

EVENTS OF 1853

General Events of 1854

SPRING	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH
SUMMER	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
FALL	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER
WINTER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER

Following the death of Jesus Christ there was a period of readjustment that lasted for approximately one million years.

-Kurt Vonnegut, THE SIRENS OF TITAN



1854

January							February							March						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4				1	2	3	4
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
29	30	31					26	27	28					26	27	28	29	30	31	
April							May							June						
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						1		1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30	
30																				

EVENTS OF 1855

July							August							September							
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	
						1			1	2	3	4	5							1	2
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
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30	31																				
October							November							December							
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8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
														31							

[Read !\[\]\(0f848bbd71cef6b345273b16f905912a_img.jpg\) Henry Thoreau's Journal for January 1854 \(æf. 36\)](#)
[Read !\[\]\(d873c0073cfd3b74a7c9b5ca09bad0c7_img.jpg\) Henry Thoreau's Journal for February 1854 \(æf. 36\)](#)
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[Read !\[\]\(68dcb7f31ce1e4d333f7ed1f91a944e1_img.jpg\) Henry Thoreau's Journal for May 1854 \(æf. 36\)](#)
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[Read !\[\]\(cc74f3e81055786400a295e22b6c577a_img.jpg\) Henry Thoreau's Journal for September 1854 \(æf. 37\)](#)
[Read !\[\]\(5a69e7d17a69a1399fb49384219ae697_img.jpg\) Henry Thoreau's Journal for October 1854 \(æf. 37\)](#)
[Read !\[\]\(1b9fcf71674d377fb5580bd65cbefce4_img.jpg\) Henry Thoreau's Journal for November 1854 \(æf. 37\)](#)
[Read !\[\]\(69593f9c55a824cf4b78566358384808_img.jpg\) Henry Thoreau's Journal for December 1854 \(æf. 37\)](#)

1854

1854



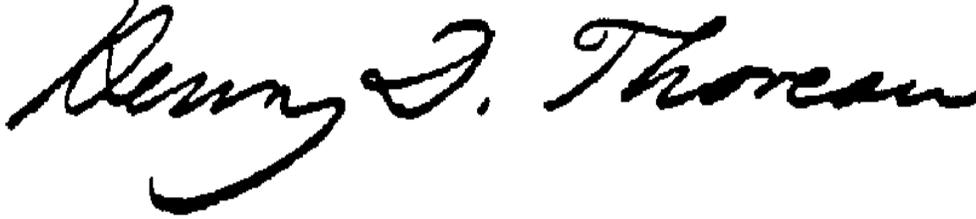
Late 1853 to Early 1854: The “F” version of Thoreau’s “[WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#)” manuscript. Thoreau’s mobilization of the absurd inverted-Walden tale came about in 1853-1854 while he was trying to explain the provenance of the rim of smooth “paving stones” around the shoreline of the pond:



stones have been shoved up into a ridge by the edge of the ice being driven against it, or as if the sand had washed down and collected against the ice, and there remained when the ice was melted. But the truth ~~seems to be~~ probably is that when there is a thaw or warm rain in midwinter which warms the water ~~in the pond,~~ that portion ~~of the water~~ which penetrates a little way under the frozen shore ~~apparently~~ takes out some of the frost there, and the shore, whether it is sand or pebbles, or stones or sticks, is puffed up in the form of a pent-roof six inches or more high, and under ~~which~~ this there is found to be no frost. Even pretty large rocks and trees, as I have said, are thus actually tripped up or pried over by a force applied beneath. Some have been puzzled to tell how the shore became so regularly paved. but I observe that the surrounding hills are remarkably full of the same kind of stones, so that they have been obliged to pile them up in walls on both sides of the railroad cut nearest the pond; and, moreover, that there are most stones where the shore is most abrupt; so that, unfortunately, it is no longer a mystery to me. I detect the paver.

[TIMELINE OF WALDEN](#)

 This was [Henry Thoreau](#)'s signature:



Thoreau noted in his journal that, as in the previous year, the water level in [Walden Pond](#) was dropping.

Here is the analysis made by [Robert Milder](#) in his REIMAGINING THOREAU (NY: Cambridge UP, 1995, page 119), of the revisions being made by Thoreau, during this 1852-1853-1854 timeframe, to drafts B and C of the [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) manuscript which had been laid by since 1849:

Unlike drafts B and C of 1849, which expand the initial manuscript written at the pond without substantively changing it, the revisions of 1852-1854 differ both from the 1849 WALDEN and, in subtle but important ways, from each other, though with considerable overlap. In draft D, for example, Thoreau elaborated his critique of getting and spending in "Economy," as he did at every stage of composition, but he also broke new ground in "The Ponds," which drafts E and F would develop with emphases peculiar to each of **those** stages. Sattelmeyer finds WALDEN the work of two Thoreaus, corresponding to its two phases of composition (1846-1849 and 1853-1854), with "an earlier self subsumed but still present, as it were, within the latter." I would divide the second period into identifiable substages and discriminate among three kinds of additions belonging to each: "dominant," "residual," and "emergent." "Dominant" refers to the pattern of the seasons that governed Thoreau's sense of structure and proportion throughout the period; "residual," to the amplification of existing chapters according to their original spirit; and "emergent," to those new and unforeseen elements reflective of Thoreau's development that intruded upon and modified his book within the framework of its seasonal plan.

In Boston, William Ticknor's publishing house became Ticknor & Fields by the addition of James T. Fields (1817-1881).

The fusion of frog sperm and egg was observed under a microscope. For the first time we were getting a clue, as to just how it is that male and female share in the reproductive process.

The first “stereotypes” came into use in newspaper presses. That is, the type itself was no longer mounted upon the rotating cylinder of the press, but instead a cast replica of the type, termed a “stereotype,” was mounted. This achieved two efficiencies, it prevented type from working loose and flying into the press, and it freed up the type so that the setting of type for tomorrow’s newspaper could begin early. Another word for this semicircle of metal was “boilerplate.” (The use of the terms “stereotype” and “boilerplate” to refer, respectively, to hackneyed communication and to standardized communication, would develop in a later timeframe.)



“Among all the manufactures which -for the mental and mechanical skill required in their prosecution, the remarkable steps by which they have attained their present rank, and the influence which they exert on society generally- claim our attention and admiration, none perhaps is more striking than the **manufacture of a book.**”



— George Dodd’s DAYS AT THE FACTORIES

HISTORY OF THE BOOK

HISTORY OF THE PRESS



1854

1854

Speaking of stereotypes: Evidently there had been no cross-dressing in the [“The Institute of 1770”](#) predecessor of the Hasty Pudding club while Thoreau had been a member prior to 1837. For the cross-dressing which occurred in this year was evidently being considered an innovation:

The wearing of women's clothes continued to be explicitly forbidden through at least 1816; by 1825, with the list of infractions growing yearly longer, the prohibition in dress was characterized merely as “indecent in language, dress, or behaviour,” and this phrase recurs in the regulations for 1848. Conflict with the law, both university and civil, was probably inevitable for an undergraduate theater group whose increasing focus was on female impersonation. And, as we will see, in two specific instances the club's ambivalent attitude toward gender bending came to the fore. As early as 1854 some members of the Hasty Pudding had begun to specialize in female impersonation; Horace Furness '54 [who would later edit the Shakespeare Variorum] was the club's first diva, “The unparalleled Signorina Furness”; Charles Eliot Furness '63 kept up the family tradition.

Sometime during this year or the previous year, Thoreau made a fair copy of the penciled last part of his parable of the artist of Kouroo and made the final condensations and changes that would constitute the print H version. His parable of the unreality of temporality and of the unworthiness of the consequentialist attitude

was complete:



There was an artist ~~who lived~~ in the city of Kouroo who was ~~truly~~ disposed to strive after perfection. One day it came into his mind to make a staff. Having considered that in an imperfect work time is an ingredient, but into a perfect work time does not enter, he said to himself, It shall be perfect in all respects, though I should do nothing else in ~~all~~ my life. He proceeded instantly to the forest for wood, being resolved that it should not be made of unsuitable material; and as he searched for and rejected stick after stick, his friends gradually deserted him, for they grew old in their works and died, but ~~still~~ he grew not older by a moment. His singleness of purpose and resolution, and his elevated piety, endowed him, without his knowledge, with perennial youth. As he made no compromise with Time, Time kept out of his way, and only sighed at a distance because he could not overcome him. Before he had found a stock in all respects suitable the city of Kouroo was a hoary ruin, and he sat on one of its mounds to peel the stick. Before he had given it the proper shape the dynasty of the Candahars was at an end, and with the point of the stick he wrote the name of the last of that race in the sand, and then resumed his work. By the time he had smoothed and polished the staff Kalpa was no longer the pole-star; and ere he had put on the ferule and the head adorned with precious stones, Brahma had awoke and slumbered many times. But why do I stay to mention these things? When the finishing stroke was put to his work, it suddenly expanded before the eyes of the astonished artist into the fairest of all the creations of Brahma. He had made a new ~~universe~~ ^{^system} in making a staff, a world with full and fair proportions; in which, though the old cities and dynasties had passed away, fairer and more glorious ones had taken their places. And now he saw by the heap of shavings still fresh at his feet, that, for him and his work, the former lapse of time had been an illusion, and that no more time had elapsed than is required for a single scintillation from the brain of Brahma to fall on and inflame the tinder of a mortal brain. The material was pure, and his art was pure; how could the result be other~~wise~~ than wonderful?



1854

1854

 [Thomas Mayne Reid, Jr.](#)'s 1852 THE YOUNG VOYAGEURS; OR, THE BOY HUNTERS IN THE NORTH was reprinted in Boston by Ticknor, Reed, and Fields ([Henry Thoreau](#) would comment on his reading of this on March 9th in his journal, and make notes in his Indian Notebook #8 and Fact Book).



After this author's marriage to his publisher's young daughter there were any number of amusing incidents in and about London, as people continually presumed her to be his daughter (although she would fondly remember all these incidents, I will here relate but one):

The milliner, looking very much astonished, said: "I beg your pardon, sir, I thought the young lady was about returning to school, and that you were choosing a bonnet for her to take."

IT IS NO COINCIDENCE THAT IT IS MORTALS WHO CONSUME OUR HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS, FOR WHAT WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO DO IS EVADE THE RESTRICTIONS OF THE HUMAN LIFESPAN. (IMMORTALS, WITH NOTHING TO LIVE FOR, TAKE NO HEED OF OUR STORIES.)

1854

"Stack of the Artist of Kouroo" Project

1854

1854





1854

1854



THE U.S. GRINNELL EXPEDITION IN SEARCH OF SIR JOHN FRANKLIN. A PERSONAL NARRATIVE. BY [ELISHA KENT KANE, M.D., U.S.N.](#) (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 329 & 331 Pearl Street, Franklin Square). [Henry Thoreau](#) would be able to consult this at the Concord Public Library, and it would figure in [WALDEN](#) and in ["SUCCESSION OF FOREST TREES"](#).

U.S. GRINNELL EXPEDITION

[WALDEN](#): What does Africa, -what does the West stand for? Is not our own interior white on the chart? black though it may prove, like the coast, when discovered. Is it the source of the Nile, or the Niger, or the Mississippi, or a North-West Passage around this continent, that we would find? Are these the problems which most concern mankind? Is Franklin the only man who is lost, that his wife should be so earnest to find him? Does Mr. Grinnell know where he himself is? Be rather the Mungo Park, the Lewis and Clarke and Frobisher, of your own streams and oceans; explore your own higher latitudes, -with shiploads of preserved meats to support you, if they be necessary; and pile the empty cans sky-high for a sign. Were preserved meats invented to preserve meat merely? Nay, be a Columbus to whole new continents and worlds within you, opening new channels, not of trade, but of thought. Every man is the lord of a realm beside which the earthly empire of the Czar is but a petty state, a hummock left by the ice. Yet some can be patriotic who have no *self-respect*, and sacrifice the greater to the less. They love the soil which makes their graves, but have no sympathy with the spirit which may still animate their clay. Patriotism is a maggot in their heads. What was the meaning of that South-Sea Exploring Expedition, with all its parade and expense, but an indirect recognition of the fact, that there are continents and seas in the moral world, to which every man is an isthmus or an inlet, yet unexplored by him, but that it is easier to sail many thousand miles through cold and storm and cannibals, in a government ship, with five hundred men and boys to assist one, than it is to explore the private sea, the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean of one's being alone.-

"Erret, et extremos alter scrutetur Iberos.
Plus habet hic vitæ, plus habet ille viæ."

Let them wander and scrutinize the outlandish Australians.
I have more of God, they more of the road.

PEOPLE OF
WALDEN

SIR JOHN FRANKLIN

DR. ELISHA KENT KANE

LEWIS AND CLARK

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

MUNGO PARK



1854

1854

"SUCCESSION OF FOREST TREES": In the planting of the seeds of most trees, the best gardeners do no more than follow Nature, though they may not know it. Generally, both large and small ones are most sure to germinate, and succeed best, when only beaten into the earth with the back of a spade, and then covered with leaves or straw. These results to which planters have arrived, remind us of the experience of Kane and his companions at the North, who, when learning to live in that climate, were surprised to find themselves steadily adopting the customs of the natives, simply becoming Esquimaux. So, when we experiment in planting forests, we find ourselves at last doing as Nature does. Would it not be well to consult with Nature in the outset? for she is the most extensive and experienced planter of us all, not excepting the Dukes of Athol.

DR. ELISHA KENT KANE
THE DUKES OF ATHOLL

1854

1854

 [Asa Fitch](#) became the 1st professional [entomologist](#) of the New York State Agricultural Society (commissioned by the State of New York).



This made him the very 1st it's-my-day-job entomologist in the US of A (many of his notebooks are now at the Smithsonian Institution).

[Benedict Jaeger](#), assisted by [H.C. Preston, M.D.](#), produced a “valuable ornament for the parlor table” (that’s how he described it) entitled THE LIFE OF NORTH AMERICAN INSECTS ILLUSTRATED BY NUMEROUS COLORED

1854

ENGRAVINGS AND NARRATIVES (Published for the Author. [Providence](#): Sayles, Miller and Simons, Printers,

1854



NORTH AMERICAN INSECTS

This was initially issued in parts, six in all, each with a colored plate of insect illustrations prepared by [Dr. Washington Hoppin](#), and prefaced with a thumbnail biography of [Sir Hans Sloane, M.D.](#), who had founded the British Museum:

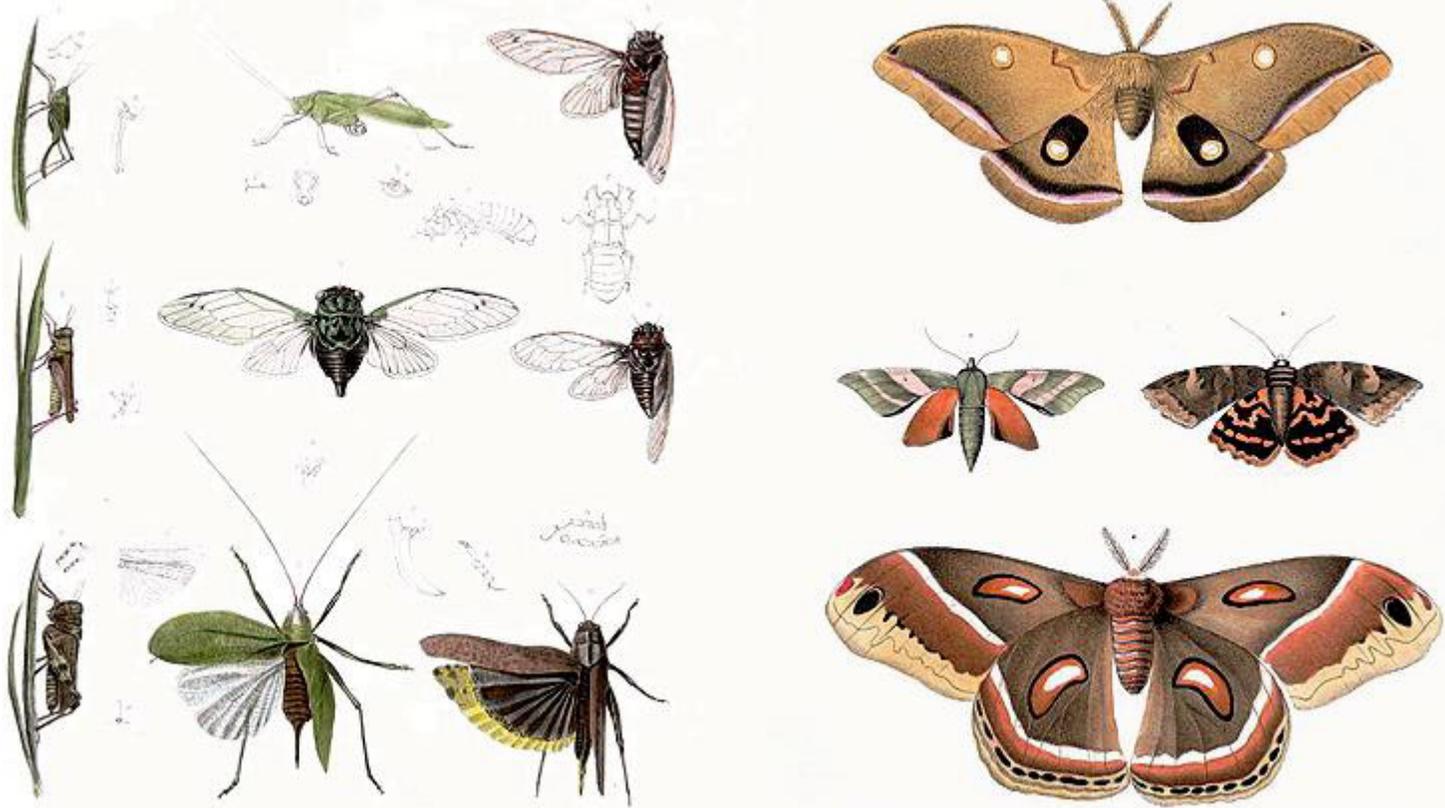


SIR HANS SLOANE, M.D.

Afterward the six parts were offered bound together as a book. What [Henry Thoreau](#) had in his personal library may have been this initial printing in six separate parts (and it would seem, out of good judgment or whatever, that he never made notes from this questionable source, in any of his Commonplace books or Indian notebooks, etc.). John D. Sherman's "Catalog 10 of Books on Insects" has characterized Professor Jaeger's volume as "famous as the most worthless of all American Insect books," presumably due to its lack of organization, lack of detailed information, egregious blunders, and "semi-philosophical meanderings."

Now it is a fact that during my twenty-two years' residence in this country not a single summer has passed without my seeing some of these red-eyed Cicadas in one or other of the States, and hence I must maintain that the name "Seventeen-years Locust" is neither correct nor proper.

At some point [Thoreau](#) would check out, from the [New Bedford, Massachusetts](#) library, a volume published in this year, [Ebenezer Emmons](#)'s INSECTS OF [NEW-YORK](#).



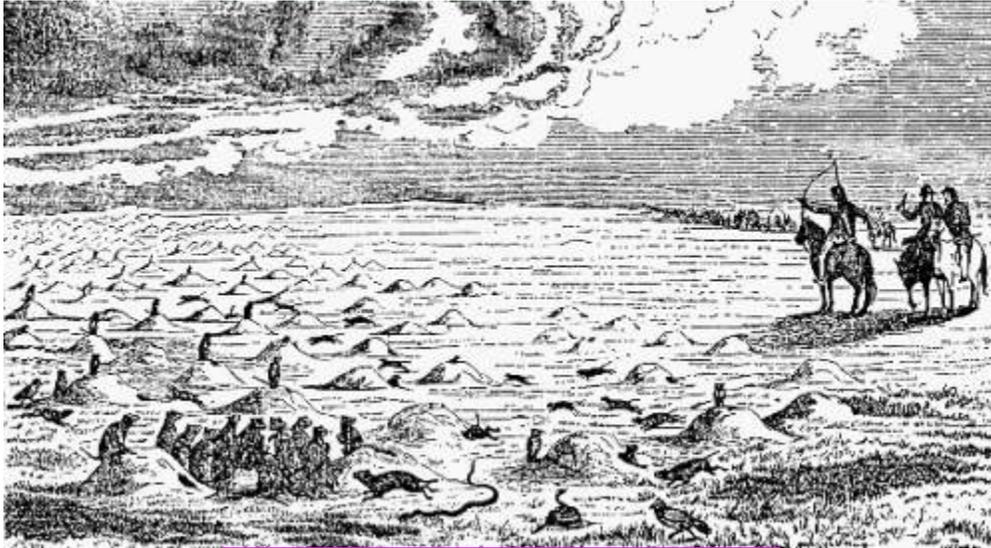
1854

1854



In about this timeframe [Henry Thoreau](#) copied from the volumes of [Josiah Gregg](#)'s COMMERCE OF THE PRAIRIES: OR, THE JOURNAL OF A SANTA FE TRADER, DURING EIGHT EXPEDITIONS ACROSS THE GREAT WESTERN PRAIRIES, AND A RESIDENCE OF NEARLY NINE YEARS IN NORTHERN MEXICO (New York: Henry G. Langley) into his Indian Notebook #8.

MAP OF THE INDIAN TERRITORY



COMMERCE OF THE PRAIRIES

By “northern Mexico” this [tuberculosis](#) sufferer had intended what today we would consider as Oklahoma, Arizona, New Mexico, and southern [California](#), although he did indeed during the [War upon Mexico](#) enter the Mexican state of Chihuahua (no, we’re not referring here to a little doggie).

The sarape saltillero, or fancy blanket completes the picture. This peculiarly useful garment is commonly carried dangling carelessly across the pommel of the saddle except in bad weather when it is drawn over the shoulders, or the rider puts his head through a slit in the middle, while his whole person is thus effectually protected.

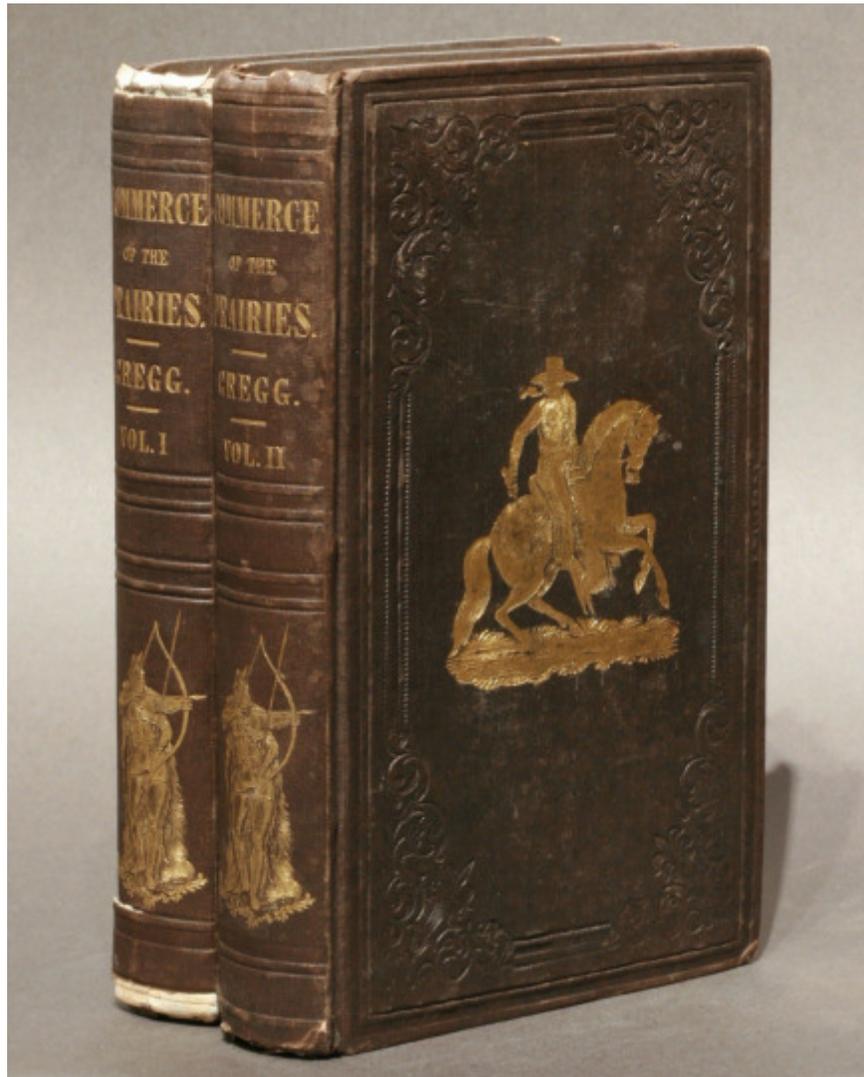
HDT

WHAT?

INDEX

1854

1854

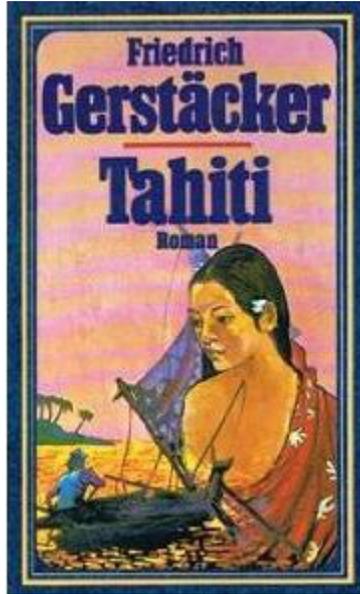


1854

1854



[Friedrich Gerstäcker](#)'s 2-volume *AUS ZWEI WELTTEILEN*, *FRITZ WILDAU'S ABENTEUER ZU WASSER UND ZU LANDE*, and *TAHITI*.



Publication in English translation of his 1844 *STREIF- UND JAGDZÜGE DURCH DIE VEREINIGTEN STAATEN NORDAMERICAS*, as *WILD SPORTS IN THE FAR WEST*. An 1859 revision would be read by [Henry Thoreau](#).¹

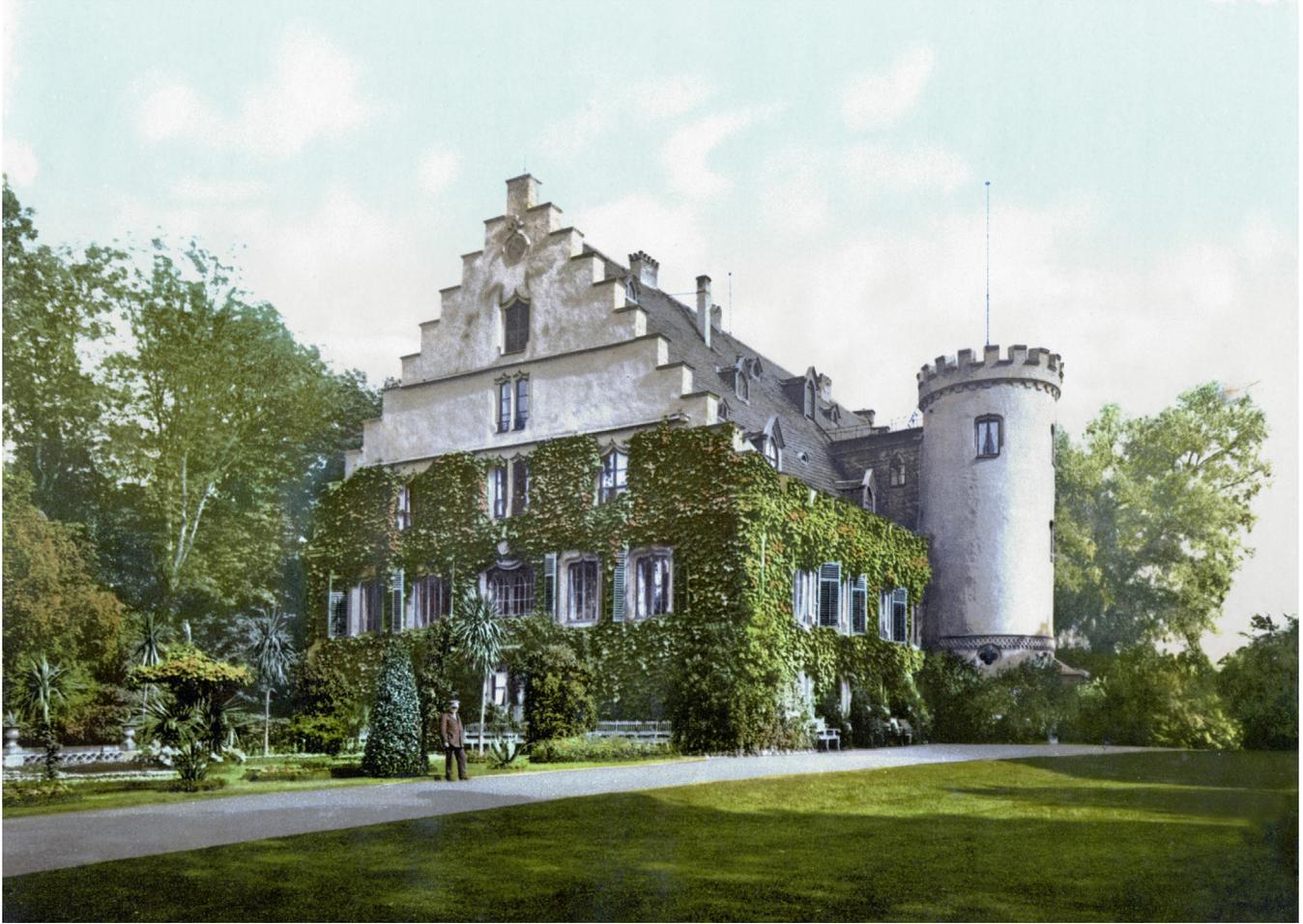
WILD WESTERN ARKANSAS

1. This original version of *WILD SPORTS IN THE FAR WEST* is available in a 1968 reprint from Duke UP, Durham, North Carolina.

1854

1854

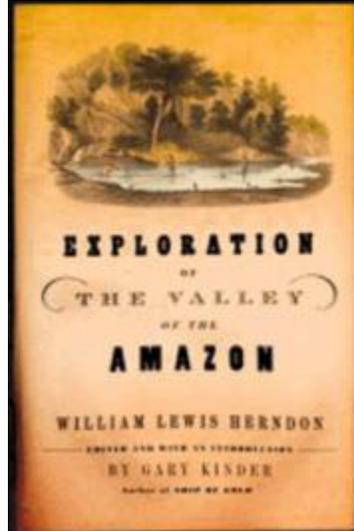
His family moved into the Schloss Rosenau castle, as permanent guests of Duke Ernst II von Coburg.



1854

1854

→ [Lardner Gibbon](#)'s portion, the 2d volume, of EXPLORATION OF THE VALLEY OF THE AMAZON, MADE UNDER DIRECTION OF THE NAVY DEPARTMENT was published in the District of Columbia. This also would be in the personal library of [Henry Thoreau](#), although I don't think Thoreau ever commented on Lieutenant Gibbon's part of the journey.



LT. GIBBON'S AMAZON

☰ **"LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE"**: Lieutenant Herndon, whom our Government sent to explore the Amazon, and, it is said, to extend the area of Slavery, observed that there was wanting there "an industrious and active population, who know what the comforts of life are, and who have artificial wants to draw out the great resources of the country." But what are the artificial wants to be encouraged? Not the love of luxuries, like the tobacco and slaves of, I believe, his native Virginia, nor the ice and granite and other material wealth of our native New England; nor are "the great resources of a country" that fertility or barrenness of soil which produces these. The chief want, in every State that I have been into, was a high and earnest purpose in its inhabitants. This alone draws out "the great resources" of Nature, and at last taxes her beyond her resources; for man naturally dies out of her. When we want culture more than potatoes, and illumination more than sugar-plums, then the great resources of a world are taxed and drawn out, and the result, or staple production, is, not slaves, nor operatives, but men, -those rare fruits called heroes, saints, poets, philosophers, and redeemers.

HDT

WHAT?

INDEX

1854

1854



1854

1854



THE GENESIS OF THE EARTH AND OF MAN appeared, anonymously edited by [Edward William Lane](#)'s nephew Reginald Stuart Poole.

A POPULAR ACCOUNT OF THE ANCIENT [EGYPTIANS](#). REVISED AND ABRIDGED FROM HIS LARGER WORK, BY [SIR J. GARDNER WILKINSON, D.C.L., F.R.S., &c.](#) IN TWO VOLUMES. *ILLUSTRATED WITH FIVE HUNDRED WOODCUTS* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 329 & 331 Pearl Street, Franklin Square; illustrated by Joseph Bonomi). These two volumes would be purchased for the personal library of Waldo Emerson and [Henry Thoreau](#) would immediately copy from them into his Fact Book, and into his Indian Notebook #8.



ANCIENT EGYPT, VOL. I

ANCIENT EGYPT, VOL. II

[Thoreau](#) copied from [George Douglas Brewerton](#)'s article in the previous August's [Harper's New Monthly Magazine](#) "A Ride with [Kit Carson](#) through the Great American Desert and the Rocky Mountains," into his Indian Notebook #8 (about something that had happened in 1848).



A RIDE WITH KIT CARSON



1854

1854

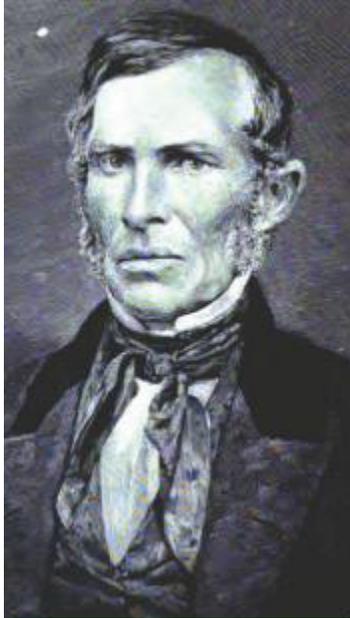
ONE COULD BE ELSEWHERE, AS ELSEWHERE DOES EXIST.
ONE CANNOT BE ELSEWHEN SINCE ELSEWHEN DOES NOT.
(TO THE WILLING MANY THINGS CAN BE EXPLAINED,
THAT FOR THE UNWILLING WILL REMAIN FOREVER MYSTERIOUS.)

1854

1854



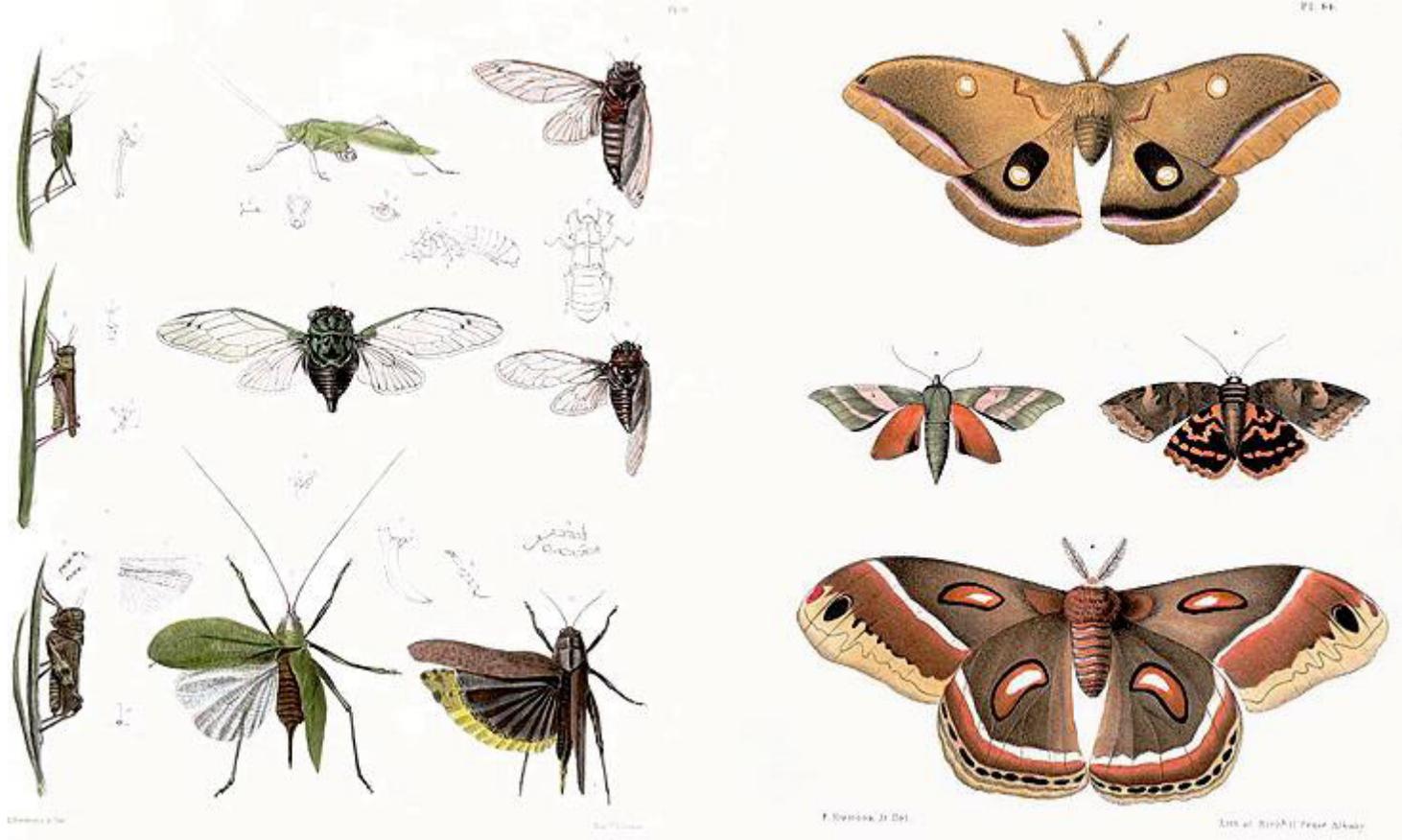
[Ebenezer Emmons](#)'s AMERICAN GEOLOGY, CONTAINING A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES OF THE SCIENCE WITH FULL ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE CHARACTERISTIC AMERICAN FOSSILS (Albany: Gray, Sprague & Co.). Also, his A TREATISE UPON AMERICAN GEOLOGY.



PIONEER OF SCIENCE

Also, his INSECTS OF NEW-YORK (C. van Benthuysen, publisher; this was the 5th volume of the author's AGRICULTURE OF [NEW-YORK](#)), which [Henry Thoreau](#) would check out of the [New Bedford](#) library while visiting [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in 1857.

THE SCIENCE OF 1854





1854

1854

 Everett and Laraine Fergenson's "A Personality Profile of [Henry David Thoreau](#): A New Method in Psycho-History" appeared in Raymond D. Gozzi's THOREAU'S PSYCHOLOGY (Lanham, Maryland: UP of America).

"A Review From Professor Ross's Seminar"

Everett Fergenson, Director of the Institute for Behaviorial Analysis at the Stevens Institute of Technology, Hoboken NJ, and his wife Laraine, sent some twenty Thoreau scholars a series of questions from the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) and asked them to answer the questions as they believed that [Henry David Thoreau](#) would have in 1854.  The Fergensons compiled the responses and determined how Thoreau's personality measured on the MMPI scales. Their outstanding finding is that Thoreau registered high on the "male sexual inversion scale," that he was [homoerotic](#) and was plagued by conflicts inhibiting his sexual expression.

As the Fergensons and some of the responding scholars point out, this type of psycho-historical research poses difficulties. 1stly, the test compared Thoreau to thirty-seven year old men living today and not his contemporaries. Thus, Thoreau's frank but platonic love for an [Edmund Quincy Sewall, Jr.](#) has implications in this homophobic age of which Thoreau, Edmund, or Edmund's parents never would have dreamed. 2dly, the scholars note that Thoreau was an artist who played with words, and they wonder how literally he would have taken the test questions. 3dly, they recognize Thoreau as having several different personalities: the literary Thoreau, the biographical Thoreau, and the strident Thoreau would answer the questions on the test differently.

The Fergenson's results generally agree with the Thoreau we know from his work and biographies. While it is interesting to "give" a modern psychological test to a historical figure, I am not sure it reveals very much. The MMPI and other personality tests are designed chiefly to measure the personalities of people whose biographies are unknown. In Thoreau's case, we have both biography and a body of work to explore.

(Scott G. Kassner, January 29, 1986)

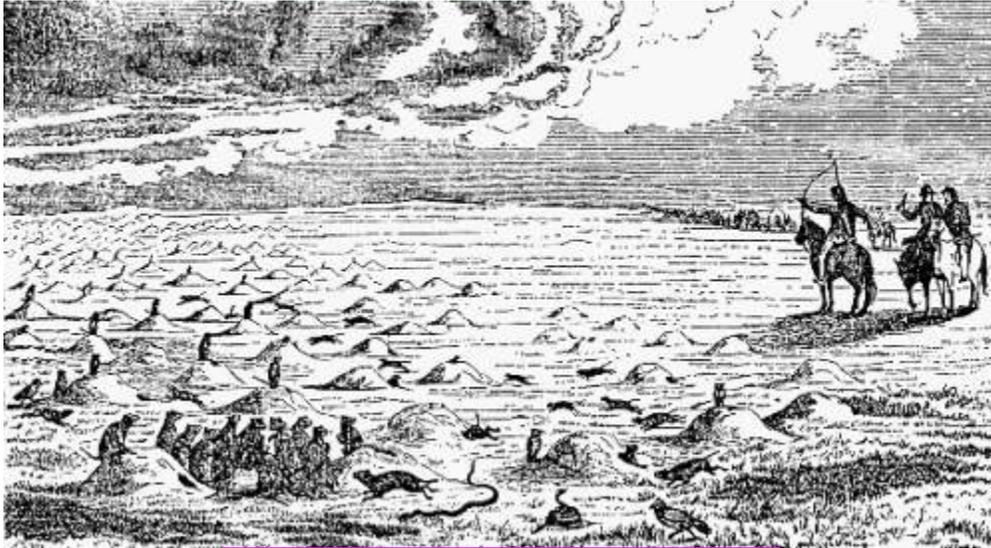
1854

1854



In about this timeframe [Henry Thoreau](#) copied from the volumes of [Josiah Gregg](#)'s COMMERCE OF THE PRAIRIES: OR, THE JOURNAL OF A SANTA FE TRADER, DURING EIGHT EXPEDITIONS ACROSS THE GREAT WESTERN PRAIRIES, AND A RESIDENCE OF NEARLY NINE YEARS IN NORTHERN MEXICO (New York: Henry G. Langley) into his Indian Notebook #8.

MAP OF THE INDIAN TERRITORY



COMMERCE OF THE PRAIRIES

By “northern Mexico” this [tuberculosis](#) sufferer had intended what today we would consider as Oklahoma, Arizona, New Mexico, and southern [California](#), although he did indeed during the [War upon Mexico](#) enter the Mexican state of Chihuahua (no, we’re not referring here to a little doggie).

The sarape saltillero, or fancy blanket completes the picture. This peculiarly useful garment is commonly carried dangling carelessly across the pommel of the saddle except in bad weather when it is drawn over the shoulders, or the rider puts his head through a slit in the middle, while his whole person is thus effectually protected.

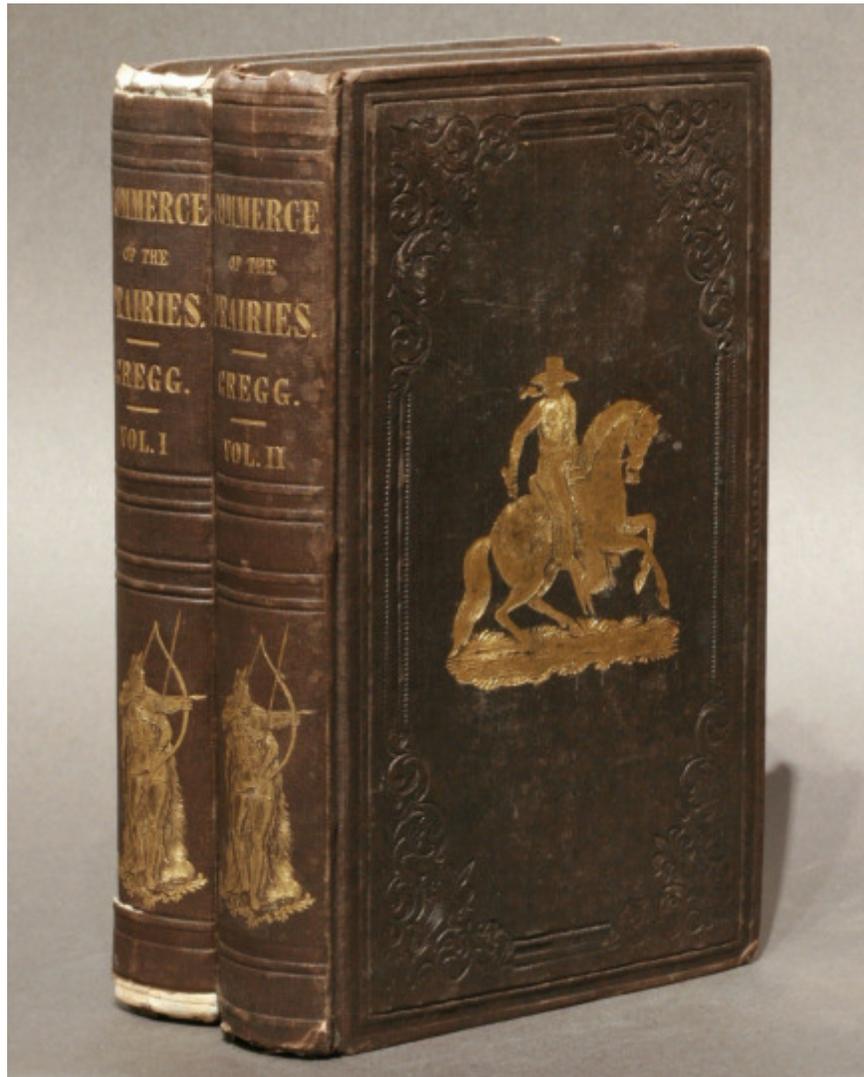
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WHAT?

INDEX

1854

1854



1854

1854



An English translation of [Gabriel Franchère](#)'s *RELATION D'UN VOYAGE À LA CÔTE DU NORD-OUEST DE L'AMÉRIQUE SEPTENTRIONALE DANS LES ANNÉES 1810, 11, 12, 13, ET 14* of 1820, not merely translated but also extensively re-edited by Jedediah Vincent Huntington, was put out as a 2d edition entitled NARRATIVE OF A VOYAGE TO THE NORTHWEST COAST OF AMERICA IN THE YEARS 1811, 1812, 1813, AND 1814 OR THE FIRST AMERICAN SETTLEMENT ON THE PACIFIC, by the Redfield Press at 110 and 112 Nassau Street in New-York (there would be, subsequent to this point, four more versions, each with extensive notes and introductions).



GABRIEL FRANCHÈRE

This volume would be in the personal library of [Henry Thoreau](#).



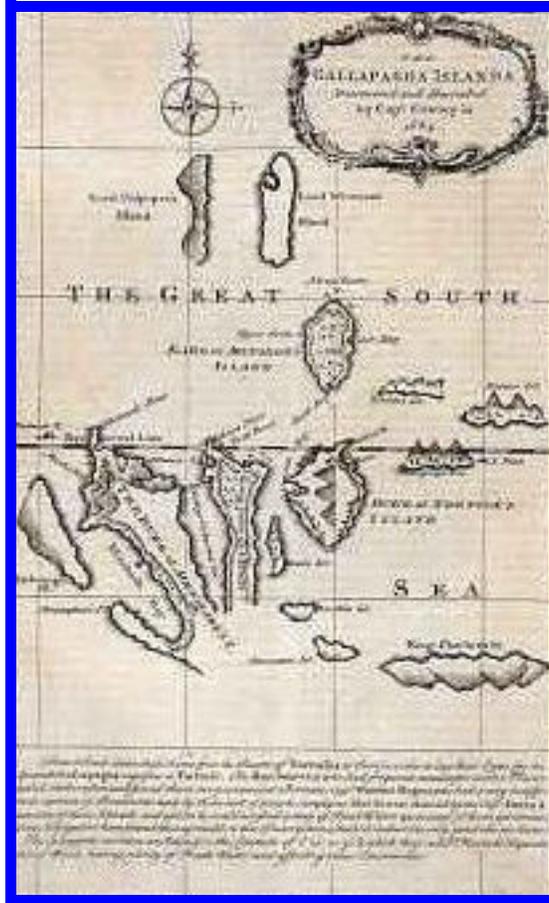
[THE LIFE OF NORTH AMERICAN INSECTS. BY B. JAEGER, LATE PROFESSOR OF ZOOLOGY AND BOTANY IN THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY. ASSISTED BY H.C. PRESTON, M.D. WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS, FROM SPECIMENS IN THE CABINET OF THE AUTHOR.](#) ([Henry Thoreau](#) would own the 8 volumes of the 1st edition).

1854

1854



[Charles Pickering](#) created GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF ANIMALS AND PLANTS (Volume 15 of the Reports of the US South Seas Exploring Expedition of 1838-1842), and would create also a 2d volume (which would be published privately in 1876).



[Herman Melville](#)'s THE ENCANTADAS; OR, ENCHANTED ISLES in Putnam's Monthly Magazine of American Literature, Science and Art gave [Henry Thoreau](#) a chance to learn about the Galápagos Islands (which Melville had visited in 1841 and revisited in 1842) as a symbol of desolation (Melville would recycle these stark images in his *CLAREL: A POEM AND PILGRIMAGE IN THE HOLY LAND* as a comparison for the deserts of the Holy

1854

1854

Land), and [Thomas Cholmondeley](#)'s ULTIMA THULE; OR, THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY A RESIDENCE IN NEW



ZEALAND gave him a chance to learn about [New Zealand](#).² It would have been possible for Thoreau to have learned, at this point, that while the Maori population of New Zealand was still radically declining, its English population had reached:

1846	12,000
1848	17,000
1850	23,000
1852	26,000

and would by this year of **1854** have probably arrived at more than **30,000** white souls “had not an

2. Cholmondeley, Thomas. ULTIMA THULE; OR, | THOUGHTS | SUGGESTED BY | A RESIDENCE IN NEW ZEALAND | BY | THOMAS CHOLMONDELEY. | London: | John Chapman, 142, Strand. | MDCCCLIV. 8vo. Pp. iv, 344. ““A new country ought to produce new thoughts.’ Speculations and suggestions of a scholarly kind; an outcome of the novel conditions which surround a settler in a new country. The Constitution, Church, society, education, occupation, history, &c., of New Zealand all pass under able review. The author was one of the first Canterbury settlers.”

READ CHOLMONDELEY



overwhelming attraction,” the [Australia](#) of the great gold rush years, “drawn away numbers of settlers.”

The imagination of my own boyhood surrounded the tattooed natives with a halo of delightful mystery. Their warlike power was tremendous; their aspect ferocious; their cruelty unutterable: unfortunate white men seldom escaped, and then only half-roasted, from their horrid orgies; their priests were wizards, and they loved the flesh of the missionaries more than any other food. What principally struck Hongi, when in England, was the magnificence of King George, the multitude and splendour of his men-of-war, and the abundance of his swords and guns. He made up his mind that when he returned home he would become the King George of New Zealand; a determination which he afterwards carried out to the best of his power. A decidedly clever man he must have been. He managed to get supplies of muskets and ammunition by selling at Port Jackson the presents of his English friends. His warlike raids, in one of which he killed about 1500 of his enemies, were so judiciously carried on as never to derange the good understanding between him and the Church Missionary Society. Nor did the work of depopulation, which Hongi's ambition had accelerated, cease with the death of that great savage. The causes lay far deeper than the accident of individual ambition. The native ferocity of a savage race was as yet untamed when they found themselves suddenly in possession of a new and extraordinary means of destruction; suddenly exposed to overwhelming temptations, —perplexed by strange thoughts, without the safeguard of religion; suddenly enchanted by visions of wealth and power, without the check of knowledge and experience. The shadow of the white man, yet afar off, fell like a blight upon them. The evil eye from across the ocean hit them. For twenty years the work of extirpation went on. The north, where the mightiest warriors dwelt, preyed upon the south, which retaliated in its turn. Thousands perished. Thousands were carried away captives. In the whole of the Middle Island, which is larger than England, there are now not above 3000 Maories. In short, the intestine warfare of the native New Zealanders so thinned their numbers, and wore away their strength, that they became only a miserable wreck of former greatness. And thus it became comparatively easy for the Europeans, finding them weakened and divided, to gain a firm foothold among them, and ultimately to appropriate their broad lands.

Nevertheless, given the potential of the wool business, “If we rate the present number of white people at 30,000, as before stated, and account that they have more than doubled in the last eight years, we shall

be warranted in concluding that these 30,000 will have become at least 60,000 by the year 1864.”

The Maori population, now about 100,000, is yearly declining. Altogether, I should place the New Zealanders of 1864, white and dark faces together, at about 150,000. But this calculation is framed upon the supposition that the whites will continue to increase at a little less than the rate of the last few years, while very possibly they may increase much faster; in which case so also will their powers of production; and that the Maories will continue rapidly to decrease; possibly, however, the decay of that nation may yet be arrested. ...the Maories, as such, are disappearing. Those whom their own depopulating wars have left surviving, are dying very rapidly away. The number of the children is small; they do not replace their fathers. It is strange, on entering one of their villages, to see how all the finest specimens of humanity it contains are greatly past the flower of life. The young people look mean, squalid, and sickly; the children miserable in the extreme. Whether the decree is irrevocable; whether the finger of time can go back upon the dial, and the past can be so far recovered as to give this race yet a chance of prolonged existence, is a question which the experience of the next few years will enable us to answer.... Nothing can keep out white settlers, and wherever they come, the natives, as a fact, die away. So, in our woods and fields, even in England, we may observe that a new kind of tree or plant will elbow out another, which flourished before it was introduced. The antagonisms and antipathies of race and society, are but an extension of the phenomena of natural history.

Cholmondeley was much preoccupied by the prospects of the productive middle class of New Zealand, and had a number of general thoughts to offer on the productive middle classes of the various colonies and former colonies of England:

This middle class is all in all in a colony; everything moves to it, and everything depends upon it.... The United States is nothing else but an enormous, an overwhelming middle class, with a few proscribed gentlemen (a thousand, perhaps, who keep to themselves, too glad to be allowed to live), and millions of Negroes, and English, Irish, Scotch, Welsh, French, and German servants, to black their shoes, wheel their barrows, make bricks, &c. This, however, is unexampled prosperity. In the English colonies, generally, and in New Zealand in particular, the small business-capitalist is the man wanted. There are thousands of such men without openings in England.

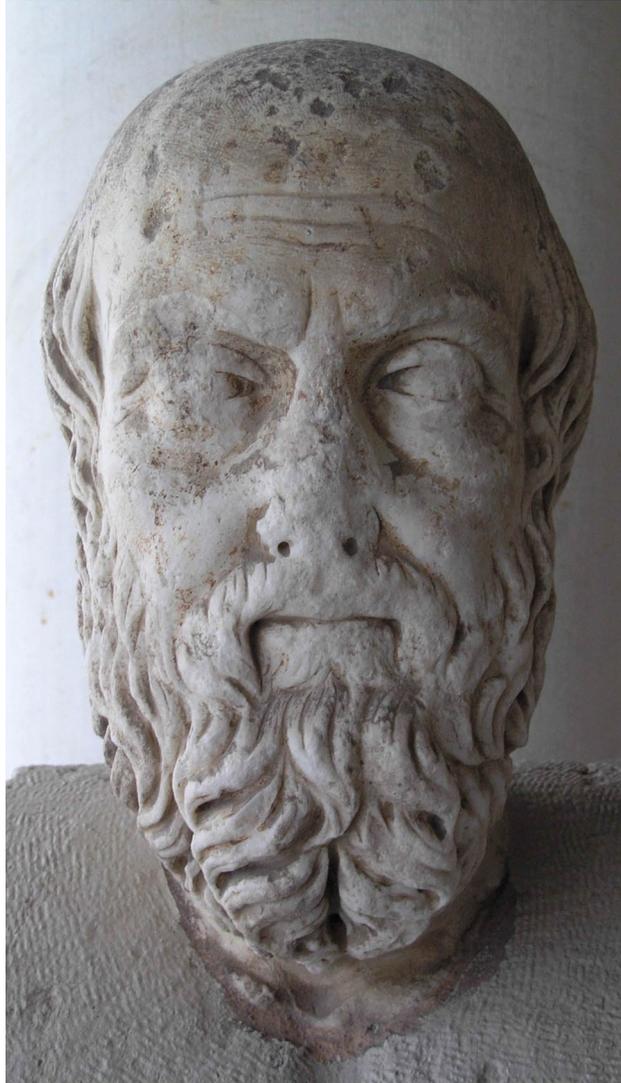
While in [Australia Richard Henry Horne](#) brought out there a new edition of his ORION. He supported himself as a Goldfields Commissioner at the Waranga goldrush and named the township of Rushworth. During his time there he also reached a peaceful settlement with over 4,000 gold miners who had rioted over the payment of their mining license fee and, in his memoirs, stated that he believed this action, in light of the events at the Eureka Stockade a few months later, was never adequately recognized. Instead he would be dismissed from the civil service for erratic behavior.

 **HERODOTUS**. A NEW AND LITERAL VERSION FROM THE TEXT OF BAEHR. WITH A GEOGRAPHICAL AND GENERAL INDEX. BY HENRY CARY, M.A., WORCESTER COLLEGE, OXFORD (London: Henry G. Bohn, York Street, Covent Garden. MDCCCLIV).

1854

1854

(In about 1861, [Henry Thoreau](#) would copy from this edition into his Indian Notebook #12, and into his Commonplace Book #2.)



THOREAU READS HERODOTUS

 At some point during this year [Emerson](#) noticed that [Thoreau](#) considered the gold rush immoral:

Thoreau thinks 'tis immoral to dig gold in California; immoral to leave creating value, & go to augmenting the representative of value, & so altering & diminishing real value, & that, of course, the fraud will appear. I conceive that work to be as innocent as any other speculating. Every man should do what he can; & he was created to augment some real value, & not for a speculator. When he leaves or postpones (as most men do) his proper work, & adopts some short or cunning method, as of watching markets, or farming in any manner the ignorance of people, as, in buying by the acre to sell by the foot, he is fraudulent, he is malefactor, so far; & is bringing society to bankruptcy. But nature watches over all this, too, & turns this malfaisance to some good. For, California gets peopled, subdued, civilised, in this fictitious way, & on this fiction a real prosperity is rooted & grown.



The recent [California](#) emigrant [John Rollin Ridge](#) (*Chee-squa-ta-law-ny*, “[Yellow Bird](#)”) produced a fiction entitled THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF [JOAQUIN MURIETA](#), THE CELEBRATED CALIFORNIA BANDIT. Of course there was no such person in California, actually, as this *bandito desesperado* Joaquin Murieta, but of course there were *banditos desesperados* aplenty in the territory to which Ridge had arrived in 1850, and this native author quite like his fictional character had been driven there by a white-man goldrush of sorts³ — except that in Ridge’s real case as a native American, the “goldrush” in question had been the State-of-Georgia-sponsored rush of white citizens into the hilly [Cherokee](#) homelands. In the fiction in question, events have a catastrophic impact upon “Joaquin Murieta” and the author expresses this in a distinctively Emersonian spatial metaphor:

His soul swelled beyond its former boundaries, and the barriers of honor, rocked into atoms by the strong passion which shook his heart like an earthquake, crumbled around him. Then it was he declared ... [that] he would live henceforth for revenge and that his path should be marked with blood.

Because this book did not sell well, Ridge would need to write for the Sacramento [Bee](#) and the San Francisco [Herald](#). While editing the [Bee](#) he would advise his Indian relatives to trust in the federal government to protect their rights (he didn’t have any advice for the California natives, who in his view were an inferior people).

So, now, here below, I will supply you with the extrapolation which has been made upon this theme recently by a scholar named John Lowe in “‘I am Joaquin!’ Space and Freedom in [Yellow Bird](#)’s THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF JOAQUIN MURIETA, THE CELEBRATED CALIFORNIA BANDIT,” which is to be found as pages 104-21 in Helen Jaskoski’s EARLY NATIVE AMERICAN WRITING: NEW CRITICAL ESSAYS (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996):

Joaquin’s circle of self, thwarted in its effort to grow via the traditional American way (hard work, enterprise, and democratic leadership), has burst through into a new and larger circle through the passion of anger. His vow to cut a “bloody path”

3. A gold nugget weighing in at a full 162 pounds was discovered in the diggings in this year. This real event would have made a better story, of course, if for instance the guy who discovered it had weighed less than it did — but he didn’t.

through the state as he avenges the wrongs done to him and his family presages ever-widening circles of spatial/criminal conquest. His path echoes several principles set down in the 1840s  by [Ralph Waldo Emerson](#) in his seminal essay "[CIRCLES](#)". In one of literary [Transcendentalism](#)'s prime expressions, Emerson gives space and confinement elemental circular forms, first in the human eye and then, significantly, in nature, for the "horizon" formed by the eyes is the second circle man knows, a "primary figure" that is repeated "without end" in nature. Here and in his other essays, Emerson maps out an imperial self that properly seeks expansion and power, a process generated from and paralleled by nature itself. The concept of the self expressed by ever-expanding concentric circles has a demonic side as well; at one point in "Circles," Emerson relates his expanding circles of self to explosive anger, the kind Ridge's readers see expressed by [Joaquin Murieta](#): "But the heart refuses to be imprisoned; in its first and narrowest pulses it already tends outward with a vast force and to immense and innumerable expansions." Theories of "self-reliance" and the "imperial self" fed into the ideology of manifest destiny. These ideas would find magnificent expression in other key works of the period, particularly in [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#)'s exploration of the "magic circles" of the self in [THE SCARLET LETTER](#) (1850 ) and in [Herman Melville](#)'s critique of unleashed darker elements of Emersonian and capitalist ideology, [MOBY-DICK](#) (1851 ) , books published only a few years before JOAQUIN. Although it is beyond the scope of this essay, THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF JOAQUIN MURIETA, THE CELEBRATED CALIFORNIA BANDIT surely demands to be studied alongside these books and other masterworks of what we have called the "American Renaissance," as well as with the works of newer members of the canon such as [Frederick Douglass](#), [Harriet Beecher Stowe](#), and [Harriet Jacobs](#).

GENERAL EVENTS OF 1854

 In Toronto, Canada, following the ministry of the [Reverend William Adam](#), who had been a Scottish missionary to [India](#), the [Reverend Charles Henry Appleton Dall](#) had done quite well for several years — until coming into disagreement with the founder of the congregation, Joseph Workman, in regard to the financing of a new church building. Again he took to his bed in illness, and resigned.

The Emerson family of Staten Island relocated to [Manhattan Island](#), renting living quarters from a cousin who had property at 33 East 14th Street. There are few resources shedding light on the early life of [Charles Emerson](#) prior to his years at Columbia College and then Harvard College. A letter from Charles's uncle [Ralph Waldo Emerson](#) addressed to his father [Judge William Emerson](#) shows the affection between the families. In a letter [Waldo](#) wrote to his brother [William](#) about the gifts he sent for New Year's, which included several items for the writing table of young son [Charles](#). Once at Harvard College, [Charles](#) would visit his uncle [Waldo](#) and his family out in [Concord](#).

Dr. John Snow, who had in 1849 investigated the Broad Street pump on [Manhattan Island](#) and suggested that

1854

1854

[cholera](#) was being spread by way of contamination of the public water supply, was still having problems



getting his theory accepted in the medical community, as the disease centered in the [India](#) of the East India Company and as the forces there of colonialist denial were firmly in the saddle. The Indian Medical Service was still engaging in its usual blaming of the victims, alleging that cholera actually was afflicting only those who were anyway predisposed to such [infections](#), and so in this year the elder Dr. Snow charged that:

The alleged predisposition was nothing visible or evident: like the elephant which supports the world, according to Hindoo mythology, it was merely invented to remove a difficulty.

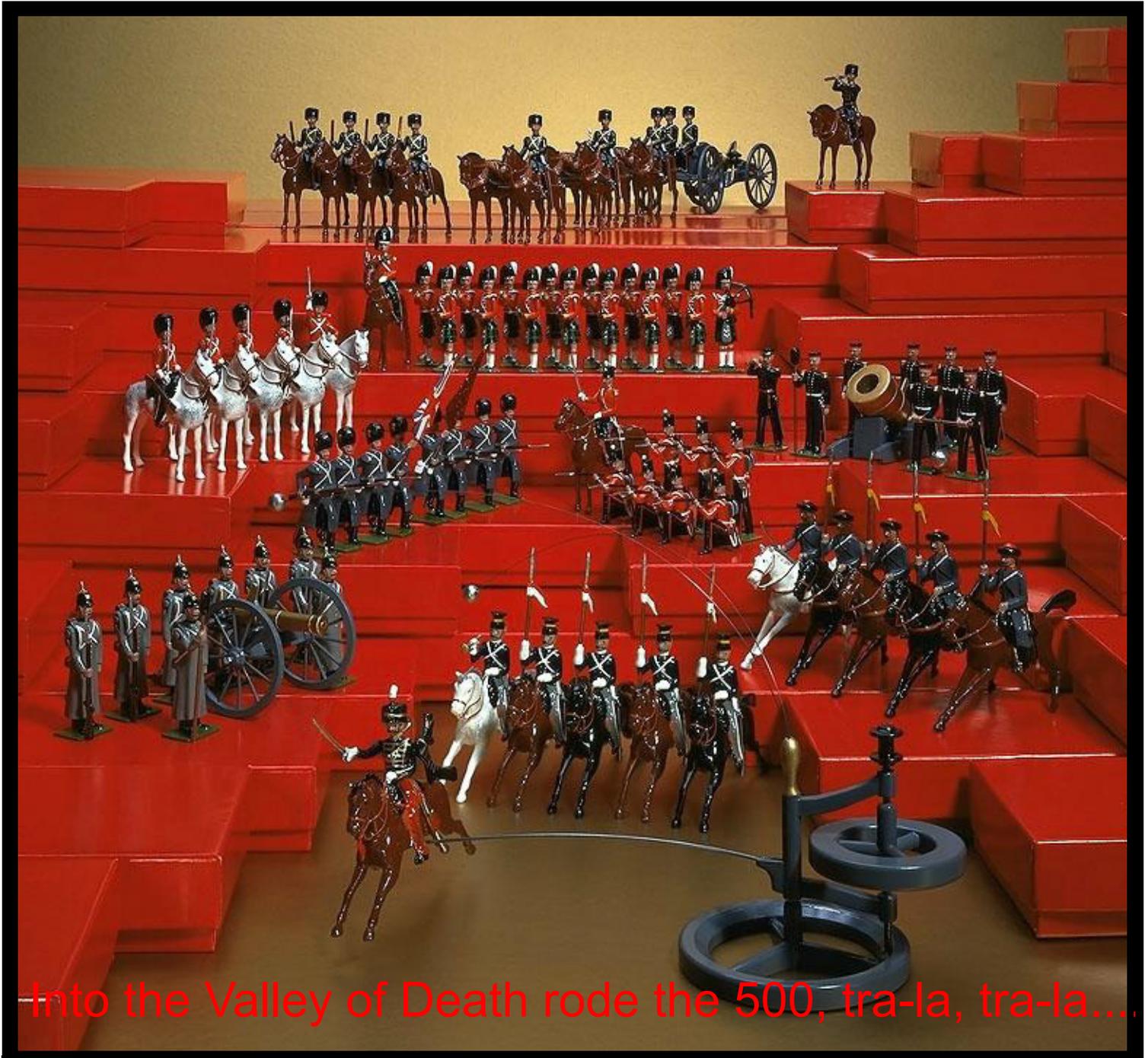


The [Crimean War](#) expanded, as Britain and France allied themselves with Turkey and declared war on [Russia](#) on March 28th. The city of Sevastopol was placed under siege. [Florence Nightingale](#) was given permission to take a group of 38 nurses to Scutari to look after the wounded Brits. She would find appalling conditions in the army hospital. The men, unwashed, were still wearing army costumes “stiff with dirt and gore.” There were

1854

1854

no blankets and there was no decent food. With such conditions at the army hospitals, only one death in six was being caused by the wounds themselves. Diseases such as [cholera](#), [typhoid fever](#), and dysentery were the primary causes of the high death-rate. Nightingale overcame the opposition of the brass by using her contacts at [The Times of London](#) to inform the British public of how the Army treated its victims. Given the task of organizing the barracks hospital after the battle of Inkerman, she improved the [sanitation](#) and dramatically reduced the death-rate.



Into the Valley of Death rode the 500, tra-la, tra-la...

In the Crimea, a [typhoid fever](#) epidemic spread from the Russian army to the French and the British. It spread

1854

1854

throughout Russia and Turkey thanks to merchant ships. [Florence Nightingale](#) took nearly three dozen nurses from London to Scutari, and tried to use sanitary measures to block the spread of the disease. Still, disease would claim many more lives in the [Crimean War](#) than the battles.

IT IS NO COINCIDENCE THAT IT IS MORTALS WHO CONSUME OUR HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS, FOR WHAT WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO DO IS EVADE THE RESTRICTIONS OF THE HUMAN LIFESPAN. (IMMORTALS, WITH NOTHING TO LIVE FOR, TAKE NO HEED OF OUR STORIES.)



Francis William Edmond's "Taking the Census" depicted a scene from the national census of 1850, which had initiated the requirement that a head of household provide accurate information on each of his dependents.



1854

"Stack of the Artist of Kouroo" Project



1854

1854



[Stephen Collins Foster](#) reminisced at his house in Hoboken, New Jersey about his estranged spouse [Jane Denny McDowell Foster Wiley](#) (December 10, 1829-January 17, 1903, married July 22, 1850, gave birth to their only child, Marion, on April 18, 1851, after the marital separation supported herself as a telegraph operator) and created “[Jeannie with the Light Brown Hair](#).”

I dream of Jeanie with the light brown hair,
Borne, like a vapor, on the summer air;
I see her tripping where the bright streams play,
Happy as the daisies that dance on her way.
Many were the wild notes her merry voice would pour.
Many were the blithe birds that warbled them o'er:
Oh! I dream of Jeanie with the light brown hair,
Floating, like a vapor, on the soft summer air.

I long for Jeanie with the daydawn smile,
Radiant in gladness, warm with winning guile;
I hear her melodies, like joys gone by,
Sighing round my heart o'er the fond hopes that die:—
Sighing like the night wind and sobbing like the rain,—
Wailing for the lost one that comes not again:
Oh! I long for Jeanie, and my heart bows low,
Never more to find her where the bright waters flow.

I sigh for Jeanie, but her light form strayed
Far from the fond hearts round her native glade;
Her smiles have vanished and her sweet songs flown,
Flitting like the dreams that have cheered us and gone.
Now the nodding wild flowers may wither on the shore
While her gentle fingers will cull them no more:
Oh! I sigh for Jeanie with the light brown hair,
Floating, like a vapor, on the soft summer air.

1854

1854



In this year there were 4 shipwrecks near [Van Diemen's Land](#) (what would soon be renamed "Tasmania"): the *Alert*, a schooner, ran aground in the Arthur River during a violent storm, without loss of life (the remains of this vessel would in 2005 be exposed by a storm), the *Lioness*, a schooner, was lost at Clarke Island on the Furneaux Group, with 4 lives, the *Brahmin*, a full-rigged ship, was lost off King Island, with the loss of 16 lives, and the *Dolphin*, a cutter, was wrecked in Louisa Bay, with 11 lives lost.

Severe floods and fires ravaged [Van Diemen's Land](#).

The surviving [Van Diemen's Land](#) aboriginals of pure blood were 3 men, 11 women, and 2 children.

Native Tasmanians

1802	5,000±
1830	300
1847	47
1854	16
1876	0



FIGURING OUT WHAT AMOUNTS TO A “HISTORICAL CONTEXT” IS WHAT THE CRAFT OF HISTORICIZING AMOUNTS TO, AND THIS NECESSITATES DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN THE SET OF EVENTS THAT MUST HAVE TAKEN PLACE BEFORE EVENT E COULD BECOME POSSIBLE, AND MOST CAREFULLY DISTINGUISHING THEM FROM ANOTHER SET OF EVENTS THAT COULD NOT POSSIBLY OCCUR UNTIL SUBSEQUENT TO EVENT E.

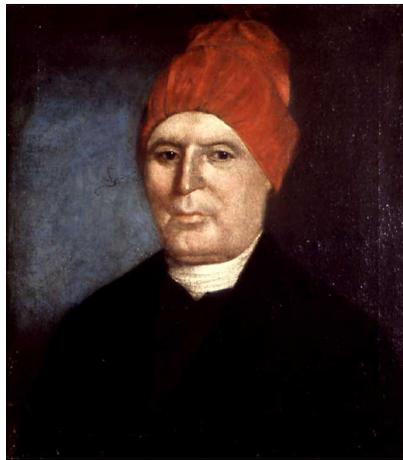
➡ [The Times](#) of [London](#)'s annual summary:

THE TIMES

READ ABOUT THE YEAR

- In [London](#), a re-erected Crystal Palace was opened at Sydenham.
- In [London](#), the Working Men's College was established in Red Lion Square.
- In [London](#), the Royal Panopticon of Science and Art opened in Leicester Square.
- In [London](#), the opening of the Great Northern Hotel at King's Cross.
- In [London](#), the opening of Paddington Station, and the Great Western Hotel.

➡ Separate publication of the Reverend [Samuel Hopkins](#)'s TREATISE ON THE [MILLENNIUM](#), which had originally appeared in his THE SYSTEM OF DOCTRINES CONTAINED IN DIVINE REVELATION of 1793 and in which he had deduced from prophecies in the books of DANIEL and REVELATION that the millennium would come not far from the end of the 20th Century.



[Harriet Beecher Stowe](#)'s THE MINISTER'S WOOING, in which the lead character was modeled on the Reverend [Samuel Hopkins](#) of the 1st Congregational Church at [Newport, Rhode Island](#) (who had died in 1803).

As her response to the [Kansas/Nebraska Act](#), Mrs. Stowe urged the women of America to hire lecturers, to circulate copies of speeches and petitions, and to pray. This was published as "An Appeal to the Women of America" in the [Independent](#). A petition she was circulating achieved a total of 3,050 signatures, each of these 3,050 signatures not by a mere female-type woman but by a Man Of The Cloth, a minister — and this was duly presented to the Senate of the United States.

1854

1854

➡ Since her relationship with her 49-year-old little sister [Angelina Emily Grimké Weld](#) was not improving, big sister [Sarah Moore Grimké](#) move out of the household at Belleville, New Jersey. Then, however, [Theodore Dwight Weld](#) and Angelina and Sarah—all three—decided to join the Raritan Bay Union of Perth Amboy, [New Jersey](#) and start an “[Eagleswood School](#)” there with Weld as headmaster. (When the Union would fail in 1856, the School would continue with Angelina and Sarah still as teachers. Eventually, during the Civil War, it would forsake its Quaker roots and be transformed into a military academy.)

Since Miss [Caroline Cushing Andrews](#) began to teach in the schools of Perth Amboy, New Jersey in this year, presumably while living at the Eagleswood settlement since she was an abolitionist, perhaps it was at this “Eagleswood School” that she was teaching? —I don’t know.

➡ : The Graduation Act of this year made female citizens eligible to be homesteaders “in their own right.” (White female citizens, that is.)

A sort of “war” between Cleveland and Ohio City was settled through the annexation of the latter.

➡ A 2d edition of [Charles Kraitsir, M.D.](#)’s 1852 GLOSSOLOGY: BEING A TREATISE ON THE NATURE OF LANGUAGE AND ON THE LANGUAGE OF NATURE (New-York: Charles B. Norton).

GLOSSOLOGY: A TREATISE

➡ During this year and the following one [John Henry Kagi](#) would be teaching school at Hawkinstown, Virginia — until his pupils would be led to suspect that their teacher had some sort of trepidation as to the system of [race slavery](#) prevalent in that area — upon which their teacher would be compelled to return to Ohio under a pledge never to return to Virginia.



Shame on him! He didn’t believe in human slavery!

1854

1854



"It is simply crazy that there should ever have come into being a world with such a sin in it, in which a man is set apart because of his color – the superficial fact about a human being. Who could **want** such a world? For an American fighting for his love of country, that the last hope of earth should from its beginning have swallowed slavery, is an irony so withering, a justice so intimate in its rebuke of pride, as to measure only with God."



– Stanley Cavell, MUST WE MEAN WHAT WE SAY?
1976, page 141



Emma Hart Willard's ASTRONOGRAPHY; OR ASTRONOMICAL GEOGRAPHY: WITH THE USE OF THE GLOBES: ARRANGED EITHER FOR SIMULTANEOUS READING AND STUDY IN CLASSES, OR FOR STUDY IN THE COMMON METHOD.

ASTRONOGRAPHY

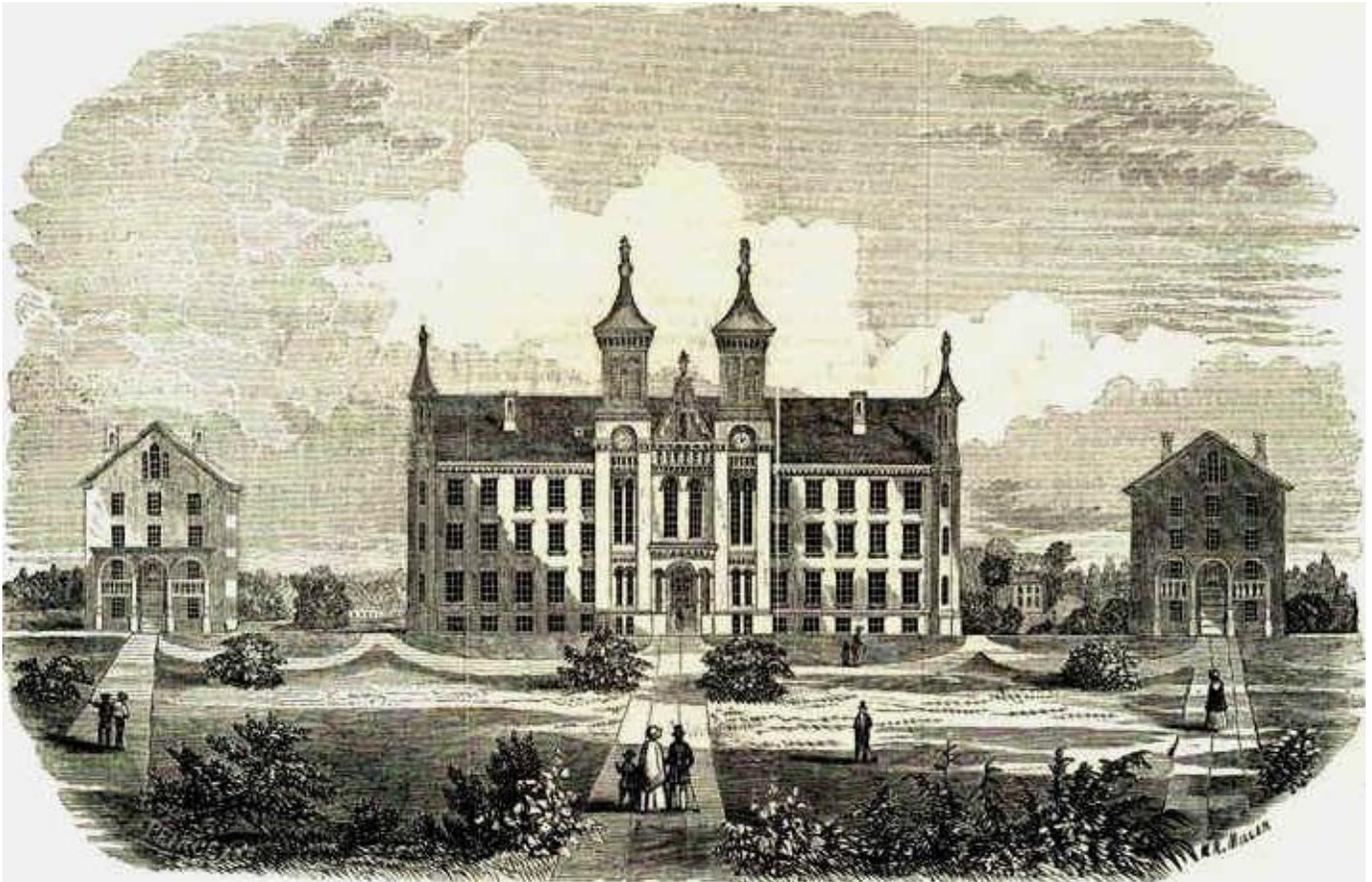
1854

1854

 Having studied law under an anti-slavery judge in Elyria, Ohio, [John Mercer Langston](#) became the 1st black lawyer in the United States. After leaving [Oberlin](#) and going to Virginia in 1871, he would make himself the 1st black American admitted to practice law before the US Supreme Court.



This was Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio in 1854:



 [John Albee](#) graduated from Phillips Academy in Andover. He would go on to [Harvard Divinity School](#) in Cambridge.

1854

1854

➡ While working on *Die Walküre*, [Richard Wagner](#) plowed through [Arthur Schopenhauer](#)'s WORLD AS WILL AND IDEA a total of 4 times. He sent along a copy of THE RING OF THE NIBELUNG inscribed "in veneration and gratitude," which presumably looked real nice on the philosopher's coffee-table in his living-room. He fell in love with [Mathilde Wesendonck](#) (since her husband [Otto Wesendonck](#) had saved him from having to pay his bills, one might suppose it would have been more seemly for him to have fallen in love with the husband, but I guess that's not the way this sort of thing works).

➡ [Joseph-Héliodore-Sagesse-Vertu Garcin de Tassy](#)'s *MÉMOIRE SUR LES NOMS PROPRES ET LES TITRES MUSULMANS*. His *TABLEAU DU KALI YUG OU DE L'ÂGE DE FER, PAR WISCHNU-DÂS*. His *LES FEMMES POÈTES DANS L'INDE*. His *CHANTS POPULAIRES DE L'INDE*.



➡ DIARY AND CORRESPONDENCE OF [JOHN EVELYN](#), F.R.S., AUTHOR OF THE "SYLVA": TO WHICH IS SUBJOINED THE PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN KING CHARLES I. AND SIR EDWARD NICHOLAS, AND BETWEEN SIR EDWARD HYDE, AFTERWARDS EARL OF CLARENDON, AND SIR RICHARD BROWNE. EDITED FROM THE ORIGINAL MSS. AT WOTTEN BY WILLIAM BRAY (London: Published for Henry Colburn, by his successors, Hurst & Blackett, Great Marlborough Street).



- JOHN EVELYN, VOLUME I**
- JOHN EVELYN, VOLUME II**
- JOHN EVELYN, VOLUME III**
- JOHN EVELYN, VOLUME IV**

➡ [New-York](#)'s slaughterhouses processed 1,058,690 animals during this year.

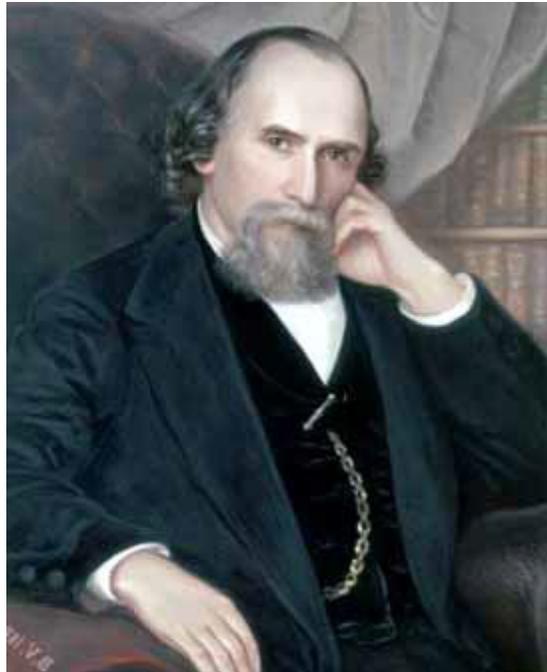
Some longhorns were herded all the way from [Texas](#) to a slaughterhouse in [New-York](#). To keep the scrotums of the males from chafing during such a long trek, their testicles would have been shoved up into their bodies and the empty sack cut off.⁴ It turned out that the long period of extreme exercise had made the resulting meat altogether too tough and too stringy. —Would a better way be found to provide meat for the citizens of America's burgeoning cities?

4. This do-unto-others procedure would be known as "goodnighting" after the ranchman who developed it, a Mr. Goodnight. Betcha you's not been contemplating this sort of thingie while watching black-and-white cowboy movies on late-night TV!

1854

1854

 [GRAINS DE MIL](#). *GRAINS DE MIL, POÉSIES ET PENSÉES PAR HENRI-FRÉDÉRIC AMIEL*. Sponsored by the democratic party (in opposition to the aristocracy), Professor Amiel was made Professor of Moral Philosophy at the academy of Genève.



 [Ticknor, Reed, and Fields](#) of [Boston](#) became [Ticknor & Fields](#).



1832-1834	Allen & Ticknor
1834-1843	William D. Ticknor
1843-1849	William D. Ticknor & Co.
1849-1854	Ticknor, Reed & Fields
1854-1868	Ticknor and Fields
1868-1871	Fields, Osgood & Co.
1871-1878	James R. Osgood & Co.
1878-1880	Houghton, Osgood, & Co.
1880-1908	Houghton, Mifflin, & Co.
1908-2007	Houghton Mifflin Company
2007-????	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

1854

1854

➡ At the end of the journal entries for this year, [Waldo Emerson](#) listed his recent readings in Oriental materials: “Plotinus; Dionysius of Alexandria; Porphyry; Iamblichus; Synesius; Proclus; Sidonius; Bhagavat Geeta; Vyasa; Saadi, Gulistan; Hafiz.”

➡ In Palestine, The [Reverend Dr. Johann Ludwig Krapf](#) met Bishop Gobat. He prepared a VOCABULARY OF THE *ENGÚTUK ELOIKOB*, OR OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE *WAKUAFI*-NATION IN THE INTERIOR OF EQUATORIAL AFRICA, and *SALLA SA SUBUCI NA JIONI SASALLIWASO KATIKA KIRIAKI JA KIENGESE SIKU SOTHE SA MUAKA. I.E.:* MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS SAID IN THE ENGLISH CHURCH DAILY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. TRANSLATED INTO *KISUAHILI* BY THE REV^D DR. L. KRAPF. He challenged the Church Missionary Society to make the grave of his wife and infant daughter, near Mombasa, the starting point for the Christian conversion of East Africa.

When a colony of manumitted Maryland slaves, holding the African coastline between the Grand Cess River and the San Pedro River, declared its independence from the Maryland State Colonization Society, it elected not to become part of the Republic of [Liberia](#).

➡ The [Reverend William Ingraham Kip](#)'s THE CATACOMBS OF ROME AS ILLUSTRATING *THE CHURCH* OF THE FIRST THREE CENTURIES (Redfield: 110 and 112 Nassau Street, New York).

THE CATACOMBS OF ROME

➡ [Gregor Mendel](#) received a teaching appointment at the *Oberrealschule* in Brno, where he would successfully teach natural history and physics for the following 16 years. He published his 2d paper, which concerned the beetle *Bruchus pisi*, on crop damage.

[Professor Sir William Jackson Hooker](#)'s A CENTURY OF FERNS.

THE PRINCIPLES OF [BOTANY](#), AS EXEMPLIFIED IN THE PHANEROGAMIA; BY [HARLAND COULTAS](#), PROFESSOR OF GENERAL AND MEDICAL BOTANY IN THE PENN MEDICAL UNIVERSITY OF PHILADELPHIA (Philadelphia: King & Baird, Printers, No. 9 Sansom Street).

➡ Selling his estate “Woodlee,” [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) purchased “Brooklawn,” 3 miles from the center of [New Bedford](#), the estate on which he would build himself a somewhat larger 12X14 board-and-batten unplastered shanty.

HDT

WHAT?

INDEX

1854

1854

 THE MYRTLE WREATH, OR STRAY LEAVES RECALLED. By *Minnie Myrtle* (New York: Charles Scribner, 145 Nassau St.).



YANKEE COURTSHIP.

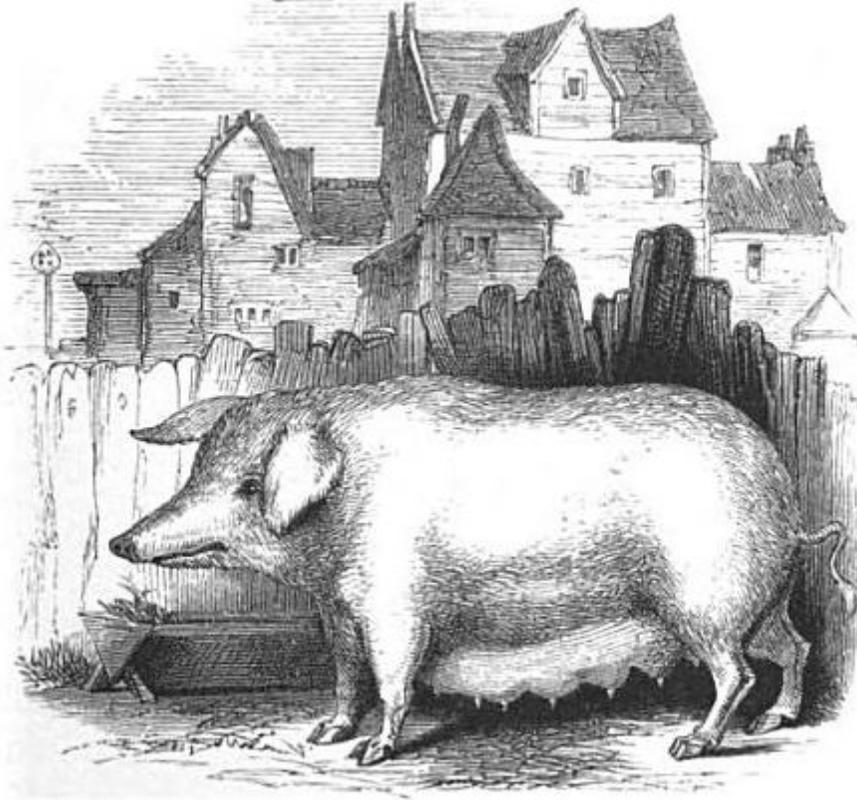
THE MYRTLE WREATH

1854

1854

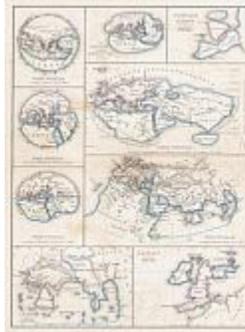
➡ [Edward Jesse](#)'s edition of [THE NATURAL HISTORY OF SELBORNE](#); WITH OBSERVATIONS ON VARIOUS PARTS OF NATURE AND THE NATURALISTS CALENDAR / BY THE LATE REV. [GILBERT WHITE](#); WITH ADDITIONS AND SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES BY SIR WILLIAM JARDINE ... WITH FORTY ENGRAVINGS (London: Henry G. Bohn, York Street, Covent Garden), contained a new biography of the reverend.⁵

REVEREND GILBERT WHITE



THE COMMON OR DOMESTIC HOG. (*Sus scrofa*.)

➡ [Professor George Long](#) edited an ATLAS OF CLASSICAL GEOGRAPHY.

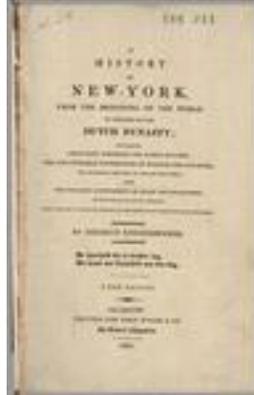


5. The Reverend White's NATURAL HISTORY OF SELBORNE is only the 4th most reprinted book in the English language.

1854

1854

 A new edition of [Washington Irving](#)'s A HISTORY OF [NEW YORK](#), BY "DIEDRICH KNICKERBOCKER."



Poughkeepsie was incorporated as a city.

A steam railroad connected Rochester with Charlotte. The New York Central railroad opened from Rochester to Syracuse. A spur ran to Charlotte.

The final volume of the report of the [New York](#) State Agricultural Department was published.

Henry Larcom Abbot graduated 2d in his class at West Point and was posted to the Topographical Engineers.

Lewiston's Dickersonville Cemetery Association was incorporated.

The [New York](#) State Inebriate Asylum in Binghamton was incorporated, with a 50-year charter.

The US government placed lifeboats on Lake Ontario at the mouth of the Genesee and Niagara rivers, Oswego, Salmon River, Sandy Creek, Sodus, and Tibbetts Point.

 The [Erie Canal](#) was enlarged. A plan was devised to supply water for the [Genesee Valley Canal](#) summit level. The canal reached its peak capacity of 158,942 tons. This year and next the [Chenango Canal](#) carried 14% of all the coal carried on the state's canals.

 [Samuel H. Hammond](#)'s HILLS, LAKES AND FOREST STREAMS: OR, A TRAMP IN THE CHATEAUGAY WOODS (New York: J.C. Derby).



"For myself I prefer the quiet of the country, a ramble along the rivers and brooks, or better still, some wild forest dell, where the birds are merry all the day, and where no unseemly

1854

1854

revelry breaks the stillness of night.”

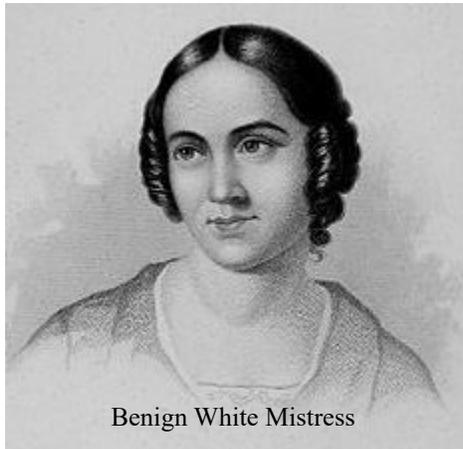
➡ [Isaac-Farwell Holton](#) became a lecturer in Chemistry and Natural History in the College of New Jersey.

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

➡ [Professor Robert Hunt](#) was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society.



➡ [Mrs. Caroline Lee Hentz](#)'s THE PLANTER'S NORTHERN BRIDE (Philadelphia: T.D. Peterson). The gist of this was that the author, although a personal friend of the misled [Harriet Beecher Stowe](#), had quite a bit more life experience in regard to human slavery. What a crock was her UNCLE TOM'S CABIN! Actual southern white masters *cared* for their black slaves and *watched over* them and *provided for* them. Northern white abolitionists were selfrighteous busybodies and were motivated by a desire for personal gain rather than a desire to benefit humankind. Besides, it would be manifestly wrong to encourage the terror of a slave uprising, and besides, in the “free” North there's a crying need for cheap labor, so there!



