pond. How was it when the youth first discovered fishes? Was it the number of their fin-rays or their arrangement, or the place of the fish in some system that made the boy dream of them? Is it these things that interest mankind in the fish, the inhabitant of the water? No, but a faint recognition of a living contemporary, a provoking mystery. One boy thinks of fishes and goes a-fishing from the same motive that his brother searches the poets for rare lines. It is the poetry of fishes which is their chief use; their flesh is their lowest use. The beauty of the fish, that is what it is best worth the while to measure. Its place in our systems is of comparatively little importance. Generally the boy loses some of his perception and

23. Was it not November 1st?

his interest in the fish; he degenerates into a fisherman or an ichthyologist.[24]

1859


January 2: P.M.–To Cliffs and Walden.

Going up the hill through Stow's young oak woodland, I listen to the sharp, dry rustle of the withered oak leaves. This is the voice of the wood now. It would be comparatively still and more dreary here in other respects, if it were not for these leaves that hold on. It sounds like the roar of the sea, and is enlivening and inspiriting like that, suggesting how all the land is seacoast to the aerial ocean. It is the sound of the surf, the rut of an unseen ocean, billows of air breaking on the forest like water on itself or on sand and rocks. It rises and falls, wells and dies away, with agreeable alternation as the sea surf does. Perhaps the landsman can foretell a storm by it. It is remarkable how universal these grand murmurs are, these backgrounds of sound, –the surf, the wind in the forest, waterfalls, etc.,– which yet to the ear and in their origin are essentially one voice, the earth-voice, the breathing or snoring of the creature. The earth is our ship, and this is the sound of the wind in her rigging as we sail. Just as the inhabitant of Cape Cod hears the surf ever breaking on its shores, so we countrymen hear this kindred surf on the leaves of the forest. Regarded as a voice, –though it is not articulate,– as our articulate sounds are divided into vowels (but this is nearer a consonant sound), labials, dentals, palatals, sibilants, mutes, aspirate, etc., so this may be called folial or frondal, produced by air driven against the leaves, and comes nearest to our sibilants or aspirate.

The color of young oaks of different species is still distinct, but more faded and blended, becoming a more uniform brown. Michaux said that white oaks would be distinguished by their retaining their leaves in the winter, but as far as my observation goes they cannot be so distinguished. All our large oaks may retain a. few leaves at the base of the lower limbs and about the trunks, though only a few, and the white oak scarcely more than the others, while the same trees when young are all alike thickly clothed in the winter, but the leaves of the white oaks are the most withered and shrivelled of them all.

Why do young oaks retain their leaves while old ones shed them? Why do they die on the stem, having some life at the base in the one case, while they wither through at the base in the other case? Is it because in the former case they have more sap and vigor?

There being some snow on the ground, I can easily distinguish the forest on the mountains (the Peterboro Hills, etc.) and tell which are forested, those parts and those mountains being dark like a shadow. I cannot distinguish the forest thus far in the summer.

The white pines, etc., as I look down on them from this hill, are now darker, as becomes the sterner season, like a frost-bitten apple, – a sombre green. When I hear the hypercritical quarrelling about grammar and style, the position of the particles, etc., etc., stretching or contracting every speaker to certain rules of theirs, –Mr. Webster, perhaps, not having spoken according to Mr. Kirkham's rule,– I see that they forget that the first requisite and rule is that expression shall be vital and natural, as much as the voice of a brute or an interjection: first of all, mother tongue; and last of all, artificial or father tongue. Essentially your truest poetic sentence is as free and lawless as a lamb's bleat. The grammarian is often one who can neither cry nor laugh, yet thinks that he can express human emotions. So the posture.masters tell you how you shall walk, –turning your toes out, perhaps, excessively,– but so the beautiful walkers are not made.

Mediaeval, or law, Latin seems to have invented the word "forest," not being satisfied with silva, nemus, etc. Webster makes it from the same root with "L. foris, Fr. hors, and the Saxon faran, to go, to depart." The allied words "all express distance from cities and civilization, and are from roots expressing departure or wandering," – as if this newer term were needed to describe those strange, wild woods furthest from the centres of civilization.

The earth, where quite bare, is now, and for five or six weeks, russet without any lively red, – not golden-russet. I notice on the top of the Cliffs that the extremities of the smooth sumach are generally dead and withered, while those of the staghorn, which are so downy, are alive. Is this a prevailing difference? Which extends furthest north?

The outside bark-scales of some large pitch pines in the midst of the woods having dropped off gives a peculiar flatness to the ridges, as if it had been shaved or scraped.

DOG

GEORGE MINOTT

Minott says that a fox will lead a dog on to thin ice in order that he may get in. Tells of Jake Lakin losing a hound so, which went under the ice and was drowned below the Holt; was found afterward by Sted. Buttrick, his collar taken off and given to Lakin. They used to cross the river there on the ice, going to market, formerly.

Looking from the southwest side of Walden toward Heywood's Peak before sunset, the brown light on the oak

24. *Vide* pages 363, 364.

leaves is almost dazzling.