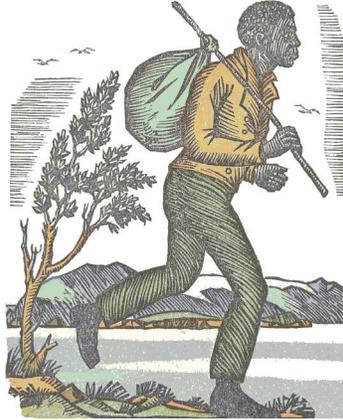
Benign White Mistress

... the negroes of the south are the happiest *labouring*

class on the face of the globe.

[Frederick Law Olmsted](#) would write of encountering an escaped US slave during his travels through [Mexico](#). Much to the surprise of white Americans, former slaves were holding their own in their new communities south of the border.

[Bronson Alcott](#) was so perturbed about the capture and return of “fugitive slaves” to the slaveholders of the South that, for the 1st time in his life, he abandoned his posture of complete noncooperation with government, and went to the polls and voted.



 [Heinrich Heine](#)'s *LUTEZIA* and *VERMISCHTE SCHRIFTEN* (VARIOUS WRITINGS).

 [Alexander William Doniphan](#) served a 3d time in the Missouri legislature, as a member of the Whig party.

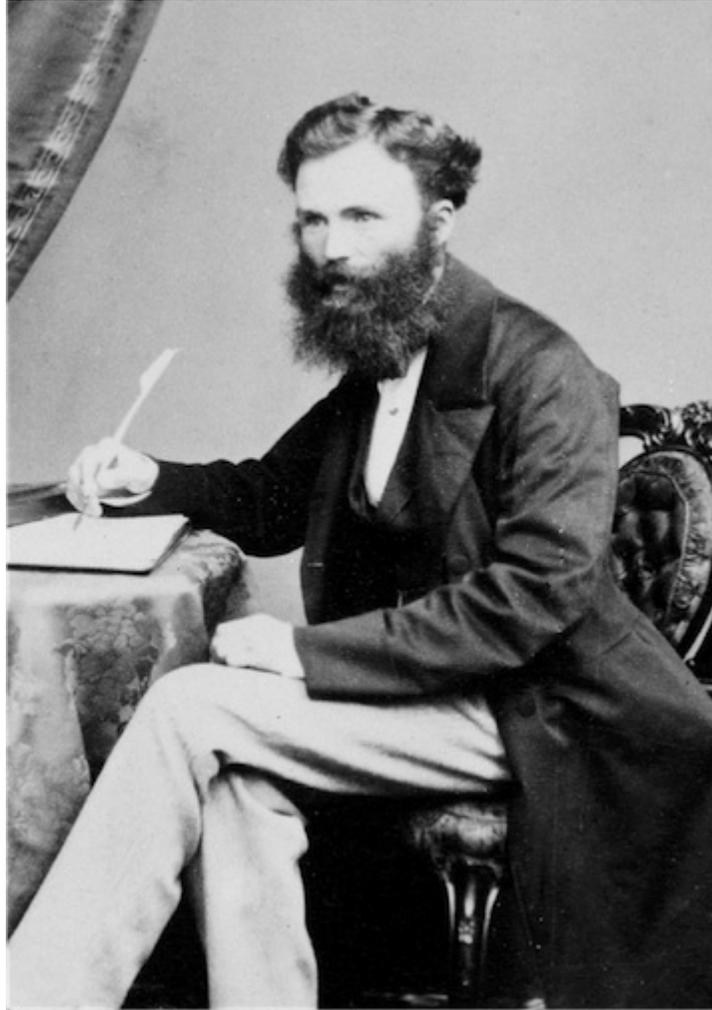
1854

1854



The [Reverend George Gilfillan](#)'s THIRD GALLERY OF LITERARY PORTRAITS (Edinburgh: Hogg).

Completing a year's service as resident physician of the City Cholera Hospital, Edinburgh, [Dr. William Lauder Lindsay](#) became an assistant physician in the Crichton Royal Institution, Dumfries and was then appointed medical officer to Murray's Royal Institution for the Insane at Perth, [Australia](#).



SCOTLAND



Sylvestre de Sacy and Cardinal Dupanloup were elected to the *Académie française*.

[Professor François Pierre Guillaume Guizot](#)'s 2-volume *HISTOIRE DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE D'ANGLETERRE ET DE CROMWELL*.



The Reverend [Alexander Dyce](#) contributed biographies of [William Shakespeare](#), Alexander Pope, Akenside, and Beattie to the series PICKERING'S ALDINE POETS.

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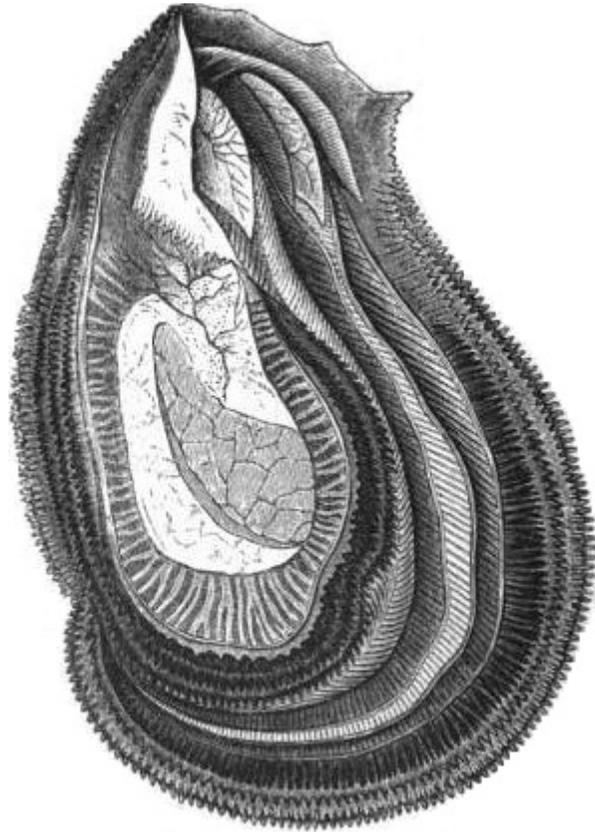
WHAT?

INDEX

1854

1854

 [Philip Henry Gosse's NATURAL HISTORY. MOLLUSCA.](#)



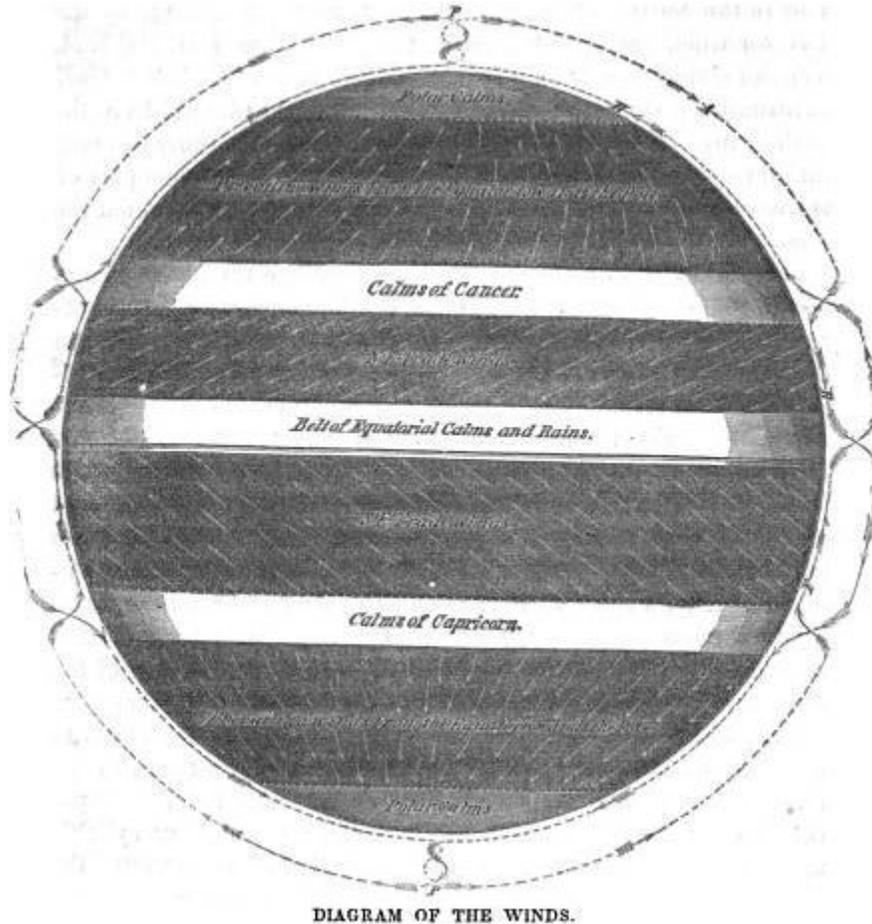
ANIMAL OF THE OYSTER.

NAT. HIST. — MOLLUSCA

1854

1854

→ [Lt. Matthew Fontaine Maury](#)'s *PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY OF THE SEA*, the 1st extensive and comprehensive book on oceanography.



→ [Charles Frédéric Girard](#) was naturalized as a citizen of the United States of America. His 4-page article announcement about fish appeared in the *PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOSTON SOCIETY OF NATURAL HISTORY*.

BSNH 1854, PAGES 39-42

→ Massachusetts senator [Winthrop Emerson Faulkner](#), not yet sufficiently self-important, was initiated into the Corinthian Lodge of [Freemasons](#) at [Concord](#), Massachusetts (this was an easy pick, for his daddy had been among the original petitioners for the group's charter).

By this point the [pencil](#) business was no longer working out for Francis Munroe, so he contracted with others for his stock in the company and relocated to Manchester, Vermont, where he would die in 1870.

According to an anonymous undated *ms* in the [Alfred Winslow Hosmer](#) Collection at the Concord Free Public Library:

The story that Thoreau made one pencil and then stopped takes on quite a different aspect in the light [of] investigation into the history of the business. As Henry and his father brought the

1854

1854

lead used for the pencils to a high degree of perfection, it was wanted by a firm in Boston for the stereotype business, and selling it for that purpose was so much more profitable than making pencils that the latter was carried on only as a cover for the other, which it was desirable to keep secret. To keep it a secret, the lead was carried from the mill to the house, and then shipped to Boston from there.

➡ [George Field](#) died. Subsequent to the studies and theories of Maxwell and Helmholtz, none of his proposals in regard to the relationship between color vibrations and sound vibrations have been remembered — they were such false starts, such dead ends, that they are not even taught as part of the history of science.

➡ [George Sand](#)'s *HISTOIRE DE MA VIE* (Paris: Victor Lecou, Éditeur, Rue du Bouloi, 10).

Belatedly the grave of [Thomas Hood](#) and Jane Hood in Kensal Green was graced with a stone, inscribed HE SANG THE SONG OF THE SHIRT (the stone neglects to mention any song that might have been sung by the wife).

A bronze statue of [Ebenezer Elliott](#) by Neville Northey Burnard, paid for by the people of Sheffield and Rotherham, was erected in Sheffield marketplace at a cost of £600.



1854

1854

➡ A specimen of *Elliottia racemosa* Muhlenberg ex Elliott, or “Georgia plume,” named in honor of the botanist Stephen Elliott but feared to have been lost because it can be propagated by cuttings but not by seed, was recovered near Hamburg, South Carolina.



➡ Thomas De Quincey moved into town, taking lodgings at 42 Lothian Street in Edinburgh. His “Postscript” to “On Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts” appeared in Volume 4 of SELECTIONS GRAVE AND GAY. His friend Professor John Wilson, emeritus of Edinburgh University, died.

In Boston, De Quincey’s THEOLOGICAL ESSAYS AND OTHER PAPERS and the two volumes of his ESSAYS ON PHILOSOPHICAL WRITERS, AND OTHER MEN OF LETTERS came off the presses of Ticknor, Reed, and Fields and wound up in the Concord Town Library, where Henry Thoreau would copy from “The Toilette of the Hebrew Lady” into his Indian Notebook #9 and from “Analects from Richter” into his Commonplace Book #2.

- THEOLOGICAL ESSAYS I
- THEOLOGICAL ESSAYS II
- PHILOSOPHICAL WRITERS I
- PHILOSOPHICAL WRITERS II

➡ Rector George Croly’s most enduring hymn:

Spirit of God, descend upon my heart;
Wean it from earth; through all its pulses move;

Stoop to my weakness, mighty as Thou art;
And make me love Thee as I ought to love.

I ask no dream, no prophet ecstasies,
No sudden rending of the veil of clay,
No angel visitant, no opening skies;
But take the dimness of my soul away.

Teach me to feel that Thou art always nigh;
Teach me the struggles of the soul to bear.
To check the rising doubt, the rebel sigh,
Teach me the patience of unanswered prayer.

Hast Thou not bid me love Thee, God and King?
All, all Thine own, soul, heart and strength and mind.
I see Thy cross; there teach my heart to cling:
O let me seek Thee, and O let me find!

Teach me to love Thee as Thine angels love,
One holy passion filling all my frame;
The kindling of the heaven descended Dove,
My heart an altar, and Thy love the flame.

 [Doctor Walter Channing](#) resigned from the [Harvard College](#) medical faculty.



 A Boston printing of the 3d edition of [Samuel Bailey](#)'s ESSAYS ON THE FORMATION AND PUBLICATION OF OPINIONS.

 George Gilfillan (ed.): THE POETICAL WORKS OF GOLDSMITH, [COLLINS](#), AND T. WARTON, in LIBRARY EDITION OF THE BRITISH POETS.

 [William Carpenter](#) became the editor of the [Sunday Times](#) and the [Bedfordshire Independent](#).

 [Elihu Burritt](#)'s THOUGHTS AND THINGS AT HOME AND ABROAD. WITH A MEMOIR BY MARY HOWITT (Boston: Phillips, Sampson, and Co.; New York: J.C. Derby). He merged his abolitionist newspaper with a [Quaker](#) periodical promoting a boycott of slavery-produced goods, the [Nonslaveholder](#). This boycott would never sustain itself and by 1856 the enterprise would need to be abandoned.



1854

1854

 [L. Maria Child](#) completed her 3-volume *magnum opus*, THE PROGRESS OF RELIGIOUS IDEAS THROUGH SUCCESSIVE AGES. She intended these volumes to remove “the superstitious rubbish from the sublime morality of Christ” and to provide respectful attention to other world religions. (Despite the immense labor of her research and despite positive reviews this work would not sell well, and the Reverend Thomas Wentworth Higginson would attempt to explain what the problem was: it was “too learned for a popular book and too popular for a learned one.”)

- [PROGRESS OF IDEAS, I](#)
- [PROGRESS OF IDEAS, II](#)
- [PROGRESS OF IDEAS, III](#)

 [Christian C.J. Bunsen](#)'s [CHRISTIANITY](#) AND MANKIND, THEIR BEGINNINGS AND PROSPECTS (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans).⁶

- [VOLUME I, HIPPOLYTUS](#)
- [VOLUME II, HIPPOLYTUS](#)
- [VOLUME III, OUTLINES](#)
- [VOLUME IV, OUTLINES](#)
- [VOLUME V, ANALECTA](#)
- [VOLUME VI, ANALECTA](#)
- [VOLUME VII, ANALECTA](#)

 [Orestes Augustus Brownson](#)'s [THE SPIRIT-RAPPER: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY](#).

6. This consists in all of 7 volumes. The initial 2 amount to a 2d edition of the author's treatise on HIPPOLYTUS AND HIS AGE; OR, THE BEGINNINGS AND PROSPECTS OF CHRISTIANITY; the following 2 are made up of his OUTLINES OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF UNIVERSAL HISTORY, APPLIED TO LANGUAGE AND RELIGION: CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF THE ALPHABETICAL CONFERENCES; the final 3 are his ANALECTA ANTE-NICÆNA. All 7 of these volumes of Catholic liturgical history would be in the personal library of [Henry Thoreau](#) and in addition, his library would include this author's reconstruction of Egyptian chronology [EGYPT](#)'S PLACE IN UNIVERSAL HISTORY: AN HISTORICAL INVESTIGATION, IN FIVE BOOKS. TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY CHARLES H. COTTRELL, ESQ., M.A. WITH MANY ILLUSTRATIONS (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1848).

- [BUNSEN'S EGYPT, VOL. I](#)
- [BUNSEN'S EGYPT, VOL. II](#)
- [BUNSEN'S EGYPT, VOL. III](#)
- [BUNSEN'S EGYPT, VOL. IV](#)
- [BUNSEN'S EGYPT, VOL. V](#)

HDT

WHAT?

INDEX

1854

1854



1854

1854

 An 11-volume edition of various of the writings of [Professor Dugald Stewart](#) would be being issued from this year into 1858, including the OUTLINES OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY that had originated in 1793, the PHILOSOPHICAL ESSAYS that had originated in 1810, and the PHILOSOPHY OF THE ACTIVE AND MORAL POWERS OF MAN that had originated in 1828.

 [Richard Realf](#), having given up trying to be the lover of Lady Noell Byron, widow of [George Gordon, Lord Byron](#), came to the United States of America due to “instincts” which he characterized as “democratic and republican, or, at least, anti-monarchical.” Initially he would explore the slums of [New-York](#), become a [Five Points](#) missionary, and assist in establishing in that slum environment a course of cheap lectures and a self-improvement association.

While touring the South as a special correspondent of the [New-York Times](#), Frederick Law Olmsted visited a German community near Neu-Braunfels.

When no hospital in [New-York](#) would accept a female physician on its staff, Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell opened a clinic and dispensary on East 7th Street (now honored in Beth Israel Medical Center at Stuyvesant Square East and 15th Street) that would provide the poor and sick with the services of “medical practitioners [*sic*] of either sex.”

The Free Academy of [New-York](#) (later City College) at this point had 14 instructors and 600 students. 11,000 students were attending night classes. The municipality had a total of 224 public schools with 133,831 students enrolled, and of these public schools, 25 were for blacks and 199 were for whites.

Word came to several [New-York](#) newspapers that Daniel Sickles, first secretary to the US legation in London, had been able to introduce his mistress, [New-York](#) madame Fanny White, to [Queen Victoria](#).

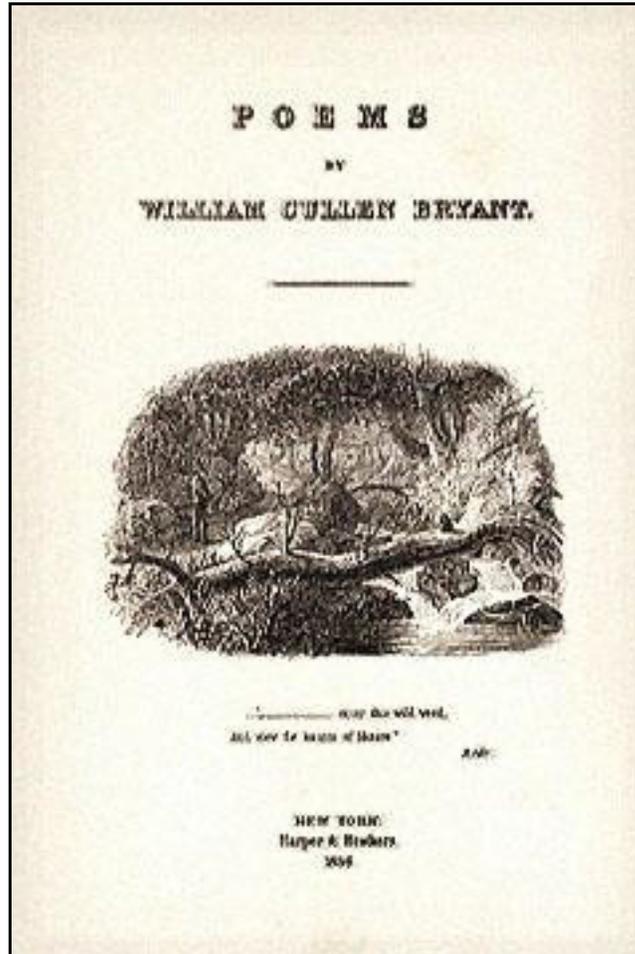
In [New-York](#), the opening of the Academy of Music at 14th St. and Irving Place.

 [Sir David Brewster FRS](#)'s MORE WORLDS THAN ONE.

1854

1854

 Publication of a new collection of [William Cullen Bryant](#)'s poems.



 A memoir of the Reverend [Alexander Young](#), DD by the Reverend Chandler Robbins, DD appeared in COLLECTIONS OF THE MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY (4th Series, Volume 2).

REV. ALEXANDER YOUNG

Volume the 6th of [George Bancroft](#)'s A HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES, FROM THE DISCOVERY OF THE AMERICAN CONTINENT.

BANCROFT'S US, VI

The HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES FROM THE DISCOVERY OF AMERICA TO THE INAUGURATION OF WASHINGTON is treated by Bancroft in three parts. The first, Colonial History from 1492 to 1748, occupies more than one fourth of his pages. The second part, the American Revolution, 1748 to 1782, claims more than one half of the entire work, and is divided into four epochs: — the first, 1748-1763, is entitled THE OVERTHROW OF THE EUROPEAN COLONIAL SYSTEM; the second, 1763-1774, HOW GREAT BRITAIN ESTRANGED AMERICA; the third, 1774-1776, AMERICA DECLARES ITSELF INDEPENDENT; the fourth, 1776-1782, THE INDEPENDENCE OF AMERICA IS ACKNOWLEDGED. The last part, THE HISTORY OF

THE FORMATION OF THE CONSTITUTION, 1782-1789, though published as a separate work, is essentially a continuation of the History proper, of which it forms in bulk rather more than one tenth....
(Austin Scott)



"The critic's joking comment that Bancroft wrote American history as if it were the history of the Kingdom of Heaven, had a trifle of truth in it."



— [Russel Blaine Nye](#)

 John Maclean, Jr. was installed as the 10th president of the College of New-Jersey.

[PRINCETON UNIVERSITY](#)

 [Francis Galton](#), who had been awarded the Annual Gold Medal of the Royal Geographical Society, was elected to that Society's council.

 In [New-York](#), an Englishman named Harry Hill opens a concert saloon at 25 East Houston Street. Although prizefights were illegal in New York, Harry Hill's nightly entertainments included boxing and wrestling acts. His pugilists were usually male — both William Muldoon and John L. Sullivan started at Harry Hill's — but could be female. In 1876, for instance, Nell Saunders would box (and beat) Rose Harland for the prize of a silver butter dish. A drawing published in the National Police Gazette on November 22d, 1879, would reveal Harry Hill's female boxers as wearing T-shirts, knickers, and buttoned shoes, while displaying a scandalous quantity of arm and thigh. Harry Hill's had a main entrance for men, paying 25¢ for admission, but it also had a side door for women, paying nothing for admission. Hill's drinks were overpriced and his air was a toxic miasma of tobacco smoke. Other than that this was a respectable house and the boxers, circulating through the throng, kept it that way (reform politicians would finally compel Harry Hill's to close, in 1886).

 Lieutenant [Charles Henry Davis](#) was promoted to Commander and given the command of the *USS St. Mary's*, an older sailing vessel that had once upon a time been one of the fastest warships.⁷



 Williams, Stevens, Williams & Company, art dealers on Broadway Avenue in Manhattan, crafted an exceedingly fine lithographic representation of "Uncle Sam's youngest son, Citizen [Know Nothing](#)" (see following screen).

7. The vessel had seen service in the war on Mexico and had been one of the "black ships" with which Commodore Perry had forced the opening up of [Japan](#) in 1850.

HDT

WHAT?

INDEX

1854

1854



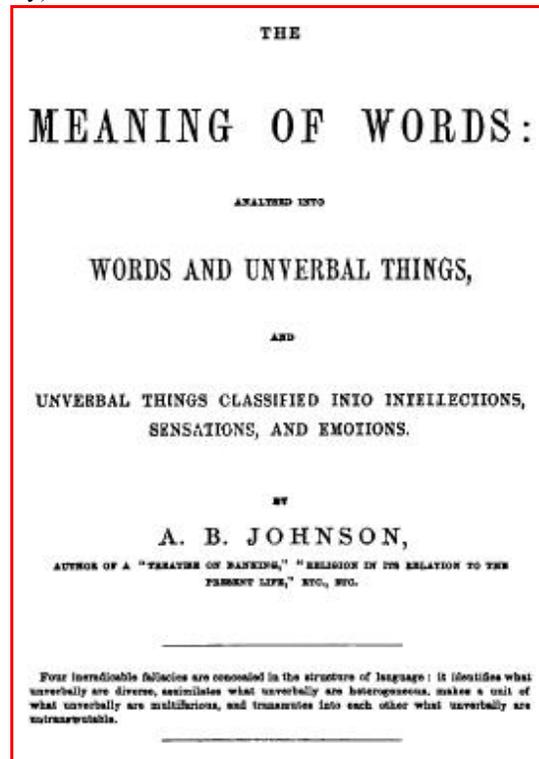


1854

1854

→ [William Allingham](#)'s PEACE AND WAR (London: G. Routledge). Also, in this year, from the same publisher, his DAY AND NIGHT SONGS, illustrated by his friend [Dante Gabriel Rossetti](#). He moved from [Ireland](#) to London with the intention of finding work in literary journalism.

→ The 1st edition of [Alexander Bryan Johnson](#)'s THE MEANING OF WORDS ANALYSED INTO WORDS AND UNVERBAL THINGS, AND UNVERBAL THINGS CLASSIFIED INTO INTELLECTIONS, SENSATIONS, AND EMOTIONS (D. Appleton and Company).



→ [Edmond François Valentin About](#)'s *L'ÎLE D'ÉGINE*.

→ [Lydia Howard Huntley Sigourney](#)'s PAST MERIDIAN.

→ In this year the Massachusetts legislature granted property rights to women.

FEMINISM

From this year until sometime in 1857, the Robinson family would be renting the “Texas House” of the Thoreaus on Belknap Street in [Concord](#). After [Mrs. William Stevens Robinson](#) ([Harriet Hanson Robinson](#)) would move to Malden she would have some acerbic memories to relate:

Concord is a very nice place.... But it is a dull old place. It is a narrow old place. It is a set old place. It is a snobbish old place. It is an old place full of Antideluvian people and manners.... The leaves never shake on the trees and the children never cry in the streets.... The women never go out, and the

1854

1854

streets are full of stagnation. It was so still that walking up and down its streets filled me with horror. I used to feel that I must jump up and holler, or do something desperate to make a stir. A good place to be born & buried, but a terrible, wearing place for one to live.



Oh dear me, I am surrounded by dreariness and ineptitude.

1854

1854

 Samuel Peck patented a case molded out of shellac and sawdust for such glassed photos, called the “Union” case.⁸ Also, in this year, James “Ambrose” Cutting of Boston patented a technique for sealing the “Ambrotype,” so called, within a glass cover plate with Canada balsam, a resin.

PHOTOGRAPHY

HOW TO TELL THEM APART:

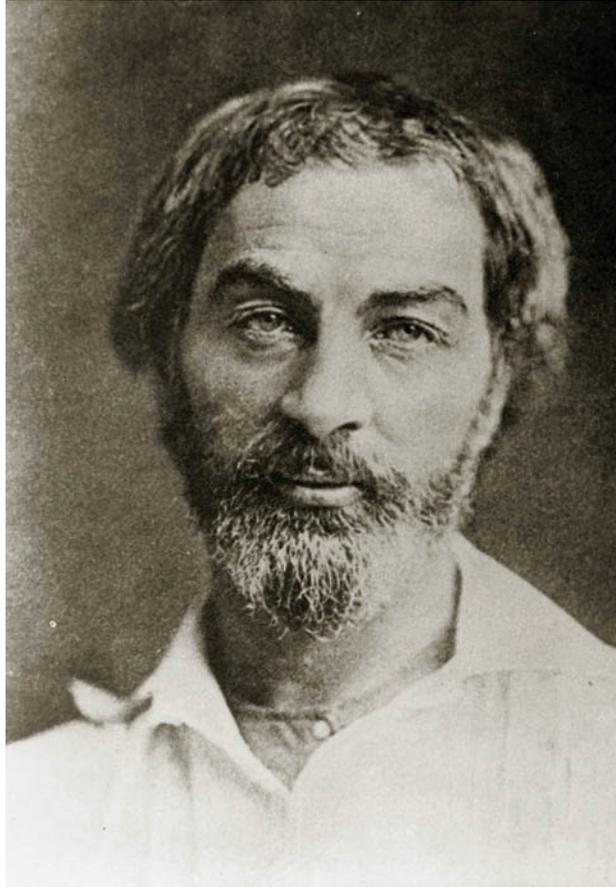
Daguerreotype	direct positive, reversed image	mirrorlike surface shifts from positive to negative as you tilt it	August 19, 1839- circa 1860
Ambrotype	direct positive, reversed image	pry the sheets apart and shine a light through from the back to verify that the image is negative	1855-circa 1865
Carte de Visite	non-reversed image	wedding band is on the proper hand, you can read the titles of books, and clothing is buttoned properly for each gender	1854-circa 1925
“Tintype” (Ferrottype)	direct positive, reversed image	The metal is attracted to a magnet and there is no mirror appearance	1856-circa 1945

8. These cases were sometimes referred to, incorrectly, as *gutta-perchas*, since that plasticky material had become commercially available in about 1844.

1854

1854

In or about this year an image was made of [Walt Whitman](#), probably by Gabriel Harrison in New-York.



Can you tell that this is a quarter-plate Daguerreotype?

[Walt Whitman](#) would reminisce about this period from 1852 to 1854, in the Camden Post for April 16, 1891:

“Memoranda”

Occupied in house-building in Brooklyn. (For a little while of the first part of that time in printing a daily and weekly paper.)

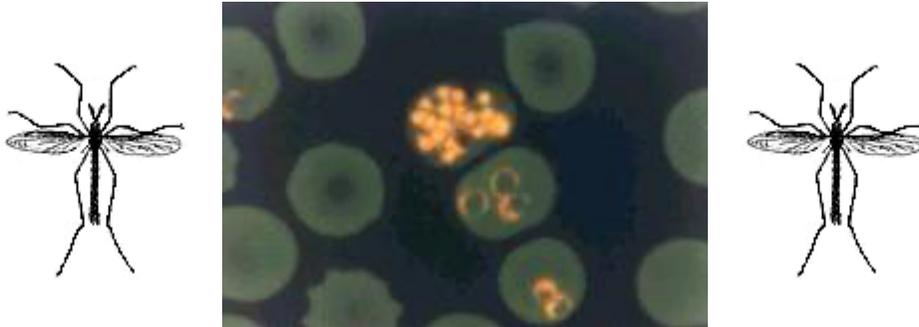
 Formation of the London Stereoscopic Company, with its motto “A stereoscope in every home.”
During the next two years the catalog of available images would increase by one order of magnitude, to 100,000, and some 500,000 such viewers for these images would in fact be placed in some 500,000 homes. You’ve probably seen one on your aunt’s parlor table.

PHOTOGRAPHY

 Charles Pickering Gerrish, son of a [Concord](#) teacher, graduated from [Harvard College](#). He would become a merchant.

NEW "HARVARD MEN"

In 1796, Dr. John Crawford had written a series of reports contradicting the bad-air theory "[malaria](#)," asserting that the illness that went under that name was not being occasioned by the nature of the air of marshes and swamps but instead by tiny "eggs insinuated, without our knowledge, into our bodies" during mosquito bites, tiny eggs that were hatching within the puncture and migrating through the host's body, and were producing the manifestations of the disease.



This notion had been considered so entirely absurd, by Dr. Crawford's American contemporaries, that the local medical journals summarily rejected all Dr. Crawford's articles. He was disparaged so vehemently that his medical practice began to suffer, and so he desisted from this effort. We had lost, for fully half a century, an opportunity to deal with this disease. However, in this year Lewis Daniel Beaupterthy, a "traveling naturalist," published a theory that malaria, and the [yellow fever](#) (or [black vomit](#)) as well, were being "produced by venomous fluid injected under the skin by mosquitoes like poison injected by snakes," that marshes and swamps were made treacherous not by their miasmatic vapors, but by the mosquitoes that proliferated within them.



WALDEN: It is the luxurious and dissipated who set the fashions which the herd so diligently follow. The traveller who stops at the best houses, so called, soon discovers this, for the publicans presume him to be a Sardanapalus, and if he resigned himself to their tender mercies he would soon be completely emasculated. I think that in the railroad car we are inclined to spend more on luxury than on safety and convenience, and it threatens without attaining these to become no better than a modern drawing room, with its divans, and ottomans, and sunshades, and a hundred other oriental things, which we are taking west with us, invented for the ladies of the harem and the effeminate natives of the Celestial Empire, which Jonathan should be ashamed to know the names of. I would rather sit on a pumpkin and have it all to myself, than be crowded on a velvet cushion. I would rather ride on earth in an ox cart with a free circulation, than go to heaven in the fancy car of an excursion train and breathe a *malaria* all the way.

PEOPLE OF WALDEN

SARDANAPALUS
"JONATHAN"



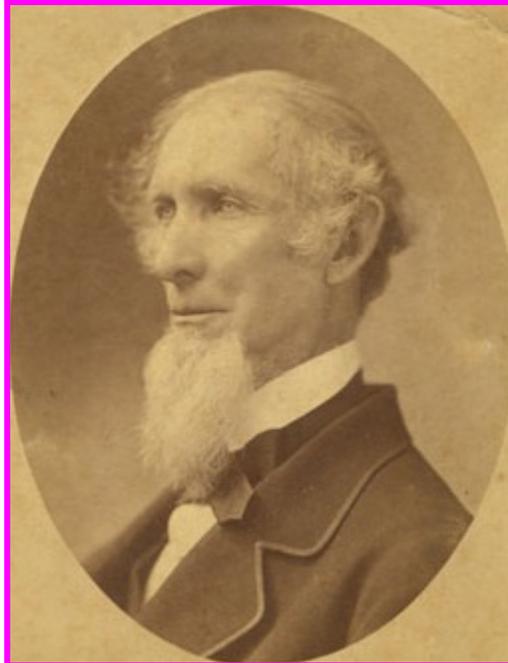
1854

1854

1854

1854

[Dr. Josiah Clark Nott](#) would come to embrace this theory, and eventually would be credited as among the 1st to apply the insect vector theory to [yellow fever](#).



THE SCIENCE OF 1854

[Dr. Josiah Clark Nott](#), [George Robins Gliddon](#), and Louis Ferdinand Alfred Maury's INDIGENOUS RACES OF THE EARTH; OR, NEW CHAPTERS OF ETHNOLOGICAL INQUIRY; INCLUDING MONOGRAPHS ON SPECIAL DEPARTMENTS.

Few of the scientists of [Professor Samuel George Morton](#)'s day would have challenged his thesis that the race concept is a physical reality, or his assumption that cranial volume was a prime indicator of human mental capability or intelligence.

1854

1854



Samuel George Morton

In this year such views were incorporated, for instance, into [Dr. Josiah Clark Nott](#)'s and the former diplomat [George Robins Gliddon](#)'s textbook *TYPES OF MANKIND: OR, ETHNOLOGICAL RESEARCHES, BASED UPON THE ANCIENT MONUMENTS, PAINTINGS, SCULPTURES, AND CRANIA OF RACES, AND UPON THEIR NATURAL, GEOGRAPHICAL, PHILOLOGICAL, AND BIBLICAL HISTORY: ILLUSTRATED BY SELECTIONS FROM THE INEDITED PAPERS OF SAMUEL GEORGE MORTON, M.D., (LATE PRESIDENT OF THE ACADEMY OF NATURAL SCIENCES AT PHILADELPHIA,) AND BY ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS FROM PROF. L. AGASSIZ, LL.D., W. USHER, M.D.; AND PROF. H.S. PATTERSON, M.D. (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo & Co.; London: Trübner & Co.)*, which would go through ten editions offering the unaltering scientific knowledge that the mental superiority of the white man over the colored man was a proven fact. The “Negro-Races” had “ever been *Servants* and *slaves*.”

TYPES OF MANKIND

The book in fact incorporates a letter from Professor [Louis Agassiz](#) of [Harvard](#), who supported such a view without any qualification whatever. The book asserts as an unchallengeable scientific finding that the Negro can exist alongside the white race only as a tributary either in name or in fact. The book quite ignores in all its editions [Frederick Douglass](#), who, in one of his speeches during this year, in no uncertain terms denounced it: “Perhaps, of all the attempts ever made to disprove the unity of the human family, and to brand the negro with natural inferiority, the most compendious and barefaced is the book, entitled *TYPES OF MANKIND*, by Nott and Glidden [*sic*].”⁹

In “Sketch of the Natural Provinces of the Animal World and Their Relation to the Different Types of Man” Professor [Agassiz](#) argued that the distinct human types, in effect distinguishable species, having developed under differing conditions in different regions of the globe, could only degenerate when taken out of these

9. And guess what? Subsequent developments have demonstrated that [Douglass](#) the nonscientist was right, and the scientists were wrong — and not merely on moral but on strictly evidentiary grounds!

environments to which they had accommodated.¹⁰

But race is a very great reality.... Any analysis of a great creative period ... must have this chaotic spot in its centre: the incalculable fact of racial intermixture. — Percy Wyndham Lewis, THE LION AND THE FOX: THE ROLE OF THE HERO IN THE PLAYS OF SHAKESPEARE (London: Methuen, 1951 [1927], page 298)

RACISM

Today’s reviewer of the evidences marshalled in this volume may marvel at the easy manner in which the authors interpolated their own views inside the context of quotations ostensibly from the work of others. Certain of the “quotations” placed between the covers of this work are said now to have been “half made-up.” Clearly, from the standpoint of Nott and Gliddon, there was more at stake here than mere accuracy. In the introduction to this textbook, on page 49, Nott and Gliddon indicated that their understanding of this new science ethnology was that it was not only to pose, but also to provide a definitive answer for, the \$64,000 question of who had to do whose laundry, “what position in the social scale Providence has assigned to each type of man?”¹¹ Although this was a quite expensive volume, by 1871 it would have gone through fully ten editions. This scientific treatise declared that

We have had too much of sentimentalism about the Red-man. It is time that cant was stopped now.

Also, this detailed scientific argument for the separate creation of the differing human races and the inherent inalienable superiority of some of these races over other of these races pointed out, by “supplanting inferior types” the Caucasian race rather than incurring shame and guilt would be merely “fulfilling a law of nature.”

EVOLUTIONARY ETHICS

For a decade, Dr. Benjamin Barrett would be serving as treasurer of the Northampton Savings Bank.

Frances Gulick (Jewett) was born to missionary parents in Micronesia.

10. As another conservative biologist, Garret Hardin, would be commenting, a weed is a plant that is out of place. Refer to Stepan, Nancy, “Biological Degeneration: Races and Proper Places,” in J. Edward Chamberlain and Sander L. Gilman, DEGENERATION: THE DARK SIDE OF PROGRESS (NY: Columbia UP, 1985, page 98-104).

11. Nott’s attitude was that “The time must come when the blacks will be worse than useless to us. What then? Emancipation must follow, which, from the lights before us, is but another name for extermination.”

1854

1854

➡ Printing of Joshua Victor Hopkins Clark's LIGHTS AND LINES OF INDIAN CHARACTER. This amateur local historian Clark (1803-1869) averred that his "Indian Legends have been carefully gathered from the oral registers of the last hoary chiefs of a perishing race. The Pioneer Tales and Anecdotes are from the lips of those aged men of a past generation, many of whom have long since passed away, and their few surviving companions...." –In other words "Don't bother to check my sources for these native informants are unavailable." (Nothing being too good for us, this crowd-pleaser would be reissued in 1860 in New-York by Derby & Jackson as INDIAN CAMP-FIRES, AND HUNTING GROUNDS OF THE RED MEN; OR, LIGHTS AND LINES OF INDIAN CHARACTER.) In this volume we may note that there are two-count-'em-two illustrated plates, and both these colored plates depict brutal redskins caught in the act of slaughtering decent white folks!



➡ The Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled that the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 was unconstitutional.

➡ In this year Robert Chambers published THINGS AS THEY ARE IN AMERICA, a book of excerpts from his Edinburgh Journal.

VIEW THE PAGE IMAGES

➡ The SOUTHERN HARMONY hymnal attributed the tune "New Britain" –which eventually we would be using for our "Amazing Grace"– to the BAPTIST HARMONY, a collection in the American shape-note tradition.

1854

1854

 Father Bernard Flood began regular [Catholic](#) masses in [Concord](#).

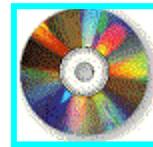


The American (AKA [Know-Nothing](#)) Party, an anti-immigrant, [anti-Catholic](#), anti-slavery party, ran in opposition to the Whig party and obtained an election landslide in Massachusetts, receiving more votes than the Whigs, Democrats, National (pro-slavery) Democrats, and Free-Soilers all put together, putting into office their entire state ticket and seizing every seat in the Federal legislature that was open.



"To understand is not to forgive. It is only to understand. It is not an end but a beginning."

— [Rebecca West](#)



However, Simon Brown of [Concord](#), himself not much of a bigot, managed to get himself elected Lieutenant-Governor as part of this slate — and then as the political climate would gradually become less inflamed he would gradually come out of the closet, as an abolitionist.

Dr. [Edward Jarvis](#) was appointed by the Governor of Massachusetts to the Lunacy Commission, to study the insane population of the state.



1854

1854



[Robert Collyer](#)'s young son Samuel Collyer, whom he had left behind in Leeds, England in the care of his grandmother, at this point was summoned to [Philadelphia](#).

[Philadelphia](#) became the first major city to issue revolvers to policemen (for the following six decades it would refrain from providing them with any training in the use of such weapons).

A fulltime schoolteacher was hired for the [Eastern State Penitentiary](#).

The University of [Pennsylvania](#) appointed [Professor Joseph Leidy](#) as its delegate to the American Medical Association at St. Louis, Missouri.

1854

1854

 [Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoevski](#) completed his 4-year sentence to penal servitude at Omsk in western Siberia and began a 5-year period of compulsory military service in the [Russian](#) army at Semipalatinsk in southwest Siberia.



The war correspondent of [The Times of London](#), Billy Russell, witnessing incompetence in the British Army's logistical and medical procedures, inquired of his editor "Am I to tell, or am I to hold my tongue?" Encouraged by this editor, he would file a series of dispatches that would topple the British government and lead to reform of the press laws. At Balaklava just south of Sevastopol in the [Crimea](#) in this year, General Sir Colin Campbell confronted his infantry line, preventing them from dashing after a retreating Russian hussar regiment by crying out "Damn all that eagerness!" However, nearby, Lieutenant General James Thomas Brudenell, 7th Earl of Cardigan ordered the light cavalry to charge. French Marshal Pierre Bosquet would comment about that day's action "*C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la guerre. C'est de la folie.*"

[Adam Gurowski](#) had been on the editorial staff of [Horace Greeley's New-York Tribune](#), writing articles favorable to the Russian cause in the Crimean War. His RUSSIA AS IT IS and THE TURKISH QUESTION (New York: William Taylor & Company, No. 18 Ann Street).

RUSSIA AS IT IS

THE TURKISH QUESTION

 There was a [comet](#) during this year, with an orbit similar to the one that had appeared in 1677.¹²

SKY EVENT

12. "GREAT COMET, (C/1854 F1=1854 II). Period of naked eye visibility extended from Mar. 23 until mid-Apr., T=1854 March 24. Relatively short-lived object. Discovered in the morning twilight of March 23 as an object of zero to 1st magnitude. Located in southern Pegasus. Moved to conjunction with the Sun, passing well north of it on March 27, and entering the evening sky. At the very end of the month situated in Pisces, of 1st magnitude with a 5 degree tail. Traversed Aries during the first week of April, fading rapidly from 2nd to about 4th magnitude but tail still spanned up to 5 degrees. In mid April, while crossing southern Taurus, near the limit of naked eye visibility with a 1 degree tail."



In England, an English laborer accused of criminal actions during the full and new moons, Charles Hyde, defended himself in court by arguing that he was not responsible for acts of "lunacy," that is, for acts caused not by himself but by the mandate of the heavens. The court was distinctly not impressed by this early version of what is now referred to as "the twinkie defense" and packed this defendant off to prison to protect him for the foreseeable future from the direct influence of the rays of the moon, but a writer named [Robert Louis Stevenson](#) would be impressed enough to use his ingenious apology as the basis for a story, "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde."



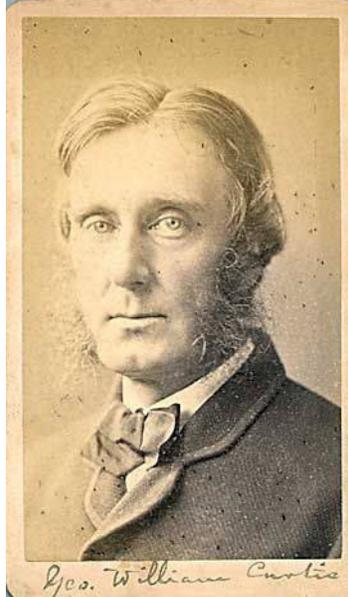
Phases of the Moon

-  **The New Moon**
-  **The Waxing Crescent**
-  **The First Quarter**
-  **The Gibbous Moon**
-  **The Full Moon**
-  **The Gibbous Moon**
-  **The Last Quarter**
-  **The Waning Crescent**

1854

1854

 [George William Curtis](#) became the author of a “The Easy Chair” column in [Harper’s Monthly Magazine](#). He published an essay about [Waldo Emerson](#) (this would be reprinted in 1895 in his [LITERARY AND SOCIAL ESSAYS](#)).



He received the honorary degree of AM from [Brown University](#).

 [George William Curtis](#) published an essay about [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#). (this would be reprinted in 1895 in Curtis’s [LITERARY AND SOCIAL ESSAYS](#)).

 The [neg](#)  [Glamorgan](#), of [New-York](#), was captured while about to embark nearly 700 [slaves](#) (SENATE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 34th Congress, 1st session XV, Number 99, pages 59-60).

The [negrero](#) [Grey Eagle](#), of [Philadelphia](#), was captured off [Cuba](#) by a British cruiser (SENATE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 34th Congress, 1st session XV, Number 99, pages 61-3).

The [negrero](#) [Peerless](#), of [New-York](#), landed 350 [slaves](#) in [Cuba](#) (SENATE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 34th Congress, 1st session XV, Number 99, page 66).

The [negrero](#) [Oregon](#), of [New Orleans](#), was known to be trading to [Cuba](#) (SENATE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 34th Congress, 1st session XV, Number 99, pages 69-70).

INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE

[W.E. Burghardt Du Bois](#): A somewhat more sincere and determined effort to enforce the slave-trade laws now followed; and yet it is a significant fact that not until Lincoln’s administration did a slave-trader suffer death for violating the laws of the United States. The participation of Americans in the trade continued, declining somewhat between 1825 and 1830, and then reviving, until it reached its highest activity between 1840 and 1860. The development of a vast internal slave-trade, and the consequent rise in the South of vested interests strongly opposed to slave smuggling, led to a falling off in the illicit introduction of Negroes after 1825, until the fifties;



nevertheless, smuggling never entirely ceased, and large numbers were thus added to the plantations of the Gulf States. Monroe had various constitutional scruples as to the execution of the Act of 1819;¹³ but, as Congress took no action, he at last put a fair interpretation on his powers, and appointed Samuel Bacon as an agent in Africa to form a settlement for recaptured Africans. Gradually the agency thus formed became merged with that of the Colonization Society on Cape Mesurado; and from this union [Liberia](#) was finally evolved.¹⁴ Meantime, during the years 1818 to 1820, the activity of the slave-traders was prodigious. General James Tallmadge declared in the House, February 15, 1819: "Our laws are already highly penal against their introduction, and yet, it is a well known fact, that about fourteen thousand slaves have been brought into our country this last year."¹⁵ In the same year Middleton of South Carolina and Wright of Virginia estimated illicit introduction at 13,000 and 15,000 respectively.¹⁶ Judge Story, in charging a jury, took occasion to say: "We have but too many proofs from unquestionable sources, that it [the slave-trade] is still carried on with all the implacable rapacity of former times. Avarice has grown more subtle in its evasions, and watches and seizes its prey with an appetite quickened rather than suppressed by its guilty vigils. American citizens are steeped to their very mouths (I can hardly use too bold a figure) in this stream of iniquity."¹⁷ The following year, 1820, brought some significant statements from various members of Congress. Said Smith of South Carolina: "Pharaoh was, for his temerity, drowned in the Red Sea, in pursuing them [the Israelites] contrary to God's express will; but our Northern friends have not been afraid even of that, in their zeal to furnish the Southern States with Africans. They are better seamen than Pharaoh, and calculate by that means to elude the vigilance of Heaven; which they seem to disregard, if they can but elude the violated laws of their country."¹⁸ As late as May he saw little hope of suppressing the traffic.¹⁹ Sergeant of Pennsylvania declared: "It is notorious that, in spite of the utmost vigilance that can be employed, African negroes are clandestinely brought in and sold as slaves."²⁰ Plumer of New Hampshire stated that "of the unhappy beings, thus in violation of all laws transported to our shores, and thrown by force into the mass of our black population, scarcely one in a hundred is ever detected by the officers of the General Government, in a part of the country, where, if we are to believe the statement of Governor Rabun, 'an officer who would perform his duty, by attempting to enforce the law [against the slave trade] is, by

13. Attorney-General Wirt advised him, October, 1819, that no part of the appropriation could be used to purchase land in Africa or tools for the Negroes, or as salary for the agent: OPINIONS OF ATTORNEYS-GENERAL, I. 314-7. Monroe laid the case before Congress in a special message Dec. 20, 1819 (HOUSE JOURNAL, 16th Congress 1st session, page 57); but no action was taken there.

14. Cf. Kendall's Report, August, 1830: SENATE DOCUMENT, 21st Congress 2d session, I. No. 1, pages 211-8; also see below, Chapter X.

15. Speech in the House of Representatives, Feb. 15, 1819, page 18; published in Boston, 1849.

16. Jay, INQUIRY INTO AMERICAN COLONIZATION (1838), page 59, note.

17. Quoted in Friends' FACTS AND OBSERVATIONS ON THE SLAVE TRADE (ed. 1841), pages 7-8.

18. ANNALS OF CONGRESS, 16th Congress 1st session, pages 270-1.

19. ANNALS OF CONGRESS, 16th Congress 1st session, page 698.

20. ANNALS OF CONGRESS, 16th Congress 1st session, page 1207.

many, considered as an officious meddler, and treated with derision and contempt;' ... I have been told by a gentleman, who has attended particularly to this subject, that ten thousand slaves were in one year smuggled into the United States; and that, even for the last year, we must count the number not by hundreds, but by thousands."²¹ In 1821 a committee of Congress characterized prevailing methods as those "of the grossest fraud that could be practised to deceive the officers of government."²² Another committee, in 1822, after a careful examination of the subject, declare that they "find it impossible to measure with precision the effect produced upon the American branch of the slave trade by the laws above mentioned, and the seizures under them. They are unable to state, whether those American merchants, the American capital and seamen which heretofore aided in this traffic, have abandoned it altogether, or have sought shelter under the flags of other nations." They then state the suspicious circumstance that, with the disappearance of the American flag from the traffic, "the trade, notwithstanding, increases annually, under the flags of other nations." They complain of the spasmodic efforts of the executive. They say that the first United States cruiser arrived on the African coast in March, 1820, and remained a "few weeks;" that since then four others had in two years made five visits in all; but "since the middle of last November, the commencement of the healthy season on that coast, no vessel has been, nor, as your committee is informed, is, under orders for that service."²³ The United States African agent, Ayres, reported in 1823: "I was informed by an American officer who had been on the coast in 1820, that he had boarded 20 American vessels in one morning, lying in the port of Gallinas, and fitted for the reception of slaves. It is a lamentable fact, that most of the harbours, between the Senegal and the line, were visited by an equal number of American vessels, and for the sole purpose of carrying away slaves. Although for some years the coast had been occasionally visited by our cruisers, their short stay and seldom appearance had made but slight impression on those traders, rendered hardy by repetition of crime, and avaricious by excessive gain. They were enabled by a regular system to gain intelligence of any cruiser being on the coast."²⁴

Even such spasmodic efforts bore abundant fruit, and indicated what vigorous measures might have accomplished. Between May, 1818, and November, 1821, nearly six hundred Africans were recaptured and eleven American slavers taken.²⁵ Such measures gradually changed the character of the trade, and opened the international phase of the question. American slavers cleared

21. ANNALS OF CONGRESS, 16th Congress 1st session, page 1433.

22. Referring particularly to the case of the slaver "Plattsburg." Cf. HOUSE REPORTS, 17th Congress 1st session, II. No. 92, page 10.

23. HOUSE REPORTS, 17th Congress 1st session, II. No. 92, page 2. The President had in his message spoken in exhilarating tones of the success of the government in suppressing the trade. The House Committee appointed in pursuance of this passage made the above report. Their conclusions are confirmed by British reports: PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS, 1822, Vol. XXII., SLAVE TRADE, Further Papers, III. page 44. So, too, in 1823, Ashmun, the African agent, reports that thousands of slaves are being abducted.

24. Ayres to the Secretary of the Navy, Feb. 24, 1823; reprinted in FRIENDS' VIEW OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE-TRADE (1824), page 31.

25. HOUSE REPORTS, 17th Congress 1st session, II. No. 92, pages 5-6. The slavers were the "Ramirez," "Endymion," "Esperanza," "Plattsburg," "Science," "Alexander," "Eugene," "Mathilde," "Daphne," "Eliza," and "La Pensée." In these 573 Africans were taken. The naval officers were greatly handicapped by the size of the ships, etc. (cf. FRIENDS' VIEW OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE-TRADE (1824), pages 33-41). They nevertheless acted with great zeal.



for foreign ports, there took a foreign flag and papers, and then sailed boldly past American cruisers, although their real character was often well known. More stringent clearance laws and consular instructions might have greatly reduced this practice; but nothing was ever done, and gradually the laws became in large measure powerless to deal with the bulk of the illicit trade. In 1820, September 16, a British officer, in his official report, declares that, in spite of United States laws, "American vessels, American subjects, and American capital, are unquestionably engaged in the trade, though under other colours and in disguise."²⁶ The United States ship "Cyane" at one time reported ten captures within a few days, adding: "Although they are evidently owned by Americans, they are so completely covered by Spanish papers that it is impossible to condemn them."²⁷ The governor of Sierra Leone reported the rivers Nunez and Pongas full of renegade European and American slave-traders;²⁸ the trade was said to be carried on "to an extent that almost staggers belief."²⁹ Down to 1824 or 1825, reports from all quarters prove this activity in slave-trading.

The execution of the laws within the country exhibits grave defects and even criminal negligence. Attorney-General Wirt finds it necessary to assure collectors, in 1819, that "it is against public policy to dispense with prosecutions for violation of the law to prohibit the Slave trade."³⁰ One district attorney writes: "It appears to be almost impossible to enforce the laws of the United States against offenders after the negroes have been landed in the state."³¹ Again, it is asserted that "when vessels engaged in the slave trade have been detained by the American cruisers, and sent into the slave-holding states, there appears at once a difficulty in securing the freedom to these captives which the laws of the United States have decreed for them."³² In some cases, one man would smuggle in the Africans and hide them in the woods; then his partner would "rob" him, and so all trace be lost.³³ Perhaps 350 Africans were officially reported as brought in contrary to law from 1818 to 1820: the absurdity of this figure is apparent.³⁴ A circular letter to the marshals, in 1821, brought reports of only a few well-known cases, like that of the "General Ramirez;" the marshal of Louisiana had "no information."³⁵

There appears to be little positive evidence of a large illicit importation into the country for a decade after 1825. It is hardly possible, however, considering the activity in the trade, that slaves were not largely imported. Indeed, when we note how the laws were continually broken in other respects, absence of

26. PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS, 1821, Vol. XXIII., SLAVE TRADE, Further Papers, A, page 76. The names and description of a dozen or more American slavers are given: PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS, 1821, Vol. XXIII., SLAVE TRADE, Further Papers, A, pages 18-21.

27. HOUSE REPORTS, 17th Congress 1st session, II. No. 92, pages 15-20.

28. HOUSE DOCUMENT, 18th Congress 1st session, VI. No. 119, page 13.

29. PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS, 1823, Vol. XVIII., SLAVE TRADE, Further Papers, A, pages 10-11.

30. OPINIONS OF ATTORNEYS-GENERAL, V. 717.

31. R.W. Habersham to the Secretary of the Navy, August, 1821; reprinted in FRIENDS' VIEW OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE-TRADE (1824), page 47.

32. FRIENDS' VIEW OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE-TRADE (1824), page 42.

33. FRIENDS' VIEW OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE-TRADE (1824), page 43.

34. Cf. above, pages 126-7.

35. FRIENDS' VIEW OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE-TRADE (1824), page 42.



evidence of petty smuggling becomes presumptive evidence that collusive or tacit understanding of officers and citizens allowed the trade to some extent.³⁶ Finally, it must be noted that during all this time scarcely a man suffered for participating in the trade, beyond the loss of the Africans and, more rarely, of his ship. Red-handed slavers, caught in the act and convicted, were too often, like *La Coste* of South Carolina, the subjects of executive clemency.³⁷ In certain cases there were those who even had the effrontery to ask Congress to cancel their own laws. For instance, in 1819 a Venezuelan privateer, secretly fitted out and manned by Americans in Baltimore, succeeded in capturing several American, Portuguese, and Spanish slavers, and appropriating the slaves; being finally wrecked herself, she transferred her crew and slaves to one of her prizes, the "Antelope," which was eventually captured by a United States cruiser and the 280 Africans sent to Georgia. After much litigation, the United States Supreme Court ordered those captured from Spaniards to be surrendered, and the others to be returned to Africa. By some mysterious process, only 139 Africans now remained, 100 of whom were sent to Africa. The Spanish claimants of the remaining thirty-nine sold them to a certain Mr. Wilde, who gave bond to transport them out of the country. Finally, in December, 1827, there came an innocent petition to Congress to *cancel this bond*.³⁸ A bill to that effect passed and was approved, May 2, 1828,³⁹ and in consequence these Africans remained as slaves in Georgia.

On the whole, it is plain that, although in the period from 1807 to 1820 Congress laid down broad lines of legislation

36. A few accounts of captures here and there would make the matter less suspicious; these, however, do not occur. How large this suspected illicit traffic was, it is of course impossible to say; there is no reason why it may not have reached many hundreds per year.

37. Cf. editorial in *Niles's Register*, XXII. 114. Cf. also the following instances of pardons: —

PRESIDENT JEFFERSON: March 1, 1808, Phillip M. Topham, convicted for "carrying on an illegal slave-trade" (pardoned twice). PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, I. 146, 148-9.

PRESIDENT MADISON: July 29, 1809, fifteen vessels arrived at New Orleans from Cuba, with 666 white persons and 683 negroes. Every penalty incurred under the Act of 1807 was remitted. (Note: "Several other pardons of this nature were granted.") PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, I. 179.

Nov. 8, 1809, John Hopkins and Lewis Le Roy, convicted for importing a slave. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, I. 184-5.

Feb. 12, 1810, William Sewall, convicted for importing slaves. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, I. 194, 235, 240.

May 5, 1812, William Babbit, convicted for importing slaves. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, I. 248.

PRESIDENT MONROE: June 11, 1822, Thomas Shields, convicted for bringing slaves into New Orleans. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 15.

Aug. 24, 1822, J.F. Smith, sentenced to five years' imprisonment and \$3000 fine; served twenty-five months and was then pardoned. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 22.

July 23, 1823, certain parties liable to penalties for introducing slaves into Alabama. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 63.

Aug. 15, 1823, owners of schooner "Mary," convicted of importing slaves. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 66.

PRESIDENT J.Q. ADAMS: March 4, 1826, Robert Perry; his ship was forfeited for slave-trading. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 140.

Jan. 17, 1827, Jesse Perry; forfeited ship, and was convicted for introducing slaves. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 158.

Feb. 13, 1827, Zenas Winston; incurred penalties for slave-trading. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 161. The four following cases are similar to that of Winston: —

Feb. 24, 1827, John Tucker and William Morbon. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 162.

March 25, 1828, Joseph Badger. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 192.

Feb. 19, 1829, L.R. Wallace. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 215.

PRESIDENT JACKSON: Five cases. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 225, 270, 301, 393, 440.

The above cases were taken from manuscript copies of the Washington records, made by Mr. W.C. Endicott, Jr., and kindly loaned me.

38. See SENATE JOURNAL, 20th Congress 1st session, pages 60, 66, 340, 341, 343, 348, 352, 355; HOUSE JOURNAL, 20th Congress 1st session, pages 59, 76, 123, 134, 156, 169, 173, 279, 634, 641, 646, 647, 688, 692.

39. STATUTES AT LARGE, VI. 376.



sufficient, save in some details, to suppress the African slave trade to America, yet the execution of these laws was criminally lax. Moreover, by the facility with which slavers could disguise their identity, it was possible for them to escape even a vigorous enforcement of our laws. This situation could properly be met only by energetic and sincere international co-operation....⁴⁰

W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: It was not altogether a mistaken judgment that led the constitutional fathers to consider the slave-trade as the backbone of slavery. An economic system based on slave labor will find, sooner or later, that the demand for the cheapest slave labor cannot long be withstood. Once degrade the laborer so that he cannot assert his own rights, and there is but one limit below which his price cannot be reduced. That limit is not his physical well-being, for it may be, and in the Gulf States it was, cheaper to work him rapidly to death; the limit is simply the cost of procuring him and keeping him alive a profitable length of time. Only the moral sense of a community can keep helpless labor from sinking to this level; and when a community has once been debauched by slavery, its moral sense offers little resistance to economic demand. This was the case in the West Indies and Brazil; and although better moral stamina held the crisis back longer in the United States, yet even here the ethical standard of the South was not able to maintain itself against the demands of the cotton industry. When, after 1850, the price of slaves had risen to a monopoly height, the leaders of the plantation system, brought to the edge of bankruptcy by the crude and reckless farming necessary under a slave régime, and baffled, at least temporarily, in their quest of new rich land to exploit, began instinctively to feel that the only salvation of American slavery lay in the reopening of the African slave-trade.

It took but a spark to put this instinctive feeling into words, and words led to deeds. The movement first took definite form in the ever radical State of South Carolina. In 1854 a grand jury in the Williamsburg district declared, "as our unanimous opinion, that the Federal law abolishing the African Slave Trade is a public grievance. We hold this trade has been and would be, if re-established, a blessing to the American people, and a benefit to the African himself."⁴¹ This attracted only local attention; but when, in 1856, the governor of the State, in his annual message, calmly argued at length for a reopening of the trade, and boldly declared that "if we cannot supply the demand for slave labor, then we must expect to be supplied with a species of labor we do not want,"⁴² such words struck even Southern ears like "a thunder clap in a calm day."⁴³ And yet it

40. Among interesting minor proceedings in this period were two Senate bills to register slaves so as to prevent illegal importation. They were both dropped in the House; a House proposition to the same effect also came to nothing: SENATE JOURNAL, 15th Congress 1st session, pages 147, 152, 157, 165, 170, 188, 201, 203, 232, 237; 15th Congress 2d session, pages 63, 74, 77, 202, 207, 285, 291, 297; HOUSE JOURNAL, 15th Congress 1st session, page 332; 15th Congress 2d session, pages 303, 305, 316; 16th Congress 1st session, page 150. Another proposition was contained in the Meigs resolution presented to the House, Feb. 5, 1820, which proposed to devote the public lands to the suppression of the slave-trade. This was ruled out of order. It was presented again and laid on the table in 1821: HOUSE JOURNAL, 16th Congress 1st session, pages 196, 200, 227; 16th Congress 2d session, page 238.

41. BRITISH AND FOREIGN STATE PAPERS, 1854-5, page 1156.

42. Cluskey, POLITICAL TEXT-BOOK (14th edition), page 585.

43. De Bow's Review, XXII. 223; quoted from Andrew Hunter of Virginia.

1854

1854

needed but a few years to show that South Carolina had merely been the first to put into words the inarticulate thought of a large minority, if not a majority, of the inhabitants of the Gulf States.

→ The US soldiers were again withdrawn from [Fort Niagara](#).

→ [Susan B. Anthony](#) began to organize petition drives for women's rights, including women's suffrage. In each county of New York State she, along with others, went door to door obtaining signatures to present to the legislature.



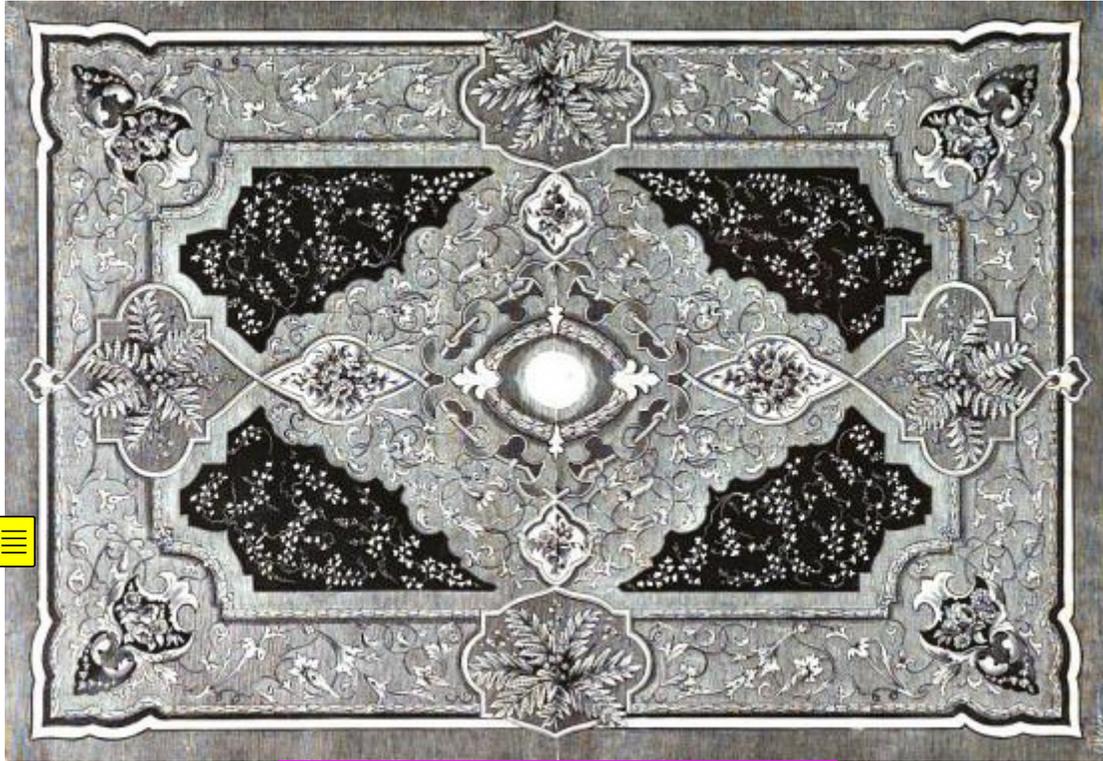
FEMINISM

1854

1854



[Dr. Samuel Kneeland, Jr.](#) contributed to Charles Rush Goodrich's edition, *SCIENCE AND MECHANISM: ILLUSTRATED BY EXAMPLES IN THE NEW YORK EXHIBITION, 1853-4. INCLUDING EXTENDED DESCRIPTIONS OF THE MOST IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTIONS IN THE VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS, WITH ANNOTATIONS AND NOTES RELATIVE TO THE PROGRESS AND PRESENT STATE OF APPLIED SCIENCE, AND THE USEFUL ARTS* (New York: G.P. Putnam and Company, 10 Park Place. London: — Sampson Low, Son, and Company).



SCIENCE AND MECHANISM

In this year Hermann Ludwig von Helmholtz reasoned that all temperature differences would eventually average out, over the course of time, into a universally uniform temperature: all flows of heat from here to there would disappear at the “heat death of the universe.” All it would take was for the universe to exist long enough, and it was inevitably going asymptotically to approach a state where all energy would be more or less randomized to the point at which there could be no further significant flowing of energy from place to place. (This sort of thinking had originated in the year 1824 when Thoreau was but seven, when Nicolas Léonard Sadi Carnot had in the course of thinking about the conversion of heat into mechanical work made some pregnant observations about the loss of available energy as heat, realizing that the efficiency of this conversion depended on the difference of temperature between an engine and its environment, and then in 1850, when Thoreau was about 33, recognizing the significance of some work by James Prescott Joule on the conservation of energy, Rudolf Clausius would formulate the 2d Law of Thermodynamics in the initial simple form that contrary to the caloric theory of heat popular at the time, which considered heat as a liquid, heat does not spontaneously flow from cold to hot bodies. From that new awareness, Clausius would be able to infer in 1865, subsequent to Thoreau's death, the law that Sadi Carnot had proclaimed in 1824, and coin a definition of a new quantity, which he named “entropy.” Clausius would at that point give this 2d Law of Thermodynamics its definitive present formulation, that entropy tends to increase in any isolated system. The philosophical problem in this is a problem that has to do with our tendency toward future-worship. It has to do with the consequentialist attitude in ethics. This “heat death” thingie which began in 1824 and proceeded through 1850

and 1854 to 1865 was entirely incompatible with our moral consequentialism, our future-worship, because it pointed up the fact that eventually, inevitably, there won't be any sort of livable future anymore, and nothing will be morally legitimate or illegitimate, and everything will be as if no human being had ever lived and struggled and hoped and dreamed and thought. The shit would really hit the fan in the popular mind when a 29-year-old would publish his first successful fiction, in 1895. This would be [H.G. Wells](#) and his science-fiction fantasy THE TIME MACHINE. The book would be suffused with the sadness of knowing that eventually our sun would be exploding, and then fading away, and that eventually, the entire universe would be reduced to a big dull blah. The only "inconvenient truth" that Al Gore is now adding is an awareness that since human civilization is inevitably subject to the "Law of the Most Limiting Condition," our demise is bound to come a whole lot sooner than folks had, during the 19th Century, been imagining.)

 A rail line opened between Vienna and Trieste, crossing the Alps through the Semmering pass.

HISTORY OF RR

 [Jean-François Millet](#) painted *The Reaper*.

 The [Reverend John Lewis Russell](#), after functioning as a Unitarian minister for well over 2 decades at various churches in Fishkill, New York, Burlington, Vermont, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Kennebunk, Maine, and Chelmsford, Massachusetts, and the 2d (South) parish in Hingham, Massachusetts, left the ministry. By this point he had developed an expertise in lichens and in general, "cryptogams," which are plants that reproduce by the use of spores (the bolete fungus *Boletellus russelli* has been named in his honor).

Wherever this man went to fill a pulpit the lovers of nature gravitated toward him, and he made them his allies. They attended him to the fields, and ranged with him the steep hills and the miry swamps. His animated talk and moist kindling eyes as he described the graces of the ferns and the glories of the grasses and the lichens quickened the love of beauty in them. He imparted stimulating knowledge of the secrets of the meadows and woods, and drew about him by instinctive sympathy such as had an ear for the mysteries of the sea, or the forests, or the moss-coated rocks.

— The Reverend Edmund B. Willson

BOTANY

 News items relating to the development of ELECTRIC WALDEN technology:

- [George Boole](#), whose CALCULUS OF LOGIC had appeared in 1848, published AN INVESTIGATION OF THE LAWS OF THOUGHT, ON WHICH ARE FOUNDED THE MATHEMATICAL THEORIES OF LOGIC AND PROBABILITIES, which articulated a binary system of "symbolic logic."
- Georg Riemann's "On the Hypotheses Forming the Foundation of Geometry," based on his famous June 10th lecture in Göttingen.

 The [Cadbury](#) Brothers opened an office in London and received a Royal Appointment as "[Cocoa](#) Manufacturers to [Queen Victoria](#)." The mid-1850s were such difficult times that the brothers would come close to closing the doors of their enterprise.

ELECTRIC WALDEN

1854

1854

➡ Due to the ongoing boycott of race segregation of public school facilities, enrollment at Boston's black [Smith School](#) stood at 54. Considering the case of the racially intermixed child Edward Pindall, a city commission determined that Boston's racial segregation of its public schools was "doing more injury" than good. The common council at first endorsed this committee's finding — and then reversed itself 21 to 14.

➡ [Henry Bibb](#) died in Canada at the age of 39.

➡ [Mary Ann Shadd](#) took over editing [The Provincial Freeman](#). The 1st black female editor and publisher in North America, she announced in an article that she had "broken the editorial ice." Shadd's newspaper would bear the slogan "Self Reliance is the True Road to Independence," and would excoriate all such begging and compromising approaches as had been being practiced by the [Bibb](#) family.



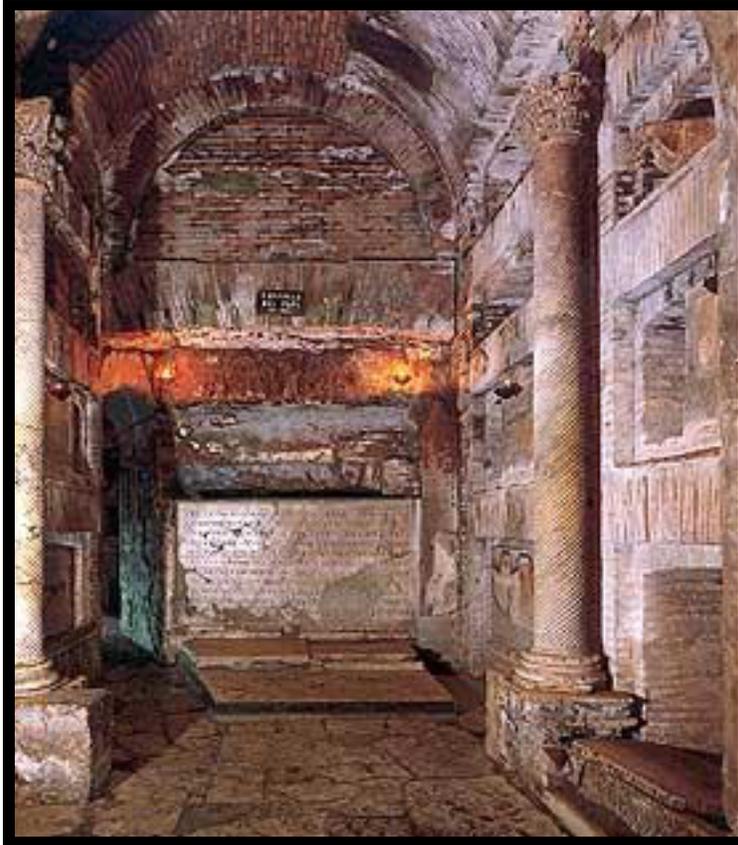
FEMINISM

1854

1854

➡ [Friend John Wilbur](#) visited England for the 2d time.

➡ The archaeologist Giovanni Battista de Rossi (1822-1984) put on display the Tomb of the Popes, discovered in a catacomb near [Rome](#):



The 18th through the 24th Papas of Rome had been interred here, back at a time in the 3d Century when the Roman papas did not have sovereignty over the papas of other Christian congregations in other cities.

➡ We had known about female eggs and male sperm since the 17th Century. In this year the fusion of frog sperm and egg was 1st more or less observed, or inferred, with the assistance of a microscope. It was all still very confusing, but it would be gradually becoming clearer just how male and female share in the reproductive process.

➡ It was at some point during the early 1850s that the Howes established a summer residence in South [Portsmouth](#) at Lawton's Valley on [Aquidneck Island](#). Eventually Dr. [Samuel Gridley Howe](#) and [Julia Ward Howe](#) and their six children would have the house at 745 Union Street known as "Oak Glen" as their long-term summer home.

[RHODE ISLAND](#)

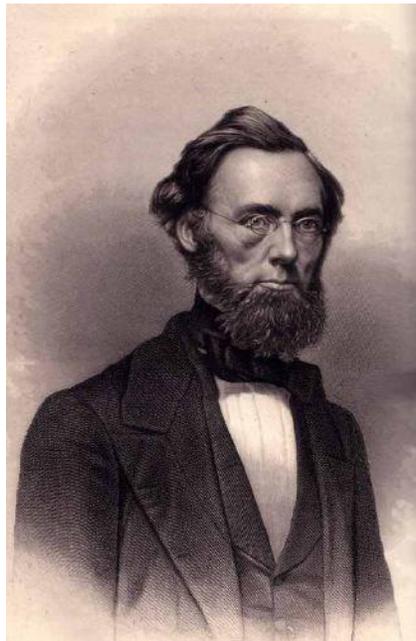
1854

1854

➡ This was the 4th year of the [tuberculosis](#) outbreak in Britain, where over the course of 5 years 1851-1855 some 250,000 would die.

**LIFE IS LIVED FORWARD BUT UNDERSTOOD BACKWARD?
— NO, THAT'S GIVING TOO MUCH TO THE HISTORIAN'S STORIES.
LIFE ISN'T TO BE UNDERSTOOD EITHER FORWARD OR BACKWARD.**

➡ [F.A.P. Barnard](#) became the head of the departments of astronomy and mathematics the University of Mississippi in Oxford, Mississippi. While at this institution he would create a small astronomical observatory and suspend a [Foucault pendulum](#) from a dome by a 90-foot piano wire. Although he ordered a 19-inch lens from Clark of Cambridge, by the time this was ready for shipment the Civil War would be going on, and the lense would be delivered instead to the Dearborn Observatory in [Chicago](#). In this year, also, he received orders in the Episcopal church.



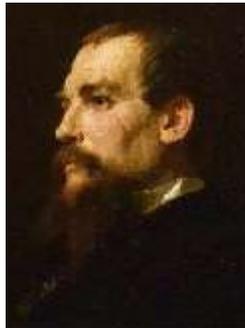
1854

1854

 [Elizabeth Oakes Smith](#)'s THE NEWSBOY, a reform novel, and BERTHA AND LILY; OR THE PARSONAGE AT BEECH GLEN, a story about an intellectual woman who bears an illegitimate child.



 [Richard Francis Burton](#) and John Hanning Speke were the 1st Europeans to enter the city of Harar in Somaliland in East Africa, and live to tell the tale.



In the course of this, both adventurers were wounded. In 1856 Burton would recount this trip as FIRST FOOTSTEPS IN EAST AFRICA, seeming to minimize the role played by Speke — this would create a feud between the two.

1854

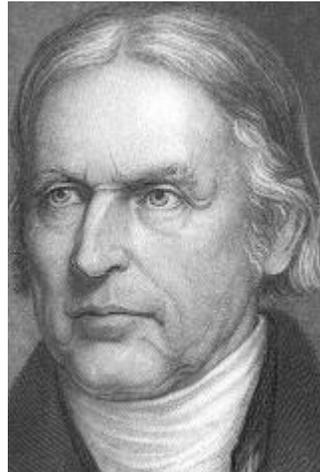
1854

 The Reverend [Adin Ballou](#) wrote his main justification of the [Hopedale](#) Community, PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN SOCIALISM.



CHRISTIAN SOCIALISM

The 1st section of this treatise would be his only completed work of systematic theology. He asserted that God permeated an “infinitarium,” that is, an infinity of universes, and that both space and time were without center or limit. Every separate one of these universes, of this infinity of universes within this “infinitarium,” he asserted, was going through an unending sequence of “grand cycles,” each one of which could appropriately be characterized as “an eternity.” His Christology was not Unitarian, nor was it Trinitarian, but instead was rather similar to the ancient heresy known as “Sabellianism.” He asserted that Christ was a manifestation of God, proportioned in such manner as to be comprehensible by our finite minds, but he asserted also that Christianity might not be the sole religion to contain divine truth. Like the Reverend [Hosea Ballou](#), the



Reverend [Adin Ballou](#) portrayed atonement as a form of demonstration by God, an appeal to human beings for a spiritual and moral response. He differed from this other Reverend Ballou in asserting that divine punishment in the afterlife was necessary, not only for the sake of justice but also as a mechanism for individual correction and progress. Our human spirits, as they were gradually regenerated, were eventually to become one with God.

This treatise laid out a plan for human society that was as simple and as obvious as the Lord's Prayer. To be perfect as God is perfect is a difficult thing for us human creatures. We all impinge on each other in one manner or another; we are all in life together, on this planet together, and should we fail to forgive "them" their trespasses, no way could our own trespasses be forgiven — for our own trespasses against "them" are in no way more privileged than "their" trespasses against us. When we manage to avoid seeking to retaliate for the harms that are done to us by others, we face only a further obligation. After accepting these harms with no spirit of retribution, no spirit of doing harm in response, we must go on and do more: we must ask that the people who did these things to us be forgiven. And we can ask for this only if we ourselves are ready to grant the prayer. "After this manner, therefore, pray ye.... Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." The word "as" in this prayer means "to the extent that." To the extent that we are able to forgive these other people for what they have done to us, to that extent and to that extent only, forgive us for what we ourselves have done against them, and, the inverse also, if there should be lurking in us any residual unwillingness to forgive, to that extent please do not forgive us for what we have ourselves done, but instead take retribution against us. There's no such thing as selective forgiveness, it only works if it is perfectly indiscriminate, and if it is perfectly applied across the board.⁴⁴

If, while we sue for mercy, we exercise none; if, while we pray for forgiveness, we meditate vengeance; if, while we ask to be treated better than we deserve, we are trying to respond to others according to their deserts; then we at once display our own insincerity, and our worship is a fraud and God is mocked. Our spirit of partiality is in opposition to the Lord's spirit of indiscriminate acceptance (which seems while we are in this spirit to be mere blind and callous indifference); we stand self-excluded from his presence alike unforgiving and unforgiven. The idea, repeated over and over, is that it is a law of life that only the forgiving can be forgiven. This forgiving is what constitutes our proof of our sincerity. This, not something as trivial as passing the salt to others at the table if we wish others to have the politeness to pass the salt to us, is the meat of the golden rule of doing unto others as we would have done unto ourselves. Our spirits must be fit to receive forgiveness. Then God can commune with us, for we have erected no barrier, we have not held ourselves away from his perfect spirit. It is only in the spirit of human forgiveness that we can receive and enjoy the divine forgiveness.

Yet Christianity has been suborned to authorize, to aid, and to abet the whole catalog of penal injuries, and when they are not enough, capital punishment, and not only that, but also the just war. The Chaplain leads the troops in the Lord's Prayer, while Christians draw near their God with their lips, and hold their hearts far away in a safe place where there may yet be found vengeance.

44. Also, "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matthew 6:12-15). "Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times?" Jesus said unto him, "I say not unto thee, until seven times, but until seventy times seven" (Matthew 18:21-22). "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any, that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses; but if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses" (Mark 11:25-26). "Judge not, and ye shall not be judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven" (Luke 6:37).

This, then, would be the foundation of our economic life, that to the greatest extent possible we voluntarily refrain from gaining our bread in any manner that interferes one with another, recognizing that a certain minimal level of such interference is inevitable, and, since we know full well that these residual interferences are unavoidable, we merely be understanding of these residual interferences in a spirit of awareness that we are as likely ourselves to commit such blunders against others, as they are to commit such against us. – The remainder of any economic program, obviously, is just window dressing and agenda and special pleading.

By this point the Reverend John Murray Spear, Medium, of the [Hopedale](#) community, had come to be under the direction of a group of spirits that termed itself “The Association of the Beneficents.” His committee (in sequence according to how long they had been in the spirit realm) included:⁴⁵



DIED	PERSONALITY
65CE	Lucius Annaeus Seneca
1546	Martin Luther
1683	Roger Williams
1772	Emmanuel Swedenborg
1790	Benjamin Franklin
1790	John Howard
1809	John Murray
1813	Benjamin Rush
1825	Thomas Jefferson
1834	Lafayette
1842	William Ellery Channing



45. John Murray, 4th Earl of Dunmore (1732-1809), had been the appointed governor of the Virginia colony. After the battles of Lexington and Concord he had taken gunpowder stores from Williamsburg and moved his seat of government to a British man-of-war anchored off Yorktown. After he had burned Norfolk in 1776, the Americans had been able to drive him back to England from his station on Gwynn’s Island in Chesapeake Bay. It is not clear that John Murray Spear had been named after this earl, and it is not clear that this is the John Murray that he was intending to channel. An alternative hypothesis was that he was intending to channel the father of American Universalism, the Reverend [John Murray](#) (1741-1815) and that somewhere somehow an error has crept in.

What this spiritual committee decided was that voting would not be necessary. All decisions, it seemed, could in the future be made by “a single leading, sound, central mind,” indeed, by the mind of the Reverend John M. Spear, Medium. “The leading mind gathers up, focalizes, concentrates the whole.” (This of course is what we in the 20th Century are familiar with as the *Führerprinzip*.) Spear proceeded to set up a new community of spiritualists in a city to be called Harmonia, in western New York, and to experiment with the creation of a perpetual motion machine. The machine was to be constructed in the Lynn home of the Hutchinson Family Singers, and the spirit of [Benjamin Franklin](#) guaranteed that, when constructed, it would work.



(The community of Harmonia would soon be charged with free love, and would disintegrate.)

THE FALLACY OF MOMENTISM: THIS STARRY UNIVERSE DOES NOT CONSIST OF A SEQUENCE OF MOMENTS. THAT IS A FIGMENT, ONE WE HAVE RECOURSE TO IN ORDER TO PRIVILEGE TIME OVER CHANGE, A PRIVILEGING THAT MAKES CHANGE SEEM UNREAL, DERIVATIVE, A MERE APPEARANCE. IN FACT IT IS CHANGE AND ONLY CHANGE WHICH WE EXPERIENCE AS REALITY, TIME BEING BY WAY OF RADICAL CONTRAST UNEXPERIENCED — A MERE INTELLECTUAL CONSTRUCT. THERE EXISTS NO SUCH THING AS A MOMENT. NO “INSTANT” HAS EVER FOR AN INSTANT EXISTED.

 There was a funeral in [Concord](#) for an infant, which was the 1st Episcopal service to be held in that town. The service was conducted by an Episcopal minister from nearby [Waltham](#).

Mary E. Brown, daughter of [Simon Brown](#) and Ann Caroline French Brown, got married with George Keyes. “The first George Keyes moved in with Mary Brown Keyes and raised all the children in that house. Then later his son, George Keyes moved in with him with his wife. The women married different people and moved away, but the sons seemed to stay at home and brought their wives in. Jay’s grandmother also lived at River Cottage, and then made way for her son, Henry Keyes and turned it over to him and she moved out.”

 In [Waltham](#), the Rumford Building was sold to the town for use as a Town Hall.

 Aaron Dennison established the [Waltham](#) Improvement Company (later to become Waltham Watch Company); developed innovative technology of mass production using interchangeable parts; becomes major employer of Yankee Protestants offering higher wages and skilled work. In 100 years of existence produced 40 million jeweled watches, plus clocks, speedometers, compasses, time fuses for bombs and other precision instruments.

 [William Whiting](#)'s "Memoir of Reverend Joseph Harrington" was prefixed to a volume of the Reverend's sermons being printed in Boston.

 [John Bowring](#)'s THE DECIMAL SYSTEM IN NUMBERS, COINS AND ACCOUNTS (he was all for it).

 American pugilism appeared in [California](#) during the mid-1850s (well-known pugilists such as Chris Lilly, John Morrissey, and Yankee Sullivan made the tour). For extra drama, John Morrissey had his seconds threaten his competition with pistols and clubs.

It was not unheard of, in [California](#), for the noose of a man being [hanged](#) to come untied. That happened spectacularly in this year in El Dorado County, when both nooses of two men being hanged together, James Logan and William Lipsey, came untied during the drop, necessitating a “do-over.”

[Chinese](#) miners waved homemade spears and swords at one another in Trinity County, [California](#). While reputed killers had been hired by both sides in this mining dispute, the only actual casualties were drunken American and European spectators who shot or stabbed one another while attempting to collect or avoid paying side bets (so the first killing to be clearly attributed to North American Chinese would not be in this year, but would only arrive during November 1857 with the robbery and murder of the bank clerk M.V.B. Griswold).

In [China](#), meanwhile, a 2d child was born to the Reverend [Issachar J. Roberts](#) 罗孝全 and Mrs. [Virginia Young Roberts](#).

The Growth of the White Community in [Shanghai](#)



1844	50
1846	134
1848	159
1849	175
1850	210
1851	265
1854	250
1860	569
1865	5,129 (due to foreign troops fighting the Taipings)



In London, the tobacconist Philip Morris began hand-rolling his own [cigarettes](#). Old Bond Street would soon become a center for this retail traffic.

Friedrich Tiedemann authored the 1st exhaustive treatment on [tobacco](#).

The hoop skirt came back into fashion, and was usually fashioned of graduated steel wires covered with a woven cotton netting held together by perpendicular straps of broad tape. Lady Dorothy Neville came too close to a drawing-room fireplace wearing one of these contraptions, one evening after dinner – unfortunately while the gentlemen were still finishing their [cigars](#) and before they came to rejoin the ladies – and when her dress caught [fire](#) none of the other ladies could come to her assistance because of their own skirts,

and in an instant I was in a blaze, but I kept my presence of mind, and rolling myself in the hearth rug by some means or other eventually put out the flames.



Speaking of setting things on fire, in this year William Gates, Jr. patented a machine for mechanizing the handling of the frames that hold [match](#) splints during dipping, thus further reducing the manual labor ingredient in the mass manufacture of matches.⁴⁶

46. Would this Bill Gates the Match King be an ancestor of **the** Bill Gates, richest nerd in the world, biggest benefactor in the world?

1854

1854



Thomas Alva Edison in America and Joseph W. Swann in England did not invent the 1st lightbulbs, a month apart, as of 1880. They merely created two of the 1st **cost-effective** lightbulbs. A watchmaker in Germany, Heinrich Goebel, had already invented electric lightbulbs as of this Year of Our Lord 1854.



Electric street lighting would already be on certain London streets as of 1878, and, where and when I grew up, the first electrically lighted municipality was known to be our home town of Wabash, Indiana. We school kids were taken on a walking excursion to our county museum in our new courthouse, where we could view this blackened preserved apparatus which had been positioned atop the old courthouse's cupola in the year 1880 — the highest available elevation. We were told that if they turned it on, it would still work. We're even in the *ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA*, page 505 of Volume X in my 1979 home edition — and they wouldn't lie to us, ever. Some mottos:

- “London's a big place, but this whole world's been here for the same length of time.”
- “Former residents of Wabash, Indiana are known for their need of illumination.”
- “I have some [electricity](#) to sell — I wonder what I could persuade people to use it for.”

This must have been a very similar circumstance to that faced by the Irvine boys, on their ranch in Southern [California](#)'s Orange County. They were growing grass, which grew cows, which they sold for hides and beef. They were cowpokers, and they were doing OK but were not doing outstandingly. They looked at each other across the dinnertable one night, and mused “What have we **really** got to offer the world?” And the answer was obvious: they had water in the middle of what in many years was a virtual desert. So they posed their question as “We have something to sell people — how could we encourage people to come here and buy it?” The result is beautiful Irvine California, run in the background by a bunch of inheritors riding around in Mercedes Bentzs, the owner/managers of the Irvine Ranch Water Authority.

The US Supreme Court upheld the patent of [Samuel F.B. Morse](#) for a particular design of [electromagnetic telegraph](#) while striking down the Magnetic Telegraph Company's broad claim that this patent covered any design making use of the principle of electromagnetism (however, the competing designs offered by Royal E.

House and Alexander Bain would prove so unreliable in service, that after a few years the telegraph industry in the US would be using Morse's design almost exclusively).

The tale has been retailed that the shortest [telegraphic](#) query and answer was between Oscar Wilde, the [Irish](#) poet and playwright, in his Paris refuge, and his publisher in England. Wilde, curious about the sales of his new book in England, cabled “?” and “!” was the response of the publisher. However, this same story has been retailed about a [telegraphic](#) exchange between [Victor Hugo](#) and his publisher, with Hugo wanting to know whether *LES MISÉRABLES*, was selling well, and also has been retailed in regard to F. Scott Fitzgerald. This all seems entirely spurious for in fact a version of the tale appeared in this year in the humor magazine [Yankee Notions](#):

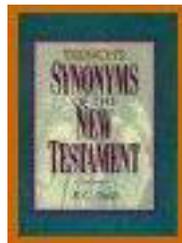
The shortest correspondence on record is one between an American merchant in want of news and his London agent. The letter ran thus: ? And the answer thus: 0, Being the briefest possible intimation that there was nothing stirring.

 [Gail Borden](#) borrowed the technology of vacuum pans from the Shakers of New Lebanon, [New York](#) in order to produce a condensed milk product. In doing this, he supposed it to be the condensing of the milk, rather than the milk's being heated, which was what was so providentially preventing his product from spoiling in the containers.⁴⁷

 Upstate [New York](#) richie-rich real estate magnate and rabid abolitionist [Gerrit Smith](#) resigned from Congress, writing a final letter to his constituents in which he outlined his political philosophy.

 Former US Congressman Fernando Wood defeated [Know-Nothing](#) candidate James W. Barker and Reform candidate Wilson G. Hunt to become the “Soft Shells-Hard Shells” mayor of [New-York](#).

 The Reverend [Richard Chenevix Trench](#)'s SYNONYMS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT; also, “The Sermon on the Mount, as Illustrated from St. [Augustine](#),” “Sacred Latin Poetry,” “St. [Augustine](#) as an Interpreter of Scripture.”



 [Susan Fenimore Cooper](#)'s RHYME AND REASON OF COUNTRY LIFE; FROM FIELDS OLD AND NEW, a volume of selections “connected together by a mere thread of remarks.”

The large reading and fine taste of Miss Cooper are admirably displayed in her choice as well as arrangement of the flowers which go to make up her several bouquets.... Precisely such a book as cultivated persons like to snatch up for a spare hour, during the

47. It would not be until 1860  that [Louis Pasteur](#) of France would develop the technique which would be termed “Pasteurization,” of sterilizing milk by heating.

long evenings of winter, in the country, or to carry out with them, in the summer-time, to the shade of a favourite arbour or tree.

— Putnam's Monthly Magazine of American Literature, Science and Art

➡ [George Eliot \(Marian Evans\)](#)'s translation of [Ludwig Feuerbach](#)'s THE ESSENCE OF [CHRISTIANITY](#).

➡ In this year the German-language [Louisiana Staats-Zeitung](#) serialized on its cover page an erotic novel by the exiled Bavarian baron Ludwig von Reizenstein titled (in its English-language translation to be first published in 1998) THE MYSTERIES OF [NEW ORLEANS](#). In this work a woman escapes from the town in man's clothing and is then pursued by her lover decked out as a woman. The plot is a conspiracy plot having to do with a slave uprising, and unmasking the sordidness of life in an American city. Lesbian sexual relations are portrayed as political and as the equivalent of slave revolt. The author of this work would abandon writing and go on to a career in the vending of, of all things, birdcages.⁴⁸

➡ [John Mitchel](#)'s account of things was published in the United States as JAIL JOURNAL, OR FIVE YEARS IN BRITISH PRISONS. The author had an ideal of freedom. In one entry, for instance, we are allowed to see that the author welcomes the [Crimean War](#) because of the consideration that an [Irish](#) rebellion can succeed only if England is preoccupied elsewhere. (The sentiment would influence Patrick Pearse in 1916.)



➡ Jacob Hamblin, a missionary to the Indians in southern Utah, had acquired reputé among them as a person of special powers and turned this toward the smoothing of relations between them and the newly arriving hordes of white people.