April 17. P.M.–Up Assabet.
The river, which had got down on the 10th so that I could not cross the meadows, is up again on account of snow and rain, so that I push with difficulty straight to Mantatuket's Rock, but, I believe, is already falling. Many grackles and robins are feeding on those strips of meadow just laid bare. It is still rather cold and windy, and I listen for new birds under the lee of the Rock woods in vain; but I hear the hum of bees on a willow there, and this fine susurrus makes the weather seem warmer than it is. At the same time I hear the low stuttering of the Rana halecina from the Hunt meadow (call it the Winthrop meadow).
How pleasing and soothing are some of the first and least audible sounds of awakened nature in the spring, as this first humming of bees, etc., and the stuttering of frogs! They cannot be called musical,–are no more even than a noise, so slight that we can endure it. But it is in part an expression of happiness, an ode that is sung and whose burden fills the air. It reminds me of the increased genialness of nature. The air which was so lately void and silent begins to resound as it were with the breathing of a myriad fellow-creatures, and even the unhappy man, on the principle that misery loves company, is soothed by this infinite din of neighbors. I have listened for the notes of various birds, and now, in this faint hum of bees, I hear as it were the first twittering of the bird Summer. Go ten feet that way, to where the northwest wind comes round the hill, and you hear only the dead mechanical sound of the blast and your thoughts recur to winter, but stand as much this way in the sun and in the lee of this bush, and your charmed ears may hear this faint susurrus weaving the web of summer. The notes of birds are interrupted, but the hum of insects is incessant. I suppose that the motion of the wings of the small tipulidae which have swarmed for some weeks produced a humming appreciated by some ears. Perhaps the phoebe heard and was charmed by it. Thus gradually the spaces of the air are filled. Nature has taken equal care to cushion our ears on this finest sound and to inspire us with the strains of the wood thrush and poet. We may say that each gnat is made to vibrate its wings for man's fruition. In short, we hear but little music in the world which charms us more than this sound produced by the vibration of an insect's wing and in some still and sunny nook in spring.
A wood tortoise on bank; first seen, water so high.
DOG
I heard lately the voice of a hound hunting by itself. What an awful sound to the denizens of the wood! That relentless, voracious, demonic cry, like the voice of a fiend! At hearing of which, the fox, hare, marmot, etc., tremble for their young and themselves, imagining the worst. This, however, is the sound which the lords of creation love to accompany and follow, with their bugles and "mellow horns" conveying a similar dread to the hearers instead of whispering peace to the hare's palpitating breast.

A partridge **[Ruffed Grouse** ***Bonasa umbellus*** (~~Partridge~~)**]** drums.

1860

Jan. 14. About an inch more snow fell this morning. An average snow-storm is from six to eight inches deep on a level.

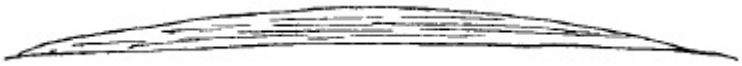
The snow having ceased falling this forenoon, I go to Holden Wood, Conantum, to look for tracks. It is too soon. I see none at all but those of a hound, and also where a partridge **[Ruffed Grouse** ***Bonasa umbellus*** (~~Partridge~~)**]** waded through the light snow, apparently while it was falling, making a deep gutter.
Yesterday there was a broad field of bare ice on each side of the river, i. e. on the meadows, and now, though it is covered with snow an inch deep, as I stand on the river or even on Fair Haven Hill a quarter to half a mile off, I can see where the ice is through the snow, plainly, trace its whole outline, it being quite dark compared with where the snow has fallen on snow. In this case a mantle of light snow even an inch thick is not sufficient to conceal the darkness of the ice beneath it, where it is contrasted with snow on snow.
DOG
Those little groves of sweet-fern still thickly leaved, whose tops now rise above the snow, are an interesting warm brown-red now, like the reddest oak leaves. Even this is an agreeable sight to the walker over snowy fields and hillsides. It has a wild and jagged leaf, alternately serrated. A warm reddish color revealed by the snow.
It is a mild day, and I notice, what I have not observed for some time, that blueness of the air only to be perceived in a mild day. I see it between me and woods half a mile distant. The softening of the air amounts to this. The mountains are quite invisible. You come forth to see this great blue presence lurking about the woods and the

horizon.

Jan. 17. Another mild day.

P.M.—To Goose Pond and Walden.
Sky overcast, but a crescent of clearer in the northwest.
I see on the snow in Hubbard's Close one of those rather large flattish black bugs some five-eighths of an inch long, with feelers and a sort of shield at the forward part with an orange mark on each side of it.