[Benjamin Gilbert Ferris](#), a Swedenborgian, had most definitely not gotten along with the [Mormons](#) of Utah during the 6 months he had spent there as the US Secretary to that Territory, and soon resigned: "He could not suppress his abhorrence [*sic*] of Mormonism nor tolerate its influences, nor accept its devotees as his neighbors, and resigned his high position, thus sacrificing great possibilities in his very promising public career." In this year his record of his experiences appeared as UTAH AND THE MORMONS. THE HISTORY, GOVERNMENT, DOCTRINES, CUSTOMS, AND PROSPECTS OF THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS. FROM PERSONAL OBSERVATION DURING A SIX MONTHS' RESIDENCE AT GREAT SALT LAKE CITY (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers,

48. Birdcages, actually, are an excellent venue for the recycling of writings.

1854

1854

82 Beekman Street).



UTAH AND THE MORMONS

On the banks of *Payzhehooze* Hazel Run south of the Minnesota River, 5 miles upstream from the Yellow Medicine Agency, *Marpiyawicasta Man of the Clouds*, his brother *Mazakutemane* Walks Shooting Iron, and their band of Dakotas joined a “Hazelwood Republic” of “Christian Indians” sponsored by the Reverend Riggs but, in the eyes of the creators of civilization, failed to create a satisfactory imitation of civilization.⁴⁹

We had such a respectable community of young men, who had cut off their hair and exchanged the dress of the Dakotas for that of the white men, and whose wants now were very different from the annuity Dakotas generally, that we took measures to organize them into a separate band, which we called the Hazelwood Republic. They elected their President for two years, and other needed officers, and were without any difficulty recognized by the agent as a separate band. A number of these men were half-breeds, who were, by the organic law of Minnesota, citizens. The Constitution of the State provided that Indians also might become citizens by satisfying a court of their progress in civilization. A few years after the organization of this civilized community, I took eight or ten of the men to meet the court at Mankato; but the court deciding that a knowledge of English was necessary to comply with the laws of the State, only one of my men was passed into citizenship.

49. Account of the Reverend Riggs.



1854

1854

In the Minnesota Territory, [President Millard Fillmore](#) was escorted on “The Grand Tour” from St. Anthony “Place where the Water Falls” around Lake Calhoun and Lake Harriet, near the fields of the Dakota bark homes along the lake shore that had made up Marpiyawicasta’s village of Eatonville. This was the package tour that had become known nationwide as the “Fashionable Tour” and it had been taken by, among others, Millard Fillmore and Anthony Trollope and Clara Barton. The journey had been being puffed by James M. Goodhue, the editor of the [Minnesota Pioneer](#), for at least the past 9 years:⁵⁰

Who that is idle would be caged up between walls of burning brick and mortar, in dog-days, down the river, if at less daily expense, he could be hurried along through the valley of the Mississippi, its shores studded with towns, and farms, flying by islands, prairies, woodlands, bluffs – an ever varied scene of beauty, away up into the land of the wild Dakota, and of cascades and pine forests, and cooling breezes? – Why it is an exhilarating luxury, compared with which, all the fashion and tinsel and parade of your Newports and Saratogas, are utterly insipid.... A month in Minnesota, in dog-days, is worth a whole year anywhere else; and, we confidently look to see the time, when all families of leisure down South, from the Gulf of Mexico along up, will make their regular summer hegira to our Territory, and when hundreds of the opulent from those regions, will build delightful cottages on the borders of our ten thousand lakes and ornament their grounds with all that is tasteful in shrubbery and horticulture, for a summer retreat.

50. This particular puff is dated July 22, 1852.

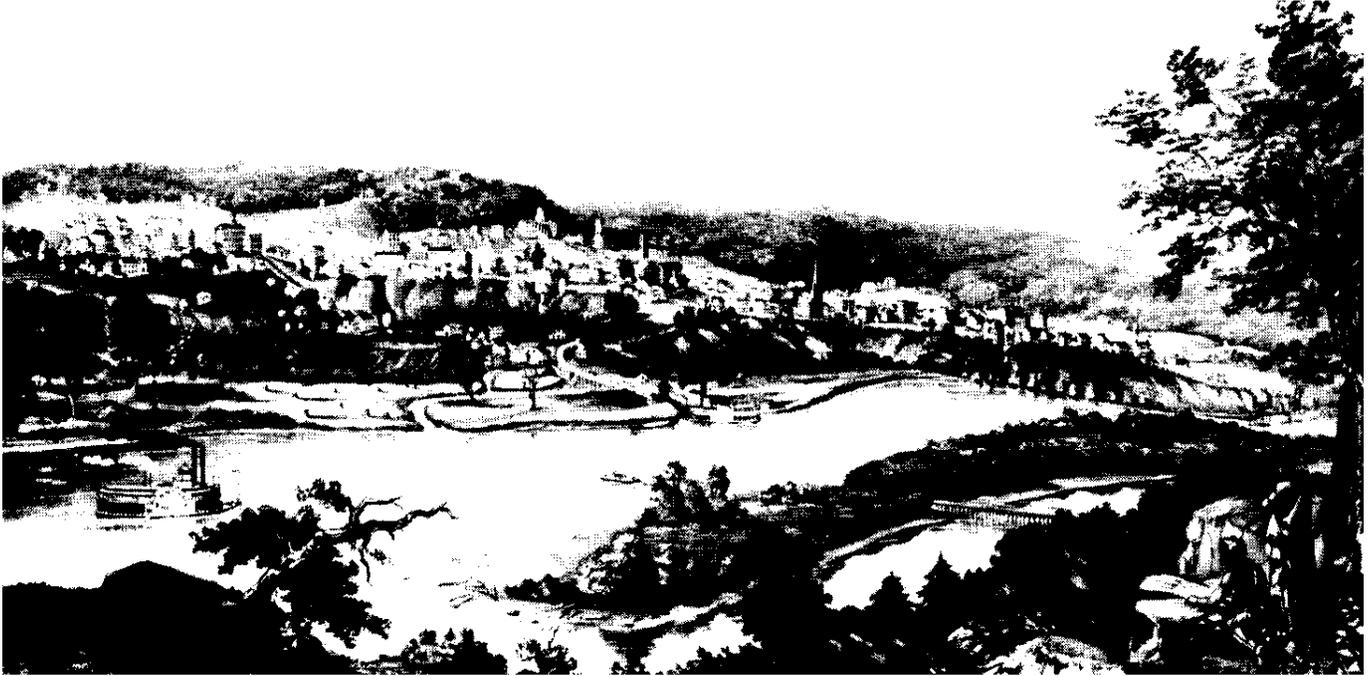
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WHAT?

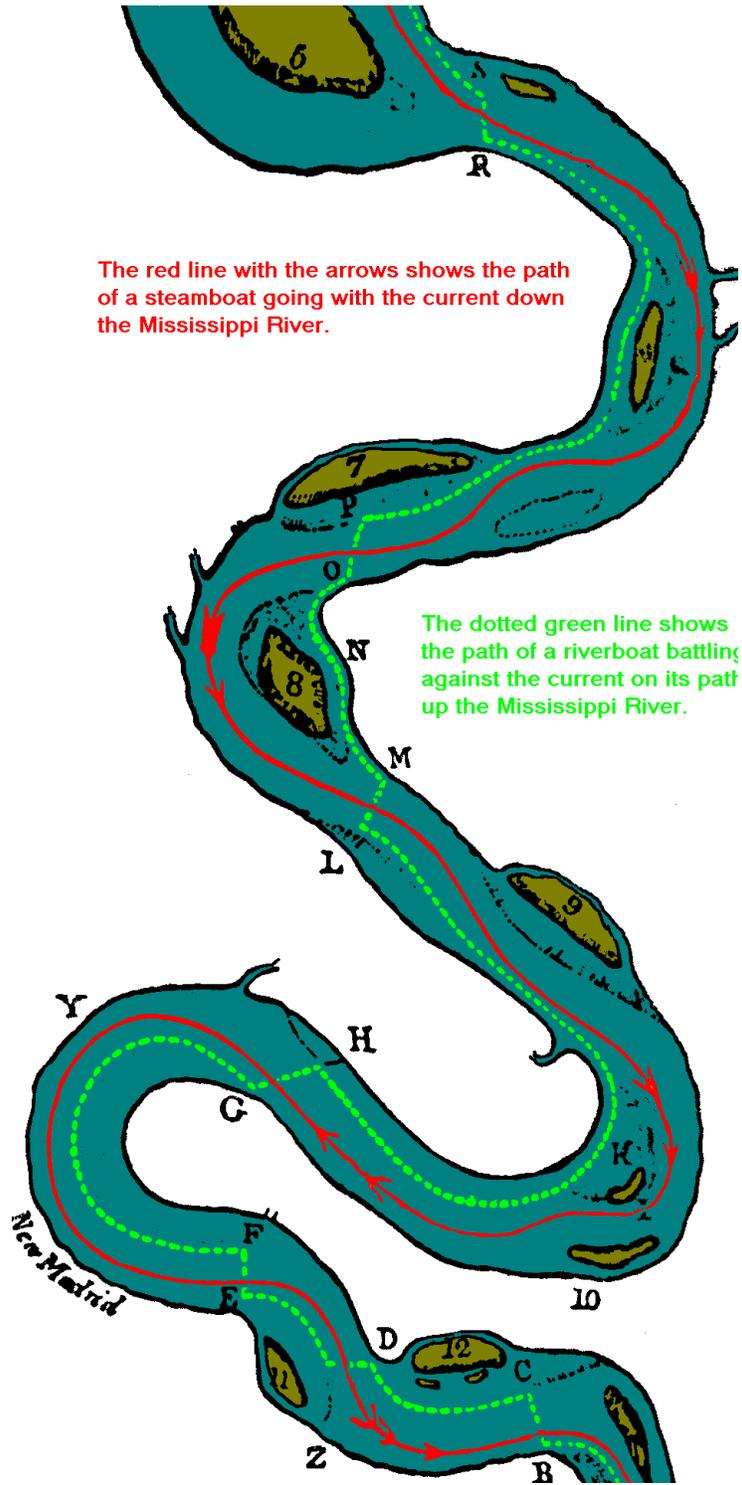
INDEX

1854

1854



Steamboat arriving at St. Paul "Iminijaska White Rocks," Minnesota



The red line with the arrows shows the path of a steamboat going with the current down the Mississippi River.

The dotted green line shows the path of a riverboat battling against the current on its path up the Mississippi River.

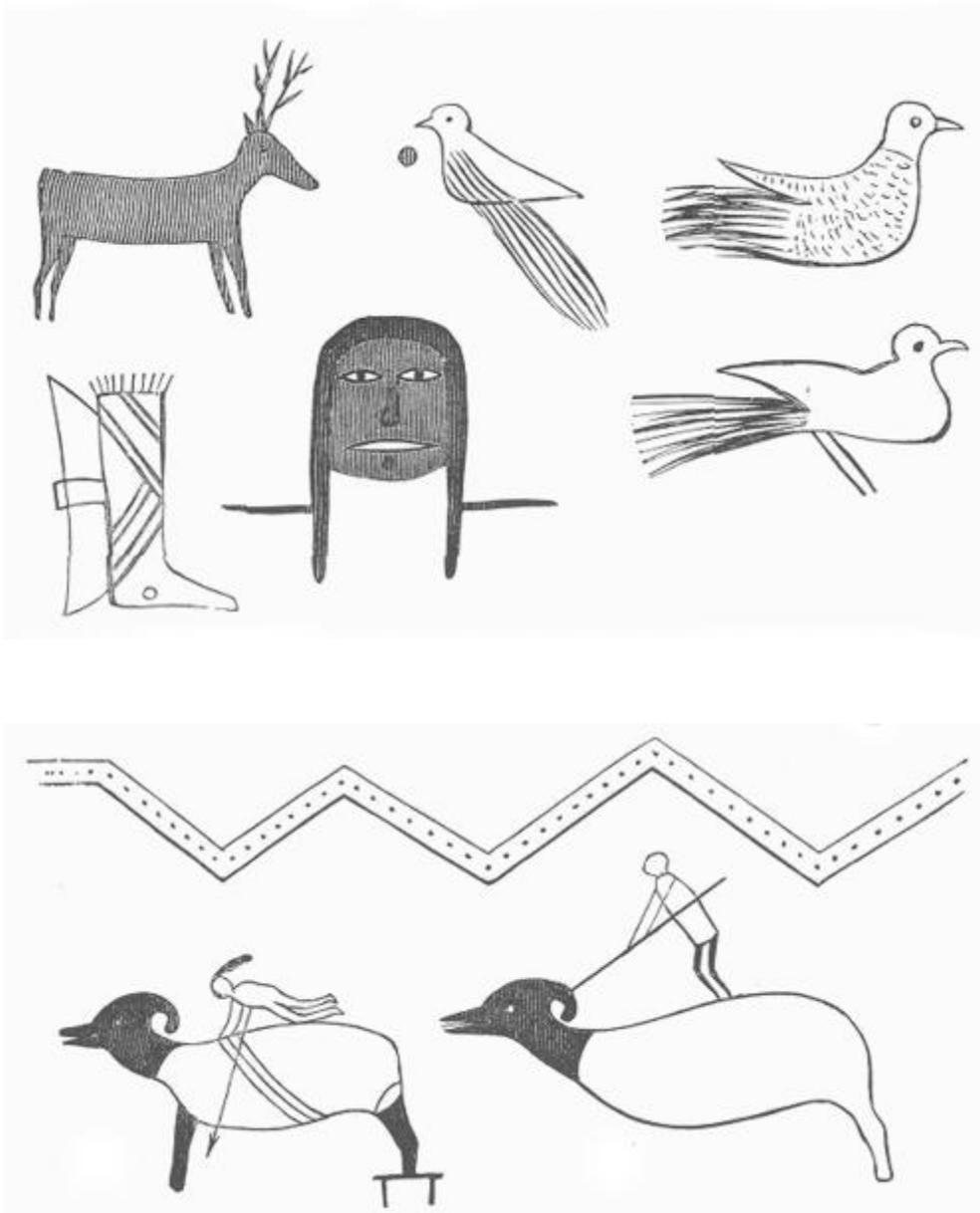
A tourist puff said that
“the Mississippi flows from the pine to the palm”

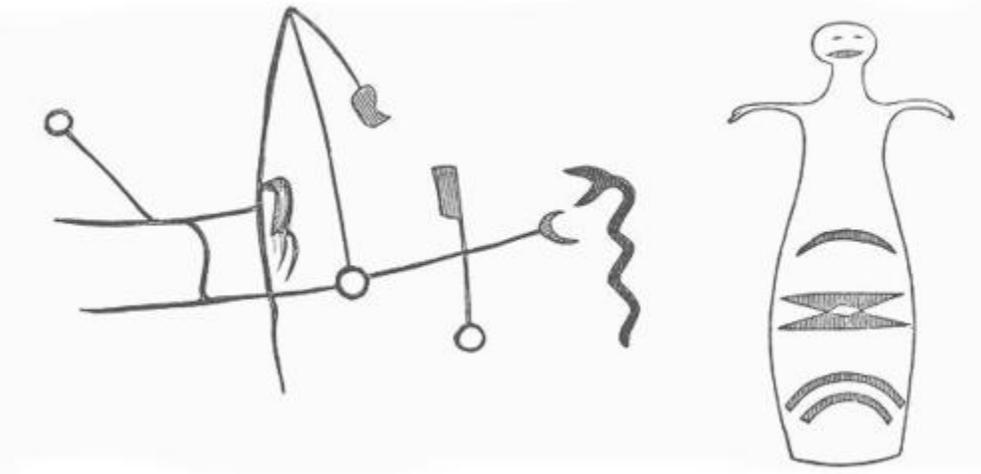
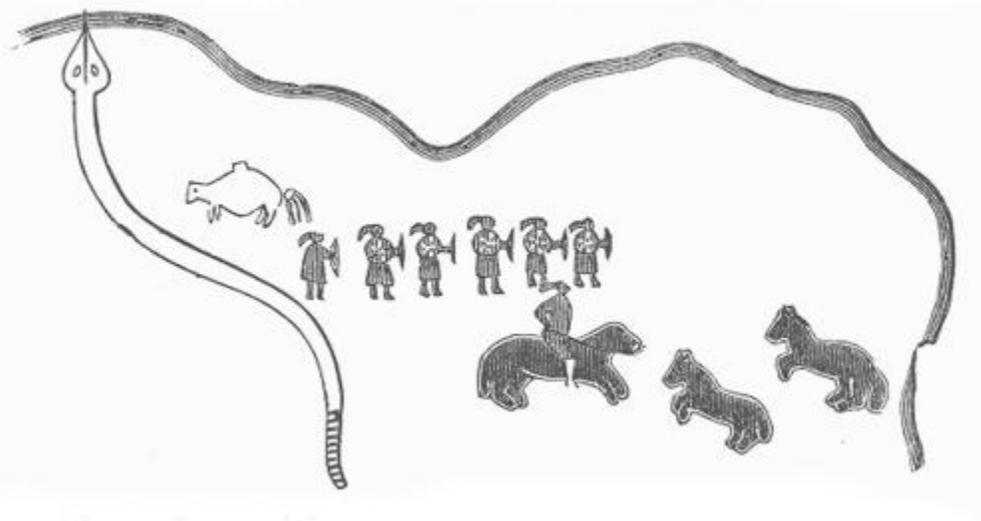
1854

1854

➡ When [President Franklin Pierce](#) upped the ante and offered Spain \$130,000,000 for [Cuba](#), Spain again turned us down. President Pierce then got into trouble with his Ostend Manifesto, which was considered to be a threat aimed at Spain that the US would “go ahead” and seize this island anyway. (These various attempts to buy or forcibly annex the island by invasion would end with the American Civil War, but the lust to annex the island to the American empire is to this day undiminished.)

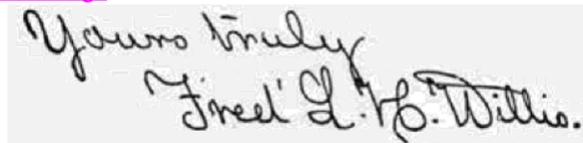
When Pierce had become President [John Russell Bartlett](#) had of course been replaced as a United States Commissioner for the survey of the boundary between the United States and [Mexico](#). He published A PERSONAL NARRATIVE OF EXPLORATIONS AND INCIDENTS IN TEXAS, NEW MEXICO, [CALIFORNIA](#), SONORA AND CHIHUAHUA (2 volumes) which included sketches of native petroglyphs.





 A physician recommended that [Frederick Llewellyn Hovey Willis](#) be sent on a sea voyage for his health, but aboard ship he began to hear rappings in his stateroom, which he attributed to two recently deceased acquaintances. Returning to Boston, he was informed by [spiritualists](#) that perhaps this had happened not as a feverish hallucination but because he was a medium, a person with special powers of sensitivity, having antennae fine-tuned to communicate with the dead. He began to hold séances in the private homes of Cambridge, Boston, Salem, and other locales. He found that he was able to make money by summoning the spirit of Byron –and the spirit of Shelley –and the spirits of the poets of antiquity. Boston was his oyster, and the act quickly came to include camellias, roses, and ferns — that would suddenly materialize out of thin air.

In this year, at the very unusually advanced old age of 24 (students then rarely began later than age 15), Fred matriculated at [Harvard College](#).



Friend [John Greenleaf Whittier](#) savaged the deceased [Daniel Webster](#) in a poem he titled “Ichabod.”⁵¹

Ichabod

So fallen! so lost! the light withdrawn
Which once he wore!
The glory from his gray hairs gone
Forevermore!

Reville him not, the Tempter hath
A snare for all;
And pitying tears, not scorn and wrath,
Befit his fall!

Oh, dumb be passion’s stormy rage,
When he who might
Have lighted up and led his age,
Falls back in night.

Scorn! would the angels laugh, to mark
A bright soul driven,
Fiend-goaded, down the endless dark,
From hope and heaven!

Let not the land once proud of him
Insult him now,
Nor brand with deeper shame his dim,
Dishonored brow.

But let its humbled sons, instead,
From sea to lake,
A long lament, as for the dead,

51. In Hebrew, “Ichabod” means “inglorious.” “This poem was the outcome of the surprise and grief and forecast of evil consequences which I felt on reading the seventh of March speech of Daniel Webster in support of the ‘compromise,’ and the Fugitive Slave Law. No partisan or personal enmity dictated it. On the contrary my admiration of the splendid personality and intellectual power of the great Senator was never stronger than when I laid down his speech, and, in one of the saddest moments of my life, penned my protest. I saw, as I wrote, with painful clearness its sure results, — the Slave Power arrogant and defiant, strengthened and encouraged to carry out its scheme for the extension of its baleful system, or the dissolution of the Union, the guaranties of personal liberty in the free States broken down, and the whole country made the hunting-ground of slave-catchers. In the horror of such a vision, so soon fearfully fulfilled, if one spoke at all, he could only speak in tones of stern and sorrowful rebuke.

But death softens all resentments, and the consciousness of a common inheritance of frailty and weakness modifies the severity of judgment. Years after, in *The Lost Occasion*, I gave utterance to an almost universal regret that the great statesman did not live to see the flag which he loved trampled under the feet of Slavery, and, in view of this desecration, make his last days glorious in defence of ‘Liberty and Union, one and inseparable.’”

In sadness make.
Of all we loved and honored, naught
Save power remains;
A fallen angel's pride of thought,
Still strong in chains.
All else is gone; from those great eyes
The soul has fled:
When faith is lost, when honor dies,
The man is dead!
Then, pay the reverence of old days
To his dead fame;
Walk backward, with averted gaze,
And hide the shame!

“HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE” BEING A VIEW FROM A PARTICULAR POINT IN TIME (JUST AS THE PERSPECTIVE IN A PAINTING IS A VIEW FROM A PARTICULAR POINT IN SPACE), TO “LOOK AT THE COURSE OF HISTORY MORE GENERALLY” WOULD BE TO SACRIFICE PERSPECTIVE ALTOGETHER. THIS IS FANTASY-LAND, YOU’RE FOOLING YOURSELF. THERE CANNOT BE ANY SUCH THINGIE, AS SUCH A PERSPECTIVE.

 [Gregor Mendel](#) received a teaching appointment at the *Oberrealschule* in Brno, where he would successfully teach natural history and physics for the following 16 years. He published his 2d paper, which concerned the beetle *Bruchus pisi*, on crop damage.

[Professor Sir William Jackson Hooker](#)'s A CENTURY OF FERNS.

THE PRINCIPLES OF [BOTANY](#), AS EXEMPLIFIED IN THE PHANEROGAMIA; BY [HARLAND COULTAS](#), PROFESSOR OF GENERAL AND MEDICAL BOTANY IN THE PENN MEDICAL UNIVERSITY OF PHILADELPHIA (Philadelphia: King & Baird, Printers, No. 9 Sansom Street).

 Abigail McIntire Patch died at the age of 84. Her property was valued at \$17.

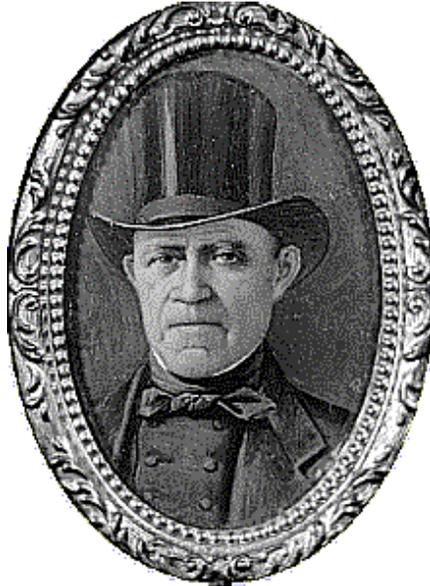
According to the New-York SPIRIT OF THE TIMES:

Afore you could say [Sam Patch](#), them hogs were yanked aout [sic] of the lot, kilt, and scraped.

1854

1854

➡ [Judah Touro](#) died, leaving more than half a million dollars to various [Catholic](#), Protestant, and [Jewish](#) charities (half a million dollars was serious money in those days). His will established, also, a Ministerial Fund for the empty synagogue in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) at which his father had once officiated while there were still Jews living in that town.

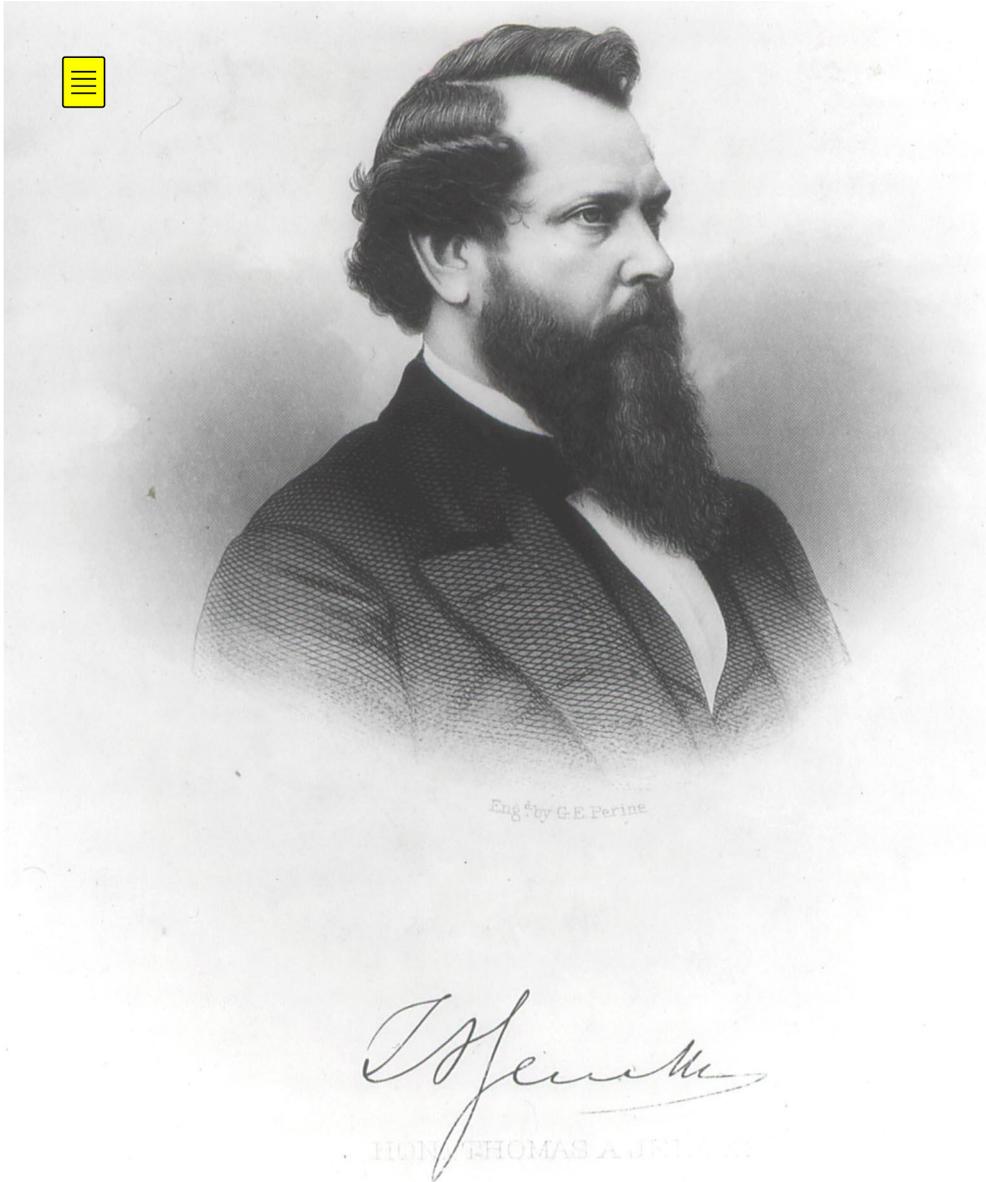
[TOURO SYNAGOGUE](#)

➡ In [Rhode Island](#), William W. Hoppin was in charge.

1854

1854

 [Thomas Allen Jenckes](#) became a member of the [Rhode Island](#) House of Representatives. He would be a Representative until 1857.



1854

1854

 As of 1844 the USA had already, in 15 years, created what had become by a considerable degree,

The world's largest RR system as of 1844

US	3,688 miles
Britain	2,069 miles
Germany	1,997 miles
France	552 miles
Belgium	343 miles

However, by this point, as of 1854, in the course of a decade, the nation had achieved considerably greater number of miles of railroad track **than the remainder of the world lumped together**. We were really pounding the rails. For instance, by this point railroad tracks extended all the way out Cape Cod as far as Hyannis. Also, it was in this year that a Hartford, [Providence](#), and Fishkill railroad link connected [Rhode Island](#) with the Hudson River.

HISTORY OF RR

 Yet another outbreak of the [cholera](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) prompted Dr. Edwin M. Snow to characterize the condition of the local Moshassuck River as “filthy as any common sewer.”



1854

1854



George F. Wilson and Professor Eben N. Horsford built a chemical laboratory just to the east of [Providence, Rhode Island](#): Geo. F. Wilson & Co. They would name their chemical works, and also the village that grew up around it, in honor of [Count von Rumford](#), because he had funded at Harvard University a professorship, and because this chair had since 1847 been held by Professor Horsford as “Rumford Professor of the Application of Science to the Useful Arts.” The factory would manufacture:

- Horsford’s Cream of Tartar Substitute.
- Horsford’s Bread Preparation.
- Horsford’s Phosphatic Baking Powder (Double-Acting Baking Powder).
- Rumford Yeast Powder.
- Horsford’s Acid Phosphate.
- Horsford’s Anti-Chlorine.
- Horsford’s Sulphite for Preserving Cider.

The previous type of baking powder (now known as single-acting) merely fizzed in the presence of liquid. Housewives had been able to make it themselves by combining baking soda and cream of tartar, but timing was critical as the mixture fizzed out rapidly while being mixed. The new “double-acting” baking powder was a convenience product: it was the old concoction plus a substance that did not begin to fizz until heated — sodium aluminum phosphate. Initially the phosphate would be obtained from ground-up slaughterhouse bones. This mixture had a good shelf life, so all the housewife would need to do would be to spoon it out of the convenient red can. Professor Horsford, who of course resided in Cambridge rather than in [Rhode Island](#), would become quite wealthy.



1854

1854

 [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *OTROTSHESTVO* (BOYHOOD). The [Crimean War](#) began, the most famous event of which would be the charge of the Light Brigade. Although the commander would survive unscathed, 503 of his 700 men would be cut down by [Russian](#) artillery. During the Crimean War, in about this timeframe, Tolstòy was commanding a battery. He witnessed (and would write about) the siege of Sebastopol.



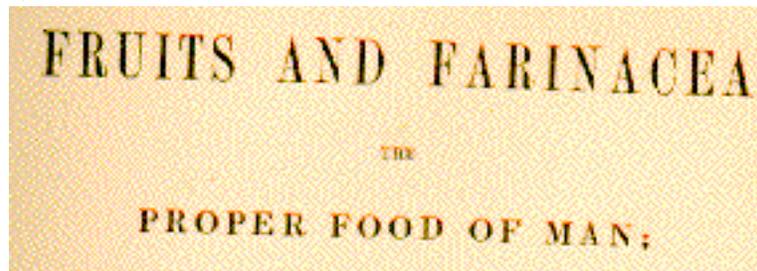
1854

1854

➡ Professor [Jacob Bigelow](#)'s NATURE IN DISEASE, a volume of essays.



➡ John Smith's FRUITS AND FARINACEA, THE PROPER FOOD OF MAN; BEING AN ATTEMPT TO PROVE FROM HISTORY, ANATOMY, PHYSIOLOGY, AND CHEMISTRY THAT THE ORIGINAL, NATURAL, AND BEST DIET OF MAN IS DERIVED FROM THE VEGETABLE KINGDOM. WITH NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS BY R. T. TRALL, M.D. (NY: Fowler & Wells).



➡ [Elizabeth A. Parkhill Gloucester](#) and [the Reverend James Newton Gloucester](#) gave up their 2d-hand clothing store on 7th Avenue in [New-York](#).

[Victor Hugo](#), in exile on the island of Guernsey, assisted in the campaign against the hanging by the English government of a local man guilty of murder. After the execution he attempted to transform this agitation into a general campaign for the abolition of [capital punishment](#) by the British.

COLDBLOODED MURDER

He produced at this time what would later be repurposed and would be transformed by its new context into the single most famous and graphic European image to appear in the wake of the raid by American abolitionists upon the US arsenal at [Harpers Ferry](#). In this engraving, in an indistinct scene of gloom, a human figure hangs from a gallows. Shafts of light are, however, falling on the figure on the gallows, from one side of the heavens.

It would be in late 1859 or early 1860 that Hugo would be moved to repurpose this bleak illustration to indicate the figure as being [John Brown](#) on his American gallows, and he would be able to do so simply by inscribing beneath it the words:

*Pro Christo-Sicut Christus, John Brown, - Charleston.
Designed by Victor Hugo.*

1854

1854



At the [Yearly Meeting School](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), the “old” gymnasium was erected — a wooden structure that was for use only by the boy scholars. The charge for board and tuition was increased to \$80 per scholar per year, plus a surcharge of \$120 if the scholar happened not to be from a [Quaker](#) family. There would be an additional surcharge of \$10 for instruction in ancient languages, French, and drawing.

One attitude toward [Quakers](#) in the arts:

Thou shalt rob me no more of sweet silence and rest,
 For I've proved thee a trap, a seducer at best.
 —Friend [Amelia Opie](#)'s “Farewell to Music”



(Amelia, who had been a popular fiction writer before giving this up in 1825 in order to become a [Quaker](#), had died in 1853 leaving her book manuscript THE PAINTER AND HIS WIFE unfinished.)

And another, completely different, attitude toward [Quakers](#) in the arts, in the same year: Friend [John Greenleaf Whittier](#)'s LITERARY RECREATIONS AND MISCELLANIES. Among the poems from this period is “Maud Muller,” with its best-known couplet:

Of all sad words of tongue and pen
 The saddest are these, “It might have been.”



1854

1854



Human bones were dug up on Cole's Hill in [Plymouth, Massachusetts](#) during a sewer project. These would be identified by [Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes](#) as the remains of white persons, and thus would be presumed to be the bones of Pilgrims who had expired during the First Winter, who had been buried in secret according to a tradition preserved by Elder Faunce, on Leyden Street near the original Common House. Eventually such sacred white-people bones would be re-interred alongside the Plymouth Rock under its canopy.

[Dr. Holmes](#) produced another volume of sickeningly self-celebrating Harvard "poetry," entitled SONGS OF THE CLASS OF 1829.



For instance, he wrote of his classmate the Baptist [Reverend Samuel Francis Smith](#), who had in 1831 made himself author of words for (not the tune of) the patriotic song "[America](#)," that:

There's a nice youngster of excellent pith,
Fate tried to conceal him by naming him Smith;
But he shouted a song for the brave and the free,
Just read on his medal, "[My country 'Tis of thee](#)."

1854

1854

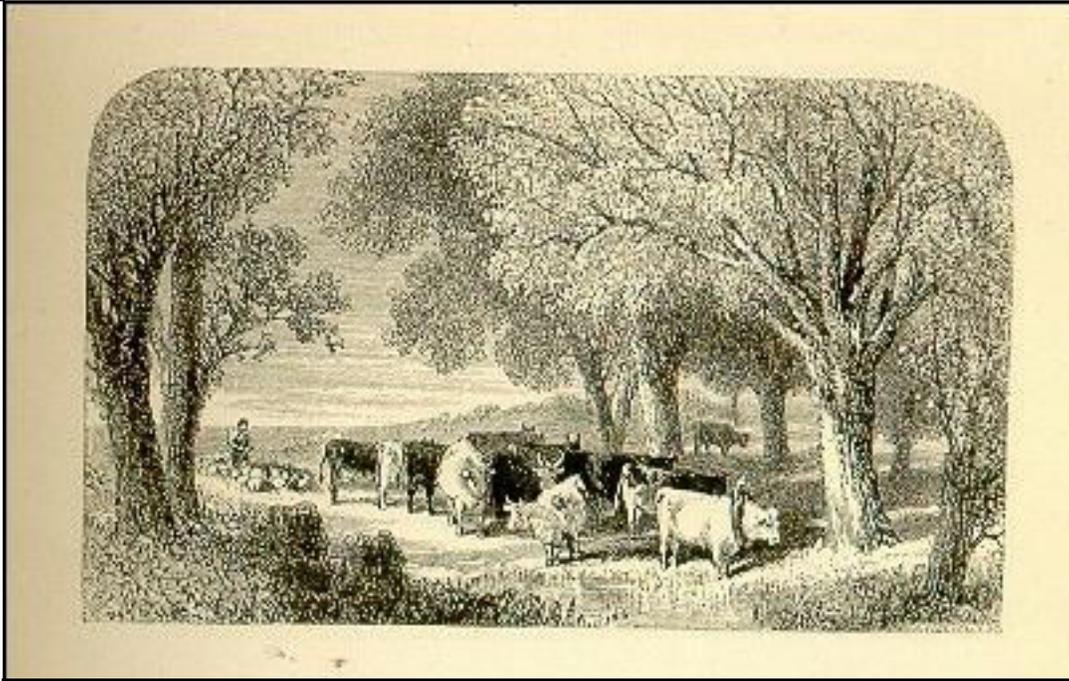


**Literary Hermits Recreating Themselves in Their Chapel:
Whittier-Holmes-Emerson-Motley-Alcott-Hawthorne-Lowell-Agassiz-Longfellow**

1854

1854

 [Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's](#) POEMS:



When an English acquaintance wrote the poet, unhelpfully suggesting without amplification that the famous “A Psalm of Life” and “Reaper” had amounted to mere translations from Goethe (LETTERS, Volume III, page 443), Longfellow responded in the negative.



My business, if I have any here to-day, is with the present. The accepted time with God and his cause is the ever-living now.



“Trust no future, however pleasant,
Let the dead past bury its dead;
Act, act in the living present,
Heart within, and God overhead.”

We have to do with the past only as we can make it useful to the present and to the future.

— Frederick Douglass

FULL TEXT OF THE ORATION

 Two municipal housing issues, the 1st pleasantly high-rent, the 2d unpleasantly low-rent:

- The doors of [Parker House](#) at 60 School Street in [Boston](#) opened for its upscale clientele. (And these doors’ve evidently been open ever since, for this edifice, now the “Omni Parker House,” lays claim to being the oldest continuously operating hotel in the US of A.)⁵²

1854

1854

- [Boston](#) began to house its paupers on [Deer Island](#) in [Boston Harbor](#) (where Native American Christian hostages used to be kept to starve while awaiting sale as slaves to the Azores Islands, and where Boston's prisoners would be kept to rot, and Boston's sewage processed).



52. The establishment, which has since positioned itself as “Boston’s Literary Hotel,” would be distinguished more by the quality of its lowly help than by that of its uppity clientele: although a prominent actor named [John Wilkes Booth](#) would indeed stop overnight in 1865 while on a journey toward the District of Columbia, during 1912/1913 the establishment would employ [Hô Chí Minh](#) in its bakeshop, and in the early 1940s a busboy named Malcolm Little ([Malcolm X](#)).

The founder [Harvey D. Parker](#) would pioneer the deployment of the term “scrod” to describe a fish dish that might be cod but maybe was instead halibut, or any other young whitefish being sold on the docks that morning. His hotel would be the venue for the creation of Boston Cream Pie (Massachusetts’s official dessert), would pioneer the Parker House Roll (appropriate for Boston both because shaped like a purse and due to its ability to absorb an infinite amount of real butter), would be the 1st hotel in Boston to boast hot and cold running water (although subsequent to the Tremont House’s installation of indoor plumbing and a rooftop water tank, with toilets on the ground floor and customer bathing in the basement), and the 1st in Boston to have a powered passenger elevator (although subsequent to the 1857 steam-powered passenger elevator in the 5-story department store of E.W. Haughtwhat & Company on Broadway in Manhattan, the 1859 passenger elevator in the Fifth Avenue Hotel in Manhattan, and the 1868 rope elevator designed by Otis Tufts for the American House on Hanover Street in Boston).

An [Irish](#) priest, to an immigrant: “[Boston](#) is a dreadful place for making Protestants of people, and you must be careful, especially of the children, or they will get them from you.”

A group of German Jews separated from the Ohabai Shalom congregation in [Boston](#), which was mainly Polish in background, to form the Temple Israel congregation.

A man with a horn, who called himself Gabriel, was making quite a nuisance of himself in beautiful downtown [Boston](#). He would attract attention with his horn and then deliver a nearly incoherent quasipolitical speech which would wind up with his passing the hat. (Eventually collections would fall off, this man would be unable to pay for his lodgings, and he would take ship for Santo Domingo where, after being detained as a disturber of the police, he would die in jail.)



Perhaps to protect the tree from men with horns, Mayor J.V.C. Smith ordered that an iron grillwork fence be installed around the [Great Elm \(*Ulmus americana*\)](#) on [Boston Common](#).⁵³

THE OLD ELM
THIS TREE HAS BEEN STANDING
HERE FOR AN UNKNOWN PERIOD. IT IS
BELIEVED TO HAVE EXISTED BEFORE THE
SETTLEMENT OF BOSTON, BEING FULLY
GROWN IN 1722, EXHIBITED MARKS OF OLD
AGE IN 1792, AND WAS NEARLY DESTROYED
BY A STORM IN 1832. PROTECTED BY AN
IRON ENCLOSURE IN 1854.
J.V.C. SMITH, MAYOR.

53. One account has it that after 1658 and before 1674 one Hezekiah Henschman had transplanted this [Great Elm](#) from the North End.

1854

1854



**Literary Hermits Recreating Themselves in Their Chapel:
Whittier-Holmes-Emerson-Motley-Alcott-Hawthorne-Lowell-Agassiz-Longfellow**

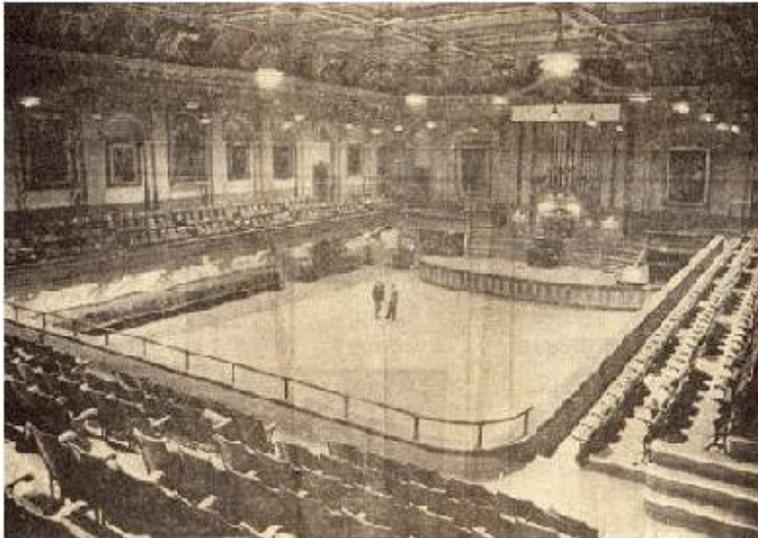
1854

1854

 A piano manufacturer in [Worcester, Massachusetts](#) advertised the firm's wares:



On the site formerly occupied by the Waldo Mansion, a Mechanics Hall was completed. This edifice would proudly record that it had hosted lecturers such as John B. Gough, Rufus Choate, President McKinley, ex-Vice President Stevenson, the Honorable James R. Garfield, President Taft, President [Theodore?] Roosevelt, and President [Woodrow Wilson](#).



Hey, didn't [Henry Thoreau](#) also lecture there? –Or, was that at Worcester's Washburn Hall?

1854

1854



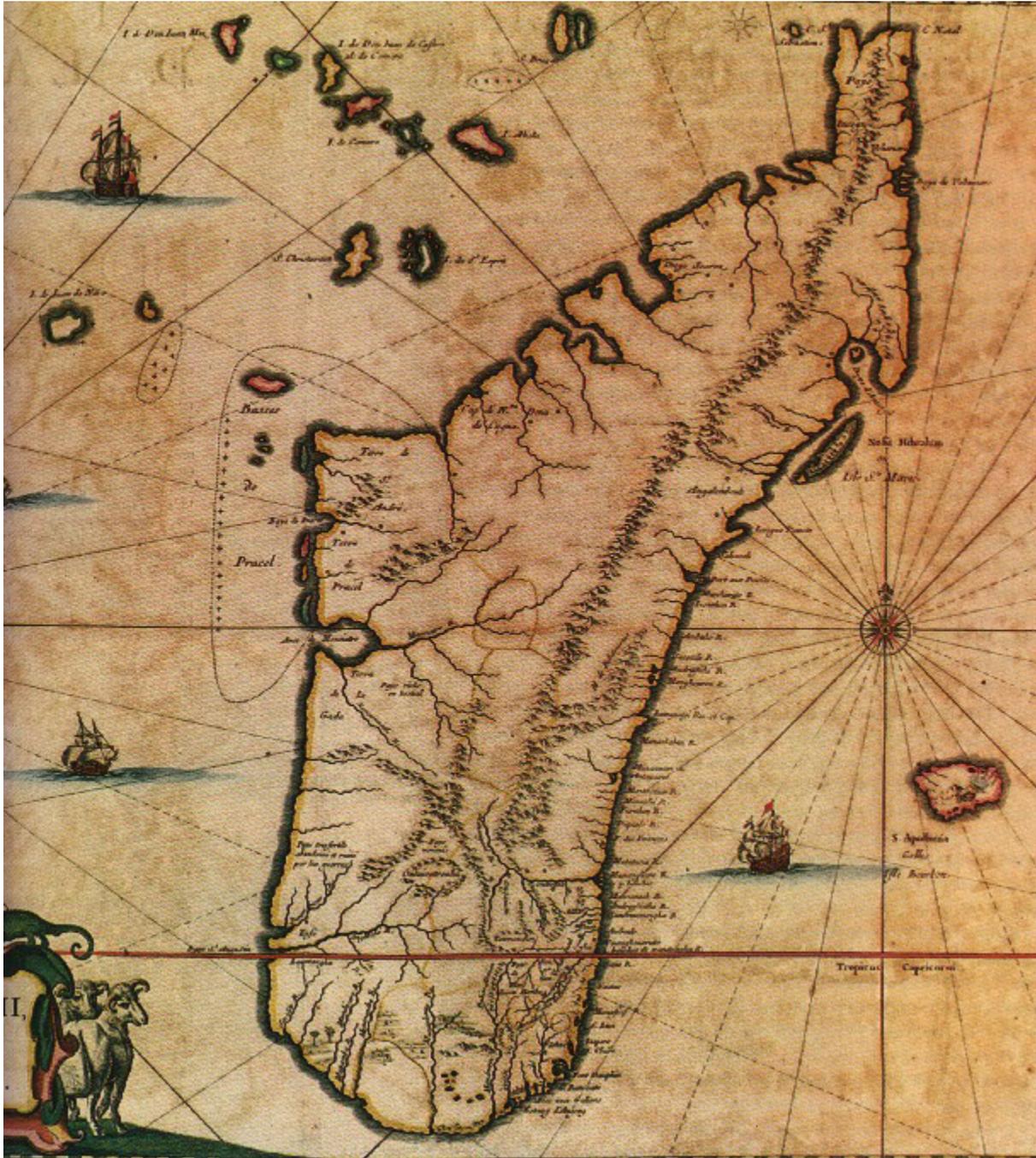
In this year approximately 30,000 American [tourists](#) departed for destinations other than [Mexico](#) or Canada, by way of contrast with a figure from the year 1954 of approximately 1,000,000 such tourists. Here is Honolulu, [Hawaiian Islands](#), a view upslope and a view downslope, in a couple of lithographs prepared in this year by Paul Emmert for the firm of Britton & Rey in San Francisco:



Having been rebuffed in the previous year as the official emissary of the London Missionary Society to the island of [Madagascar](#), the Reverend [William Ellis](#) returned from the island of Mauritius to Madagascar for a 2d try. He was again rebuffed (this may have had to do with French influence on the island).

1854

1854



The Reverend [William Henry Channing](#) left the USA to take up a pastorate in Liverpool, England. He would come back during the Civil War and serve a term in the US House of Representatives, but would then return to England in 1866 and remain there for the remainder of his life.

1854

1854

➡ [Arnold Henri Guyot](#) was appointed Professor of [Geology](#) and Physical Geography at the College of New Jersey. You can see, in Guyot Hall at [Princeton University](#), the field toilet kit he used to carry on his mountain explorations.



The Reverend Professor [Edward Hitchcock](#), likewise a [geologist](#), left off being President of [Amherst College](#), retaining his teaching role. During his presidency he had personally conducted the worship in the college church.

➡ Sir [George Back](#) was made an honorary doctor of civil law at [Oxford University](#).



1854

1854

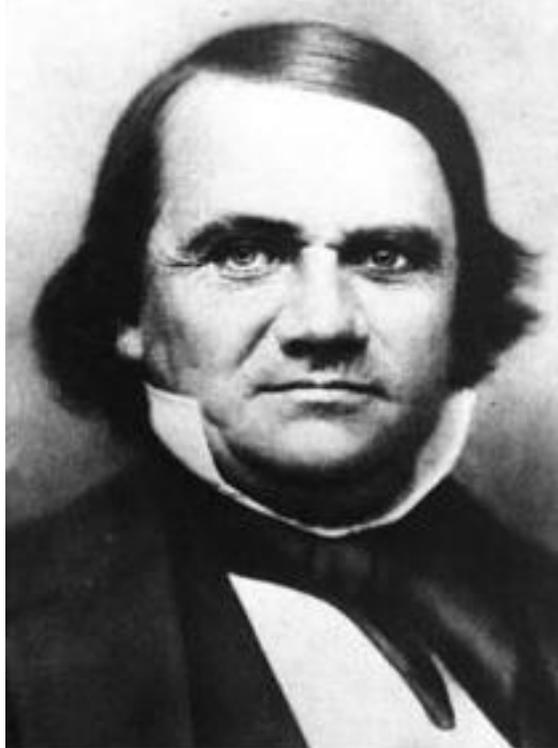


**Literary Hermits Recreating Themselves in Their Chapel:
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1854

1854

 Anti-slavery, and therefore an opponent of the [Fugitive Slave Law](#), [Richard Josiah Hinton](#) assisted in the organization of the [Republican Party](#). The party took its name from the “Democratic-Republican” party founded by Thomas Jefferson (that party had dropped “Republican” from its name in 1828). Prominent in the Republican platform was the opposition to the extension of slavery. The issue of slavery, and this year’s [Kansas/Nebraska Act](#) proposed by [Illinois](#) Senator [Stephen A. Douglas](#) as a way of repealing the Missouri Compromise and extending slavery, contributed to the defection of many Whigs to the new party.



[Waldo Emerson](#)’s attitude toward the [Kansas/Nebraska Act](#) was: “the question is properly, whether slavery or whether freedom shall be abolished.”⁵⁴

54. Slater, Joseph, ed. THE CORRESPONDENCE OF EMERSON AND CARLYLE. New York: Columbia University Press, 1964, page 499.

[Frederick Douglass](#) made a modest proposal about “[Bleeding Kansas](#)”:⁵⁵ It has been alleged by Michael



Goldfield in “The Color of Politics in the United States: White Supremacy as the Main Explanation for the Peculiarities of American Politics from Colonial Times to the Present” (in LaCapra, Dominick, ed. THE BOUNDS OF RACE: PERSPECTIVES ON HEGEMONY AND RESISTANCE. Ithaca NY: Cornell UP, 1991, page 124) that:



Until the early 1850s when Joseph Wedemeyer and other radical followers of [Karl Marx](#) who understood the importance of abolition for the white workers, gained some small influence in the white workers’ movement, labor leaders as a whole were more interested in freedom from Afro-Americans than in freedom for them. The rallying cry of Free Soilism in 1845 was the Wilmot Proviso, which barred slavery from the new territories, but suggested that land rights should be reserved for whites only. Such an approach was counterposed to the more radical and more realistic approach offered by Douglass for [Kansas](#) in 1854. Douglass argued that 1,000 free black homesteading families settling in [Kansas](#) would put up a “wall of living fire” through which slavery could not pass.

[Frederick Douglass](#) delivered an address “The Claims of the Negro Ethnologically Considered” before the literary societies of Western Reserve College in Rochester, New York, in which he attacked the use of the scientism of his day as a legitimator for racism. Weighing craniological and physiological similarities against differences, he proposed that from a purely scientific standpoint humans constituted one grouping, which should not have been a difficult conclusion for his audience to accept, since, as we now know, were the same standards for speciation to be applied to the pongid branch of mammals as are routinely applied to, say, beetles,

55. You will notice an amazing thing here. We’ve got “Douglas” and “Douglass” in the very same data element!

we would be forced to recognize that there is only one existing species of pongids, of which chimpanzees, humans, and the recently discovered gorillas would constitute at most differing local races. Nevertheless, at the end of all this rationalization Douglass proclaimed it all to be quite literally of no significance. For even if none of this turned out to be the case, he indicated, even if anatomical differences were someday by someone demonstrated to far outweigh similarities, it would never follow that one human group ought to hold another human group in contempt as inferior beings. The title to freedom, liberty, and knowledge he held to depend not at all upon any “natural” realities, but instead upon the law of “the Courts of Heaven.” What difference does difference make, when it comes to human rights? None whatsoever. One is reminded of our contemporary “Calvin and Hobbes” cartoon in which Hobbes the Tiger destroys Calvin the boy terror’s incipient Social Darwinism by informing him that living things were obviously put upon the face of this planet in order to chase and tear one another, and to eat one another alive. (Chastened of his naturalism, Calvin goes home, and at the end of the strip he is locking all the doors and turning on all the lights.)

[Abraham Lincoln](#) re-entered politics in opposition to the [Kansas/Nebraska Act](#) and was elected to the [Illinois](#) legislature, but declined this seat in order to try to become a US Senator. The Act succeeded in sweeping aside the Missouri Compromise, which had been restricting the expansion of slavery. With a nod to Southern power, the federal government was placing the volatile issue of slavery into the hands of those settling the new territories. “The people” will decide, by “popular vote,” whether to be “free” or “slave.”

 The [Reverend Nehemiah Adams](#) offered A SOUTHSIDE VIEW OF SLAVERY (Boston: T.R. Marvin) as a rejoinder to [UNCLE TOM’S CABIN](#) (just so you’ll know, the Reverend Adams happened to be a white man, and happened to have what we’d be tempted to term a white man’s tolerant attitude toward race slavery).

 [John James Audubon](#)’s THE QUADRUPEDS OF AMERICA began to be published.

 Jesse Hoover moved from Ohio with his father Eli. They traveled by river boat and covered wagon to a farm outside West Branch, Iowa, a small town founded by [Quakers](#).

HERBERT HOOVER

During this year 84 certificates of membership from very divergent sources would be received by the Iowa [Quakers](#). When the Red Cedar Monthly Meeting (“[Springdale](#)”) became overcrowded these new immigrants moved on to the northwest, and for many years the fertile divide between the Iowa River and Cedar River to the northwest of Springdale would be known as “Quaker Ridge.”

The immigration into Iowa the present season is astonishing and unprecedented. For miles and miles, day after day, the prairies of Illinois are lined with cattle and wagons, pushing on towards this prosperous State. At a point beyond Peoria, during a single month, seventeen hundred and forty-three wagons had passed, and all for Iowa.

1854

1854

How very different the peaceable settlement of Iowa was, as above, from the warlike settlement that was going on simultaneously in the [Kansas Territory](#)! [Amos Adams Lawrence](#), co-founder of the emigration company concept, has a town there named after him; after [Kansas](#) would become "[Bleeding Kansas](#)" such emigration companies would be supplying arms and ammunition to their anti-slavery settlers. The city of Topeka was founded by 5 [antislavery](#) activists. Five of [John Brown](#)'s sons went to the [Kansas Territory](#), taking with them 2 small shotguns and a revolver and staking claims 8 or 10 miles from [Osawatimie](#).



John Brown Statue dedicated May 9, 1935 at John Brown Memorial State Park located at Osawatimie, Kansas

THE 2D GREAT AMERICAN DISUNION

The beginning of publication of the Leavenworth [Herald](#), 1st newspaper in the [Kansas Territory](#).

[Thaddeus Hyatt](#) became actively involved in the abolitionist movement after Congress passed the Kansas-Nebraska Act. The law, which mandated that the question of legalizing slavery in the [Kansas Territory](#) be settled by the territory's voters, would spark a race between proslavery and antislavery factions to move to Kansas and tip the ballot boxes. These factions would clash in what would come to be regarded as "Bleeding Kansas." Several state-level committees would be formed to provide aid to antislavery settlers, including the New York Kansas League of which [Hyatt](#) was president (during this year, also, he would be awarded Patent No. 11,695 for a "Vault-Light"). [Hyatt](#) and William Barnes simultaneously but separately embarked on efforts to organize counties in upstate New York to participate in packing the [Kansas Territory](#) with antislavery voters.

Meanwhile the South was packing the territory with armed proslavery settlers. You do understand what was going on here, don't you? –The antislavery North and the proslavery South, locked in opposition to one another in the US federal Senate, had determined that they would fight a [proxy war](#) in this territory, by pouring in armed proslavery activists and armed antislavery activists as sponsored "settlers." They would kill each other and kill each other, and otherwise dominate and subdue each other, until in the end one or the other side in this proxy struggle would succeed in packing the ballot boxes sufficiently full — and the new state of [Kansas](#) would then emerge in the form of two extra votes in the US Senate for the proslavery South, that would allow the proslavery South to dominate the nation, or else emerge as two extra votes in the US Senate for the antislavery North, which would allow the antislavery North to dominate the nation. Study up on [proxy war](#), it isn't just something that happened to Vietnam.

1854

1854



[Parker Pillsbury](#) served as an emissary from the American Anti-Slavery Society to Great Britain, residing there with the surgeon John Estlin and his abolitionist daughter Mary Estlin (both John and Mary would become involved in Pillsbury's problematic correspondence with the British activist [Louis-Alexis Chamerovzow](#)).



During the [Anthony Burns](#) case, after Transcendentalist poets and preachers had attacked the Boston courthouse, the building had been converted into a sort of armored slavepen, in that it was guarded by a detachment of [U.S. Marines](#), and 2 artillery companies with loaded cannons and with fixed bayonets on their rifles, as well as by the US Marshall's guard consisting of "a gang of about one-hundred and twenty men, the lowest villains in the community, keepers of brothels, bullies, blacklegs, convicts...." Not even the judges, let alone the jurors, the witnesses, and the litigant attorneys, were being permitted inside the courthouse without first passing a cordon of men 5 men deep, and proving their right to be there.



Boston abolitionists had offered the [slavemaster](#) of Burns the sum of \$1,200 in return for a document in

[manumission](#), but had been refused.

Nothing in the whole record of the Burns affair is more striking to a modern audience or at first more off-putting than the apparent incapacity of even the most committed of the radicals to express a direct, authentic outrage on Burns's personal behalf. Phillips's unelaborated reference to his "suffering" is as close as they come. The evil that Parker undertakes to agitate against is the threat to the civil liberties of Northern white men. There is an oddity about this argument even on the supposition that it consciously appeals to self-interest ... if they are to be made to fight again, it must probably be for the same thing [their own personal liberty] and not ... for ... the right of another man than oneself to be free.

WENDELL PHILLIPS
THEODORE PARKER

At some point in the year, in regard to the enforcement of the federal Fugitive Slave Act in regard to the Burns case, the Reverend [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#) would deliver a sermon entitled "Massachusetts in Mourning."

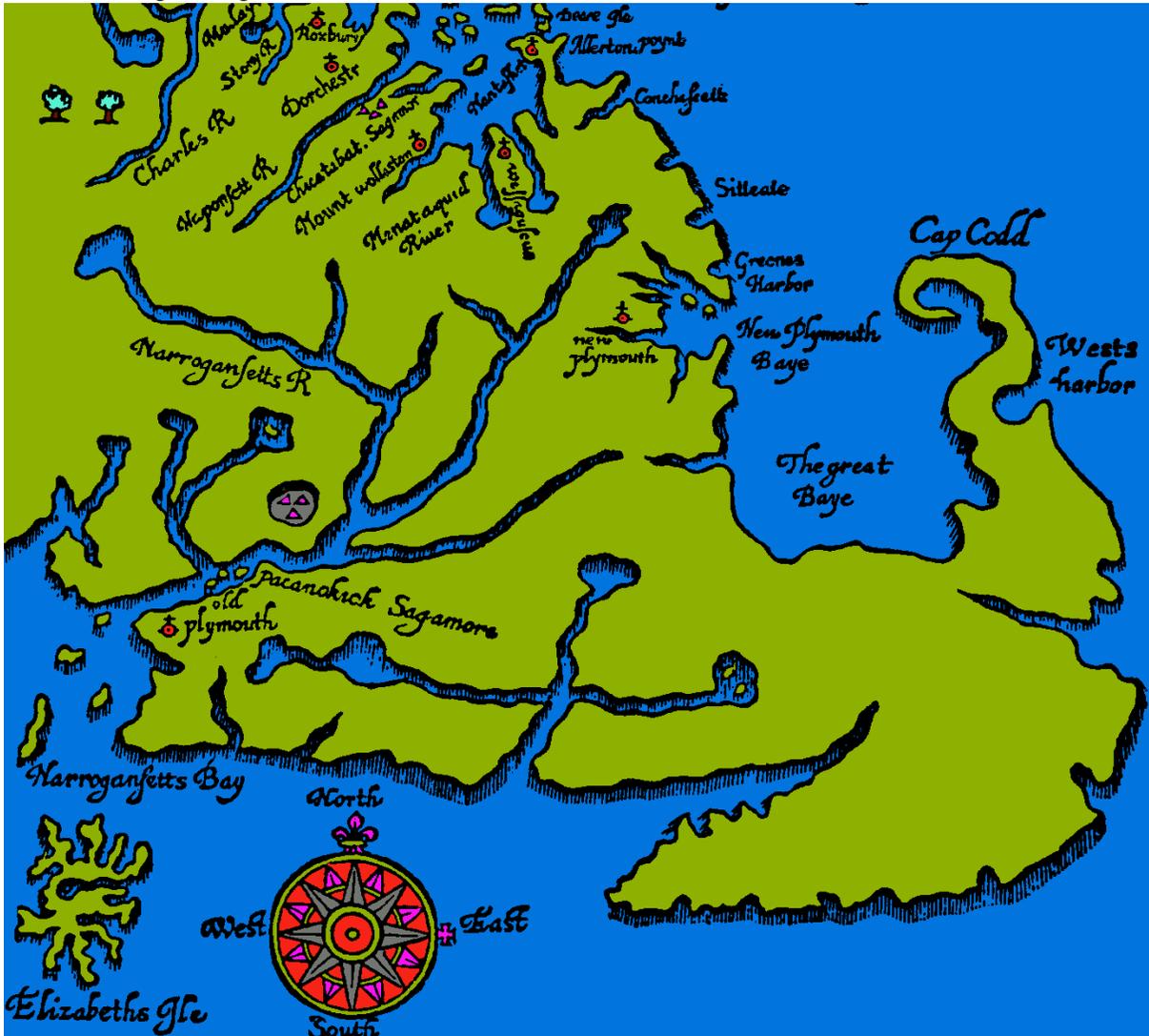
➡ After British abolitionists had "purchased" his [manumission](#) papers, redeeming him from the danger of re-enslavement under the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, [William Wells Brown](#) returned to reside in the Boston area. While abroad he had created CLOTEL, which would be the 1st novel by an American of color, and he had ST. DOMINGO, a work indicative of growing antislavery militancy, in process. (He had also produced a travelogue complete with a rolled 24-scene [panorama](#), and would produce a play, a compilation of antislavery songs, and finally 3 volumes of black history.)

ABOLITIONISM

1854

1854

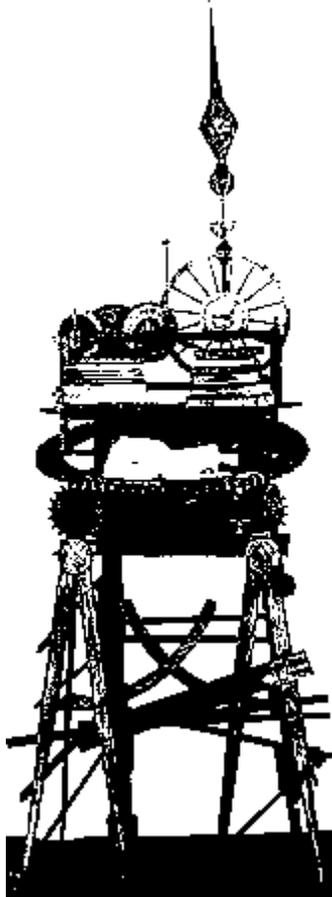
 [Daniel Gookin](#)'s INDIAN CHILDREN PUT TO SERVICE 1676 was published in the New England Historical and Genealogical Register VIII:270-273.



 In this period it was common to regard extraordinary physical performance as a Native American racial characteristic, to the extent that at some fairgrounds there were races for endurance and speed which were restricted to Native American athletes only. A Seneca tribesman named Albert Smith was regarded as the current dominant such "pedestrian." At this point John Grindall and Mickey Free went to Buffalo, New York specifically to test themselves, as white men, against these Native American athletes. Mickey Free beat a Native American named Armstrong in the speed quarter-mile, in 56 seconds, and then tested himself against Native American runners named Burton, Armstrong, [Louis "Red Jacket" Bennett](#), and an aging runner named Steeprock who had been dominant during the 1840s, in a 5-mile endurance race over 500 3-foot hurdles. Burton won. There was then a similar 7-mile race, which was awarded to a Native American named Sundown after the Native American runner Albert Smith was revealed to have knocked down one of the 700 hurdles without going back and righting it. There was also a 4.42-mile race in which Grindall defeated Sundown and a 10-mile race in which Albert Smith defeated Grindall. In none of these longer contests could Red Jacket manage to get among the winners.⁵⁶

➡ The Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled that the federal Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 was unconstitutional and released an American who had been convicted under that federal law.

➡ At the age of 16, in Wisconsin, [John Muir](#) was becoming greatly interested in literature and poetry. No Luddite his reputation to the contrary notwithstanding, he was beginning to construct clocks, barometers, hydrometers, table saws, and other such pieces of technology.



Another expression of a Luddistic kind, also contemporary with the [Luddites](#), was Romanticism, beginning with [William Blake](#) and [William Wordsworth](#) and [George Gordon, Lord Byron](#) particularly, who like the machine-breakers were repulsed by the Satanic mills and the getting-and-spending of the past. (The identity was so immediate for Byron at least that at one point he was even moved to write, "Down with all kings but King Ludd!") This Romanticism, and particularly its attachment to an unspoiled machine-free nature, was echoed across the Atlantic by [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#), [Edgar Allan Poe](#), and [Herman Melville](#), among literary lions, and notably by [Waldo Emerson](#) and [Henry David Thoreau](#) and

56. Having been built in Rockland ME by the firm of Deacon George Thomas in the previous year, the clipper [Red Jacket](#) (named in honor of Headman Sagoyewatha of the Seneca) in this year sailed under master Asa Eldridge from New-York dockside to Liverpool dockside in but 13 days, 1 hour, and 25 minutes. This is still the record.

1854

their great heir, [John Muir](#). Muir, one feels, would have been a Luddite given half the chance, and there is in his tirades against the developers of the West – “These Temple destroyers, devotees of ravaging commercialism, seem to have a perfect contempt for Nature, and instead of lifting their eyes to the God of the mountains, lift them to the Almighty Dollar” – the taste of the acrid anger found in the Luddite letters. ...What purpose does this machine serve? What problem has become so great that it needs this solution? Is this invention nothing but, as Thoreau put it, an improved means to an unimproved end?

1854



1854

1854

 Things having more or less quieted down on the political front, the [Harvard Corporation](#) was able to offer the Reverend Professor [Francis Bowen](#), who had up to this point been in the History Department, its Alford Chair of Moral Philosophy.

 [Hugh Miller](#)'s [AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY: MY SCHOOLS AND SCHOOLMASTERS; OR, THE STORY OF MY EDUCATION](#).

 [John Henry Clifford](#) again became attorney general of Massachusetts (as he had been 1849-1853, and this time he would serve until 1858).

 In Germany, the 1st volume of Jacob Ludwig Carl Grimm and Wilhelm Carl Grimm's *DAS DEUTSCHE WÖRTERBUCH* appeared.

 [Robert FitzRoy](#) devoted himself to weather prediction. He set up a storm warning system for mariners and invented the FitzRoy barometer, but did not discover the ENSO oscillation:

ENSO

Largest Scale Global Weather Oscillations 1847-1854

	Southern Oscillation	South Pacific current reversal	Indonesian monsoon	Australian droughts	Indian monsoon	Annual Nile flood
1847	absent	cold La Niña	adequate	adequate	adequate	adequate
1848	absent	cold La Niña	adequate	adequate	adequate	adequate
1849	absent	cold La Niña	adequate	adequate	adequate	adequate
1850	strong	warm El Niño moderate	drought	drought	deficient	quite weak
1851	absent	cold La Niña	adequate	adequate	adequate	adequate
1852	moderate	warm El Niño moderate	adequate	adequate	deficient SBM	quite weak
1853	moderate	cold La Niña	drought	adequate	deficient	adequate
1854	strong	warm El Niño moderate	adequate	drought	adequate	adequate

The southern ocean / atmosphere "seesaw" links to periodic Indonesian east monsoon droughts, Australian droughts, deficient Indian summer monsoons, and deficient Ethiopian monsoon rainfall causing weak annual Nile floods. This data is presented from Tables 6.2-6.3 of Quinn, William H. "A study of Southern Oscillation-related climatic activity for AD 622-1900 incorporating Nile River flood data," pages 119-49 in Diaz, Henry F. and Vera Markgraf, eds. *EL NIÑO: HISTORICAL AND PALEOCLIMATIC ASPECTS OF THE SOUTHERN OSCILLATION*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992.

1854

1854

 What remained of the Caddo confederation, the 1st Native Americans in what is now the USA to have been confronted by adventuresome Europeans (the De Soto expedition below) were at this point being relocated, from their ancestral homelands, onto a reservation in Texas.





1854

1854

F. TODD SMITH

THE CADDO INDIANS:

TRIBES AT THE CONVERGENCE OF EMPIRES, 1542-1854

(COLLEGE STATION TX: TEXAS A&M UP, 1995)

Reviewed by Michael James Foret, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

In *THE CADDO INDIANS*, F. Todd Smith has done something very old, but at the same time something new and exciting. Like an old-fashioned historian, he wrote a narrative history. What's new? He wrote a narrative history of the Caddo Indians and their relations with the Europeans and Americans who settled the Red River Valley of present-day Louisiana and eastern Texas. Like Daniel Usner in *INDIANS, SETTLERS, AND SLAVES*,⁵⁷ Smith wonders in his introduction that historians have so long neglected such an interesting subject. The Caddo were among the first natives in North America contacted by Europeans—during the Soto expedition—and they occupied a strategic location that put them at various times between various combinations and permutations of New Spain, New France, Mexico, the Republic of Texas, the United States, and other Indian groups, a position that allowed them to “play off” the peoples around them, although Smith does not use that exact term.

To explain this neglect, Smith points to “the bias of American historians toward English colonization over the contemporaneous history of those areas once controlled by France and Spain” (p. 4). He makes it clear at the same time that he is writing Indian-centered history — that is, not a general history of Indian-white relations, but the history of the three peoples that made up the Caddo confederacies, from first contact until the establishment of their Texas reserve in 1854. That history involves two main themes. First, the Caddo confederacies were able to play off the European (French and Spanish) and Euroamerican (Texan and U.S.) powers well into the nineteenth century. Second, close contact with Europeans led to a dwindling population and to the Caddos’ becoming dependent on Europeans, first for goods, then for food as well.

The Caddo confederacies have a history that should be told and that should be studied by historians who want to make sense of American history. In Chapter 1, as is common among such histories, Smith begins with an overview of Caddoan prehistory and culture. The Caddoan confederacies lived in what is today Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Oklahoma, but there is also a Caddoan language group that includes Plains tribes such as the Arikaras, Pawnees, Wichitas, and Kichais. The “Caddos” as a people included three confederacies, although membership changed over time between the fifteen

57. *INDIANS, SETTLERS, AND SLAVES IN A FRONTIER EXCHANGE ECONOMY: THE LOWER MISSISSIPPI VALLEY BEFORE 1783* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 2-5.



1854

1854

or so towns, known as the Kadohadacho, Natchitoches, and Hasinai. Smith explains the basic religious tenets of the Caddos, as well as their civil government, which probably reflect Mississippian survivals. The Caddos were expert agriculturalists, which Smith argues accounted for their large population and their ability to retain independence from the Europeans for so long. Caddo contact with Soto's expedition was brief, and Smith discusses it briefly in this chapter.

The rest of the book covers the period from 1686 to 1854; it is divided into chapters (two through nine) based mainly on the changing circumstances of the Caddos, which were dictated by the shifting Euroamerican presence in Caddo country and on their borders. The Caddos were able to retain their numbers, even at the levels they did, and their independence in part because Caddo country was not a frontier of settlement until after 1800: Louisiana and Texas were both tactical colonies placed where they were to protect vital European possessions (Canada and Mexico), and neither attracted much settlement. The establishment of Natchitoches and then the Nasonite Post in the early part of the eighteenth century made Caddo country a pivot, if not of empire, of trade and diplomacy, and the Caddos made the most of it. A series of remarkable Caddo leaders such as Bernardino, Tinhouen, Bigotes, Dehahuit, and Iesh exercised great political and diplomatic skills, and some of the Caddo leaders were among the most respected native leaders of their day, at a time when trade, diplomacy, and war could bring together such diverse allies and enemies as the Cherokees, Choctaws, Chickasaws, Delawares, Kickapoos, Alabama-Koasatis, Osages, Apaches, Comanches, and Quapaws.

Dealing with the Europeans, of course, had to be part of any such considerations. In this one part of the world, at least, France was more powerful than Spain, and the story of just how that came to be is one of the most interesting chapters in North American colonial history. Ironically, even after Louisiana became a Spanish colony after the Seven Years' War, a frontier remained between Louisiana and Texas, as Louisiana fell under the jurisdiction of the viceroyalty of Havana, while Texas continued to be administered from Mexico City.

The Caddos were able to maintain a play-off system later than any other eastern tribes because of a series of episodes that kept the various governments hesitant to challenge the balance of power in the region, and the Caddos were at the center of that balance. First there was the confusion over the Louisiana-Texas border after the Louisiana Purchase, followed by the turmoil of the War of 1812 and the Creek Red Stick revolt. Mexico won its independence from Spain shortly after that, but then the Texas revolutions broke out, followed by the creation of the short-lived Republic of Texas, which was nonetheless significant for the Caddos, because its Indian policies might have made even Andrew Jackson's policies look humane by comparison. Even after the annexation of Texas things remained unsettled, however, as the circumstances of annexation led to Texas' public lands not coming under the immediate jurisdiction of the federal government. Finally, by 1854, the Caddos became just another small, powerless tribe to be pushed here and there by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Although Smith is not writing about a very large area, at least on a continental scale, it is indeed a region "at the convergence of empires," and working in the history of these empires is not easy. Historians have not written about the Caddos and some of the other tribes of the Southeast partly because many of the sources are not in English and thus not accessible to many U.S. historians: Smith notes in the introduction that



the only published history of the Caddos has almost nothing about the Caddos before 1803 (p. 4). Although some French and Spanish archival sources and published primary sources on Texas and Louisiana have been translated, and Smith has used these to great effect, he has also used Spanish-language materials, archival and published, to write this history.

Although I like what is here, there are a few topics and sources that I think the author should have included. Although Smith makes playing off the peoples and states around the Caddos a major theme of the book, he does not make much of the idea of play-off systems; I have absorbed enough anthropology to think that he should at least make reference to other play-off systems and how and why they did or did not work—for instance, Daniel Richter's discussion in *THE ORDEAL OF THE LONGHOUSE*.⁵⁸ In the same way, Smith writes about dependency, without calling it that directly or citing any other discussions of this topic, even though he might easily have cited Richard White's work on nations to the east and northwest of the Caddos, the Choctaws and Pawnees, especially because the Choctaws have a least cameo appearances in the book.⁵⁹

Likewise, the notes and bibliography miss at least a couple of works that the author should have included. Although I can understand why he might not have highlighted it, Smith should at least have made reference to Ross Phares' biography of St. Denis, a crucial European figure in Caddo history, if only to explain why he doesn't make much of it.⁶⁰ I also think, especially given that some of the Caddo tribes maintained their population levels longer than other groups in the region, that he should have included information about the Caddos and neighboring groups provided by Peter Wood's excellent article on Southeastern demography in *POWHATAN'S MANTLE*.⁶¹

I have a few other quibbles—for instance, I do not think that Jackson's removal policy represented a dramatic change in U.S. policy (p. 103)—but overall, *THE CADDOS* is an excellent work. The book has six well-done maps, which are crucial to keeping up with the different groups as they change configurations and places through the years. The book has extensive endnotes and a bibliography, a combination that I think should be standard for history books today, even with book prices as they are.

The Caddos and their territory lay between several zones of convergence in North America. They occupied the borders of ecological zones—that is, the Plains and the Mississippi Valley. Their culture was basically that of the eastern woodlands, but some of their near neighbors were of the Plains cultures. And they certainly occupied the “convergence of empires.” But the Caddos and other groups also occupy frontiers between history and anthropology, between “U.S.” or “American” history and other histories. They have, until very recently, occupied the academic equivalent of the “neutral ground” between Texas and Louisiana. F. Todd Smith's book goes a long way toward opening up that neutral ground for our exploration. I would hope that colleagues outside of Indian history, borderlands, and Texas and Louisiana colonial history do not fail to discover what F. Todd Smith has

58. Daniel Richter, *THE ORDEAL OF THE LONGHOUSE: THE PEOPLES OF THE IROQUOIS LEAGUE IN THE ERA OF EUROPEAN COLONIZATION* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), especially 2-4.

59. Richard White, *THE ROOTS OF DEPENDENCY: SUBSISTENCE, ENVIRONMENT, AND SOCIAL CHANGE AMONG THE CHOCTAWS, PAWNEES, AND NAVAHOES* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983).

60. Ross Phares, *CAVALIER IN THE WILDERNESS: THE STORY OF THE EXPLORER AND TRADER, LOUIS JUCHEREAU DE SAINT DENIS* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1952).

61. Peter Wood, “The Changing Population of the Colonial South: An Overview by Race and Region, 1685-1790,” in Wood, Gregory Waselkov, and M. Thomas Hatley, *POWHATAN'S MANTLE: INDIANS IN THE COLONIAL SOUTHEAST* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), 35-103.



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December: [James Parton](#)'s THE LIFE OF [HORACE GREELEY](#): EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TRIBUNE (Fields, Osgood, & Company), the preliminary biography of a successful businessman who as yet was but 44 years of age:

Chapter VI Apprenticeship

East Poultney is not, decidedly not, a place which a traveler—if, by any extraordinary chance, a traveler should ever visit it—would naturally expect of a newspaper. But, in one of the most densely-populated parts of the city of New York, there is a field!—a veritable, indubitable field, with a cow in it, a rough wooden fence around it, and a small, low, wooden house in the middle of it, where an old gentleman lives, who lived there when all was rural around him, and who means to live there all his days, pasturing his cow and raising his potatoes on ground which he could sell—but won't—at a considerable number of dollars per foot. The field in the metropolis we can account for. But that a newspaper should ever have been published at East Poultney, Rutland county, Vermont, seems, at the first view of it, inexplicable.

Vermont, however, is a land of villages; and the business which is elsewhere done only in large towns is, in that State, divided among the villages in the country. Thus, the stranger is astonished at seeing among the few signboards of mere hamlets, one or two containing most unexpected and metropolitan announcements, such as "Silversmith," "Organ Factory," "Piano Fortes," "Printing Office," or "Patent Melodeons." East Poultney, for example, is little more than a hamlet, yet it once had a newspaper, and boasts a small factory of melodeons at this moment. A foreigner would as soon expect to see there an Italian opera house or a French cafe.

The Poultney river is a small stream that flows through a valley, which widens and narrows, narrows and widens, all along its course; here, a rocky gorge; a grassy plain, beyond. At one of its narrow places, where the two ranges of hills approach and not to one another, and where the river pours through a rocky channel—a torrent on a very small scale—the little village nestles, a cluster of houses at the base of an enormous hill. It is built round a small triangular green, in the middle of which is a church, with a handsome clock in its steeple, all complete except the works, and bearing on its ample face the date 1805. No village, however minute, can get on without three churches, representing the Conservative, the Enthusiastic, and Eccentric tendencies of human nature; and, of course East Poultney has three. It has likewise the most remarkably shabby and dilapidated school-house in all the country round. There is a store or two; but business is not brisk, and when a customer arrives in town, perhaps his first difficulty will be to find the storekeeper, who has locked up his store and gone to hoe in his garden or talk to the blacksmith. A tavern, a furnace, a saw-mill, and forty dwelling houses, nearly complete the inventory of the village. The place has a neglected and "seedy" aspect which is rare in New England. In that remote and sequestered spot, it seems to have forgotten, and left behind in the march of progress; and the people, giving up the hope and the endeavor to catch up, have settled down to the tranquil enjoyment of Things as they Are. The village cemetery, near by,—more populous far than the village, for the village is an old one—is upon the side of a steep ascent, and the whole ranks of gravestones bow, submissive to the law of gravitation, and no man sets them aright. A quiet, slow little place is East Poultney. Thirty years ago, the people were a little more wide awake, and there were a few more of them.



It was a fine spring morning in the year 1826, about ten o'clock, when Mr. Amos Bliss, the manager, and one of the proprietors, of the Northern Spectator, "might have been seen" in the garden behind his house planting potatoes. He heard the gate open behind him, and, without turning or looking round, became dimly conscious of the presence of a boy. But the boys of country villages go into whosoever garden their wandering fancy them, and supposing this boy to be one of his own neighbors, Mr. Bliss continued his work and quickly forgot that he was not alone. In a few minutes, he heard a voice close behind him, a strange voice, high pitched and whining.

It said, "Are you the man that carries on the printing office?"

Mr. Bliss then turned, and resting upon his hoe, surveyed the person who had thus addressed him. He saw standing before him a boy apparently about fifteen years of age, of a light, tall, and slender form, dressed in the plain, farmer's cloth of the time, his garments cut with an utter disregard of elegance and fit. His trowsers were exceedingly short and voluminous; he wore no stockings; his shoes were of the kind denominated "high-lows," and much worn down; his hat was of felt, "one of the old stamp, with so small a brim, that it looked more like a two-quart measure inverted than anything else;" and it was worn far back on his head; his hair was white, with a tinge of orange at its extremities, and it lay thinly upon a broad forehead and over a head "rocking on shoulders which seemed too slender to support the weight of a member so disproportioned to the general outline." The general effect of the figure and its costume was so outre, they presented such a combination of the rustic and ludicrous, and the apparition had come upon him so suddenly, that the amiable gardener could scarcely keep from laughing.

He restrained himself, however, and replied, "Yes, I'm the man."

Whereupon the stranger asked, "Don't you want a boy to learn the trade?"

"Well," said Mr. Bliss, "we have been thinking of it. Do you want to learn to print?"

"I've had some notion of it!" said the boy in true Yankee fashion, as though he had not been dreaming about it, and longing for it for years.

Mr. Bliss was both astonished and puzzled-astonished that such a fellow as the boy looked to be, should have ever thought of learning to print, and puzzled how to convey to him an idea of the absurdity of the notion. So, with an expression in his countenance, such as that of a tender-hearted dry-goods merchant might be supposed to assume if a hod-carrier should apply for a place in the lace department, he said, "Well, my boy-but, you know, it takes considerable learning to be a printer. Have you been to school much?"

"No," said the boy, "I hav'nt had much chance at school. I've read some."

"What have you read?" asked Mr. Bliss.

"Well, I've read some history, and some travels, and a little of most everything."

"Where do you live?"

"At Westhaven."

"How did you come over?"

"I came on foot."

"What's your name?"

"Horace Greeley."



Now it happened that Mr. Amos Bliss had been for the last three years an inspector of Common Schools, and in fulfilling the duties of his office—examining and licensing teachers—he had acquired an uncommon facility in asking questions, and a fondness for that exercise which men generally entertain for any employment in which they suppose themselves to excel. The youth before him was—in the language of medical students—a “fresh subject,” and the Inspector proceeded to try all his skill upon him, advancing from easy questions to hard ones, up to those knotty problems with which he had been wont to “stump” candidates for the office of teacher. The boy was a match for him. He answered every question promptly, clearly and modestly. He could not be “stumped” in the ordinary school studies, and of the books he had read he could give a correct and complete analysis. In Mr. Bliss’s own account of the interview, he says, “On entering into conversation, and a partial examination of the qualifications of my new applicant, it required but little time to discover that he possessed a mind of no common order, and an acquired intelligence far beyond his years. He had had but little opportunity at the common school, but he said “he had read some,” and what he had read he well understood and remembered. In addition to the ripe intelligence manifested in one so young, and whose instruction had been so limited, there was a single-mindedness a truthfulness and common sense in what he said, that at once commanded my regard.”

After half an hour’s conversation with the boy, Mr. Bliss intimated that he thought he would do, and told him to go into the printing-office and talk to the foreman. Horace went to the printing office, and there his appearance produced an effect on the tender minds of the three apprentices who were at work therein which can be much better imagined than described, and which is most vividly remembered by the two who survive. To the foreman Horace addressed himself, regardless certainly oblivious probably, of the stare and the remarks of the boys. The foreman, at first, was inclined to wonder that Mr. Bliss should, for one moment think it possible that a boy got up in that style could perform the most ordinary duties of a printer’s apprentice. Ten minute’s talk with him, however, effected a partial revolution in his mind in the boy’s favor, and as he was greatly in want of another apprentice, he was not inclined to be over particular. - He tore off a slip of proof-paper, wrote a few words upon it hastily with a pencil, and told the boy to take it to Mr. Bliss. That piece of paper was his fate. The words were: “Guess we’d better try him.” Away went Horace to the garden, and presented his paper. Mr. Bliss, whose curiosity had been excited to a high pitch by the extraordinary contrast between the appearance of the boy and his real quality, now entered into a long conversation with him, questioned him, respecting his history, his past employments, his parents, their circumstances, his own intentions and wishes; and the longer he talked, the more his admiration grew. The result was, that he agreed to accept Horace as an apprentice, provided his father would agree to the usual terms; and then, with eager steps, and a light heart, the happy boy took the dusty road that led to his home in Westhaven.

“You’re not going to hire that tow-head, Mr. Bliss, are you?” asked one of the apprentices at the close of the day. “I am,” was as the reply, “and if you boys are expecting to get any fun out of him, you’d better get it quick, or you’ll be too late. There’s something in that tow-head as you’ll find out before you’re a week older.”

A day or two after Horace packed up his wardrobe in a small cotton handkerchief. Small as it was, it would have held more; for its proprietor never had more than two shirts, and one change of outer-clothing, at the same time, till he was of age. Father and son walked, side by side, to Poultney, the boy carrying his possessions upon a stick over his shoulder.

At Poultney, an unexpected difficulty arose, which for a time made Horace tremble in his high-low shoes. The terms proposed by Mr. Bliss were, that the boy should be bound for five years, and receive his board and twenty dollars a year. Now, Mr. Greeley had ideas of his own on the subject of apprenticeship, and he objected to this proposal, and to every particular of it. In the first place, he had determined that no child of his should ever be bound at all. In the second place, he thought five years an unreasonable term, thirdly he considered that twenty dollars a year and board was a compensation ridiculously disproportionate to the services which Horace would be required to render; and finally, on each and all of these points, he clung to his opinion with the tenacity of a Greeley. Mr. Bliss appealed to the established custom of the country; five years was the usual period; the compensation offered was the regular thing; the binding was a point essential to the employer’s interest. And at every pause in the conversation, the appealing voice of Horace was heard: “Father, I guess you’d better make a



bargain with Mr. Bliss;" or, "Father, I guess it won't make much difference;" or, "Don't you think you'd better do it, father?" At one moment the boy was reduced to despair. Mr. Bliss had given it as his ultimatum that the proposed binding was absolutely indispensable; he "could do business in no other way." "Well, then, Horace," said the father, "let us go home." The father turned to go; but Horace lingered; he could not give it up; and so the father turned again; the negotiation was re-opened, and after a prolonged discussion, a compromise was effected. What the terms were, that were finally agreed to, I cannot positively state, for the three memoirs which I have consulted upon the subject give three different replies. Probably, however, they were-no binding and no money for six months; then the boy could, if he chose, bind himself for the remainder of the five years, at forty dollars a year, the apprentice to be boarded from the beginning And so the father went home, and the son went straight to the printing office and took his first lesson in the art of setting type.

A few months after, it may be as well to mention here, Mr. Greeley removed to Erie county, Pennsylvania, and bought some wild land there, from which he gradually created a farm, leaving Horace alone in Vermont. Grass now grows where the little house stood in Westhaven, in which the family lived longest, and the barn in which they stored their hay and kept their cattle, leans forward like a kneeling elephant, and lets in the daylight through ten thousand apertures. But the neighbors point out the tree that stood before their front door, and the tree that shaded the kitchen window, and the tree that stood behind the house, and the tree whose apples Horace liked, and the bed of mint with which he regaled his nose. And both the people of Westhaven and those of Amherst assert that whenever the Editor of the Tribune revisits the scenes of his early life, at the season when apples are ripe, one of the things that he is surest to do, is to visit the apple trees that produce the fruit which he liked best when he was a boy, and which he still prefers before all the apples of the world.

The new apprentice took his place at the font, and received from the foreman his "copy," composing stick, and a few words of instruction, and then he addressed himself to his task. He needed no further assistance. The mysteries of the craft he seemed to comprehend intuitively. He had thought of his chosen vocation for many years; he had formed a notion how the types must be arranged in order to produce the desired impression, and, therefore, all he had to acquire was manual dexterity. In perfect silence, without looking to the right hand or to the left, heedless of the sayings and doings of the other apprentices, though they were bent on mischief, and tried to attract and distract his attention, Horace worked on, hour after hour, all that day; and when he left the office at night could set type better and faster than many an apprentice who had had a month's practice. The next day, he worked with the same silence and intensity. The boys were puzzled. They thought it absolutely incumbent on them to perform an initiating rite of some kind; but the new boy gave them no handle, no excuse, no opening. He committed no greenness, he spoke to no one, looked at no one, seemed utterly oblivious of everything save only his copy and his type. They threw type at him but he never looked around. They talked saucily at him, but he threw back no retort. This would never do. Towards the close of the third day, the oldest apprentices took one of the large black balls with which printers used to dab the ink upon the type, and remarking that in his opinion Horace's hair was of too light a hue for so black an art as that which he had undertaken to learn, applied the ball, well inked, to Horace's head, making four distinct dabs. The boys, the journeymen, the pressman and the editor, all paused in their work to observe the result of this experiment. Horace neither spoke nor moved. He went on with his work as though nothing had happened, and soon after went to the tavern where he boarded, and spent an hour in purifying his dishonored locks. And that was all the fun the boys "got out" of their new companion on that occasion. They were conquered. In a few days the victor and the vanquished were excellent friends.

Horace was now fortunately situated. Ampler means of acquiring knowledge were within his reach than he had ever before enjoyed, nor were there wanting opportunities for the display of his acquisitions and the exercise of his powers.



“About this time,” writes Mr. Bliss, “a sound, well read theologian and a practical printer was employed to edit and conduct the paper. This opened a desirable school for intellectual culture to our young debutant. Debates ensued; historical, political, and religious questions were discussed; and often while all hands were engaged at the font of types; and here the purpose for which our young aspirant “had read some” was made manifest. Such was the correctness of memory in what he had read, in both biblical and profane history, that the reverend gentleman was often put at fault by his corrections. He always quoted chapter and verse to prove the point in dispute. On one occasion the editor said that money was the root of all evil, when he was corrected by the “devil,” who said he believed it read in the Bible that the love of money was the root of all evil.

“A small town library gave him access to books, by which, together with the reading of the exchange papers of the office, he improved all his leisure hours. He became a frequent talker in our village Lyceum, and often wrote dissertations.

“In the first organization of our village temperance society, the question arose as to the age when the young might become members. Fearing lest his own age might bar him he moved that they be received when they were old enough to drink-which was adopted *nem. con.*

“Though modest and retiring, he was often led into political discussions with our ablest politicians, and few would leave the field without feeling instructed by the soundness of his views and the unerring correctness of his statements of political events.

“Having a thirst for knowledge, he bent his mind and all his energies to its acquisition with unceasing application and untiring devotion; and I doubt if, in the whole term of his apprenticeship, he ever spent an hour in the common recreations of young men. He used to pass my door as he went to his daily meals, and though I often sat near, or stood in the way, so much absorbed did he appear in his own thoughts-his head bent forward and his eyes fixed upon the ground that I have the charity to believe the reason why he never turned his head or gave me a look, was because he had no idea I was there.”

On one point the reminiscences of Mr. Bliss require correction. He thinks that his apprentice never spent an hour in the common recreations of young men during his residence in Poultney. Mr. Bliss, however, was his senior and his employer; and therefore observed him at a distance and from above. But I, who have conversed with those who were the friends and acquaintances of the youth, can tell a better story. He had a remarkable fondness for games of mingled skill and chance, such as whist, draughts, chess, and others; and the office was never without its dingy pack of cards, carefully concealed from the reverend editor and the serious customers, but brought out from its hiding-place whenever the coast was clear and the boys had a leisure hour. Horace never gambled, nor would he touch the cards on Sunday; but the delight of playing a game occasionally was heightened, perhaps, by the fact that in East Poultney a pack of cards was regarded as a thing accursed, not fit for saintly hands to touch. Bee-hunting, too, continued to be a favorite amusement with Horace. “He was always ready for a bee-hunt,” says one who knew him well in Poultney, and bee-hunted with him often in the woods above the village. To finish with this matter of amusement, I may mention that a dancing-school was held occasionally at the village tavern, and Horace was earnestly (ironically, perhaps,) urged to join it; but he refused. Not that he disapproved of the dance-that best of all home recreations-but he fancied he was not exactly the figure for a quadrille. He occasionally looked in at the door of the dancing-room, but never could be prevailed upon to enter it.

Until he came to live at Poultney, Horace had never tried his hand at original composition. The injurious practice of writing compositions was as not among the exercises of any of the schools which he had attended. At Poultney, very early in his apprenticeship, he began, not indeed to write, but to compose paragraphs for the paper as he stood at the desk, and to set them in type as he composed them. They were generally items of news condensed from large articles in the exchange papers; but occasionally he composed an original paragraph of some length; and he continued to render editorial assistance of this kind all the while he remained in the office. The “Northern Spectator” was an “Adams paper,” and Horace was an Adams man.

The Debating Society, to which Mr. Bliss alludes, was an important feature in the life of East Poultney. There happened to be among the residents of the place, during the apprenticeship of Horace Greeley, a considerable number of intelligent men, men of some knowledge and talent—the editor of the paper, the village doctor, a county judge, a clergyman or two, two or three persons of some political eminence, a few well-informed mechanics, farmers, and others. These gentlemen had formed themselves into a ‘Lyceum,’ before the arrival of Horace, and the Lyceum had become so famous in the neighborhood that people frequently came a distance of ten miles to attend its meetings. It assembled weekly, in the winter, at the little brick school-house. An original essay was read by the member whose “turn” it was to do so, and then the question of the evening was debated; first, by four members who had been designated at the previous meeting, and after they had each spoken once, the question was open to the whole society. The questions were mostly of a very innocent and rudimental character, as, “Is novel-reading injurious to society?” “Has a person a right to take life in self-defence?” “Is marriage conducive to happiness?” “Do we, as a nation, exert a good moral influence in the world?” “Do either of the great parties of the day carry out the principles of the Declaration of Independence?” “Is the Union likely to be perpetuated?” “Was Napoleon Bonaparte a great man?” “Is it a person’s duty to take the temperance pledge?” et cetera.

Horace joined the society, the first winter of his residence in Poultney, and, young as he was, soon became one of its leading members. “He was as a real giant at the Debating Society,” says one of his early admirers. “Whenever he was appointed to speak or to read an essay, he never wanted to be excused; he was always ready. He was exceedingly interested in the questions which he discussed, and stuck to his opinion against all opposition—not discourteously, but still he stuck to it, replying with the most perfect assurance to men of high station and of low. He had one advantage over all his fellow members; it was his memory. He had read everything, and remembered the minutest details of important events; dates, names, places, figures, statistics—nothing had escaped him. He was never treated as a boy in the society, but as a man and an equal; and his opinions were considered with as much deference as those of the judge or the sheriff—more, I think. To the graces of oratory he made no pretence, but he was a fluent and interesting speaker, and had a way of giving an unexpected turn to the debate by reminding members of a fact, well known but overlooked; or by correcting a misquotation, or by appealing to what are called first principles. He was an opponent to be afraid of; yet his sincerity and his earnestness were so evident, that those whom he most signally floored liked him none the less for it. He never lost his temper. “In short, he spoke in his sixteenth year just as he speaks now; and when he came a year ago to lecture in a neighboring village, I saw before me the Horace Greeley of the old Poultney ‘Forum,’ as we called it, and no other.”

It is hardly necessary to record, that Horace never made the slightest preparation for the meetings of the Debating Society in the way of dress—except so far as to put on his jacket. In the summer, he was accustomed to wear, while at work, two garments, a shirt and trowsers; and when the reader considers that his trowsers were very short, his sleeves tucked up above his elbows, his shirt open in front, he will have before his mind’s eye the picture of a youth attired with extreme simplicity. In his walks about the village, he added to his dress a straw hat, valued originally at one shilling. In the winter, his clothing was really insufficient. So, at least, thought a kind-hearted lady who used to see him pass her window on his way to dinner. “He never,” she says, “had an overcoat while he lived here; and I used to pity him so much in cold weather I remember him as a slender, pale little fellow, younger looking than he really was, in a brown jacket much too short for him. I used to think the winds would blow him away sometimes, as he crept along the fence lost in thought, with his head down, and his hands in his pockets. He was often laughed at for his homely dress, by the boys. Once, when a very interesting question was to be debated at the school-house, a young man who was noted among us for the elegance of his dress and the length of his account at the store, advised Horace to get a new “rig out” for the occasion, particularly as he was to lead one of the sides, and an unusually large audience was expected to be present. “No,” said Horace, “I guess I’d better wear my old clothes than run in debt for new ones.”

Now, forty dollars a year is sufficient to provide a boy in the country with good and substantial clothing; half the sum will keep him warm and decent. The reader, therefore, may be inclined to censure the young debater for his apparent parsimony; or worse, for an insolent disregard of the feelings of others; or, worst, for a pride that aped humility. The reader, if that be the present inclination of his mind, will perhaps experience a revulsion of feeling when he is informed—as I now do inform him, and on the best authority—that every dollar of the apprentice’s little stipend which he could save by the most rigid economy, was piously sent to his father, who was struggling in the wilderness on the other side of the Alleghanies, with the difficulties of a new farm, and an insufficient capital. And this was the practice of Horace Greeley during all the years of his apprenticeship, and for years afterwards; as long, in fact, as his father’s land was unpaid for and inadequately provided with implements, buildings, and stock. At a time when filial piety may be reckoned among the extinct virtues, it is a pleasure to record a fact like this.

Twice, during his residence at Poultney, Horace visited his parents in Pennsylvania, six hundred miles distant, walking a great part of the way, and accomplishing the rest on a slow canal boat. On one of these tedious journeys he first saw Saratoga, a circumstance to which he alluded seven years after, in a fanciful epistle, written from that famous watering-place, and published in the “New Yorker”:

“Saratoga! bright city of the present! thou ever-during one-and-twenty of existence! a wanderer by thy stately palaces and gushing fountains salutes thee,! Years, yet not many, have elapsed since, a weary roamer from a distant land, he first sought thy health-giving waters. November’s sky was over earth and him, and more than all, over thee; and its chilling blasts made mournful melody amid the waving branches of thy ever verdant pines. Then, as now thou wert a City of Tombs, deserted by the gay throng whose light laughter re-echoes so joyously through thy summer-robed arbors. But to him thou wert ever a fairy land, and he wished to quaff of thy Hygeian treasures as of the nectar of the poet’s fables. One long and earnest draught, ere its sickening disrelish came over him, and he flung down the cup in the bitterness of disappointment and disgust, And sadly addressed him again to his pedestrian journey. Is it ever thus with thy castles, Imagination? thy pictures, Fancy? thy dreams, O Hope? Perish the unbidden thought! A health, in sparkling Congress, to the rainbow of life! even though its promise prove as shadowy as the baseless fabric of a vision. Better even the dear delusion of Hope— if delusion it must be—than the rugged reality of listless despair. (I think I could do this better in rhyme, if I had not trespassed in that line already. However, the cabin-conversation of a canal packet is not remarkably favorable to poetry.) In plain prose, there is great deal of mismanagement about this same village of Saratoga. The season gives up the ghost too easily,” &c., &c.,

During the four years that Horace lived at East Poultney, he boarded for some time at the tavern, which still affords entertainment for man and beast—i.e. pedler and horse—in that village. It was kept by an estimable couple, who became exceedingly attached to their singular guest, and he to them. Their recollections of him are to the following effect:—Horace at that time ate and drank whatever was placed before him; he was rather fond of good living, ate furiously, and fast, and much. He was very fond of coffee, but cared little for tea. Every one drank in those days, and there was a great deal of drinking, at the tavern, but Horace never could be tempted to taste a drop of anything intoxicating. “I always,” said the kind landlady, “took a great interest in young people, and when I saw they were going wrong, it used to distress me, no matter whom they belonged to; but I never feared for Horace. Whatever might be going on about the village or in the bar-room, I always knew he would do right.” He stood on no ceremony at the table; he fell to without waiting to be asked or helped, devoured everything right and left, stopped as suddenly as he had begun, and vanished instantly. One day as Horace was stretching his long arm over to the other side of the table in quest of a distant dish, the servant, wishing to hint to him in a jocular manner that that was not exactly the most proper way of proceeding, said, “Don’t trouble yourself, Horace, I want to help you to that dish, for, you know I have a particular regard for you.” He blushed, as only a boy with a very white

1854

1854

face can blush, and, thenceforth, was less adventurous in exploring the remoter portions of the table-cloth. When any topic of interest was started at the table, he joined in it with the utmost confidence, and maintained his opinion against anybody, talking with great vivacity, and never angrily. He came, at length, to be regarded as a sort of Town Encyclopedia, and if any one wanted to know anything, he went as a matter of course, to Horace Greeley; and, if a dispute arose between two individuals, respecting a point of history, or politics, or science, they referred it to Horace Greeley, and whomsoever he declared to be right, was confessed to be the victor in the controversy. Horace never went to a tea-drinking or a party of any kind, never went on an excursion, never slept away from home or was absent from one meal during the period of his residence at the tavern, except when he went to visit his parents. He seldom went to church, but spent the Sunday, usually, in reading. He was a stanch Universalist, a stanch Whig, and a pre-eminently stanch anti-Mason. Thus, the landlord and landlady.

 Jacob Hamblin, a missionary to the Indians in southern Utah, had acquired repute among them as a person of special powers and turned this toward the smoothing of relations between them and the newly arriving hordes of white people.

[Benjamin Gilbert Ferris](#), a Swedenborgian, had most definitely not gotten along with the [Mormons](#) of Utah during the 6 months he had spent there as the US Secretary to that Territory, and soon resigned: “He could not suppress his abhorrence [*sic*] of Mormonism nor tolerate its influences, nor accept its devotees as his neighbors, and resigned his high position, thus sacrificing great possibilities in his very promising public career.” In this year his record of his experiences appeared as *UTAH AND THE MORMONS. THE HISTORY, GOVERNMENT, DOCTRINES, CUSTOMS, AND PROSPECTS OF THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS. FROM PERSONAL OBSERVATION DURING A SIX MONTHS’ RESIDENCE AT GREAT SALT LAKE CITY* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 82 Beekman Street).



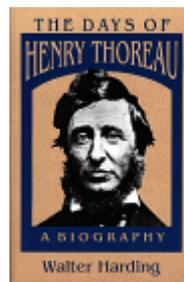
UTAH AND THE MORMONS

On the banks of *Payzhehooetez* Hazel Run south of the Minnesota River, 5 miles upstream from the Yellow Medicine Agency, [Marpiyawicasta Man of the Clouds](#), his brother *Mazakutemane* Walks Shooting Iron, and their band of Dakotas joined a “Hazelwood Republic” of “Christian Indians” sponsored by the Reverend Riggs but, in the eyes of the creators of civilization, failed to create a satisfactory imitation of civilization.⁶²

We had such a respectable community of young men, who had cut off their hair and exchanged the dress of the Dakotas for that of the white men, and whose wants now were very different from the annuity Dakotas generally, that we took measures to organize them into a separate band, which we called the Hazelwood Republic. They elected their President for two years, and other needed officers, and were without any difficulty recognized by the agent as a separate band. A number of these men were half-breeds, who were, by the organic law of Minnesota, citizens. The Constitution of the State provided that Indians also might become citizens by satisfying a court of their progress in civilization. A few years after the organization of this civilized community, I took eight or ten of the men to meet the court at Mankato; but the court deciding that a knowledge of English was necessary to comply with the laws of the State, only one of my men was passed into citizenship.

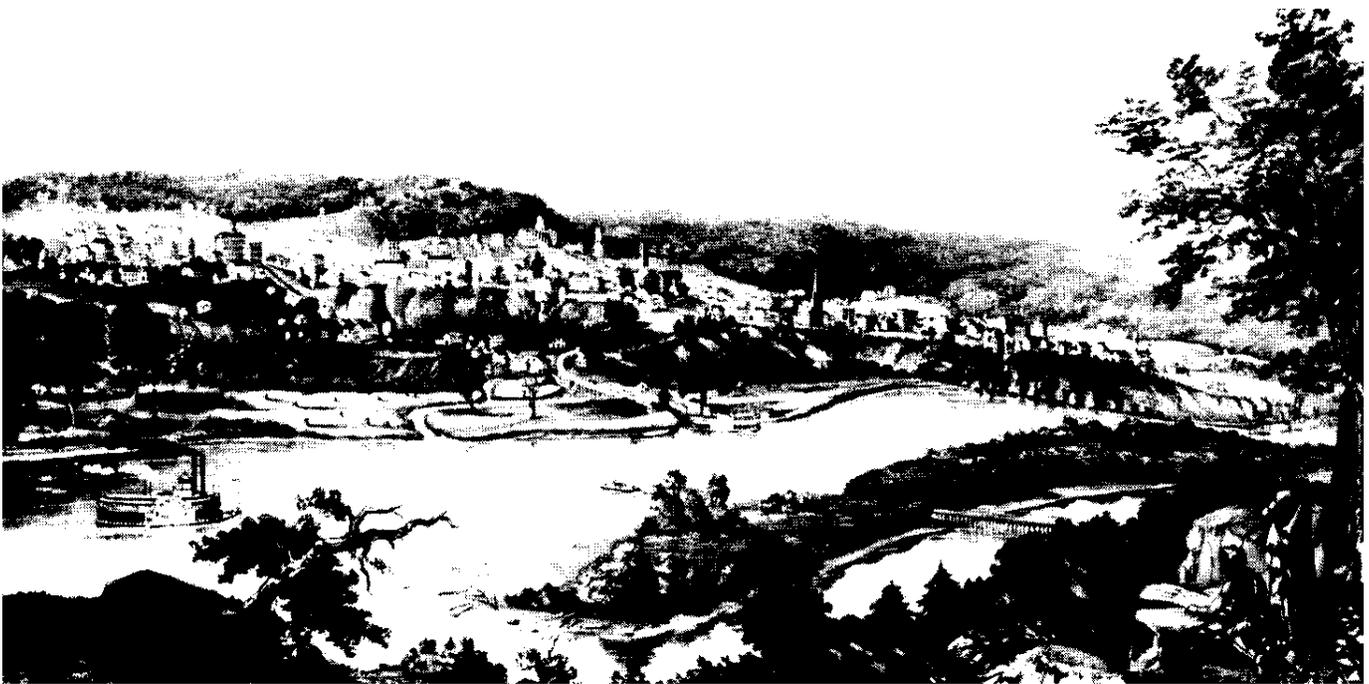
In the Minnesota Territory, [President Millard Fillmore](#) was escorted on “The Grand Tour” from St. Anthony “Place where the Water Falls” around Lake Calhoun and Lake Harriet, near the fields of the Dakota bark homes along the lake shore that had made up Marpiyawicasta’s village of Eatonville. This was the package tour that had become known nationwide as the “Fashionable Tour” and it had been taken by, among others, Millard Fillmore and Anthony Trollope and Clara Barton. The journey had been being puffed by James M. Goodhue, the editor of the [Minnesota Pioneer](#), for at least the past 9 years:⁶³

 [Walter Roy Harding](#). THE DAYS OF [HENRY THOREAU](#): A BIOGRAPHY. NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966; enlarged and corrected edition, NY: Dover, 1982; Princeton NJ: Princeton UP, 1992

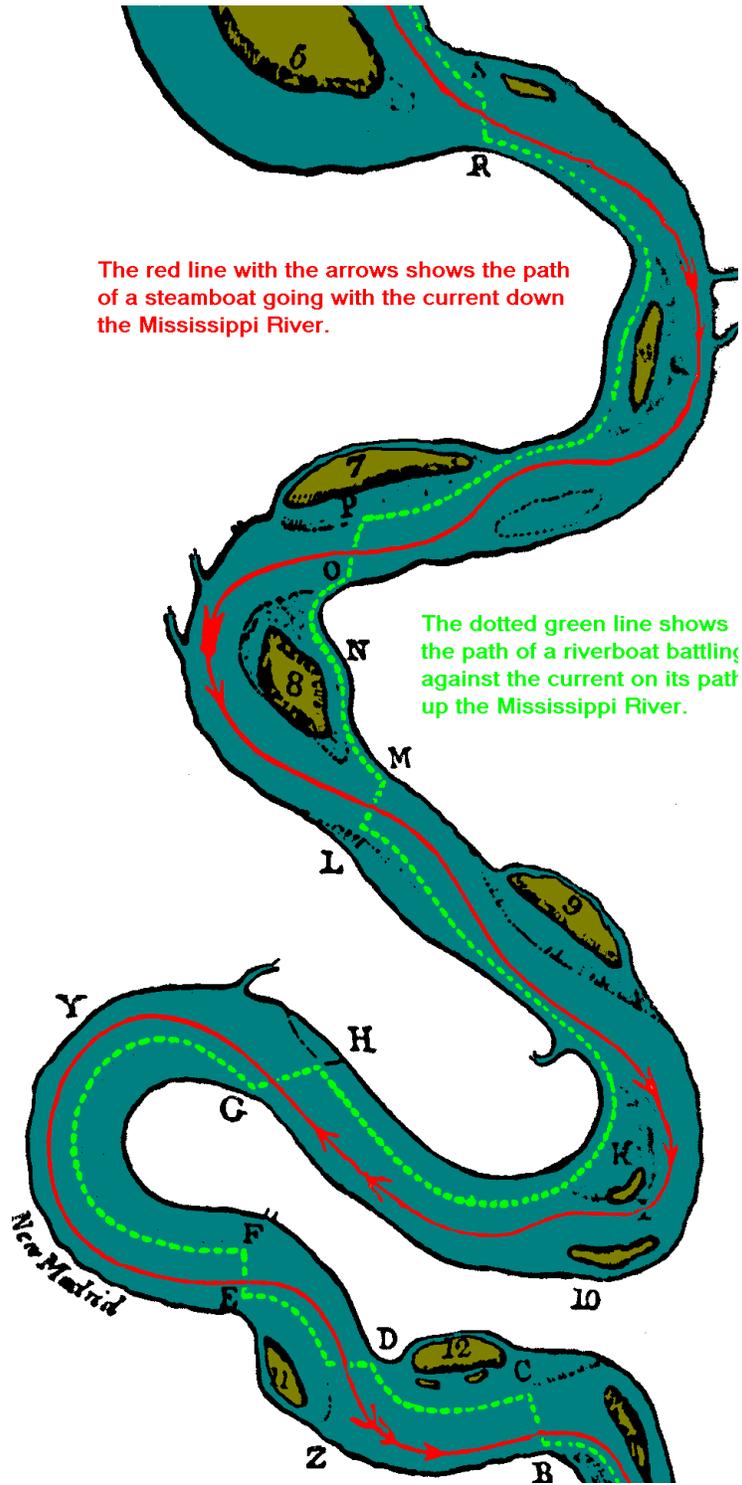


62. Account of the Reverend Riggs.
63. This particular puff is dated July 22, 1852.

Who that is idle would be caged up between walls of burning brick and mortar, in dog-days, down the river, if at less daily expense, he could be hurried along through the valley of the Mississippi, its shores studded with towns, and farms, flying by islands, prairies, woodlands, bluffs – an ever varied scene of beauty, away up into the land of the wild Dakota, and of cascades and pine forests, and cooling breezes? – Why it is an exhilarating luxury, compared with which, all the fashion and tinsel and parade of your Newports and Saratogas, are utterly insipid.... A month in Minnesota, in dog-days, is worth a whole year anywhere else; and, we confidently look to see the time, when all families of leisure down South, from the Gulf of Mexico along up, will make their regular summer hegira to our Territory, and when hundreds of the opulent from those regions, will build delightful cottages on the borders of our ten thousand lakes and ornament their grounds with all that is tasteful in shrubbery and horticulture, for a summer retreat.



Steamboat arriving at St. Paul “Iminijaska White Rocks,” Minnesota



The red line with the arrows shows the path of a steamboat going with the current down the Mississippi River.

The dotted green line shows the path of a riverboat battling against the current on its path up the Mississippi River.

A tourist puff said that
“the Mississippi flows from the pine to the palm”

**“A Review From Professor Ross’s Seminar”****WALTER HARDING’S BIOGRAPHY**

Chapter 15a (1849-1854) -Thoreau and Emerson’s relationship was cooling as Emerson had passed beyond his greatest creative period and was becoming disappointed in Thoreau and other Transcendentalists like Ellery Channing and Jones Very who had “little to show” for their “labors.” Thoreau increasingly influenced Emerson in essays like “Culture,” “Roots and Imagination” and “Country Life” which were partially derived from conversations between the two men recorded in Emerson’s journal. Although their friendship floundered, it never totally dissolved.

Ellery Channing accompanied Thoreau on his walks with greater frequency during a period when Ellery’s marriage was falling apart, mainly due to his own irresponsibility, which disgusted Thoreau. Channing’s Thoreau biography of twenty years later was characteristically undisciplined and incomplete and wasted an opportunity to further Thoreau’s reputation. (HGO Blake’s journal achieved much more toward this end when it was published in the 1880s.)

(Robert L. Lace, January-March 1986)

“A Review From Professor Ross’s Seminar”**WALTER HARDING’S BIOGRAPHY**

Chapter 15b (1853-1854) -In the summer of 1853 Thoreau again visited the Maine woods, this time with his cousin Thatcher and guide Joe Aitteon. Thatcher shot a moose which Thoreau took the opportunity to mismeasure, but he was sickened at the skinning. As his cousin killed for pleasure, for Thoreau it tainted the journey which carried them past Ktaadn and Chesuncook.

Thoreau began to take an interest in social causes such as the anti-slavery movement (he was enraged by the 1851 Fugitive Slave Law) and the plight of the Irish (despite his obvious earlier prejudices.)

With the Anthony Burns case in May of 1854, Thoreau was prompted to cull his journal and created “Slavery in Massachusetts,” which was published in Garrison’s Liberator on July 21, 1854 and by Greeley’s Tribune in August.

Thoreau was disturbed by the hypocrisy he saw in the clergy and in “professional reformers.”

Thoreau suffered from recurrent depression in the spring of 1853, possibly from a lack of speaking invitations and his relative failure in the publishing realm.

(Robert L. Lace, January-March 1986)



1854

1854

"A Review From Professor Ross's Seminar"

WALTER HARDING'S BIOGRAPHY

Chapter 16a (1854-1855) WALDEN – by 1852 Thoreau had completed 4 drafts of Walden. At Greeley's suggestion, he sent several excerpts to New York, which were forwarded to Sartain's Union Magazine.

On June 19 and July 22 Greeley "proudly puffed" Thoreau's excerpts in his Tribune.

In July of 1852 "Iron Horse" from the "Sounds" chapter was published in the Union and a month later "A Poet Buying a Farm" from the "Where I Lived" chapter, for which he never received any payment.

In 1853 he wrote the 5th and 6th drafts of WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS, and in March of 1854 completed the 7th and final draft and sent it off to Ticknor & Fields. Fields was extremely impressed and offered Thoreau a 15% royalty rate reserved for "first class authors."

Held up by copyright difficulties in England, the official August 9, 1854 printing consisted of 2000 copies.

Emerson described Thoreau during this time as "the undoubted King of all American lions" walking up and down Concord "in a tremble of great anticipation" of the book's reception.

(Robert L. Lace, January-March 1986)

“A Review From Professor Ross’s Seminar”

WALTER HARDING’S BIOGRAPHY

Chapter 16b -Reviews of Walden generally gave qualified, but sincere praise. Thoreau himself made a personal stylistic evaluation on the inside cover of his manuscript journal for the fall of 1855:

My faults are:

- Paradoxes, — saying just the opposite, — a style which may be imitated.
- Ingenious. Playing with words, — getting the laugh, — not always simple, strong, and broad.
- Using the current phrases and maxims, when I should speak for myself.
- Not always earnest. “In short,” “in fact,” “alas!” etc. Want of conciseness.

Total sales – 2250 copies. Only weeks before his death Thoreau persuaded Ticknor’s to print a second edition. Thoreau tried to capitalize on his relative success by launching a midwestern lecture tour like Emerson, but it never got off the ground as he was not a very talented public speaker and his transcendental humor was too subtle for audiences looking for “humorous lectures.” His “fiery” speeches proved to be his best. After [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) he attracted another important “disciple,” Thomas Cholmondeley. Cholmondely, who became a devoted friend for life, sent Thoreau a 44 volume collection of oriental works and tried in vain to persuade Thoreau to travel to Europe, offering to pay his passage.

(Robert L. Luce, January-March 1986)

JANUARY 1854

Read Henry Thoreau’s Journal for January 1854 (æf. 36)



Early in this year, [New-York](#) shipowners Howland and Aspinwall approached The Manhattan Life Insurance Company for coverage on a cargo of about 700 coolies they were bringing on the clipper *Sea Witch* from [China](#) to the [Isthmus of Panama](#) (this is the ship that still holds the China-to-New-York record for sailing ships). Since they were valuing these coolies at \$120.⁰⁰ each, the responsible officers wanted to purchase \$84,000.⁰⁰ in life insurance for the group. The minutes of the corporate meetings during this period indicate heated discussions as to whether or not this risk should be taken. In any event, the company finally did issue this policy, which, if it was not the very first, was one of the first group policies ever to be written by an American life insurance carrier. The underwriting was based on certain stipulations, such as that a medical doctor recognized by the crew as responsible for sanitary conditions, food, and other factors affecting the mortality of the cargo be on board during such a voyage. For a premium of \$840.⁰⁰ the company assumed a quarter of the total risk, or \$21,000.⁰⁰ and the balance of the risk was reinsured with four other such companies. Actually, 720 coolies would be packed aboard for this voyage, but within the first 24 hours after raising anchor at Swatow port, three of the men in the cargo managed to jump overboard. During the 65-day voyage, arriving March 31, 1854 in the City of Panama, 11 of the remaining cargo of 717 had died of sundry diseases. Therefore, on April 29, 1854, The Manhattan Life Insurance Company would pay out \$408.⁰⁰, a quarter of the total loss, realizing a net profit of \$432.⁰⁰ on this life policy.

Commodore Matthew C. Perry of the USA forcibly “opened” [Japan](#)’s doors to the West by means of the signing of a trade agreement, the Treaty of Kanagawa, with an official of the Shogunate. Exchanges between the two countries would include an American agricultural exhibit managed by Dr. James Morrow, assisted by S. Wells Williams, a Protestant missionary to [China](#). Dried specimens from this initial trip would go to Williams’ boyhood friend, the Harvard College botanist Asa Gray. These specimens would be quickly followed by collections from Charles Wright, who had been working in the North Pacific as botanist on a US Surveying Expedition and would therefore be able to sail directly for [Japan](#) as soon as the existence of this new trade agreement became known.

PLANTS

Diplomatically, he instructed the translator to inform this Japanese official that

Our country has just had a war with a neighboring country, [Mexico](#), and we even attacked and captured its capital. Circumstances may lead your country also into a similar plight.

 January: This month’s issue of [Harper’s New Monthly Magazine](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE

 January: [William Cooper Nell](#) was a member of the Massachusetts State Council and a Massachusetts delegate to the National Convention of Colored People of the United States.

 January: [Francis Sales](#), who on account of his health had been trying to resign from [Harvard College](#) for several years, and had been being coozied along from semester to semester by the administration, finally at the age of 84 became simply unable to continue. Professor [Henry Wadsworth Longfellow](#), who had been one of his students, visited this old warhorse in his home:

Called to see Mr. Sales – good old man! He is dying. There he lay, emaciated and sharp, sometimes panting for breath. He clasped both my hands and said in a feeble voice – “Kiss me”

- and then - "Don't forget me." I took leave of him forever.



 Late 1853 to Early 1854: The "F" version of [Thoreau's "WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS"](#) manuscript. Thoreau's mobilization of the absurd inverted-Walden tale came about in 1853-1854 while he was trying to explain the provenance of the rim of smooth "paving stones" around the shoreline of the pond:



stones have been shoved up into a ridge by the edge of the ice being driven against it, or as if the sand had washed down and collected against the ice, and there remained when the ice was melted. But the truth ~~seems to be probably~~ is that when there is a thaw or warm rain in midwinter which warms the water ~~in the pond,~~ that portion ~~of the water~~ which penetrates a little way under the frozen shore ~~apparently~~ takes out some of the frost there, and the shore, whether it is sand or pebbles, or stones or sticks, is puffed up in the form of a pent-roof six inches or more high, and under ~~which~~ this there is found to be no frost. Even pretty large rocks and trees, as I have said, are thus actually tripped up or pried over by a force applied beneath Some have been puzzled to tell how the shore became so regularly paved. but I observe that the surrounding hills are remarkably full of the same kind of stones, so that they have been obliged to pile them up in walls on both sides of the railroad cut nearest the pond; and, moreover, that there are most stones where the shore is most abrupt; so that, unfortunately, it is no longer a mystery to me. I detect the paver.



1854

1854



January: The scandal of the new Irish-American racist newspaper, [The Citizen](#), dominated discussion at the Annual Meeting of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society in Boston. According to Chris L. Nesmith, Thoreau's mention of this newspaper in this period was not a simple derogation, but was instead a complex comment on the abolitionist movement as a whole and upon the role of individual responsibility within that movement. Thoreau was not merely condemning something or someone, but was on his way to telling his audience what they themselves could positively do: they could dissolve their union with these slavemasters and their slavish apologists.

[JOHN MITCHEL](#)



January: An Anglo/French fleet entered the Black Sea.

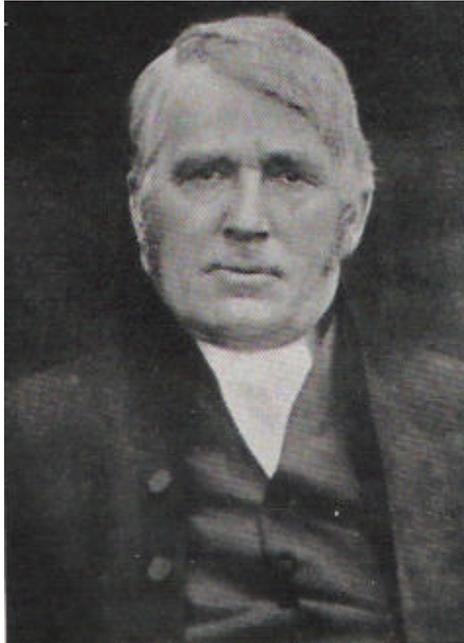
1854

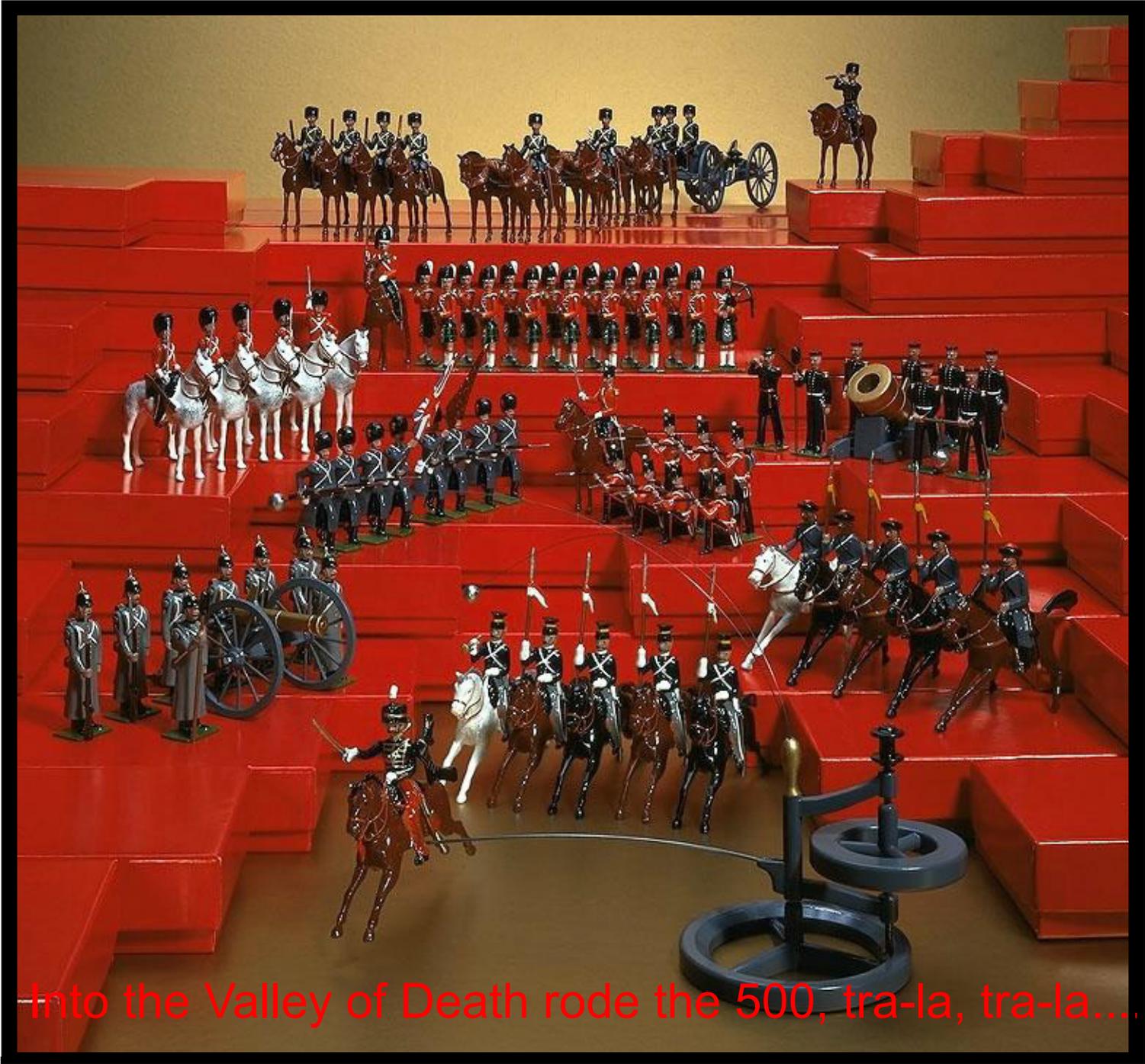
1854

➡ January: [Jefferson Davis](#) was leading the federal administration's efforts in support of the [Kansas/Nebraska Act](#) (until May).

THE 2D GREAT AMERICAN DISUNION

Friend [Joseph Sturge](#) had become active in various international peace organizations and at this point journeyed to [Russia](#) in an attempt to prevent the [Crimean War](#).





Into the Valley of Death rode the 500, tra-la, tra-la...

1854

1854

 January 1, Sunday: Lincoln University was chartered in Oxford, Pennsylvania, initially as “Ashmun Institute.” This would be one of America’s earliest “Negro colleges.”

[James George Frazer](#) was born in [Glasgow, Scotland](#).

At the Cruz Bay Battery on the Caribbean island of St. John, Judge (Landfoged) Carl Henschell was advised of the death of a 7-year-old at the Cinnamon Bay plantation on the island’s north shore, from what appeared to be [cholera](#) (by the following year the epidemic would eliminate almost 1 out of every 4 of the human inhabitants of this island).

[California](#)’s gold exports for the year 1853 had amounted to a grand sum total of \$56,390,812.

A former missionary to [Canton](#) in [China](#), the Presbyterian Reverend William Speer (1822-1904), and his wife, and sons John and James, with his brother James Speer and their Irish servant girl “Biddy,” sent greetings for the new year from [San Francisco](#) to the Speer family in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Many friends would be visiting during the holiday as was usual but “Preachers do not go out, so I am released.” The letter enclosed a prospectus for [The Oriental](#), a [Chinese](#)-American gazette, and asked for assistance in soliciting subscribers.⁶⁴

Young America Engine Co. No. 13 was organized in [San Francisco](#) with quarters at 144 Second St.

At 9PM the steamer *S.S. Golden Gate*, “probably the most magnificent sea steamer afloat,” built in 1851 for the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, sailed under Captain J.B.G. Isham from the west coast of the [Isthmus of Panama](#) for [San Diego, California](#) carrying 750 passengers such as the 3-person [Kip](#) family.



[Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Waldo Emerson](#):

1 Jan^y 1854
Dear Henry,

64. The 1st such gazette had been [Golden Hills News](#), a weekly published by William Howard in San Francisco for a few months in 1854. [The Oriental](#) would appear weekly from 1855 to 1857 in English and Cantonese. Although neither of these gazettes had Chinese owners, both were edited by recent Chinese immigrants and eventually [The Oriental](#) would be owned by ethnic Chinese. However, the 1st Chinese-owned gazette would be the Sacramento [Daily News](#), published by Ze Tu Yun from 1856 to 1858. San Francisco and Sacramento would consistently have Chinese-language gazettes until the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.

I meant to have seen you, but for delays that grew out of the snowbanks, to ask your aid in these following particulars. On the 8 February, Professor Horsford is to lecture at the Lyceum; on the 15th Feb^y, *Theodore Parker*. They are both to come to my house for the night. Now I wish to entreat your courtesy & counsel to receive these lonely pilgrims, when they arrive, to guide them to our house, & help the alarmed wife to entertain them, & see that they do not lose the way to the Lyceum, nor the hour. For, it seems pretty certain that I shall not be at home until perhaps the next week following these two. If you shall be in town, & can help these gentlemen so far, you will serve the whole municipality as well as

Yours faithfully,
 R.W. Emerson
 H.D. Thoreau.

[Thoreau](#) was reading [Father Paul Le Jeune](#) on American and Canadian natives.



[Transcript]

January 1. [Le Jeune](#), describing the death of a young Frenchwoman who had devoted her life to the savages of Canada, uses the expression: "Finally this beautiful soul detached itself from its body the 15th of March," etc.

The drifts mark the standstill or equilibrium between the currents of air or particular winds. In our greatest snow-storms, the wind being northerly, the greatest drifts are on the south sides of the houses and fences and accordingly on the left-hand side of the street going down it. The north tract: of the railroad was not open till a day or more later than the south. I notice that in the angle made by our house and shed, a southwest exposure, the snow-drift does not lie close about the pump, but is a foot off, forming a circular bowl, showing that there was an eddy about it. It shows where the wind has been, the form of the wind. The snow is like a mould, showing the form of the eddying currents of air which have been impressed on it, while the drift and all the rest is that which fell between the currents or where they counterbalanced each other. These boundary lines are mountain barriers.

The white-in-tails, or grass finches [[Vesper Sparrow](#) [Poocetes gramineus](#)], linger pretty late, flitting in flocks before, but they come so near winter only as the white in their tails indicates. They let it come near enough to whiten their tails, perchance, and they are off. The snow buntings and the tree sparrows are the true spirits of the snow-storm; they are the animated beings that ride upon it and have their life in it.

The snow is the great betrayer. It not only shows the tracks of mice, otters, etc., etc., which else we should rarely if ever see, but the tree sparrows are more plainly seen against its white ground, and they in turn are attracted by the dark weeds which it reveals. It also drives the crows and other birds out of the woods to the villages for food. We might expect to find in the snow the footprint of a life superior to our own, of which no zoology takes cognizance. Is there no trace of a nobler life than that of an otter or an escaped convict to be looked for in the snow? Shall we suppose that that is the only life that has been abroad in the night? It is only the savage that can see the track of no higher life than an otter. Why do the vast snow plains give us pleasure, the twilight of the bent and half-buried woods? Is not all there consonant with virtue, justice, purity, courage, magnanimity? Are we not cheered by the sight? And does not all this amount to the track of a higher life than the otter's, a life which has not gone by and left a footprint merely,⁶⁵ but is there with its beauty, its music, its perfume, its sweetness, to exhilarate and recreate us? Where there is a perfect government of the world according to the highest laws, is there no trace of intelligence there, whether in the snow or the earth, or in ourselves? No other trail but, such as a dog can smell? Is there none which an angel can detect and follow? None to guide a man on his pilgrimage, which water will not conceal? Is there no odor of sanctity to be perceived? Is its trail too old? Have mortals lost the scent? The great game for mighty hunters as soon as the first snow, falls is Purity, for, earlier than any rabbit or fox, it is abroad, and its trail may be detected by curs of lowest degree. Did this great snow come to reveal the track merely of some timorous hare, or of the Great Hare, whose track no hunter has seen? Is there no trace nor suggestion of Purity to be detected? If one could detect the meaning of the snow, would he not be on the trail of some higher life that has been abroad in the night? Are there not hunters who seek for something higher than foxes, with judgment more discriminating than the senses of foxhounds, who rally to a nobler music than that of the hunting-horn? As there is contention among the fishermen who shall be the first to reach the pond as soon as the ice will bear, in spite of the cold, as the hunters are forward to take the field as soon as the first snow has fallen, so the observer, or lie who would make the most of his life for

65. But all that we see is the impress of its spirit.

discipline, must be abroad early and late, in spite of cold and wet, in pursuit of nobler game, whose traces are then most distinct. A life which, pursued, does not earth itself, does not burrow downward but upward, which takes not to the trees but to the heavens as its home, which the hunter pursues with winged thoughts and aspirations, — these the dogs that tree it, — rallying his pack with the bugle notes of undying faith, and returns with some worthier trophy than a fox's tail, a life which we seek, not to destroy it, but to save our own. Is the great snow of use to the hunter only, and not to the saint, or him who is earnestly building up a life? Do the Indian and hunter only need snow-shoes, while the saint sits indoors in embroidered slippers?

The Indians might have imagined a large snow bunting to be the genius of the storm.

This morning it is snowing again fast, and about six inches has already fallen by 10 A.M., of a moist and heavy snow. It is about six inches in all this day. This would [be] two feet and a half in all, if it has not settled, — but it has.

I would fain be a fisherman, hunter, farmer, preacher, etc., but fish, hunt, farm, preach other things than usual. When, in 1641, the five hundred Iroquois in force brought to Three Rivers two French prisoners (whom they had taken), seeking peace with the French, - I believe this preceded any war with them, -at the assembling for this purpose, they went through the form of tying their prisoners, that they might pass for such; then, after a speech, they broke their bonds and cast them into the river that it might carry them so far that they might never be remembered. The speaker “then made many presents, according to the custom of the country where the word for presents is speech (*où le mot de présens se nomme parole*), to signify that the present speaks more strongly than the mouth.” ([Le Jeune](#).)

Our orators might learn much from the Indians. They are remarkable for their precision; nothing is left at loose ends. They address more senses than one, so as to preclude misunderstanding. A present accompanies each proposition. In delivering one present, the speaker said, “This is the house which we shall have at Three Rivers when we come here to treat with you,” etc. This is in [Paul Le Jeune's](#) Relation for '40 and '41, page 156.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



January 2, Monday: [Henry Thoreau](#) took an afternoon walk up the Union Turnpike.



Jan. 2. The trees are white with a hoar frost this morning, small leafets, a tenth of an inch long, on every side of the twigs. They look like ghosts of trees. Took a walk on snow-shoes at 9 n. v<. to Hubbard's Grove. A flock of snow buntings flew over the fields with a _rippling whistle, accompanied sometimes by a tender peep and a ricochet motion.

P.M. — Up Union Turnpike.

The tints of the sunset sky are never purer and more ethereal than in the coldest winter days. This evening, though the colors are not brilliant, the sky is crystalline and the pale fawn-tinged clouds are very beautiful. I wish to get on to a hill to look down on the winter landscape. We go about these days as if we had fetters on our feet. We walk in the stocks, stepping into the holes made by our predecessors.

I noticed yesterday that the damp snow, falling gently without wind on the top of front-yard posts, had quite changed the style of their architecture, -to the (ionic style of the East, a four-sided base becoming a dome at top. I observe other revelations made by the snow. The team and driver have long Ace gone by, but I see the marks of his whip-lash on the snow, - its recoil,- but alas! these are not a complete tally of the strokes which fell upon the oxen's back. The unmerciful driver thought perchance that no one saw him, but unwittingly he recorded each blow on the unspotted snow behind his back as in the book of life. To more searching eyes the marks of his lash are in the air.

I paced partly through the pitch pine wood and partly the open field from the Turnpike by the Lee place to the railroad, from north to south, more than a quarter of a mile, measuring at every tenth pace. The average of sixty-five measurements, up hill and down, was nineteen inches; this after increasing those in the woods by one inch each (little enough) on account of the snow on the pines. So that, apparently, it has settled about as much as the two last snows amount to. I think there has been but little over two feet at any one time. I think that one would have to pace a mile on a north and south line, up and clown hill, through woods and fields, to get a quite reliable result. The snow will drift sometimes the whole width of a field, and fill a road or valley beyond. So that it would be well that your measuring included several such driftings. There is very little reliance to [be] put on the usual estimates of the depth of snow. I have heard different men set this snow at six, fifteen, eighteen, twenty-four, thirty-six, and forty-eight inches. My snow-shoes sank about four inches into the snow this morning, but more than twice as much the 29th.

On north side the railroad, above the red house crossing, the cars have cut through a drift. about a quarter of a mile long and seven to nine feet high, straight up and down. It reminds me of the Highlands, the Pictured Rocks, the side of an iceberg, etc. Now that the sun has just sunk below the horizon, it is wonderful what an amount of soft light [it] appears to be absorbing. There appears to be more day just here by its side than anywhere. I can almost see into [it] six inches. It is made translucent, it is so saturated with light. I have heard of one precious stone found in Concord, the cinnamon stone. A geologist⁶⁶ has spoken of it as found in this town, and a farmer has described to me one which he once found, perhaps the same referred to by the other. He said it was as large as a brick, and as thick, and yet you could distinguish a pin through it, it was so transparent. If not a mountain of light, it was a brickbatful, at any rate.



January 3, Tuesday: Police raided the Hung Gate Society on Jackson Street in San Francisco and arrested 159 Celestials on charges of extortion.

CALIFORNIA

In the PM, Henry Thoreau noticed that fishermen were on the ice at Walden Pond, which had only frozen over on December 31st. He noted also that with luck the fishermen could get 15-20 pounds of fish, although the average size of a Walden Pond fish was 2-3 pounds.



January 3. It is now fairly winter. We have passed the line, have put the autumn behind us, have forgotten what these withered herbs that rise above the snow here and there are, what flowers they ever bore. They are fishing on Walden this P.M. The fisherman gets fifteen or twenty pounds thus, when he has pretty good luck. Two to three pounds is a common size there. From the Peak, I looked over the wintry landscape. First there is the white ground, then the dark, dulled green of evergreens, then the reddish (?) brown or leather-color of the oaks, which generally retain their leaves, then the gray of maples and other trees, which are bare. They are modest Quaker colors that are seen above the snow. The twilight appears to linger in the snow. This it is makes the days seem suddenly longer. The sun has set, shorn of its disk [sic] in dun, red clouds. The young moon and the evening star are seen. The partridge has come forth to bud on some wayside apple tree. The woodchopper's task is clone; he puts his axe under a log and sets out for home. For an hour the fisherman's lines have been freezing in, and now he, too, has commenced his retreat. That large round track forming nearly a straight line Goodwin thinks a fox.

A thaw appears to be commencing. We hear the eaves run in the evening.



January 4, Wednesday: Captain William McDonald discovered the islands that now bear his name, to the east of Heard Island in the south Indian Ocean.

66. According to Professor of Geology Robert M. Thorson, this geologist must have been the Reverend Professor Edward Hitchcock, who along among Thoreau's sources described the cinnamon stone as essonite. By referring to the rock as a "brickbat," Thorson speculates, Thoreau must have been meaning to suggest something to throw at someone, "almost certainly the Reverend Edward Hitchcock, who irked Thoreau for being a wolf in sheep's clothing: in this case, a 'sacred historian' posing as a 'Man of Science.' The wolf was a Christian divine who used his presidency of Amherst College as a bully pulpit to evangelize 'natural theology' across the region, a program Thoreau wanted no part of. The sheep's clothing was Hitchcock's otherwise excellent Final Report on the Geology of Massachusetts in Four Parts [Northampton: J. Butler], complete with six hundred hand-tinted copies of a beautiful foldout map of the state. When published in 1841, five hundred copies of the full report were delivered by government order to various institutions, including 'one copy each to each incorporated Athenaeum, Lyceum, and Academy.' This gave Thoreau free and convenient public access to the best such work in the nation at a time when geology was the most fashionable science of the day, and when Hitchcock was one of its leading fashionistas. Seizing his historic moment nearly a decade earlier, Hitchcock had persuaded the Commonwealth to appoint him as 'geologist of the state,' fund a long-term mapping project, and publish its massive report at taxpayer expense. Thus it was that Thoreau's most valuable scientific reference for the most exciting new field of science had been written by someone whose lifelong purpose was to 'defend and illustrate' he truth of 'Christian religion' by aligning the facts of geology to it."





Jan. 4. It thaws all day; the eaves drip as in a rain; the road begins to be soft and a little sloshy.



January 5, Thursday: [Henry Thoreau](#) noted that in the afternoon, it being warm and thawing though fair, the snow was covered with snow-fleas, especially in tracks a woodchopper had made through deep snow. "These are the first since the snow came."



January 5. Still thaws. This afternoon (as probably yesterday), it being warm and thawing, though fair, the snow is covered with snow-fleas. Especially they are sprinkled like pepper for half a mile in the tracks of a woodchopper in deep snow. These are the first since the snow came. With the first thawing weather they are [sic]. There is also some blueness now in the snow, the heavens being now (toward night) overcast. The blueness is more distinct after sunset.



January 6, Friday: Sherlock Holmes was born (or so we are told).

TAPPAN FAMILY

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) led [Lewis William Tappan](#), a young Transcendentalist friend of [Waldo Emerson](#) and [Ellery Channing](#) to whom Thoreau had been introduced while living on Staten Island, down the railroad tracks to see Heywood Brook, Fair Haven Bay, and Fair Haven Cliffs.



January 6. Walked [Tappan](#) in P.M. down railroad to Heywood Brook, Fair Haven, and Cliffs. At every post along the brook-side, and under almost every white pine, the snow strewn with the scales and seeds of white pine cones left by the squirrels. They have sat on every *post* and dropped them for a great distance, also acorn-shells. The surface of the snow was sometimes strewn with the small alder scales, i.e. of catkins; also, here and there, the large glaucous lichens (*cetrarias?*). Showed [Tappan](#) a small shadbush, which interested him and reminded him of a greyhound, rising so slender and graceful with its narrow buds above the snow. To return to the squirrels, I saw where they had laid up a pitch pine cone in the fork of a rider in several places. Many marks of partridges, and disturbed them on evergreens. A winter (?) gnat out on the bark of a pine. On Fair Haven we slumped nearly a foot to the old ice. The partridges were budding on the Fair Haven orchard, and flew for refuge to the wood, twenty minutes or more after sundown. There was a low, narrow, clear segment of sky in the west at sunset, or just after (all the rest overcast), of the coppery yellow, perhaps, of some of Gilpin's pictures, all spotted coarsely with clouds like a leopard's skin. I took up snow in the tracks at dark, but could find no fleas in it then, though they were exceedingly abundant before. Do they go into the snow at night? Frequently see a spider apparently stiff and dead on snow.

In [Vimont's](#) Jesuit Relation for 1642, he describes the customs of the Iroquois. As in the case of the Hurons, everything is done by presents. The murderer and robber are restrained by the very defect of justice, and because the community (his relations or tribe) whips itself for his fault. They must appease the injured with costly presents. They make that he shall involve his friends in ruin along with himself, and if he would injure any one, shall injure them too. By making it impossible for him to do an injury without doing a greater injury than he wishes, they restrain him.

1854

1854



January 7, Saturday: Friend [William Henry Harvey](#) arrived at Albany on the coast of Western [Australia](#). After a month at Cape Riche he would hike overland through the bush to Perth to visit Fremantle, Rottnest Island (where he would live in a deserted convict establishment), and Garden Island. He would collect some 10,000 specimens of seaweed, many of them new to science.

Having been awarded a hero's welcome when he arrived in New-York, complete with a banquet attended by prominent Americans of Irish extraction, [John Mitchel](#), along with Thomas Meagher, began to put out [The Citizen](#). Within a few weeks this libertarian newspaper, which obsequiously pandered to every rancid prejudice of its target audience, would be enjoying press runs of 50,000.



The publication would of course be greatly in favor of freedom for [Ireland](#). Along the way it would also defend our inalienable right to own other human beings (that is, human [slavery](#)), would attack the great humbug of the Colonization Society, and would insist upon the unimpeachable privilege of a white man to engage in any business at all (that is, for instance, return to the [international slave trade](#)). Covering all bases, this paper would also be used to argue against the emancipation of the Jews.

ANTISEMITISM
RACISM



January 7 P.M. –To Ministerial Swamp. I went to these woods partly to hear an owl [[Great Horned Owl *Bubo virginianus*](#)], but did not; but now that I have left them nearly a mile behind, I hear one distinctly, *hoorer hoo*. Strange that we should hear this sound so often, loud and far, –a voice which we call the owl,– and yet so rarely see the bird. Oftenest at twilight. It has a singular prominence as a sound; is louder than the voice of a dear friend. Yet we see the friend perhaps daily and the owl but a few times in our lives. It is a sound which the wood or the horizon makes.



(George Edwards's A NATURAL HISTORY OF UNCOMMON BIRDS, 1745)



January 8, Sunday morning: Before his walk [Henry Thoreau](#) placed excerpts into his Fact Book from the [Reverend William Gilpin](#)'s OBSERVATIONS ON THE COASTS OF HAMPSHIRE, SUSSEX, AND KENT, RELATIVE CHIEFLY TO PICTURESQUE BEAUTY: MADE IN THE SUMMER OF THE YEAR 1774, and it is clear when he characterizes such an approach as "superficial" and then explodes in outrage "And he a clergyman, 'vicar of Boldre!'" — that his two-year inquiry into British leisure-class hoity-toity aesthetic theorizing has definitively come to an end.



January 8. Sunday. [Gilpin](#), in his essay on the "Art of Sketching Landscape," says: "When you have finished your sketch therefore with Indian ink, as far as you propose, tinge the whole over with some light horizon hue. It may be the rosy tint of morning; or the more ruddy one of evening; or it may incline more to a yellowish, or a greyish cast.... By washing this tint over your *whole drawing*, you lay a foundation for harmony." I have often been attracted by this harmonious tint in his and other drawings, and sometimes, especially, have observed it in nature when at sunset I inverted my head. We love not so well the landscape represented as in broad noon, but in a morning or evening twilight, those seasons when the imagination is most active, the more hopeful or pensive seasons of the day. Our mood may then possess the whole landscape, or be in harmony with it, as the hue of twilight prevails over the whole scene. Are we more than crepuscular in our intellectual and spiritual life? Have we awakened to broad noon? The morning hope is soon lost in what becomes the routine of the day, and we do not recover ourselves again until we land on the pensive shores of evening, shores which skirt the great western continent of the night. At sunset we look into the west. For centuries our thoughts fish those grand banks that lie before the newfoundland, before our spirits take up their abode in that Hesperian Continent to which these lie in the way.

P.M. —To the Spruce Swamp in front of J. Farmer's. Can go across both rivers now. New routes are more practicable. Stood within a rod of a downy woodpecker [[Downy Woodpecker](#) [Picoides pubescens](#)] on an apple tree. How curious and exciting the blood-red spot on its hindhead! I ask why it is there, but no answer is rendered by these snow-clad fields. It is so close to the bark I do not see its feet. It looks behind as if it had on a black cassock open behind and showing a white undergarment between the shoulders and down the back. It is briskly and incessantly tapping all round the dead limbs, but rare twice in a place, as if to sound the tree and so see if it has any worm in it, or perchance to start them. How much he deals with the bark of trees, all his life long tapping and inspecting it! He it is that scatters those fragments of bark and lichens about on the snow at the base of trees. What a lichenist he must be! Or rather, perhaps it is fungi makes his favorite study, for he deals most with dead limbs. How briskly he glides up or drops himself down a limb, creeping round and round, and hopping from limb to limb, and now flitting with a rippling sound of his wings to another tree!

The lower two-thirds of the white spruce has its branches retraced or turned downward, and then curving upward at the extremities, as much as the white pine commonly slants upwards. Above it is so thick that you cannot see through it. All the black spruce that I know hereabouts stand on higher land than this. Saw two squirrel-nests in the thick top of a spruce. It was a foot in diameter, of coarse grass and bark fibres, with very thick bottom and sides and a scarcely distinguishable entrance, lined with fine fibres of bark, probably inner bark of maple, very warm. Probably a red squirrel's, for I heard one winding up his clock. Many white pine cones had been eaten in the neighborhood.

[Gilpin](#)'s "Essay on Picturesque Beauty" is the key to all his writings. He says in the outset that he does not mean to inquire "into the general sources of beauty," but the questions which he proposes to himself depend on the result of such an inquiry. He asks, first, "What is that quality in objects, which particularly marks them as picturesque?" and answers "*roughness*," assigning to that kind of beauty which he makes the opposite to the picturesque the quality of "*smoothness*." This last he styles, too generally or exclusively, "the beautiful." The beautiful, he says, cannot be painted; *e.g.*, "A piece of Palladian architecture may be elegant in the last degree. The proportion of its parts — the propriety of its ornaments — and the symmetry of the whole, may be highly pleasing. But if we introduce it in a picture, it immediately becomes a formal object, and ceases to please. Should we wish to give it picturesque beauty, we must use the mallet, instead of the chisel: we must beat down one half of it, deface the other, and throw its mutilated members around in heaps. In short from a *smooth* building we must turn it into a *rough* ruin." I do not believe that the "beautiful" is not equally beautiful in picture, that the beautiful statue for instance, however smooth, may not appear beautiful when daguerretyped or painted. In the case instanced he must use, the mallet either because the building is not beautiful, or because lie cannot catch and render the spirit of its beauty. If there is the same genius in the painter that there was in the architect, the painting will be beautiful too. The smooth may be more difficult, but is not impossible, to be represented by picture. It is not the mere roughness of the surface which makes the patriarchal head more interesting than that of a youth ever, nor is this the reason why we "admire the Laocoön more than the Antinoüs," for we do not admire it more than the Apollo Belvidere.

True, there are many reasons why the painter should select the rough. It is easier to execute; lie can do it more

justice. In the case of the patriarchal head, those lines and wrinkles which man's life has produced his hand can better represent than the fullness and promise of infancy; and then, on the whole, perhaps, we have more sympathy with performance than promise. The humble or sincere and true is more commonly rough and weather-beaten, so that from association we prefer it. But will Mr. [Gilpin](#) assert that the Venus and Apollo are not fit objects for painting? So we prefer the poor man's irregular garden for its sincerity and truth to the rich man's formal and pretending parterres, and the "worn-out cart-horse" to the pampered steed for similar reasons. Indeed "he does riot recommend his art," if he fails to fix the fleeting forms of the beautiful. The worn-out cart-horse is thought to be more picturesque and admits "of being rendered with spirit," because we can far more easily enter into his spirit, whether as beholders or painters, — have more sympathy with it than with that of the free horse of the prairie. Beside, what has the pampered coach-horse done to deserve our respect and sympathy? He defends the painter, first, by saying that "a free, bold touch is in itself pleasing," and assuming to too great an extent that the objects which he calls beautiful do not admit of being painted in this touch, — but God used a free and bold touch when he created them, and so may the creative painter do when he paints them, — secondly, by saying that "the very essence of his art requires" that he select the Picturesque for the sake of composition, variety, light and shade, and coloring.

But he is superficial. He goes not below the surface to account for the effect of form and color, etc. For instance, he thus attempts to account for the fact that the pampered steed may be a picturesque object. "Though the horse, in a *rough* state, as we have just observed, or worn down with labor, is more adapted to the pencil than when his sides shine with brushing, and high feeding; yet in this latter state also he is certainly a picturesque object. But it is not his smooth, and shining coat, that makes him so. It is the apparent interruption of that smoothness by a variety of shades, and colors, which produces the effect. Such a play of muscles appears, everywhere, through the fineness of his skin, gently swelling, and sinking into each other — he is all over so *lubricus aspici*, the reflections of light are so continually shifting upon him, and playing into each other, that the eye never considers the smoothness of the surface; but is amused with gliding up, and down, among those endless transitions, which in some degree, supply the room of *roughness*." And this is the reason why a pampered steed can be painted! Mark that there is not the slightest reference to the fact that this surface, with its lights and shades, belongs to a horse and not to a bag of wind. The same reasoning would apply equally well to one of his hind quarters hung bottom upwards in a butcher's stall. This comes of not inquiring "into the general sources of beauty."

So I should answer that "the beauty of an old head" is *not* "greatly improved by the *smoothness* of the bald pate" (if bald pates were rough they would do just as well), but it may be improved by the associations which a bald pate suggests.

He fails to show why roughness is essential to the picturesque, because he does not go beneath the surface.

To return to the horse, I should say that no arrangement of light and shade without reference to the object, actual or suggested, so lit and shaded can interest us powerfully, any more than the paint itself can charm us.

In the "Essay on Picturesque Travel," after speaking of the *objects* of such travel, he treats of the way in which "the mind is gratified by these objects." He says: "we might begin in moral style, and consider the objects of nature in a higher light than merely as amusement. We might observe, that a search after beauty should naturally lead the mind to the great origin of all beauty," etc. "But though in theory this seems a natural climax, we insist the less upon it, as in fact we have scarce ground to hope that every admirer of *picturesque beauty* is an admirer also of the *beauty of virtue*." And he a clergyman, "vicar of Boldre!" This is to give us the play of Hamlet with Hamlet's part left out. But there is no half way in this case that is not at the same time half true.

Again, as if that were true, which [G.](#) asserts in another essay, that "the *eye*, which has nothing to do with *moral sentiments*, and is conversant only with *visible forms*, is disgusted," etc., any more than a telescope is disgusted! As if taste resided in the eye! As if the eye, which itself cannot see at all, were conversant with surfaces! Yet he adds directly that "there is a still *higher character* in landscapes than what arises from the *uniformity of objects* — and that is the power of furnishing images *analogous to the various feelings, and sensations of the mind*." Can good landscape have any lower aim? But he says, "To convey however ideas of this kind is the perfection of the art: it requires the splendor, and variety of colors; and is not to be attempted in such trivial sketches as these." And this is Dot modesty merely, but a low estimate of his own art. I might have said some pages back that he allows that grandeur which is produced "by uniformity of color, and a long continuation of line," falls under the head of picturesque beauty, though he says that the idea of it is not easily caught.

The elegant [Gilpin](#). I like his style and manners better than anything he says.

TAPPAN FAMILY



January 9, Monday: In the afternoon Henry Thoreau led Lewis William Tappan to Heywood’s Pond. Thoreau spent that evening at the Channing’s, and Ellery got out a map of Rome and showed Thoreau where he had walked during his stay. At one point during the evening Ellery Channing’s cat was purring loudly, and Thoreau noticed that Channing’s response to this was to punch the cat with the poker.

New-York’s Astor Library opened (later to be known as the New York Public Library).

In San Francisco, the mechanics, merchants, traders, and bankers converged on the Merchants’ Exchange to oppose a licensing law. On this day the city felt a slight shock of earthquake.



Jan. 9. P.M. — To Heywood’s Pond with Tappan.

We were looking for rainbow-tinted clouds, small whiffs of vapor which form and disperse, this clear, cold afternoon, when we saw to our surprise a star, about half past three or earlier, a mere round white dot. Is the winter then such a twilight? I wonder if the savages ever detected one by day. This was about an hour and a half before sunset. T. said he had lost fowls by the owls. They selected the roosters and took off their heads and ate their insides. Found many snow-fleas, apparently frozen, on the snow. [Vide below, the following day.]

T. has a singularly elastic step. He will run through the snow, lifting his knees like a child who enjoys the motion. When he slumped once through to water and called my attention to it, with an indescribable flash of his eye, he reminded me forcibly of Hawthorne’s little son Julian. He uses the greatest economy in speech of any man I know. Speaks low, beside, and without emphasis; in monosyllables. I cannot guess what the word was for a long time. His language is different from the Algonquin.



January 10, Tuesday: “Description of The Seasons,” a composition by Joseph Haydn with an oratorio about the short life of the composer by Henry C. Watson, was performed by The Philharmonic Society of San Francisco at that metropolis’s Musical Hall, under the direction of Mr. R. Herold.

CALIFORNIA



Jan. 10. I cannot thaw out to life the snow-fleas which yesterday covered the snow like pepper, in a frozen state. How much food they must afford to small birds, — chickadees, etc. The snow went off remarkably fast in the thaw before the 7th, but it is still deep, lying light in swamps and sprout-lands, somewhat hollow beneath. The thaw produced those yellowish pools in hollows in the fields, where water never stands else, and now perhaps there is a bottom of snow; and now for the last three days they have afforded good sliding. You got a start by running over the snow-crust. In one place, where the depression was inconsiderable but more extensive than usual, I found that it was mere glazed snow on which I slid, it having rapidly frozen dry.

The sportsmen chose the late thaw to go after quails. They come out at such times to pick the horse-dung in the roads, and can be traced thence to their haunts.

When we were walking last evening, Tappan admired the soft rippling of the Assabet under Tarbell’s bank. One could have lain all night under the oaks there listening to it. Westward forty rods, the surface of the stream reflected a silvery whiteness, but gradually darkened thence eastward, till beneath us it was almost quite black. What you can recall of a walk on the second day will differ from what you remember on the first day, as the mountain chain differs in appearance, looking back the next day, from the aspect it wore when you were at its base, or generally, as any view changes to one who is journeying amid mountains when he has increased the distance.

With Tappan, his speech is frequently so frugal and reserved, in monosyllables not fairly uttered clear of his thought, that I doubt if he did not cough merely, or let it pass for such, instead of asking what he said or meant, for fear it might turn out that he coughed merely.

Channing showed me last night on a map where, as he said, he “used to walk” in Rome. He was there sixteen days.

I mistook the creaking of a tree in the woods the other day for the scream of a hawk. How numerous the resemblances of the animate to the inanimate!

 January 11, Wednesday: [Charles Wesley Slack](#) wrote from Boston to Evelina E. Vannevar Slack. Family affairs; recent election.⁶⁷

Having been built in Rockland, Maine by the firm of Deacon George Thomas in the previous year, the clipper [Red Jacket](#) sailed under master Asa Eldridge from New-York dockside in order to get its bottom coppered in Liverpool. She would arrive dockside in but 13 days, 1 hour, and 25 minutes. (The name “Red Jacket” refers to Sa Go Ye Wat Ha, (“he who keeps them awake”), the Seneca orator and leader who had aided the British during the American Revolution, earning him his British red uniform and the nickname.)

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked to Fair Haven Cliff and [Walden Pond](#).

 January 12, Thursday: Great Britain and France informed Russia that their navies were operating on the Black Sea.

A rainy day.

 January 13, Friday: Incidental music to Romulus, a comédie by Dumas, Feuillet and Bocage, by Jacques Offenbach was performed for the initial time, at the Comédie-Française.

It was a warm and thawing day, and [Henry Thoreau](#) walked to [Walden Pond](#) and the Goose Ponds, and Britton’s Camp.

[Emily Dickinson](#) wrote to B.F. Newton’s last pastor, the Reverend Edward Everett Hale.

Anthony Foss obtained a patent for the accordion. (Might this Anthony Foss be related to [Andrew Twombly Foss](#) of [New Hampshire](#)?)

67. Stimpert, James. A GUIDE TO THE CORRESPONDENCE IN THE CHARLES WESLEY SLACK MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION: 1848-1885. Kent State University, Library, Special Collections

1854

1854

 January 14, Saturday: The [New York State](#) legislature passed “An Act for the Incorporation of Companies formed to Navigate the Waters of Lake George by Steamboats.”

[John Mitchel](#)'s new paper, [The Citizen](#), reviewed a lecture that had been delivered by [Charles Lenox Remond](#) before the [New-York](#) Anti-Slavery Society at the Broadway Tabernacle. The gazette included also in this issue



a letter from James Haughton, asking that the editors by embracing the cause of abolitionism “prove themselves true men,” and Mitchel reacted to this provocation in no uncertain terms, pointing out that this correspondent already knew full well that the cause of negro [emancipation](#) was something that had always been “distasteful” to him:

Others may exert themselves to gain justice and freedom for Irish serfs; he [James Haughton], for his part, will stand by the negroes, and scathe the cradle-plunderers.

The editor continued in no uncertain terms:

We are not abolitionists; no more abolitionists than Moses, or Socrates, or Jesus Christ. We deny that it is a crime, or a wrong, or even a peccadillo, to hold slaves, to buy slaves, to keep slaves to their work by [flogging](#) or other needful coercion.

The editor continued by informing his audience that he, personally, wished that he owned some “good plantation, well-stocked with healthy negroes, in Alabama.” Have no doubt about it: that would be in his consideration a righteous thingie rather than a wicked thingie.

[Henry Thoreau](#) was surprised to note by how much the river was swollen due to the Thursday rain. He received a coat from the tailor and was dismayed by how he looked in it:

GOD IN CONCORD by Jane Langton © 1992

34

This is not the figure that I cut. This is the figure the tailor cuts. That presumptuous and impertinent fashion whispered in his ear, so that he heard no word of mine.
Journal, January 14, 1854

Homer Kelly was on his way to the barbershop. His wife had told him he needed a haircut, and when he looked in

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Jan. 14. If the writers of the brazen age are most suggestive to thee, confine thyself to them, and leave those of the Augustan age to dust and the bookworms. Was surprised this morning to see how much the river was swollen by the rain of day before yesterday.

The channel, or river itself, is still covered with ice, but the meadows are broad sheets of dark-blue water, contrasting with the white patches of snow still left. The ice on the river rises with the water in this case, while it remains attached to the bottom by one edge on each side, and is Heaved up and cracked in consequence along the line of the willows, thus:—



All the water on the meadows lies over ice and snow. The other day I started a partridge from a sumach bush with berries on it, and to-day from a barberry bush with berries. I suspect that they eat the berries of both.

[Cato](#) makes the vineyard of first importance to a farm; second, a well-watered garden; third, a willow plantation (*salictum*); fourth, an olive-yard (*oletum*); fifth, a meadow or grass ground (?) (*pratium*); sixth, a grain-field or tillage (?) (*campus frumentarius*); seventh, a copsewood (?) for fuel (?) (*silva caedua*) (Varro speaks of planting and cultivating this); eighth, an arbustum (Columella says it is a plantation of elms, etc., for vines to rest on) (*arbustum*); ninth, a wood that yields mast (*glandaria silva*). He says elsewhere the *arbustum* yields *ligna et virgae*.

He says: "In earliest manhood the master of a family must study to plant his ground; as for building he must think a long time about it (*diu cogitare*); he must not think about planting, but do it. When he gets to be thirty-six years old, then let him build, if he has his ground planted. So build, that the villa may not have to seek the farm, nor the farm the villa." This contains sound advice, as pertinent now as ever.

As for farming implements, I do not see but the Romans had as great a variety as are now exhibited in the Crystal Palace.

The master of a family must have in his rustic villa "cellam olcariam, vinariam, dolia multa, uti lubeat caritatem exspectare, et rei et virtuti, et gloriae crit" (an oil and wine cellar, many casks, so that it may be pleasant to expect hard times; it will be for his advantage, and virtue and glory).

This, too, to make farmers prudent and thrifty: "Cogitato quotannis tempestates magnas venire, et oleam dejicere solere" (Consider that great tempests come every year, and the olive is wont to fall). The steward must

not lend seed for sowing, etc. He may have two or three families of whom to borrow and to whom to lend and no more.

I just had a coat come home from the tailor's. Ah me! Who am I that should wear this coat? It was fitted upon one of the devil's angels about my size. Of what use that in measuring of me if he did not measure my character, but only the breadth of my shoulders, as it were a peg to hang it on. This is not the figure that I cut. This is the figure the tailor cuts. That presumptuous and impertinent fashion whispered in his ear, so that he heard no word of mine. As if I had said, "Not my will, O Fashion, but thine be done." We worship not the Parcae, nor the Graces, but Fashion, offspring of Proteus and Vanessa, of Whim and Vanity. She spins and weaves and cuts with the authority of the Fates. Oh, with what delight I could thrust a spear through her vitals or squash her under my heel! Every village might well keep constantly employed a score of knights to rid it of this monster. It changes men into bears or monkeys with a single wave of its wand. The head monkey at Paris, Count D'Orsay, put on the traveller's cap, and now all the monkeys in the world do the same thing. He merely takes the breadth of my shoulders and proceeds to fit the garment to Puck, or some other grotesque devil of his acquaintance to whom he has sold himself.

I despair of ever getting anything quite simple and honest done in this world by the help of men. They would have to be passed through a powerful press, *à la* cider-mill, that their old notions might be thoroughly squeezed out of them, and it would be some time before they would get upon their legs again. Then undoubtedly there would be some one with a maggot in his head, offspring of an egg deposited there nobody knows when; fire does not kill these things, and you would have lost your labor. I could cry, if it were not for laughing.

"If you have done one thing late, you will do all your work late," says [Cato](#) to the farmer. They raised a sallow (*salicem*) to tie vines with. Ground subject to fogs is called *nebulosus*. They made a cheap wine of poor grapes, called *vinum praeliganeum*, for the laborers to drink. (So our farmers give their men rum or weak cider.) Oxen "must have muzzles [or little baskets, *fiscellas*], that they may not go in quest of grass (*ne herbam sectentur*) when they plow."

January 15, 1854



January 15.

January 16, 1854



January 16.



January 17, Tuesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed for William O. Benjamin in the east part of Lincoln.

Detroit and [Niagara Falls](#) became connected across Canada by way of the Great Western Railway.

[James Redpath](#), a reporter at [Horace Greeley](#)'s New-York [Tribune](#), having been assigned to cull for republication in the [Tribune](#), articles from Southern newspapers that usefully described the "Facts of Slavery," came upon [the following relevant material](#):

We learn from The Norfolk Beacon that one of the first acts of Judge Baker, of the Superior Court on Monday, Jan. 9, was to sentence Mrs. Douglas, who was convicted

at the last term for instructing negroes to read and write, contrary to law, to one month's imprisonment to the city jail, which sentence was immediately carried into execution....



Jan. 17. Surveying for William O. Benjamin in east part of Lincoln. Saw a red squirrel on the wall, it being thawing weather. Human beings with whom I have no sympathy are far stranger to me than inanimate matter, — rocks or earth. Looking on the last, I feel comparatively as if I were with my kindred.

[Cato](#), prescribing a *medicamentum* for oxen, says, “When you see a snake’s slough, take it and lay it up, that you may not have to seek it when it is wanted.” This was mixed with bread, corn, etc.

He tells how to make bread and different kinds of cakes, viz., a *libum*, a *placenta*, a *spira* (so called because twisted like a rope, perhaps like doughnuts), *scriblita* (because ornamented with characters like writing), *globi* (globes), etc., etc. Tells how to make a vow for your oxen to Mars Sylvanus in a wood with an offering, no woman to be present nor know how it is done.

When the brine will float a dry *maena* (a fish) or an egg, then it will preserve meat. Tells how to cram hens and geese. If you wish to remove an ill savor from wine, he recommends to heat a brick and pitch it and let it down by a string to the bottom of the cask and there remain two days, the cask being stopped.

“If you wish to know if water has been added to wine, make a little vessel of ivy wood (*materia ederacea*). Put into it the wine which you think has water in it. If it has water, the wine will run out (*effluct*), the water will remain. For a vessel of ivy wood does not hold wine.”

“The dogs must be shut up by day that they may be more sharp (*aeriores*, more fierce (?)) and vigilant by night.”

So I might say of a moon and star gazer.

“Make a sacrificial feast for the oxen when the pear is in blossom. Afterward begin to plow in the spring.”

“That day is to be holy (*feriae*) to the oxen, and herdsmen, and those who make the feast.” They offer wine and mutton to Jupiter Dapalis, also to Vesta if they choose.

When they thinned a consecrated grove (*lucum conlucare*) (as if [to] let in the light to a shaded place) they were to offer a hog by way of expiation and pray the god or goddess to whom it was sacred to be favorable to them, their house and family and children. Whatever god or goddess thou art to whom this grove is sacred, I pray thee be propitious. Should not all groves be regarded as a *lucus*, or consecrated grove, in this sense? I wish that our farmers felt some such awe when they cut down our consecrated groves; would realize that they are sacred to some god.

A *lustrum*, or sacrifice, of a sow, sheep, and bull (*suovitaurlia*) was performed every fifth year, when various things were prayed for.

Gives several charms to cure diseases, mere magician’s words.



January 18, Wednesday: Just after midnight, the [steamer SS Golden Gate](#), “probably the most magnificent sea steamer afloat,” limped into the harbor of San Diego, [California](#) with a broken centre shaft, making best use of its one remaining engine and paddlewheel, to take on fresh provisions for its 750 passengers for the trip farther up the coast. At 3PM the vessel began to leave the harbor of San Diego, and there would be a series of mishaps, followed by a storm and a shipwreck, with the 750 passengers being returned to San Diego to board other steamers (the *Golden Gate* would be recovered but this incident would end up costing the steamboat company some \$140,000).

[Thomas A. Watson](#) was born.

Robert and Clara Schumann left Düsseldorf for Hanover to give concerts and visit [Johannes Brahms](#) and Joseph Joachim (this would be their last trip together).

Having received minimal interference from [Mexican](#) authorities, [William Walker](#) expanded his domains from Baja California to Sonora (although he has never been there).

The Reverend [Henry Ward Beecher](#) sermonized, in his Tabernacle “crowded to its utmost capability,” on [John Mitchel](#) and his attitude toward human slavery. He read to this audience the substance of the disgusting letter

that Mitchel had placed in [The Citizen](#), to “a tempest of hisses and cries of shame.” He suggested to this audience that they consider Mitchel to be among “the dead,” which is a curious thing to say since it is so ambiguous: –it might be taken to mean that everyone ought to shun such a person, –or it might be taken to mean that someone ought to put him out of his misery.

[Henry Thoreau](#) was summoned as surveyor by Middlesex County Justice of the Peace [L. Marrett](#) of the Court of Common Pleas in Cambridge to help resolve a land dispute at 9 AM on January 20th in regard to a survey he had just completed for William O. Benjamin. The other party was listed as “Leonard Spaulding Lots.”⁶⁸ The threat made in the legal summons was merely the customary and usual sort of belligerent insolence which one is to expect, when an established government bureaucracy deals with a mere citizen:



Hereof fail not, as you will answer your default under the pain and penalty in the law in that behalf made and provided.

Middlesex[] SS[]To Henry D. Thoreau of Concord
in said County of [Middlesex]

Greeting.

You are hereby required, in the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to make your appearance before Justices of the Court of Common [Pleas] now— — holden at Cambridge Thursday within and for the County of [Middlesex] on [~~Friday~~] the twentieth day of January instant at 9 O clock [A.M] and from day to day until the Action hereinafter named is heard by the court, to give evidence of what you know relating to an Action or Plea of Tort then and there to be heard and tried betwixt ~~William C Benjamin~~ Leonard Spaulding [& als]
} Plaintiff

and William [C] Benjamin ----- } Defendant

Hereof fail not[,] As you will answer your default under the pains and penalty in the law in that behalf made and provided.— Dated at Cambridge the [E]ig-hteenth day of January [] in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty four

L. Marrett Justice of the Peace[.]

View [Henry Thoreau](#)'s personal working drafts of his surveys courtesy of AT&T and the Concord Free Public Library:

http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_Surveys/Thoreau_Surveys.htm



Thoreau testified in Cambridge, but his client Benjamin lost.

68. It has been pointed out that this episode occurs too late to account for the appearance of the Spaulding farm in “Walking.”

1854

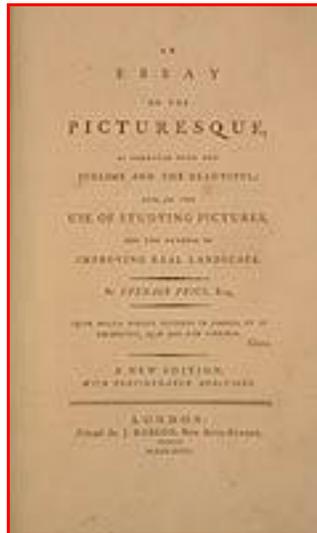
1854

➡ January 19, Thursday: The Reverend [Henry Ward Beecher](#) placed, in his newspaper [The Independent](#), an article "[John Mitchel](#) and Slavery," pointing out that the so-called liberty and the so-called freedom for which Mitchel had struggled in Ireland had no "real principle of liberty at bottom," because this was a "liberty" and a "freedom" that "sends terror through the cotton field," a "liberty" and a "freedom" that "vociferates triumphant bids for comely girls and healthy boys of divided families, among squabbling Legrees, around the auction-block." –His prose may have been purple but his point was of course most valid.

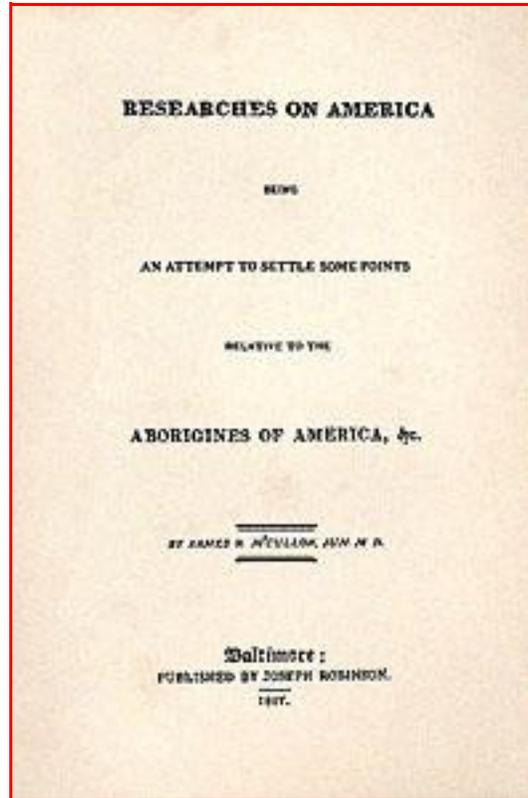
➡ January 19, Thursday: While visiting the metropolis to testify in a court case, [Henry Thoreau](#) stopped by [Harvard Library](#) to turn in the 3d volume of HISTORICAL AND STATISTICAL INFORMATION RESPECTING ... THE INDIAN TRIBES OF THE UNITED STATES,

THE INDIAN TRIBES, III, 1854

that he had checked out on the 28th of November, and check out the first of the three volumes of Sir Uvedale Tomkyns Price (1747-1829)'s ESSAYS ON THE PICTURESQUE, AS COMPARED WITH THE SUBLIME AND THE BEAUTIFUL, AND ON THE USE OF STUDYING PICTURES, FOR THE PURPOSE OF IMPROVING REAL ESTATE (London: Mawman, 1810) (1st edition, London: J. Robson, 1794).



[Thoreau](#) also checked out Dr. James H. McCulloh, Jr. (1793-1870)'s RESEARCHES ON AMERICA: BEING AN ATTEMPT TO SETTLE SOME POINTS RELATIVE TO THE ABORIGINES OF AMERICA, &C. (Baltimore: Joseph Robinson, 1st edition 1816, 2d edition 1817).



[Thoreau](#) also checked out [John Josselyn](#)'s ACCOUNT OF TWO VOYAGES TO NEW-ENGLAND (1674).⁶⁹

69. Refer to Philip F. Gura's "Thoreau and John Josselyn" in *NEQ* 48 (December 1975), pages 505-18:

It is my contention that people tracing the sources of Thoreau's singular literary development have overlooked influences very close to home.... Could it not be that Thoreau's true affinity is not to people like Emerson, but to those seventeenth-century men who were, in Urian Oakes's words, "the Lord's **Remembrancers** or **Recorders**"?... Is it accidental that the excursion was Thoreau's chosen form, or that he would compose a botanical index for his trips to the Maine woods?

THE MAINE WOODS: There may be some truth in what he said about the moose growing larger formerly; for the quaint John Josselyn, a physician who spent many years in this very district of Maine in the seventeenth century, says, that the tips of their horns "are sometimes found to be two fathoms asunder," —and he is particular to tell us that a fathom is six feet,— "and [they are] in height, from the toe of the fore foot to the pitch of the shoulder, twelve foot, both which hath been taken by some of my sceptique readers to be monstrous lies"; and he adds, "There are certain *transcendentia* in every creature, which are the indelible character of God, and which discover God." This is a greater dilemma to be caught in than is presented by the cranium of the young Bechuana ox, apparently another of the *transcendentia*, in the collection of Thomas Steel, Upper Brook Street, London, whose "entire length of horn, from tip to tip, along the curve, is 13 ft. 5 in.; distance (straight) between the tips of the horns, 8 ft. 8 1/2 in." However, the size both of the moose and the cougar, as I have found, is generally rather underrated than overrated, and I should be inclined to add to the popular estimate a part of what I subtracted from Josselyn's.

JOHN JOSSELYN



Jan 19th 54

Went to Cambridge to Court.

Dr Harris says that my cocoons found in Lincoln in Dec. are of the Atticus Cecropia. the largest of our emperor moths. He made this drawing of the 4 kinds of Emperor moths which he says we have— The Cecropia is the largest The cocoon must be right end uppermost when they are ready to come out. The A. Promethia is the *only moth* whose cocoon has a *fastening wound round the petiole of the leaf & round the shoot — the leaf partly folded round it.*

That spider whose hole I found — & which I carried *him, he is pretty sure* is the *Lycosa fatifera*.

In a large & splendid work on the insects of Georgia by Edwards & smith (?) near end of last century upstairs, I found plates of the above moths — called not atticus but phalaena — and other species of phalaena.

He thinks that small beetle slightly metallic which I saw with grubs &c on the Yellow lily roots last fall — was a Donax or one of the Donasia?

In **Josselyn's** account of his voyage from London to Boston in 1638 he says "June the first day in the afternoon, very thick foggie weather, we sailed by an enchanted island," &c This kind of remark to be found in so many accounts of voyages — appears to be a fragment of tradition come down from the earliest account of Atlantis & its disappearance—

COLL.MASS.HIST.SOC. 1833

Varro having enumerated certain writers on Agriculture says accidentally that they wrote *soluta ratione* [should be *soluta oratione*] i.e. in prose. This suggests the difference between the looseness of prose & the precision of poetry. A perfect expression requires a particular rhythm or measure for which no other can be substituted— The prosaic is always a loose expression

LIBRIS GRAMMATICIS

Varro makes Fundanius say "I could not live [in Italy?] in a summer day of non diffinderem meo insitio [should be insiticio] somno meridie — if I did not split it with my inserted sleep at noon" — i.e. on account of the heat—

DE AGRICULTURA LIBER



1854

1854

Cato makes much account of the leaves of elms & poplars for sheep & oxen & [Varro](#) particularly recommends to plant elms along the confines of a farm because this not merely preserve the boundary & the fence but bear some baskets of grapes & afford the most palatable leaves for sheep & oxen.

[Varro](#) divides fences into four kinds — unum naturale, alterum agreste, tertium militare, quartum fabrile. (many kinds of each)— The first is the living hedge— One kind of sepes agrestis is our rail fence — & our other dead wooden farm fences would come under this head— The military sepes consists of a ditch & rampart — is common along highways — sometimes a rampart alone. The 4th is the mason's fence of stone — or brick (burnt or unburnt) or stone & earth together.

DE AGRI CULTURA, I

Seges dicitur quod aratum satum est; arvum, quod aratum necdum satum est: novalis, ubi satum fuit ante, quam secunda aratione renovetur.



January 20, Friday: Captain J.B.G. Isham of the steamship *SS Golden Gate* reported to the Pacific Mail Steamship Company:

Mr. E. Flint,—

Dear Sir:—

I am obliged to report to you that on the 10th we broke our centre shaft, and drifted about under sail until the 14th, by which time we were able to steam with one engine and one wheel. I have 750 passengers on board. I came into San Diego on the night of the 18th, between 12 and 1 o'clock, for fresh provisions, all hands having been on an allowance for six days. I was 500 miles from San Diego when I broke down. In leaving San Diego I had got outside and near to Point Toma; coming down broadside too, I gave the engine a back turn to get room to swing around, and when I rang the bell to go ahead, it being so badly balanced it could not be got over the centre, and the result was that the current sheared the ship on to the edge of the bank, which I did not consider of any consequence, notwithstanding I had but one engine and it worked heavy. The ship then swung around and brought up alongside the bank fore and aft. The steamer *Goliah* was at this time leaving port. I made signal to her; she came alongside and took my hawsers; by the time she got hold the tide had fallen eight inches. She parted both hawsers, and I then saw no chance of getting off until the next high tide. I ran my hawsers again and the *Goliah* came to anchor to be ready when the tide made. By this time it was 5 P.M. and perfectly smooth. The tide commenced to flow at 6 o'clock, at which time a gale from the south east burst upon us. At 9 o'clock the *Goliah* let go my hawsers and made a shelter inside the harbor. At 11 P.M., having sail on the ship and the engines at work, the ship swung around and brought up upon the same shoal, not being able to get away on account of the violence of the storm and the breaking sea. After bringing up, the sea broke heavily on us until 4 o'clock in the morning, when it moderated; but the sea continued to break heavily and around us. During the night the ship pounded very heavily and almost any other ship would have gone to pieces; when the ebb tide made, she soon became more quiet. At daylight the *Goliah* came out to see us; it was too rough to do anything with her. The ship made



1854

1854

considerable water during the night. This day we have been occupied in getting the water out of the ship, which was over the furnaces; we began at 8 o'clock with bail gangs and pumps. At 7 P.M., had the furnaces clear of water and raised steam and started the engines, but it did not effect anything but to keep in position. At 4 A.M., on the 20th, had steamers Goliah and Isthmus off to us; made contract with them to land the passengers, and the Goliah to take off both of our steam anchors. Many of the passengers will go up on these boats, the balance I shall subsist on shore until you send a steamer down to take them up. I shall use every means to take her off. I think she has started some of her butts, but hope, if we succeed in shifting her position, to be able to get her into San Diego; if not, I shall keep her in as shoal water as is necessary, until I get assistance from San Francisco.

I think you had better send down a set of purchases and two or three steam pumps, and if we do not get another gale we shall succeed in saving the ship. At 12 M. I have sounded in two lines from the ship, and find that we must lighten the ship twenty inches to get her up.

The Goliah failed in carrying out my anchors this morning, and I shall be obliged to adopt other expedients. I shall do the best that I can. I shall send the mails up by the steamer Goliah. I have announced to the passengers that the Company will subsist them on shore until you send a steamer to their relief. I have one or two hulks alongside, and shall commence discharging freight, stores and coal to-morrow.

Yours, &c.,
J.B.G. Isham,
Comd'g Golden Gate

1854

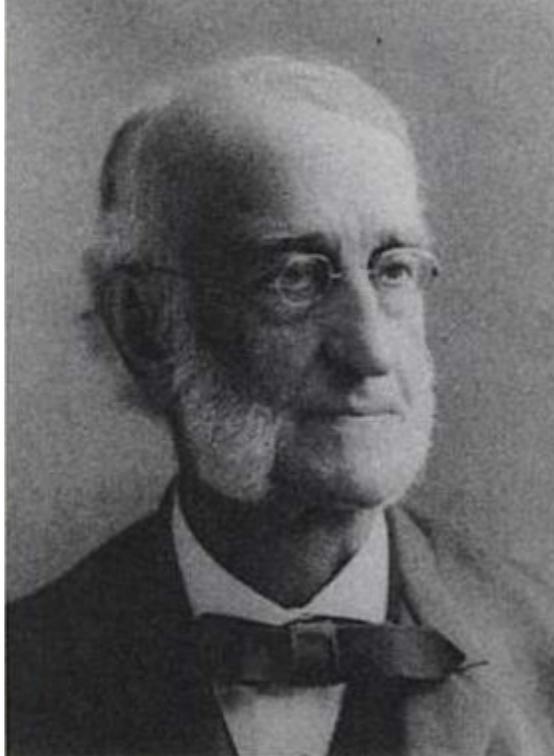
1854



January 21, Saturday: [John Mitchel](#) responded in [The Citizen](#) to the Reverend [Henry Ward Beecher](#)'s sermon against him, by referring to Beecher as "his reverence" and promising that in his eventual response he meant "not only to parry but to thrust."

Phantasie op.131 for violin and orchestra by [Robert Schumann](#) was performed for the initial time, in Hannover. Joseph Joachim was the soloist.

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [H.G.O. Blake](#) in Worcester, telling him that he would visit on Monday.



Concord Jan 21st '54

Mr Blake,

My coat is at last

done, and my mother & sister allow
that I am so far in a condition

to go abroad. I feel as if I had gone
abroad the moment I put it on. It is,

as usual a production strange to
me the wearer, invented by some Count

D'Orsay, and the maker of it was not
acquainted with any of my real depressions

or elevations. He only measured a peg
to hang it on, and might have made

the loop big enough to go over my
head. It requires a not quite in-

nocent indifference not to say inso-
lence to wear it. Ah, the process by which



1854

1854

we get our coats is not what it
should be. Though the church de-
clares it righteous & its priest pardons
me, my own Good Genius tells
me that it is hasty & coarse & false.
I expect a time when, or rather an
integrity by which a man will get
his coat as honestly, and as per-
fectly fitting as a tree its bark. Now
<<lines missing at bottom of xerox>>
our garments are typical of our con[]

Page 2

formity to the world, i. e.
of the Devil — & to some extent react on
us and poison us like that shirt which
Hercules put on.
I think to come & see you next week on monday,
if nothing hinders. I have just returned
from Court at Cambridge, whither I was
called as a witness, having surveyed a
water-privelege about which there
is a dispute since you were here.

Ah! what foreign countries there
are, greater in extent than the U. S. or
Russia, and with no more souls to a
square mile — stretching away on every side
from every human being with whom you
have no sympathy. Their humanity affects me
as simply monstrous. Rocks — earth — brute
beasts comparatively are not so strange
to me. When I sit in the parlors or kitchens
of some with whom my business brings
me — I was going to say in contact —
(business, like misery, makes strange bed-
fellows) I feel a sort of awe and as
forlorn as if I were cast away on
a desolate shore — I think of Riley's
Narrative & his suffering. You y who roared
like a merlin with your mate through
the realms of ether — in the presence of the
unlike drop at once to earth a mere
amorphus
<<lines missing at bottom of xerox>>
squab — divested of your air
inflated pinions. (By the way, excuse

Page 3

this writing, for I am using the stub of the last feather I chance to possess —) You travel on, however, through this dark & desert world, you see in the distance an intelligent & sympathizing lineament, — ~~the~~ stars come forth in the dark & oases appear in the desert.

But (to return to the subject of coats), we are well nigh smothered under yet more fatal coats, which do not fit us, our whole lives long.

Consider the cloak that our employment or station is — how rarely men treat each other for what in their true & naked characters they are — How we use & tolerate pretension; how the judge is clothed with dignity which does not belong to him, and the trembling witness with humility ~~as~~ that does not belong to him, and the criminal perchance with shame or impudence which no more belong to him — It does not matter so much then what is the fashion of the cloak with which we cloak these cloaks. Change the coat — put the judge in the criminal box & the criminal on the bench, and you might think that you had changed the men.

No doubt the thinnest of all cloaks is it is sleazy & frays out conscious deception, or lies, it is not close ^ woven like cloth — but its meshes are a coarse net-work. A man can afford to lie only at the intersection of the threads, but truth <<lines missing at bottom of xerox>> puts in the filling & makes a consistent stuff.

Page 4

I mean merely to suggest how much the station affects the demeanor & self-respectability of the parties, & that the difference between the judge's coat of cloth & the criminal[']s] is insignificant compared with — or only partially significant of — the difference between the coats which their respective stations permit[s] them to wear —. What airs the judge may put on over his coat which the criminal may not! The judge's opinion (sententia) of the criminal sentences him

& is read by the clerk of the court, & published to the world, & executed by the sheriff — but the criminal’s opinion of the judge has the weight of a sentence & is published & executed only in the supreme court of the universe — a court not of common pleas. How much juster is the one than the other? Men are continually sentencing each other, but whether we be judges or criminals, the sentence is ineffectual unless we condemn ourselves.

I am glad to hear that I do not always limit your vision when you look this way — that you sometimes see the light through me, that I am here & there windows & not all dead wall. Might not the community sometimes petition a man to remove himself as a [nuisance] a darkener of the day — a too large <<lines missing from bottom of xerox>> mote?
H.D.T.