In the spring-hole ditches of the Close I see many little water-bugs (*Gyrinus*) gyrating, and some under water. It must be a common phenomenon there in mild weather in the winter.
I look again at that place of squirrels (of the 13th). As I approach, I have a glimpse of one or two red squirrels gliding off silently along the branches of the pines, etc. They are gone so quickly and noiselessly, perhaps keeping the trunk of the tree between you and them, that [YOU] would not commonly suspect their presence if you were not looking for them. But one that was on the snow ascended a pine and sat on a bough with its back to the trunk as if there was nothing to pay. Yet when I moved again he scud up the tree, and glided across on some very slender twigs into a neighboring tree, and so I lost him. Here is, apparently, a settlement of these red squirrels. There are many holes through the snow into the ground, and many more w here they have probed and dug up a white pine cone, now pretty black and, for aught I can see, with abortive or empty seeds; yet they patiently strip them on the spot, or at the base of the trees, or at the entrance of their holes, and evidently find some good seed. The snow, however, is strewn with the empty and rejected seeds. They seem to select for their own abode a hillside where there are half a dozen rather large and thick white pines near enough together for their aerial travelling, and then they burrow numerous holes and depend on finding (apparently) the pine cones which they cast down in the summer, before they have opened. In the fall they construct a nest of grass and bark-fibres, moss, etc., in one of the trees for winter use, and so apparently have two resources.
I walk about Ripple Lake and Goose Pond. I see the old tracks of some foxes and rabbits about the edge of these ponds (over the ice) within a few feet of the shore. I think that I have noticed that animals thus commonly go round by the shore of a pond, whether for fear of the ice, or for the shelter of the shore, i. e. not to be seen, or because their food and game is found there. But a dog will oftener bolt straight across.
When I reached the open railroad causeway returning, there was a splendid sunset. The northwest sky at first was what you may call a lattice sky, the fair weather establishing itself first on that side in the form of a long and narrow crescent, in which the clouds, which were uninterrupted overhead, were broken into long bars parallel to the horizon, thus:—

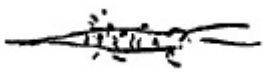


Alcott said well the other day that this was his definition of heaven, "A place where you can have a little conversation."

Jan. 22. P.M.— Up river to Fair Haven Pond; return via Andromeda Ponds and railroad.
Overcast, but some clear sky in southwest horizon; mild weather still.
Where the sedge grows rankly and is uncut, as along the edge of the river and meadows, what fine coverts are made for mice, etc., at this season! It is arched over, and the snow rests chiefly on its ends, while the middle part is elevated from six inches to a foot and forms a thick thatch, as it were, even when all is covered with snow, under which the mice and so forth can run freely, out of the way of the wind and of foxes. After a pretty deep

snow has just partially melted, you are surprised to find, as you walk through such a meadow, how high and lightly the sedge lies up, as if there had been no pressure upon it. It grows, perhaps, in dense tufts or tussocks, and when it falls over, it forms a thickly thatched roof.
Nature provides shelter for her creatures in various ways. If the musquash, etc., has no longer extensive fields of weed and grass to crawl in, what an extensive range it has under the ice of the meadows and river-sides! for, the water settling directly after freezing, an icy roof of indefinite extent is thus provided for it, and it passes almost its whole winter under shelter, out of the wind and invisible to men.
The ice is so much rotted that I observe in many places those lunar-shaped holes, and dark places in the ice, convex up-stream, sometimes double-lunar.

I perceive that the open places in the river do not preserve the same relative importance that they had December 29th. Then the largest four or five stood in this order: (l) below boat's place, (2) below junction, (3) Barrett's Bar, (4) Clamshell or else Hubbard's Bath. Now it is (l) below junction, (2) Hubbard's Bath or else Clamshell. I do not know but Clamshell is as large as Hubbard's Bath. Which of the others is largest I am not quite sure. In other words, below junction and Hubbard's Bath (if not also Clamshell, not seen) retain about their former size, while below boat's place and Barrett's Bar have been diminished, especially below boat's place.
Birds are commonly very rare in the winter. They are much more common at some times than at others. I see more tree sparrows in the beginning of the winter (especially when snow is falling) than in the course of it. I think that by observation I could tell in what kind of weather afterward these were most to be seen. Crows come about houses and streets in very cold weather and deep snows, and they are heard cawing in pleasant, thawing winter weather. and their note is then a pulse by which you feel the quality of the air, i. e., when cocks crow. For the most part, lesser redpolls and pine grosbeaks do not appear at all. Snow buntings are very wandering. They were quite numerous a month ago, and now seem to have quit the town. They seem to ramble about the country at will.
C. says that he followed the track of a fox all yesterday afternoon, though with some difficulty, and then lost it at twilight. I suggested that he should begin next day where he had left off, and that following it up thus for many days he might catch him at last. "By the way," I asked, "did you go the same way the fox did, or did you take-the back track?" "Oh," said he, "I took the back track. It would be of no use to go the other way, you know." DOG
Minott says that a hound which pursues a fox by scent cannot tell which way he is going; that the fox is very cunning and will often return on its track over which the dog had already run. It will ascend a high rock and then leap off very far to one side; so throw the dogs off the scent for a while and gain a breathing-spell.
I see, in one of those pieces of drifted meadow (of last spring) in A. Wheeler's cranberry meadow, a black willow thus transplanted more than ten feet high and five inches in diameter. It is quite alive.
The snow-fleas are thickest along the edge of the wood here, but I find that they extend quite across the river, though there are comparatively few over the middle. There are generally fewer and fewer the further you are from the shore. Nay, I find that they extend quite across Fair Haven Pond. There are two or three inches of snow on the ice, and thus they are revealed. There are a dozen or twenty to a square rod on the very middle of the pond. When I approach one, it commonly hops away, and if it gets a good spring it hops a foot or more, so that it is at first lost to me. Though they are scarcely the twentieth of an inch long they make these surprising bounds, or else conceal themselves by entering the snow. We have now had many days of this thawing weather, and I believe that these fleas have been gradually hopping further and further out from the shore. To-day, perchance, it is water, a day or two later ice, and no fleas are seen on it. Then snow comes and covers the ice, and if there is no thaw for a month, you see no fleas for so long. But, at least soon after a thaw, they are to be seen on the centre of ponds at least half a mile across. Though this is my opinion, it is by no means certain that they come here thus, for I am prepared to believe that the water in the middle may have had as many floating on it, and that these were afterward on the surface of the ice, though unseen, and hence under the snow when it fell, and ready to come up through it when the thaw came. But what do they find to eat in apparently pure snow so far from any land? Has their food come down from the sky with the snow? They must themselves be food for many creatures. This must be as peculiarly a winter animal as any. It may truly be said to live in snow.
I see some insects of about this form on the snow:



I scare a partridge that was eating the buds and ends of twigs of the Vaccinium vacillans on a hillside.
At the west or nesaea end of the largest Andromeda Pond, I see that there has been much red ice, more than I ever saw, but now spoiled by the thaw and snow.
The leaves of the water andromeda are evidently more appressed to the twigs, and showing the gray under sides, than in summer.

 January 23. 8 A.M.— On river.
Walking on the ice by the side of the river this very pleasant morning, I see many minnows (may be dace) from one and a half to four inches long which have come out, through holes or cracks a foot wide more or less, where the current has worn through and shows the dark stream, and the water has flown over the adjacent ice, sinking it down so as to form a shallow water four or five feet wide or more, and often several rods long, and four or five inches deep on the side next the crack, or deepest side. This water has a yellowish color, and a fish or anything else in it is at once seen. I think that they come out into this thin water overlying the ice for the sake of the sun's warmth. Much heat must be reflected from the icy bottom this sunny morning, — a sort of anticipation of spring to them. This shallow surface water is also thinly frozen over, and I can sometimes put my hand close over the minnow. When alarmed they make haste back to the dark water of the crack, and seek the depths again.
Each pleasant morning like this all creatures recommence life with new resolutions, — even these minnows, methinks.
That snow which in the afternoons these days is thawing and dead — in which you slump — is now hard and crisp, supporting your weight, and has a myriad brilliant sparkles in the sunlight.
When a thaw comes, old tracks are enlarged in every direction, so that an ordinary man's track will look like the track of a snow-shoe, and a hound's track will sometimes have spread to a foot in diameter (when there is a thin snow on ice), with all the toes distinct, looking like the track of a behemoth or megalonyx.

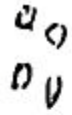
DOG

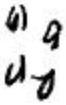
GEORGE MINOTT

Minott says that pigeons **[American Passenger Pigeon** *Ectopistes migratorius*] alight in great flocks on the tops of hemlocks in March, and he thinks they eat the seed. (But he also thought for the same reason that they ate the white pine seed at the same season, when it is not there! They might find a little of the last adhering to the pitch.)
Says he used to shoot the gray squirrel thus: he put his hat or coat upon a stick while the squirrel hung behind an upright limb, then, going round to the side, he shot him, for the squirrel avoided exposing himself to the coat as much as to the man.
He has stood on the steep hill southwest side of Moore's Swamp and seen two foxes chase a white rabbit all about it. The rabbit would dodge them in the thicket, and now and then utter a loud cry of distress. The foxes would burst out on the meadow and then dash into the thicket again. This was when the wood had been cut and he could see plainly. He says that the white rabbit loves to sit concealed under the over-arching cinnamon ferns (which he calls "buck-horns") on the sunny side of a swamp, or under a tuft of brakes which are partly fallen over. That a hound in its head-long course will frequently run over the fox, which quickly turns and gets off three or four rods before the former can stop himself.
For Spring and Blossoming vide Pliny, vol. ii, page 163.

 Feb. 5. P.M.— Up Assabet.
2 P.M., 40°.
I see where crows have pecked the tufts of cladonia lichens which peep out of the snow, pulling them to pieces, no doubt looking for worms. Also have eaten the frozen-thawed apples under the trees, tracking all the ground over there.
February 1st, though so cold and the snow so dry, as it blowed pretty hard, was a day of drift behind northerly walls, and when those shell-like drifts were formed, as well as the wild drifts of Hubbard's meadow described on the 3d.
I see at the Assabet stone bridge where, apparently, one or two otters travelled about on the ice last night in the thin snow. The river is open eight or ten rods there, and I noticed their tracks all about the river and close to the edge of the ice, thin as it was, for a dozen rods above and below the bridge. At first, being at a distance, I thought them dog-tracks, but I might have known that no dogs would ever have run about so there, on that thin ice and

so near the edge of it. They were generally like this, each four being from fifteen to twenty-four inches apart.