[Bronson Alcott](#) returned home from his Western lecture tour. Almost immediately upon his return, he joined the Committee of Vigilance headed by the white-supremacist Reverend [Theodore Parker](#):

Perhaps blood is to be spilt to rescue the nation from slavery and bring these desperate conservatives to sanity. A retribution is not far off. Let it come.



January 22, Sunday: Birth of the Reverend [John Stetson Barry](#) and [Louisa Young Barry](#)’s 4th child, [Esther Stetson Barry](#), who would become a teacher and a clerk.



Jan. 22nd 54 Saw Jan 20th some tree sparrows in the yard Ones or twice of late I have seen the mother-o’-pearl tints & rain-bow flocks in the western sky— The usual time is when the air is clear & pretty cool, about an hour before sundown Yesterday I saw a very permanent specimen like a long knife-handle of mother of pearl very pale with an interior blue. & rosaceous tinges. Methinks the summer sky never exhibits this so finely.

When I was at Cs the other evening, he punched his cat with the poker because she purred too loud for him. R. Rice says he saw a white owl 2 or 3 weeks since. [Harris](#) told me on the 19th ult that he had never found the snow flea—

No 2d snowstorm in the winter can be so fair & interesting as the 1st. Last night was very windy — & today I see the dry oak leaves collected in thick beds in the little hollows of the snow-crust — these later falls of the leaf—

A fine freezing rain on the night of the 19th ult produced a hard crust on the snow — which was but three inches

[Transcript]

CAT

deep & would not bear.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

ELLERY CHANNING

January 23, Monday: Ellen Taylor Russell was born to Mary Ellen "Nellie" Taylor Russell and Thomas Russell.

The clipper Red Jacket under master Asa Eldridge arrived from New-York harbor in order to get its bottom coppered in Liverpool. It had arrived dockside in but 13 days, 1 hour, and 25 minutes.

Henry Thoreau left at noon to visit H.G.O. Blake in Worcester.



Jan. 23. Love tends to purify and sublime itself. It mortifies and triumphs over the flesh, and the bond of its union is holiness.

The increased length of the days is very observable of late. What is a winter unless you have risen and gone abroad frequently before sunrise and by starlight? Varro speaks of what he calls, I believe, before-light (antelucana) occupations in winter, on the farm. Such are especially milking, in this neighborhood.⁷⁰

If one may judge from Josselyn, they began to be weather-wise very early in New England. He says: "The obscuring of the smaller stars is a certain sign of tempests approaching.... The resounding of the sea from the shore, and murmuring of the winds [sic in Josselyn] in the woods without apparent wind, sheweth wind to follow.... The redness of the sky in the morning, is a token of winds, or rain, or both," etc., etc. "If the white hills look clear and conspicuous, it is a sign of fair weather; if black and cloudy, of rain; if yellow, it is a certain sign of snow shortly to ensue," etc. Vide his "Two Voyages." He speaks of "the Earth-nut bearing a princely flower, the beautiful leaved Pirola," etc. Is n't this the glossy-leaved wintergreen?

At noon, go to Worcester.

January 24, Tuesday: Salmon Portland Chase's abolitionist appeal was published in the New-York Daily Times.

Henry Thoreau and H.G.O. Blake walked about 6 miles from Worcester into Holden and returned via Stonehouse Hill. In his journal entry for this date Thoreau mentioned that he had not yet had an opportunity to peruse the latest volumes of the writings of Thomas De Quincey published in the previous year in Boston and available at the Concord Town Library.

HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL I HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL II

70. Speaking of the rustic villa, you must see that the kitchen is convenient, "because some things are done there in the winter before daylight (antelucanis temporibus); food is prepared and taken." In the study are not some things to be done before daylight, and a certain food to be prepared there?

1854

1854

 January 25, Wednesday: The day was so cold that [Henry Thoreau](#)'s driver in [Worcester, Massachusetts](#) mentioned that, although he drove in the mornings, he did not wear gloves or mittens — except that very morning. “He had a very large hand, one of his fingers as big as three of mine. But this morning he had to give up.” Thoreau returned to [Concord](#) at noon.



Judge Alexander Hamilton formally deferred implementation of the negative ruling of the Missouri Supreme Court, that the Scotts still were enslaved, pending an opportunity for the US Supreme Court determine whether or not it desired to intercede in the case.

[DRED SCOTT](#)
[HARRIET ROBINSON SCOTT](#)
[MRS. IRENE EMERSON](#)

[Lucy Stone](#) delivered a lecture at the Reverend [Henry Ward Beecher](#)'s Tabernacle, suggesting that no matter how contemptuous the abolitionists were of such a person as Mitchel, “the slaveholders themselves” would “dump on him more contempt” even than that. [John Mitchel](#) was in the gallery to hear himself being denounced by a woman from the pulpit, and commented afterward that not having ever experienced before a

1854

1854

woman speaking in such a manner in public, he had been surprised to find himself “listening with respectful attention, for more than an hour.” He found Lucy “very intelligent” and “unaffected” and “young.” He had attended this meeting, he said, for the good of his health, “as a Russian after a hot bath goes out and rolls himself in the snow.”

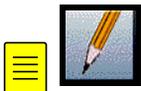


At the 22nd Annual Meeting of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, [William Lloyd Garrison](#) proposed, and the meeting accepted, a resolution that “John Mitchel has revealed himself to be a braggart patriot, and a thoroughly unprincipled man, utterly recreant to all his professions of liberty.” (Mitchel would respond that if he was a “braggart patriot,” Garrison was an “ass.” Then [Wendell Phillips](#) took the floor, and characterized Mitchel as being a product of “British tyranny,” from whom the life had been crushed through its persecution. The British “had sent him to us, the poorest and meanest Slave he had ever heard of.”



 January 26, Thursday, early morning: The [Kip](#) family boarded the steamer *Columbia* to complete their voyage to San Francisco, [California](#). This steamer was greatly overloaded and during the dark boarding, one of the passengers fell down an open hatch, suffering injuries that would prove fatal.

[Henry Thoreau](#) spent the day in court in Cambridge.



Jan. 26. All day at court at Cambridge.

1854

1854

 January 27, Friday: In the [New-York Daily Tribune](#) appeared an article, presumably by [Horace Greeley](#), describing [John Mitchel](#) as an isolated case. The man had “severed himself from every advocate of [Irish](#) emancipation in this country, whose sympathy is in the lest degree vital, or at all worth having.”

 January 27, Friday: [Henry Thoreau](#) attended the auction of the effects of Deacon R. Brown.⁷¹ He made an entry in his journal that indicates that he had been reading in [Lemuel Shattuck](#)'s 1835 [A HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF CONCORD:...](#) (Boston MA: Russell, Odiorne, and Company; Concord MA: [John Stacy](#), 1835). At the auction Thoreau noted an account book from 1742 found in the Deacon's attic. Thoreau made an entry in his journal that he was later to copy into his early lecture “[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT](#)” It would be combined with an entry made on April 8, 1854 and an entry made on March 23, 1853 to form the following:

[Paragraph3] At a lyceum, not long since, I felt that the lecturer had chosen a theme too foreign to himself, and so failed to interest me as much as he might have done.¹ He described things not in or near to his heart, but toward his extremities and superficialities. There was, in this sense, no truly central or centralizing thought in the lecture. I would have had him deal with his privatest experience, as the poet does. The greatest compliment that was ever paid me was when one asked me what **I thought**, and attended to my answer. I am surprised, as well as delighted, when this happens, it is such a rare use he would make of me, as if he were acquainted with the tool. Commonly, if men want anything of me, it is only to know how many acres I make of their land,—since I am a surveyor,—or, at most, what trivial news I have burdened myself with. They never will go to law for my meat; they prefer the shell. A man once came a considerable distance to ask me to lecture on Slavery; but on conversing with him, I found that he and his clique expected seven-eighths of the lecture to be theirs, and only one-eighth mine; so I declined. I take it for granted, when I am invited to lecture anywhere, that there is a desire to hear what I think on some subject, though I may be the greatest fool in the country,—and not that I should say pleasant things merely, or such as the audience will assent to; and I resolve, accordingly, that I will give you a strong dose of myself.² You have sent for me, and engaged to pay for me, and I am determined that you shall have me, though I bore you beyond all precedent.³

-
1. Thoreau drew this and the following three sentences from his journal entry of April 8, 1854. Three days earlier Waldo Emerson had lectured at the Concord Lyceum on the “foreign” subject of “France.”
 2. On authority of the Nantucket [Inquirer](#), Bradley P. Dean has emended the essay copy-text by omitting “—for I have had a little experience in that business,—” which follows “lecture anywhere.”; and by changing “them” to “you”.
 3. On authority of the Nantucket [Inquirer](#), I emend the essay copy-text by changing the three plural pronouns in this sentence from the third to the second person.



Jan. 27. I have an old account-book, found in Deacon R. Brown's garret since his death. The first leaf or two is gone. Its cover is brown paper, on which, amid many marks and scribblings, I find written: —

“Mr. Ephraim Jones
His Wast Book

71. Would this be the same person as the Reuben Brown for whom he had surveyed Fair Haven Hill on October 20-22, 1851? [Henry Thoreau](#) had recorded a talk with Deacon R. Brown on November 18, 1851.



Anno Domini
1742”

It extends from November 8th, 1742, to June 20th, 1743 (inclusive). It appears without doubt from the contents of this book that he is the one of whom Shattuck writes in his history that he “married Mary Hayward, 1728, and died November 29th, 1756, aged 51; having been captain, town-clerk, and otherwise distinguished.” His father’s name was Ephraim, and he had a son Ephraim. The entries are made apparently by himself, or a boy, or his wife, or some other when he was out. The book is filled with familiar Concord names, the grandfathers and great-grandfathers of the present generation. Dr. Hartshorn — he lived to be ninety-two — and Dr. Temple send to the store once or twice. It is more important now what was bought than who bought it.

The articles most commonly bought were mohair (commonly with buttons) (a kind of twist to sew on buttons with), rum (often only a gill to drink at the store), — more of these than anything; salt, molasses, shalloon, fish, calico, some sugar, a castor hat, almanac, psalter (and sometimes primer and testament), paper, knee-buckles and shoe-buckles, garters and spurs by the pair, deer skins, a fan, a cart whip, various kinds of cloth and trimmings, — as half -thick, osnaburg, a very little silk, ferret, quality, serge for breeches, etc., etc., — gloves, a spring knife, an ink-horn, a gun, cap, spice, a pocket case, timber, iron, etc., earthenware; no tea (?) (I am in doubt about one or perhaps two entries), nor coffee, nor meal, nor flour. Of the last two they probably raised all they wanted. Credit is frequently given for timber and once for cloth brought to the store.

On the whole, it is remarkable how little provision was sold at the store. The inhabitants raised almost everything for themselves. Chocolate is sold once. Rum, salt, molasses, fish, a biscuit with their drink, a little spice, and the like are all that commonly come under this head that I remember.

On a loose piece of paper is a bill for “today,” “a bowl of punch,” etc., and on another piece is Jonathan Dwight’s (innholder’s?) bill against the Estate of Capt. Ephraim Jones for entertainment, etc., etc. (apparently he treated his company) at divers times for half a dozen years, amounting to over £146. One entry is “Dea Brown to flip & rum.”

The people apparently made their own cloth and even thread, and hence for the most part bought only buttons and mohair and a few trimmings.

Feb. 1, 1742. “Town of Concord Dr to sundry for the funerel of Widow Williams daughter to 5 pr gloves @ 1/9 1 D P. @ 2/1 ½	0-10-10½ ”
Jan. 10, 1742 (3). “Jon ^d Edes to 3 Raccoon skins } @ 2/9 2 minks @ 1/6 4 musquash @ 3 ½ • }	0-12-5 ”
Jan. 18, 1742 (3). “John Melven Cr by 1 Grey fox	0- 2- 3 ”
Feb. 14. 1742 (3). “Aaron Parker Cr by 100 squirell skins	0- 6- 3 ”

Deer skins were sold at from ten to seventeen shillings. Sometimes it is written “old” or “new tenor.”

Many of the customers came from as far as Harvard, or much farther.

A fan, a jack-knife, or a pair of garters are much more important relatively to the other goods sold than now. No butter, nor rice, nor oil, nor candles are sold. They must have used candles [of their own making], made their own butter, and done without rice. There is no more authentic history of those days than this “Wast Book” contains, and, being money matters, it is more explicit than almost any other statement; something must be said. Each line contains and states explicitly a fact. It is the best of evidence of several facts. It tells distinctly and authoritatively who sold, who bought, the article, amount, and value, and the date. You could not easily crowd more facts into one line. You are warned when the doctor or deacon had a new suit of clothes, by the charge for mohair, buttons, and trimmings, or a castor hat; and here also is entered the rum which ran down their very throats.

Attended the auction of Deacon Brown’s effects a little while to-day, — a great proportion of old traps, rubbish, or trumpery, which began to accumulate in his father’s day, and now, after lying half a century in his garret and other dust-holes, is not burned, but surviving neighbors collect and view it, and buy it, and carefully transport it to their garrets and dust-holes, to lie there till their estates are settled, when it will start again.

Among his effects was a dried tapeworm and various articles too numerous and worthless to mention. A pair of old snow-shoes is almost regularly sold on these occasions, though none of this generation has seen them worn here.

I have some good friends from whom I am wont to part with disappointment, for they neither care what I think nor mind what I say. The greatest compliment that was ever paid me was when one asked me what I *thought*, and attended to my answer.

We begin to die, not in our senses or extremities, but in our divine faculties. Our members may be sound, our sight and hearing perfect, but our genius and imagination betray signs of decay. You tell me that you are growing old and are troubled to see without glasses, but this is unimportant if the divine faculty of the seer shows no

signs of decay.

Cut this afternoon a cake of ice out of Walden and brought it home in a pail, another from the river, and got a third, a piece of last year's ice from Sam Barrett's Pond, at Brown's ice-house, and placed them side by side. These lumps are not large enough to show the color. Walden ice has a green tint close by, but is distinguished by its blueness at a distance. The river ice inclines to a more opaque white. Comparing the lumps, Walden ice was, you might say, more crystalline than the river, but both showed the effect of heat more than the Barrett ice of last year, the bubbles being very much elongated and advanced toward the honeycomb stage, while in the Barrett ice they were spherical and there were wide clear spaces. This looked as if it would keep best.

[Varro](#), on grafting, says when the wood is of a close and dry texture they tie a vessel over it from which water drops slowly, that the shoot may not dry up before it coalesces; also "by the turning of some leaves you can tell what season (*tempus*) of the year it is, as the olive and white poplar, and willow. For when their leaves turn, the solstice is said to be past." They had not such a brilliant change of the leaf as we.

Speaking of the nursery, he says: "Herbaeque elidendae, et dum tenerae sunt vellendae, prius enim aridae factae rixantur, ac celerius rumpuntur, quam sequuntur (and the weeds are to be levelled and, while they are tender, pulled up, for if they have first grown tough they resist and break sooner than come up)... Contra herba in pratis ad spem foeniciciae nata, non modo non evellenda in nutricatu, sed etiam non calcanda. Quo pecus a prato ablegandum, et omne jumentum, ac etiam homines. Solum enim hominis exitium herbae, et semitae fundamentum. (On the other hand, grass in grass-ground, raised with a view to hay, not only is not to be pulled up while it is growing, but is not even to be trodden upon. Wherefore the cattle are to be driven from the mowing, and every beast of burden, and even men. For the sole (track?) of a man's foot is the destruction of the grass, and the foundation of a (foot)path.)" Even so early did the farmers raise this hue and cry about your treading down or going through their grass.



January 28, Saturday: Confirming [Horace Greeley](#)'s evaluation of him as a self-isolated advocate of [Irish](#) emancipation "severed" from every advocate of Irish emancipation in this country "whose sympathy is in the least degree vital, or at all worth having," [John Mitchel](#) wrote in [The Citizen](#) that his belief in human slavery was justified by the Holy Bible itself — and cited proof texts. Chris L. Nesmith has alleged that "It is impossible to say exactly why Mitchel defended slavery so vehemently," but isn't this rather disingenuous? Mitchel was an Irish American in a period during which the Irish Americans and the American blacks were at one another's throats. For the Irish Americans of that period, such as Mitchel, the only thing worse than a slave was a free negro. Contempt was flowing freely both ways, as witness Frederick Douglass's many rancid remarks about drunken Irishmen. In positioning his newspapers in favor of American slavery, Mitchel wasn't doing anything mysterious or incomprehensible, but on the contrary, was doing something entirely predictable and understandable. Mitchel was giving voice to one of the primary prejudices of his constituency.



January 29, Sunday, morning: The steamer *Columbia* delivered the [Kip](#) family to its [California](#) destination, the community of San Francisco.

It was 18 below zero, Fahrenheit. In Boston, the Reverend [Alexander Young](#) preached his last sermon (because soon after, he would catch a cold that would turn into pleurisy). In Concord, [Henry Thoreau](#) stayed home and read [Marcus Terentius Varro](#).



Jan. 29. A very cold morning. Thermometer, or mercury, 18° below zero.

[Varro](#) says that *gluma* seems to be *a glubendo* because the grain is shelled from its follicle (*deglubitur*). *Arista*, the beard of grain, is so called because it dries first (*quod arescit prima*). The grain, *granum*, is a *gerendo*, for this is the object of planting, that this maybe borne. "But the *spica* (or ear), which the rustics call *specca*, as they have received it from their forefathers, seems to be named from *spes* (hope), since they plant because they *hope* that *this* will be hereafter (*cam enim quod sperant fore*)."

The village is the place to which the roads tend, a sort of expansion of the highway, as a lake of a river, the thoroughfare and ordinary of travellers, a trivial or quadrivial place. It is the body of which roads are the arms and legs. It is from the Latin *villa*, which, together with *via* (a way), or more anciently *vea* and *vella*, [Varro](#) derives from *veho* (to carry), because the villa is the place to and from which things are carried. The steward or



1854

1854

overseer of the villa was a *vilicus*, and those who got their living by teaming (?) (*vecturis*) were said *vellaturam facere*. And whence the Latin *vilis* and our word *villain* (?). The inhabitants are way-worn by the travel that goes by and over them without travelling themselves.



January 30, Monday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked up the river on the ice and snow to Fair Haven Pond. He wrote in his journal:

I knew a crazy man who walked into an empty pulpit one Saturday and, taking up a hymn-book, remarked: "We have had a good fall for getting in corn and potatoes. Let us sing Winter." So I say, "Let us sing winter." What else can we sing, and our voices be in harmony with the season?

For ever so many years [Samuel F.B. Morse](#) had been bedeviled by [Dr. Charles T. Jackson](#) who had a fundamental problem, that he didn't understand what capitalism is all about. Capitalism simply is not about earning other people's respect, respect being what [Dr. Jackson](#) needed, but about obtaining other people's money. The patent system, an expression of capitalism, is not about getting credit for being the 1st to have had a great new idea, it isn't about dinner-table conversation, but is instead about gaining the government's protection and monopoly entitlement while applying some great new idea in a pursuit of massive amounts of income. To obtain a patent one needs to apply for a patent, so [Dr. Jackson](#) never had a patent. To obtain a patent one needs to by experimentation develop a device that can secure patent protection, and [Dr. Jackson](#) had never done experimentation or developed such a patentable device. If anyone should understand all this, it should be [Morse](#), after having been bedeviled in this manner for so many years by [Dr. Jackson](#). On this day, however, Chief Justice Roger B. Taney of the US Supreme Court needed to advise [Morse](#) in the case of O'Reilly v. Morse, that the majority of the justices did not side with his patent claims, which were over-broad. It is simply not enough, the Supremes had to point out to Morse, to have merely had a grand idea. Some abstract conceit that somebody might form in one's mind is never to be entitled to any US patent protection, unless and until it be implemented. It has to amount to something. And then it only applies to what it amounts to. The decision of the Supremes turned on the fact that, as an electric current travels along a long wire, it inevitably becomes gradually weaker and weaker until the signal it is carrying is overcome by incidental static. Any such communication scheme, therefore, in order to be effective over long distances, requires re-amplification after re-amplification of the initial signal carrier current. Morse's plan, his patent application had said, had involved "combining two or more electric or galvanic circuits, with independent batteries for the purpose of overcoming the diminished force of electromagnetism in long circuits." He had mentioned an incorporation of "relays" or "repeaters" every 15 or 20 miles or thereabouts in order to keep restoring the carrier current so that it could convey its unambiguous signals "at any distances." Although in his patent application he had laid claim to the exclusive right to every improvement where the motive power was the electric or galvanic current and the result was the marking or printing intelligible characters, signs, or letters at a distance, in fact he had not devised the sole manner in which such an electric or galvanic current could be made to print at a distance. As it turns out, there are other ways to accomplish this phenomenon, other ways that might in some cases prove cheaper, or work better. But Morse's [electromagnetic telegraph](#) patent applied only to the particular manner in which he had actually accomplished this effect, rather than to all conceivable manners in which one might accomplish this effect: "The court is of opinion that the claim is too broad, and not warranted by law."

 January 31, Tuesday: [Silvio Pellico](#) died.

Novellen op.146, a waltz by [Johann Baptist Strauss II](#), was performed for the initial time, in the Sophiensaal, Vienna.

[Henry Thoreau](#) continued to read [Marcus Terentius Varro](#). He walked to Great Meadows by way of Oak Island, and then went to Beck Stow's.



Jan. 31. P.M. —To Great Meadows and Beck Stow's.

[Transcript]

The wind is more southerly, and now the warmth of the sun prevails, and is felt on the back. The snow softens and melts. It is a beautiful clear and mild winter day. Our washwoman says she is proud of it. Any clear day, methinks, the sun is ready to do his part, and let the wind be right, and it will be warm and pleasant-like, at least now that the sun runs so high a course. But I do not melt; there is no thaw in me; I am bound out still.

I see the tree sparrows, one or two at a time, now and then, all winter, uttering a faint note, with their bright-chestnut crown and spot on breast and barred wings. They represent the sparrows in the winter. Went to the Great Meadows by the Oak Island. The maples along the edge of the meadow, which all winter have been perfectly leafless, have an agreeable mixed, slightly pepper-and-salt look, spotted or barred with white lichens. It is an agreeable maze to the eye, so thick their bare and clean gray limbs.

Many tracks of partridges [**Ruffed Grouse**  **Bonasa umbellus** (Partridge)] there along the meadowside in the maples, and their droppings where they appear to have spent the night about the roots and between the stems of trees. I think they eat the buds of the azalea. And now, with a mew, preludeing a whir, they go off before me. Coming up, I follow her tracks to where she eased herself for lightness, and immediately after are five or six parallel cuts in the snow, where her wing struck when she lifted herself from the ground, but no trace more.



I pass the woodchoppers, busily felling trees cutting up those which they have felled. One is measuring his lengths with his axe-helve and does not see me.

The pitch pines are yellowish, the white incline to bluish. In the winter, when there are no flowers and leaves are rare, even large buds are interesting and somewhat exciting. I go a-budding like a partridge. I am always attracted at this season by the buds of the swamp-pink, the poplars, and the sweet-gale.

A hundred years ago, as I learned from Ephraim Jones's ledger, they sold bark in our street. He gives credit for a load. Methinks my genius is coeval with that time. That is no great wildness or *selvaggia* that cannot furnish a load of bark, when the forest has lost its shagginess. This is an attempt to import this wildness into the cities in a thousand shapes. Bark is carried thither by ship and by cartloads. Bark contains the principle of tannin, by which not only the fibre of skins but of men's thoughts is hardened and consolidated. It was then that a voice was given to the dog, and a manly tone to the human voice. Ah! already I shudder for these comparatively degenerate days of the village, when you cannot collect a load of bark of good thickness.

[Varro](#) thinks that when man reached the pastoral or second stage and domesticated animals (*pecus*), "primum non sine causa putant oves assumptas, et propter utilitatem, et propter placiditatem" (they think not without reason that sheep were first taken, both on account of their usefulness and on account of their gentleness); for, as he says, they furnish milk, cheese, their fleece, and skin. It looks to me as if the sheep had been supplied with a superfluity of clothing that it might share it with man, and, as [Varro](#) suggests, did not this fleece, on account of its value, come to be called golden? was not this the origin of the fable?

We too have our thaws. They come to our January moods, when our ice cracks, and our sluices break loose. Thought that was frozen up under stern experience gushes forth in feeling and expression. There is a freshet which carries away dams of accumulated ice. Our thoughts hide unexpressed, like the buds under their downy or resinous scales; they would hardly keep a partridge [**Ruffed Grouse**  **Bonasa umbellus** (Partridge)] from starving. If you would know what are my winter thoughts look for them in the partridge's crop. They are like the laurel buds, - some leaf, some blossom buds,-which, though food for such indigenous creatures, will not expand into leaves and flowers until summer comes.

"Et primitus oritur herba imbribus primoribus evocata," says [Varro](#).



THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

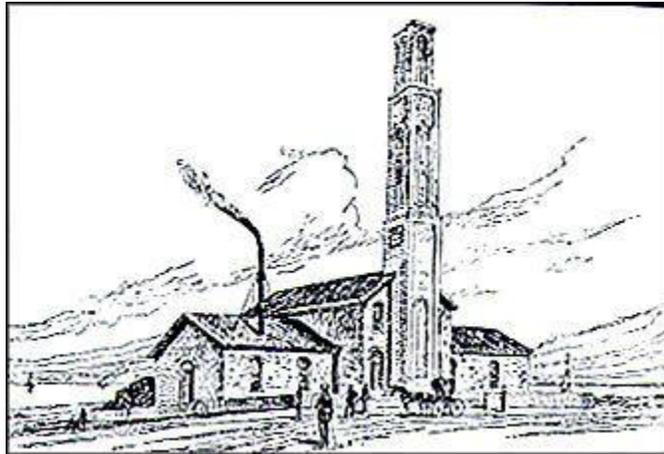
FEBRUARY 1854

February: This month's issue of [Harper's New Monthly Magazine](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE

February: [Francis Trevelyan Buckland](#) was elected to the Athenaeum Club. Later in the year he would be gazetted as Assistant Surgeon to the Second Life Guards of the British Army, a position he would hold until 1863.

February: The 1st water-pumping station for the city of [Chicago](#):



From this point forward this city's water was going to be clean.

(Not.)

1854

1854

February: According to [Anita Haya Patterson](#)'s FROM EMERSON TO KING: DEMOCRACY, RACE, AND THE POLITICS OF PROTEST (NY: Oxford UP, 1997, page 132), at about this point [Waldo Emerson](#)'s journal indicates the manner in which Emerson was exulting in the eventual victory of the biologically superior race (his own, of course):

The Unitarians, you say, are a poor skeptical egotistic shopping sect. The Calvinists serious, still darkened over by their Hebraistic dream. The Saxon race has never flowered into its own religion, but has been fain to borrow this old Hebraism of the dark race. The Latin races are at last come to a stand, & are declining. Merry England & saucy America striding far ahead. The dark man, the black man declines. The black man is courageous, but the white men are the children of God, said Plato. It will happen by & by, that the black man will only be destined for museums like the Dodo. Alcott compassionately thought that if necessary to bring them sooner to an end, polygamy might be introduced & these made the eunuchs, polygamy, I suppose, to increase the white births.

RACE POLITICS



I myself consider (something which Patterson does not consider) that in this context Emerson was hinting that he and [Bronson Alcott](#) had been scheming to accelerate the disappearance of the black race in America through forced miscegenation, by a wet-dream final solution for the American race problem in which white owners were to geld all black men so that they themselves as white superiors would be the only males who might



1854

1854

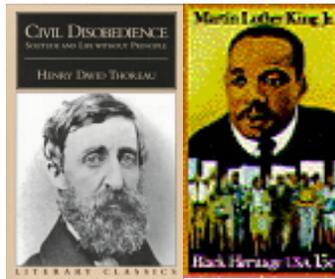
fecundate the black women of America. Of course, in recollecting such a conversation, Emerson would need as above to make Alcott bear the brunt of the responsibility for such musings, and, of course, in recollecting such a conversation, Emerson would need as above to characterize the affect as compassion rather than as viciousness.⁷² Patterson merely goes on to point up the fact that although Emerson, like so many of his contemporaries who were presuming their own race to be inherently and intrinsically superior, was wont to speculate bloodily that the inferior races would most likely be exterminated, this is far from all the information and guidance that we might extrapolate from these foul droppings of his pen⁷³ — if we can bring ourselves to pay careful attention:

72. While I was a pubescent, after WWII during the occupation of [Japan](#), there was talk of this in regard to the Japanese population. Perhaps I heard this as idle “guy talk” in my uncle Frosty’s barbershop in Cory, Indiana. Kill all the men and fuck all the women. What I have to confess is that this sort of wet-dream final solution then became a fertile source of sexual fantasies for me. It is probably just as well I wasn’t Ruler of the Universe at that time, or President or something, and probably just as well that nobody was looking to me for good advice. So I suppose that here, since I sense a similar strain of thought in these journal musings of Emerson, I should feel a special empathy for him and for Alcott, the Sage and the Saint. But I don’t. Somehow I don’t feel they were one bit better informed, or more highly spirited, than that pubescent Indiana boy with whom I can hardly any longer identify.

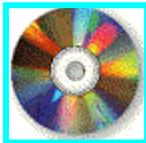
73. A suspicion has been raised, on the internet, in regard to our 2005 horror at Emerson’s and Alcott’s 1854 discussion of the desirability of a proposal to castrate all black American males, that our horror may be due to the error “presentism,” the historic error of retrojecting into the past an attitude that could only pertain to today and to 2005’s relative condition of enlightenment. Back in 1854, the concept of “genocide” having not yet been created, how do we dare to stand on our mount of enlightenment and fault Emerson and Alcott for thinking thoughts back then that today would be considered genocidal? I responded that [Frederick Douglass](#) was not a man of today, but was a man of yesterday. Nevertheless, had he been privy, in 1854, to this privileged conversation between the white man Emerson and the white man Alcott, a privileged conversation in which they were toying with the idea of castrating him so that he would be able to produce no children, and castrating every other man who was like him, every other colored man, so that none of them would ever be able to have a home and family with children of their own — he would unquestionably have been offended, he would have been horrified, he would have been denunciatory, he would have been outraged, etc. Perhaps the only thing he might not have been, is, he might not have been surprised. —He would have had that sort of attitude and, guess what, it would have been an 1854 attitude. Since he could not have been guilty of a “presentism,” since he in 1854 would not have been guilty of the historic error of retrojection into his own era of an attitude that could only pertain to 2005’s relative condition of enlightenment, we in 2005 are not guilty of a presentism, in reconstructing and embracing what would have been his 1854 attitude.

The sheer weight of evidence that proves the fact of [Waldo Emerson's racism](#) is disturbing. However, we would miss the focus of this discussion -namely, the historical **function** of racism in Emerson's writings- were we simply to dismiss him for exhibiting the racist perceptions of his time.... Emerson's racism is central to his vision of American nationality - a compelling, myopic vision that must be viewed in the context of a violent policy of westward expansion that prevailed in nineteenth-century America. In NATURE, Emerson's unmistakable reference to the raciality of the American self allows him to situate that self at the brink of egocentric absolutism: at the same time he expresses a near disavowal of human society represented by ties to the liberal-democratic state in NATURE, Emerson's racist imagination of the white, male body of Columbus is a framework for social cohesion. For Emerson, race functions to express both a threat to and an affirmation of social order. Generally speaking, Emerson's racist vision of the representative self is essential for his articulation of a call to revolution - what [Henry Thoreau](#) (and, much later, [the Reverend] [Martin Luther King, Jr.](#)) would designate as "civil disobedience."

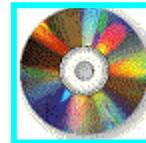
CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS



RESISTANCE TO CIVIL GOVERNMENT



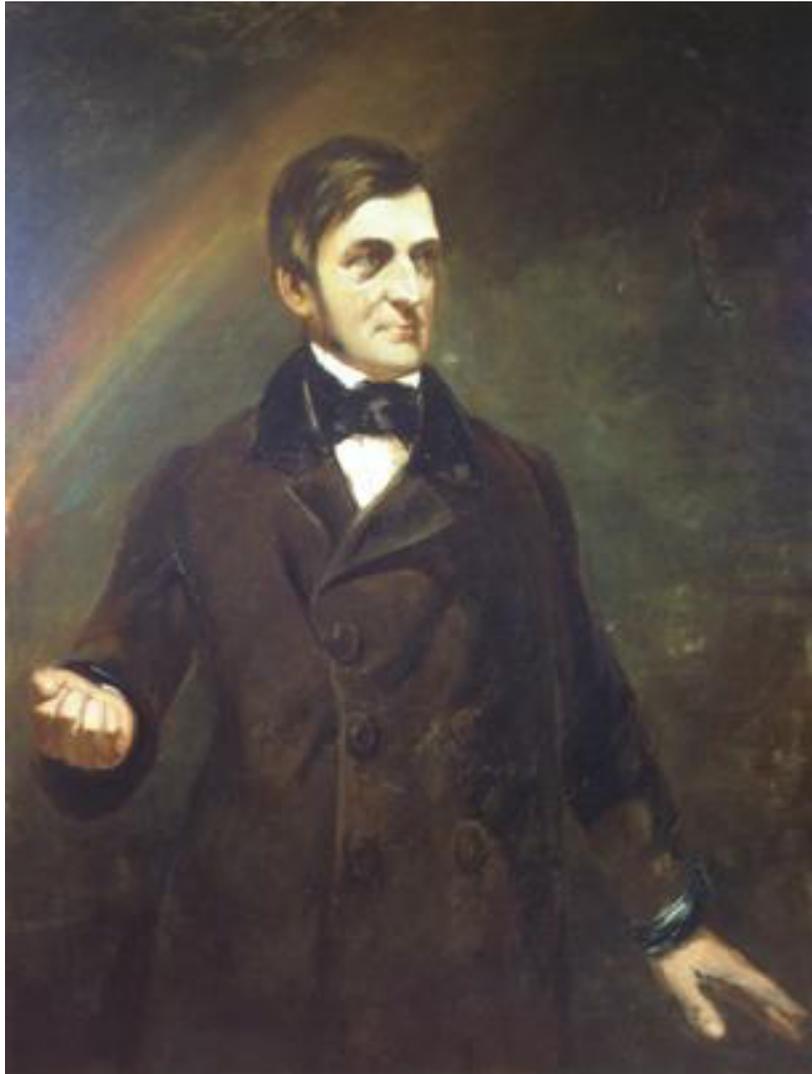
"[Waldo Emerson's](#) profound [racism](#) abated over time, but it never disappeared, always hovering in the background and clouding his democratic vision. Like all too many of his fellow intellectuals, throughout his life and works Emerson remained convinced that the characteristics that made the United States, for all its flaws, the great nation of the world were largely the product of its Saxon heritage and history. Here, alas, Ralph Waldo Emerson's democratic imagination largely failed him."



- [Peter S. Field](#)

1854

1854



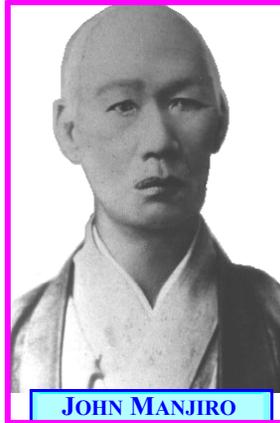
YOU SEE, I'M A WHITE MAN

1854

1854



February: The US naval force under the command of Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) that had landed in [Nagasaki](#) in 1853, at this point returned to Japanese waters, this time with seven ships (four sailing vessels and three steamships) and 1,600 men, demanding that they were going to open trade with [Japan](#) or know the reason why. After a standoff, the Commodore would be able to land and begin peace and trade talks on March 8, 1854. Nakahama Manjiro, known to us as [John Manjiro](#), was granted a rather minor samurai title and given the family name of Nakahama, after the village Nakanohama in which he had grown up, and was employed as an interpreter for the Shogunate in dealing with Commodore Matthew Perry's "four black ships."



JOHN MANJIRO

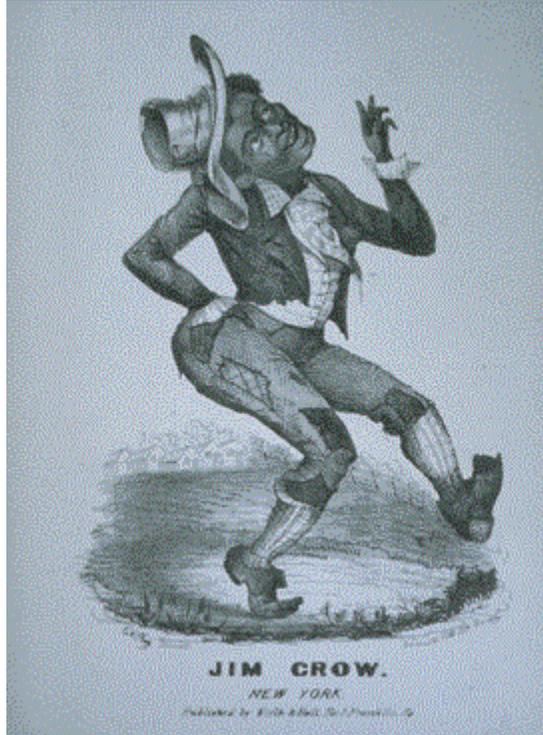
As Nakahama Manjiro he would teach naval science, ship-building, and navigation.

Aboard the USS *Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry*, or on the beach, a trade treaty to be known as the Treaty of Kanagawa was signed with a Japanese delegation. The Japanese put on a demonstration of sumo wrestling, and in return the American sailors gave a minstrel show starring Bones and Tambourine.

1854

1854

The Japanese fascination with black Americans, noticeable even today, began here.



ME HAPPY SO ME SING

THE MINSTREL SHOW

(By the way, this was the year in which, back home, Stephen Collins Foster was writing “Jeannie With the Light Brown Hair.”)

I dream of Jeanie with the light brown hair,
 Borne, like a vapor, on the summer air;
 I see her tripping where the bright streams play,
 Happy as the daisies that dance on her way.
 Many were the wild notes her merry voice would pour,
 Many were the blithe birds that warbled them o'er:
 Oh! I dream of Jeanie with the light brown hair,
 Floating, like a vapor, on the soft summer air.

I long for Jeanie with the daydawn smile,
 Radiant in gladness, warm with winning guile;
 I hear her melodies, like joys gone by,
 Sighing round my heart o'er the fond hopes that die:-
 Sighing like the night wind and sobbing like the rain,-
 Wailing for the lost one that comes not again:
 Oh! I long for Jeanie, and my heart bows low,
 Never more to find her where the bright waters flow.

I sigh for Jeanie, but her light form strayed
 Far from the fond hearts round her native glade;
 Her smiles have vanished and her sweet songs flown,
 Flitting like the dreams that have cheered us and gone.
 Now the nodding wild flowers may wither on the shore
 While her gentle fingers will cull them no more:
 Oh! I sigh for Jeanie with the light brown hair,
 Floating, like a vapor, on the soft summer air.

POPULAR SONGS



1854

1854

1854

1854



February/March to April/May: [Henry Thoreau](#) was working on his 8th draft of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#), the G copy that was sent to the typesetter which evidently the printer threw away after the setting of the type. The paragraph about being able to live in the present always, about how this capability constitutes a “blessing,” the paragraph which now appears on page 314, underwent radical condensation and focusing so that there could no longer be any misreading that sometimes things can be very nice for us, and that when things are nice, such as on sunny days, we should hedonistically pay attention to this transitory niceness of nature:



We should be blessed if we lived in the present always, and took advantage of every accident that befell us, like the grass which confesses the influence of the slightest dew that falls on it; and did not spend our time in atoning for the neglect of past opportunities, which we call doing our duty. We loiter in winter while it is already spring.

TIMELINE OF WALDEN
WALDEN A → G

Likewise the phrase I have emphasized in the material from [WALDEN](#) which follows, evidently added to the “Bean-Field” chapter of the manuscript by Thoreau at the last because it is not to be found in any existing draft despite the fact that the paragraph that precedes this material had been in the manuscript from the very beginning. This phrase is a paraphrase from [Mrs. Felicia Hemans](#)’s popular poem “The Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in New England,” which Thoreau had already accessed for [A WEEK](#):



WALDEN: On gala days the town fires its great guns, which echo like popguns to these woods, and some waifs of martial music occasionally penetrate thus far. To me, away there in my bean-field at the other end of the town, the big guns sounded as if a puff ball had burst; and when there was a military turnout of which I was ignorant, I have sometimes had a vague sense all the day of some sort of itching and disease in the horizon, as if some eruption would break out there soon, either scarlatina or canker-rash, until at length some more favorable puff of wind, making haste over the fields and up the Wayland road, brought me information of the "trainers." It seemed by the distant hum as if somebody's bees had swarmed, and that the neighbors, according to Virgil's advice, by a faint *tintinnabulum* upon the most sonorous of their domestic utensils, were endeavoring to call them down into the hive again. And when the sound died quite away, and the hum had ceased, and the most favorable breezes told no tale, I knew that they had got the last drone of them all safely into the Middlesex hive, and that now their minds were bent on the honey with which it was smeared.

I felt proud to know that the liberties of Massachusetts and of our fatherland were in such safe keeping; and as I turned to my hoeing again I was filled with an inexpressible confidence, and pursued my labor cheerfully with a calm trust in the future.

When there were several bands of musicians, it sounded as if the village was a vast bellows, and all the buildings expanded and collapsed alternately with a din. But sometimes it was a really noble and inspiring strain that reached these woods, and the trumpet that sings of fame, and I felt as if I could spit a Mexican with a good relish, -for why should we always stand for trifles?- and looked round for a woodchuck or a skunk to exercise my chivalry upon. These martial strains seemed as far away as Palestine, and reminded me of a march of crusaders in the horizon, with a slight tantivy and tremulous motion of the elm-tree tops which overhang the village. This was one of the *great* days; though the sky had from my clearing only the same everlastingly great look that it wears daily, and I saw no difference in it.

PEOPLE OF
WALDEN

VIRGIL

FELICIA DOROTHEA HEMANS

WAR ON MEXICO

The breaking waves dashed high
On a stern and rock-bound coast;
And the woods against a stormy sky,
Their giant branches tossed;
And the heavy night hung dark
The hills and waters o'er
When a band of exiles moored their bark
On a wild New England shore.
Not as the conqueror comes,
They, the true-hearted, came;
Not with the roll of stirring drums,
And the trumpets that sing of fame;
Not as the flying come,
In silence and in fear;
They shook the depths of the desert's gloom
With their hymns of lofty cheer.
Amidst the storm they sang,
And the stars heard, and the sea!
And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang
To the anthem of the free;
The ocean eagle soared
From his nest by the white wave's foam,
And the rocking pines of the forest roared:
This was their welcome home!
There were men with hoary hair
Amidst that pilgrim band;
Why had they come to wither there,
Away from their childhood's land?
There was woman's fearless eye,
Lit by her deep love's truth;
There was manhood's brow serenely high,
And the fiery heart of youth.
What sought they thus afar?
Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas? the spoils of war?
They sought a faith's pure shrine!
Aye, call it holy ground,
The soil where first they trod!
They left unstained what there they found
Freedom to worship God!



Every morning was a cheerful invitation to make my life of equal simplicity, and I may say innocence, with Nature herself. I have been as sincere a worshipper of Aurora as the Greeks. I got up early and bathed in the pond; that was a religious exercise, and one of the best things which I did. They say that characters were engraven on the bathing tub of king Tching-thang to this effect: "Renew thyself completely each day; do it again, and again, and forever again." I can understand that. Morning brings back the heroic ages. I was as much affected by the faint hum of a mosquito making its visible and unimaginable tour through my apartment at earliest dawn, when I was sitting with door and windows open, as I could be by **any trumpet that ever sang of fame**. It was Homer's requiem; itself an Iliad and Odyssey in the air, singing its own wrath and wanderings. There was something cosmical about it; a standing advertisement, till forbidden, of the everlasting vigor and fertility of the world. The morning, which is the most memorable season of the day, is the awakening hour. Then there is least somnolence in us; and for an hour, at least, some part of us awakes, which slumbers all the rest of the day and night. Little is to be expected of that day, if it can be called a day, to which we are not awakened by our Genius, but by the mechanical nudgings of some servitor, are not awakened by our own newly-acquired force and aspirations from within, accompanied by the undulations of celestial music, instead of factory bells, and a fragrance filling the air -to a higher life than we fell asleep from; and thus the darkness bear its fruit, and prove itself to be good, no less than the light. That man who does not believe that each day contains an earlier, more sacred, and auroral hour than he has yet profaned, has despaired of life, and is pursuing a descending and darkening way. After a partial cessation of his sensuous life, the soul of man, or its organs rather, are reinvigorated each day, and his Genius tries again what noble life it can make. All memorable events, I should say, transpire in morning time and in a morning atmosphere. The Vedas say, "All intelligences awake with the morning." Poetry and art, and the fairest and most memorable of the actions of men, date from such an hour. All poets and heroes, like Memnon, are the children of Aurora, and emit their music at sunrise. To him whose elastic and vigorous thought keeps pace with the sun, the day is a perpetual morning. It matters not what the clocks say or the attitudes and labors of men. Morning is when I am awake and there is a dawn in me. ...

Draft G of the 3d paragraph of the [Hollowell Farm](#) ruminations, destined for the 2d chapter of [WALDEN](#):

The real attractions of the Hollowell farm, to me, were; ^{1st} its complete retirement, being about two miles from the village, half a mile from the nearest neighbor, and separated from the highway by a broad field; ^{2ndly} its bounding on the river, [^]which the owner said ~~by its fogs~~ protected it [^]by its fogs from frosts in the spring, [^]though that was nothing to me ~~but his words suggested more than was meant~~ [^]other values [?] than he suspected; ^{3rdly} the gray color and ~~pleasing ruin~~ [^]ruinous state of the house and barn, ~~putting such an interval between me and the last occupant~~ and the dilapidated ~~& picturesque~~ fences, [^]which put such an interval between me and the last occupant; ^{4thly} the hollow and lichen-covered apple trees, gnawed by rabbits, ~~proving that there were rabbits there to gnaw them~~ [^]suggesting [^]showing what kind of neighbors I should have; but ^{5thly} & above all, the recollection I had of it from my earliest voyages up the river, when the house was concealed behind a dense grove of red maples ~~which stood between it & the river~~ [^]water, through which I heard the house-dog bark. ~~Though it afforded no western prospect~~ I was in haste to buy it, before the proprietor finished getting out ~~the~~ [^]some rocks, cutting down the hollow apple trees, and grubbing up some young birches which had sprung up in the pasture, or, in short, had made any more of his improvements.

Read  [Henry Thoreau's Journal for February 1854 \(æf. 36\)](#)



February 1, Wednesday: [Professor Henri-Frédéric Amiel](#), who would be referred to as the “Swiss [Thoreau](#),” wrote in his [JOURNAL INTIME](#): “A walk. The atmosphere incredibly pure, a warm caressing gentleness in the sunshine — joy in one’s whole being. Seated motionless upon a bench on the Tranchées, beside the slopes clothed with moss and tapestried with green, I passed some intense delicious moments, allowing great elastic waves of music, wafted to me from a military band on the terrace of St. Antoine, to surge and bound through me. Every way I was happy, as idler, as painter, as poet. Forgotten impressions of childhood and youth came back to me — all those indescribable effects wrought by color, shadow, sunlight, green hedges, and songs of birds, upon the soul just opening to poetry. I became again young, wondering, and simple, as candor and ignorance are simple. I abandoned myself to life and to nature, and they cradled me with an infinite gentleness. To open one’s heart in purity to this ever pure nature, to allow this immortal life of things to penetrate into one’s soul, is at the same time to listen to the voice of God. Sensation may be a prayer, and self-abandonment

an act of devotion.”

Henry Thoreau continued with extensive surveys of the Bedford Road begun in July 1853 which show the Middlesex Agricultural Society, Reuben Brown’s farm with its Sleepy Hollow (the region that would become Sleepy Hollow Cemetery), and all of the existing houses to the Charles Gordon and William Pedrick farms on Old Bedford Road to Bedford.



View Henry Thoreau’s personal working drafts of his surveys courtesy of AT&T and the Concord Free Public Library:

http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_Surveys/Thoreau_Surveys.htm

(The official copy of this survey of course had become the property of the person or persons who had hired this Concord town surveyor to do their surveying work during the 19th Century. Such materials have yet to be recovered.)

View this particular personal working draft of a survey in fine detail:

http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_Surveys/94a.htm



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR FEBRUARY 1st]



February 2, Thursday: The Reverend Henry Ward Beecher wrote in The Independent that since the Old Testament amounted to “records of rude society four thousand years ago,” it should not determine our present-day attitudes toward a wrong such as human slavery:

The question between you and the public is not whether Hebrew slavery was right. Nor whether Roman slavery was right. Nor even whether American slavery is right. The question is simply this: Can John Mitchel be an American slaveholder without apostasy from the grounds which he took against the English government?... Please let Moses sleep; and come back from your retreat behind the dust of 4000 years.”

Henry Thoreau and a companion, presumably Ellery Channing, walked in the cold and snow up the river to Clematis Brook, then up Corner Road and on the ice at Potter’s Meadow. They noticed it was comparatively very warm under the south side of Bittern Cliff and stopped for awhile there.

JONAS POTTER



February 2: Up river on ice to Clematis Brook.

Another warm, melting day, like yesterday. You can see some softening and relenting in the sky. Apparently the vapor in the air makes a grosser atmosphere, more like that of a summer eve. We go up the Corner road and take the ice at Potter’s Meadow. The Cliff Hill is nearly bare on the west side, and you hear the rush of melted snow down its side in one place. Here and there are regular round holes in the ice over the meadow, two or three feet in diameter, where the water appears to be warmer, –perchance there is a spring there, –and therein, in shallow water, is seen the cress and one or two other plants, still quite fresh. The shade of pines on the snow is in some lights quite blue.

We stopped awhile under Bittern Cliff, the south side, where it is very warm. There are a few greenish radical leaves to be seen, –primrose and Johnswort, strawberry, etc., and spleenwort still green in the clefts. These sunny old gray rocks, completely covered with white and green lichens and overrun with ivy, are a very cozy place. You hardly detect the incited snow swiftly trickling down them until you feel the drops on your cheek. The winter gnat is seen in the warm air before the rock. In the clefts of these rocks are the latebræ of many insects, spiders, etc. Were they not sowbugs I found under the Marchantia polymorpha (?) ? The ice is about

eighteen inches thick on Fair Haven. Saw some pickerel just caught there, with a fine lustre to them. Went to the pond in the woods which has an old ditch dug from it near Clematis Brook. The red twigs of the cornets and the yellow ones of the sallows surrounding it are interesting at this season. We prize the least color now. As it is a melting day, the snow is everywhere peppered with snow-fleas, even twenty rods from the woods, on the pond and meadows. The scream of the jay [Blue Jay  *Cyanocitta cristata*] is a true winter sound. It is wholly without sentiment, and in harmony with winter. I stole up within five or six feet of a pitch pine behind which a downy woodpecker was pecking. From time to time he hopped round to the side and observed me without fear. They are very confident birds, not easily scared, but incline to keep the other side of the bough to you, perhaps. Already we begin to anticipate spring, and this is an important difference between this time and a month ago. We begin to say that the day is springlike. Is not January the hardest month to get through? When you have weathered that, you get into the gulf-stream of winter, nearer the shores of spring.

ROSS/ADAMS COMMENTARY

 February 3, Friday: [Henry Thoreau](#) mused about the attractions of the [Hollowell Farm](#) that he had once attempted to purchase:



Feb. 3. A driving snow-storm again.

The attractions of the Hollowell Farm were; its complete retirement, being at least two miles from the village, half a mile from any neighbor, and separated from the highway by a broad field; its bounding on the river; the pleasing ruin of the house and barn; the hollow and lichen-covered apple trees gnawed by rabbits; above all the recollection I had of it from my earliest voyages up the river, when the house was concealed behind a dense grove of red maples, which then stood between it and the river, through which I once heard the house-dog bark; and in general the slight improvements that had been made upon it. These were the motives that swayed, though I did not mention there to the proprietor. To enjoy these things I was ready to carry it on and do all those things which I now see had no other motive or excuse but that I might pay for it and be unmolested in my possession of it; though I knew all the while that it would yield the most abundant crop of the kind I wanted if I could only afford to let it alone. Though it afforded no western prospect, the dilapidated fences were picturesque. I was in some haste to buy, before the proprietor finished getting out some rocks, cutting down sonic hollow apple trees, and grubbing up some voting birches which had sprung up in the pasture, all which in my eyes very much enhanced its value.

[Varro](#) speaks of two kinds of pigeons, one of which was wont to alight “on the (*columinibus villae*) columns of a villa (*a quo appellatae columbae*), from which they were called *columbae*, which on account of their natural timidity (*summa loca in tectis captant*) delight in the highest places on the roofs (?) (or under cover?).”

TIMELINE OF WALDEN

 February 4, Saturday: In the morning, [Henry Thoreau](#) went over to the Hemlocks on the [Assabet River](#). That afternoon Frank Brown, the son of [Mrs. Lucy Cotton Jackson Brown](#), showed him a gray hare, a gray squirrel, and a red squirrel shot on Thursday.



Feb. 4. F. Brown showed me this afternoon his game killed day before yesterday, -a bray hare, a gray squirrel, and a red squirrel. The red squirrel was peeping out of his nest in a tree. The gray was a fine large fellow in good condition; weighed one pound and a quarter, more than half as heavy as the hare, and his tail still perfectly and beautifully curved over his back. It recovered its place when you stroked it, as if it were full of electricity. All were frozen, the hare, as usual, in the attitude of running. The gray squirrel’s ears were white above, edged with tawny brown. He thought that my marsh peep of the fall might [be] the ash-colored sandpiper.

John Moore and Company got about fifty weight of fish at Flint's Pond the same day. Two pickerel weighed nine pounds.

I went over to the Hemlocks on the Assabet this morning. Saw the tracks, I think of a mink, in the shallow snow along the edge of the river, looking for a hole in the ice. A clear, cold morning. The smokes from the village chimneys are quickly purified and dissipated, like vapor, in the air. They do not stream high.

Varro says *Africanae bestiae* for savage or ferocious beasts. Is this a difference of climate merely? Are not some quarters of the globe thus better fitted for the habitation of man for other reasons?

We have not much that is poetic in the accompaniments of the farmer's life. Varro speaks of the swineherd accustoming the swine or boars to come at the sound of a horn when he fed them with acorns. I remember that my grandmother used to call her cow home at evening from a near pasture to be milked by thumping on the mortar which held her salt. The tinkling cow-bell cannot be spared. Ever what most attracts us in the farmer's life is not its profitableness. We love to go after the cow, not for the sake of her milk, or her beef, or the money they yield, but perchance to hear the tinkling of the cow-bell; and we would fain keep a herd of pigs, not because of the profit there is in bacon, but because we have dreamed of hearing the swineherd's horn. We would keep hens, not for eggs, but to hear the cocks crow and the hens cackle.

As for the locality of beehives, Varro says that they must be placed near the villa, "potissimum ubi non resonent imagines, hic enim sonus harum fugae causa existimatur esse" (especially where there are no echoes, for this sound is thought to be the cause of their flight).



February 5, Sunday: In the morning, [Henry Thoreau](#) was looking at some old account books from 1741-1750 kept by the storekeeper [Ephraim Jones](#). In the afternoon he walked in Hubbard's blueberry swamp woods [Ebenezer or George Hubbard??] and James P. Brown's woods. William M. White's version of a journal entry is:

*Shall we not have sympathy with the muskrat
Which gnaws its third leg off,
Not as pitying its sufferings,
But through our kindred mortality,
Appreciating its majestic pains and its heroic virtue?
Are we not made its brothers by fate?*

*For whom are psalms sung and mass said,
If not for such worthies as these?*

*When I hear the church organ peal,
Or feel the trembling tones of the bass viol,
I see in imagination the musquash gnawing off his leg,
I offer up a note that his affliction may be sanctified
To each and all of us.*

WRIGHT TAVERN

An earthquake shock was felt in San Francisco.

CALIFORNIA



Feb. 5. Have two more old account-books of Ephraim Jones, running from 1741 to 1750 and further, — what are called ledgers, I think. Some of the items of the waste-book are here collected, each man's purchases

and credit brought together.

I think he must have kept in the store which Goodnow & How first kept in. Some remember when an Ephraim Jones, probably his grandson, kept there. There appears to have been an Ephraim Jones keeping the jail then (probably a son of the first), in the Revolution. There is said to have been a public house with the sign of a black horse where Mr. Brooks's house stands, and hence the society that worshipped there were called the Black Horse Church.

He sold a few religious books as well as almanacs and primers. In 1745, "to Inchwoods Glimpse of Glory and Mr. (or Wm.) Row's Meditation well Bound," so much. In another place, "to Glimpse of Glory and sundry." Sometimes "a sermon book."

Whitefield was here first in 1741, and there were exciting revivals under Mr. Bliss at this time, says the History. Yet it is a dreary and ghastly life suggested, when you come upon a man's bill for a lock to the Burying Gate, and that is so nearly all that has come down. I picture to myself a rude, straggling village with a wide-open burying-ground gate.

Hezekiah Stratton has credit in 1743, "Feb. 7 by 1/2 a Catt skin 0-1-4 1/2," — of course a wildcat.

Gingerbread is bought several times, flour once or twice, and credit given for butter once or twice. Several times one nutmeg is bought. Credit given for weaving; also for a load of bark and tar and turpentine from Groton. The lime-kiln and iron mine are frequently named. Credit given for so much "mine," meaning apparently iron ore. Stephen Parks has credit in 1746, "Aug 2. Cr by one wampum belt 0-15-0." To another, in 1744, "Cr by Dressing 50 squirrel skins 0-6-3." Credit is also given for fox skins and a few deer skins. But above all Jones gives credit for timber brought to the store, or, more commonly, carted to Menotomy, Mistick, Medford, or Charlestown. Some customers live in Nisstissit (?). Credit is given by "digging mine." (Probably iron, after called "mine.") For example of the quantity of rum and the like bought, *vide* pages 128-193 of No. 2. Long columns run down the page, of nothing but flip, flip, mug flip, mug flip, toddy, punch, punch, bowl of tody, brandy punch, etc., etc.; sometimes charges for the breaking of the glass, also for sugar and limes and flip for himself and company. Jones appears to have kept a public house, for he frequently charges for entertainment.

The animal merely makes him a bed, which he warms with his body in a sheltered place. He does not make a house. But man, having discovered fire, warms a spacious apartment up to the same temperature with his body, and without robbing it, so that he can divest himself of cumbersome clothing, — not keeping his bed, — maintain a kind of summer in the midst of winter, and, by means of windows, even admit the light. It was his invention to box up some air and warm it, make that his bed, and in this live and move and have his being still, and breathe as in a congenial climate or summer, without taking to his bed. Thus he goes a step or two beyond instinct and secures a little time for the fine arts.

Though I began to grow torpid when exposed a long time to the pinching winter air, — my hands and feet grew numb, and my ears and face stiffened, — when I lead reached the genial atmosphere of my house, I soon recovered my faculties. I did not squat in a form, or lie in a burrow or ensconced in a nest of leaves or grass, like the squirrels, nor become quite dormant in any hole, like the woodchuck. I ameliorated the winter climate with fire, and lengthened out the day with a lamp.

Even Varro, to prove that the ancients did not shave (or that there were no barbers), is obliged to refer his readers to their bearded statues. "Olim tonsores non fuisse adsignificat antiquorumstatuae, quod pleraeque habent capillum, et barbam magnam." Vet it was true of the old statues only "for the most part."

P.M. — To walk.

Begins to snow.

At Hubbard's blueberry swamp woods, near the bathing-place, came across a fox's track, which I think was made last night or since. The tracks were about two inches long, or a little less, by one and a half wide, shaped thus where the snow was only half an inch deep on ice:



generally from nine to fifteen inches apart longitudinally and three to four inches apart transversely. It came from the west. I followed it back. At first it was difficult to trace, to *investigate* it, amid some rabbit tracks, of which I did not know whether they had been made before or since. It soon led out of the woods on to the ice of the meadow to a slight prominence, then turned and followed along the side of the wood, then crossed the meadow directly to the riverside just below the mouth of Nut Meadow Brook, visited a muskrat-house there and left its mark, — watered, — for, dog-like, it turned aside to every muskrat-house or the like prominence near its route and left its mark there. You could easily scent it there. It turned into the meadow eastward once or twice as it went up the riverside, and, after visiting another muskrat's house, where it left its manure, large and light-colored, as if composed of fir, crossed the river and John Hosmer's meadow and potato-field and the road south of Nut Meadow Bridge. (If it had been a dog it would have turned when it reached the road.) It was not lost then, but led straight across, through J. Hosmer's field and meadow again, and over ditch and up sidehill in the woods;

and there, on the side of the hill, I could see where its tail had grazed the snow. It was then mixed with rabbit-tracks, but was easily unravelled. Passed out of the wood into J.P. Brown's land, over some mice or mole tracks, then over the middle of Brown's meadows westward, to Tarbell's meadows, till at last, by the brook, I found that it had had a companion up to that point, which turned off. Then I saw the large tracks of hounds on the trail. Still it held on, from straight across the road again, some way on an old dog's trail; had trodden and nosed very much about some hardbacks in the field beyond, where were a few mice-tracks, as if for food, the hound's tracks numerous with it; and so I traced it into the Ministerial Swamp, where, the snow-storm increasing; I left it, having traced it back more than a mile westward in a pretty direct course. What expeditions they make in a night in search of food! No doubt the same one crosses the river many times.

Shall we not have sympathy with the muskrat which gnaws its third leg off, not as pitying its sufferings, but, through our kindred mortality, appreciating its majestic pains and its heroic virtue? Are we not made its brothers by fate? For whom are psalms sung and mass said, if not for such worthies as these? When I hear the church organ peal, or feel the trembling tones of the bass viol, I see in imagination the musquash gnawing off his leg, I offer up a note that his affliction may be sanctified to each and all of us. Prayer and praise fitly follow such exploits. I look round for majestic pains and pleasures. They have our sympathy, both in their joys and in their pains. When I think of the tragedies which are constantly permitted in the course of all animal life, they make the plaintive strain of the universal harp which elevates us above the trivial. When I think of the muskrat gnawing off his leg, it is as the plectrum on the harp or the bow upon the viol, drawing forth a majestic strain or psalm, which immeasurably dignifies our common fate. Even as the worthies of mankind are said to recommend human life by having lived it, so I could not spare the example of the muskrat.

That sand foliage! It convinces me that Nature is still in her youth, -that florid fact about which mythology merely mutters, -that the very soil can fabulate as well as you or I. It stretches forth its baby fingers on every side. Fresh curls spring forth from its bald brow. There is nothing inorganic. This earth is not, then, a mere fragment of dead history, strata upon strata, like the leaves of a book, an object for a museum and an antiquarian, but living poetry, like the leaves of a tree, — not a fossil earth, but a living specimen. You may melt your metals and cast them into the most beautiful moulds you can; they will never excite me like the forms which this molten earth flows out into. The very earth, as well as the institutions upon it, is plastic like potter's clay in the hands of the artist. These florid heaps lie along the bank like the slag of a furnace, showing that nature is in full blast within; but there is no admittance except on business. Ye dead and alive preachers, ye have no business here. Ye will enter only to your tomb.

I fear only lest my expressions may not be extravagant enough, — may not wander far enough beyond the narrow limits of our ordinary insight and faith, so as to be adequate to the truth of which I have been convinced. I desire to speak somewhere without bounds, in order that I may attain to an expression in some degree adequate to truth of which I have been convinced. From a man in a waking moment, to men in their waking moments. Wandering toward the more distant boundaries of a wider pasture. Nothing is so truly bounded and obedient to law as music, yet nothing so surely breaks all petty and narrow bonds. Whenever I hear any music I fear that I may have spoken tamely and within bounds. And I am convinced that I cannot exaggerate enough even to lay the foundation of a true expression. As for books and the adequateness of their statements to the truth, they are as the tower of Babel to the sky.

In Jones's account there is a paper headed —
 "funerel Charges.

4 P Shug...	
¼ of alspice	
tobackoo	
11 yd Cyprus	
4 goze; hankerchiefs	
4 Par of women black gloves	The prices mostly cut off.
1 ½ yd Lutestring	
silk feret	
12 pair of mens white gloves	
6 yards of allomode	
silk"	

There was plainly much cooeping done in those days. How dangerous to the foxes and all wild animals is a light snow, accompanied and succeeded by calm weather, betraying their course to the hunters! Here was one track that crossed the road, — did not turn in it like a dog, — track of a wilder life. How distinct from the others! Such as was made before roads were, as if the road were [a] more recent track. This traveller does not turn when he strikes the trail of man. The fox that invaded the farmer's poultry-yard last night came from a great distance.

I followed on this trail so long that my thoughts grew foxy; though I was on the back track, I drew nearer and nearer to the fox each step. Strange as it may seem, I thought several times that I scented him, though I did not stoop.



February 6, Monday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked to Fair Haven Cliff and [Walden Pond](#).



Feb. 6. The weather has been very changeable for some weeks. First it is warm and thawing, sloshy weather; then the thermometer goes down to 1.9° below zero, and our shoes squeak on the snow; then, perhaps, it moderates and snows; then is mild and pleasant again and good sleighing; then we wake to find a drifted snow upon the last and a bleak, wintry prospect.

P. M. —To Cliffs and Walden.

It is a very light snow and, though seven or inches deep, but a slight obstacle to walking. Its surface in the woods is everywhere creased and scored by the flitting leaves and the snow that has fallen from the trees. For a drifting wind has followed fast upon the snow, shaking it off the trees, and there is a new fall of withered leaves. Probably these leaves decay the faster for being deposited thus in successive layers, alternating with the snow. From the Cliff Hill the landscape looks very bleak and Nova-Zernbla-like. A cold, drifting wind sweeps from the north; the surface of the snow is imbricated on a great scale, being very regularly blown into waves, alike over the high road and the railroad, concealing the tracks and the meadow and the river and the pond. It is all one great wintry-looking snow-field, whose surface consists of great wave-like drifts, maybe twenty feet wide with an abrupt edge on the south. It is like a scaly armor drawn alike over the meadow and the pond. We need not trouble ourselves to speculate how the human race on this globe will be destroyed at last, whether by fire or otherwise. It would be so easy to cut their threads any time with a little sharper blast from the north. We go on dating from the Cold Fridays and the [Great Snows](#) and the September gales, but a little colder Friday, or greater snow, or more eight violent gale would put a period to man's existence on the globe.

I see great shadows on the northeast sides of the mountains, forty miles off, the sun being in the southwest. The snow is so light that few animals have been out. I see the track of a rabbit about the Cliff; there are hollows in the snow on the tops of the rocks, shaped like a milk-pan and as large, where he has squatted or whirled round. I also see the tracks of a few mice or moles. The squirrel, too, has been out. Hear the old owl at 4.30 P.M. Crossing Walden where the snow has fallen quite level, I perceive that my shadow [is of] a delicate or transparent blue rather than black.

Price on the Picturesque says, "The midsummer shoot is the first thing that gives relief to the eye, after the sameness of color which immediately precedes it; in many trees, and in none more than the oak, the effect is singularly beautiful; the old foliage forms a dark background, on which the new appears, relieved and detached in all its freshness and brilliancy: it is spring engrafted upon summer." Is not this the effect which I noticed by Fair Haven side last summer or autumn, toward night, — that watered and variously shaded foliage?

As for autumn, he speaks of "the warm haze, which, on a fine day in that season, spreads the last varnish over every part of the picture."

[Gilpin](#) talked as if there was some food for the soul in mere physical light and shadow, as if, without the suggestion of a moral, they could give a man pleasure or pain!

WALDEN: Though, when I had been exposed to the rudest blasts a long time, my whole body began to grow torpid, when I reached the genial atmosphere of my house I soon recovered my faculties and prolonged my life. But the most luxuriously housed has little to boast of in this respect, nor need we trouble ourselves to speculate how the human race may be at last destroyed. It would be easy to cut their threads any time with a little sharper blast from the north. We go on dating from Cold Fridays and Great Snows; but a little colder Friday, or greater snow, would put a period to man's existence on the globe.

HENRY OFTEN MENTIONS THE GREAT SNOW



February 7, Tuesday: Marianne Marschner, 3d wife of Heinirch August Marschner, dies in Berlin, probably of pneumonia. She was 50 years old.

Schallwellen op.148, a waltz by Johann Baptist Strauss II, was performed for the initial time, in the Sophiensaal, Vienna.

In the afternoon Henry Thoreau walked down river with Ellery Channing and they made a fire on the snow-covered ice half a mile below Ball's Hill. It was an excellent day to look out across Concord's Great Meadows.

Long before Thoreau's lifetime, the alluvial plain of the Concord Valley lay at the bottom of a gray glacial lake. This beaded ribbon of turbid water extended the whole length of the valley, widening over bedrock basins that would later become meadows, and narrowing in bedrock constrictions. In Thoreau's epoch, every strong flood recreated the moccasin footprints of this ancient glacial lake at a lower level. The result was a "chain of handsome lakes" that was made higher, more frequent, and more long-lasting by the direct and indirect effects of the Billerica dam. He described the largest lake, over the Sudbury Meadows, as a "smaller Lake Huron," more than a mile across in every direction. Next in size was that over the Great Meadows of Concord, more than two miles long and half a mile wide. Both of these transient lakes could last for weeks at a time, which was long enough for him to be surprised when they finally disappeared. During floods, the already wide Carlisle reach expanded to resemble one of New York's smaller Finger Lakes.
- Professor Robert M. Thorson, THE BOATMAN, pages 120-121

Arguments were heard before the Supreme Court in the case of Isaac N. Thorne against the City of San Francisco, over land grants.

CALIFORNIA



February 7: Under the waves of the snowy ocean yesterday, roads and rivers, pastures and cultivated fields, all signs of man's occupancy of the globe were for the most part concealed. Water and sand also assume this same form under the influence of wind. And I have seen, on the surface of the Walden ice, great sweeping, waving lines, somewhat like these. It is the track of the wind, the impress which it makes on flowing materials.

P.M. — Down river with C.

"Downriver," "To Great Meadow," and "To Hill" signified a northward trip down the Concord River below the triple point of the confluence. After passing through a straight reach aligned by the local bedrock strike, arched by two bridges, and flanked by gravel bars of historic sediment that were repeatedly dredged, he entered the north side of Great Meadow. Bounded by the site of the Old North Bridge to the southwest and Ball's Hill to the northeast, it was two miles long and half a mile across. When in flood, the meadow was his favorite inland sea to sail upon because the wind was least impeded and the waves were highest.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 11



The river has not been so concealed by snow before. The snow does not merely lie level on it and on the land, so many inches deep, but great drifts, perchance beginning on the land, stretch quite across it, so that you cannot always tell where it is, for there is no greater levelness than elsewhere to betray it. In some places, where the ice is exposed, little bunches of hoar frost have formed, with perfect ribbed leaves one inch in diameter. This morning was one of the coldest in the winter. Does the whistle of the locomotive sound differently, tear the air any more, this weather? I see the prinus berries turned now a dark, coppery brown, looking blackish at a little distance. We crossed the Great Meadows lengthwise, a broad level plain, roughened only by snowy waves, about two miles long and nearly half as wide. Looking back over it made me dunk of what I have read of Arctic explorers traveling over snow-covered ice. Saw a few crows. Some green-briar berries quite fresh.

Made a fire on the snow-covered ice half a mile below Ball's Hill. Cut first a large bundle of green oak twigs with leaves on them, laid them on sticks, then sprinkled on fine dead maple and alder and poplar twigs, and then dry cat-sticks of the same material. We broke up some larger pine trees by striking them on the ice, at the same time letting go to save our hands. Made a large warm fire, whose flame went up straight, there being no wind, and without smoke. Stayed half an hour, and when we took our departure, felt as if we had been in a house all the while, for we had been warm and had looked steadily at the fire instead of looking off. The fire made a large circular cavity in the snow and ice, three feet in diameter and four or five inches deep, with water at the bottom. We had often sailed over this very spot. Sticks in a circle on their ends and slanted over a common centre make a perfect fire. Such is the earliest hearth, with a hole in the roof above it. Our chimney fires are only semicircles or half-fires, or what is worse, oblong squares, or, in the case of stoves, mere boxes full of fire, without symmetry or form.

Observed in some large cakes of ice left on the river, I thought, the faintest possible tinge of green, also a white, leafy internal frostwork along the planes of the irregular flaring cleavages, — or call them deep conchoidal sometimes.

These afternoons the shadows of the woods have already a twilight length by 3 or 4 P.M. We made our fire in the shadow of a wood rather than in the sun, that the flame might show better, and the sun went down before we left it. Not till we had left our fire many rods behind did we observe the narrow column of blue smoke rising straight from it against the wood. It had appeared to its pure flame, producing merely that boiling of the air above it through which you see objects confusedly.



February 8, Wednesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) made extracts from [Marcus Porcius Cato](#) the Censor, [Marcus Terentius Varro](#), and from page 118 of [John Josselyn](#)'s AN ACCOUNT OF TWO VOYAGES TO NEW ENGLAND.



Feb. 8. The poets, philosophers, historians, and all writers have always been disposed to praise the life of the farmer and prefer it to that of the citizen. They have been inclined to regard trade and commerce as not merely uncertain modes of getting a living, but as running into the usurious and disreputable. And even at the

present day the trader, as carrier or go-between, the speculator, the forestaller, and corporations do not escape a fling. Trade has always been regarded to some extent as a questionable mode of getting a livelihood. Cato says: "Et virum bonum cum laudabant, ita laudabant, bonum agricolam, bonumque colonum. Amplissime laudari existimabatur, qui ita laudabatur. Mercatorem autem strenuum studiosumque rei quaerendae existimo; verum ... periculosum et calamitosum. At ex agricolis et viri fortissimi, et milites strenuissimi gignuntur, maximeque pius quaestus, stabilissimusque consequitur, minimeque invidiosus: minimeque male cogitantes sunt, qui in eo studio occupati sunt." That is: "when they [i.e. our ancestors] praised a good man, they called him a good farmer and a good husbandman (settler?). He was thought to be most amply praised who was so praised. However, I think that the merchant is energetic and studious to make money, but his business is dangerous and liable to misfortunes. But from the cultivators of the soil, both the men of most fortitude and the hardest soldiers are descended, and theirs is a gain particularly just (honest, pious) and stable, and least of all the subject of envy: and they are the least of all thinking evil who are engaged in this pursuit."

And [Varro](#) says: "Viri magni nostri majores non sine causa praeponerent rusticos Romanos urbanis. Ut ruri enim, qui in villa vivunt ignaviores, quam qui in agro versantur in aliquo opere faciundo; sic qui in oppido sederent, quam qui rura colerent, desidiosiores putabant." That is: "Great men, our ancestors, preferred Romans who had lived in the country to those who lived in the city. For, as in the country, they who live in the villa are idler than they who are employed in the field doing some work, so they thought that those who sat in a town were more slothful than they who cultivated the fields." And he says that they did not need the gymnasia of the Greeks, but now one does not think that he has a villa unless he has many places with Greek names in it, and, having stolen into the city, instead of using their hands in swinging (?) a scythe or holding a plow they move them in the theatre and circus and have forgotten husbandry.

And in another place [V.](#) boasts of the antiquity of rustic life, saying that "there was a time when men cultivated the fields, but had no city (fuit tempus, cum rura colerent homines, neque urbem haberent)." And again: "Immani numero annorum urbanos agricolae praestant. Nec mirum, quod divina natura dedit agros, ars humana aedificavit urbes. (That is: Cultivators of the soil precede citizens by a vast number of years. Nor is it to be wondered at, for divine Nature gave fields, human art built cities.) ... Nec sine causa Terram eandem appellabant matrem, et Cererem, et qui eam colerent, eam et utilem agere vitam credebant, atque eos solos reliquos esse ex stirpe Saturni regis. (That is: Nor without reason did they [our ancestors] call the same Earth mother and Ceres, and thought that they who cultivated it led a pious and useful life, and that they alone were left of the race of King Saturn.)"

But now, by means of railroads and steamboats and telegraphs, the country is denaturalized, the old pious, stable, and unenvied gains of the farmer are liable to all the suspicion which only the merchant's formerly excited. All milk-farms and fruit-farms, etc., are so many markets with their customs in the country.

Consider the deformities to which the farmer is liable, — the rustic, the clown (*a colono?*), the villain, etc., etc. [Josselyn](#), speaking of crickets, says, "The Italian who hath them cryed up and down the streets (*Grille che cantelo*) and buyeth them to put into his Gardens, if he were in New England would gladly be rid of them, they make such a dinn in an Evening." I am more charmed by the Italian's taste than by [Josselyn](#)'s impatience.

Ann, the Irishwoman who has lived with Deacon Brown so long, says that when he had taken to his bed with his last illness, she was startled by his calling, "Ann, Ann," "the bitterest Ann you ever heard," and that was the beginning of his last illness.

On the 2d I saw the sand foliage in the Cut; pretty good. This is the frost coming out of the ground; this is spring. It precedes the green and flowery spring, as mythology does ordinary literature and poetry.

P.M. — Rain, rain, rain, carrying off the snow and leaving a foundation of ice. The wind southeasterly.

 February 9, Thursday: James Jackson Cabot was born in Boston, the 4th child of [Dr. Samuel Cabot III](#) with Hannah Lowell Jackson Cabot.

Because of tensions between France and Russia, [Giacomo Meyerbeer](#) and Eugène Scribe were forced to make minor changes in the text of their upcoming opera, *L'étoile du nord*.

[Henry Thoreau](#) went to Pine Hill at 9 AM. He read [Marcus Terentius Varro](#), [Lucius Junius Moderatus Columella's DE RE RUSTICA](#),

REI RUSTICAE AUCTORES...

and [William Howitt's THE BOOK OF THE SEASONS](#); OR, THE CALENDAR OF NATURE.

There were a great many holidays at Plumfield, and one of the most delightful was the yearly apple-picking, — for then the Marches, Laurences, Brookes, and Bhaers turned out in full force, and made a day of it. Five years after Jo's wedding, one of these fruitful festivals occurred. — A mellow October day, when the air was full of an exhilarating freshness which made the spirits rise and the blood dance healthily in the veins. The old orchard wore its holiday attire; golden-rod and asters fringed the mossy walls; grasshoppers skipped briskly in the sere grass, and crickets chirped like fairy pipers at a feast. Squirrels were busy with their small harvesting; birds twittered their *adieux* from the alders in the lane; and every tree stood ready to send down its shower of red or yellow apples at the first shake. Everybody was there, — everybody laughed and sang, climbed up and tumbled down; everybody declared that there never had been such a perfect day or such a jolly set to enjoy it, — and every one gave themselves up to the simple pleasures of the hour as freely as if there were no such things as care or sorrow in the world.

Mr. March strolled placidly about, quoting Tusser, Cowley, and Columella to Mr. Laurence, while enjoying

“The gentle apple's winey juice.”

ABRAHAM COWLEY

COLUMELLA

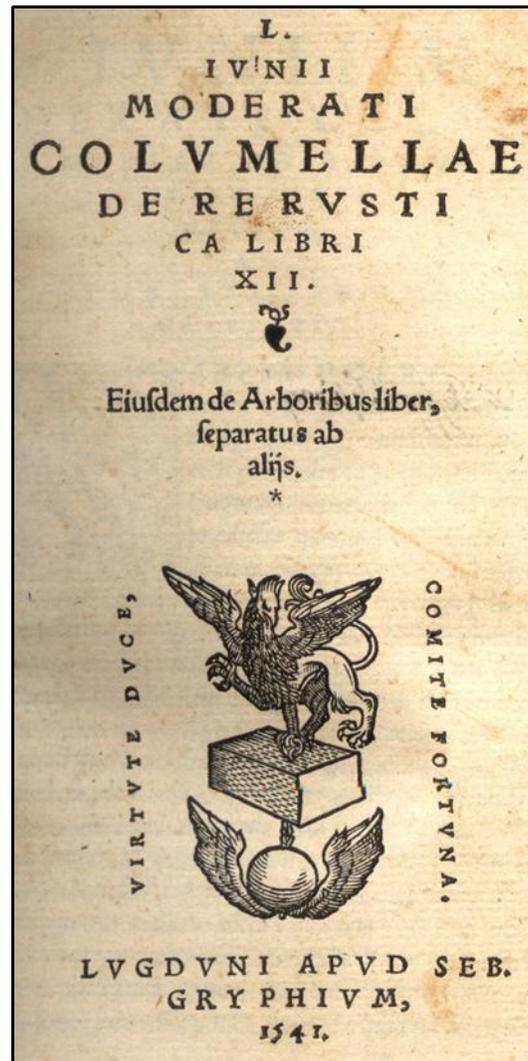


Feb. 9. High wind in the night and now, the rain being over. Does it not usually follow rain-storms at this season, to dry up the water? It has cleared off very pleasant and is still quite warm. 9 A.M. —To Pine Hill.

Some of these thaws succeed suddenly to intensely cold weather, and the sky that was tense like a bow that is bent is now relaxed. There is a peculiar softness and luminousness in the air this morning, perhaps the light being diffused by vapor.

It is such a warm, moist, or softened, sunlit air as we are wont to hear the first bluebird's warble in. And the brightness of the morning is increased tenfold by the sun reflected from broad sheets of rain and melted snow-water, and also, in a peculiar manner, from the snow on the sides of the Deep Cut. The crowing of cocks mid the voices of the school-children sound like spring. I hear the sound of the horses' feet on the bared ice as on pavements; and the sun is reflected from a hundred rippling sluices of snow-water finding its level in the fields. Are not both sound and light condensed or contracted by cold?

The jays are more lively than usual. That lichen with a white elastic thread for core is like a tuft of hair on the trees, sometimes springing from the centre of another, larger, flat lichen. There are show-fleas, quite active, on the half-melted snow on the middle of Walden. I do not hear Therien's axe far of late. The moment I came on his chopping-ground, the chickadees flew to me, as if glad to see me. They are a peculiarly honest and sociable little bird. I saw them go to his pail repeatedly and peck his bread and butter. They came and went a dozen times while I stood there. He said that a great flock of them came round him the other day while he was eating his



dinner and lit on his clothes “just like flies.” One roosted on his finger, and another pecked a piece of bread in his hand. They are considerable company for the woodchopper. I heard one wiry phe-be. They love to hop about wood freshly split. Apparently they do not leave his clearing all day. They were not scared when he threw, down wood within a few feet of them. When I looked to see how much of his bread and butter they had eaten, I did not perceive that any was gone. He could afford to dine a hundred.

I see some chestnut sprouts with leaves on them still. The hollows about Walden, still bottomed with snow, are filled with greenish water like its own. I do not find any willow catkins started, though many have lost their scales. I have brought home some alder and sweet-gale and put there in water. The black birch has a slender sharp bud, much like the shadbush. In Stow's meadow by railroad causeway, saw many dusky flesh-colored, transparent worms, about five eighths of an inch long, in and upon the snow, crawling about. These, too, must be food for birds.

I have seen two red squirrels and heard a third since the snow covered the ground. I have seen one gray one, but traces of many.

After “putabant” in [Varro](#), four pages back, comes “Itaque annum ita diviscrunt, ut nonis modo diebus urbanas res usurparent, reliquis VII ut rura colerent. (Therefore they so divided the year as to attend to town affairs on the ninth day only, that they might cultivate the fields on the other days).” Hence *nundinae* means a fair, and *oppidam nundinarium* (a ninth-day town) is a market town, and *forum numlinarium* is the market-place.

Columella, referring to [Varro](#), hives the same reason for the setting aside of the ninth day only, and adds: “Illis enim temporibus proceres civitatis in agris morabantur; et cum consilium publicum desiderabatur, a villis

arcessebantur in senatum. Ex quo qui eos evocabant, Viatores nominati sunt. (For in those days the chief men of the state stayed on their farms; and when a public council was wanted they were sent for from their villas to the senate. Whence they who called them out were named Road-men.)” These were the times which all Romans loved to praise. But now, so far as the rulers of the State are concerned, the city for the most part, instead of being a ninth-day town, gets six days, while the country gets only one day and the nights at most. We go to market every day. The city is not a ninth-day place but an every-day place, and the country is only a night or Sunday place. In a Yankee’s estimation, it is perhaps the greatest satire on a New England country village to say that it has an air of quietness which reminds him of the Sabbath. He loves the bustle of a market, where things are bought and sold, and sometimes men among the rest. The boys swop jack-knives on Sunday, and their fathers, perchance, barter their own souls.

[Howitt](#) describes the harvest moon in August. Did I not put it in September? He speaks of “willow-holts on the banks of rivers.” Bailey defines “holt, — small wood or grove.” Does not our “holt” on the river answer to this? It is in this case a poke-logan.

NATHAN BAILEY

THE BOOK OF THE SEASONS

My ink was frozen last month, and is now pale.

[Howitt](#) says that in Britain the law “is opposed to tracking game in a snow.” I feel some pity for the wild animals when I see how their tracks betray them in calm weather after a snow-storm, and consider what risks they, run of being exterminated.

Is not January alone pure winter? December belongs to the fall: is a wintry -November: February, to the spring: it is a snowy March.

The water was several inches deep in the road last evening, but it has run nearly dry by morning. The illustrious farmer Romans who lived simply on their land, to whom Columella refers, are Q. Cincinnatus, C. Fabricius, and Curius Dentatus.

BAILEY’S DICTIONARY



February 10, Friday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked up the railroad to Assabet, returning by way of the [Hollowell Farm](#).

[Thoreau](#) wrote in his journal “P. M. – Up railroad to Assabet and return via Hollowell place... The sturdy white oak near the Derby railroad bridge has been cut down....” He wrote to [Harvard Library](#) Librarian [Thaddeus William Harris](#).



February 11, Saturday: [Henry Thoreau](#) noted at 7:30 AM that on the ice which had frozen the previous night, the snow fleas were lying in dark patches 3-4 inches in diameter about the grass-stems or willows.

[John Mitchel](#) wrote in his [The Citizen](#) that abolitionism was an English import, with on it “the slime and trail of Exeter Hall” (a large antislavery rally had been held in a hall of that name in London in 1841). He responded the Reverend [Henry Ward Beecher](#)’s remarks about him that “You belong to a sect and a school of social reformers that I have always kept at arm’s length.”

On this night the San Francisco Gas Company turned on the 1st coal gas lamps. The occasion was celebrated at a grand banquet at the Oriental Hotel — the coal gas illuminated 86 lamps, and also the Metropolitan Theatre.

CALIFORNIA



February 11: 7.30 A.M. — Snow-fleas lie in black patches like some of those dark rough lichens on rocks, or like ink-spots three or four inches in diameter, about the grass-stems or willows, on the ice which froze

last night. When I breathe on them I find them all alive and ready to skip. Also the water, when I break the ice, arouses them. I saw yesterday, in a muddy spring in Tarbell's meadow, many cockle-shells on the bottom, with their feet out, and marks as if they had been moving.

When I read of the catkins of the alder and the willow, etc., scattering their yellow pollen, they impress me as a vegetation which belongs to the earliest and most innocent dawn of nature; as if they must have preceded other trees in the order of creation, as they precede them annually in their blossoming and leafing. In [lie winter we so value the semblance of fruit that even the dry black female catkins of the alder are an interesting sight, not to mention, on shoots rising a foot or two above these, the red or mulberry male catkins, in little parcels, dangling at a less than right angle with the stems, and the short female ones at their bases. For how many æons did the willow shed its yellow pollen annually before man was created!

Apparently I read Cato and Varro from the same motives that Virgil did, and as I read the almanac, *New England Farmer*, or *Cultivator*, or Howitt's "Seasons."



February 12, Sunday: [Robert Schumann](#) suffers constant hallucinations, hearing heavenly instruments and J.S. Bach's "Ein feste Burg."

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked on the ice and snow of the river to the mouth of Swamp Bridge Brook, and there put on his skates and skated to Pantry Brook.



Feb. 12: Another cold morning. The patches of snow-fleas on the ice are now much reduced, but still, when I kneel and breathe on them, they begin to skip, though the last two nights and all day yesterday have been severely cold. They look like little patches of rust on the ice.

At first, in clear cold weather, we may be walking on dry snow, which we crunch with squeaking sound under our feet. Then comes a thaw, and we slump about in slosh half a foot deep. Then, in a single night, the surface of the earth is all dried and stiffened, and we stagger over the rough, frozen ground and ice on which it is torture to walk. It becomes quite a study how a man will shoe himself for a winter. For outdoor life in winter, I use three kinds of shoes or boots: first and chiefly, for the ordinary dry snows or bare ground, cowhide hoots; secondly, for shallow thaws, half-shoe depth, and spring weather, light boots and india-rubbers; third, for the worst sloshy weather, about a week in the year, india-rubber boots.

P.M. —Skate to Pantry Brook.

Put on skates at mouth of Swamp Bridge Brook. The ice appears to be nearly two inches thick. There are many rough places where the crystals are very coarse, and the old ice on the river (for I spoke of a new ice since the freshet) is uneven and covered, more or less, with the scales of a thin ice whose water is dried up. In some places, where the wind has been strong, the foam is frozen into great concentric ridges, over which with an impetus I dash. It is hobbling and tearing work.

Just beyond the bathing-place, I see the wreck of an ice-fleet, which yesterday morning must have been very handsome. It reminds me of a vast and crowded fleet of sloops with large slanting sails all standing to the north.



These sails are, some of them, the largest specimens of the leaf-structure in ice that I have seen, eight or nine inches long. Perhaps this structure is more apparent now they have wasted so much. Their bases can be seen continuing quite through the level ice which has formed about them, as if the wind and waves, breaking up a thin ice, had held it in that position while it froze in.

One accustomed to glide over a boundless and variegated ice floor like this cannot be much attracted by tessellated floors and mosaic work. I skate over a thin ice all tessellated, so to speak, or in which you see the forms of the crystals as they shot. This is separated by two or three feet of water from the old ice resting; on the meadow. The water, consequently, is not dark, as when seen against a muddy bottom, but a clear yellow, against which the white air-bubbles in and under the ice are very conspicuous.

Landed at Fair Haven hill. I was not aware till I came out how pleasant a day it was. It was very cold this morning, and I have been putting [on] wood in vain to warm my chamber, and lo! I come forth, and surprised to find it warm and pleasant. There is very little wind, here under Fair Haven especially. I begin to dream of summer even. I take off my mittens.

Here is a little hollow which, for a short time every spring, gives passage to the melting snow, and it was consequently wet there late into the spring. I remember well when a few little alder hushes, encouraged by the

moisture, first sprang up in it. They now make a perfect little grove, fifteen feet high, and maybe half a dozen rods long, with a rounded outline, as if they were one mass of moss, with the wrecks of ferns in their midst and the sweet-fern about its edge. And so, perchance, a swamp is beginning to be formed. The shade and the decaying vegetation may at last produce a spongy soil, which will supply a constant rill. Has not something like this been the history of the alder swamp and brook a little further along? True, the first is on a small scale and rather elevated, part way up the hill; and ere long trout begin to glance in the brook, where first was merely a course for melted snow which turned the dead grass-blades all one way, — which combed the grassy tresses down the hill.

This is a glorious winter afternoon. The clearness of a winter day is not impaired, while the air is still and you feel a direct heat from the sun. It is not like the relenting of a thaw with a southerly wind. There is a bright sheen from the snow, and the ice booms a little from time to time. On those parts of the Trill Which are bare, I see the radical leaves of the buttercup, mouse-ear, and the thistle.

Especially do gray rocks or cliffs with a southwest exposure attract us now, where there is warmth and dryness. The gray color is nowhere else so agreeable to us as in these rocks in the sun in this season, where I hear the trickling of water under great ice organ-pipes. What a floor it is I glide thus swiftly over! It is a study for the slowest walker. See the shells of countless air-bubbles within and beneath it, some a yard or two in diameter. Beneath they are crowded together from the size of a dollar downward. They give the ice a white-spotted or freckled appearance. Specimens of every coin (*numismata*) from the first minting downward. I hear the pond faintly boom or mutter in a low voice, promising another spring; to the fishes. I saw yesterday deeply scalloped oak leaves which had sunk nearly an inch into the ice of Walden, making a perfect impression of their forms, on account of the heat then absorbed. Their route is thus downward to dust again, through water and snow and ice and every obstacle. This thick meadow ice with yellow water under it yields a remarkable hollow sound, like a churn, as I rip over it, as if it were about to give way under me, — some of that gong-like roar which I have described elsewhere, — the ice being tense. I crossed the road at Bidens Brook. here the smooth ice was dusty (from the road) a great distance, and I thought it would dull my skates.

To make a perfect winter day like this, you have a clear, sparkling air, with a sheen from the snow, sufficient cold, little or no wind; and the warmth must come directly from the sun. It must not be a thawing warmth. The tension of nature must not be relaxed. The earth must be resonant if bare, and you hear the lisp-tinkle of chickadees from time to time and the unrelenting steel-cold scream of a jay [Blue Jay  *Cyanocitta cristata*], unmelted, that never flows into a song, a sort of wintry trumpet, screaming cold; hard, tense, frozen music, like the winter sky itself; in the blue livery of winter's band.⁷⁴ It is like a flourish of trumpets in the winter sky. There is no hint of incubation in the jay's scream. Like the creak of a cart-wheel. There is no cushion for sounds now. They tear our ears.

I frequently see three or four old white birches standing together on the edge of a pond or meadow, and am struck by the pleasing manner in which they will commonly be grouped, — how they spread so as must to make

74. [William M. White](#)'s version of the journal entry is:

*To make a perfect winter day like this,
You must have a clear, sparkling air,
With a sheen from the snow,
Sufficient cold,
Little or no wind;
And the warmth must come directly from the sun.*

*It must not be a thawing warmth.
The tension of nature must not be relaxed.*

*The earth must be resonant if bare,
And you hear the lisp-tinkle of chickadees
From time to time
And the unrelenting steel-cold scream of a jay,
Unmelted,
That never flows into a song,
A sort of wintry trumpet, screaming cold;
Hard, tense, frozen music,
Like the winter sky itself;
In the blue livery of winter's band.*

room for each other, and make an agreeable impression on the eye. Methinks I have seen groups of three in different places arranged almost exactly alike. I saw these near Lily Bay: the third upright one is lapped over and partly twined round the middle one at base.



Returning, I overhauled a muskrat-house by Bidens Brook. For want of other material, it was composed of grass, flags, and in a great measure (half) of twigs and sticks, mostly sweet-gale, both dead and alive, and roots, from six inches to two feet in length. These were, in fact, the principal material of it, and it was a large one, two feet above the ice. — I was surprised to find that these sticks, both green and dead, had, the greater part of them, been gnawed off by the rat, — and some were nearly half an inch in diameter. They were cut off, not at a right angle with a smooth cut, but by successive cuts, smooth as with a knife, across, at the same time bending the twig down, which produced a sloping and, so to speak, terraced surface.



I did not know before that they resembled the beaver in this respect also. It was chiefly the sweet-gale thus cut, commonly the top left on, two feet long, but sometimes cut off six inches long, thus:



The bottom of its chamber was barely raised above the water, and the roof was hung with icicles from rain or frost. The sun being low, I see as I skate, reflected from the surface of the ice, flakes of rainbow somewhat like cobwebs, where the great slopes of the crystallization fall at the right angle, six inches or a foot across, but at so small an angle with the horizon that they had seemed absolutely flat and level before. Think of this kind of



mosaic and tessellation for your floor! A floor made up of surfaces not absolutely level, — though level to the touch of the feet and to the noonday eye, — composed of crystals variously set, but just enough inclined to reflect the colors of the rainbow when the sun gets low.