Occasionally the track was somewhat like a rabbit's. I saw where one had apparently dragged himself along the ice. They had entered the water in many places, also travelled along under the slanting ice next the bank long distances. They were evidently attracted by that open water. There was no distinct sliding place.

Coming home last night in the twilight, I recognized a neighbor a dozen rods off by his walk or carriage, though it was so dark that I could not see a single feature of his person. Indeed, his person was all covered up excepting his face and hands, and I could not possibly have distinguished these at this distance from another man's. Nor was it owing to any peculiarity in his dress, for I should have known him though he had had on a perfectly new suit. It was because the man within the clothes moved them in a peculiar manner that I knew him thus at once at a distance and in the twilight. He made a certain figure in any clothes he might wear, and moved in it in a peculiar manner. Indeed, we have a very intimate knowledge of one another; we see through thick and thin; spirit meets spirit. A man hangs out innumerable signs by which we may know him. So, last summer, I knew another neighbor half a mile off up the river, though I did not see him, by the manner in which the breath from his lungs and mouth, i. e. his voice, made the air strike my ear. In that manner he communicated himself to all his acquaintance within a diameter of one mile (if it were all up and down the river). So I remember to have been sure once in a very dark night who was preceding me on the sidewalk, — though I could not see him, — by the sound of his tread. I was surprised to find that I knew it.

And to-day, seeing a peculiar very long track of a man in the snow, who has been along up the river this morning, I guessed that it was George Melvin, because it was accompanied by a hound's track. There was a thin snow on the ice, and I observed that he not only furrowed the snow for a foot before he completed his step, but that the (toe) of his track was always indefinite, as if his boot had been worn out and prolonged at the toe. I noticed that I and my companion made a clear and distinct track at the toe, but when I experimented, and tried to make a track like this by not lifting my feet but gliding and partly scuffing along, I found myself walking just like Melvin, and that perfectly convinced me that it was he. [I told him of it afterward, and he gave a corresponding account of himself.]

We have no occasion to wonder at the instinct of a dog. In these last two instances I surpassed the instinct of the dog.

DOG

It may always be a question how much or how little of a man goes to any particular act. It is not merely by taking time and by a conscious effort that he betrays himself. A man is revealed, and a man is concealed, in a myriad unexpected ways; e. g., I can hardly think of a more effectual way of disguising neighbors to one another than by stripping them naked.

Feb. 18. A snow-storm, falling all day; wind northeast.

The snow is fine and drives low; is composed of granulated masses one sixteenth to one twentieth of an inch in diameter. Not in flakes at all. I think it is not those large-flaked snow-storms that are the worst for the traveller, or the deepest.

It would seem as if the more odd and whimsical the conceit, the more credible to the mass. They require a surprising truth, though they may well be surprised at any truth. For example, Gesner says of the beaver: "The biting of this beast is very deep, being able to crash asunder the hardest bones, and commonly he never loseth his hold until he feeleth his teeth gnash one against another. Pliny and Solinus affirm, that the person so bitten cannot be cured, except he hear the crashing of the teeth, which I take to be an opinion without truth."

CONRAD GESNER

Gesner (unless we owe it to the translator) has a livelier conception of an animal which has no existence, or of an action which was never performed, than most naturalists have of what passes before their eyes. The ability

to report a thing *as if* [it] *had occurred*, whether it did or not, is surely important to a describer. They do not half tell a thing because you might expect them to but half believe it. I feel, of course, very ignorant in a museum. I know nothing about the things which they have there, — no more than I should know my friends in the tomb. I walk amid those jars of bloated creatures which they label frogs, a total stranger, without the least froggy thought being suggested. Not one of them can croak. They leave behind all life they that enter there, both frogs and men. For example, Gesner says again, "The tree being down and prepared, they take one of the oldest of their company, whose teeth could not be used for the cutting, (or, as others say, they constrain some strange beaver whom they meet withal, to fall flat on his back),... and upon his belly lade they all their timber, which they so ingeniously work and fasten into the compass of his legs that it may not fall, and so the residue by the tail draw him to the water side, where those buildings are to be framed, and this the rather seemeth to be true, because there have been some such taken that had no hair on their backs, but were pilled, which being espied by the hunters, in pity of their slavery or bondage, they have let them go away free." Gives Albertus and Olaus Magnus as authorities for this.

Melvin tells me that he went a day or two ago to where G.M. Barrett had placed a dead cow of his, and that he found the snow thickly tracked by foxes to within five feet around the carcass, and they appeared to have sat down there, but so suspicious of some trick were they that they had not touched it.

Sometimes, when I go forth at 2 P.M., there is scarcely a cloud in the sky, but soon one will appear in the west and steadily advance and expand itself, and so change the whole character of the afternoon and of my thoughts. The history of the sky for that afternoon will be but the development of that cloud.

I think that the most important requisite in describing an animal, is to be sure and give its character and spirit, for in that you have, without error, the sum and effect of all its parts, known and unknown. You must tell what it is to man. Surely the most important part of an animal is its anima, its vital spirit, on which is based its character and all the peculiarities by which it most concerns us. Yet most scientific books which treat of animals leave this out altogether, and what they describe are as it were phenomena of dead matter. What is most interesting in a dog, for example, is his attachment to his master, his intelligence, courage, and the like, and not his anatomical structure or even many habits which affect us less.

DOG

If you have undertaken to write the biography of an animal, you will have to present to us the living creature, *i. e.,* a result which no man can understand, but only in his degree report the impression made on him.

Science in many departments of natural history does not pretend to go beyond the shell; i. e., it does not get to animated nature at all. A history of animated nature must itself be animated.

The ancients, one would say, with their gorgons, sphinxes, satyrs, mantichora, etc., could imagine more than existed, while the moderns cannot imagine so much as exists.

In describing brutes, as in describing men, we shall naturally dwell most on those particulars in which they are most like ourselves, — in which we have most sympathy with them.

We are as often injured as benefited by our systems, for, to speak the truth, no human system is a true one, and a name is at most a mere convenience and carries no information with it. As soon as I begin to be aware of the life of any creature, I at once forget its name. To know the names of creatures is only a convenience to us at first, but so soon as we have learned to distinguish them, the sooner we forget their names the better, so far as any true appreciation of them is concerned. I think, therefore, that the best and most harmless names are those which are an imitation of the voice or note of an animal, or the most poetic ones. But the name adheres only to the accepted and conventional bird or quadruped, never an instant to the real one. There is always something ridiculous in the name of a great man, — as if he were named John Smith. The name is convenient in communicating with others, but it is not to be remembered when I communicate with myself.

If you look over a list of medicinal recipes in vogue in the last century, how foolish and useless they are seen to be! And yet we use equally absurd ones with faith to-day.

When the ancients had not found an animal wild and strange enough to suit them, they created one by the mingled [traits] of the most savage already known, — as hyenas, lionesses, pards, panthers, etc., etc., — one with another. Their beasts were thus of wildness and savageness all compact, and more *ferine* and *terrible* than any of an unmixed breed could be. They allowed nature great license in these directions. The most strange and fearful beasts were by them supposed to be the offspring of two different savage kinds. So fertile were their imaginations, and such fertility did they assign to nature. In the modern account the fabulous part will be omitted, it is true, but the portrait of the real and living creature also.

The old writers have left a more lively and lifelike account of the gorgon than modern writers give us of real animals.

 October 9. P.M.–Up Assabet.

See one crow chasing two marsh hawks over E. Hosmer's meadow. Occasionally a hawk dives at the crow, but the crow perseveres in pestering them. Can it now have anything to do with the hawk's habit of catching young birds? In like manner smaller birds pursue crows. The crow is at length joined by another.
See several squirrels' nests of leaves formed in the maples lately.
Though the red maples have not their common brilliancy on account of the very severe frost about the end of September, some are very interesting. You cannot judge a tree by seeing it from one side only. As you go round or away from it, it may overcome you with its mass of glowing scarlet or yellow light. You need to stand where the greatest number of leaves will transmit or reflect to you most favorably. The tree which looked comparatively lifeless, cold, and merely parti-colored, seen in a more favorable light as you are floating away from it, may affect you wonderfully as a warm, glowing drapery. I now see one small red maple which is all a pure yellow within and a bright red scarlet on its outer surface and prominences. It is a remarkably distinct painting of scarlet on a yellow ground. It is an indescribably beautiful contrast of scarlet and yellow. Another is yellow and green where this was scarlet and yellow, and in this case the bright and liquid green, now getting to be rare, is by contrast as charming a color as the scarlet.
I met in the street afterward a young lady who rowed up the river after me, and I could tell exactly where she plucked the maple twig which she held in her hand. It was the one so conspicuous for a quarter of a mile in one reach of the river.
I wonder that the very cows and the dogs in the street do not manifest a recognition of the bright tints about and above them. I saw a terrier dog glance up and down the painted street before he turned in at his master's gate, and I wondered what he thought of those lit trees, – if they did not touch his philosophy or spirits, – but I fear he had only his common doggish thoughts after all. He trotted down the yard as if it were a matter of course after all, or else as if he deserved it all.

DOG

Wood ducks are about now, amid the painted leaves.
For two or more nights past we have had remarkable glittering golden sunsets as I came home from the post-office, it being cold and cloudy just above the horizon. There was the most intensely bright golden light in the west end of the street, extending under the elms, and the very dust a quarter of a mile off was like gold-dust. I wondered how a child could stand quietly in that light, as if it had been a furnace.
This haste to kill a bird or quadruped and make a skeleton of it, which many young men and some old ones exhibit, reminds me of the fable of the man who killed the hen that laid golden eggs, and so got no more gold. It is a perfectly parallel case. Such is the knowledge which you may get from the anatomy as compared with the knowledge you get from the living creature. Every fowl lays golden eggs for him who can find them, or can detect alloy and base metal.