See where a muskrat yesterday brought up clams through a hole in the ice over the middle of the river, and left their great violet-tinted shells on the edge of the ice. Sometimes they break the hinge.

Cold as this morning has been, I find the water, as usual, overflowing the ice along the shore and about the willows and button-bushes. Apparently when the river freezes up thus tensely, the ice compresses it, and where the ice is held down near the shore and by the bushes, not being able to rise when the sun comes to warm the water, it bursts out and overflows in such places even in very cold weather. At last, in warmer weather still, it is difficult to get on or off on this account. The pond does not thunder every night, and I do not learn its law, exactly. I cannot tell surely where to expect its thundering, for it feels scarcely perceptible changes in the weather. Who would have suspected so large and cold and thick-skinned a thing to be so sensitive. Yet it has its law to which [it] thunders obedience when it should, as surely as the buds expand in the spring. For the earth is all alive and covered with feelers of sensation, *papillæ*. The hardest and largest rock, the broadest ocean, is as sensitive to atmospheric changes as the globule of mercury in its tube. Though you may perceive no difference in the weather, the pond does. So the alligator and the turtle, with quakings of the earth, come out of the mud.

WALDEN: The phenomena of the year take place every day in a pond on a small scale. Every morning, generally speaking, the shallow water is being warmed more rapidly than the deep, though it may not be made so warm after all, and every evening it is being cooled more rapidly until the morning. The day is an epitome of the year. The night is the winter, the morning and evening are the spring and fall, and the noon is the summer. The cracking and booming of the ice indicate a change of temperature. One pleasant morning after a cold night, February 24th, 1850, having gone to Flint's pond to spend the day, I noticed with surprise, that when I struck the ice with the head of my axe, it resounded like a gong for many rods around, or as if I had struck on a tight drum-head. The pond began to boom about an hour after sunrise, when it felt the influence of the sun's rays slanted upon it from over the hills; it stretched itself and yawned like a waking man with a gradually increasing tumult, which was kept up three or four hours. It took a short siesta at noon, and boomed once more toward night, as the sun was withdrawing his influence. In the right stage of the weather a pond fires its evening gun with great regularity. But in the middle of the day, being full of cracks, and the air also being less elastic, it had completely lost its resonance, and probably fishes and muskrats could not then have been stunned by a blow on it. The fishermen say that the "thundering of the pond" scares the fishes and prevents their biting. The pond does not thunder every evening, and I cannot tell surely when to expect its thundering; but though I may perceive no difference in the weather, it does.

WALDEN: Every incident connected with the breaking up of the rivers and ponds and the settling of the weather is particularly interesting to us who live in a climate of so great extremes. When the warmer days come, they who dwell near the river hear the ice crack at night with a startling whoop as loud as artillery, as if its icy fetters were rent from end to end, and with in a few days see it rapidly going out. So the alligator comes out of the mud with quakings of the earth.



February 13, Monday: [Henry Thoreau](#) walked to [Walden Pond](#) at 7 AM to [skate](#). In the afternoon the snow prevented further [skating](#).

1854

1854

February 14, Tuesday: Bürger-Ball-Polka op.145 by [Johann Baptist Strauss II](#) was performed for the initial time, in the Redoutensaal, Vienna. Also premiered was Strauss' Musen-Polka op.147.

Louis Moreau Gottschalk arrived in Havana for a concert tour.

In the afternoon, [Henry Thoreau](#) walked down the railroad tracks and noted that the telegraph's aeolian harp was resounding at every post. "It is a harp with one string, –the first strain from the American lyre." Here are the sorts of insulating hooks from which the wires of this period most likely were being hung from the [telegraph](#) posts:



AEOLIAN HARP

On this day and the following one [Sam Houston](#) was delivering a major speech on the floor of the US Senate, opposing the [Kansas/Nebraska Bill](#).



February 15, Wednesday: [Robert Schumann](#) told Clara that if the music he had been hearing for 4 days did not stop he would go mad. She summoned a doctor.

 February 16, Thursday: [Francis Sales](#) died, leaving his daughter Mary Catherine Sales.⁷⁵

On the birthday of the Dowager, Grand Duchess, Franz Liszt's symphonic poem Orpheus was performed for the initial time, in Weimar, conducted by the composer, as an introduction to a production of Gluck's Orfeo ed Euridice.

L'étoile du nord, an opéra comique by [Giacomo Meyerbeer](#) to words of Scribe, was performed for the initial time, at the Théâtre Favart, Paris, in the presence of the imperial family. This was a fantastic success and the opera would receive 100 performances in its 1st year at the Opéra-Comique.

[Henry Thoreau](#) was reading [Lucius Junius Moderatus Columella](#)'s *DE RE RUSTICA*.

REI RUSTICAE AUCTORES...

In the afternoon he walked to [Walden Pond](#) and Flint Pond, returning home on the turnpike.

There were a great many holidays at Plumfield, and one of the most delightful was the yearly apple-picking, — for then the Marches, Laurences, Brookes, and Bhaers turned out in full force, and made a day of it. Five years after Jo's wedding, one of these fruitful festivals occurred. — A mellow October day, when the air was full of an exhilarating freshness which made the spirits rise and the blood dance healthily in the veins. The old orchard wore its holiday attire; golden-rod and asters fringed the mossy walls; grasshoppers skipped briskly in the sere grass, and crickets chirped like fairy pipers at a feast. Squirrels were busy with their small harvesting; birds twittered their *adieux* from the alders in the lane; and every tree stood ready to send down its shower of red or yellow apples at the first shake. Everybody was there, — everybody laughed and sang, climbed up and tumbled down; everybody declared that there never had been such a perfect day or such a jolly set to enjoy it, — and every one gave themselves up to the simple pleasures of the hour as freely as if there were no such things as care or sorrow in the world.

ABRAHAM COWLEY

Mr. March strolled placidly about, quoting Tusser, Cowley, and Columella to Mr. Laurence, while enjoying

COLUMELLA

“The gentle apple's winey juice.”

The New-York [Daily Times](#) reported an address by [Lt. Matthew Fontaine Maury](#) before the Geographical and Nautical Society. [Thoreau](#) would copy from this article into his Fact Book.



February 16: By this time in the winter I do not look for those clear, sparkling mornings and delicate leaf frosts, which, methinks, occur earlier in the winter, as if the air of winter was somewhat tarnished and debauched, — had lost its virgin purity.

Every judgment and action of a man qualifies every other, *i.e.* corrects our estimate of every other, as, for instance, a man's idea of immortality who is a member of a church, or his praise of you coupled with his praise of those whom you do not esteem. For in this sense a man is awfully consistent, above his own consciousness. All a man's strength and all his weakness go to make up the authority of any particular opinion which he may

75. Sales's papers have migrated to the Harvard Library (HUG1763). The “Sales Prize” of \$60 is awarded to Harvard students “who shall have commenced the study of that language at Harvard College and whose scholarship shall be determined by his proficiency in Spanish Composition.” This award is made possible out of income from his bequest.

utter. He is strong or weak with all his strength and weakness combined. If he is your friend, You may have to consider that he loves you, but perchance he also loves gingerbread.

It must [be] the leaves of the *Chimaphila umbellata*, spotted wintergreen, which Charming left here day before yesterday.

I have not seen *F. hyemalis* since last fall, the snow buntings only during the great and severe snow-storm, no pine grosbeaks nor *F. linaria* this winter.

Snows again this morning. For the last month the weather has been remarkably changeable; hardly three days together alike.

That is an era not yet arrived, when the earth, being partially thawed, tells the slight snows which fall on it.

P.M. — To Walden and Flint's; return by Turnpike.

Saw two large hawks circling over the woods by Walden, hunting, — the first I have seen since December 15th. That Indian trail on the hillside about Walden was revealed with remarkable distinctness to me standing on the middle of the pond, by the slight snow which had lodged on it forming a clear white line underscored by weeds and twigs. (For snow is a great revealer not only of tracks made in itself, but even in the earth before it fell.) It was quite distinct in many places where you would not have noticed it before. A light snow will often reveal a faint foot or cart track in a field which was hardly discernible before, for it reprints it, as it were, in clear white type, alto-relievo. [Walden, page 200; Riv., page 282.] Went to the locality of the *Chimaphila maculata* by Goose Pond.

[Columella](#), after saying that many authors had believed that the climate (“*qualitatem caeli statumque*”) was changed by lapse of time (“*longo aevi situ*”), refers to [Hipparchus](#) as having given out that the time would be when the poles of the earth would be moved from their place (“*tempus fore, quo cardines mundi loco moverentur*”); and, as confirmatory of this, he ([C.](#)) goes on to say that the vine and olive flourish now in some places where formerly they failed.

He gives the names of about fifty authors who had treated *de rusticis rebus* before him.



February 17, Friday: [Robert Schumann](#) composed a melody which, he informed his wife, had been sung to him by angels.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked to Gowing's Swamp and looked at animal tracks in the snow.



February 18, Saturday: The angels heard by [Robert Schumann](#) on the previous day have been transformed into demons come to carry him off to hell. It required a couple of doctors to hold him down.

Stanislaw Moniuszko's opera *Halka* to words of Wolski after Wojcicki, was staged for the initial time, in Vilnius.

[Henry Thoreau](#) was reading some congressional speeches about the Nebraska Bill.

To take Thoreau's own word for it, after finishing [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) he was only marginally interested in the politics of the idea palaces of our nation:

I read some of the speeches in Congress about the Nebraska Bill, — a thing the like of which I have not done for a year. What trifling upon a serious subject! while honest men are sawing wood for them outside. Your Congress halls have an ale-house odor, — a place for stale jokes and vulgar wit. It compels me to think of my fellow-creatures as apes and baboons.

In the afternoon he walked to Yellow Birch Swamp, which he found more to his liking.

[Professor Henri-Frédéric Amiel](#), who would be referred to as the “Swiss [Thoreau](#),” wrote in his *JOURNAL INTIME*: “Everything tends to become fixed, solidified, and crystallized in this French tongue of ours, which seeks form and not substance, the result and not its formation, what is seen rather than what is thought, the outside rather than the inside.

We like the accomplished end and not the pursuit of the end, the goal and not the road, in short, ideas ready-made and bread ready-baked, the reverse of Lessing’s principle. What we look for above all are conclusions. This clearness of the “ready-made” is a superficial clearness — physical, outward, solar clearness, so to speak, but in the absence of a sense for origin and genesis it is the clearness of the incomprehensible, the clearness of opacity, the clearness of the obscure. We are always trifling on the surface. Our temper is formal — that is to say, frivolous and material, or rather artistic and not philosophical. For what it seeks is the figure, the fashion and manner of things, not their deepest life, their soul, their secret.”

 February 19, Sunday: This is the day when, very likely, [Anthony Burns](#), all six foot of him, crept from his place of hiding in the cargo of the ship in [Boston Harbor](#) and entrusted himself to freedom.

[William Cooper Nell](#) became editor of the Literary Society.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked on the ice of the river to Fair Haven, returning on the railroad tracks.

 February 20, Monday: [Robert Schumann](#) was well enough to finish proofs of his Cello Concerto.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) and [Ellery Channing](#) skated to Fair Haven Pond and made a fire on the south side of the pond, using canoe birch bark and oak leaves for kindling. When they [skated](#) home at dusk, the odor of smoke in their clothing was noticeable.



February 20: Channing saw yesterday three little birds olive-green above, with yellowish-white breasts and, he thinks, bars on wings. Were they goldfinches?

P.M. — Skating to Fair Haven Pond.

Made a fire on the south side of the pond, using canoe birch bark and oak leaves for kindlings. It is best to lay down first some large damp wood on the ice for a foundation, since the success of a fire depends very much on the bed of coals it makes, and, if these are nearly quenched in the basin of melted ice, there is danger that it will go out. How much dry wood ready for the hunter, inviting flames, is to be found in every forest, — dry bark fibres and small dead twigs of the white pine and other trees, held up high and dry as if for this very purpose! The occasional loud snapping of the fire was exhilarating. I put on some hemlock boughs, and the rich salt crackling of its leaves was like mustard to the ears, — the firing of uncountable regiments. Dead trees love the fire.

We skated home in the dusk, with an odor of smoke in our clothes. It was pleasant to dash over the ice, feeling the inequalities which we could not see, now rising over considerable hillocks, — for it had settled on the meadows, — now descending into corresponding hollows.

We have had but one⁷⁶ (and that I think was the first) of those gentle moist snows which lodge perfectly on the trees and make perhaps the most beautiful sight of any. Much more common is what we have now, i.e.—

76. No more this winter

1854

1854

 February 21, Tuesday: Carnevals-Specktakel-Quadrille op.152 by [Johann Baptist Strauss II](#) was performed for the initial time, in Schwender's Colosseum, Vienna.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked to Goose Pond by way of Tuttle Patch.

 February 22, Wednesday: Track was laid to Rock Island, Illinois, thus making the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad the 1st rail link between the Mississippi River and the Great Lakes.

HISTORY OF RR

[Henry Thoreau](#) noted that the ground at the deep cut on the new Bedford road was frozen more than 18 inches deep at the top of the incline but less than 18 inches deep at the bottom.

In the evening at the [Concord Lyceum](#), Edward Banks lectured on "Dead Cities" (we know nothing about who this person was, except that he was known to Emerson; Emerson had written to Mrs. Emerson giving instructions that, were he himself unable to make it back home by that evening, she was to arrange for Thoreau to receive Mr. Banks at the Emerson home).



Feb. 22. I measured the thickness of the frozen ground at the deep cut on the new Bedford road, about half-way up the hill. They dig under the frozen surface and then crack it off with iron wedges, with much labor, in pieces from three to six feet square. It was eighteen inches thick and more there — thicker higher up, not so thick lower down the hill.

Saw in Sleepy Hollow a small hickory stump, about six inches in diameter and six inches high, so completely, regularly, and beautifully covered by that winkle-like fungus in concentric circles and successive layers that the core was concealed and you would have taken it for some cabbage-like plant.



This was the way the wound was healed. The cut surface of the stirrup was completely and thickly covered. Our neighbor Wetherbee was J. Moore's companion when he took that great weight of pickerel this winter. He says it was fifty-six pounds in Flint's, in one day, and that four of them weighed eighteen pounds and seven ounces. My alder catkins in the pitcher have shed their pollen for a day or two, and the willow catkins have pushed out half an inch or more and show red and yellowish.

 February 23, Thursday: Les Préludes, a symphonic poem by Franz Liszt, was performed for the initial time, in Weimar, directed by the composer.

By the Convention of Bloemfontein, Great Britain agrees to vacate territory north of the Orange River, thus allowing for the creation of the Orange Free State.

La Viennoise op.144, a polka-mazurka by [Johann Baptist Strauss II](#), was performed for the initial time, in the Sperl Ballroom, Vienna.

[Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by Thomas B. Smith, a printer in New-York, ordering 5 pounds of plumbago and a small quantity of black lead.⁷⁷

*From THOMAS B. SMITH
 Mr Henry Thoreau
 New York Feb^y 23/54
 Dear Sir*



1854

1854

Enclosed I send Ten Dollars for which send me 5 pounds best Plumbago for Electrotype purposes. The pound you sent before I found very good. Please send me a small quantity of the \$1.50 per pound Black Lead that I may try it.

77. Thomas B. Smith was born in 1815 on Long Island. His father had died in 1821 while he was 6 years of age. In 1831 when he was 16, he had apprenticed himself to a master builder. He became New-York's Superintendent for Buildings. He designed a house in the Bronx resembling an English castle, for the actor Edwin Forrest. He ran the Thomas B. Smith Stereotype foundry at 216 William Street in New-York and his residence was at 54 Lawrence Street in Brooklyn. Later his firm became Thomas B. Smith and Son, at another New-York street address. After the Civil War he would take possession of the a small abandoned and dismantled single-kiln porcelain factory in the "Pottery Hill" neighborhood of Greenpoint, Brooklyn, as partial satisfaction of debt. This firm had been fabricating doorknob handles and other such items out of a mixture of kaolin with phosphate of lime, that were considered less than entirely satisfactory. At 300 Eckford Street he would create the Union Porcelain Works, and would travel to Sevres in France and Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire in England in order to inspect the manner in which they were mixing and firing their porcelain. He would put a "hard" American porcelain on the market for use in vases and platters, and also as doorknobs, castor wheels, and insulators. This would sell well, even to the White House in Washington DC, and some of the quality items he manufactured are now to be seen in the Metropolitan Museum of New York and the Brooklyn Museum. By 1867 he would become wealthy enough to design for himself a house at 136 Milton Street (this now houses the Greenpoint Reformed Church; not only this particular structure, but a number of other houses on Milton Street were designed by him). He would die in 1901 and the pottery work would cease during the 1920s. In the parlor of his house, a tile would be belatedly discovered in the back wall of the fireplace. The tile appears to have been made in the 1870s and appears to portray the Robert Fulton who devised the first practical submarine, and seems to have been made for Fulton's business partner Robert Livingston on behalf of the Emperor Napoleon:



 February 24, Friday: [Robert Schumann](#) told Ruppert Becker, concertmaster of the Düsseldorf orchestra, that [Franz Schubert](#) had appeared to him and provided him with a melody.

[Henry Thoreau](#) measured the thickness of the ice at [Walden Pond](#) and on Fair Haven Bay.

A couple of bridge workers fell to their deaths from a suspension bridge being erected at [Niagara Falls](#).



February 24. P. M. — To Walden and Fair Haven.

In Wheeler's Wood by railroad. Nuthatches are faintly answering each other, — tit for tat, — on different keys, — a faint creak. Now and then one utters a loud distinct *gnah*. This bird more than any I know loves to stand with its head downward.

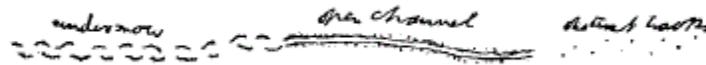
Meanwhile chickadees, with their silver tinkling, are flitting high above through the tops of the pines. Measured the ice of Walden in three places, —

One about 10 rods from the shore, $16\frac{7}{8}$ inches thick
 25 rods from the shore, “ “
 In middle $17\frac{1}{4}$ “ “

Call it then 17 inches on an average. On Fair Haven, in the only place tried, it was 21 inches thick. The portion of the ice in Walden above water was *about* $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches, in Fair Haven *about* $1\frac{3}{4}$. This part then equals $\frac{1}{13}$ + and $\frac{1}{12}$ respectively.

Tried the frost in five different and very distant woods in my walk. Found that though the ground is frozen more than 18 inches — from 18 [inches] to $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet — thick on the open hillside on the new Bedford road, notwithstanding some snow on it, I can drive a stake without any trouble in the midst of ordinary level mixed pine and oak woods where the snow is a foot deep, in *very thick* pine and oak woods where the snow is only one inch thick or none at all, and the ground does not slope to the north and east, and probably the northwest, and in sprout-lands where it is 20 inches thick in some places, and in springy meadows. In Moore's Swamp it is frozen about 4 inches deep in open land. I think that in an average year the ice in such a pond as Fair Haven attains a greater thickness than the snow on a level. The other day I thought that I smelled a fox very strongly, and went a little further and found that it was a skunk. May not their odors differ in intensity chiefly? Observed in one of the little pond-holes between Walden and Fair Haven where a partridge had travelled around in the snow amid the bordering bushes twenty-five rods, had pecked the green leaves of the lambkill and left fragments on the snow, and had paused at each high blueberry bush, fed on its red buds and shaken down fragments of its bark on the snow. These buds appeared its main object. I finally scared the bird.

I see such mice or mole tracks as these:—



The frozen earth at the new road cut is hauled off twenty rods by chains hooked round it, and it lies like great blocks of yellow sandstone for building, cracked out exactly square by wedges. The sexton tells me that he had to dig the last grave through two feet of frozen ground. I measured a block to-day two feet five inches thick after being dragged a dozen rods.

 February 25, Saturday: Sacramento became the capital of [California](#).

CALIFORNIA

[Jerome Van Crowninshield Smith](#) wrote from Boston to Abel Munroe and other members of a Committee of the Citizen's Union, assuring the committee that he was aware of their principles.

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to his cousin [George Thatcher](#) in Maine:

Concord Feb. 25th '54
 Dear Cousin,
 I should have answered you earlier if a wood-merchant whom I



1854

1854

engaged had kept his appointment. Measuring on Mr. Hubbard's plans of '36 and '52, which I enlarged, I make the whole area wanted for a cemetery 16 acres & 114 rods. This includes a path one rod wide on the north side of the wood next the meadow, and is all of the Brown Farm north of the New Road, except the meadow of about 7 acres and a small triangle of about a dozen rods next the Agricultural Land. The above result is probably accurate within half an acre; nearer I cannot come with certainty without a resurvey. 9 acres & 9 rods are woodland, whose value I have got Anthony Wright, an old Farmer & now measurer of wood at the Depot,

Page 2
to assist me in determining. This is the result.

Oak chiefly 4A 53 rd	156 Cords at \$2.75 ^{pr}	cord standing	small
429		large &	
[Whit]e & Pitch Pine 3A	30rd	143½ Cords 2	287
Pitch Pine	146rd	16½ Cords 2	41.25
Young P. Pine	100rd	5 cord 2	10.
			<hr/>
			\$767.
25			

Merchantable green oak wood, piled on the cars, brings here \$4.75 pr cord.
Pitch Pine 4.25
White 2.50

An acquaintance in Boston applied to me last October for a small farm in Concord, but the small amount of land & the want of a good house may prevent his thinking of the Dutch House place, & beside circumstances have transpired which I fear will prevent his coming here; however I will inform him at once that it is on the market. I do not know about the state of his funds, only that he was in no hurry, though in earnest, & limited me to \$2000.

All well-
Yrs
Henry D. Thoreau

Page 3
Postage: pd
PAID
3
Postmark: CONCORD
MASS
Address: Geo. A. Thatcher
Bangor
ME



1854

1854

(Miss Sarah Bartlett of the Concord Free Public Library indicated, in the 20th Century, that the land Thoreau surveyed was probably land intended for Sleepy Hollow Cemetery and that it was probably the plan of Cyrus Hubbard that Thoreau had accessed. She indicated that the farm in question was that of Deacon Reuben Brown.)



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR FEBRUARY 25th]

IT IS NO COINCIDENCE THAT IT IS MORTALS WHO CONSUME OUR HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS, FOR WHAT WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO DO IS EVADE THE RESTRICTIONS OF THE HUMAN LIFESPAN. (IMMORTALS, WITH NOTHING TO LIVE FOR, TAKE NO HEED OF OUR STORIES.)

HDT

WHAT?

INDEX

1854

1854

 February 26, Sunday: Fearful that he might be a threat to his wife, [Robert Schumann](#) asked to be taken to a lunatic asylum — but was persuaded by Clara and a doctor to go to bed.

[Henry Thoreau](#) was reading about [Dr. Elisha Kent Kane](#)'s expedition to find the remains of the expedition of [Sir John Franklin](#) in the Arctic.



U.S. GRINNELL EXPEDITION

THE FROZEN NORTH

In the afternoon he walked in the rain to [Martial Miles](#)'s. Miles said he thought he had heard a bluebird.



1854

1854

PEOPLE OF
WALDEN

WALDEN: What does Africa, -what does the West stand for? Is not our own interior white on the chart? black though it may prove, like the coast, when discovered. Is it the source of the Nile, or the Niger, or the Mississippi, or a North-West Passage around this continent, that we would find? Are these the problems which most concern mankind? Is Franklin the only man who is lost, that his wife should be so earnest to find him? Does Mr. Grinnell know where he himself is? Be rather the Mungo Park, the Lewis and Clarke and Frobisher, of your own streams and oceans; explore your own higher latitudes, -with shiploads of preserved meats to support you, if they be necessary; and pile the empty cans sky-high for a sign. Were preserved meats invented to preserve meat merely? Nay, be a Columbus to whole new continents and worlds within you, opening new channels, not of trade, but of thought. Every man is the lord of a realm beside which the earthly empire of the Czar is but a petty state, a hummock left by the ice. Yet some can be patriotic who have no *self-respect*, and sacrifice the greater to the less. They love the soil which makes their graves, but have no sympathy with the spirit which may still animate their clay. Patriotism is a maggot in their heads. What was the meaning of that South-Sea Exploring Expedition, with all its parade and expense, but an indirect recognition of the fact, that there are continents and seas in the moral world, to which every man is an isthmus or an inlet, yet unexplored by him, but that it is easier to sail many thousand miles through cold and storm and cannibals, in a government ship, with five hundred men and boys to assist one, than it is to explore the private sea, the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean of one's being alone.-

“Erret, et extremos alter scrutetur Iberos.
Plus habet hic vitæ, plus habet ille viæ.”

Let them wander and scrutinize the outlandish Australians.
I have more of God, they more of the road.

SIR JOHN FRANKLIN
DR. ELISHA KENT KANE
LEWIS AND CLARK
CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS
MUNGO PARK

Thoreau wrote Elijah Wood about beginning to forward to him $\frac{3}{4}$ ths of Michael Flannery's wages. A comment made was that this was in repayment of “money lent him in some pinch.”

Concord Feb. 26th '54

Mr Wood,

I mentioned to you that Mr. Flannery had given me an order on you for $\frac{3}{4}$ of his wages. I have agreed with him that that arrangement shall not begin to take effect until the first of March 1854.

yrs

Henry D. Thoreau

THOREAU ON THE IRISH

1854

1854

In a few years, upon returning to a friend a copy of [Dr. Kane](#)'s ARCTIC EXPLORATIONS: *THE SECOND GRINNELL EXPEDITION* IN SEARCH OF SIR JOHN FRANKLIN, 1853, '54, '55, [Thoreau](#) would remark that "most of the phenomena therein recorded are to be observed about Concord":

**ARCTIC EXPLORATIONS, I****ARCTIC EXPLORATIONS, II**

Eventually Thoreau would obtain his own personal set of these volumes and would make notes in his Indian Notebooks #8 and #10 and his Fact Book.

HDT

WHAT?

INDEX

1854

1854



E. A. Kane

There was one Philadelphian book of the fifties that lay on countless parlour tables, acclaimed by Irving, Bancroft, Prescott and Bryant, the ARCTIC EXPLORATIONS of Dr. Elisha Kent Kane, who had reached the highest latitude, the furthest north. A surgeon in the navy in Oriental waters, he had previously explored the Philippines in 1844 more extensively than any traveller before him; then he led one of the expeditions in search of the British explorer Franklin, who had vanished with his ship and crew in the northern ice-fields. He spent two winters in the arctic zone, encountering with his comrades the utmost of hardship and danger that men can endure, beset by darkness, cold, scurvy and rats and the perils of lockjaw and floating ice, subsisting on blubber and the beef of walrus and bear. Obligated at last to abandon their brig, the party escaped on sledges, having found what they thought was an open polar sea, and Dr. Kane's record of these adventures, describing their daily arctic life, revealed a world that was all but unknown and new. It abounded in pictures of Eskimo customs, seal-stalking and walrus-hunts, and Dr. Kane sketched landscapes that Dante might have conjured up, so mysterious, so inorganic and so desolate they were. They appeared to have been left unfinished when the earth was formed. The moonlight painted on the snow-fields fantastic profiles of crags and spires, and the firmament seemed to be close overhead with the stars magnified in glory in the awful frozen silence of the arctic night. One felt amid these night-scenes as if the life of the planet were suspended, its companionships and its colours, its movements and its sounds.



Feb. 26. [Kane](#), ashore far up Baffin's Bay, says, "How strangely this crust we wander over asserts its identity through all the disguises of climate!"

Speaking of the effects of refraction on the water, he says: "The single repetition was visible all around us; the secondary or inverted image sometimes above and sometimes below the primary. But it was not uncommon to see, also, the uplifted ice-berg, with its accompanying or false horizon, joined at its summit by its inverted image, and then above a second horizon, a third berg in its natural position." He refers to Agassiz at Lake Superior as suggesting "that it may be simply the reflection of the landscape inverted upon the surface of the lake, and reproduced with the actual landscape;" though there there was but one inversion.

He says that he saw sledge-tracks of Franklin's party in the neighborhood of Wellington Sound, made on the snow, six years old, which had been covered by the aftersnows of five winters. This reminds me of the sled-tracks I saw this winter.

Kane says that, some mornings in that winter in the ice, they heard "a peculiar crisping or crackling sound." "This sound, as the 'noise accompanying the aurora,' has been attributed by Wrangell and others, ourselves among the rest, to changes of atmospheric temperature acting upon the crust of the snow." Kane thinks it is rather owing "to the unequal contraction and dilatation" of unequally presenting surfaces, "not to a sudden change of atmospheric temperature acting upon the snow." Is not this the same crackling I heard at Fair Haven on the 19th, and are not most of the arctic phenomena to be witnessed in our latitude on a smaller scale? At Fair Haven it seemed a slighter contraction of the ice, -- not enough to make it thunder, This morning it began with snowing, turned to a fine freezing rain producing a glaze, -the most of a glaze thus far,-but in the afternoon changed to pure rain.

P.M. —To Martial Miles's in rain.

The weeds, trees, etc., are covered with a glaze. The blue-curl cups are overflowing with icy drops. All trees present a new appearance, their twigs being bent down by the ice, - birches, apple trees, etc., but, above all, the pines. Tall, feathery white pines look like cockerels' tails in a shower. Both these and white [= pitch] pines, their branches being inclined downward, have sharpened tops like fir and spruce trees. Thus an arctic effect is produced. Very young white and pitch pines are most changed, all their branches drooping in a compact pyramid toward the ground except a single plume in the centre. They have a singularly crestfallen look. The rain is fast washing off all the glaze on which I had counted, thinking of the effect of to-morrow's sun on it. The wind rises and the rain increases. Deep pools of water have formed in the fields, which have an agreeable green or blue tint, — sometimes the one, sometimes the other. Yet the quantity of water which is fallen is by no means remarkable but, the ground being frozen, it is not soaked up. There is more water on the surface than before this winter.

 February 27, Monday: While making a copy of some variations on a theme in Eb, [Robert Schumann](#) ran out of his Düsseldorf home to the Rhine bridge and threw himself headfirst into the river. He was pulled from the water by fishermen who managed to bring him home, despite his attempts to jump out of the boat. Doctors would not allow Clara to see him. Unable to live in the same house under those conditions, she moved to a friend's house.

Great Britain and France sent an ultimatum to Russia demanding that it evacuate all Turkish territories within 2 months.

Ballg'schichten op.150, a waltz by [Johann Baptist Strauss II](#), was performed for the initial time, in the Sperl Ballroom, Vienna.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked to Flint's Pond.

 February 28, Tuesday: At a meeting called in Ripon, Wisconsin to oppose the [Kansas/Nebraska Bill](#), the decision was reached to launch a new political party under John Fremont to take membership away from the Whigs. The host of this meeting, Alvan Bovay, motioned that the new party be denominated the [Republican Party](#) (the old Republican Party, also known as "Jeffersonian Republicans," having withered away after losing power in 1825 and had divided into the group that had become known as "Whigs" versus a group of "Democratic Republicans" who had during the regime of President Andrew Jackson assumed the name "Democratic Party") — and so it was. 

[THE 2D GREAT AMERICAN DISUNION](#)

In [Havana](#), Spanish police boarded an American merchant ship, the *Black Warrior*, and imprisoned her crew under a charge of "violating customs regulations" (after appeals and demands by US authorities as high as President Pierce, the ship would be returned).⁷⁸



1854

1854

MARCH 1854

 March: This month's issue of [Harper's New Monthly Magazine](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE

 March: [Cornelius Conway Felton](#) arrived back in Boston from his European tour. His letters written during this trip eventually would be published.

[Amiel Weeks Whipple](#), son of David Whipple and Abigail Brown Pepper Whipple, who had grown up in the north part of [Concord, Massachusetts](#) where his father owned the Whipple Tavern and had attended the [Concord Academy](#) before teaching at the district school at Nine Acre Corner in Concord, had graduated 5th in his class from the West Point Military Academy and had led an expedition through the western United States to survey a possible route for a proposed transcontinental railway, starting at Fort Smith, Arkansas and proceeding along the 35th parallel. During this month the party reached southern [California](#).

78. Clearly, there's a terminology problem here. In an effort to resolve this terminology issue, at the Republican National Convention in [New York](#) during August 2004 –at which the [Republican Party](#) would for four days make an effort to strip from its face its mask of hostility to the plight of the downtrodden and reveal its true countenance of benevolent conservatism and concern– these people would be sensitively referred to by a Hoosier Republican running for the US Senate as “involuntary immigrants.”

So, perhaps, this is a good point at which to insert a story about involuntary immigrants that has been passed on to us by Ram Varmha, a retired IBM engineer whose father had briefly served as Maharaja after the independence of Cochin. He relates the story as narrated to him by his paternal grandmother who lived in Thripoonithura, Cochin: “When my grandmother (born 1882) was a young girl she would go with the elder ladies of the family to the Pazhayannur Devi Temple in Fort Cochin, next to the Cochin Lantha Palace built by the Dutch (Landers = Lantha), which was an early establishment of the Cochin royal family before the administration moved to Thripoonithura. My grandmother often told us that in the basement of the Lantha Palace, in a confined area, a family of Africans had been kept locked up, as in a zoo! By my Grandmother's time all the Africans had died. But, some of the elder ladies had narrated the story to her of ‘Kappiries’ (Africans) kept in captivity there. It seems visitors would give them fruits and bananas. They were well cared for but always kept in confinement. My grandmother did not know all the details but according to her, ‘many’ years earlier, a ship having broken its mast drifted into the old Cochin harbor. When the locals climbed aboard, they found a crewless ship, but in the hold there were some chained ‘Kappiries’ still alive; others having perished. The locals did not know what to do with them. Not understanding their language and finding the Africans in chains, the locals thought that these were dangerous to set free. So they herded the poor Africans into the basement of the Cochin Fort, and held them in captivity, for many, many years! I have no idea when the initial incident happened, but I presume it took place in the late 1700s or early 1800s. This points to the possibility that it was, in fact, a slave ship carrying human cargo from East Africa to either the USA or the West Indies. An amazing and rather bizarre story. Incidentally, this is not an ‘old woman's tale’! Its quite reliable. My grandmother would identify some of the older ladies who had actually seen the surviving Kappiries.”

1854

1854



March: It was perhaps in this month that [Waldo Emerson](#) made a comment about time in his journal in a way which, had the author been [Henry Thoreau](#), would have most definitely been a *double entendre*:

Strychnine, prussic acid, tobacco, coffee, alcohol, are weak dilutions; the surest poison is time.

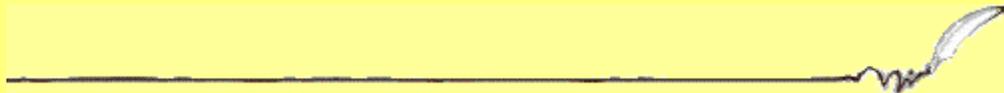


Had this been [Thoreau](#), the passage would surely have meant not only that we do get old and wrinkled and gray, and finally deteriorate and die, but also that the surest way to poison one's own life is to preoccupy it with anxiety about the loss and deterioration of it, an anxiety which we create and occasion through our improper reliance upon spatial metaphors for time. "NOW I see and hear the lark sitting with head erect." Since this is Emerson, however, we can see that not only is there no *double entendre* here, but also, the possibility of there being a *double entendre* here has not so much as entered the man's mind. Thoreau's seed has, to use a Biblical metaphor, fallen upon the rock. What we find in Emerson's journal of this date is merely a lament about physicality, and where we should expect to find a moral and spiritual dimension to his writing, he seems entirely unaware of its absence.

Also perhaps during this month, [Emerson](#) to his journal:

*H.D.T. charged [H.G.O.] Blake, if he could not do the hard tasks, to take the soft ones, & when he liked anything, if it was only a picture or a time, to stay by it, find out what he liked, & draw that sense or meaning out of it, & do **that**: harden it, somehow, & make it his own. Blake thought & thought on this, & wrote afterwards to Henry, that he had got his first glimpse of heaven.*

Henry was a good physician.



H.G.O. BLAKE

J. Wesley Jones had made some 1,500 daguerreotypes while on an 8,000-mile trek through the American westlands, and had developed a very attractive Pantoscope exhibit to show as accompaniment to his lectures. At this point he ran into financial difficulties and we lose track permanently of these daguerreotypes and of the paintings based upon them. —Will the materials ever again resurface?

1854

1854



March: [James Redpath](#) began to travel in the South to examine slavery for himself, interviewing slaves and collecting material that he would in 1859 publish as THE ROVING EDITOR: OR, TALKS WITH SLAVES IN THE SOUTHERN STATES (his book's production costs would be covered by prominent antislavery philanthropist [Gerrit Smith](#)).



[Henry Thoreau](#) subscribed to the New-York [Semi-Weekly Tribune](#).

The 1st election for a territorial constitution took place in [Kansas](#).



People were having difficulty understanding how totally technology was changing their lives. As an illustration of this, it had been the custom in the days before the [telegraph](#), to report on departing ships in the newspapers, as they sailed out of port heading for foreign conflicts:

[A]fter all, the news could travel no faster than the ships themselves.... As troops departed for the [Crimean](#) peninsula following the declaration of war on Russia by France and Britain in March 1854, the War Ministry in London issued precise details of the number and nature of the forces being deployed.... [D]aily reports of the British plans, lifted from that day's copy of the [Times](#), could be telegraphed to Russia.



1854

1854



March: [Alfred Russel Wallace](#) secured a travel grant from the Royal Geographical Society and departed from England on a natural history collecting expedition in the Indonesian archipelago then known as “the Malay Archipelago.”

In a series of 10 sketches, [Herman Melville](#)'s “The Encantadas, or Enchanted Isles,” based upon the Galápagos Islands, would be appearing in [Putnam's Monthly Magazine](#)'s issues for March, April, and May:

Take five-and-twenty heaps of cinders dumped here and here in an outside city lot; imagine some of them magnified into mountains, and the vacant lot the sea; and you will have a fit idea of the general aspect of the Encantadas, or Enchanted Isles. A group rather of extinct volcanoes than of isles; looking much as the world at large might after a penal conflagration. It is to be doubted whether any spot on earth can, in desolation, furnish a parallel to this group.... But the special curse, as one may call it, of the Encantadas ... is that to them change never comes; neither the change of seasons nor of sorrows. Cut by the Equator, they know not autumn and they know not spring; while already reduced to the lees of fire, ruin itself can work little more upon them. The showers refresh the deserts, but in these isles, rain never falls.... Another feature in these isles is their emphatic uninhabitedness. It is deemed a fit type of all-forsaken overthrow, that the jackal should den in the wastes of weedy Babylon; but the Encantadas refuse to harbour even the outcasts of the beasts. Man and wolf alike disown them. Little but reptile life is here found: -tortoises, lizards, immense spiders, snakes, and the strangest anomaly of outlandish Nature, the *aguano*. No voice, no low, no howl is heard; the chief sound of life here is a hiss.... Tangled thickets of wiry bushes, without fruit and without a name, springing up among deep fissures of calcined rock, and treacherously masking them; or a parched growth of distorted cactus trees. In many places the coast is rock-bound, or more properly, clinker-bound; tumbled masses of blackish or greenish stuff like the dross of an iron-furnace, forming dark clefts and caves here and there, into which a ceaseless sea pours a fury of foam; overhanging them with a swirl of grey, haggard mist, amidst which sail screaming flights of unearthly birds heightening the dismal din. However calm the sea without, there is no rest for these swells and those rocks, they lash and are lashed, even when the outer ocean is most at peace with itself. On the oppressive, clouded days such as are peculiar to this part of the watery Equator, the dark vitrified masses, many of which raise themselves among white whirlpools and breakers in detached and perilous places off the shore, present a most Plutonian sight. In no world but a fallen one could such lands exist.

Read [Henry Thoreau's Journal for March 1854 \(æt. 36\)](#)

1854

1854



March 1, Wednesday: On this day [Friedrich Eduard Beneke](#) disappeared (a couple of years later the remains of this post-Kantian philosopher would be found in a canal near Charlottenburg).

The *SS City of Glasgow* departed from Liverpool harbor with about 480 passengers and crewmembers and when the vessel dropped below the horizon, was fated never again to be seen.

The [California](#) Steam Navigation Company was organized.

CALIFORNIA

There exists, among the papers of [Charles Wesley Slack](#), a list of contributors and a statement of purpose for a "Million Freedom Fund" of the American Anti-Slavery Society, dated on this day.

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Harvard Library](#) Librarian [Thaddeus William Harris](#). He was able to offer this "Politeness of Mr. Gerrish," the deliverer of the books being Charles Pickering Gerrish of Harvard's Class of 1854.



Dear Sir, I return here-with — three volumes viz. Price on the Picturesque 1st vol. M'Culloh's Researches, and Josselyn's Voyages.

Yrs
Henry D. Thoreau

1854

1854

JOHN JOSSELYN



In the afternoon [Thoreau](#) walked over to visit the [Waldo Emersons](#) and then went on to [Walden Pond](#). In reading the following entry in his journal, we need to bear in mind that “phlegm,” like “poison,” was during that period a pronouncedly ambivalent term. Just as “poison” might refer to a strong antidote or corrective, rather than to a murder device, as in Waldo Emerson’s phrase “the Thoreau poison, working for good or for ill,” so also “phlegm” might refer as it does now to bronchial mucus, an irritant to be coughed up and spit out and gotten rid of, or it might merely be a deployment of the archaic term for the distilled water which is used in chemical experiments in order to avoid prejudicing the outcome with distracting side reactions. By introducing such a term, Thoreau is suggesting that the description he is creating of his authorial process can be read in two distinct manners, that it can be read not only in a sense in which he is ruthlessly excising his writing mistakes, with sufficient **affect**, but also in a sense in which he is objectively re-evaluating and sifting previous materials, with dispassionate **judgment**:



March 1: In correcting my manuscripts, which I do with sufficient phlegm, I find that I invariably turn out much that is good along with the bad, which is then impossible for me to distinguish — so much for keeping

bad company; but after the lapse of time, having purified the main body and thus created a distinct standard for comparison, I can review the rejected sentences and easily detect those which deserve to be readmitted.

In the journal he spoke of this day as the beginning of spring, although that had not been the case per the previous year 1853's almanac:

BEGINNING AND LENGTH OF THE SEASONS.

Sun enters ♄	(Winter begins)	1852, Dec. 21st,	h. m.	} Mean Time at Washington Observatory.
“ “ ♃	(Spring “	1853, March 20th,	10 8 M.	
“ “ ☊	(Summer “	“ June 21st,	11 17 M.	
“ “ ♁	(Autumn “	“ Sept. 22d,	8 16 M.	
“ “ ♄	(Winter “	“ Dec. 21st,	10 29 A. 4 4 A.	



March 1. Here is our first spring morning according to the almanac. It is remarkable that the spring of the almanac and of nature should correspond so closely. The morning of the 26th was good winter, but there came a plentiful rain in the afternoon, and yesterday and today are quite spring like. This morning the air is still, and, though clear enough, a yellowish light is widely diffused throughout the east, now just after sunrise. The sunlight looks and feels warm, and a one vapor fills the lower atmosphere. I hear the phoebe or spring note of the chickadee, and the scream of the jay is perfectly repeated by the echo from a neighboring wood. For some days past the surface of the earth, covered with water, or with ice where the snow is washed off, has shone in the sun as it does only at the approach of spring, me thinks. And are not the frosts in the morning more like the early frosts in the fall, — common white frosts? As for the birds of the past winter: I have seen but three hawks, — one early in the winter and two lately; have heard the hooting owl pretty often late in the afternoon. Crows have not been numerous, but their cawing was heard chiefly in pleasanter mornings. Blue jays have blown the trumpet of winter as usual, but they, as all birds, are most lively in spring like days. The chickadees have been the prevailing bird. The partridge common enough. one ditcher tells me that he saw two robins in Moore's Swamp a month ago. I have not seen a quail, though a few have been killed in the thaws. Four or five downy woodpeckers. The white-breasted nuthatch four or five times. Tree sparrows one or more at a time, oftener than any bird that comes to us from the north. Two pigeon woodpeckers, I think, lately. one dead shrike, and perhaps one or two live ones. Have heard of two white owls, — one about Thanksgiving time and one in midwinter. one short-eared owl in December. Several flocks of snow buntings for a week in the severest storm, and in December, last part. one grebe in Walden just before it froze completely. And two brown creepers once in middle of February. Channing says he saw a little olivaceous-green bird lately. I have not seen an F. Linaria, nor a pine grosbeak, nor an F. hyemalis this winter, though the first was the prevailing bird last winter. In correcting my manuscripts, which I do with sufficient phlegm, I find that I invariably turn out much that is good along with the bad, which it is then impossible for me to distinguish — so much for keeping bad company; but after the lapse of time, having purified the main body and thus created a distinct standard of comparison, I can review the rejected sentences and easily detect those which deserve to be readmitted.

P. M. — To Walden via R.W.E.'s. I am surprised to see how bare Minott's hillside is already. It is already spring there, and Minott is pattering outside in the sun. How wise in his grandfather to select such a site for a house, the summers he has lived have been so much longer! How pleasant the calm season and the warmth — the sun is even like a burning-glass on my back — and the sight and sound of melting snow running down the hill! I look in among the withered grass blades for some starting greenness. I listen to hear the first bluebird in the soft air. I hear the dry clucking of hens which have come abroad. The ice at Walden is softened, — the skating is gone; with a stick you can loosen it to the depth of an inch, or the first freezing, and turn it up in cakes. Yesterday you could skate here; now only close to the south shore. I notice the redness of the andromeda leaves, but not so much as once. The sand foliage is now in its prime.

 March 2, Thursday: A Corner man told [Henry Thoreau](#) that Witherell had seen a bluebird. Although Thoreau remembered that Martial Miles had recently told him he thought he had heard one, nevertheless he doubted the reports and considered it to be too early for a bluebird to arrive.

In San Francisco, a light earthquake caused doors and windows to rattle.

CALIFORNIA



March 2. A Corner man tells me that Witherell has seen a bluebird, and Martial Miles thought that he heard one. I doubt it. It may have been given to Witherell to see the first bluebird, so much has been withholden from him. What produces the peculiar softness of the air yesterday and today, as if it were the air of the south suddenly pillowed amid our wintry hills? We have suddenly a different sky,--a different atmosphere. It is as if the subtlest possible soft vapor were diffused through the atmosphere. Warm air has come to us from the south, but charged with moisture, which will yet distill in rain or congeal into snow and hail. The sand foliage is vital in its form, reminding me [of] what are called the vitals of the animal body. I am not sure that its arteries are ever hollow. They are rather meandering channels with remarkably distinct sharp edges, formed instantaneously as by magic. How rapidly and perfectly it organizes itself! The material must be sufficiently cohesive. I suspect that a certain portion of clay is necessary. Mixed sand and clay being saturated with melted ice and snow, the most liquid portion flows downward through the mass, forming for itself instantly a perfect canal, using the best materials the mass affords for its banks. It digs and builds it in a twinkling. The less fluid portions clog the artery, change its course, and form thick stems and leaves. The lobe principle,--lobe of the ear (labor, lapsus?). On the outside all the life of the earth is expressed in the animal or vegetable, but make a deep cut in it and you find it vital; you find in the very sands an anticipation of the vegetable leaf. No wonder, then, that plants grow and spring in it. The atoms have already learned the law. Let a vegetable sap convey it upwards and you have a vegetable leaf. No wonder that the earth expresses itself outwardly in leaves, which labors with the idea thus inwardly. The overhanging leaf sees here its prototype. The earth is pregnant with law. The various shades of this sand foliage are very agreeable to the eye, including all the different colors which iron assumes,--brown, gray, yellowish, reddish, and clay-color. Perhaps it produces the greater effect by arranging the sands of the same color side by side, bringing them together.

 March 3, Friday: British and French warships entered the Black Sea to protect Turkey from Russia.

After hearing of [Robert Schumann](#)'s condition, [Johannes Brahms](#) moved to Düsseldorf to aid Clara.

Harriet Smithson died at Montmartre attended only by her nurses. Since her 1st stroke in 1848, she had been suffering from progressive paralysis, irregular breathing, and skin disease and her mobility and speech had been limited. Her husband [Hector Berlioz](#) visited the apartment in Montmartre and kissed the body before it was taken away for burial, then fetched a Protestant pastor for the interment in the Cimetière St.-Vincent. Some important literary figures attended the burial but Berlioz was too distraught to attend. He spent the time in her apartment even though they had been estranged since the early 1840s.

On an earlier day [Henry Thoreau](#) had posted \$2.⁰⁰ to Horace Greeley in New York City for a subscription to the [Tribune Semi-Weekly](#). Sinclair responded for Greeley and McEliath, acknowledging receipt of Thoreau's letter and promising to send the paper, but indicating that the firm had received no money, so Thoreau sent off another \$2.⁰⁰.



March 4, Saturday: St. Paul, [Minnesota](#) was incorporated as a city.

[Robert Schumann](#) was brought to Dr. Richarz' asylum at Endenich, near Bonn. Clara was prevented from seeing him off. She would not see him again until shortly before his death.

During the dull, cloudy afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked through Hubbard's Wood past the foot of Cliff Hill, to Walden Pond.



March 4. A dull, cloudy day.

P.M. — To Walden via Hubbard's Wood and foot of Cliff Hill. The snow has melted very rapidly the past week. There is much bare ground. The checker berries are revealed, — somewhat shrivel led many of them. I look along the ditches and brooks for tortoises and frogs, but the ditches are still full of dirty ice, and they are not yet seen in the brooks. In Hubbard's maple swamp I see the evergreen leaves of the gold-thread as well as the mitchella and large pyrola. I begin to sniff the air and smell the ground. In the meadow beyond I see some still fresh and perfect pitcher-plant leaves, and everywhere the green and reddish radical leaves of the golden senecio, whose fragrance when bruised carries me back or forward to an incredible season. Who would believe that under the snow and ice lie still — or in midwinter — some green leaves which, bruised, yield the same odor that they do when their yellow blossoms spot the meadows in June? Nothing so realizes the summer to me now. This past winter the sphagnum (?) in swamps and meadows has been frost-bitten and blackened, but last winter it was fresh and handsome. I see nowadays, the ground being laid bare, great cracks in the earth revealed, a third of an inch wide, running with a crinkling line for twenty rods or more through the pastures and under the walls, — frost-cracks of the past winter. Sometimes they are revealed through ice four or five inches thick over them. I observed to-day where a crack had divided a piece of bark lying over it with the same irregular and finely meandering line, sometimes forking. Yesterday I saw a wasp slowly stretching himself and, I think, a fly, outside of Minott's house in the sun, by his wood-shed. In the dry pasture under the Cliff Hill, the radical leaves of the johnswort are now revealed everywhere in pretty radiating wreaths flat on the ground, with leaves recurved, reddish above, green beneath, and covered with dewy drops. I can no longer get on to the river ice. I do not find any willow catkins started. A red maple which I cut bleeds somewhat, — only the upper side the cut however. Is not this the earliest distinct motion of the spring? This stood in water. other trees were dry. Found a geiropodium (?), its globe now transparent, with the vermilion-colored remnants of others (?) lying in jelly about. In dry pastures I see that fungus--is it?-- split into ten or twelve rays like a star and curved backward around a white bag or inner membrane. Were they not the seeds of rose-hips which I saw abundantly in some



creature's dung? The various cladonias are now very plump and erect, not only exposed to view, the ground being bare, but flourishing on account of the abundant moisture,--some light, some dark green, and various more dusky shades. In one or two places on the snow under the Cliffs I noticed more than a half-pint of partridge-droppings within a diameter of six inches. Were these all dropped in one night by one bird, or in the course of several nights, or by many birds? I saw that they had eaten the buds of the small blueberry vacillans. In their manure was what looked like woody fibres; may have been fibres of leaves. I am surprised to see how fresh and tender is the winter green bud, almost pure white. Was it so two months ago? It looks as if it had started under the snow. What is that gray beetle of which I found many under the bark of a large dead white pine, five eighths of an inch long, within an elliptical sort of log fort seven eighths of an inch or more in diameter piled around, of fibres of the sap-wood, perhaps one eighth or one tenth of an inch high, with some red bark chankings? Sometimes a curious chrysalis instead, like a very narrow and long bandbox with flat and parallel top and bottom, but highest at one end like a coffin. Also some white grubs stretch themselves, and some earwig-shaped creatures under the bark. I find that the ice of Walden has melted or softened so much that I sink an inch or more at every step, and hardly anywhere can I cut out a small cake, the water collects so fast in [the] hole. But at last, in a harder and drier place, I succeeded. It was now fifteen and a half inches thick, having lost about an inch and a half. Though the upper side was white and rotten and saturated with water for four or five inches, the under surface was still perfectly smooth and so far unchanged, yet ready to flake off, and did so readily in my hand, in flakes a half-inch to an inch thick, leaving the irregular, undulating surface with which I am familiar. But this side was comparatively unchanged and hard, though for two and three quarters inches, measuring upwards, it was whitish, then for two and a half inches remarkably clear (free from air-bubbles) and hard. Then by successive layers it grew more white and soft till you reached the upper surface. I think that that

slight white ice beneath the clear and dark may have been produced by the recent warmth of the water, though this is doubtful. At any rate this year the ice has melted much more above than beneath. Least of all between two and three quarters and five inches from the under side.

 March 5, Sunday: [Henry Thoreau](#) chatted with [Ellery Channing](#), and in the afternoon he walked to Upper Nut Meadow.

The forces of Fort Union under [Lieutenant Colonel Philip St. George Cooke](#) defeated the [Jicarilla Apache](#) band led by Lobo Blanco.



WHITE ON RED, RED ON WHITE



March 5. [Channing](#), talking with Minott the other day about his health, said, "I suppose you'd like to die now." "No," said Minott, "I've toughed it through the winter, and I want to stay and hear the bluebirds once more." The patches of bare ground grow larger and larger, of snow less and less; even after a night you see a difference. It is a clear morning with some wind beginning to rise, and for the first time I see the water looking blue on the meadows. Has not the johnswort two lives, in winter sending out radical shoots which creep flat on the ground under the snow, in the summer shooting upward and blossoming?

P.M.—To Upper Nut Meadow. The river is breaking up. The meadows are already partly bare, for it has only been cold enough to form a thin ice on them since this last freshet, and the old ice still lies concealed on the bottom. Great fields of thick ice from the channel, or between the channel and meadows, are driven by the wind against the thick ice on the channel. Hence the meadow ice appears to break up first. The waves dash against the edge of the ice and eat into it fast. As I go along on the snow under Clamshell Hill I hear it sing around me, being melted next the ground. This is a spring sound. I cannot yet see the marchantia (?) in the ditches, for they are yet filled with ice or flooded. I see no horse-tail (unless one) nor flags, etc., yet started in Nut Meadow, nor any minnows out. This brook has run clear of ice a long time. Near Jenny's its sides are strewn with the wreck of angelic stems and asters. I go along looking at its deep, sometimes yellow, shelving bottom, sprinkled with red pebbles. In the upper meadow the sweet-gale grows rankly along its edges, slanted over the water almost horizontally, so as frequently to meet and conceal it altogether. It is here a dark and sluggish water, comparatively shallow, with a muddy bottom. This sweet-gale is now full of fruit. This and the water andromeda are wild plants, as it were driven to the water's edge by the white man, Saw a wood tortoise at the bottom. A reptile out of the mud before any bird, and probably quadruped. Not yet a frog, I think. The down of some willow catkins by this brook may have started forward this spring, though it is doubtful. Those which look most forward now will not be so a fortnight hence. It grew colder before I left. I saw some crystals beginning to shoot on the pools between the tussocks, shaped like feathers or fan coral,—the most delicate I ever saw. Thus even ice begins with crystal leaves, and birds' feathers and wings are leaves, and trees and rivers with intervening earth are vast leaves. Saw a small blackish caterpillar on the snow. Where do they come from? And crows, as I think, migrating northeasterly. They came in loose, straggling flocks, about twenty to each, commonly silent, a quarter to a half a mile apart, till four flocks had passed, and perhaps there were more. Me thinks I see them going southwest in the fall.

 March 6, Monday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Horace Greeley](#) / McElrath in [New-York](#). In the afternoon he walked to [Goose Pond](#). Greeley returned Thoreau's 2d \$2.⁰⁰ payment because a thief in the newspaper office had been apprehended.⁷⁹

Office of the Tribune[,]
New York, 6 March 185[4]
Mr. Henry D[.] Thoreau[]

79. This thief would do time.



1854

1854

*Sir:
Yours of
[3rd] to Mr[] Greeley is before us and
we will send you the Tribune
though the money has not reached
us[.]*

*Very [Resp^y,]
Greeley & [M^cElrath]
[pr] S[.] Sinclair[e]*

*New York
Mar. 6, 1854.*

*Dear Sir:
I presume your
first letter containing
the \$2 ~~has~~ was robbed
by our general mail
robber at New Haven,
who has just been sent
to the State Prison. Your
second letter has probably
failed to receive due at-
tention, owing to a press
of business. But I will
make all right. You ought
to have the Semi-Weekly,
and I shall order it*

*[Page 2]
sent you one year on
trial; if you choose to
write me a letter or
s[o] some time, very
well; if not, we will
be even without that.
Thoreau, I want you
to do something on
my [urging]. I want
you to collect and ar-
range your Miscella-
n[i]es, and send them to
me. Put in 'Katahdin,'
'Carlyle,' 'A Winter Wood,' and 'Canada,' &c. and I
will try to find a pub-
lisher who will bring
them out at his own*

[Page 3]

*risk and (I hope) to your
ultimate profit. If you
have any thing new to put
with them, very well;
but let us have ~~the~~
about a l2 mo volume
whenever you can get
it ready, and see if
there is not something
to your credit in the
bank of Fortune.
Yours,
Horace Greeley.
Henry D. Thoreau, Esq.
Concord, Mass.*

[Waldo Emerson](#) had advanced some money against subscription promises of various Concordians, including the Thoreau family, in order to enable [Michael Flannery](#) to send for his wife Ann and children from Ireland. At this point [Thoreau](#) was able to write the letter for this Irish laborer, sending for his family. He noted in particular Flannery's concern that his wife be careful and not let their children fall overboard due to the rocking of the ship.

THOREAU ON THE IRISH



March 6. A cool morning. The bare water here and there on the meadow begins to look smooth, and I look to see it rippled by a muskrat. The earth has to some extent frozen dry, for the drying of the earth goes on in the cold night as well as the warm day. The alders and hedgerows are still silent, emit no notes.

P.M. — To Goose Pond. According to [G. Emerson](#), maple sap sometimes begins to flow in the middle of February, but usually in the second week of March, especially in a clear, bright day with a westerly wind, after a frosty night. The brooks--the swift ones and those in swamps--open before the river; indeed some of the first have been open the better part of the winter. I saw trout glance in the Mill Brook this afternoon, though near its sources, in Hubbard's Close, it is still covered with dark, icy snow, and the river into which it empties has not broken up. Can they have come up from the sea? Like a film or shadow they glance before the eye, and you see where the mud is roiled by them. Saw children checker berrying in a meadow. I see the [skunk-cabbage](#) started about the spring at head of Hubbard's Close, amid the green grass, and what looks like the first probing of the skunk. The snow is now all off on meadow ground, in thick evergreen woods, and on the south sides of hills, but it is still deep in sprout-lands, on the north sides of hills, and generally in deciduous woods. In sprout lands it is melted beneath, but upheld by the bushes. What bare ground we have now is due then not so much to the increased heat of the sun and warmth of the air as to the little frost there was in the ground in so many localities. This remark applies with less force, however, to the south sides of hills. The ponds are hard enough for skating again. Heard and saw the first blackbird, flying east over the Deep Cut, with a tchuck, tchuck, and finally a split whistle.



1854

1854



March 7, Tuesday: [Charles Miller](#) of St. Louis, Missouri, who already held a sewing-machine patent, was issued Patent No. 10,609 for the 1st such device that that was capable of stitching buttonholes. There were 3 different mechanically sewn buttonhole stitches, describe as “button-hole stitch, whip stitch or herring-bone stitch.”

In the afternoon, [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Annurnsnack.

In New-York’s Broadway Tabernacle, [Waldo Emerson](#) was delivering “The Fugitive Slave Law.” (At the time of the passage of this federal Fugitive Slave Law, according to Lawrence Lader’s *THE BOLD BRAHMINS*,⁸⁰ some 600 “runaway slaves” were living and working in the city of Boston.⁸¹)

[Linck C. Johnson](#). “Reforming the Reformers: Emerson, Thoreau, and the Sunday Lectures at Amory Hall, Boston,” *ESQ* Volume 37 (4th Quarter 1991):235-89, quoting page 280:

On 7 March 1854, exactly a decade after he had spoken at Amory Hall, Emerson delivered “The Fugitive Slave Law” as part of a lecture series sponsored by the American Anti-Slavery Society at the Broadway Tabernacle in New York City. Warmly describing the society as “the Cassandra that has foretold all that has befallen, fact for fact, years ago,” Emerson concluded, “I hope we have reached the end of our unbelief, have come to a belief that there is a divine Providence in the world, which will not save us but through our own cooperation.” His language and tone recall the final paragraph of “New England Reformers,” in which he had expressed a similar faith in the providential order of the universe. But whereas at Amory Hall he had urged the reformers simply to “trust” that power, “secure that the future will be worthy of the past,” Emerson at the Broadway Tabernacle embraced the position of the reformers, who had always insisted upon the individual’s responsibility to help bring about such a future.

BOSTON’S AMORY HALL

It is to be noted that during this period, the lecturers at this anti-slavery convention being held in the Broadway Tabernacle were declaring themselves in opposition to the offensive new Irish-American racist newspaper in town, [The Citizen](#) — each and every one of them **with the solitary exception of Emerson**.⁸²



JOHN MITCHEL

March 7: Heard the first bluebird, [[Eastern Bluebird](#), [Sialia sialis](#)] —something like *pe-a-wor*,— and then other slight warblings, as if farther off. Was surprised to see the bird within seven or eight rods on the top of an oak on the orchard’s edge under the hill. But he appeared silent, while I heard others faintly warbling and twittering far in the orchard. When he flew I heard no more, and then I suspected that he had been ventriloquizing; as if he hardly dared open his mouth yet, while there was so much winter left. It is an overcast and moist but rather warm afternoon. He revisits the apple trees, and appears to find some worms. Probably not till now was his food to be found abundantly.

P.M. — To Annurnsnack. I did not mention the drifts yesterday. Most of the snow left on bare, dry level ground consists of the remains of drifts, particularly along fences, — most on the south side. Also much that looks like snow is softened ice in the lower parts of fields. Looking from Annurnsnack, there is no perceptible difference as to snow between the north and south prospects, though the north one is not extensive; but the snowiest view is westward. Has this anything to do with there being most snow inland? All the sides of steep hills are likely to be bare, washed bare by rain (?). I do not know why there should be so much snow in sprout-lands and

80. NY: Dutton, 1961, page 140.

81. Was this the Broadway Tabernacle erected in 1834 for the evangelist Finney, who became the president of [Oberlin College](#)??

82. For his racist attitudes, Mitchel was receiving accolades and invitations to lecture from the South. The state legislature of Louisiana even awarded him a special commendation.

deciduous woods, unless it is because the sun has had less chance to thaw the frosts which yet have been thick there. It is remarkable how true each plant is to its season. Why should not the fringed gent Ian put forth early in the spring, instead of holding in till the latter part of September? I do not perceive enough difference in the temperature. How short a time it is with us! I see many little white or dirty white puffballs, yellowish inside, commonly less than an inch in diameter, on bare cultivated fields, and, in pastures, some great chocolate-colored ones (within). Both yield their dust. Heard the first bluebird,--something like pe-a-wor,--and then other slight warblings, as if farther off. Was surprised to see the bird within seven or eight rods on the top of an oak on the orchard's edge under the hill. But he appeared silent, while I heard others faintly warbling and twittering far in the orchard. When he flew I heard no more, and then I suspected that he had been ventriloquizing; as if he hardly dared upon his mouth yet, while there was so much winter left. It is an overcast and moist but rather warm afternoon. He revisits the apple trees, and appears to find some worms. Probably not till now was his food to be found abundantly. Saw some fuzzy gnats in the air. Saw where a partridge had been eating many prinos berries, now black and shrivel led. I suspect that they devour a great bulk, which has but little nutriment. The radical leaves of the pin weeds are like the johnswort with leaves reflexed,--most of them closer and finer. They appear unaffected by frost. The radical leaves of the crow foot everywhere are the commonest green, as soon as the snow goes off. You can hardly tell when it begins to spring. Saw mountain cranberry near Brooks's pigeon-place, very flat on the pasture, raying out from a centre six feet each way, more than three quarters of an inch thick in the middle. Did not know it was so woody. This one of the winter-reds, perfectly fresh and glossy. The river channel is nearly open everywhere. Saw, on the alders by the riverside front of Hildreth's, a song sparrow, quirking its tail. It flew across the river to the willows, and soon I heard its well-known dry tchip, tchip, Saw, me thinks, what I called ephemerae last spring,--one on the water, three quarters of an inch long, narrow, gray-winged, several segments [?] curved on the back. on winter-rye field, top of Annurnsnack, what looked like a very large hard core of a buttonwood ball--same color. Broke it with a stone and found it full of dark earth. Was it not my pigeon's-egg fungus turned dark and hardened?



March 8, Wednesday morning: Captain Philip Thompson led the 55 men of Company F of the [1st US Regiment of Dragoons](#) out of Cantonment Burgwin for a planned rendezvous with [Colonel Thomas Turner Fauntleroy](#)'s column. Captain Thompson rode only a few miles before halting at Ceran St. Vrain's mill and distillery in Talpa, south of Taos, New Mexico, to procure cornmeal for the horses and Taos lightning (whiskey) for the men. Several Company F soldiers would be drunk when they entered Taos and, procuring alcohol in local saloons, would become even drunker. One trooper galloped his horse through a gathering of Mexicans and then attempted to ride up the steps of Peter Joseph's store. His horse stumbled, and he fell off as was mocked by the locals. [New Mexico Territory Supreme Court Associate Justice Perry E. Brocchus](#) rushed to the plaza, sensing "a suppressed spirit of mutiny in the majority of the soldiers." Entering Joseph's store, he found [Major George Alexander Hamilton Blake](#) seated at a desk, writing reports in apparent oblivion of the commotion outside. The Major then ordered Captain Thompson to get his detachment out of town as quickly as possible. The Captain instructed 1st Sergeant Thomas Fitzsimmons, a 26-year-old veteran from Westmeath, Ireland, to prepare the troop to depart. When Bugler [Aaron Dwight Stevens](#) sounded "To Horse," most of the troopers obeyed the call, forming an extended line across the plaza. Captain Thompson needed to round up drunken soldiers who had not responded to the bugle. Private Jeremiah Sullivan, a 3-year veteran who had been seriously wounded at Cieneguilla, was too intoxicated to rise from the dirt. The captain ordered his 1st Sergeant to tie that "damned rascal" into his saddle. However, when Fitzsimmons hefted Sullivan onto his horse, the intoxicated soldier rolled off and fell back to the ground. When the sergeant tried again, the soldier resisted: "You son of a bitch, you are always down upon me." Fitzsimmons struck Sullivan in the face. Major Blake, standing nearby, was not pleased. He protested the sergeant's rough treatment of the drunken trooper. Fitzsimmons claimed to have been defending himself. Blake answered that Sullivan had not struck the sergeant, and ordered Captain Thompson to arrest 1st Sergeant Fitzsimmons. When the captain did not do so, the Major walked over to the 1st Sergeant and went "Very well, you are placed under arrest." He then shouted to his Captain, "I order you to take your company out of town immediately, or if you do not, I will march the company out myself!" He walked to the front of the assembled troop and told the enlisted men that he was taking immediate command. It was these extreme and unexpected actions--arresting their sergeant and stripping their captain of his command--that would set off what was to follow. "I am well aware that there was



such a feeling in the Company against Major Blake,” Post Surgeon Edmund Barry would later aver, “It was like gunpowder — it required but a spark to explode it.” An intoxicated private, John Cooper, rode up and proclaimed that they all were tired of being driven like slaves and needed to be allowed some slack. Major Blake, who had long detested Private Cooper, yanked him off his horse, grabbed him by the collar, and struck him several times. The private returned this, grabbing his major by the collar, yanked the officer’s hair, bit him, and began to kick and punch him (we may note here that these well-armed men were making no resort to their weapons, when someone handed the major a pistol, he tossed the pistol aside, and when the major pulled Captain Thompson’s saber out of its scabbard he merely used it to strike the private a number of times with the flat of its blade). When 1st Lieutenant Robert Johnston reached for his saber, Corporal Jim Vanderven caught his shoulder prevented this, and the lieutenant moved back to the left flank of the troop. Among the onlookers was [Christopher “Kit” Carson](#), a renown fighter, but during this fracas the fabled frontiersman merely peeked cautiously around a corner. The major’s manservant Ramón Baca would attempt to intervene, rushing in and kicking the private in the neck. Private Cooper yelled “Kill the son of a bitch!” and 4 soldiers sprang into action — of them struck the manservant twice with the knuckle guard of his saber, while the others pounded him with the butts of their carbines. 1st Sergeant Fitzsimmons finally pulled out his pistol and he and Corporal Vanderven rushed to break up the fight. Someone yelled “Look out, sergeant, or you’ll get hit or hurt!” as trooper Joseph Fox came up and used his saber to knock the pistol out of 1st Sergeant Fitzsimmons’s hand. The sergeant fended off the saber with his forearm, receiving minor defensive cuts. Private Robert Johnson rode toward Major Blake with pistol drawn, but when 1st Sergeant Fitzsimmons shouted at the trooper to get back in ranks, the private obeyed. Private John Steele grabbed Major Blake’s neckerchief, pulling him to the ground, and began to beat him. [Justice Perry E. Brocchus](#) would later recall seeing the major rolling on the ground, fighting off a “stout athletic soldier,” as Captain Thompson merely looked on in a “state of total inertness, manifestly paralyzed in his energies.” Justice Brocchus shoved aside Private Steele and dragged the major, dazed and bruised, his uniform dusty and bloody, to the door of Peter Joseph’s store. When the major slowly rose to his feet he pointed out the 3 troopers who had struck him. Taos County Deputy Sheriff Ezra Depew, who was himself a former dragoon, aided by the sergeant and corporal, disarmed the 3 troopers and took them to the town jail. [Justice Brocchus](#) would remember Major Blake as “in very high blood and laboring under a sense of outrage and wrong.” He berated Captain Thompson and 1st Lieutenant Johnston for failing to come to his aid, accusing them of wanting him to get killed. He turned to his men and shouted out: “I can whip or thrash any man in this company from right to left — either with gun, pistol or saber — and now if there is any one of you thinks yourself fit — step out here and I will show you whether you can call old Blake a coward or such.” During all this commotion, Company F’s bugler, Private [Aaron Dwight Stevens](#), had been standing calmly, holding Captain Thompson’s and 1st Lieutenant Johnston’s horses. When he heard Major Blake’s challenge, however, he threw down the reins, drew his Colt Dragoon revolver, and proclaimed: “You can’t back out the company that way! I’m one of the worst men in it, and I’ll accept your challenge either with gun, pistol or saber.” It seems likely that Major Blake didn’t hear this, as [Justice Brocchus](#) did not hear it. When he saw the bugler standing there he demanded that the man apologize on behalf of all the troop. [Stevens](#) was willing to do so, but the major was not ready to listen as Company F’s bugler tried to explain why he and the men had become so upset. When Major Blake repeated he was not afraid of [Stevens](#) or anyone else in the company, the bugler came back with “God damn you! I’m as good as you are and will blow your goddamned heart out!” He raised and cocked his Model 1851 Sharps carbine, pointing it at Blake’s chest. It was only then that [Kit Carson](#) came forward, and he and Justice Brocchus seized [Stevens](#)’s carbine and took him into custody. Then 1st Lieutenant Johnston ordered the remainder of the 55 men of Company F to mount their horses, and led them out of town.

Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) was able to put ashore in [Japan](#) for a 2d time, and begin to negotiate a trade agreement. [Henry Thoreau](#) made a journal entry that resulted in a portion of the following paragraph from

[US MILITARY INTERVENTIONS](#)

“Life without Principle”:

1854

1854

At a lyceum, not long since, I felt that the lecturer had chosen a theme too foreign to himself, and so failed to interest me as much as he might have done. He described things not in or near to his heart, but toward his extremities and superficialities. There was, in this sense, no truly central or centralizing thought in the lecture. I would have had him deal with his privatest experience, as the poet does. The greatest compliment that was ever paid me was when one asked me what I *thought*, and attended to my answer. I am surprised, as well as delighted, when this happens, it is such a rare use he would make of me, as if he were acquainted with the tool. Commonly, if men want anything of me, it is only to know how many acres I make of their land—since I am a surveyor,—or, at most, what trivial news I have burdened myself with. They never will go to law for my meat; they prefer the shell. A man once came a considerable distance to ask me to lecture on Slavery; but on conversing with him, I found that he and his clique expected seven-eighths of the lecture to be theirs, and only one-eighth mine; so I declined. I take it for granted, when I am invited to lecture anywhere, —for I have had a little experience in that business, —that there is a desire to hear what I *think* on some subject, though I may be the greatest fool in the country, —and not that I should say pleasant things merely, or such as the audience will assent to; and I resolve, accordingly, that I will give them a strong dose of myself. They have sent for me, and engaged to pay for me, and I am determined that they shall have me, though I bore them beyond all precedent.



March 8: Steady rain on the roof in the night, suggesting April-like warmth. This will help melt the snow and ice and take the frost out of the ground. What pretty wreaths the mountain cranberry makes, curving upward at the extremity! The leaves are now a dark, glossy red, and wreath and all are of such a shape as might fitly be copied in wood or stone or architectural foliage. I wrote a letter for an Irishman night before last, sending for his wife in Ireland to come to this country. one sentence which he dictated was, “Don’t mind the rocking of the vessel, but take care of the children that they be not lost overboard.” Lightning this evening, after a day of successive rains.

MICHAEL FLANNERY

THOREAU ON THE IRISH



March 9, Thursday: Auction sales! By Selover & Sinton, real estate auctioneers and agents. Public auction of real estate in the City of San Francisco by the Board of [California](#) Land Commissioners. Covered the area bounded by Jackson St., the Bay, and Washington St.,

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked to the Great Meadows, and conducted an experiment to verify an account he had seen in "[Captain](#)" [Mayne Reid](#)'s THE YOUNG VOYAGEURS; OR, THE BOY HUNTERS IN THE NORTH, an American edition of which had just been published in Boston.

Spring 1845	Ice of Walden Pond first completely open on April 1st
Spring 1846	Ice of Walden Pond first completely open on March 25th
Spring 1847	Ice of Walden Pond first completely open on April 8th
Spring 1851	Ice of Concord River opened much before February 25th; Ice of Walden Pond first completely open on March 28th
Spring 1852	Ice of Concord River opened at least by March 14th; Ice of Walden Pond first completely open on April 18th
Spring 1853	Ice of Concord River opened at least by about March 8th; Ice of Walden Pond first completely open on March 23d
Spring 1854	Ice of Concord River opened about March 9th, average March 5th; Ice of Walden Pond first completely open about April 7th
Spring 1856	Ice of Concord River opened on March 5th; Ice cleared on Walden Pond on April 18th



March 9. A.M. — Clearing up.

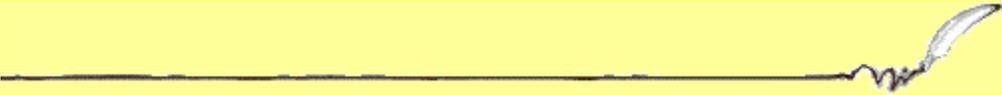
Water is fast taking place of ice on the river and meadows, and morning and evening we begin to have some smooth water prospects. Saw this morning a muskrat sitting "in a round form on the ice" or, rather, motionless like the top of a stake or a mass of muck on the edge of the ice. He then dove for a clam, whose shells he left on the ice beside him.

Boiled a handful of rock-tripe (*Umbilicaria Muhlenbergii*) — which [Tuckerman](#) says "was the favorite Rock-Tripe in Franklin's Journey" — for more than an hour. It produced a *black* pulp, looking *somewhat* like boiled tea leaves, and was insipid like rice or starch. The dark water in which it was boiled had a bitter taste and was slightly gelatinous. The pulp was not positively disagreeable to the palate. The account in "[The Young Voyageurs](#)" is correct.

P.M. — To Great Meadows.

"Downriver," "To Great Meadow," and "To Hill" signified a northward trip down the Concord River below the triple point of the confluence. After passing through a straight reach aligned by the local bedrock strike, arched by two bridges, and flanked by gravel bars of historic sediment that were repeatedly dredged, he entered the north side of Great Meadow. Bounded by the site of the Old North Bridge to the southwest and Ball's Hill to the northeast, it was two miles long and half a mile across. When in flood, the meadow was his favorite inland sea to sail upon because the wind was least impeded and the waves were highest.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 11



Peter H. says that he saw gulls (?) and sheldrakes about a month ago, when the meadow was flooded. I detect the trout minnows not an inch long by their quick motions or quirks, soon concealing themselves. The river channel is open, but there is a very *thin* ice of recent formation over the greater part of the meadows. It is a still, moist, luring day, and the water is smooth. Saw several flocks of large grayish and whitish or speckled ducks, — I suppose the same that P. calls sheldrakes. They, like ducks commonly, incline to fly in a line about an equal distance apart. I hear the common sort of quacking from them. It is pleasant to see them at a distance alight on the water with a slanting flight, launch themselves, and sail along so stately. The pieces of ice, large and small, drifting along, help to conceal them, supply so many objects on the water. There is this last night's ice on the surface, but the old ice still at the bottom of the meadows. In the spaces of still open water I see the reflection of the hills and woods, which for so long I have not seen, and it gives expression to the face of nature. The face of nature is lit up by these reflections in still water in the spring. Sometimes you see only the top of a distant hill reflected far within the meadow, where a dull-gray field of ice intervenes between the water and the shore.

DO I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION? GOOD.



March 10, Friday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked the C. Miles road by way of [Clamshell Hill](#). He saw a skunk on Corner Road and followed it for 60 rods or more.

Dr. Dickson of the Marine Hospital died in a [duel](#) in Sacramento, California.

CALIFORNIA



March 10, Misty rain, rain, — the third day of more or less rain.



P.M. — C. Miles road via Clamshell Hill. Misty and mizzling. The radical leaves of the shepherd's-purse are

common and fresh, also that early thistle by Nut Meadow Brook, with much down webbed, holding the mist in drops. Each alder cat kin has a clear drop at the end, though the air is filled with mist merely, which from time to time is blown in my face and I put up my umbrella. The bæomyces is very perfect and handsome to-day. It occurs to me that heavy rains and sudden meltings of the snow, such as we had a fortnight ago (February 26th), before the ground is thawed, so that all the water, instead of being soaked up by the ground, flows rapidly into the streams and ponds, is necessary to swell and break them up. If we waited for the direct influence of the sun on the ice and the influence of such water as would reach the river under other circumstances, the spring would be very much delayed. In the violent freshet there is a mechanic force added to the chemic, The willow catkins on the Miles [road] I should say had decidedly started since I was here last, and are all peeping from under their scales conspicuously, At present I should say that the vegetable kingdom showed the influence of the spring as much in the air as in the water,--that is, in the flowing of the sap, the [skunk cabbage](#) buds, and the swelling of the willow catkins. I have detected very little, if anything, starting in brooks or ditches, for the first have far overflowed their banks and [are] full of rapid and sandy water, and the latter are still frequently full of ice. But probably that depends on the year, whether open or not. Saw a skunk in the Corner road, which I followed sixty rods or more. out now about 4 P. M.,-- partly because it is a dark, foul day. It is a slender black (and white) animal, with its back remarkably arched, standing high behind and carrying its head low; runs, even when undisturbed, with a singular teeter or undulation, like the walking of a Chinese lady. Very slow; I hardly have to run to keep up with it. It has a long tail, which it regularly erects when I come too near and prepares to



discharge its liquid. It is white at the end of the tail, and the hind head and a line on the front of the face,--the rest black, except the flesh-colored nose (and I think feet). The back is more arched and the fore and hind feet nearer together than in my sketch. It tried repeatedly to get into the wall, and did not show much cunning. Finally it steered, apparently, for an old skunk or woodchuck hole under a wall four rods off, and got into it,--or under the wall, at least--for it was stopped up,--and there I view at leisure close to. It has a remarkably long, narrow, pointed head and snout, which enable it to make those deep narrow holes in the earth by which it probes for insects. Its eyes have an innocent, childlike, bluish-black expression. It made a singular loud patting sound repeatedly, on the frozen ground under the wall, undoubtedly with its fore feet (I saw only the upper part of the animal), which reminded me of what I have heard about your stopping and stamping in order to stop the skunk. Probably it has to do with its getting its food,--patting the earth to get the insects or worms. Though why it did so then I know not. Its track was small, round, showing the nails, a little less than an inch in diameter, alternate five or six inches by two or two and a half, sometimes two feet together. There is something pathetic in such a sight,--next to seeing one of the human aborigines of the country. I respect the skunk as a human being in a very humble sphere. I have no doubt they have begun to probe already where the ground permits,--or as far as it does. But what have they eat all winter? The weather is almost April-like. We always have much of this rainy, drizzling, misty weather in early spring, after which we expect to hear geese.

In what would become a test of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, and only a few days before the meeting in the little white schoolhouse in Ripon, Wisconsin that would launch the new “[Republican Party](#),”  Missouri slavemaster Benjamin S. Garland procured a process in the United States District Court and proceeded to a shanty at a sawmill near Racine, Wisconsin in company with two deputy United States marshals. His runaway slave [Joshua Glover](#) was in his shanty playing cards with the other lumbermen. One of the deputies knocked him down with a club and put a pistol to his head, and they handcuffed him.⁸³ [Sherman M. Booth](#)’s newspaper [The Free Democrat](#) or the [American Freeman](#) (different sources tell different stories) would report that Glover was “dumped mangled and bleeding into a democrat wagon, and with a marshal’s foot on his neck taken to Milwaukee and thrust into the county jail.” Pursuit having been anticipated, the officers made their way back into Milwaukee by a circuitous route. Booth, who took a leading part in the courthouse meeting, according to popular account of the affair charged up and down the streets on a white horse shouting “Freemen, to the rescue!” (In federal court, Booth would deny this, claiming to have been shouting only nonincendiary stuff such as “All freemen who are opposed to being made slaves or slave-catchers turn out to a meeting in the courthouse square at 2 o’clock!”) A hundred white activists came over by boat from Racine and marched to the city center in formation. Great crowds congregated and an indignation meeting was held. The meeting adopted resolutions having to do with Glover’s right to a writ of habeas corpus and a trial by jury. A local judge issued such a writ, but the federal officers inside the jail refused to acknowledge its validity. This led to a battering in of the jail door with pickaxes, and the forwarding of Glover to safety in Canada.



We send greetings to the Free States of the Union, that, in Wisconsin, the Fugitive Slave Law is repealed! The first attempt to enforce the law, in the state, ... has failed! NO MORE COMPROMISE WITH SLAVERY!... PERISH ALL ENACTMENTS ESTABLISHING SLAVERY ON FREE SOIL!

83. Although Garland would be charged with assault and battery, he would successfully defend himself by pointing out that, as a slave owner, he was entitled to use whatever level of violence he considered necessary to secure himself in his property.

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 March 11, Saturday: Mayor G.K. Garrison hosted a dinner for the Common Council and Executive Officers of San Francisco at Robb’s “Court Block,” T.P. Robb, H.H. Doty, W.B. Gould Proprietors (and we may trust that a good time was had by all).

CALIFORNIA

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked to the Cliffs.



March 11: Fair weather after three rainy days. Air full of birds,— bluebirds, song sparrows, chickadee (phoebe notes), and blackbirds. Song sparrows toward the water, with at least two kinds of variations of their strain hard to imitate. Ozit, ozit, ozit, psa te-te-te-te ter ewe ter is one; the other began chip chip eke we, etc., etc. Bluebirds’ [[Eastern Bluebird](#)  [Sialia sialis](#)] warbling curls in elms. Shall the earth be regarded as a graveyard, a necropolis, merely, and not also as a granary filled with the seeds of life? Is not its fertility increased by this decay? A fertile compost, not exhausted sand. on Tuesday, the 7th, I heard the first song sparrow chirp, and saw it flit silently from alder to alder. This pleasant morning after three days’ rain and mist, they generally forth burst into sprayey song from the low trees along the river. The developing of their song is gradual but sure, like the expanding of a flower. This is the first song I have heard.

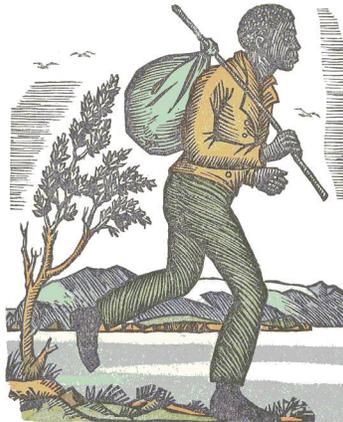
84. Although Garland would be charged with assault and battery, he would successfully defend himself by pointing out that, as a slave owner, he was entitled to use whatever level of violence he considered necessary to secure himself in his property.

1854

1854

P.M. — To Cliffs. River higher than any time in the winter, I think, yet, there being some ice on the meadows and the tops of reflected trees being seen along its edges, Aunt thought the river had gone down and that this was the ground. Muskrats are driven out of their holes. Heard one's loud plash behind Hubbard's. It comes up, brown striped with wet. I could detect its progress beneath in shallow water by the bubbles which came up. I believe I saw to-day, and have for some time seen, lizards in water, wiggling away more swiftly than tadpoles or frogs. From the hill the river and meadow is about equally water and ice,— rich blue water and islands or continents of white ice--no longer ice in place--blown from this side or that. The distant mountains are all white with snow while our landscape is nearly bare. Another year I must observe the alder and willow sap as early as the middle of February at least. Fair Haven covered with ice. Saw a hawk. Goodwin saw a ground squirrel a fortnight ago and heard robin this morning. He has caught skunks in traps set for minks with a piece of muskrat. Says the fox and skunk eat huckleberries, etc. Nowadays, where snow-banks have partly melted against the banks by the roadside in low ground, I see in the grass numerous galleries where the mice or moles have worked in the winter.

Incited by an editorial in [Sherman M. Booth's Free Democrat](#), a mob battered down the door of the jail in Milwaukee, Wisconsin to free [Joshua Glover](#), a runaway slave from Missouri. Although Booth would later allege that his newspaper had been advocating an entirely peaceable protest, federal authorities would seek to hold him responsible.



The feds used the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 as their basis for arresting the newspaper editor, so the state government moved immediately to declare that legislation void in Wisconsin and to release the political prisoner on a writ of habeas corpus. Here is the story as it has been telescoped by William Raney in *WISCONSIN: A STORY OF PROGRESS* (Perin Press, 1963, pages 148-49):

For the next six years Sherman M. Booth was the center of legal proceedings initiated by the federal authorities under the Fugitive Slave Act. He was arrested, and while in the custody of the United States marshal was released on a writ of habeas corpus issued by a judge of the Wisconsin Supreme Court. The whole court reviewed the case and on July 19, 1854 upheld the habeas corpus. Arrested again and tried by a federal court, Booth was sentenced to a month's imprisonment and a fine of \$1,000 in January, 1855. He was again set at liberty by a writ of habeas corpus issuing from the state supreme court. At this time the full court declared the Fugitive Slave Act unconstitutional and void. When the Supreme Court of the United States asked for a copy of the record in order to review the case, the Supreme Court of Wisconsin took no notice of the request. In March, 1857, the United States assumed jurisdiction, procured a copy of the record, and on March 7, 1859, gave judgment reversing that of the Wisconsin Supreme Court. In



1854

1854

March, 1860, Booth was again arrested by federal authorities and released by friends and rearrested, and the case was finally ended when President Buchanan pardoned him in March, 1861.

In writing the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States in the case (*Ableman v Booth*, 62 US 506), a decision cited as a precedent as late as the 1950s, Chief Justice Roger Taney would argue that the Wisconsin courts had no jurisdiction over what was a constitutional issue, and therefore that Booth's conviction would have to stand. His argument would cite the court's essential role in arbitrating conflicts between states, a specter that would become actuality only two years later:

[L]ocal interests, local passions or prejudices, incited and fostered by individuals for sinister purposes, would lead to acts of aggression and injustice by one State upon the rights of another, which would ultimately terminate in violence and force unless there was a common arbiter between them, armed with power enough to protect and guard the rights of all by appropriate laws to be carried into execution peacefully by its judicial tribunals.

Booth's sympathizers would take matters into their own hands. A group led by Professor Edward Daniels, who was not only a faculty member at Brockway College in Ripon but also a regent of Wisconsin's normal schools, would "rescue" the editor from his cell at the Milwaukee federal Custom House on [August 1st, 1860](#).



[John Mitchel](#) wrote in his [The Citizen](#) that:

The concluding lecture of the Anti-Slavery course was delivered on Tuesday evening, by no less a person than [Ralph Waldo Emerson](#). There was considerable curiosity to hear how this practiced elaborator of exquisite sentences would set about composing such sentences as should fit the taste of the Tabernacle. We had certainly formed no high estimate of Mr. Emerson as a thinker, that is to say a coherent reasoner; yet we did expect that he would give us either fancy or logic, either poetry or vigor, either rhyme or reason. We declare that we were disappointed in this very reasonable alternative anticipation.... Two things, indeed, the Lecturer forbore to do. He did not anathematize the American Union: he did not abuse the unfortunate wight, John Mitchel. So much the worse: his lecture was less piquant.

1854

1854

 March 12, Sunday: Out of sympathy for her sex, Miss Delia Webster was pardoned out of the [Kentucky](#) Penitentiary, where she had been held for having aided the [Reverend Calvin Fairbanks](#) in the escape of slaves.



[Kentucky's sexism](#) had worked in this lady's favor, muting the virulence of [Kentucky's racism](#)!

France and Great Britain concluded an alliance with the Ottoman Empire against Russia.

In the morning [Henry Thoreau](#) walked up the railroad tracks to the Walden Woods, and in the afternoon he went to Ball's Hill along the river. Evidently he did one or the other or both trips with [Waldo Emerson](#), for he commented bitterly in his journal about the bad effect that a companion was having on him: "My companion tempts me to certain licenses of speech, i.e. to reckless and sweeping expressions which I am wont to regret that I have used. that is, I find that I have used more harsh, extravagant, and cynical expressions concerning mankind and individuals than I intended. I find it difficult to make to him a sufficiently moderate statement. I think it is because I have not his sympathy in my sober and constant view. He asks for a paradox, and eccentric statement, and too often I give it to him."



March 12, A.M. — Up railroad to woods. We have white frosts these mornings. This is the blackbird morning. Their sprayey notes and *conqueree* ring with the song-sparrows' jingle all along the river. Thus gradually they acquire confidence to sing. It is a beautiful spring morning. I hear *my* first robin peep distinctly at a distance on some higher trees, — oaks or ?, — on a high key. No singing yet. I hear from an apple-tree a faint cricket-like chirp, and a sparrow darts away, flying far, *dashing from side to side*. I think it must be the white-in-tail, or grass finch [[Vesper Sparrow](#)  [Pooecetes gramineus](#)]. Saw either a large mouse or a ground squirrel on the snow near the edge of the wood, — probably the former. I hear a jay loudly screaming phe-phay phe-phay,—a loud, shrill chickadee's phebe. Now I see and hear the lark [[Eastern Meadowlark](#)  [Sturnella magna](#)] sitting with head erect, neck outstretched, in the middle of a pasture, and I hear another far off singing. Sing when they first come. All these birds do their warbling especially in the still, sunny hour after sunrise, as rivers twinkle at their sources. Now is the time to be abroad and hear them, as you detect the slightest ripple in smooth water. As with tinkling sounds the sources of streams burst their icy fetters, so the rills of music begin to flow and swell the general quire of spring. Memorable is the warm light of the spring sun on russet fields in the morning. A new feature is being added to the landscape, and that is expanses and reaches of blue water. C. says he saw a gull to-day.

[Transcript]



1854

1854

P.M. —To Ball's Hill along river. My companion tempts me to certain licenses of speech, i.e. to reckless and sweeping expressions which I am wont to regret that I have used. That is, I find that I have used more harsh, extravagant, and cynical expressions concerning mankind and individuals than I intended. I find it difficult to make to him a sufficiently moderate statement. I think it is because I have not his sympathy in my sober and constant view. He asks for a paradox, an eccentric statement, and too often I give it to him. Saw some small ducks, black and white,—perhaps teal or widgeons. This great expanse of deep-blue water, deeper than the sky, why does it not blue my soul as of yore? It is hard to soften me now. I see no gulls myself. The time was when this great blue scene would have tinged my spirit more. Now is the season to look for Indian relics, the sandy fields being just bared. I stand on the high lichen covered and colored (greenish) hill beyond Abner But trick's; I go further east and look across the meadows to Bedford, and see that peculiar scenery of March, in which I have taken so many rambles, the earth just bare and beginning to be dry, the snow lying on the north sides of hills, the gray deciduous trees and the green pines souging in the March wind—they look now as if deserted by a companion, the snow. When you walk over bare lichen-clad hills, just beginning to be dry, and look afar over the blue water on the meadows, you are beginning to break up your winter quarters and plan adventures for the new year. The scenery is like, yet unlike, November; you have the same barren russet, but now, instead of a dry, hard cold wind, a peculiarly soft, moist air, or else a raw wind. Now is the reign of water. I see many crows on the meadow by the water's edge these days. It is astonishing how soon the ice has gone out of the river, but it still lies on the bottom of the meadow. Is it peculiar to the song sparrow to dodge behind and hide in walls and the like? Toward night the water becomes smooth and beautiful. Men are eager to launch their boats and paddle over the meadows. The spring birds have come a little earlier this year than last, me thinks, and I suspect the spring may be earlier in the air, yet there is more ice and snow and frozen ground still, because the winter has been so much more severe. I am surprised to find that water froze pretty thick in my chamber the night of the 14th of March, '53, after a fire in the evening, and that they were at work on the ice at Loring's on the 16th. This is very different weather. The ice is all out of the river proper, and all spoiled even on Walden.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

1854

1854



March 13, Monday: Louis Moreau Gottschalk gave his initial performance in Havana.

Documentation of the [international slave trade](#), per [W.E. Burghardt Du Bois](#): "Message from the President ... communicating ... the correspondence between Mr. Schenck, United States Minister to Brazil, and the Secretary of State, in relation to the African slave trade." –SENATE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 33 Cong. 1 sess. VIII. No. 47.