1861

March 11. C. says that Walden is almost entirely open to-day, so that the lines on my map would not strike any ice, but that there is ice in the deep cove. It will be open then the 12th or 13th. This is earlier than I ever knew it to open. Fair Haven was solid ice two or three days ago, and probably is still, and Goose Pond is to-day all ice. Why, then, should Walden have broken up thus early? for it froze over early and the winter was steadily cold up to February at least. I think it must have been because the ice was uncommonly covered with snow, just as the earth was, and so, as there was little or no frost in the earth, the ice also was thin, and it did not increase upward with snow ice as much as usual because there was no thaw or rain at all till February 2d, and then very little. According to all accounts there has been no skating on Walden the past winter on account of the snow. It was unusually covered with snow. This shows how many things are to be taken into account in judging of such a pond. I have not been able to go to the pond the past winter. I infer that, if it has broken up thus early, it must be because the ice was thin, and that it was thin not for want of cold generally, but because of the abundance of snow which lay on it.
The water is now high on the meadows and there is no ice there, owing to the recent heavy rains. Yet C. thinks it has been higher a few weeks since.
C. observes where mice (?) have gnawed the pitch pines the past winter. Is not this a phenomenon of a winter of deep snow only? as that when I lived at Walden, — a hard winter for them. I do not commonly observe it on a large scale.
My Aunt Sophia, now in her eightieth year, says that when she was a little girl my grandmother, who lived in

DOG

Keene, N. H., eighty miles from Boston, went to Nova Scotia, and, in spite of all she could do, her dog Bob, a little black dog with his tail cut off, followed her to Boston, where she went aboard a vessel. Directly after, however, Bob returned to Keene. One day, Bob, lying as usual under his mistress's bed in Keene, the window being open, heard a dog bark in the street, and instantly, forgetting that he was in the second story, he sprang up and jumped out the chamber window. He came down squarely on all fours, but it surprised or shocked him so that he did not run an inch, — which greatly amused the children, — my mother and aunts.

The seed of the willow is exceedingly minute, — as I measure, from one twentieth to one twelfth of an inch in length by one fourth as much in width, — and is surrounded at base by a tuft of cotton-like hairs about one fourth of an inch long rising around and above it, forming a kind of parachute. These render it the most buoyant of the seeds of any of our trees, and it is borne the furthest horizontally with the least wind. It falls very slowly even in the still air of a chamber, and rapidly ascends over a stove. It floats the most like a mote of any, — in a meandering manner, — and, being enveloped in this tuft of cotton, the seed is hard to detect.

Each of the numerous little pods, more or less ovate and beaked, which form the fertile catkin is closely packed with down and seeds. At maturity these pods open their beaks, which curve back, and gradually discharge their burden like the milkweed. It would take a delicate gin indeed to separate these seeds from their cotton.

If you lay bare any spot in our woods, however sandy, — as by a railroad cut, — no shrub or tree is surer to plant itself there sooner or later than a willow (commonly S. humilis or tristis) or poplar.

We have many kinds, but each is confined to its own habitat. I am not aware that the S. nigra has ever strayed from the river's brink. Though many of the S. alba have been set along our causeways, very few have sprung up and maintained their ground elsewhere.

The principal habitat of most of our species, such as love the water, is the river's bank and the adjacent river meadows, and when certain kinds spring up in an inland meadow where they were not known before, I feel pretty certain that they come from the river meadows. I have but little doubt that the seed of four of those that grow along the railroad causeway was blown from the river meadows, viz. S. pedicellaris, lucida, Torreyana, and petiolaris.

The barren and fertile flowers are usually on separate plants. I observe [?] that the greater part of the white willows set out on our causeways are sterile ones. You can easily distinguish the fertile ones at a distance when the pods are bursting. And it is said that no sterile weeping willows have been introduced into this country, so that it cannot be raised from the seed. Of two of the indigenous willows common along the brink of our river I have detected but one sex.

The seeds of the willow thus annually fill the air with their lint, being wafted to all parts of the country, and, though apparently not more than one in many millions gets to be a shrub, yet so lavish and persevering is Nature that her purpose is completely answered.

May 12, Sunday: In Worcester.

DOG

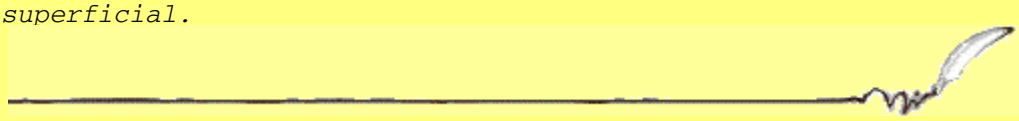
Rode to east side of Quinsigamond Pond with Blake and Brown and a dry humorist, a gentleman who has been a sportsman and was well acquainted with dogs. He said that he once went by water to St. John, N.B., on a sporting excursion, taking his dog with him; but the latter had such a remarkable sense of decency that, seeing no suitable place aboard the vessel, he did not yield to the pressing demands of nature and, as the voyage lasted several days, swelled up very much. At length his master, by taking him aside and setting him the example, persuaded him to make water only. When at length he reached St. John, and was leading his dog by a rope up a long hill there which led to the town, he was compelled to stop repeatedly for his dog to empty himself and was the observed of all observers. This suggested that a dog could be educated to be far more cleanly in some respects than men are.

He also states that a fox does not regard all dogs,—or, rather, avoid them,—but only hunting dogs. He one day heard the voices of hounds in pursuit of a fox and soon after saw the fox come trotting along a path in which he himself was walking. Secreting himself behind a wall he watched the motions of the fox, wishing to get a shot at him, but at that moment his dog, a spaniel, leapt out into the path and advanced to meet the fox, which stood still without fear to receive him. They smelled of one another like dogs, and the sportsman was prevented from shooting the fox for fear of hitting his dog. So he suddenly showed himself in the path, hoping thus to separate them and get a shot. The fox immediately cantered backward in the path, but his dog ran after him so directly in a line with the fox that he was afraid to fire for fear of killing the dog.

1862

August: Waldo Emerson to his journal:

> *How shallow seemed to me yesterday in the woods the speech one often hears from tired citizens who have spent their brief enthusiasm for the country, that Nature is tedious, and they have had enough of green leaves. Nature and the green leaves are a million fathoms deep, and it is these eyes that are superficial.*



"Thoreau" appeared in The Atlantic Monthly. At Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau's insistence Emerson had omitted the implicit reference which he had made, during his funeral oration, to Walt Whitman, "one who is not known to those here assembled."

In his oration over Henry Thoreau's corpse Emerson had mentioned the dead man's "mythical record of ... disappointments." Now, although we don't have documentation that he had ever bothered to read through WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS, this, clearly, would amount to a categorization of the hound/horse/turtledove passage as an attempt at myth (as well as one of the author's "riddles"), characterizing it as having to do with some series of personal life disappointments — and it would constitute evidence that Emerson had at least skimmed the first few pages of the book although it might not constitute evidence that he had

considered the material very carefully.

WALDEN: In any weather, at any hour of the day or night, I have been anxious to improve the nick of time, and notch it on my stick too; to stand on the meeting of two eternities, the past and future, which is precisely the present moment; to toe that line. You will pardon some obscurities, for there are more secrets in my trade than in most men's, and yet not voluntarily kept, but inseparable from its very nature. I would gladly tell all that I know about it, and never paint "No Admittance" on my gate.

I long ago lost a hound, a bay horse, and a turtle-dove, and am still on their trail. Many are the travellers I have spoken concerning them, describing their tracks and what calls they answered to. I have met one or two who had heard the hound, and the tramp of the horse, and even seen the dove disappear behind a cloud, and they seemed as anxious to recover them as if they had lost them themselves.

To anticipate, not the sunrise and the dawn merely, but, if possible, Nature herself! How many mornings, summer and winter, before yet any neighbor was stirring about his business, have I been about mine! No doubt many of my townsmen have met me returning from this enterprise, farmers starting for Boston in the twilight, or woodchoppers going to their work. It is true, I never assisted the sun materially in his rising, but, doubt not, it was of the last importance only to be present at it.

It may well be that it was during this month that Emerson confided to his journal a discovery that the generals of the North were womanly:

> *Strange that some strong-minded president of the Woman's Rights Convention should not offer to lead the Army of the Potomac. She could not do worse than General Maclellan* [George B. McClellan].

During this month Union General John Pope would suffer defeat at the 2nd Battle of Bull Run on August 29-30, a defeat for which General Fitz-John Porter would be held responsible since he had failed to commit his troops quickly to the battle: by 1863 this hesitant "womanly" officer would be forced out.

Commissioned as Chaplain of the 33rd Massachusetts Regular Volunteers, Daniel Foster would serve with manhood in this capacity during numerous engagements, such as those at Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Beverley's Ford, Gettysburg, and Lookout Mountain, before being killed.

"It's all now you see. Yesterday won't be over until tomorrow and tomorrow began ten thousand years ago."

– Remark by character "Garin Stevens" in William Faulkner's INTRUDER IN THE DUST

Prepared: November 13, 2013

ARRGH AUTOMATED RESEARCH REPORT

GENERATION HOTLINE

This stuff presumably looks to you as if it were generated by a human. Such is not the case. Instead, upon someone's request we have pulled it out of the hat of a pirate that has grown out of the shoulder of our pet parrot "Laura" (depicted above). What these chronological lists are: they are research reports compiled by ARRGH algorithms out of a database of data modules which we term the Kouroo Contexture. This is data mining. To respond to such a request for information, we merely push a button.

Commonly, the first output of the program has obvious deficiencies and so we need to go back into the data modules stored in the contexture and do a minor amount of tweaking, and then we need to punch that button again and do a recompile of the chronology — but there is nothing here that remotely resembles the ordinary "writerly" process which you know and love. As the contents of this originating contexture improve, and as the programming improves, and as funding becomes available (to date no funding whatever has been needed in the creation of this facility, the entire operation being run out of pocket change) we expect a diminished need to do such tweaking and recompiling, and we fully expect to achieve a simulation of a generous and untiring robotic research librarian. Onward and upward in this brave new world.

First come first serve. There is no charge.
Place your requests with <Kouroo@kouroo.info>.
Arrgh.