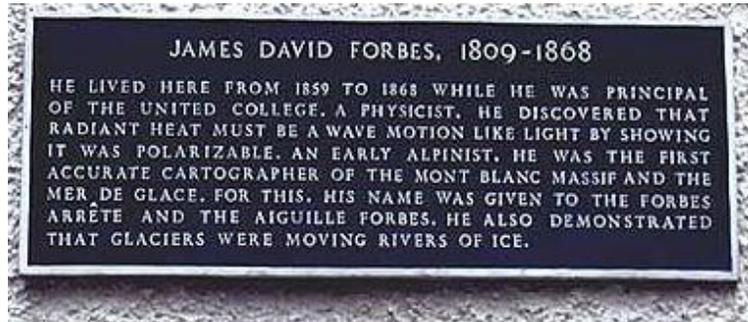
*Thoreau's Flute, Telescope and copy of
Wilson's Ornithology.*

*"I bought me a spy-glass some weeks since. I buy but few things,
and those not till long after I begin to want them, so that when I do get them I
am prepared to make a perfect use of them and extract their whole sweetness."*

Page 3. Early Spring.

Besides purchasing a [telescope](#) (above) for eight dollars (more than a week's total wages, order of magnitude approximately \$800 in today's greenbacks), [Henry Thoreau](#) stopped by the [Boston Society of Natural History](#) and checked out:

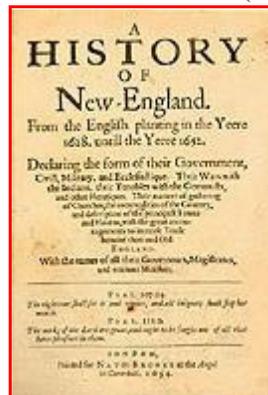
- [James David Forbes](#) (1809-1868)'s TRAVELS THROUGH THE ALPS OF SAVOY AND OTHER PARTS OF THE PENNINE CHAIN, WITH OBSERVATIONS ON THE PHENOMENA OF GLACIERS (1843)



THE ALPS OF SAVOY, ETC.

and stopped by the [Harvard Library](#) and checked out:

- [Louis Agassiz](#)'s *ÉTUDES SUR LES GLACIERS* (Neuchâtel, aux frais de l'auteur, August 20, 1840, with atlas)
- [Edward Johnson](#)'s A HISTORY OF NEW-ENGLAND. FROM THE ENGLISH PLANTING IN THE YEERE 1628. UNTILL THE YEERE 1652: DECLARING THE FORM OF THEIR GOVERNMENT, CIVILL, MILITARY, AND ECCLESIASTIQUE: THEIR WARS WITH THE INDIANS, THEIR TROUBLES WITH THE GORTONISTS, AND OTHER HERETIQUES: THEIR MANNER OF GATHERING OF CHURCHES, THE COMMODITIES OF THE COUNTRY, AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PRINCIPALL TOWNS AND HAVENS... (London: Printed for Nath. Brooke ..., 1654)⁸⁵



- The Reverend Thomas Shepard's THE CLEAR SUNSHINE OF THE GOSPEL BREAKING OUT ON THE INDIANS OF NEW ENGLAND (1648)⁸⁶



Mar. 13th To Boston— [C.](#) says he saw skater insects today. [Harris](#) tells me that those gray insects within the little log forts under the bark of the dead Wht pine — which I found about a week ago — are Rhagium

85. The popular title of this work is WONDER-WORKING PROVIDENCE OF SION'S SAVIOR IN NEW ENGLAND. Thoreau would place his notes in his Indian Notebook #8.

86. The Reverend Shepard was a founder of Harvard College.

lineatum. Bought a telescope today for 8 dollars — Best military spyglass with 6 slides which shuts up to about same size, 15 dols & very powerful Saw the squares of achromatic glass from Paris which [Clark](#)-(e?) uses — 50-odd dols apiece the larger— It takes 2 together — one called the flint— These French glasses all one quality of glass. My glass tried by [Clark](#) & approved — only a part of the object glass available. Bring the edge of the diaphragm against middle of the light & your nail on object glass in line with these shows what is cut off— Sometimes may enlarge the hole in diaphragm— But if you do so you may have to enlarge the hole in diaphragm near small end — which must be exactly as large as the pencil of light there. As the diameter of the pencil is to the diameter of the available portion of the object glass so is the power — so many times it magnifies— A good glass because the form of the blurred object is the same on each side of the focus *i.e* shoved in or drawn out. [C.](#) was making a glass for Amherst Col.

ASTRONOMY



March 14, Tuesday: Anton Rubinstein conducted the premiere of his Symphony in Bb in Lichtenthal Hall, St. Petersburg (the 1st movement of this would become his Concert Overture op.60 while the 2nd and 3d will be appended to the Symphony no.2).



March 14, A.M. — Threatening rain after clear morning. Great concert of song sparrows in willows and alders along Swamp Bridge Brook by river. Hardly hear a distinct strain. Couples chasing each other, and some tree sparrows with them. R.W.E. saw a small bird in the woods yesterday which reminded him of the parti-colored warbler.

P.M. — To Great Meadows. Raw thickening mists, as if preceding rain; Counted over forty robins with my glass in the meadow north of Sleepy Hollow, in the grass and on the snow. A large company of fox-colored sparrows [**Fox Sparrow** [Passerella iliaca](#)] in Heywood's maple swamp close by. I heard their loud, sweet, canary-like whistle thirty or forty rods off, sounding richer than anything yet; some on the bushes singing, *twee twee twa twe ter tweer twa*,--this is the scheme of it only, there being no dental grit to it. They were shy, flitting before me, and I heard a slight susurrus where many were busily scratching amid the leaves of the swamp, without seeing them, and also saw many indistinctly. Wilson never heard but one sing, their common note there being a *cheep*. Saw fresh tracks in what looked like a woodchuck's hole. No ice visible as I look over the meadows from Peter's, though it lies at the bottom. Scared up four black ducks from the flooded meadow on the right of the roadway as you go to Peter's. The water being rough on the meadows, they had apparently sought this smooth and shallow place shut in by the woods. Alder scales are visibly loosened, their lower edges (*i.e.* as they hang) showing a line of yellowish or greenish. The pads in open warm ditches are now decidedly the greatest growth of this season, though I am not sure how much is due to last fall. From within the house at 5:30 P.M. I hear the loud honking of geese, throw up the window, and see a large flock in disordered harrow flying more directly north or even northwest than usual. Raw, thick, misty weather.



March 15, Wednesday: In Concord, [Henry Thoreau](#) painted his boat.



March 15. Pleasant morning, unexpectedly. Hear on the alders by the river the lill lill lill lill of the first F. hyemalis, mingled with song sparrows and tree sparrows. The sound of Barrett's sawmill in the still morning comes over the water very loud. I hear that peculiar, interesting loud hollow tapping of a woodpecker from over the water. I am sorry to think that you do not get a man's most effective criticism until you provoke him. Severe truth is expressed with some bitterness. J. Farmer tells me his dog started up a lark last winter completely buried in the snow, Painted my boat.

Thoreau also went into Cambridge and checked out, from Harvard Library, [Louis Agassiz](#)'s 1840 *ETUDES SUR LES GLACIERS*.



In Wisconsin, [Sherman M. Booth](#) was arrested for “aiding and abetting” the escape of Missouri fugitive slave [Joshua Glover](#) and a hearing was held. Bail of \$2,000 was paid immediately.



Following Booth’s arrest for his role in freeing this escaped slave, the Supreme Court of Wisconsin would immediately judge that the state’s laws of habeas corpus superseded the federal Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, and consequently that the case against Booth was void. On March 7, 1859 in the case of *Ableman v. Booth* (62 U.S. 506), however, the United States Supreme Court would federally countermand that state judgment. Writing for the court, Chief Justice Taney would base the decision not on the merits of the fugitive law itself, but rather on a state’s limited powers and jurisdiction:

The judges of the Supreme Court of Wisconsin do not distinctly state from what source they suppose they have derived this judicial power. There can be no such thing as judicial authority unless it is conferred by a Government or sovereignty, and if the judges and courts of Wisconsin possess the jurisdiction they claim, they must derive it either from the United States or the State. It certainly has not been conferred on them by the United States, and it is equally clear it was not in the power of the State to confer it, even if it had attempted to do so, for no State can authorize one of its judges [62 US 516] or courts to exercise judicial power, by habeas corpus or otherwise, within the jurisdiction of another and independent Government. And although the State of Wisconsin is sovereign within its

1854

1854

territorial limits to a certain extent, yet that sovereignty is limited and restricted by the Constitution of the United States. And the powers of the General Government, and of the State, although both exist and are exercised within the same territorial limits, are yet separate and distinct sovereignties, acting separately and independently of each other within their respective spheres. And the sphere of action appropriated to the United States is as far beyond the reach of the judicial process issued by a State judge or a State court, as if the line of division was traced by landmarks and monuments visible to the eye. And the State of Wisconsin had no more power to authorize these proceedings of its judges and courts than it would have had if the prisoner had been confined in Michigan, or in any other State of the Union, for an offence against the laws of the State in which he was imprisoned.

The Supreme Court's decision would reaffirm the verdict rendered against Booth 4 years earlier by the US District Court, and during March 1860 Booth would be again arrested and remanded to prison in the federal Custom House in Milwaukee (he would need to be again rescued from the law by the citizens of his state).

 March 16, Thursday: [Henry Thoreau](#) signed an indenture for the publication of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#).

That the said Thoreau agrees to give, and by these presents give to said Ticknor & Co., the right to publish for the term of five years, a certain book, entitled "Walden, a Life in the Woods" of which, said Thoreau is the Author and Proprietor.

TIMELINE OF WALDEN



[Alexander Young](#) died of pleurisy in [Boston](#) at the age of 53, leaving the widow Mrs. Caroline James Young with 8 surviving children (4 of their 12 had died but the oldest, Edward James Young, had arrived at 24 years of age and was a graduate of Harvard College). The Reverend Ezra Stiles Gannett would deliver the discourse at his funeral. Eventually he would be succeeded in the pulpit of the New South Church, located on "Church Green" at the corner of Summer Street and Bedford Street, by the Reverend [Orville Dewey](#).⁸⁷

On this night an earthquake was felt in San Francisco.

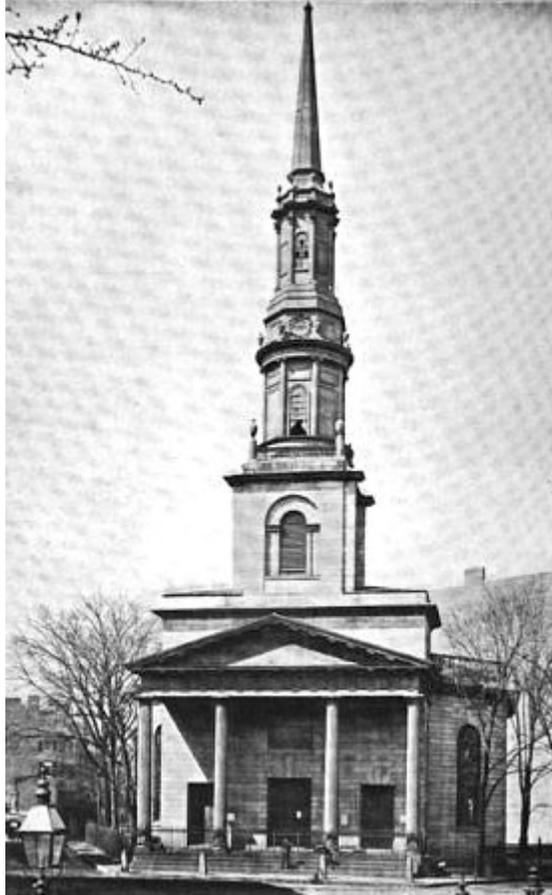
CALIFORNIA

87. In the Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, among the Benjamin Loring Young papers under call number Ms. N-504, has been found a "photomechanical" of a painting on the verso of which is the notation "Rev. Alexander Young, D.D. Born in Boston, Sept. 22, 1800. Pastor of Church on Church Green, 1825-1854. Died, March 16, 1854."

1854

1854

This Daguerreotype of the edifice, which had been designed in 1814 by Charles Bulfinch and would be demolished in 1868, would be exposed as of 1858:



This deceased reverend's CHRONICLES OF THE PILGRIM FATHERS OF THE COLONY OF [PLYMOUTH](#), FROM 1602 TO 1625. NOW FIRST COLLECTED FROM ORIGINAL RECORDS AND CONTEMPORANEOUS PRINTED DOCUMENTS, AND ILLUSTRATED WITH NOTES would be appearing in Thoreau's new book, albeit in somewhat submerged form:

WALDEN: This further experience also I gained. I said to myself, I will not plant beans and corn with so much industry another summer, but such seeds, if the seed is not lost, as sincerity, truth, simplicity, faith, innocence, and the like, and see if they will not grow in this soil, even with less toil and manurance, and sustain me, for surely it has not been exhausted for these crops. Alas! I said this to myself; but now another summer is gone, and another, and another, and I am obliged to say to you, Reader, that the seeds which I planted, if indeed they were the seeds of those virtues, were wormeaten or had lost their vitality, and so did not come up. Commonly men will only be brave as their fathers were brave, or timid. This generation is very sure to plant corn and beans each new year precisely as the Indians did centuries ago and taught the first settlers to do, as if there were a fate in it. I saw an old man the other day, to my astonishment, making the holes with a hoe for the seventieth time at least, and not for himself to lie down in! But why should not the New Englander try new adventures, and not lay so much stress on his grain, his potato and grass crop, and his orchards? —raise other crops than these? Why concern ourselves so much about our beans for seed, and not be concerned at all about a new generation of men? We should really be fed and cheered if when we met a man we were sure to see that some of the qualities which I have named, which we all prize more than those other productions, but which are for the most part broadcast and floating in the air, had taken root and grown in him. Here comes such a subtile and ineffable quality, for instance, as truth or justice, though the slightest amount or new variety of it, along the road. Our ambassadors should be instructed to send home such seeds as these, and Congress help to distribute them over all the land. We should never stand upon ceremony with sincerity.

ALEXANDER YOUNG
THE BEANFIELD
SQUANTO

In transit from Vevey to Geneva, [Professor Henri-Frédéric Amiel](#), who would be referred to as the “Swiss [Thoreau](#),” wrote in his *JOURNAL INTIME*: “What message had this lake for me, with its sad serenity, its soft and even tranquility, in which was mirrored the cold monotonous pallor of mountains and clouds? That disenchanted disillusioned life may still be traversed by duty, lit by a memory of heaven. I was visited by a clear and profound intuition of the flight of things, of the fatality of all life, of the melancholy which is below the surface of all existence, but also of that deepest depth which subsists forever beneath the fleeting wave.”



March 16, A.M. — Another fine morning.

Willows & alders along watercourses all alive these mornings & ringing with the trills & jingles & warbles of birds even as the waters have lately broken loose & tinkle below — song-sparrows blackbirds — not to mention robins &c &c

The song sparrows are very abundant peopling each bush-willow or alder for ¼ of a mile & pursuing each other as if now selecting their mates— It is their song which especially fills the air — made an incessant & undistinguishable trill & jingle by their numbers— I see ducks afar saling on the meadow leaving a long furrow in the water behind them— Watch them at leisure without scaring them with my glass; observe their free & undisturbed motions— Some dark-brown partly on water alternately dipping with their tails up partly on land— These I think may be summer ducks. [Were they not females of the others?] Others with bright white breasts

&c & black heads about same size or larger which may be Golden Eyes — i e Brass-eyed Whistlers They dive & are gone some time & come up a rod off— At first I saw but one — then a minute after 3— The first phœbe near the water is heard.

Saw & heard honey-bees about my boat in the yard — attracted probably by the beeswax in the grafting-wax which was put on it a year ago. It is warm weather. A thunder-storm in the evening.

[Thaddeus William Harris](#) of Cambridge, Massachusetts wrote in regard to the LARVÆ OF THE CRANE FLY to Simon Brown, Esq. via page 210 of the [New England Farmer](#), as follows:

Dear Sir — Yesterday, Mr. Flint brought to me the bottle of grubs, which you sent by him. He said that they were found in considerable numbers, on snow in Concord lately, and that they were alive when taken; but they were dead when received.

They are of a livid or pale brownish color, about half an inch long, thickest at the hinder end of the body, and tapering towards the other end. Above the vent, there is a kind of coronet of short spines, four of which are longer than the others, and the latter are black at the points. These grubs are the larvæ or young of some kind of crane-fly or *Tipula*, and resemble the figures of the larvæ of the European *Tipula corniciva* and *Tipula oleracea*, two species vulgarly called daddy long-legs, in England, and well known for their injury, in the larvæ state, to the grass-roots of meadows. In the volume of "Insect Transformations" belonging to the "Library of Entertaining Knowledge," will be found a short account of the European insects above named, pages 252 to 255 inclusive, to which I beg to refer you. The Concord grubs, like their European prototypes, probably lived in the ground upon the roots of grasses. How they came to be dislodged from their quarters I cannot tell.



CHAPTER X.

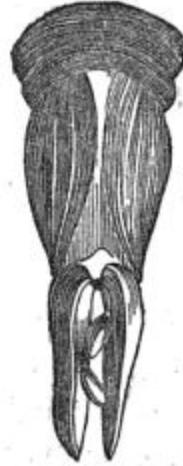
Voracity of Caterpillars, Grubs, and Maggots; — concluded.

MAGGOTS.

ADHERING to the distinction of terming those larvæ which are destitute of feet, *maggots*, we shall notice here a very destructive one, which is sometimes popularly called *the grub*, and sometimes confounded with the wire worm.* We allude to the larvæ of one or two common species of crane flies (*Tipulidæ*), well known by the provincial names of father-long-legs, Jenny-spinners, and tailors. These insects are so common in some meadows, that, being very shy and fearful of danger, they rise in swarms at every step — some of them flying high, others only skipping over the grass, and others running and using their long legs as the inhabitants of marshy countries use stilts, and employing their wings like the ostrich to aid their limbs.

These flies deposit their eggs in the earth; sometimes in grass fields or moist meadows, and sometimes in the tilled ground of gardens and farms. For this purpose the female is provided with an ovipositor well adapted to the operation, consisting of a sort of pincers or forceps of a horny consistence, and sharp at the point. By pressure, as Réaumur says, the eggs may be extruded from this in the same way as the stone can be easily squeezed out of a ripe cherry as in the following figure.

* See Stickney's Observ. on the grub, 8vo. Hull, 1800.



Ovipositor and eggs of the crane fly (*Tipula*).

The eggs are exceedingly small and black, like grains of gunpowder, and each female lays a good many hundreds. The position which she assumes appears somewhat awkward, for she raises herself perpendicularly on her two hind legs, using her ovipositor as a point of support, and resting with her fore-legs upon the contiguous herbage. She then thrusts her ovipositor into the ground as far as the first ring of her body, and leaves one or more eggs in the hole; and next moves onwards to another place, but without bringing herself into a horizontal position. The maggot, when hatched from the egg, immediately attacks the roots of the grass and other herbage which it finds nearest to it; and of course the portion of the plant above ground withers for lack of nourishment.

The maggots of this family which seem to do most injury are those of *Tipula oleracea* and *T. cornicina*. In the summer of 1828, we observed more than an acre of ground, adjoining the Bishop of Oxford's garden, at Blackheath, as entirely stripped, both of grass and every thing green, as if the turf had been

 March 17, Friday: The city government of [Worcester, Massachusetts](#) purchased some parkland (the 1st occasion on which any US city had ever done any such thing).

On a remarkably warm morning for the season, almost like a May morning, [Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed a houselot belonging to Doctor Joseph Reynolds on Lowell Road near the present Bow Street. This may have been property that John Stacy had to sell in 1853.



In the afternoon [Thoreau](#) walked to the Cliffs.



March 17. Friday. A remarkably warm day for the season; too warm while surveying without my greatcoat; almost like May heats.

4 P.M.— To Cliffs. The grass is slightly greened on south bank-sides,— on the south side of the house. It begins to be windy. Saw a small gyrinus at the brook bridge behind Hubbard’s Grove. The first tinge of green appears to be due to moisture more than to direct heat. It is not on bare dry banks, but in hollows where the snow melts last that it is most conspicuous. Fair Haven is open for half a dozen rods about the shores. If this weather holds, it will be entirely open in a day or two.

 March 18, Saturday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked with [Ellery Channing](#) in a very high wind, around the west side of the river to Conantum.



March 18. Very high wind this forenoon; began by filling the air with a cloud of dust. Never felt it shake the house so much; filled the house with dust through the cracks; books, stove, papers covered with it. Blew down [Mr. Frost](#)’s chimney again. Took up my boat, a very heavy one, which was lying on its bottom in the yard, and carried it two rods. The white caps of the waves on the flooded meadow, seen from the window, are a rare and exciting spectacle,— such an angry face as our Concord meadows rarely exhibit.— Walked down the street to post-office. Few inhabitants out more than in a rain. Elms bending and twisting and thrashing the air as if they would come down every moment. I was cautious about passing under them. Yet scarcely a rotten limb in the street. The highest winds occur neither in summer, when the trees are covered with leaves, nor in winter, when they may be covered with ice. Saw a flattened toad on the sidewalk. Could it have been last year’s?

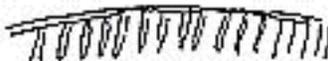
P.M. —Walked round by the west side of the river to Conantum. Wind less violent. [C.](#) has already seen a yellow-spotted tortoise in a ditch. (Two sizable elms by river in Merrick’s pasture blown down, roots being rotted off on water side.) The willow catkins this side M. Miles’s five eighths of an inch long and show some red. Poplar catkins nearly as large, color somewhat like a gray rabbit. old barn blown down on Conantum. It fell regularly, like a weak box pushed over, without moving its bottom, the roof falling upon it a little to leeward. The hay is



left exposed, but does not blow away. The river was at its height last night. Before this we saw many robins and sparrows under Clamshell Hill for shelter. Birds seek warm and sheltered places in such weather. It is very cold and freezing, this wind. The water has been blown quite across the Hubbard’s Bridge causeway in some places and incrustated the road with ice. Before looking this way we had seen the whitened shore from Lupine Hill. It is blown and dashes against the willows and incrusts them with ice, sometimes to the height of three feet, with



icicles shaped like bulls’ horns, especially observable where many osiers stand together, and from the more horizontal osiers, etc., depend icicles, five or six inches long, very regularly, looking exactly like coarse rakes, apparently not the result of melting but of the spray and water blown or dashed upon them: only more regular.





Crane fly ovipositing, and the larva beneath, in the earth, feeding upon grass roots.

pared off from the surface, the only plant untouched being the tiny bird tare (*Ornithopus perpusillus*). On digging here to learn the cause, we found these larvæ already full-fed, and about to pass into pupæ, after having left nothing upon which they could subsist. It was not a little remarkable that they seemed to be altogether confined to this spot; for we did not meet with a single foot of turf destroyed by them in any other part of the heath, or in the adjacent fields. So

very complete, however, was their destruction of the roots on the spot in question, that even now, at the distance of two years, it is still visibly thinner of herbage than the parts around it.*

Réaumur gives a similar account of their ravages in Poitou, where, in certain seasons, the grass of the low moist meadows has been so parched up in consequence, as not to afford sufficient provender for the cattle. He describes the soil in Poitou as a black peat mould; and it was the same in which we found them at Blackheath, with this difference, that the spot was elevated and dry. According to M. Réaumur, also, their only food is this sort of black mould, and not the roots of grass and herbage, which he thinks are only loosened by their burrowing.† This view of the matter appears strongly corroborated by the fact that several species of the family feed upon the mould in the holes of decaying trees, particularly the larva of a very beautiful one (*Ctenophora flaveolata*, MEIGEN), which is very rare in Britian. It is proper to mention, however, that Mr Stickney's experiments,‡ contrary to the conclusions of Réaumur, indicate that these larvæ devour the roots of grass; and Stewart says they 'feed on the roots of plants, corn, and grasses, and are thence destructive to gardens, fields, and meadows. They prevailed in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, and other places in Scotland, in the spring of 1800, when they laid waste whole fields of oats and other grain.'§

In many districts of England these insects cut off a large proportion of the wheat crop, particularly, it would appear, when it had been sown on clover leys. 'In the rich district,' say Kirby and Spence, 'of Sunk Island, in Holderness, in the spring of 1813, hundreds of acres of pasture have been entirely de-

* J. R.

‡ Obs. on the Grub.

† R aumur, v. 12, &c.

§ Elements, ii, 267.

A very wintry sight. The water is in many places blown a rod on to the shore and frozen. Saw where a woodchuck (probably) had dug out quite a pile of gravel in the side of a hill.



March 19, Sunday: Tsar Nikolai I ruled that all public concerts in St. Petersburg must be approved by the director of the Imperial Theater, thereby restricting all public concerts to Lent when the Imperial Theater was closed.

[Henry Thoreau](#) walked in Walden Woods and visited Mill Brook behind Shannon's.



March 19. Cold and windy. The meadow ice bears where shallow. William Rice 2d (?) saw a woodchuck last Sunday. Met his father in Walden Woods, who described a flock of crows he had just seen which followed him "eying down, eying down." Saw in Mill Brook behind Shannon's three or four shiners⁶ (the first), poised over the sand with a distinct longitudinal light-colored line midway along their sides and a darker line below it. This is a noteworthy and characteristic lineament, or cipher, or hieroglyphic, or type, of spring. You look into some clear, sandy-bottomed brook, where it spreads into a deeper bay, yet flowing cold from ice and snow not far off, and see, indistinctly poised over the sand on invisible fins, the outlines of a shiner, scarcely to be distinguished from the sands behind it, as if it were transparent, or as [if] the material of which it was build Ed had all been picked up from them. Chiefly distinguished by the lines I have mentioned. Goodwin killed a pigeon yesterday. Flint's Pond almost entirely open,--much more than Fair Haven.



March 20, Monday evening: A [Fourierite](#) socialist named Alvan Bovay had grown so angered with the failure of the existing political parties to demand the immediate freeing of all slaves that he had called a meeting at Ripon, Wisconsin's Little White Schoolhouse to form a new party. Most of those present were Fourierites, and they chose the name "Republican" because it was, in Bovay's words, "suggestive of equality."

REPUBLICAN PARTY

The new party adopted a platform that pledged it to seek equality not just for slaves, but for all workers. Its slogan was "Free soil, free speech, free men," and one of its first pledges was to invalidate mortgages held by big banks in order to prevent foreclosure actions against small farmers.

FREE SOIL PARTY

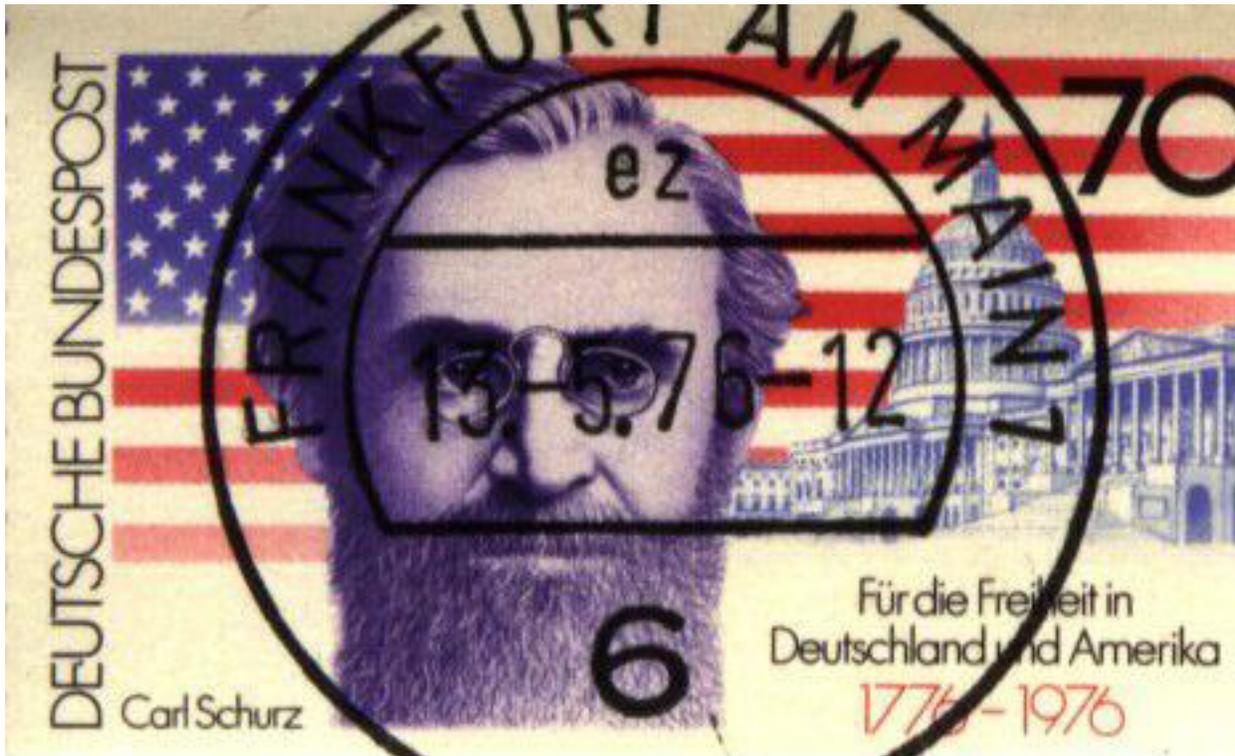
The Republicans sought as well to promote women's rights, defend immigrants, advance trade union organizing, limit the amount of land that any individual could own and forbid corporate monopolies. The intent of the new party, its founders said, was nothing less than to join "the old battle --not yet over-- between the rights of the toiling many and the special privileges of the aristocratic few." (It is an open question, whether the hearts of these people were filled with a longing to raise the condition of the lowly, or were animated instead with a lust to level down the overweening. Later on it would become abundantly clear from their own indignant "we are not nigger lovers" testimony that their agenda to eliminate human slavery had never amounted to an agenda to improve the lives of American black people.)

One of the first Wisconsinites attracted to their banner would be [Carl Schurz](#), a leader of the radical German

1854

1854

revolution of 1848 — which also had been influenced by Fourier’s ideas, as well as those of [Karl Marx](#).



Marx became a writer for [Horace Greeley](#)’s Republican newspaper, the [New-York Tribune](#), which also featured writing by Bovay and Schurz. By 1854, Schurz had settled in Watertown and soon became a leader of Wisconsin’s burgeoning German community.

Schurz rejected invitations to run for office on the Democrat line because he thought the party too conservative. But he joined the new party and, within a few years, became one of its first statewide candidates. Shortly before leaving Wisconsin to join the administration of his close friend and ally, [Abraham Lincoln](#), Schurz addressed students at the University of Wisconsin. In that speech, he warned against the evils of “the spirit of materialism” and “the pursuit of gain.” Republicans, he argued, sought “a higher order” in which equality would replace greed and other manifestations of “the dark side of the picture.”

In England, the Reverend [Samuel Ringgold Ward](#) was winding up his anti-slavery lecture tour:

After ten months’ service for the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada, through the Committee in London, its affairs were wound up, some £1,200 having been kindly given to its treasury by the philanthropists of England and Scotland. A large meeting was holden at Crosby Hall on the 20th of March, 1854, the venerable and philanthropic Samuel Gurney, Esq., in the chair; Rev. James Sherman, Samuel Horman Horman-Fisher, Esq., L.A. Chamerovzow, Esq., Rev. James Hamilton, D.D., Rev. John Macfarlane, B.A., Josiah Conder, Esq., together with others, being on the platform; and Joseph Payne, Esq., gracing the occasion with his presence, a speech, and a piece of poetry, the last of which he kindly gave me. I hold it as a memento of its beloved author, and as a remembrance of the friendship wherewith he has been pleased to honour me.

Presumably it was at about this point that [Henry Thoreau](#) brought his manuscript of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) up to date by adding some notes about the story of the pond subsequent to his residency there, comments which are not to be found in any surviving manuscript draft:

Now the trunks of trees on the bottom, and the old log canoe, and the dark surrounding woods, are gone, and the villagers, who scarcely know where it lies, instead of going to the pond to bathe or drink, are thinking to bring its water, which should be as sacred as the Ganges at least, to the village in a pipe, to wash their dishes with! -to earn their Walden by the turning of a cock or drawing of a plug! That devilish Iron Horse, whose ear-rending neigh is heard throughout the town, has muddied the Boiling Spring with his foot, and he it is that has browsed off all the woods on Walden shore; that Trojan horse, with a thousand men in his belly, introduced by mercenary Greeks! Where is the country's champion, the Moore of Moore Hall, to meet him at the Deep Cut and thrust an avenging lance between the ribs of the bloated pest?

 March 21, Tuesday: The *Lioness* of Tasmania (still known at this point as "[Van Diemen's Land](#)") wrecked at Clarke Island in the Furneaux Group with the loss of 4 crewmembers.



March 21: Tuesday. At sunrise to Clamshell Hill. River skimmed over at Willow Bay last night. Thought I should find ducks cornered up by the ice; they get behind this hill for shelter. Saw what looked like clods of plowed meadow rising above the ice. Looked with glass and found it to be more than thirty black ducks asleep with their heads in their backs, motionless, and thin ice formed about them. Soon one or two were moving about slowly. There was an open space, eight or ten rods by one or two. At first all within a space of apparently less than a rod [in] diameter. It was 6.30 A.M, and the sun shining on them, but bitter cold. How tough they are! I crawled far on my stomach and got a near view of them, thirty rods off. At length they detected me and quacked. Some got out upon the ice, and when I rose up all took to flight in a great straggling flock which at a distance looked like crows, in no order. Yet, when you see two or three, the parallelism produced by their necks and bodies steering the same way gives the idea of order.

 March 22, Wednesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) and [Ellery Channing](#) launched the boat and paddled to Fair Haven.

The news in [California](#):

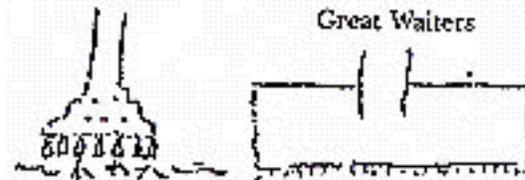
The Chinese Battle. - The Empire County Argus gives the following account of the recent fight among the Chinese, at Greenwood: Some five or six hundred of these people are congregated in Greenwood. They are principally from Hongkong, Canton and Makoy. Those from Hongkong were mostly smugglers and pirates at home, and mostly follow gambling and other vile practices in this country; those from the other portions are principally miners. A few days since, the Hongkongs found one of the opposing party in a brothel and beat him severely. This act caused a fight between the parties on Saturday last, in which some four or five were badly wounded. Since then

active preparations were made for a grand battle; messengers were sent to the various camps for reinforcements, and each party received additions to their numbers. About ten o'clock on Thursday the hostile parties mustered in force for the fray. The Hongkongs numbering about two hundred and fifty men, while the others numbered about one hundred and fifty. The parties were armed with poles, spears and stones. After manoeuvring awhile, the fight began by a furious onslaught with stones and other missiles, much to the amusement of the spectators, of whom numbers were present. It lasted about fifteen minutes, when the Hongkongs ran. The result of the encounter is, two mortally wounded, and some twelve or fifteen badly hurt. Undoubtedly the American citizens of Greenwood are censurable for this breach of the peace, as we are informed they take sides with the belligerents and urge them on.

Gold Again Found. — Under this head we clip the following bit from the Sonoma Bulletin: Gold is now the rage the world over — in fact the world is topsyturvy with glistening madness; it is a theme of conversation for the millions; only speak of digging (potatoes,) and you are asked, "how much to the pan?" so prominent is gold in the minds of the multitude. But, we mean simply to state that gold has again been found at the head, or thereabouts, of Russian River. This we were assured of by one of the inhabitants of that region, who said he had several small specimens which he found there; yet we should like to see them, in order to be fully convinced of the fact. No doubt gold exists in that neighborhood, but it is questionable whether in such quantity as to pay labor. However it may be, we are certain that our farmers are too sensible to drop their implements in a feverish moment to pursue a phantom — for so it must be called until we know to the contrary. At the Union Hotel they are exhibiting a piece of gold in a glass covered box, (whether from the new mines is not said) which, upon close scrutiny, looks very much like a lump of gilt chalk.



March 22. P.M. —Launch boat and paddle to Fair Haven. Still very cold. The most splendid show of ice chandeliers, casters, hour-glasses (1/2) that I ever saw or imagined about the piers of the bridges, surpassing any crystal, so large. Rather like the bases of columns,—terraced pedestals, that is it,—the prototypes of the



ornaments of the copings and capitals. Perfect and regular, sharp, cone-shaped drops hang from the first figure a few inches above the water. I should have described it then. It would have filled many pages. Scared up my flock of black ducks and counted forty together. See crows along the water's edge, What do they eat? Saw a small black duck with glass,—a dipper (?). Fair Haven still covered and frozen anew in part. Shores of meadow

strewn with cranberries. The now silvery willow catkins (notwithstanding the severe cold) shine along the shore, over the cold water, and C. thinks some willow osiers decidedly more yellow.



March 23, Thursday: [George Minott](#) commented to [Henry Thoreau](#) that he had not been to Boston “since the last war,” meaning since the year 1815.

[Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Horace Greeley](#) in [New-York](#). The editor was confirming that he would announce [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) in his newspaper, the [Tribune](#), at once. He also asked Thoreau to have Elizabeth Hoar send to him her personal recollections of Margaret Fuller, for possible use in an edition of Fuller’s works which he had agreed to edit.

*New York,
Mar. 23, '54.
Dear Thoreau,
I am glad your “Walden” is coming out. I shall announce it at once,
whether Ticknor does or not.
I am in no hurry now about your Miscellanies; take your time, select
a good title, and prepare your articles deliberately and finally. Then
if Ticknor will give you something worth having, let him have this
too; if proffering it to him is to glut your market, let it come to me.
But take your time. I was only thinking you were hibernating when
you ought to be doing something. I referred (without naming you) to
your “Walden” experience in my lecture on “Self-Culture,” with
which I have bored ever so many audiences. This episode excited
much interest, and I have repeatedly been asked who it is that I refer
to.
Yours,
Horace Greeley.
H. D. Thoreau, Concord, Ms.
P. S. You must know Miss Elizabeth Hoar, whereas I hardly do. Now
I have agreed to edit Margaret’s works, and I want of Elizabeth a
letter or memorandum of personal recollections of Margaret and
her Ideas. Can’t you ask her to write it for me?
Yours, H.G.*



March 23. Snows and rains a little. The birds in yard active now, — hyemalis, tree sparrow, and song sparrow. The hyemalis jingle easily distinguished. Hear all together on apple trees these days. Minott confesses to me to-day that he has not been to Boston since the last war, or 1815. Aunt said that he had not been ten miles from home since; that he has not been to Acton since Miss Powers [?] lived there; but he declared that he had been there to Cornwallis and musters. When I asked if he would like to go to Boston, he answered he was going to another Boston



1854

1854



March 24, Friday: Despite the fact that no war had as yet been declared to be in existence, Richard Somerset Le Poer Trench, 4th Earl of Clancarty, 3rd Marquess of Heusden rose in the Parliament and suggested that the day ought to be one of prayer and humiliation. He was then rebuked by the Prime Minister, George Hamilton-Gordon, 4th Earl of Aberdeen, as the assembled Lords of the Realm prepared to adjourn for their weekend:

My Lords, before your Lordships separate, I would beg to put to the noble Earl at the head of Her Majesty's Government a question upon a subject which is just now of much public interest, and I trust that, although I have not given any formal notice of it, he will be both able and willing to give a satisfactory answer. Evening after evening discussions have taken place in this House relative to the affairs of the East, and to the war with Russia, upon which this country may be said to have entered; and those discussions have certainly not been devoid of interest and of public advantage. It is a subject of congratulation that the whole of the correspondence with Russia, both secret and official, having been laid upon the table, it has been found to be such as to reflect no dishonour upon the British name, and it may justly be added that it is most creditable to those who have been entrusted with the conduct of our foreign relations. These papers show that everything has been done that could have been done to avert the calamity of war, and they conclusively establish the justice of the cause we have espoused. Again, from the discussions that have taken place on the naval and military armaments, it has been satisfactorily shown that the most efficient preparation has been made, and that the Government have not been wanting in the emergency in careful attention to the good of the public service. Hence they have acquired, at this important crisis, 1268 the cordial support of public opinion, and the national enthusiasm in the impending conflict is scarcely less than that which animates the forces that are now on their way to the scene of action. All these are most auspicious and cheering circumstances, but there is one circumstance which many in this country view with regret and disappointment, and that is, the omission on the part of the Government to take any step for publicly invoking the Divine blessing upon our arms, and upon the cause they are sent forth to support. Such a step would, I conceive, have been right, at a time when the country is embarking in a war, certainly of a very formidable character, and of which no one can foresee the issue. We may feel confident in the justice of our cause, we may feel confident in the strength of our armaments, and we shall certainly not be disappointed in the valour of the brave men we have sent forth; but "the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong;" and if we look not to the Almighty disposer of events for his guidance and blessing, we may find our confidence no better justified in the event than was that of the Spanish Monarch, who once sent against this country the armada that he styled "invincible." I am no advocate of superstitious forms and observances, but they may nevertheless be regarded in general as implying a recognition of the Deity. I therefore take the liberty of mentioning what came under my personal observation, when I happened to be with a Russian army in 1829, on the occasion of a force being detached upon some special service from Count Diebitsch's army at Adrianople. The troops were formed in an open plain around an altar, at which a

Greek priest officiated, and after a certain rite, doubtless including the offering up of prayer, had been performed, the troops were sprinkled with holy water. The ceremonial, though not very intelligible in its forms, was undoubtedly designed to invoke the Divine blessing upon the expedition, and the example is so far worthy of imitation. Forms of prayer and devotion in this country are happily simple and intelligible. Prayer is made during the sitting of Parliament for the Divine blessing upon your deliberations, and suitable forms of prayer are ordered for use in our national churches on occasions of calamity or of danger. Surely, then, on the departure of so many brave men to engage in the strife of arms, it would be suitable that some public acknowledgment should be made of national reliance on Divine support. I trust the noble Earl will, if he has not already done so, take such steps in the matter as would be becoming in the Government of a Christian people. I therefore venture to inquire, as a matter of much public interest, whether it is intended that any form of religious observance should be commanded in reference to the war in which the country is now engaged?

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN considered the noble Earl's appeal somewhat premature, for war not having yet been declared, the time had not arrived when such a step as that to which the noble Earl referred could properly be taken, even if it should be thought proper to take it at all. He would remind the noble Earl, too, that there was in our liturgy a prayer to be publicly used in time of war, and which for the same reason – that war did not exist – was not read in our churches; and it would, he submitted, be premature to announce any proceeding of this sort, until the emergency to which it was to be directed arose.



March 24. Fair again, the snow melting. Great flocks of hyemalis drifting about with their jingling note. The same ducks under Clamshell Hill. The elm buds were apparently expanded before this cold, which began on the lath. Goose Pond half open. Flint's has perhaps fifteen or twenty acres of ice yet about shores. Can hardly tell when it is open this year. The black ducks--the most common that I see-- are the only ones whose note I know or hear,--a hoarse, croaking quack. How shy they are!



March 25, Saturday: It was cold and windy. Henry Thoreau went down the river in the boat to Great Meadows.



March 25. Cold and windy. Down river in boat to Great Meadows.

"Downriver," "To Great Meadow," and "To Hill" signified a northward trip down the Concord River below the triple point of the confluence. After passing through a straight reach aligned by the local bedrock strike, arched by two bridges, and flanked by gravel bars of historic sediment that were repeatedly dredged, he entered the north side of Great Meadow. Bounded by the site of the Old North Bridge to the southwest and Ball's Hill to the northeast, it was two miles long and half a mile across. When in flood, the meadow was his favorite inland sea to sail upon because the wind was least impeded and the waves were highest.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 11

Freezes on oars. Too cold and windy almost for ducks. They are in the smoother open water (free from ice) under the lee of hills. Got a boat-load of driftwood, — rails, bridge timber, planks, etc. White maple buds bursting, making trees look like some fruit trees with blossom-buds. Is not the small duck or two I see one at a time and flying pretty high a teal? Willow osiers near Mill Brook mouth I am almost certain have acquired a fresher color; at least they surprise me at a distance by their green passing through yellowish to red at top.



March 26, Sunday: Duke Carlo III of Parma was stabbed and mortally wounded as he walked towards his palace accompanied only by an orderly (the assassin presumably disagreed with the Duke's support of a [Crimean War](#)).



March 26. River froze over at Lily Bay.



March 27, Monday: Duke Carlo III of Parma died of the wounds he had received on the previous day and was succeeded by his son Roberto. Russia declared war on France.

Amidst a group of titles by Ticknor, Reed & Fields, the Boston Evening Transcript provided in column 2 on page 2 a "Literary Announcement" of [Henry Thoreau's](#) WALDEN.

TIMELINE OF WALDEN



March 27, Saw a hawk — probably marsh hawk — by meadow.

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



March 28, Tuesday: After the Requiem mass for the funeral of Michael Arneth, prior of St. Florian and friend of Anton Bruckner, Bruckner's Vor Arneths Grab for chorus and three trombones and Libera me, Domine for chorus, three trombones, cello, double bass, and organ were heard for the initial time.

[Hector Berlioz](#) conducted in Hanover again, less successfully than in the previous year (but, he was a hit with the King and Queen).

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked to White Pond. And, when he picked up the mail, there was the nicest surprise: "Got first proof of 'Walden'."⁸⁸

ROSS/ADAMS COMMENTARY

In the chapter "Visitors" the author had deployed the phrase "a ridiculous mouse."⁸⁹ Although this can be found elsewhere in classical literature, for instance in the writings of Athenaeus, those with that sort of education would have recognized it most readily as a reference to [Horace](#)'s *ARS POETICA*, 139, "Mountains will labor, to bring forth a ridiculous mouse."

[WALDEN](#): I think that I love society as much as most, and am ready enough to fasten myself like a blood-sucker for the time to any full-blooded man that comes in my way. I am naturally no hermit, but might possibly sit out the sturdiest frequenter of the bar-room, if my business called me thither. I had three chairs in my house; one for solitude, two for friendship, three for society. When visitors came in larger and unexpected numbers there was but the third chair for them all, but they generally economized the room by standing up. It is surprising how many great men and women a small house will contain. I have had twenty-five or thirty souls, with their bodies, at once under my roof, and yet we often parted without being aware that we had come very near to one another. Many of our houses, both public and private, with their almost innumerable apartments, their huge halls and their cellars for the storage of wines and other munitions of peace, appear to me extravagantly large for their inhabitants. They are so vast and magnificent that the latter seem to be only vermin which infest them. I am surprised when the herald blows his summons before some Tremont or Astor or Middlesex House, to see come creeping out over the piazza for all inhabitants a ridiculous mouse, which soon again slinks into some hole in the pavement.

PEOPLE OF WALDEN

HERMIT HORACE

88. [Thoreau](#) would not finish with his editing of this 1st proof until May.

89. Those with the benefit of the classical education would have received this as a reference to [Horace](#).

We need not take this to be a reference to the labor of producing this magnificent book since by coincidence on this very day “the Allies” and Russia were in the process of declaring war upon each other (fighting centering upon the destruction of the Russian naval base at Sevastopol), something which would eventually come to be known as the “[Crimean War](#)” — Great Britain, Turkey, Sardinia, and France declared war on [Russia](#) while [Russia](#) declared war on Great Britain. With the benefit of our historical hindsight we now know how very well that effort was going to proceed!



March 28. P.M. — To White Pond. Coldest day for a month or more, — severe as almost any in the winter. Saw this afternoon either a snipe or a woodcock; it appeared rather small for the last. Pond opening on the northeast. A flock of hyemalis drifting from a wood over a field incessantly for four or five minutes, — thousands of them, notwithstanding the cold. The fox-colored sparrow sings sweetly also. Saw a small slate-colored hawk, with wings transversely mottled beneath, — probably the sharp-shinned hawk. Got first proof of “Walden.”

TIMELINE OF WALDEN



March 29, Wednesday: The Republic of the Orange Free State was created independent of Great Britain.

In New-York, in the Daily Tribune, 6 excerpts from [Henry Thoreau](#)'s WALDEN manuscript were published.

TIMELINE OF WALDEN

[Thoreau](#) went to Fair Haven:



March 29. P.M. — To Fair Haven. Coldest night. Pump froze so as to require thawing. Saw two marsh hawks (?), white on rump. A gull [[Herring Gull](#)  [Larus argentatus](#)] of pure white, — a wave of foam in the air. How simple and wave-like its outline, the outline of the wings presenting two curves, between which the tail is merely the point of junction, — all wing like a birch scale; tail remarkably absorbed. Saw two white-



throated, black-beaked divers fly off swiftly low over the water, with black tips of wings curved short downward. Afterward saw one scoot along out from the shore upon the water and dive; and that was the last



I could see of him, though I watched four or five minutes. Fair Haven half open; channel wholly open. See thin cakes of ice at a distance now and then blown up on their edges and glistening in the sun. Had the experience of arctic voyagers amid the floe ice on a small scale. Think I saw a hen-hawk,—two circling over Cliffs.



March 30, Thursday: 1st Lieutenant John Wynn Davidson, who was commanding a reinforced company under orders to locate a fugitive band of Jicarilla Apaches and keep them from fleeing westward across the Rio Grande, disobeyed orders and attacked the Jicarilla camp on a ridge near [Cieneguilla](#) (present-day Pilar, New Mexico). They soon found themselves surrounded in a basin below the village, and in the fight every member of the 15-man Company F detachment was killed or wounded. The hard campaigning of 1854 would leave the exhausted men of Company F with threadbare uniforms, played-out horses and damaged equipment. Nevertheless, [Colonel Thomas Turner Fauntleroy](#) would plan to send Company F of the [1st US Regiment of Dragoons](#) back into the field early in the following year.

WHITE ON RED, RED ON WHITE

[Henry Thoreau](#) went to the Island at 6 AM. Later in the day, he read an article on [Étienne Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire](#) in the January issue of [Westminster Review](#), entitled “*Le Principe des Connexions.*”



March 30. 6 A.M.— To Island. First still hour since the afternoon of the 17th. March truly came in like a lamb and went out like a lion this year. Remarkably and continuously pleasant weather from the very first day till the lath. Apparently an early spring, —buds and birds well advanced,— then suddenly very severe cold and high winds cold enough to skim the river over in broad places at night, and commencing with the greatest and most destructive gale for many a year, felt far and wide; and it has never ceased to blow since till this morning. Vegetation is accordingly put back. The ground these last cold (thirteen) days has been about bare of snow, but frozen. Some had peas and potatoes in before it. First half of month very pleasant and mild spring weather, last half severe winter cold and high winds, The water at its highest, —not very high,— this month on the 17th. Ducks have been lurking in sheltered places not frozen. Robins feed along the edge of the river. At the Island I see and hear this morning the cackle of a pigeon woodpecker at the hollow poplar; had heard him tapping distinctly from my boat’s place 1/4+ of a mile. Great flocks of tree sparrows and some *F. hyemalis* on the ground and trees on the Island Neck, making the air and bushes ring with their jingling. The former —some of them— say somewhat like this: a eke eke, ter twee twee, tweer tweer twa. It sounded like a new bird. The black ducks seem always to rise with that loud, hoarse croaking — quacking. The river early is partly filled with thin, floating, hardly cemented ice, occasionally turned on its edge by the wind and sparkling in the sun. If the sun had kept out of the way one day in the past fortnight, I think the river would have frozen to bear. Read an interesting article on Etienne Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, the friend and contemporary of Cuvier, though opposed to him in his philosophy. He believed species to be variable. In looking for anatomical resemblances he found that he could not safely be guided by function, form, structure, size, color, etc., but only by the relative position and mutual dependence of organs. Hence his *Le Principe des Connexions* and his maxim, “An organ is sooner destroyed than transposed,” — “tin organ eat plutot altere, atrophie, aneanti, que transpose.” A principal formula of his was, “Unity of Plan, Unity of Composition.”

Concord Mar. 30th '54

The undersigned, wishing to enjoy equal advantages with their fellow countrymen at a distance, earnestly request, that Mr Emerson will read to the Lyceum as many of the lectures which he has read abroad the past winter as may be convenient for him, including the one on Poetry; though they promise to repay him only with an eager attention.

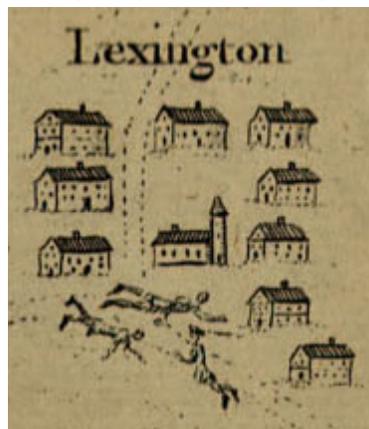
<i>Henry D. Thoreau</i> [] <i>Josephine Hosmer</i> [LP.] <i>Cheney</i> [FM Mackay] <i>Samuel Hoar</i> [] <i>Mary M. Brooks</i> <i>Geo</i> [M. Brooks]	<i>N. A. Barrett</i> <i>A. Merrick</i> [J.M. Cheney] <i>N. Brooks</i> <i>Josiah Bartlett</i> <i>Anne M. Whiting</i> <i>Louisa J. Whiting</i> []
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[A. D. Frye]	<i>Sophia E. Thoreau</i> []
<i>John H Bent</i>	<i>John Thoreau</i>
<i>Cynthia D[.] Thoreau</i>	
<i>JW. Walcott</i>	<i>John [Brown] Jr</i>
[B.N. Holden]	<i>Alvan Pratt—</i>
<i>Cyrus Peirce</i>	<i>Albert Stacy</i>
<i>Rufus <u>Hosmer</u></i>	<i>Jonas Hastings</i>
<i>James Giles</i>	[Da]n ^l . <i>Shattuck</i>
<i>Charles Bowers</i>	<i>A[C] Collier</i>
<i>Moses Pritchard</i>	<i>Julius M. Smith</i>
[] <i>Cyrus Warren</i>	<i>N[.] Henry[] Warren</i>
<i>Nancy Warren</i>	<i>Elijah Wood Jr</i>
<i>O.[L.] Page</i>	<i>Francis Monroe</i>
[F.] <i>A. Wheeler</i>	<i>Sam^l. Staples</i>
<i>F.E. Bigelow</i>	<i>L [May]</i>

WALDO EMERSON
ALBERT STACY

 March 31, Friday: Dugald Clerk was born in Glasgow.

The funeral of Jonathan Harrington, the last of the Lexington survivors, was described in the Boston Post, which commented that “no common death had taken place” and quoted one of the orators as having declared that Harrington’s life had been “eventful beyond that which could belong to any other.” This last of the Lexington company of minutemen had been their fifer, age 17 at the time, who had survived to the age of 96. The reporter was particularly impressed that not only local streets but also the “yards swarmed with omnibuses, coaches, and carriages of various descriptions” and estimated the swarm at some 10,000 citizens. More men marched at his funeral during this year than had originally fought at Lexington and Concord.





1854

1854



March 31, Friday: On behalf of the United States, Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) signed a treaty with [Japanese](#) officials to establish a “permanent” relationship between these nations. In the Treaty of Kanagawa the Japanese promised to save shipwrecked Americans and provide fuel for American ships, and to allow the opportunity for trade. The treaty opened the ports of Hakodate and Shimoda to American vessels.

[US MILITARY INTERVENTIONS](#)

[READ THE FULL TEXT](#)



March 31. Weather changes at last to drizzling. In criticising your writing, trust your fine instinct. There are many things which we come very near questioning, but do not question. When I have sent off my manuscripts to the printer, certain objectionable sentences or expressions are sure to obtrude themselves on my attention with force, though I had not consciously suspected them before. My critical instinct then at once breaks the ice and comes to the surface.

1854

1854

SPRING 1854

 Spring [Ephraim Wales Bull](#) sold each and every one of his purple Concord grape vines for a flat \$5.⁰⁰ each. His total return from having developed the Concord strain of purple grapes was thus only \$3,200, minus his 11 years (Spring 1843-Spring 1854) of development expenses of course — which fully explains the mean-spirited remark on his tombstone: “He Sowed Others Reaped.”⁹⁰

BOTANY**PLANTS**

90. In later years he would develop other strains of the Concord grape which he would name the Rockwood, the Cottage, the August Rose, and the Esther, but his suspiciousness of others would have grown by that period to the point at which it had become a paralyzing mental illness — and he would be simply unable to negotiate to release these strains to the nurseries.

1854

1854

 Spring: [Brownson's Quarterly Review](#), No. 1

CATHOLICISM

- I. *Uncle Jack and His Nephew*
- II. *Schools of Philosophy*
- III. *The Case of Martin Koszta*
- IV. "You go Too Far" [The Power of the Pope during the Middle Ages]
- V. *Hillard's Six Months in Italy*
- VI. Literary Notices and Criticisms

MAGAZINES

ORESTES AUGUSTUS BROWNSON

APRIL 1854

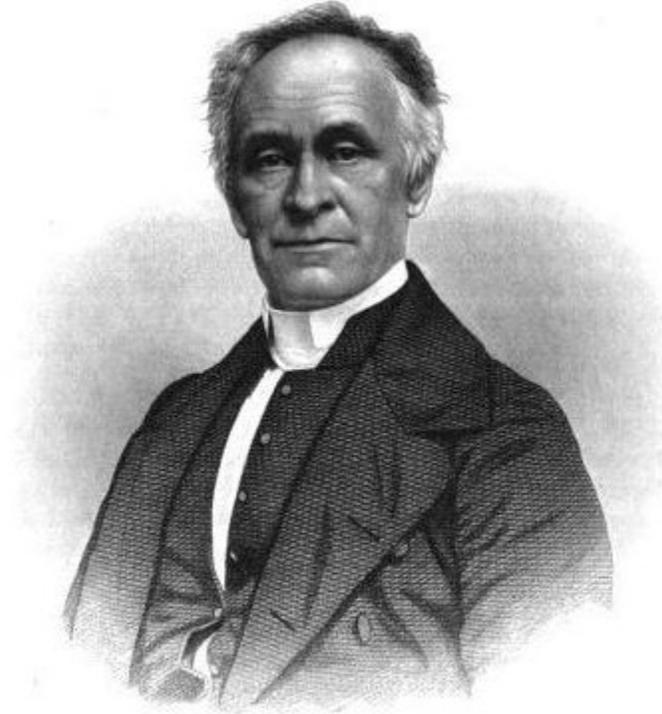
 April: This month's issue of [Harper's New Monthly Magazine](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE

1854

1854

 April: [Ralph Emerson](#) resigned his professorship at the Andover Theological Seminary and relocated to Newburyport, Massachusetts.



Ralph Emerson

The [Dickinsons](#) visited Washington DC while [Emily Dickinson](#) remained at home in Amherst with Susan Gilbert and John Graves.

 April: [Christian C.J. Bunsen](#) offered his resignation as Prussian ambassador to the Court of St. James and it was accepted. He would retire initially to a villa on the Neckar near Heidelberg, and then to Bonn.⁹¹

 April: [Harper's Magazine](#) published another article by [George Douglas Brewerton](#), "Incidents of travel in New Mexico."



91. The English branch of this family is now known as "de Bunsen."

1854

1854

→ April: What would eventually become the “New England Emigrant Aid Company” was chartered by the legislature of Massachusetts, initially under the name “The Massachusetts Emigrant Aid Society.” The men engaged in this, Eli Thayer, [Amos Adams Lawrence](#), [Dr. Samuel Cabot III](#),⁹² and others, would begin their work at once, arousing public interest and making arrangements to facilitate emigration to the [Kansas Territory](#).

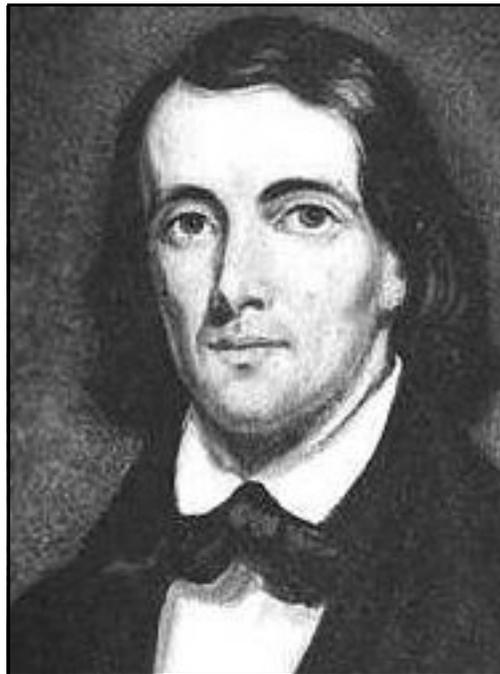
THE 2D GREAT AMERICAN DISUNION

The US circuit court for the district of Missouri was holding session in a small back room over a Main Street store in St. Louis. Preliminary skirmishing was taking place before Judge Robert M. Wells in the case of [Dred Scott](#) v Sandford.

In [Havana](#), a number of influential slave owners met with US Consul William H. Robertson to urge that he persuade [President Franklin Pierce](#) to send American troops to [Cuba](#) — in order to prevent slave [emancipation](#).

→ April: [Ellery Channing](#) visited the [Tappans](#) in Lenox, Massachusetts for a couple of weeks. Then he visited [Cincinnati](#), where he and [Ellen Fuller](#) had courted.

TAPPAN FAMILY



92. For 4 years Dr. Cabot would be involved in such activities as supplying emigrants to the Kansas Territory with rifles purchased by subscription.

1854

1854



[Charles Dickens](#)'s [HARD TIMES](#) began weekly publication in the April 1st issue of [Household Words](#) (to bolster slipping circulation) and would continue through August 12th. The Dickens family would be in Boulogne during the summer and early fall.



Dr. [John Rae](#) brought back to England definite confirmation of the fact that all the members of [Sir John Franklin](#)'s Arctic expedition had starved to death. He would receive the £10,000 award that had been offered for information of the expedition. Unfortunately, he also brought back sad news that in their final throes these starving, freezing isolates had resorted to cannibalism — which would result in a campaign by “the tiresome Lady Franklin,” and by [Charles Dickens](#) in his publication [Household Words](#), to discredit him.

[THE FROZEN NORTH](#)

ATTITUDES ON DICKENS

Read [Henry Thoreau's Journal for April 1854 \(æf. 36\)](#)



April 1, Saturday: [Dr. Thaddeus William Harris](#)'s “Larvae of the Crane Fly” was appearing in this month's issue of the [New England Farmer](#).

Having found prospecting for gold to involve a whole lot of hard work in what looked suspiciously like dirt, and being of the personal attitude that to do hard work was to be suspected of the dreadfully slavish and contemptible “strong back weak mind” syndrome, [Hinton Rowan Helper](#) had abandoned the gold fields of [California](#). On this date he arrived at a port on the Caribbean coast of Central America and embarked for the final legs of his journey home to North Carolina. Did he remember the dirt of North Carolina as being less dirty, the work of North Carolina as being less hard? Well, but maybe he could make some easy clean money by writing to warn others that the streets of California were not exactly paved with gold. Note carefully how his attitude about writing correlated with his attitude about labor correlated with his attitude about persons of color. For Helper, to be pro-slavery was to be pro-Negro and to be pro-Negro was to be pro-slavery. Because these loathsome blacks were being used for manual labor, manual labor itself had acquired an irremovable taint, and even a white man, if he was so situated as to need to work for his living, was being treated “as if he was a loathsome beast, and shunned with the utmost disdain.” Writing about the loathsome black man and how he is wronging us became for Helper a way of avoiding being condemned as equally loathsome on account of his unrelenting poor-boy need to obtain money in order to live.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went on the [Assabet River](#) to Dodge's Brook and thence to [Jacob B. Farmer](#)'s.

In San Francisco, an ordinance for the suppression of houses of ill-fame went into effect. This ordinance abolished the erotic dance known as the fandango, and shuttered the dancing and bawdy houses along Dupont Street, Jackson Street, and Pacific Street.

[CALIFORNIA](#)

1854

1854



**Literary Hermits Recreating Themselves in Their Chapel:
Whittier-Holmes-Emerson-Motley-Alcott-Hawthorne-Lowell-Agassiz-Longfellow**



Ap. 1st The tree sparrows — *hyemalis* — & song sparrows are particularly lively & musical in the yard this rainy & truly April day. The air rings with them. The robin *now* begins to sing sweet powerfully—

Pm up Assabet to Dodge's Brook — thence to Farmer's.

"Up Assabet" is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau's two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.
 — [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 10



April has begun like itself. It is warm & showery — while I sail away with a light SW wind toward the Rock— Sometimes the sun seems just ready to burst out — yet I know it will not— The meadow is becoming bare It resounds with the sprayey notes of blackbirds— The birds sing this warm showery day after a fortnight's cold (yesterday was wet too), with a universal burst & flood of melody. Great flocks of *hyemalis* [Dark-eyed Junco Junco *hyemalis*] &c pass overhead like schools of fishes in the water many abreast. The white maple stamens are beginning to peep out from the wet & weather-beaten buds. The earliest alders are just ready to bloom — to show their yellow — on the first decidedly warm & sunny day. The water is smooth at last and dark. Ice no longer forms on the oars. It is pleasant to paddle under the dripping hemlocks this dark day. They make more of a wilderness impression than pines. The lines of saw dust from Barrets mill at different heights on the steep wet bank under the hemlocks — rather enhance the impression of freshness & wildness, as if it were a new country. Saw a painted tortoise on the bottom— The bark of Poplar boughs which have been held in the ice along the sides of the river the past winter are gnawed probably by muskrats. Saw floating a good-sized rooster without a head the red stump sticking out — probably killed by an owl. Heard a bird whose note was very much like that of the purple finch — loud & clear. First *smelled* the musk-rat.

Yesterday & to-day I hear the cackle of the flicker so agreeable from association. It brings the year about. From afar, on some blasted tree, it makes all the vale ring its swelling flicker (?). Saw at farmer his snow-grubs (the same I had seen v. back) *Haris* in this weeks NE Farmer thinks on comparing them with *Eng.* plates, that they are the larvae of one of the species of Crane-fly Tipula. I saw some — still in F's pasture. Did they not come out from the roots of the grass prematurely in the winter & so become food for birds? The ground in Farmer's garden was in some places whitened with the droppings of the snowbirds after seeds of weeds — F. *hyemalis* & others. The *hyemalis* is in the largest flocks of any at this season— You see them come drifting over a rising ground just like snowflakes before a north-east wind.

I was surprised to see how Farmers young pears 3 or 4 feet high on quince stocks had been broken down by the snow-drifts broken over & over apparently the snow freezing over them and then at last by its weight breaking them down.



I hear the jingle of the *hyemalis* from within the house — sounding like a trill.



April 2, Sunday: In the afternoon, [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Conantum by way of Nut Meadow Brook.

Brockport Collegiate Institute burned to the ground. On this day, in [New-York](#), [Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Horace Greeley](#), thanking him for helping obtain material for the Margaret Fuller edition.

[April 2, 1854]

DEAR THOREAU,—Thank you for your kindness in the matter of Margaret. Pray take no further trouble; but if anything should come in your way, calculated to help me, do not for-



1854

1854

*get. Yours,
HORACE GREELEY.*



April 3, Monday: The 1st US Mint was opened on Commercial Street in San Francisco.

CALIFORNIA

John Wilson died in Edinburgh.

SCOTLAND

John Brown wrote from Akron, Ohio to John Brown, Jr.

*Dear Son John,
We received your letter of the 24th March two or three days since, and one from Henry, dated 25th March, about the same time. They had got on well so far, but had to go by stage the balance of the way. Father got home well, and was with us over night Friday last. We have all been middling well of late, but very busy, having had the care of the whole concern at Mr. Perkins's place until Friday night. I had a most comfortable time settling last year's business, and dividing with Mr. Perkins, and have to say of his dealing with me that he has shown himself to be every inch a gentleman. I bring to my new home five of the red cows and ten calves; he to have \$100 out of my share of the last year's wool, to make us even on last year's business; after dividing all crops, he paying me in hand \$28.55, balance due me on all except four of the five cows. I am going now to work with a cheap team of two yoke oxen, on which I am indebted, till I can sell my wool, \$89; \$46 I have paid towards them. I would like to have all my children settle within a few miles of each other and of me, but I cannot take the responsibility of advising you to make any forced move to change your location. Thousands have to regret that they did not let middling "well alone." I should think you ought to get for your place another \$125; and I think you may, if you are not too anxious. That would buy you considerable of a farm in Essex or elsewhere, and we may get the Homestead Law passed yet. It has been a question with me whether you would not do better to hire all your team work done than to have your little place overstocked possibly, after some trouble about buying them, paying taxes, insurance, and some expense for implements to use them with. If you get a little overstocked, everything will seem to do poorly. Frederick is very much better, but both he and Owen have been having the ague lately. They leave the Hill farm soon. I do not at this moment know of a good opening for you this way. One thing I do not fear to advise and even urge; and that is the habitual "fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom." Commending you all to his mercy, I remain*

*Your affectionate father,
John Brown.*

In the afternoon, Henry Thoreau went to the Cliffs by boat.

1854



April 3. Saw from window with glass seven ducks on meadow-water, — only one or two conspicuously white, — these, black heads, white throats and breasts and along sides, — the rest of the ducks, brownish, probably young males and females. Probably the golden-eye. [Jardine](#) says it is rare to see more than one full-plumaged male in a flock.

P.M. — To Cliffs by boat.

Did I see crow blackbirds with the red-wings [**Red-winged Blackbird**  *Agelaius phoeniceus*] and hear their harsher chattering?

The water has gone down so much that I have to steer carefully to avoid the thick hummocks left here and there on the meadow by the ice. I see the deep holes they were taken out of. A muskrat has just built a small cabin, — apparently a bushel of mouthfuls on one. No clams up yet. I see a very little snow ice still, at a distance on the north sides of hills and walls. The wind is southeasterly. This is methinks the first hazy day, though not so warm as the 17th of Mardi. The aspect of the woods reminds me of landscapes, and the sigh of the wind in the pines sounds warmer, whispering of summer. I think I may say that Flint's broke up entirely on the first wet (lay after the cold spell, — i.e. the 31st of March, — though I have not been there lately. Fair Haven will last some days yet.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

1854

[Transcript]



April 4, Tuesday: A week after declaration of war, Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka left Paris for Russia.

The 2d Regiment of Dragoons under Lieutenant Colonel Philip St. George Cooke defeated the Jicarilla Apaches at the canyon of Ojo Caliente.



WHITE ON RED, RED ON WHITE

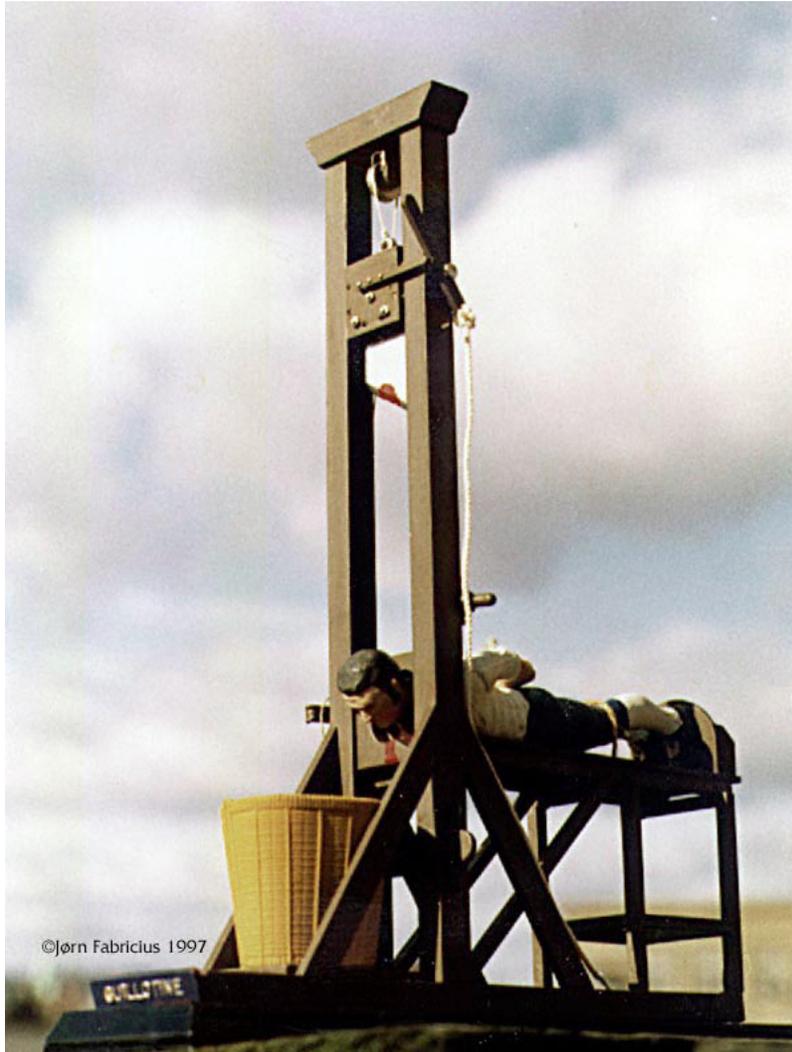
The police raided a fandango house on Pacific Street between Stockton Street and Dupont Street in San Francisco, and arrested 11 men and 14 women under this municipality's new anti-prostitution ordinance (evidently these people were suspected of having been up to no good).

CALIFORNIA

1854

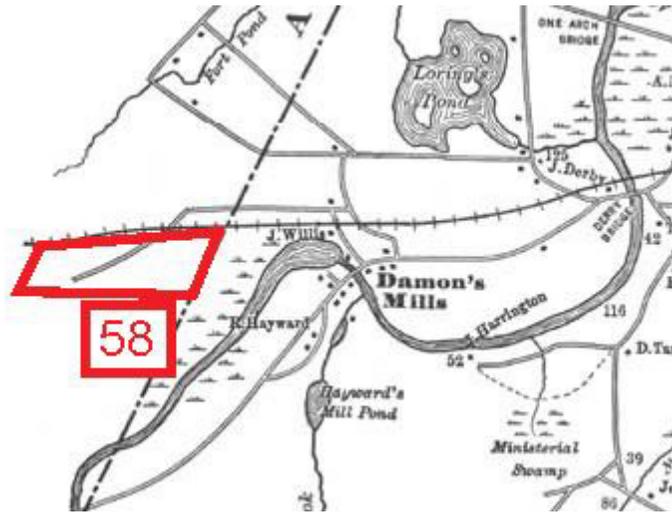
1854

Joseph Tussaud returned to London with a head-chopping machine that he had procured from Clément Sanson. This “[guillotine](#)” was to become a part of [Madame Tussaud’s Waxworks](#).



HEADCHOPPING

[Henry Thoreau](#) spent all day surveying an Acton woodlot belonging to Abel [Hosmer](#) near the railroad and the road to Stow, Jessie Willis, George Wright, Joel Conant, (?) Adams, Asa Parker and the area just west of the Damon Mill land.



View [Henry Thoreau](#)'s personal working drafts of his surveys courtesy of AT&T and the Concord Free Public Library:

http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_Surveys/Thoreau_Surveys.htm

(The official copy of this survey of course had become the property of the person or persons who had hired this Concord town surveyor to do their surveying work during the 19th Century. Such materials have yet to be recovered.)

View this particular personal working draft of a survey in fine detail:

http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_Surveys/58a.htm

An article by [John Russell Bartlett](#) appeared in the [New York Herald](#), on pages 5 and 6, entitled "The Aboriginal Semi-civilization of the Great California Basin, with a Refutation of the popular theory of the Northern Origin of the Aztecs of Mexico," on the migration of Aztecs and the distribution of Native Americans in the Great Basin region, from which [Thoreau](#) would copy into his eighth Indian Notebook.

American and English ships began to land forces at [Shanghai](#) to protect American interests during Chinese civil strife. This would continue until June 17th.

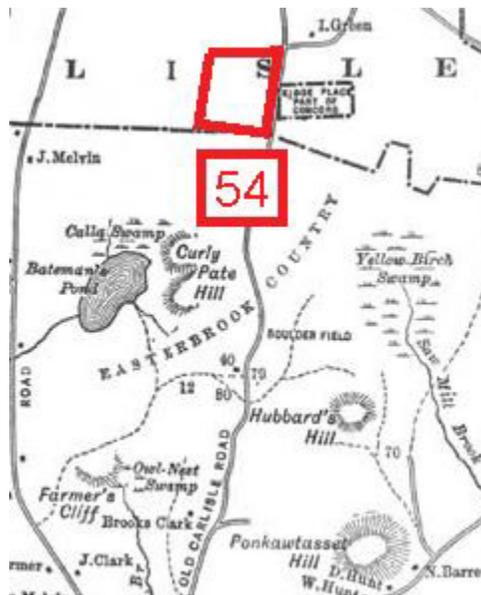
1854

1854

➡ April 5, Wednesday, evening, 1854: [Waldo Emerson](#) was delivering “France” at the [Concord Lyceum](#). Meanwhile the disintegrating body of a man was being discovered in the river between Fair Haven Pond and Lee’s. [Henry Thoreau](#) had spent all day surveying woodlots in Concord and [Carlisle](#), near Hitchinson’s property and near [I.??] Green’s property, for Samuel Hoar, and had made two maps.



The Poplar Hill map was for land on the hill behind the Bullet Hole House and opposite the Old Manse on Monument Street in Concord, near Great Meadows.



The other map was of the North part of the present Easterbrook Woods area.



Thousands of people had gathered at the Plaza in San Francisco for dedication of a new City Hall bell. Fire Chief Engineer Duane broke a bottle of champagne over the bell, because it was also to peal out alarms of fire (the bell tower itself was to be used by fire spotters).

CALIFORNIA

That night,



Spring: “Who shall distinguish between the **law** by which a brook finds its river, the **instinct** a bird performs its migrations, and the **knowledge** by which a man steers his ship round the globe?”

➡ April 6, Thursday: At 6 PM, [Henry Thoreau](#) went up the [Assabet River](#).

“Up Assabet” is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau’s two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.
 — [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 10

1854

1854

 April 7, Friday: At 6 AM, [Henry Thoreau](#) walked down the railroad tracks to the Cliffs. He did not note the condition of the ice on [Walden Pond](#). At some point before the end of this day, the ice would be completely melted:

WALDEN: In 1845 Walden was first completely open on the 1st of April; in '46, the 25th of March; in '47, the 8th of April; in '51, the 28th of March; in '52, the 18th of April; in '53, the 23rd of March; in '54, about the 7th of April.

 April 8, Saturday: Lieutenant Colonel Philip St. George Cooke led his 2d Regiment of Dragoons in pursuit of Jicarilla Apaches led by Chacón who had in a battle at Cieneguilla killed 20 of his soldiers. [Christopher "Kit" Carson](#) was in charge of his scouts. They found the natives camped in the canyon of [Ojo Caliente](#), and dispersed them.

WHITE ON RED, RED ON WHITE

Arthur Sullivan, accompanied by Mr. Plees, his schoolmaster, met Sir George Smart in London, in an attempt to enter the Chapel Royal. Smart encouraged the lad and sent him to see Thomas Helmore.

At 6 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) had gone to [Clamshell Hill](#). In the afternoon he went to Lee's Cliff by way of [Clamshell Hill](#).



April 8: Saw a large bird sail along over the edge of Wheeler's cranberry meadow just below Fair Haven, which I at first thought a gull, but with my glass found it was a hawk and had a perfectly white head and tail and broad or blackish wings. It sailed and circled along over the low cliff, and the crows dived at it in the field of my glass, and I saw it well, both above and beneath, as it turned, and then it passed off to hover over the cliffs at a greater height. It was undoubtedly a white-headed eagle [**Bald Eagle**  *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*]. It was to the eye but a large hawk.

On this day he made an entry in his journal in regard to [Waldo Emerson](#)'s recent [Concord Lyceum](#) lecture on "France" that he was later to copy into his early lecture "[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT](#)" It would be combined with an entry made on January 27th, 1854 and an entry made on March 23d, 1853 to form the following:

**Brad Dean's
Commentary**

[Paragraph3] At a lyceum, not long since, I felt that the lecturer had chosen a theme too foreign to himself, and so failed to interest me as much as he might have done.¹ He described things not in or near to his heart, but toward his extremities and superficialities. There was, in this sense, no truly central or centralizing thought in the lecture. I would have had him deal with his privatest experience, as the poet does. The greatest compliment that was ever paid me was when one asked me what **I thought**, and attended to my answer. I am surprised, as well as delighted, when this happens, it is such a rare use he would make of me, as if he were acquainted with the tool. Commonly, if men want anything of me, it is only to know how many acres I make of their land,—since I am a surveyor,—or, at most, what trivial news I have burdened myself with. They never will go to law for my meat; they prefer the shell. A man once came a considerable distance to ask me to lecture on Slavery; but on conversing with him, I found that he and his clique expected seven-eighths of the lecture to be theirs, and only one-eighth mine; so I declined. I take it for granted, when I am invited to lecture anywhere, that there is a desire to hear what **I think** on some subject, though I may be the greatest fool in the country,—and not that I should say pleasant things merely, or such as the audience will assent to; and I resolve, accordingly, that I will give you a strong dose of myself.² You have sent for me, and engaged to pay for me, and I am determined that you shall have me, though I bore you beyond all precedent.³

1. Thoreau drew this and the following three sentences from his journal entry of April 8, 1854 (JOURNAL ■ 6:187-88). Three days earlier Waldo Emerson had lectured at the Concord Lyceum on the "foreign" subject of "France."

2. On authority of the Nantucket [Inquirer](#), Bradley P. Dean has emended the essay copy-text by omitting '—for I have had a little experience in that business,—', which follows 'lecture anywhere,.'; and by changing 'them' to 'you'.

3. On authority of the Nantucket [Inquirer](#), I emend the essay copy-text by changing the three plural pronouns in this sentence from the third to the second person.



April 8. 6 A.M. — To Clamshell Hill.

Am surprised to find the skunk-cabbage out, shedding pollen (a few). This was probably the case in some places on the 5th and 6th. There has been very little growth visible in its spathes for a month. Its spring seems to be in the fall partly. This spring it has suffered more than usual, owing to the severe cold of the last half of March. Did I see a grass finch [[Vesper Sparrow](#) ■ [Poocetes gramineus](#)]? Cheney's elm begins to show stamens. That remarkably warm first half of March appears to have advanced the plants very much, and as soon as the cold last half was past they burst out almost together. Spearers' lights two or three nights past.

P.M. — To Lee's Cliff via Clamshell.

Methinks I do not see such great and lively flocks of hyemalis and tree sparrows in the morning since the warm days, the 4th, 5th, and 6th. Perchance after the warmer days, which bring out the frogs and butterflies, the alders and maples, the greater part of them leave for the north and give place to newcomers. At the Lyceum the other night I felt that the lecturer had chosen a theme too foreign to himself and so failed to interest me as much as formerly. He described things not in or near to his heart, but toward his extremities and superficialities. The poet deals with his privatest experience. There was no central nor centralizing thought in the lecture.

Some southward banks and hillsides are now considerably tinged with green, not observed at a distance.

I see the celandine and catnep (?) beginning to look green along the graveyard fence. The stigmas of the hazels (beyond Clamshell) are a splendid crimson star when brought between me and the light. I cannot find any of their catkins shedding pollen yet, but they may to-morrow. On the 5th saw a man sowing rye. Heard a prolonged dream from frog (?) in the river meadow; or was it a toad? See black ducks and hear their hoarse quacking. They commonly rise sixty rods off. They feed as often on the land as in the water, and look as clumsy there, as the tame do. At Nut Meadow Brook saw, or rather heard, a muskrat plunge into the brook before me, and saw him

endeavoring in vain to bury himself in the sandy bottom, looking like an amphibious animal. I stooped and, taking him by his tail, which projected, tossed him ashore. He did not lose the points of compass, but turned directly to the brook again, though it was toward me, and, plunging in, buried himself in the mud, and that was the last I saw of him. I see many yellow-spot tortoises today, — some of them quite rusty-looking. The alders are pretty generally [sic]; they are either yellowish, greenish, or reddish. At Heart Leaf Pond the croaking frogs are in full blast.

I saw many on the surface, — small, feruginous or dark brown, bodies two inches long, spread out on the surface and from time to time swimming about and toward each other, or diving. Most utter a short croak several times. Others use a, peculiar squirming; and nasal variation hard to imitate, somewhat like er-wah (not broad war or wor) er-wah erwah er-wah, faster and faster, the nasal between the two syllables, something like what what what what spoken nasally. Then all will be silent. They have spells at it. Did I see their spawn? A turtle dove — went off with a slight whistling note. The willow near Miles's to-morrow or next day, if fair.

That at the bridge equally early. The poplar catkins (*P. tremuloides*) on Conantum are beginning to curve downward, with their red anthers not yet open within the down, — mulberry-like. Apparently will open to-morrow, if warm; say the 10th. The polypody and marginal (?) shield fern and the spleenwort are evergreens at Lee's Cliff. The slippery elm, apparently in two or three days. Am surprised to find two crowfoot blossoms withered. They undoubtedly opened the 5th or 6th; say the last. They must be earlier here than at the Cliffs, where I have observed them the last two years. They are a little earlier than the saxifrage around them here, of which last I find one specimen at last, in a favorable angle of the rock, just opening. I have not allowed enough for the difference of localities. The columbine shows the most spring growth of any plant. What is that plant with narrow toothed leaves which has already shot up so straight four or five inches on the shelves of the rock? *Arabis laevigata* 2

Saw a large bird sail along over the edge of Wheeler's cranberry meadow just below Fair Haven, which I at first thought a gull, but with my glass found it was a hawk and had a perfectly white head and tail and broad or blackish wings. It sailed and circled along over the low cliff, and the crows dived at it in the field of my glass, and I saw it well, both above and beneath, as it turned, and then it passed off to hover over the Cliffs at a greater height. It was undoubtedly a whiteheaded eagle. It was to the eye but a large hawk.

Saw several yellow redpolls (*Sylvia petechia*) [**Pine Warbler**  *Dendroica pinus*] on the willows by the Hubbard Bridge. Am not sure I heard their note. May have mistaken it formerly for the pine warbler. Its chestnut crown would distinguish it.

Hazel, the very first male open.

I find that I can criticise my composition best when I stand at a little distance from it, — when I do not see it, for instance. I make a little chapter of contents which enables me to recall it page by page to my mind, and judge it more impartially when my manuscript is out of the way. The distraction of surveying enables me rapidly to take new points of view. A day or two surveying is equal to a journey.

Pickerel have darted in shallows for a week.

Some poets mature early and die young. Their fruits have a delicious flavor like strawberries, but do not keep till fall or winter. Others are slower in coming to their growth. Their fruits may be less delicious, but are a more lasting food and are so hardened by the sun of summer and the coolness of autumn that they keep sound over winter. The first are June-eatings, early but soon withering; the last are russets, —which last till June again.

 April 9, Sunday: **Henry Thoreau** was surprised to note that **Walden Pond** was completely clear of ice. Checking around, at first he reasoned that it must have opened sometime between the 6th and 9th, but he finally decided that the critical date must have been around the 7th:

WALDEN: In 1845 Walden was first completely open on the 1st of April; in '46, the 25th of March; in '47, the 8th of April; in '51, the 28th of March; in '52, the 18th of April; in '53, the 23rd of March; in '54, about the 7th of April.

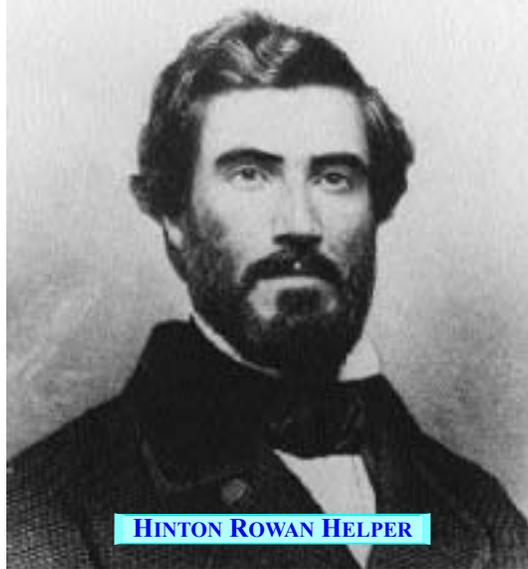


April 9. Saw several more yellow redpolls [**Palm Warbler**  *Dendroica palmarum*] with their rich, glowing yellow breasts by the causeway sides.

1854

1854

The steamer *Star of the West* carrying [Hinton Rowan Helper](#) arrived in [New-York](#) harbor, and our stone racist began his trek back to [North Carolina](#) and what he hoped was going to turn out to be literary fame — from the publication of some really informative and amusing and chauvinist crowd-pleasing [California](#) journals.



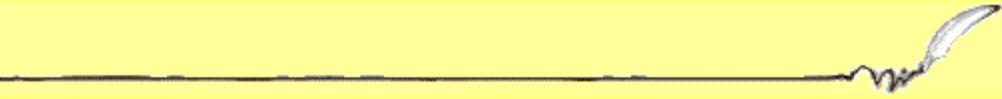
HINTON ROWAN HELPER

Austria, France, Great Britain, and Prussia signed a protocol in Vienna pledging to preserve the integrity of the Ottoman Empire.

 April 10, Monday: In the afternoon, [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Great Meadows by boat, and sailed back.

Long before Thoreau's lifetime, the alluvial plain of the Concord Valley lay at the bottom of a gray glacial lake. This beaded ribbon of turbid water extended the whole length of the valley, widening over bedrock basins that would later become meadows, and narrowing in bedrock constrictions. In Thoreau's epoch, every strong flood recreated the moccasin footprints of this ancient glacial lake at a lower level. The result was a "chain of handsome lakes" that was made higher, more frequent, and more long-lasting by the direct and indirect effects of the [Billerica dam](#). He described the largest lake, over the [Sudbury Meadows](#), as a "smaller Lake Huron," more than a mile across in every direction. Next in size was that over the [Great Meadows](#) of Concord, more than two miles long and half a mile wide. Both of these transient lakes could last for weeks at a time, which was long enough for him to be surprised when they finally disappeared. During floods, the already wide Carlisle reach expanded to resemble one of New York's smaller Finger Lakes.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, pages 120-121



Two earthquake shocks, one at 10:30 AM local time and another 15 minutes later, were experienced in San Francisco. The 2d of these was the more severe, and at Point Lobos was more violent.

CALIFORNIA



April 10: April rain. How sure a rain is to bring the tree sparrows into the yard, to sing sweetly, canary-like!
 I bought me a spy-glass some weeks since. I buy but few things, and those not till long after I begin to want them, so that when I do get them I am prepared to make a perfect use of them and extract their whole sweet.
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 Saw a dead sucker yesterday.
 P.M. — To Great Meadows by boat, and sail back.

[Transcript]

"Downriver," "To Great Meadow," and "To Hill" signified a northward trip down the Concord River below the triple point of the confluence. After passing through a straight reach aligned by the local bedrock strike, arched by two bridges, and flanked by gravel bars of historic sediment that were repeatedly dredged, he entered the north side of Great Meadow. Bounded by the site of the Old North Bridge to the southwest and Ball's Hill to the northeast, it was two miles long and half a mile across. When in flood, the meadow was his favorite inland sea to sail upon because the wind was least impeded and the waves were highest.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 11





1854

1854

There are many snipes [**Common Snipe**  *Gallinago gallinago*] now feeding in the meadows, which you come close upon, and then they go off with hoarse *cr-r-r-ack cr-r-r-ack*. They dive down suddenly from a considerable height sometimes when they alight. A boy fired at a blue-winged teal a week ago. A great many red-wings [**Red-winged Blackbird**  *Agelaius phoeniceus*] along the water's edge in the meadow. Some of these blackbirds quite black, and some *apparently larger* than the rest. Are they all red-wings? The crimson stigmas, like the hazel, of the white maple, generally by themselves, make handsome show.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

1854

1854



Middle of April: At some point during the 2d or 3d week of April, in Windsor, Canada, a widow named Evelyn, a teacher who had befriended the fugitive slave [John Anderson](#), learned of a letter that had arrived in Windsor, alleging that his wife and children had reached Detroit and were waiting there across the river for him to re-enter the good old US of A. Since this was obviously a trap to entice him back to where he could be arrested, he left his trunk with a Mrs. Jackson and hiked to Belle River, where he boarded the train to [Chatham](#). There was a man of color, old enough to pass for his father, like himself a fugitive, named James Hamilton, and so he began to call himself also James Hamilton, and pretend to be this man's son. Chopping wood at three and sixpence the cord, he found he could average about two cords per day. After a few weeks, however, there began to be rumors that he was being looked for in Chatham. He would go on the run again, residing in various locations in Canada during the following six years, while learning the trades of mason and plasterer. Eventually he would settle, and own a home, in Caledonia.

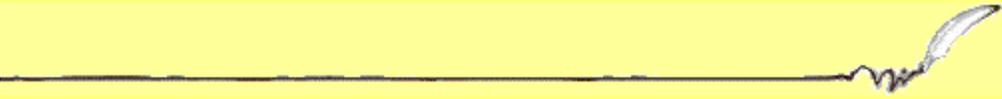


JACK BURTON AS THE CANADIAN "JOHN ANDERSON"

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THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

 April 11, Tuesday: Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka arrived in Berlin on his way home from Paris.

In the afternoon, [Henry Thoreau](#) went off to [Lincoln](#) for a surveying assignment.



April 11.A.M. — Heard the clear, rather loud and rich warble of a purple finch and saw him on an elm. Wilson says they feed on the coverings of the blossoms. It is a distinct and peculiar note, not to be confounded with anything before it. I suspect that I heard one on the 1st of April, *q.v.*

P.M. — Surveying in Lincoln.
 Large ant-hills in the woods, but no ants.
 Evening on river.
 Fine full moon; river smooth. Hear a slight snoring of frogs on the bared meadows. Is it not the *R. palustris*?
 This the first moon to walk by.



[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

 April 12, Wednesday: Arthur Sullivan was enrolled as a chorister in the Chapel Royal.

At the US Bonded Warehouse at Battery and Union in [San Francisco](#), the walls collapsed (there had been a rash of such collapses).

[Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed 20 acres of woodlot in [Lincoln](#) for Schuyler Parks.

http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_surveys/97.htm



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[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

➡ April 13, Thursday: On a clean and pleasant morning [Henry Thoreau](#) walked down as far as Moore's at 8AM and returned along the hill. In the afternoon he sailed to Bittern Cliff.

Meanwhile a decision was reached to pack [John Bowring](#) off to [Hong Kong](#) as Governor Sir John Bowring. During his administration there would be a high-handed dispute with the mainland [Chinese](#) that would eventuate in the 2d Opium War (1856-1860). Under his administration Chinese citizens in Hong Kong would come to be able to serve as jurors and some would become registered solicitors before the bar of the law (this would not be to suggest, you understand, that he personally was in favor of such developments or did something to enable them). He would, however, help to establish Hong Kong's 1st commercial public water supply system, and would institute safety regulation of construction projects. Several locales in Hong Kong commemorate his governorship, which developed eastern Wan Chai, a river mouth near Happy Valley and Victoria Harbour, by elongating that river as a canal. Bowrington, a development zone around the estuary of the Wong Nai Chung river, would become the site of "Bowrington Market."



➡ April 14, Friday: San Franciscans experienced 2 earthquake shocks.

CALIFORNIA

[Henry Thoreau](#) left at 6 AM for Nawshawtuct.



April 14, Friday. 6 A.M. — To Nawshawtuct.

[Transcript]

There is a general tinge of green now discernible through the russet on the bared meadows and the hills, the green blades just peeping forth amid the withered ones. Can they be red-wings which I have seen for some time with the red-wings [**Red-winged Blackbird**  *Agelaius phoeniceus*], — without red or buff? They have a split note, perhaps no *gurgle-ee*! There are spider-webs on the meadow lately bared. It is difficult to find the snipe, though you stand near where he alights. Saw yellow redpolls, on Cheney's elm, — a clear metallic chip and jerks of the tail.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

 April 15, Saturday: Henceforward in [New York](#) all [canal](#) engineers would be selected by a Contracting Board made up of the Canal Commission, the State Engineer, and the Auditor of the Canal Department.



[Transcript]

April 15: Morning. — Snow and snowing; four inches deep. Yesterday was very cold. Now, I trust, it will come down and out of the air. Many birds must be hard put to it. Some tree sparrows and song sparrows have got close up to the sill of the house on the south side, where there is a line of grass visible, for shelter. When Father came down this morning he found a sparrow squatting in a chair in the kitchen. Does n't know how it came there. I examined it a long time, but could not make it out. It was five or six inches long, with a somewhat finch-like bill (bluish-black above and light below); general aspect above pale brown mottled with buffish and whitish; bay and a *little* black on the wings; the crown a faint bay, divided by an ashy line, with a broad ashy line over eye and a distincter bay or chestnut line from the angle of the mouth backward; legs *pale clear flesh-color, feet black*, claws slender; two *faint* whitish bars on wings (the tips of feathers); the breast ashy-white, with many dart- or black spots edged with bay in chains; *no yellow* about it; a rounded tail, long and of a pretty uniform pale brown or bay, ashy on the inner vanes, but *no white nor black* in it; a rather slender bird. It made me *think* of the bay-wing [**Vesper Sparrow**  *Pooecetes gramineus*] and of the Savannah sparrow.

P.M. — This cold, moist, snowy day it is easier to see the birds and get near them. They are driven to the first bare ground that shows itself in the road, and the weather, etc., makes them more indifferent to your approach. The tree sparrows look much stouter and more chubby than usual, their feathers being puffed up and darker also, perhaps with wet. Also the robins and bluebirds are puffed up. I see the white under sides of many purple finches, busily and silently feeding on the elm blossoms within a few feet of me, and now and then their bloody heads and breasts. They utter a faint, clear chip. Their feathers are much ruffled. The yellow- red-poll hops along the limbs within four or five feet of me. Martins the 13th first. The arrival of the purple finches [**Carpodacus**  *purpureus*] appears to be coincident with the blossoming of the elm, on whose blossoms it feeds.

THOREAU AS ORNITHOLOGIST

[Johnson](#) in his “Wonder-working Providence” speaks of “an army of caterpillars” in New England in 1649, so great “that the cart wheels in their passage were painted green with running over the great swarms of them.”

EDWARD JOHNSON

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

1854

1854

 April 16, Easter Sunday: Mazeppa, a symphonic poem, was performed for the initial time, in Weimar, directed by its composer Franz Liszt.

When the ship *Powhatan*, en route from Le Havre, [France](#) to [New-York](#) harbor, was wrecked on [Paumanok Long Island](#)'s Long Beach, 311 perished.

In the afternoon, [Henry Thoreau](#) went to a location where there was epigaea.



April 16. The male yellow redpoll's breast and under parts are of a peculiarly splendid and lively yellow, glowing [[Palm Warbler](#) [Dendroica palmarum](#)]. It is remarkable that they too are found about willows, etc., along the water.

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

 April 17, Monday: [Benjamin Ricketson Tucker](#) was born in South Dartmouth, Massachusetts.

In [New York](#), Chemung, Steuben, and Tompkins Counties merged to form Schuyler County.

 April 18, Tuesday: The trial of [Matthew Flournoy Ward](#), a son of the richest man in Kentucky, for shooting and killing the principal of the Louisville High School, Professor William H.G. Butler, began in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, after a change of venue had been obtained. Alfred Allen of Breckinridge County was at that time the commonwealth's attorney, and would be assisted in the prosecution by Robert F. Carpenter of Covington, F.W. Gibson of Louisville, and Sylvester Harris of Elizabethtown. Attorneys for the defense included John J Crittenden of Frankfort, Thomas F. Marshall of Versailles, George Alfred Caldwell, Nat Wolfe, and Thomas W. Riley of Louisville, and John L. Helm. R.B. Hays, and James W. Hays of Elizabethtown, not to mention by name some 10 additional attorneys for the defense.

[Henry Thoreau](#) sent off some [Harvard Library](#) books, hand carry, with a note to [Thaddeus William Harris](#).

Concord April 18th '54
Dear Sir,
I return by Mr. Gerrish three vols. viz Agassiz sur Les Glaciers
Shepard's Clear Sunshine and New England in 1652
Yrs
Henry D. Thoreau

In the afternoon, he went to "stone-heaps" by boat.



April 18. For three or four days the lilac buds have looked green, — the most advanced that I have seen. The earliest gooseberry still earlier in garden (though smaller buds).

[Transcript]

P.M. — To stone-heaps by boat.

"Up Assabet" is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau's two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.
 — [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 10



Scared up snipes [**Common Snipe**  *Gallinago gallinago*] on the meadow's edge, which go off with their strange zigzag, crazy flight and a distressed sound, - *craik craik* or *cr-r-ack cr-r-rack*. One booms now at 3 P.M. They circle round and round, and zigzag high over the meadow, and finally alight again, descending abruptly from that height. Was surprised to see a wagtail thrush, the golden-crowned, [*Vide* April 26. Probably hermit thrush.] at the Assabet Spring, which inquisitively followed me along the shore over the snow, hopping quite near. I should say this was the golden-crowned thrush without doubt, though I saw none of the gold, if this and several more which I saw had not kept close to the water. May possibly be the *aquaticus*. Have a jerk of the forked tail. The male yellow redpoll's breast and under parts are of a peculiarly splendid and lively yellow, — glowing. It is remarkable that they too are found about willows, etc., along the water. Saw another warbler [*Vide* April 25.] about in the same localities, — *somewhat* creeper-like, very restless, more like the Tennessee warbler than any, methinks. Light-slate or bluish-slate head and shoulders, yellowish backward, all white beneath, and a distinct white spot on the wing; a harsh grating note (?) Saw two wood ducks probably; saw a white spot behind eyes; they went off with a shriller *craik* than the black ducks. I now feel pretty sure that they were crow blackbirds which I saw April 3d with the red-wings [**Red-winged Blackbird**  *Agelaius phoeniceus*]. They are stout fellows without any red epaulet, and go off with a hoarser *chuck chuck*, with rounded tail. They make that split singing, and, with the red-wing, feed along the water's edge. Heard a red-wing sing his *bobytee* in new wise, as if he tossed up a fourpence and it rattled on some counter in the air as it went up. Saw to-day a lesser blackbird, size of cowbird, *slaty-black*, on meadow edge. What was it?
 The snow is sprinkled along the street with the large scales of buds from the trees; thus revealing; what kind of *fall* is going on at this season.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

1854

1854



April 19, Wednesday: In a concert in Weimar the phrase “symphonic poem” was heard for the initial time, as a description of “Tasso” by Franz Liszt.

Lysander Spooner wrote to George Bradburn to express the contempt in which he held the Liberty Party’s successor, the Free Soil Party, a scorn which seemed only to deepen as the influence of this non-Spooner antislavery politics spread. –Love me, love my ideology. –Ignore my ideology, I detest you.

In the morning Henry Thoreau went paddling on the Assabet River, and in the afternoon he went to the Cliffs.

“Up Assabet” is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau’s two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.
– Professor Robert M. Thorson, THE BOATMAN, page 10



April 19. I had chosen to come to the river that afternoon, for there, the air being warm though the earth was covered with snow, there was least change. The few sparrows and warblers along the water’s edge and on the twigs over the water seemed to forget the wintry prospect.... That is a good stream to explore any summer weather, because the woods border it immediately and you can observe a greater variety of small birds. I can approach them more nearly in my boat than on foot.... I thought yesterday that the sparrows must rejoice to sit in the sun again and dry their feathers and feel its warmth.... It is remarkable how scarce and silent the birds are even in a pleasant afternoon like this, compared with the morning. Within a few days the warblers have begun to come. They are of every hue. Nature made them to show her colors with. There are as many as there are colors and shades. In certain lights, as yesterday against the snow, nothing can be more splendid and celestial than the color of the bluebird.

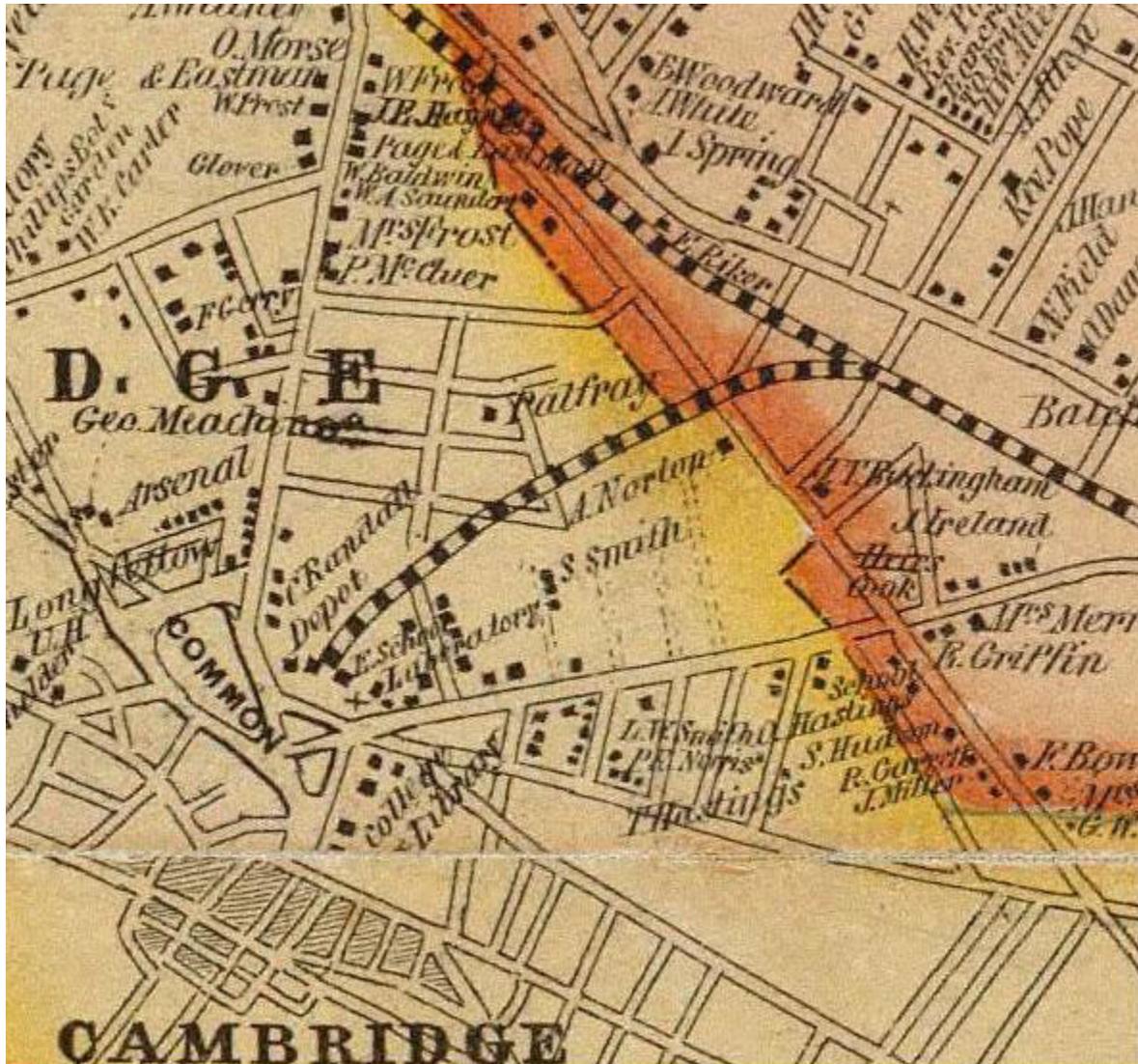
[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

1854

1854

It was decided that the last mile of the railroad link to [Harvard College](#) campus in Cambridge be abandoned (service would discontinue in 1855 and part of the former right-of-way has now become Museum Street; in 1856 a street railway would begin operation).





1854

1854

 April 20, Thursday: In the morning [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Nawshawtuct, in the afternoon he went to Island and Hill, and at 4 PM he went to Moore's Swamp.

Austria and [Russia](#) signed a defensive alliance in Berlin and remained neutral in the [Crimean War](#).

Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel [James Duncan Graham](#) of the US Army's Corps of Topographical Engineers was placed in general supervision of the Harbor Improvements on Lake Michigan.

Rochester, [New York](#)'s Penny Savings Bank opened.

[Alfred Russel Wallace](#) disembarked in Singapore for his collecting expedition in the Malay Archipelago. (He wouldn't be back until February 20th, 1862 — 8 years and about 14,000 miles of travel.)

When Captain Creesy arrived in San Francisco harbor from New-York harbor on the 88th day, this constituted a new record.

CALIFORNIA

 April 21, Friday: [William Lloyd Garrison](#), in his review for [The Liberator](#) (page 2, columns 3-4) "Exploration of the Amazon, and Designs of the Slave Power" of [William Lewis Herndon](#)'s and Lardner Gibbon's EXPLORATION OF THE VALLEY OF THE AMAZON, opined as to the base motives that lay behind all this activity. Was it not that "the prime motive" for such an exploration of the swampy jungle would be "to discover new fields and open new resources for the Slave Power, whereby its domains shall be illimitable, and its existence perpetuated as long as a tropical soil and climate can endure its pestiferous presence"?

 **"LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE":** Lieutenant Herndon, whom our Government sent to explore the Amazon, and, it is said, to extend the area of Slavery, observed that there was wanting there "an industrious and active population, who know what the comforts of life are, and who have artificial wants to draw out the great resources of the country." But what are the artificial wants to be encouraged? Not the love of luxuries, like the tobacco and slaves of, I believe, his native Virginia, nor the ice and granite and other material wealth of our native New England; nor are "the great resources of a country" that fertility or barrenness of soil which produces these. The chief want, in every State that I have been into, was a high and earnest purpose in its inhabitants. This alone draws out "the great resources" of Nature, and at last taxes her beyond her resources; for man naturally dies out of her. When we want culture more than potatoes, and illumination more than sugar-plums, then the great resources of a world are taxed and drawn out, and the result, or staple production, is, not slaves, nor operatives, but men, -those rare fruits called heroes, saints, poets, philosophers, and redeemers.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked to Saw Mill Brook. He made an entry in his journal that he was later to copy into his early lecture "[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT](#)" as:

[Paragraph 41] The title **wise** is, for the most part, falsely applied. How can one be a wise man, if he does not know any better how to live than other men?—if he is only more cunning and intellectually subtle? Does Wisdom work in a tread-mill? or does she teach how to succeed **by her example**? Is there any such thing as wisdom not applied to life? Is she merely the miller who grinds the finest logic? It is pertinent to ask if Plato got his **living** in a better way or more successfully than his contemporaries,—or did he succumb to the difficulties of life like other men? Did he seem to prevail over some of them merely by indifference, or by assuming grand airs? or find it easier to live, because his aunt remembered him in her will? The ways in which most men get their living, that is, live, are mere make-shifts, and a shirking of the real business of life,—chiefly because they do not know, but partly because they do not mean, any better.

Brad Dean's
Commentary



April 21. A.M. — Heard the ~~bay wing~~^{one of the seringos} sparrow in the redeemed meadows. None yesterday morning. At a distance hear only the end of its strain, like the ring of a small piece of steel dropped on an anvil. A few *F. hyemalis* still about. Are not those little whorls of black pointed scales the female blossom of the *Thuya occidentalis*?

[Transcript]

Scarcely an April shower yet.

How can a man be a wise man, if he does n't know any better how to live than other men? —if he is only more cunning and intellectually subtle? Does Wisdom work in a treadmill? Does Wisdom fail? or does she teach how to succeed by her example? Is she merely the miller who grinds the finest logic? Did Plato get his *living* in a better way or more successfully than his contemporaries? Did he succumb to the difficulties of life like other men? Did he merely prevail over them by indifference, or by assuming grand airs? or find it easier to live because his aunt remembered him in her will?

P.M. — To Saw Mill Brook.

As I was handling the arbor-vitæ to-day, an odor like strawberries came from [it]. Is that terebinthine? The lilac is beginning to open to-day. The snows go off and the lustre of the wintergreen is undiminished. The large black ants are at work on their hills. The great scalloped leaf betrays the *P. grandidentata*. How silent and deserted the woods are! I do not fairly see a chickadee even. Snow with its tracks would make it seem more inhabited. How we prize any redness on the ground! — a red stain in a stone or even a coxcomb lichen on a stump! The hellebore at the brook has shot up six or eight inches with its compact bundles and will soon catch the cabbage. It is *now* one of the most forward plants. That gooseberry at the brook is the most forward shrub or tree at present that I can find out of doors in Concord. [Added later: Excepting the spiræa.] [Added later yet: The thimble-berry in some places equally forward, and perhaps the honeysuckle vine.] It shows more of a leaf than the lilac or Missouri currant, which may come next. As I go up the hill beyond the brook, while the hylodes are heard behind, I perceive the faintest possible flowerlike scent as from the earth, reminding me of anemonies and houstonias. Can it be the budded mouse-ears under my feet? Downy-swaddled, they lie along flat to the earth like a child on its mother's bosom. I sit on a rock awhile just below the old trough. These are those early times when the rich golden-brown tassels of the alders tremble over the brooks — and not a leaf on their twigs. We are far north with [Sir John Franklin](#). I see the first of that bent lake grass on the smooth surface of a flooded meadow, with a dimple at its stern. It is a warm sight. The fruit of the *O. spectabilis*(?), flowering fern, still perfect. I see on the red cedar the male blossom buds not yet quite open, and very minute hollows with whitish scales at the ends of some of the branchlets, which I take to be the female flowers.

The song of the purple finch on the elms (he also frequents firs and spruce) is rich and continuous, like, but fainter and more rapid than, that of a robin, — some of the *cherruwit* in it and a little of the warble of the martin. A martin was found dead the 18th after the snows, and many bluebirds in Brookfield.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



1854

1854



April 22, Saturday: [Harvey D. Parker](#) purchased a property west of School House Lane in [Boston](#), directly across the street from the 1749/1754 King's Chapel and just down the road from the domed Massachusetts State House, and tore down the mansion built there in 1704 by John Mico, that had been inhabited in turn by Colonel Jacob Wendall, Governor Moses Gill, and the Boylston family and had then fallen into decrepitude as a boarding house. He began construction of a brick hotel faced in white marble. The 1st and 2d floors of this 5-story Italianate structure would be provided with arched windows.

Anton Bruckner's *Laßt Jubeltöne laut erklingen* for male chorus and brass to words of Weiss was performed for the initial time, for the reception of the future Empress Elizabeth, in Linz.

[Hector Berlioz](#) gave the 1st of 4 highly successful concerts in Dresden, conducting *La damnation de Faust*.



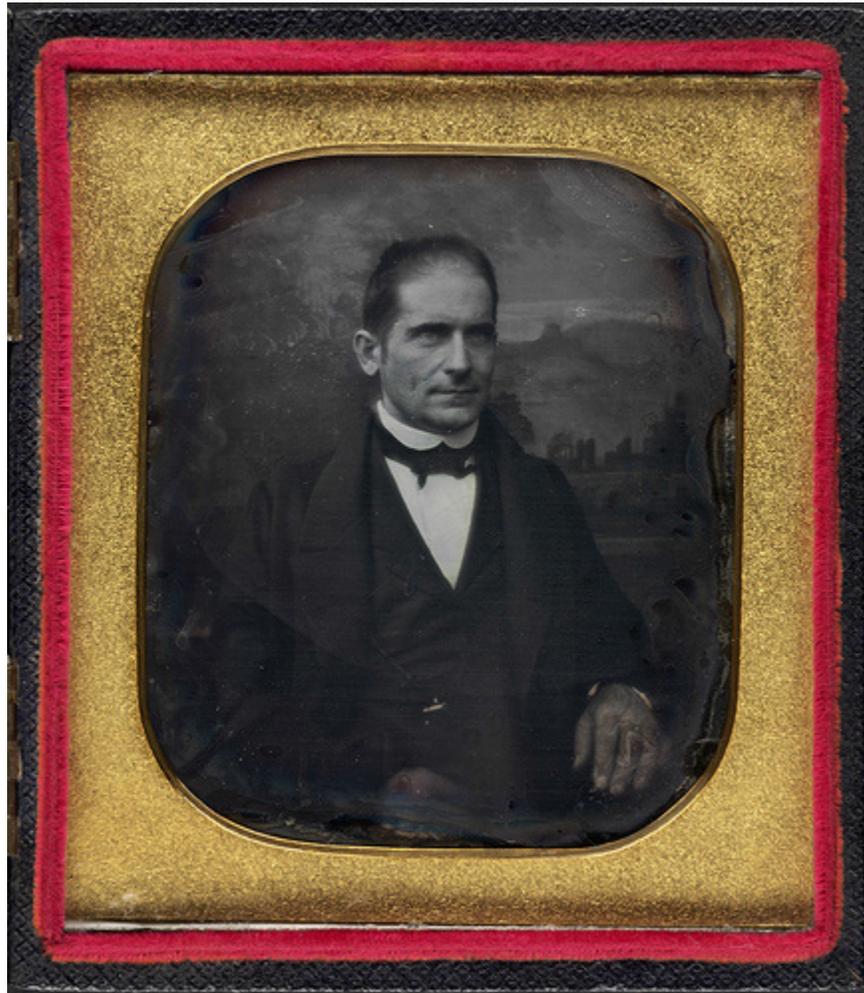
[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR APRIL 22d]

[Transcript]

1854

1854

 April 23, Sunday: [Lucy Stone](#) told [Henry C. Wright](#) that reading his [MARRIAGE AND PARENTAGE; OR, THE REPRODUCTIVE ELEMENT IN MAN, AS A MEANS TO HIS ELEVATION AND HAPPINESS](#) over and over, every time she was seeing “more clearly its absolute truth, and exceeding beauty.” She was presenting copies of it to other young people, inscribing these copies with “for all that is pure, and true between man and woman” One of Stone’s friends, however, considered the book unfit to read and refused to show it to a daughter who was becoming a bride).⁹³



April 23. A kingfisher with his *crack*, — *cr-r-r-rack*. Rain Yesterday and to-day; yet this morning the robin sings and the blackbirds and, in the yard, the tree sparrow, hyemalis, and song sparrow. A rain is sure to bring the tree-sparrow and hyemalis to the gardens. I suppose it must be the seeds of weeds which they are so busily picking from the bare ground, which their sharp eyes detect. George Minott says that he used to shoot the red-headed woodpecker, and found their nests on the trees on his hillside. He used to steal up to the pigeon woodpeckers’ holes and clap his hand over them and take out the old bird; then let her go. The first April showers are even fuller of promise and a certain moist serenity than the sunny days. How thickly the green blades are starting up amid the russet! The tinge of green is gradually increasing in the face of the russet earth. Now that the very earliest shrubs are beginning to unfold, — spirwa, gooseberry, honeysuckle vine, lilac, Missouri currant, — many herbaceous plants, not evergreen merely, make quite a show, as the skunk-cabbage

[Transcript]

93. This may be an earlier edition which we do not have, for the edition of [MARRIAGE AND PARENTAGE; OR, THE REPRODUCTIVE ELEMENT IN MAN, AS A MEANS TO HIS ELEVATION AND HAPPINESS](#) which we know about bears a publisher’s imprint of the following year.

in favorable places, nuphar in the *most favorable* places though muddy yellow and dilapidated, callitriche and the narrow tooth-leaved water plant, etc., etc., cowslip, columbine (cress and chrysosplenium, — are not both chiefly evergreen?), celandine, catnep, saxifrage, dandelion, clover, golden senecio, sweet flag, hellebore (the most forward buds begin to open), thistle, shepherd's-purse, meadow saxifrage, elder probably.

As for the birds, I have this to remark: The crows still frequent the meadows. The lark sings morning and evening. The blackbirds — red-wing [**Red-winged Blackbird**  *Agelaius phoeniceus*] and crow — have since their arrival kept up their *bobylee* and chattering and split notes on the willows and maples by the river and along the meadow's edge. They appear to depend much (as well as crows and robins) on the meadow, just left bare, for their food. They are the noisiest birds yet. Both still fly in flocks, though the male red-wings have *begun* to chase the females. Robins still frequent the meadows in flocks and sing in the rain. The song sparrows not in such flocks nor singing so tumultuously along the watercourses in the morning as in the last half of March. how wary they are! They will dodge you for half an hour behind a wall or a twig, and only a stone will make them start, looking every which way in a minute. So the blackbirds, both kinds, sidle, till they bring a twig between me and them. The flock of black ducks which stayed by so long is now reduced to a quarter part their number. Before the 4th or 5th of April the *F. hyemalis* was apparently the most abundant bird of any, in great drifting flocks with their lively jingle, their light-colored bill against slate breasts; then, on the advent of warmer weather, the greater part departed. Have the fox sparrows gone also? I have not seen them of late. As for hawks, after the one or two larger (perhaps) hen-hawks in the winter and a smaller one in December (?), the first were large marsh (?) hawks on trees on the meadow edge or skimming along it, since which the eagle, the sharp-shinned, and the smaller brown and white-rumped over meadows, which may be the same, etc., etc. Have seen the black duck, golden-eye, Merganser, blue(?) winged teal, wood duck. The golden-eye seems to have gone. Heard a nuthatch yesterday, April 22d. The tree sparrows are the prevailing bird on ground, and most numerous of any for the past month except one while the *hyemalis*. They are a chubby little bird with a clear chestnut crown, a dark spot on the otherwise clear whitish breast, and two light bars on the wings. The pigeon woodpecker now scolds long and loud morning and evening. The snipes are still feeding on the meadows. The turtle dove darts solitary about as if lost, or it had lost its mate. The yellow redpoll, with a faint clear chip, is the commonest yellow bird on hills, etc., about water. The chip sparrow does not sing much in morning yet. New kinds of warblers have begun to come within a few days. I saw yesterday the smoke of the first burning of brush which I have noticed, though the leaves cannot be very dry yet.

P.M. —To Lee's Cliff on foot.

It has cleared up. At Ivy Bridge I see the honeybees entering the crypts of the skunk-cabbage, whose tips have been bitten by the frost and cold. The first sweet-gale, which opened a day or two ago on the sunny sides of brooks where the sun reached it above the bank, was an interesting sight, full of amber dust. Those are blossom, not leaf buds, so forward on the shad-bush. The myrtle-bird, — yellow-rumped warbler, — was not this warbler c of the 20th? — on the willows, alders, and the wall by Hubbard's Bridge, slate and white spotted with yellow. Its note is a *fine*, rapid, somewhat hissing or whistling *se se se se ser riddler se*, somewhat like the common yellowbird's. The yellow redpolls [**Palm Warbler**  *Dendroica palmarum*] are very common on the willows and alders and in the road near the bridge. They keep jerking their tails. I heard one male sing a jingle like *che ve ve ve ve*, very fast, and accenting the last syllable. They are quite tame. I sit awhile on the lee side of Conant's Wood, in the sun, amid the dry oak leaves, and hear from time, to time the fine ringing note of a pine warbler, which I do not see. It reminds me of former days and indescribable things. Swarms of those little fuzzy gnats now make a faint humming about the railing of the bridge. The bay-wing has a light ring at some distance around the eye. It is also too dark for my prisoner of the 15th.

Saw my white-headed eagle [**Bald Eagle**  *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*] again, first at the same place, the outlet of Fair Haven Pond. It was a fine sight, he is mainly — i.e. his wings and body — so black against the sky, and they contrast so strongly with his white head and tail. He was first flying low over the water; then rose gradually and circled westward toward White Pond. Lying on the ground with my glass, I could watch him easily and by turns he gave me all possible views of himself when I observed him edgewise I noticed that the tips of his wings curved upward slightly the more, like a stereotyped undulation.



He rose very high at last, till I almost lost him in the clouds circling or rather looping along westward, high over the river and wood and farm, effectually concealed in the sky.



We who live this plodding life here below never know how many eagles fly over us. They are concealed in the empyrean I think I have got the worth of my glass now that it has revealed to me the white-headed eagle. Now I see him edgewise like a black ripple in the air, his white head still as ever turned to earth and now he turns his

under side to me, and I behold the full breadth of his broad black wings, somewhat ragged at the edges. ...

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

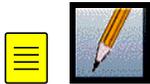
➡ April 24, Monday: In the morning [Henry Thoreau](#) walked up the railroad tracks, and in the afternoon he went up the [Assabet River](#) to Cedar Swamp.

"Up Assabet" is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau's two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.
 — [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 10



➡ April 25, Tuesday: Brevetted Lieutenant-Colonel [James Duncan Graham](#) of the US Army's Corps of Topographical Engineers was placed in general supervision of the Channel Improvement over St. Clair Flats.

In the afternoon, [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Indian Cedar Hill.



April 25: A.M. — I think I hear near George Heywood's the *tull-lull* (?). [Yes] Heard and saw my warbler (?) *b'* of the 23d and 24th on Mr. Emerson's pines. It is the smallest bird I have seen this year. Sits still amid the pines not far below the top and sings very sweetly, loud and clear, and seems further off than it is, beginning first with very *fine* wiry notes and then increasing in volume and melody till it ends with *tweeter tweeter tweeter ter twe*. Some of it a martin-like warble. Has sometimes a harsh scolding note. It is all light, perhaps ashy-white, beneath; has a little narrow forked tail; ashy (?) under wings, which are considerably shorter than tail; and light above and below eye; perhaps a whitish bar on wings; olivaceous (?) above. I think it may be the *golden-crested wren*. [~~Golden-crowned Kinglet~~ [Regulus satrapa](#)] though I hardly saw the upper parts, or *possibly* the small blue-gray flycatcher. I do not find the male blossoms of the red cedar open yet.

[Transcript]

P.M. — To Indian Cedar Hill.
 Quite warm and the frogs are snoring on the meadow. I swelter under my greatcoat. The *Populus grandidentata* is fairly begun; say very first the 23d. Many shad-flies in the air and alighting on my clothes. The summer approaches by almost insensibly increasing *lieferungs* of heat, each awakening some new bird or quadruped or reptile. At first we were compelled to take off our mittens, then to unbutton our greatcoat, and now, perhaps, to take it off occasionally (I have not left it at home yet), and wear thin boots. For some time we have done with little fire, nowadays let it go out in the afternoon. (To-day, 26th, I sit without any.) Each creature awaits with confidence its proper degree of heat. I think I saw a pigeon [~~American Passenger Pigeon~~ [Ectopistes migratorius](#) (~~Pigeon-Wild~~)] yesterday. G. Minott says that he saw some a week ago. Saw a ~~golden~~^{Ruby}-crested wren ["golden" crossed out in pencil in favor of "ruby"] [~~Ruby-crowned Kinglet~~ [Regulus calendula](#)] in the woods near Goose Pond. (This must be my warblers a and b of April 18th, *b'* of April 23d and 24th.) It sounded far off and like an imitation of a robin, [And of a golden robin, [~~Northern Oriole~~ [Icterus galbula](#) (~~Fiery Hangbird~~ or ~~Hangbird~~ or ~~Gold Robin~~ or ~~Golden Robin~~)] which later I often mistook for him.] — a long strain and often repeated. I was quite near it before I was aware of it, sounding like a faint imitation of a robin. Some chickadees [~~Chicadee~~, ~~Black-capped~~ [Parus atricapillus](#) (~~Titmouse~~, ~~Titmiee~~)] and yellow redpoll [~~Palm Warbler~~ [Dendroica palmarum](#) (~~Yellow Redpoll~~ or ~~Sylvia petechia~~)] were first apparent, then my wren on the pitch pines and young oaks. He appeared curious to observe me. A very interesting and active little fellow, darting about amid the tree-tops, and his song quite remarkable and rich and loud for his size. Begins with a very fine note, before its pipes are filled, not audible at a little distance, then *woriter weter*, etc., etc., winding up with *teter teter*, all clear and round. [His song is

comical and reminds me of the thrasher. [Thrasher, Brown  *Toxostroma rufum* (Mavis, red)] This was at 4 P.M., when most birds do not sing. I saw it yesterday, pluming itself and stretching its little wings. Our smallest bird, methinks, except the hummingbird. [Ruby-throated Hummingbird  *Archilochus colubris*] The snuff-colored, white-spotted wren  I saw some time ago was considerably larger. Just before this saw on the low bushes, — shrub oaks, etc., — by path, a large sparrow with ferruginous-brown and white-barred wings, — the white-throated sparrow, [White-throated Sparrow  *Zonotrichia albicollis*] — uttered a faint ringing chirp. The first partridge [Ruffed Grouse  *Bonasa umbellus* (Partridge)] drums in one or two places, as if the earth's pulse now beat audibly with the increased flow of life. It slightly flutters all Nature and makes her heart palpitate, Also, as I stand listening for the wren, and sweltering in my greatcoat, I hear the woods filled with the hula of insects, as if my hearing were affected; and thus the summer's quire begins. The silent spaces have begun to be filled with notes of birds and insects and the peep and croak and snore of frogs, even as living green blades are everywhere pushing up amid the sere ones. I heard that same snoring which I hear on the river meadows, on all inland meadow this afternoon, where I think no bullfrogs are. Are they not then the *palustris*, or else the shad frog? There are now many new insects in the air. Black ducks still on Flint's. The fertile fruit-stems of the sensitive fern by the side of the Flint's Pond path, more than a foot high, are a rich ornament to the ground, — brown, four or five inches long, and turned to one side, contrasting with the lighter rachis (?) Saw my thrush of the 18th by the pond. It appears dark-olive, ferruginous on rump and tail, with a dark streak slanting from each check and flesh-colored legs. The red cedar has fairly begun to-day; maybe the first yesterday. Put the red yesterday and the white to-day. As I approach the red cedars now, I perceive a delicious strawberry-like fragrance in the air, like that from the arbor-vita. The creeping juniper apparently open, but not yet open. Though I see some amber on the sweet-fern, I am in doubt whether to say to-day or to-morrow. The wild red cherry (if that is one near Everett's), privet, and buckthorn are *beginning* to leaf out. The able will probably blossom to-morrow.



THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



April 26, Wednesday: The jury in the trial of Matthew Flourney Ward, a son of the richest man in Kentucky, who had shot and killed the principal of the Louisville High School, Professor William H.G. Butler, retired for deliberation at 5 P.M. and would deliver its "not guilty" verdict the following morning.

At 2:30PM Henry Thoreau went on foot to Lee's Cliff. That evening there was a heavy thunder-shower.



April 26. The woods are full of myrtle-birds [Yellow-rumped Warbler  *Dendroica coronata*] this afternoon, more common and commonly heard than any, especially along the edge of woods on oaks, etc., — their note an oft-repeated fine jingle, a *che che che che, che che*, or a *tweedle tweedle tweedle tweedle-twe*. As I heard the *tull lull* from the same quarter from time to time, I think it came from it. Perhaps it may be written, a *tea le, tea le, tea le*. These small birds — and all small birds — seen against the sky at a little distance look black. There is not breadth enough to their colors to make any impression; they are mere motes, intercepting the light, the substance of a shadow.

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



April 27, Thursday: Myrthen-Kränze op.154, a waltz, was performed for the initial time, in the Hofburg, Vienna for the wedding of Emperor Franz Joseph II to Princess Elisabeth of Bavaria, and was directed by its composer [Johann Baptist Strauss II](#).

[Waldo Emerson](#) had offered to read a paper in [Moncure Daniel Conway](#)'s room at [Harvard Divinity School](#), and Conway had sent out invitations. The authorities had been perplexed for some time at this student's closeness to the heretic of Concord, and when this latest thing came to their attention, they went into a panic of sorts. Conway would be challenged by [Harvard](#)'s Professor of Christian Morals with the possibility that this represented a "decline of Christian morals" in Divinity Hall. Two of the professors would visit student Conway in his room and give voice to their fears that there was being organized "a school within the school," amounting to an "Emersonian cult." But the meeting in question, on this date, had in fact gone off without incident, the group having moved because of its size to a public room and Emerson having merely read his paper on "Poetry" to an audience that included Professor [Henry Wadsworth Longfellow](#) and faculty spouse Fanny Appleton Longfellow, [James Russell Lowell](#), Professor [Charles Eliot Norton](#), [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#), and [Arthur Hugh Clough](#). We are left wondering why on earth all these authority figures were getting so exercised.⁹⁴

The jury in the trial of [Matthew Floumoy Ward](#), a son of the richest man in Kentucky, for shooting and killing the principal of the Louisville High School, Professor William H.G. Butler, returned to the courtroom on this morning and delivered a "not guilty" verdict. To avert possible mob action, a horse and buggy were waiting outside the courthouse at the southwest corner of the Public Square, and the acquitted man was rushed to the railroad station and put on board a train leaving for the South.

Meanwhile, out at [Walden Pond](#), [Henry Thoreau](#) was hypothesizing that the level of water in the pond ought to become very low again during the period 1866-1869 (amazingly, this anticipation would prove to have been accurate).



April 27. 7 A.M. —To Cliffs. ... The wood thrush [[Hermit Thrush](#) [Catharus guttatus](#)] afar, —so superior a strain to that of other birds. I was doubting if it would affect me as of yore, but it did measurably. I did not believe there could be such differences. This is the gospel according to the wood thrush. He makes a sabbath out of a week-day — I could go to hear him—could buy a pew in his church— Did he ever practice pulpit eloquence? He is right about the slavery question—

[Transcript]

... [Forbes](#) says that the guides who crossed the alps with him lost the skin of their faces — (Ap from the reflections from the snow.)

It is remarkable that the rise & fall of Walden though unsteady & whether periodical or merely occasional are not completed but after many years. I have observed one rise & part of 2 falls. It attains its maximum slowly & surely though unsteadily. It is remarkable that this fluctuation, whether periodical or not, requires many years for its accomplishment — and I expect that a dozen or 15 years hence it will again be as low as I have ever known it.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

94. It wasn't the fact that [Waldo Emerson](#) talked about "arrested and progressive development" in this paper on poetry which had gotten the faculty all excited, even though later it would be proposed, by some folks who demonstrably knew nothing whatever of evolutionary theory, that Emerson had here been anticipating [Charles Darwin](#)'s theory. What Emerson had said was simply "The electric word pronounced by [Doctor] John Hunter [1728-1793] a hundred years ago, — *arrested and progressive development* — indicating the way upward from the invisible protoplasm to the highest organism, — gave the poetic key to natural science, — of which the theories of Geoffroy St. Hilaire, of [Lorenz Oken](#) [1779-1851], of [Johann Wolfgang von Goethe](#) [1749-1832], of [Louis Agassiz](#) [1807-1873], and [Sir] [Richard Owen](#) [1804-1892] and [Doctor] [Erasmus Darwin](#) [1731-1802] in zoölogy and botany, are the fruits, — a hint whose power is not exhausted, showing unity and perfect order in physics." —Which is not Darwinism, but the obsolete mental universe of hierarchy and superiority, of *Naturphilosophie*, the great ladder of being, all of which amounted to the wanna-believe bullshit that [Charles Darwin](#) would be struggling to **supersede**.

MORE

 April 28, Friday: Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka arrived in Warsaw on his way home from Paris.

The United States informed the British minister in Washington of its neutrality in the [Crimean War](#).

It rained all day, making the grass look green. [Henry Thoreau](#) transplanted some black spruce trees.

There were 25,000 [Chinese](#) in [California](#) and almost all who were adults could read in Chinese. On this day was issued the 1st issue of the 1st San Francisco newspaper in the Chinese language, titled [Gold Hills News](#).

 April 29, Saturday: Jules Henri Poincaré was born.

The legislature of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania granted a charter to Ashmun Institute, the 1st college for African-Americans.

The jury in the trial of [Matthew Flornoy Ward](#), a son of the richest man in Kentucky, for shooting and killing the principal of the Louisville High School, Professor William H.G. Butler, having delivered a “not guilty” verdict, a mob of perhaps 8,000 prominent citizens gathered before the elegant Ward residence, stoning its windows and setting fire to the building front, demanding that the Ward brothers leave the city and burning in effigy juror Nat Wolfe and other members of the jury, and editor George D. Prentice of the [Journal](#) (he had testified as to the defendant’s character and manners). Noble Butler, a brother of the slain professor, attempted to calm these rioters.

In the afternoon Henry Thoreau rowed in a misty rain to the Cliffs.



April 29. The ideal of a market is a place where all things are bought and sold. At an agricultural meeting, in New York the other day, one said that he had lately heard a man inquiring for spurry seed; he wanted it to sow on drifting sand. His presumption had been that if he wanted it, *i.e.*, if there was a demand, there was a supply to satisfy that demand. He went simply to the shop instead of going to the weed itself. But the supply does not anticipate the demand.

[Transcript]

This is the second day of rain, and the river has risen about as high as any time this year.

P.M. — To Cliffs lay boat in the misty rain.

“Up Assabet” is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau’s two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.
 — [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 10

The barn swallows are very numerous, flying low over the water in the rain. I think that those which I saw on the 24th were barn and not bank swallows. What an entertainment this river affords! It is subject to so great overflows, owing to its broad intervals, that a day’s rain produces a new landscape. Let it rain *heavily* one whole day, and the river will be increased from half a dozen rods in width to nearly a mile in some places, and, where I walked dry-shod yesterday a-maying, I sail with a smacking breeze to-day, and fancy that I am a sailor on the ocean. It is an advantage which all towns do not possess. Off the Cliffs I met a blue heron [[Great Blue Heron](#)  [Ardea herodias](#)] flying slowly downstream. He flaps slowly aright and sharp bill projecting forward, then his keel-like neck doubled up, and fina





His wings, as I looked after him, presented this outline
 He alighted on a rock, and stood erect awhile.
 I am surprised to find a few andromedas out, just behind the alders at the oak on Cardinal Shore. Possibly yesterday the very first, though it rained. At last I find one houstonia just out there.
 The mouse-ear is now fairly in blossom in many places. It never looks so pretty as now in an April rain, covered with pearly drops. Its corymbs of five heads with one in the centre (all tinged red) look like a breast-pin set with pearls.

J. Farmer says that this rain will kill many caterpillars just hatched.
 As nearly as I can remember and judge, plants were *generally* out at the following dates:—

White maple	April 7	Hazels	April 12
Alders	8	<i>Populus Tremuloides</i>	14
Skunk-cabbage	9	Crowfoot	13
Sedge	11	Saxifrage	13
Earliest willows fairly begun		Slippery elm	22
(not common till April 20)	12	Common elm	12
Cowslip	24	Red cedar	26
Sweet-gale	23	White [cedar]	27 (?)
<i>Salix humilis</i>	23	<i>Populus grandidentata</i>	26
Red maple	26	Field horse-tail	28
Larch	28 (?)	Mouse-ear	29

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR APRIL 30th]

[Transcript]

1854

1854



MAY 1854

THE 1ST TUESDAY IN MAY WAS THE ANNUAL "MUSTER DAY," ON WHICH ALL THE ABLEBODIED WHITE MEN OF A TOWN WERE SUPPOSEDLY REQUIRED TO FALL INTO FORMATION, WITH THEIR PERSONAL FIREARMS, TO UNDERGO THEIR ANNUAL DAY OF MILITARY TRAINING AND MILITIA INDOCTRINATION.



May: [Elisha Graves Otis](#) produced the initial elevator with a safety device to prevent it from free-falling if the hoist cable should break, and demonstrated how it worked at America's 1st world's fair at the Crystal Palace (now Bryant Park) in New-York City, by riding the platform high into the air and then ordering the rope to be chopped by a man standing by with an ax. Joseph J. Fucini and Suzy Fucini would write in *ENTREPRENEURS: THE MEN AND WOMEN BEHIND FAMOUS BRAND NAMES AND HOW THEY MADE IT*:

A model of engineering simplicity, the safety device consisted of a used wagon spring that was attached to both the top of the

hoist platform and the overhead lifting cable. Under ordinary circumstances, the spring was kept in place by the pull of the platform's weight on the lifting cable. If the cable broke, however, this pressure was suddenly released, causing the big spring to snap open in a jaw-like motion. When this occurred, both ends of the spring would engage the saw-toothed ratchet-bar beams that Otis had installed on either side of the elevator shaft, thereby bringing the falling hoist platform to a complete stop.

In fact most of what has been written about this "famous" demonstration has been written long after the fact, as detailed in Andreas Bernard's *Lifted: A Cultural History of the Elevator* (NYU Press, 2014). There has even been a complete newspaper issue, fabricated out of whole cloth by the industry flacks to appear to be an issue of a period newspaper, for purposes of touting the "famous" event. At the time the demonstration by Otis attracted practically no attention at all, which is why we are unable to establish the date of this demonstration with any more exactness than the approximate "May 1854."

FAKE NEWS

➡ May: Benjamin Waterhouse Hawkins had been commissioned in 1853 to construct, for the relocated [Crystal Palace](#) outside London, full-scale concrete restorations of the prehistoric reptiles known to that time. —For the very biggest and newest, what but the very biggest and oldest? With the replicas installed on the grounds of Sydenham Park to the south of London, Hawkins presented a paper before the Society of Arts in which he described the conceptual problems of restoring a creature for which the evidence was piecemeal, as well as the technical problems of casting a replica that contained, as he put it, 640 bushels of artificial stone. He displayed a drawing showing all his restorations, including the marine reptiles, in their park settings. To the left he depicts his two Iguanodon, at the center his Hylaeosaurus, and to the right his Megalosaurus.⁹⁵

➡ May: The family of the [William Jackman](#) who had become the author of a captivity-and-escape narrative sold their land claim near Madison, Wisconsin and traveled overland to Prairie Du Chein, where they boarded the *War Eagle* and traveled on the Mississippi River to Prescott, Wisconsin.

A formal "conversation" was staged in [Waldo Emerson](#)'s study, between 2 and 3 in the afternoon, with [Bronson Alcott](#) and Emerson as two of the conversants, the audience consisting of young Harvard men, primarily from the [Harvard Divinity School](#). Among these was [Edwin Morton](#) of [Plymouth](#). Emerson opened the event by stating with confidence that literature could be, in America, a young man's occupation and breadwinner. There followed a consideration of various [Harvard](#) professors and tutors, such as [Henry Wadsworth Longfellow](#), [George Ticknor](#), [Edward Everett](#), [Jones Very](#), [James Walker](#), etc.

➡ May: This month's issue of [Harper's New Monthly Magazine](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE

➡ May: The Reverend [Samuel Ringgold Ward](#) again had the opportunity to take part in the annual meetings of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society in London:

I was honoured, both in 1853 and in 1854, by invitations to

95. Although the [Crystal Palace](#) would burn down in 1936 these early models of [dinosaur](#) are still standing around to the south of London. (They'll be there even if you don't visit them.)



1854

1854

address the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society; in fact, the honour of a similar invitation was conferred upon me this year, but I was unable to attend. Added to the pleasure of labouring, however feebly, in the anti-slavery cause, was the fact that, upon the occasion first named, the Earl of Shaftesbury presided. To sustain any relation to that prince of noblemen, even for so short a time, was an honour any man might covet. Besides, among the gentlemen on the Committee of that Society are some of my dearest personal friends, to serve whom I would do anything. At that meeting, in 1853, I became acquainted with Lord Shaftesbury. No one had introduced me to him, and I was feeling all the awkwardness of being a stranger to the noble Lord whom, as chairman of the meeting, I was soon to address; but as the speaker next before myself was near concluding, his Lordship leaned towards me and said, "I believe you are to speak next, Mr. Ward." Thus the nobleman's affability removed my embarrassment, consequent upon the neglect of commoners. Thus I became acquainted with the head of the great house of Ashley: and there commenced a series of kind actions on the part of his Lordship which lay me under unceasing obligations.

It is sometimes said, that in Great Britain there is no need of discussing the question of slavery. Two very strong objections are made against it – one is, that as there are no slaves in the British empire now, there is nothing for the British people to do on the subject; the other is, that as the discussion of slavery is necessarily, now, the discussion of a subject affecting other nations and governments than our own, such discussion will be regarded by those concerned as an interference with their affairs. This remark is made with especial reference to America and the Americans, who are, of all people in the world, the most sensitive on this particular point. That I was obliged to meet these objections, at different points of my travels, I hardly need say. To answer them formed no small part of my work in England. I hope I shall be pardoned for introducing here what little I have to say on this matter. 1. It is quite true, I am but too thankful to say, that the British flag does not float anywhere over slaves. Now, in the colonies as at home, the words of Whittier apply to every man, woman, and child –

“Freedom, hand in hand with labour,
Walketh, strong and brave;
While, on the brow of his neighbour,
No man writeth – Slave!”

The British people, to their infinite credit, responded to the clarion voices of their [Henry Peter Brougham](#), Knibb, Buxton, Clarkson, Wilberforce, Macaulay, Allen, Cropper, and Rathbone, and shattered every stone of the accursed old Bastille of British slavery. Yet it is not to be forgotten, that long ere that was done, British hands had become red with the innocent blood of millions of slaves. The old slave trade, with its horrors (Liverpool being its chief mart); the horrible plantation scenes of Jamaica and other West India islands, the barbarisms of the Mauritius, the atrocities of the Cape – oh, these darkest, most guilty pages of British history, are not to be easily forgotten! While we were guilty of these abominations, and their attendant



1854

1854

crimes, the whole weight of British influence was given to the furtherance of slavery in other countries; what they did, we did. They may have surpassed us in cruelty,⁹⁶ but still we were connected with the same atrocious system. The guilt of our colonies was endorsed at home; nay, the owners of colonial slaves were dwellers at the West End of London, our senators and our peers. Commoners who were planters, in London, Liverpool, and Glasgow, rolled in untold wealth, the fruit of the Negro's unpaid toil. They were regarded with a sort of deference, such as is paid to the American slaveholder at Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. A baronetcy or a peerage was scarcely more desirable or more honourable, than to be known as a great West India planter, the owner of so many hundred slaves! Sometimes, indeed, baronet or peer, and planter, were associated titles of the same distinguished individual. These brought all the influence of wealth, name, position, patronage, and senatorial place, to bear upon the Government, which but too easily winked at the wickedness and obeyed the demands of the then British slave power. Thank God, I am writing past history; but history it is!

Having done so much for slavery, as a nation and as individuals, it is not to be denied that the British people have contracted no small share of blame for encouraging the slavery of other peoples, by their evil example. It can scarcely be said that the abolition of the slave trade, the procuring of some few treaties against it in conjunction with other nations, and the abolition of colonial slavery, at a very late day, wiped out all our guilt. In May, 1772, a decision, procured by the persevering diligence of the immortal Granville Sharpe, was rendered by Lord Chief Justice Mansfield, to the effect that the arrival of a slave upon British soil made him a freeman. In 1814 a number of Negroes escaped from North Carolina to the ships composing the British fleet, commanded by Admiral Sir George Cockburn.⁹⁷

Upon their being claimed by the American authorities, in behalf of their masters, Sir George refused to deliver them, in virtue of that decision, declaring the law of the soil to be the law of the ship to which the Negroes had fled. In 1825 the American Government desired the British Government to deliver to them slaves who had escaped to Canada. This was refused, in accordance with Lord Mansfield's decision. But while, by virtue of that decision, we freed the slaves of foreigners, when they touched our soil, we, in spite of that decision, held slaves ourselves! Nay, more. Several American slave ships, with slave cargoes on board, were driven upon our West India Islands. Touching those islands, the slaves were made freemen. Still, we held hundreds of thousands of slaves on those islands – we made our soil free to other people's slaves, while upon the same soil we held slaves!

What a glaring contradiction was here! "British soil is free soil to the slaves of other countries; it is slave soil to our own subjects." That was substantially our saying. If the highest court in the empire made British air free to foreign lungs, why did it not make that air equally free to British lungs? in a

96. That is scarcely possible, however.

97. See "Jay's View of the Action of the Federal Government in behalf of Slavery."



word, why did not the poor slave of the colonial plantations receive the benefits of this decision? I beg to say, I cannot admit that "The why is plain as way to parish church."

Is it not true, that we held half a million of slaves in our colonies, in as open contradiction to the law as laid down by Lord Chief Justice Mansfield on the 5th of May, 1772, as do our American brethren at this day hold three millions in contradiction to their [Declaration of Independence](#) as laid down by Jefferson, four years two months and twenty nine days thereafter? and from the date of the former, until 1832, were we one whit better than our neighbours? We gave them the most practical encouragement. We began our hypocrisy more than four years before they began theirs. And it is a singular fact, that each nation, at the time to which I refer, robbed about half a million of slaves of rights which, according to public and solemn declarations of both, belonged to the subjects, to all the subjects, of each: indeed, ours was the greatest inconsistency, as we violated a judicial decision, while they simply trampled upon an abstract declaration of political sentiments. They incorporated the same sentiments in their Constitution, but this was not until 1789. We had been stultifying ourselves, then, for seventeen years! I submit whether such sinners, though penitent, "bring forth fruits meet for repentance" without seeking, if possible, to counteract the effects of their own evil example, by something more than merely emancipating their own slaves.

But there is, if possible, a still darker shade in this picture. On the sailing of Sir George Cockburn's fleet to the West Indies, the American authorities followed it, and renewed their demand for the slaves. Sir George, true to his British principles, repeated and persisted in his refusal to deliver them. The Negroes, of course, remained free. But the American Government, always persevering in such cases, made their demand for gold in payment for them, through their Minister at London. It was refused. A long correspondence then commenced, which did not terminate until 1836, twenty-two years after. And how did it terminate? By our Government paying, in gold, the sum of £40,000, by way of compensation for the Negroes; and after paying this, twenty-two years' interest was demanded, and we paid that! Some six or seven cases are on record, of our complicity in American slavery, by paying for the cargoes of slave ships wrecked on our islands: indeed, we almost always paid money in such cases, until after the passing of the Emancipation Act.

To say nothing of the perfect impunity with which we allow Spain to violate a treaty against the slave trade, for compliance with which we paid her £400,000, nearly forty years ago, and not to speak of the shamefully loose provisions of our treaty with the United States⁹⁸

The treaty also provided that, should subjects of either Government be convicted of being engaged in the slave trade, in vessels owned or chartered by the parties so convicted, they should be punished, &c. The United States Senate purged the treaty of the words "or chartered." Hence an American, or any one else, desirous to engage in this abominable traffic, had only to charter – not to put himself to the expense of purchasing



or building – a vessel, and proof of its being such exempted him from the punishment threatened in that treaty.

Again: the treaty, as it left Britain, provided that punishment should be inflicted upon subjects of either Government engaged in the slave trade, under the British or the American Flag, upon conviction. The Senate of America struck out "or the American"; so that trading in slaves on the American coast, under the American flag or in a chartered vessel, is no violation of the treaty, as it now stands! I call this treaty "shamefully loose." Is it not so? For the same purpose, let us look at one more fact which shows that we are far from being innocent of present complicity in the crime of slaveholding.

In the Slave States it is law, that a free Negro from abroad or from the Northern States shall, upon landing on their shores, be imprisoned until his ship sails. When she sails, the captain must pay the charges of his arrest and imprisonment, or he is to be sold, to pay them, into slavery for life! For thirty years this has been done to British subjects, to the knowledge of the British Government! The Honourable Arthur F. Kinnaird has twice, within the past two years, brought this subject before the Government, but the answers to his questions have been most unsatisfactory. They reveal the fact, that but little care is felt about this matter in Downing Street. In the winter of 1854-55, one or two of the Atlantic Slave States so modified their law that a British Negro, arriving there, shall be forbidden to land, and the captain is put under heavy bonds, which are to be forfeited if the Negro goes on shore. This odious law is made for the security of slavery, by preventing free Negroes from associating with the slaves and teaching them the way to a free country. Conniving at it, our Government, certainly in a degree, shares its guilt. The rights of a British subject, of whatever colour, ought not to be suffered thus to be jeopardized for the accommodation of our trade in slave-grown cotton.

Considering the depth of our past guilt, and our share in planting, encouraging, and perpetuating slavery in America and elsewhere, I do not think we ought to close our lips until all whom we have for centuries aided in this sin shall be brought to repentance for it. Upon the high grounds of our common humanity and our holy religion, I am sure I need not say one word, except it be to deplore that mere business considerations, the arguments of Lombard Street and the Exchange, should so chill the hearts and dry up "the milk of human kindness" in Englishmen's bosoms as to put aside the claims of our suffering brethren.

2. As to its being considered offensive to American or other slaveholders that Englishmen condemn slavery and labour for its overthrow, it is well enough to observe, that part of what we discuss is our own guilty complicity. Surely this cannot be

98. I refer to Mr. Jay again on this point, and ask attention to what that learned American jurist, the son of the great John Jay, says on the subject. I give the substance only of Judge Jay's remarks. It seems that the United States Government proposed to the British Government a convention against the slave trade. The British Government readily complied. After waiting a reasonable time, the latter gently reminded the former that nothing had been done in the case. Another pause ensued. Then the British Government prepared a treaty, and sent it to Washington for sanction. That treaty provided that, if subjects of either Government were found engaged in the slave trade, on the coast of Africa, America, or the West Indies, they should be subjected, on conviction thereof, to certain specified penalties. The American Senate struck out the word "America"; thus exempting their own coast, for obvious reasons, from the operations of the treaty.



intermeddling with other people's affairs. The slave being our brother, and the slaveholder being our brother too, we may claim the right of obeying the command, "Thou shalt not suffer sin upon thy neighbour, thou shalt in anywise rebuke him." Besides, the great methods of a practical character by which British abolitionists seek to destroy slavery are made upon our own soil: they are, the elevation of the British Negro, and supplying the British markets with staples from the British tropics – thus rebuking slavery by the former; and competing with it, driving it out of the market, by the latter. Is it objectionable to elevate and make good subjects of our own Negroes? Is it objectionable to till our own soil, and sell the produce thereof in our own markets? Would our American neighbours listen one moment to any objections Englishmen might make to their doing things of like character?

It is said, however, by some persons who object most strongly to British abolitionism, that Great Britain entailed slavery upon the Americans. This I think is very doubtful. If it were true, however, it would not only justify, but it would authorize, the very thing that is complained of. Let us see. I do not believe the charge of the entailment of slavery upon America by the British. I admit, of course, that much guilt and great responsibility, such as I have already referred to, rest upon the people of Britain; but as to entailing slavery upon Americans, how can that be true, when they threw overboard the tea at Boston harbour, and threw off the British rule? Could they not have disposed of slavery quite as easily? If not as easily, had they not the same power over it? Had the British people or Government any power over them after they became independent? If they retained slavery after that, was it not because they chose to do so? They answer these questions by saying, as they do every day, that they found it impossible to agree upon a constitution without agreeing either to let slavery alone, or to secure it! They claim pay for their slaves, and they claim immunity from rebuke, on the ground that slavery is constitutional. If so, who made it so? If so, what becomes of the charge of its entailment upon them by Britain?

On the other hand, if it be true that British people did entail slavery upon the Americans, they of all people are the ones to seek the undoing of what they have done.

The good example set to other nations by the British Government in this matter, and the sustenance given the Government by the British people, entitle them to be heard on the subject. They have sinned, and they have repented. They have a right to "tell their experience." The Negro in America looks to the Englishman as his friend. It is with his especial consent that the Englishman speaks in his behalf. The Englishman's friendly regard for the Negro is well known to the latter. The poor slave, even, cannot be kept ignorant of this. Some Englishmen, I am proud to know, are quite willing to be looked upon as guardians, protectors, and defenders, of the poor and needy Negro.

It was with the greatest delight that I found, in every part of England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, that abolitionism is not a mere abstract idea, but a practical question of grave importance. It is not because, to a certain extent, anti-slavery sentiments are fashionable and natural, that these persons



approve them, but because of their intrinsic character. Generally, the children of the abolitionists of early days are proud of their anti-slavery inheritance. Some few, I regret to say, do not walk in their parents' footsteps: it may be because their pursuits are somewhat different. There is great occasion for rejoicing in the fact, that the leading abolitionists of Britain are among the most exalted of the land. I have mentioned the names of some of them. At their residences, where I had the pleasure of calling upon them, they impressed me most deeply with the fact. The Earl of Shaftesbury bade me call upon him as often as I pleased, to consult him upon matters relating to my mission. Upon one occasion his Lordship shook me by the hand, saying, "God bless you, my good friend! Call again, when you can." On another occasion he gently rebuked me for not having called more frequently.⁹⁹

Lord Harrowby conversed freely and with deep interest on the subject, expressing his desire that Mr. Jordan, a coloured gentleman who was candidate for the mayoralty of Kingston, Jamaica, should be elected. Lord Calthorpe asked me kindly concerning the distinctions between blacks and whites in America, and remarked that, in the judgment day, no such distinctions would appear. The same nobleman most kindly took the chair at my meeting at Birmingham. I may as well say, briefly, that the nobility generally whom I had the honour of meeting treated both me and my cause with the kindest consideration; none more so than her Grace the Duchess of Sutherland, her Grace the Duchess of Argyll, and his Grace the Duke of Argyll. I am under great obligations to Lord Robert Grosvenor, Lord Haddo, Lord Ebrington, Lord Waldegrave, the Honourable Arthur F. Kinnaird, Sir Edward North Buxton, Sir Thomas D. Acland, Ernest Bunsen, Esq., Samuel Gurney, Esq., and many others, too numerous to mention, but not too numerous both to deserve and to receive my warmest, humblest thanks.

Besides the nobility, the English abolitionists are among the most devotedly pious of the laymen, and the most eminent divines of all sections of the Christian Church. The Rev. Dr. Campbell, of London, the Rev. Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool, the Rev. Dr. Halley, of Manchester, the Rev. John Angell James, of Birmingham, the Rev. James Parsons, of York, the Rev. Dr. Alexander, of Edinburgh, the Rev. Dr. Robson, of Glasgow, the Rev. Dr. A. Moreton Brown, of Cheltenham, George Hitchcock, Esq., Samuel Morley, Esq., John Crossley, Esq., William P. Paton, Esq., John Smith, Esq., William Crossfield, Esq., Edward Baines, Esq., George Leeman, Esq., are instances and illustrations of this fact. To know that the anti-slavery cause is in such hands in England and Scotland, and to know that the honoured names now mentioned are but representatives of a class embracing the best and the purest of the earth, is reason enough why one should feel quite certain of the final success of our holy cause.

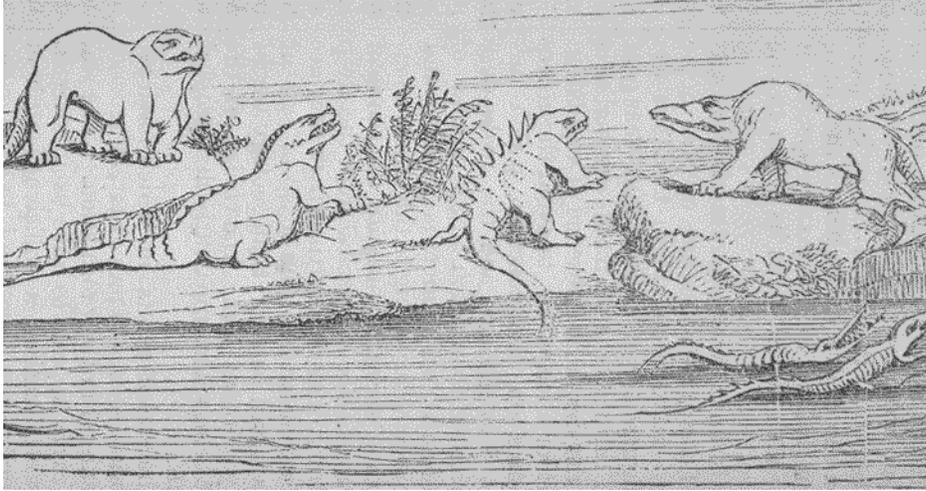
It is a little remarkable to notice the likeness of English to American abolitionists, in character and status. In both countries this precious cause has for its advocates and

99. At that time his Lordship did me the honour to accept my miniature. The note acknowledging its receipt I keep as a priceless inheritance for my children.

1854

1854

standard-bearers the very "salt of the earth." It is as if God calls into the service of defending the poor and the needy those whom by his grace he has made most like himself. What abundant evidence there is, in this fact, that the cause is his!



May: [Henry Thoreau](#) received a form letter from Charles Scribner Publishers in New-York, which had decided to put out an ENCYCLOPEDIA OF AMERICAN LITERATURE (evidently he would respond to this since, when [Evert Augustus Duyckinck](#) and George Long Duyckinck's publication would appear during 1855, it would indeed contain, on pages 653-6, selections from his writings).



[VIEW VOLUME I](#)

<<Thoreau's nature notes on top of page>>

145 Nassau Street, New York.

[May, 1854.]

As it is my intention to publish the coming season a work, entitled AN ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF AMERICAN LITERATURE, embracing Personal and Critical Notices of Authors, with passages from their Writings, from the earliest period to the present day, with Portraits, Autographs, and other illustrations, I have adopted the method of addressing to you a Circular letter[,] as the best means of rendering the book as complete in regard to points in which you may be interested, as possible, and as faithful as may be to the memories and claims of the families and personages whose literary interests will be represented in it. The plan of the work is to furnish to the public, at one view, notices of the Lives and Writings of all American authors of importance. As it is quite probable you may have in your possession material or information which you would like the



1854

1854

opportunity of seeing noticed in such a publication, you will serve the objects of the work by a reply to this circular, in such answers to the following suggestions as may appear desirable or convenient to you.

1. Dates of birth, parentage, education, residence, with such biographical information and anecdote, as you may think proper to be employed in such a publication.
2. Names and dates of Books published, references to articles in Reviews, Magazines, &c., of which you may be the author. ~
3. Family notices and sources of information touching American authors no longer living, of whom you may be the representative.

Dates, facts, and precise information, in reference to points which have not been noticed in collections of this kind, or which may have been misstated, are desirable. Your own judgment will be the best guide as to the material of this nature which should be employed in a work which it is intended shall be of general interest and of a National character.

It will represent the whole country, its only aim being to exhibit to the readers a full, fair, and entertaining account of the literary products thus far of America.

It is trusted that the plan of the work will engage your sympathy and concurrence, and that you will find in it a sufficient motive for a reply to this Circular. The materials which you may communicate will be employed, so far as is consistent with the limits and necessary literary unity of the work, for the preparation of which I have engaged Evert A. and George L. Duyckinck, who have been prominently before the public for several years in a similar connection, as Editors of the "Literary World."

Yours, respectfully,
CHARLES SCRIBNER.

<Thoreau's nature notes>

.B. All Communications upon this subject should be addressed, "Charles Scribner, Publisher, 145 Nassau Street, New York."

<Thoreau's nature notes>



May 1, Monday: At 6 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) walked up the railroad tracks. At 9 AM he went to the Cliffs and thence by boat to Fair Haven. In the afternoon he took his boat up the [Assabet River](#) to Cedar Swamp.



May 1. A fine, clear morning after three days of rain, — our principal rain-storm this year, — raising the river higher than it has been yet.

[Transcript]

6 A.M. — Up railroad. Everything looks bright and as if it were washed clean. The red maples, now fully in bloom, show red tops at a distance. Is that a black cherry so forward in the cow-killer? When I first found the saxifrage open, I observed that its leaves had been eaten considerably.

9 A.M. — To Cliffs and thence by boat to Fair Haven.

I see the scrolls of the ferns just pushed up, but yet wholly invested with wool. The sweet-fern has not yet blossomed; its anthers are green and close, but its leaves, just beginning to expand, are covered with high-scented, amber-like dots. Alder leaves begin to expand in favorable places. The viburnum (*Lentago* or *nudum*) leaves unexpectedly forward at the Cliff Brook and about Miles Swamp. I am not sure that I distinguish the *nudum* now, but suspect the other to be most forward. Snakes are now common on warm banks. At Lee's Cliff find the early cinquefoil. I think that the columbine cannot be said to have blossomed there before to-day, — the very earliest. A choke-cherry is very strongly flower-budded and considerably leaved out there. The early rose is beginning to leaf out. At Miles Swamp, benzoin will apparently open to-morrow, before any leaves begin. The creeping juniper appears to be now just in bloom. I see only the female flower.

I sail back with a fair southwest wind. The water is strewn with myriads of wrecked shad-flies, erect on the surface, with their wings up like so many schooners all headed one way. What an abundance of food they must afford to the fishes! Now and then they try to fly, and fall on the water again. They apparently reach from one end of the river to the other, one to a square yard or two. The seleranthus is out and a tuft of that brownish-flowered kind of sedge.

P.M. — Up Assabet by boat to Cedar Swamp.

"Up Assabet" is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau's two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.
 — [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 10



The earliest shrubs and trees to leaf have been thus far in this order: The earliest gooseberry (in garden and swamp), raspberries, thimble-berry (perhaps in favorable places only), wild red cherry (it that is one near Everett's), [Vide May 5. It is.] meadow-sweet, (red currant and second gooseberry, I think, here), sweet-fern (but is very *slow* to go forward), *S. alba* (April 27), and also a small dark native willow, young black cherry (if that is one in the cow-catcher, and others are as forward), choke-cherry, young shoots (am not sure if *Lentago* is earlier than *nudum*; as both are leafing, put the *Lentago* first and *nudum* next), diervilla (if that light-stemmed plant on Island is it), [Vide May 5] barberry (perhaps in favorable places only), and some young apples in like places, alders (in favorable places), early rose.

Saw two black ducks. Have seen no *F. hyemalis* for five or six days. Hear a golden-crested wren at Cedar Swamp. I think that I may have mistaken the note of the myrtle-bird for that of the creeper the other morning. A peewee, and *methinks* I have heard it a day or two.

I have seen Goodwin and Haynes all day hunting muskrats and ducks, stealthily paddling along the riverside or by the willows and button-bushes, now the river is so high, and shooting any rat that may expose himself. In one instance a rat they had wounded looked exactly like the end of an old rider stripped of bark, as it lay just on the surface close to the shore within a few feet of them. Haynes would not at first believe it a muskrat only six or eight feet off, and the dog could not find it. How, pitiful a man looks about this sport! Haynes reminded me of the Penobscots.

Early starlight by riverside.

The water smooth and broad. I hear the loud and incessant cackling of probably a pigeon woodpecker, — what some time since I thought to be a different kind. Thousands of robins are filling the air with their trills, mingling with the peeping of hylodes and ringing of frogs [*sic*]; and now the snipes have just begun their winnowing

HDT

WHAT?

INDEX

1854

1854



sounds and squeaks, and I hear Barrett's sawmill beside—, and whenever a gun fires, Wheeler's peacock screams.

The flowers of the larch which I examined on the 24th *ult.* have enlarged somewhat and may now certainly be considered in blossom, *though the pollen is not quite distinct.* I am not certain whether the 26th was not too early. The crimson scales of the female cones are still more conspicuous.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

May 2, Tuesday: In Boston, with a bequest from Joshua Bates for \$50,000.⁰⁰ worth of books, the first circulating library in America opened its doors.¹⁰⁰ Also, an anti-Catholic mob carried off the crucifix of a Catholic church.

Luc et Lucette, an opéra-comique by Jacques Offenbach to words of de Forges and Roche, was performed for the initial time, at the Salle Herz, Paris.

May 3, Wednesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) went in the morning rain by boat to Nawshawtuact.

He wrote to a [Hosmer](#), we believe to [Edmund Hosmer](#) (although we do not have this letter but only a narrow strip torn from a draft of the letter).

C.H. Tracy surveyed the town of Ravenswood, near San Francisco.

CALIFORNIA

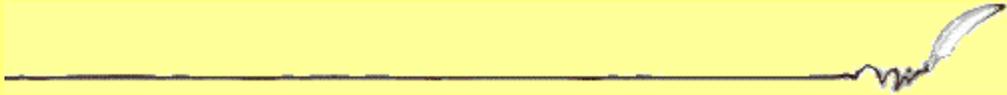
May 5, Friday: [Henry Thoreau](#) visited Boiling Spring, Laurel Glen, and Hubbard's Close.



May 5. P.M. — To epigæa *via* Clamshell Hill.

"Up Assabet" is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau's two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 10



There is no such thing as pure *objective* observation. Your observation, to be interesting, i.e. to be significant, must be *subjective*. The sum of what the writer of whatever class has to report is simply some human experience, whether he be poet or philosopher or man of science. The man of most science is the man most alive, whose life is the greatest event. Senses that take cognizance of outward things merely are of no avail. It matters not where or how far you travel,—the farther commonly the worse,—but how much alive you are. If it is possible to conceive of an event outside to humanity, it is not of the slightest significance, though it were the explosion of a planet. Every important worker will report what life there is in hire. It makes no odds into what seeming deserts the poet is born. Though all his neighbors pronounce it a Sahara, it will be a paradise to him; for the desert which we see is the result of the barrenness of our experience. No mere willful activity whatever, whether in writing verses or collecting statistics, will produce true poetry or science. If you are really a sick man, it is indeed to be regretted, for you cannot

100. Although that's about M\$5 today and would purchase some 200,000 volumes, but in those days books were proportionally more expensive and that amount of money would have obtained, order of magnitude, only some 40,000 volumes.



accomplish so much as if you were well. All that a man has to say or do that can possibly concern mankind, is in some shape or other to tell the story of his love,—to sing; and, if he is fortunate and keeps alive, he will be forever in love. This alone is to be alive to the extremities. It is a pity that this divine creature should ever suffer from cold feet; a still greater pity that the coldness so often reaches to his heart. I look over the report of the doings of a scientific association and am surprised that there is so little life to be reported; I am put off with a parcel of dry technical terms. Anything living is easily and naturally expressed in popular language. I cannot help suspecting that the life of these learned professors has been almost as inhuman and wooden as a rain-gauge or self-registering magnetic machine. They communicate no fact which rises to the temperature of blood-heat. It does n't all amount to one rhyme.

The ducks appear to be gone (though the water is higher than at any time since that greatest of all rises, I think, — reached its height, yesterday; the arches are quite concealed), swept by with the spring snow and ice and wind, though to-day it has spit a little snow and is *very* windy (northwest) and cold enough for gloves. Is not that the true spring when the *F. hyemalis* and tree sparrows are with us singing in the cold mornings with the song sparrows, and ducks and gulls are about? The *Viola ovata* this end of Clamshell hill, perhaps a day or two; let it go, then. Also, dandelions, perhaps the first, yesterday. This flower makes a great show, — a sun itself in the grass. How emphatic it is! You cannot but observe it set in the liquid green grass even at a distance. I am surprised that the sight of it does not affect me more, but I look at it as unmoved as if but a day had elapsed since I saw it in the fall. As I remember, the most obvious and startling flowers as yet have been the crowfoot, cowslip, and dandelion, so much of a high color against the russet or green. We do not realize yet so high and brilliant a flower as the red lily or arethusa. Horse-print is an inch or two high, and it [is] refreshing to scent it again. The *Equisetum sylvaticum* has just bloomed against Hosmer's gap.

It is the young shoots of the choke-cherry which are the more forward, — those which are not blossom-budded, — and this is the case with most trees and shrubs. These are growing while the older are blossoming. Female flower of sweet-gale how long? At Ministerial Swamp, the anthers of the larch appear now effete. I am surprised to find a larch whose female cones are pure white (not rose or crimson). The bundles of larch leaves are now fairly separating. Meadow saxifrage just out at Second Division. The cowslip now makes a show there, though not elsewhere, and not there as much as it will. There is a large and dense field of a small rush there, already a foot high, whose old and dead tops look like blossoms at a distance. The mayflower is in perfection. It has probably been out more than a week. Returned over the hill back of J.P. Brown's. Was surprised at the appearance of the flood. Seen now from the same side with the westering sun, it looks like a dark-blue liquid like indigo poured in amid the hills, with great bays making up between them, flooding the causeways and over the channel of each tributary brook, — another Musketaquid making far inland. I see in the distance the light, feathery willow rows [?] on the causeway, stretching across it, the trees just blooming and coming into leaf, and isolated red-topped maples standing far in the midst of the flood. This dark-blue water is the more interesting because it is not a permanent feature in the landscape. Those white froth lines conform to the direction of the wind and are from four to seven or eight feet apart.

Remembering my voyage of May 1st, and Goodwin and Haynes hunting, you aright have passed up and down the river three or four miles and yet not have seen one muskrat, yet they killed six at least. One in stern paddling slowly along, while the other sat with his gun ready cocked and the (low, erect, in the prow, all eyes constantly scanning the surface amid the button- bushes and willows, for the rats are not easy to distinguish from a bunch of dried grass or a stick.

Suddenly one, is seen resting on his perch, and crack goes the gun, and over the dog instantly goes to fetch him. These men represent a class which probably always exists, even in the most civilized community, and allies it to the most savage. Goodwin said in the morning that he was laying stone, but it was so muddy on account of the rain that he told Haynes he would like to take a cruise out.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

May 6, Saturday: More than a year after its disastrous premiere, La Traviata by Giuseppe Verdi was produced once again in Venice, this time at the Teatro San Benedetto, with different singers. It was a complete success.

The 1st issue of a publication of the Catholic Church, the Weekly Catholic Standard.

In Sacramento, there was a convention for the organization of the Grand Chapter of California Freemasons.

A comment in Scientific American helps us understand Henry Thoreau's remark in WALDEN, "often the richest freight will be discharged upon a Jersey shore":



1854

1854

The late terrific shipwrecks on the Jersey shores, by which so many lost their lives....

TIMELINE OF SHIPWRECKS

WALDEN: I have always endeavored to acquire strict business habits; they are indispensable to every man. If your trade is with the Celestial Empire, then some small counting house on the coast, in some Salem harbor, will be fixture enough. You will export such articles as the country affords, purely native products, much ice and pine timber and a little granite, always in native bottoms. These will be good ventures. To oversee all the details yourself in person; to be at once pilot and captain, and owner and underwriter; to buy and sell and keep the accounts; to read every letter received, and write or read every letter sent; to superintend the discharge of imports night and day; to be upon many parts of the coast almost at the same time; -often the richest freight will be discharged upon a Jersey shore;- to be your own telegraph, unweariedly sweeping the horizon, speaking all passing vessels bound coastwise; to keep up a steady despatch of commodities, for the supply of such a distant and exorbitant market; to keep yourself informed of the state of the markets, prospects of war and peace every where, and anticipate the tendencies of trade and civilization, -taking advantage of the results of all exploring expeditions, using new passages and all improvements in navigation;- charts to be studied, the position of reefs and new lights and buoys to be ascertained, and ever, and ever, the logarithmic tables to be corrected, for by the error of some calculator the vessel often splits upon a rock that should have reached a friendly pier, -there is the untold fate of La Perouse;- universal science to be kept pace with, studying the lives of all great discoverers and navigators, great adventurers and merchants, from Hanno and the Phoenicians down to our day; in fine, account of stock to be taken from time to time, to know how you stand. It is a labor to task the faculties of a man, - such problems of profit and loss, of interest, of tare and tret, and gauging of all kinds in it, as demand a universal knowledge.

PEOPLE OF
WALDEN

JEAN-FRANÇOIS DE GALOUP

JOSEPH FRANCIS

In the afternoon [Thoreau](#) went to a location where there was epigæa, by way of [Clamshell Bank](#) or Hill. He made an entry in his journal that he was later to copy into his early lecture "[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT](#)" It would be combined with an entry made on March 7, 1852 to form the following:

[Paragraph 76] We may well be ashamed to tell what things we have read or heard in our day. I do not know why my news should be so trivial,—considering what one’s dreams and expectations are, why the developments should be so paltry. The news I hear for the most part is not news to my genius. It is the stalest repetition. How many a man continues his daily paper because he cannot help it, which is the case with all vicious habits?¹ *Communication from Heaven* is a journal still published, which never reprints the President’s Message, but rather the higher law.² These facts appear to float in the atmosphere, insignificant as the sporules of fungi—and impinge on some neglected thallus or surface of my mind, which affords a basis for them—and hence a parasitic growth. We should wash ourselves clean of such news. Methinks that in a sane moment a man would bear with indifference if a trustworthy messenger were to inform him that the sun drowned himself last night. Of what consequence though our own planet explode, if there is no character involved in the explosion?

1. This and the following sentence were drawn from the Nantucket [Inquirer](#) summary. Their placement at this point in the paragraph is indicated by the arrangement of the sentences in the [Inquirer](#) and by a caret in the copy-text manuscript.
 2. Bradley P. Dean has emended the Nantucket [Inquirer](#) forms ““Communication from Heaven”” and ““higher law”” by dropping the quotation marks from both and italicizing the former.

May 7, Sunday: [Henry Thoreau](#) walked to the Cliffs.

Elisen-Polka française op.151 by [Johann Baptist Strauss II](#) was performed for the initial time, in the Sperl Ballroom, Vienna.

May 8, Monday: In the morning [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Nawshawtuct and in the afternoon he went by boat to Fair Haven.

"Up Assabet" is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau's two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.
 — [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 10

[Colonel William Walker](#), who once upon a time had been a newspaper editor in San Francisco, and 33 of his adventurous followers, surrendered to soldiers of the US Army near Tia Juana after having spent 6 months failing in an attempt to establish in northern [Mexico](#) a republic to be known as "[Lower California.](#)"

1854

1854



May 9, Tuesday: [Albert Fink](#) received patent No. 10,887 for a composite cast and wrought iron truss bridge distinguished by the absence of a bottom chord, in which the tension was carried by diagonal braces. The symmetry of this design would enable the construction of spans of up to 300 feet.

BRIDGE DESIGN

[Henry Thoreau](#) went to Cambridge and Boston, and visited the [Boston Society of Natural History](#).¹⁰¹

He checked out, from [Harvard Library](#), the Reverend [John Gotlieb Ernestus Heckewelder](#)'s A NARRATIVE OF THE MISSIONS OF THE UNITED BRETHREN AMONG THE DELAWARE AND MOHEGAN INDIANS FROM ITS COMMENCEMENT IN THE YEAR 1740 TO THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR 1808 (Philadelphia: M'Carthy & Davis, 1820).



REVEREND HECKEWELDER

He would make entries from this source in his Indian Notebooks #5 and #8, and in his Fact Book. In addition, he would consult an account by the Reverend Heckewelder in Volume I of the [American Philosophical Society](#)

101. These would be the proceedings, for this year, of the Society:

PROCEEDINGS, FOR 1854

Transactions, of 1819, and make entries from that source in his Indian Notebook #9¹⁰² in about 1855:

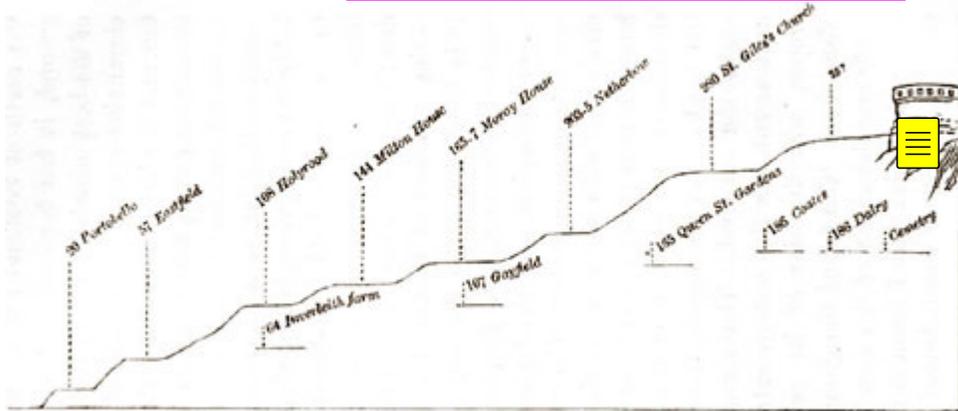
Between the Mississippi & the ocean eastward & the Hudson's Bay Company's possessions on the north — "There appears to be but 4 principal languages," some of their dialects "extend even beyond the Mississippi."

- 1st The Karabit — of the Greenlanders & Esquimaux...
- 2d The Iroquois "This language in various dialects is spoken by the ... Six Nations ... Hurons ... and others."
- 3d The Lenape "This is the most widely extended of any of those that are spoken on this side of the Mississippi."
- [4th] The Indians further N.W. Blackfeet &c. of whose language we cannot judge "from the scanty vocabularies which have been given by Mackenzie ... and other travellers."

REVEREND HECKEWELDER

He also checked out Robert Chambers's ANCIENT SEA-MARGINS, AS MEMORIALS OF CHANGES IN THE RELATIVE LEVEL OF SEA AND LAND (W. & R. Chambers, 1848).

ANCIENT SEA-MARGINS



Once back home in Concord, Thoreau planted watermelons.



Tuesday, May 9th To Boston & Cambridge.

Currant in garden X, but ours may be a late kind. Purple finch still here — Looking at the birds at the Nat Hist Rooms — I find that I have not seen the crow blackbird at all yet — this season— Perhaps I have seen the rusty blackbird — though I am not sure what those slaty black ones are as large as the redwings — nor those pure-black fellows — unless rusty-black birds. I think that my blackbirds of the morning of the 24 may have been cow-birds.

[Transcript]

102. The original notebooks are held by the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York, as manuscripts #596 through #606. There are photocopies, made by Robert F. Sayre in the 1930s, in four boxes at the University of Iowa Libraries, accession number MsC 795. More recently, Bradley P. Dean, PhD and Paul Maher, Jr. have attempted to work over these materials.

Sat on end of long wharf— Was surprised to observe that so many of the men on board the shipping were pure countrymen in dress & habits, and the sea-port is no more than a country town to which they come atrading— I found about the wharves steering the coasters & unloading the ships men in farmer's dress. As I watched the various craft successively unfurling their sails & getting to sea — I felt more than for many years inclined to let the wind blow me also to other climes.

[Harris](#) showed me a list of plants in [Hovey's Magazine](#) (I think for 42 or 3) not in Big's Botany —17 or 18 of them — among the rest a pine I have not seen — &c &c q.v. That early narrow curved winged insect on ice & river which I thought an ephemera he says is a *Stalis* — or maybe rather a *Perla*— Thinks it the *Donatia palmata* — I gave him— Says the shad-flies (with streamers & erect wings — are ephemerae— he spoke of *podura nivalis* — I think meaning ours.

Planted melons.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



May 10, Wednesday: The term "iron horse" had by this point become a popular appellation for the railroad locomotive, as witness the following oratory by Mr. Elliot of [Kentucky](#) in the US House of Representatives reported in the [Congressional Globe](#):

The same progress has transferred our persons and our commerce from the horse and the slow and dull creaking wagon to the iron horse of the railroad.

RAILROAD

[Henry Thoreau](#) went at 8 AM to Tall's Island, getting into his boat at the Cliffs. Then he stopped at Rice's. On his way back from Rice's it began to sprinkle, but the wind was in the right direction and Thoreau was able to use his umbrella for a sail.



May 10. Now in the mornings I hear the chip-bird under my windows at and before sunrise. Warbling vireo on the elms. The chimney swallow. A peach out in yard, where it had been covered by the snow. The cultivated cherry in bloom.

[Transcript]

8 A.M. — To Tall's Island. taking boat at Cliffs.

Had some rain about daylight, which I think makes the weather uncertain for the day. Damp, April-like mistiness in the air. I take an umbrella with me. The *Salix alba* — and also one or two small native ones by river of similar habits — their catkins together with their leaves make the greatest show now of any trees (which are indigenous or have fairly established themselves), though a very few scattered young trembles suddenly streak the hillsides with their tender green in some places; and perhaps young balm-of-Gileads show in some places; [Not important here; rather with birches.] but with the willows it is general and from their size and being massed together they are seen afar. The *S. alba*, partly, indeed, from its commonness and growing together, is the first of field trees — whose growth makes an impression on the careless and distant observer, — a tender yellowish green. (The mountain-ash, horse-chestnut, and perhaps some other cultivated trees, indeed, if we regard them separately end their leaves alone, which are much larger, are now ahead of the willows.) The birches of all kinds with catkins begin to show a light green.

The inquisitive yorrick of the Wilson's thrush, though I hear no veery note. This at entrance of Deep Cut. The oven-bird, and note loud and unmistakable, making the hollow woods ring. This is decidedly smaller than what I have taken to be the hermit thrush. The black and white creeper, unmistakable from its creeping habit. It holds up its head to sing sharp and fine *te che, te che, te che, te che, te che, te che, te che*. The oven-bird's note is much louder. broader, and more swinging. The latter sits on a low twig quite within the wood. Yesterday was a quite warm day, and these new birds I hear directly after it.

Vaccinium Pennsylvaticum first put out, and I see a bumblebee about some others which are not open, knocking at their doors, which, if open, would be too small for him to enter, *Viola pedata* already numerous — say yesterday without doubt. — at Lupine Knoll, paler than the *ovata*, — their pale faces. The field sparrow resembles a more slender tree sparrow without the spot on breast, with a light-colored bill and legs and feet, ashy-white breast, and beneath eye a drab, callow look. Note, *phe phe phe phe phe phe, phe phe-e-e-e-e*; holds its head the while. Thorns are leafing. *Viola blanda* by Corner road at brook and below Cliff Hill Spring. Canoe

birch and white ditto leafing. There is a dew or rather rain drop in the centre of the sun-dial (lupine) leaf, where its seven or eight leaflets meet, over the sand. Cornel (*sericea*) leafing along river. I hear the fine, wiry mew of the song sparrow. A catbird mewing.

Saw coupled on a hillock by the water two what I should have called black snakes, — a uniform very dark brown, the male much the smallest. the under side — what little I noticed of the rear of the latter — was a bluish slate; but, when they ran into *the water*, I observed dull-yellowish transverse bars on the back of the female (did not observe the other there), and, when I turned over the male, had a glimpse of a reddish or orange belly. Were they water adders or black snakes? The largest was perhaps between three and four feet.

If that is the leaf of the arrow-wood which looks so much like a cornel, it will rank next to the *Viburnum nudum*. *Vide* plant by bridge.

In Boston yesterday an ornithologist said significantly, "If you held the bird in your hand —;" but I would rather hold it in my affections.

THOREAU ON NORMATIVE SCIENCE

The wind is southwest, and I have to row or paddle up. The shad-bush in blossom is the first to show like a fruit tree, — like a pale peach, — on the hillsides, seen afar amid gray twigs, amid leafless shrub oaks, etc., before even its own leaves are much expanded. I dragged and pushed my boat over the road at Deacon Farrar's brook, carrying a roller with me. It is warm rowing with a thick coat. Heard the first regular bullfrog trump, not very loud, however, at the swamp white oaks southwest of Pantry. Heard the night-warbler. Saw three ducks on Sudbury meadows still, one partly white, the others all dusky, — probably black ducks. As to the first, with a large Clark head and white breast and sides, I am not sure whether it was a golden-eye, or whistler.

Dined at Tall's Island. The tupelo terminates abruptly, as if mutilated at top, and the slender, stragglng branches decline thence downward, often longer than the tree is high. The shores of these meadows do not invite me to land on them; they are too low. A lake requires some high land close to it. Meeting-House hill is the most accessible hereabouts. Anemones common' now; they love to grow under brush or treetops which the choppers have left. Shad leaves develop fast. Pitch pines staved for two or three days in some places, the largest shoots now four inches.

Returning stopped at Rice's. He was feeding his chickens with Indian meal and water. While talking with him heard bobolinks. I had seen what looked like a greet stake just sticking out above the surface of [lie water on the meadows and again covered as if it were fastened at one end. It finally disappeared and probably was a large mud turtle. Rice told me that he had hunted them. You go a little later in this month, — a calm forenoon when the water is smooth, — and "the wind must be south," — and see them on the surface. Deacon Farrar's meadow in time of flood (I had come through this) was a good place.

It began to sprinkle, and Rice said he had got "to bush that field" of grain before it rained, and I made haste back with a fair wind and umhm11a for sail. Were those cowbirds in Miles's meadow, about or near the cow? Alders generally have fairly begun to leaf. I came on rapidly in a sprinkling rain, which ceased when I reached Bittern Cliff, and the water smoothed somewhat. I saw many red maple blossoms on the surface. Their keys now droop gracefully about the stems.



A fresh, growing scent comes from the moistened earth and vegetation, and I perceive the sweetness of the willows on the causeway. Above the railroad bridge I saw a kingfisher [**Belted Kingfisher**  *Ceryle alcyon*] twice sustain himself in one place, about forty feet above the meadow by a rapid motion of his wings, somewhat like a devil's-needle, not progressing an inch, apparently over a fish. Heard a tree-toad.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

During the last decade of his life, Thoreau visited his rivers more than twice as often as the upland woods and lakes that he is far better known for writing about.

– [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 3



 May 11, Thursday: The newspaper [California Temperance Organ](#) renamed itself [Star of the West](#).

[Henry Thoreau](#) left at 6 AM for Laurel Hillside by [Walden Pond](#). In the afternoon he went to Saw Mill Brook to check out the gooseberries.

There is controversy over the assignment of this as the date of the famous or infamous speech by [Headman Seattle \(See-Ahth of the Susquamish\) \(or Chief Seattle\)](#), a Roman Catholic and a slaveholder, allegedly delivered at an outdoor gathering of more than 1,000 persons on a beach in Puget Sound. The new Indian Superintendent Isaac Ingalls Stevens had called the native people together to consider the surrender or sale of native land to white settlers. Doc Maynard introduced Governor Stevens and then Sealth rose. Resting his hand upon the head of the much smaller white man, the native leader declaimed for an extended period with great dignity in the Lushootseed language of the Suquamish tribe, one of the coastal Salish tribes of the region. Some unknown person would translate Sealth's words into the trade lingo known as "Chinook Jargon" and then another unknown person would translate that into the English language. Some years later (on October 29th, 1887) [Dr. Henry A. Smith](#) would write down an English version of what he would refer to as "a fragment" of the speech, based on his own notes. What was thus retained is a flowery text in which Headman Sealth purportedly thanks the white people for their generosity, demands that any treaty guarantee access to Native burial grounds, and attempts to make some sort of contrast between the God of the white people and that of his own. The speech, it seems, had primarily to do with spiritual differences between red people and white people. See-ahth most definitely did **not** say:¹⁰³

The earth is our mother.

Well, then, of what sort of naive insights **did** the chief deliver himself? For surely, as a certified native American leader, his life would have been close to nature and his mind would have been a repository of primitive wisdom! As near as it is now possible to reconstruct, some of what it seems See-ahth did say can be viewed on a following screen.

103. The [New York Times](#) of May 3, 1992 explained in an "Editors' Note" on page 3, column 1, that the reason why the book BROTHER EAGLE, SISTER SKY: A MESSAGE FROM CHIEF SEATTLE, which had been on the nonfiction best-seller list for the previous 17 weeks, was absent from the list beginning that week, was **not** that its sales had dropped, but rather that the book had been reclassified under the heading "Advice, How To, and Miscellaneous." The bulk of Seattle's speech as presented in this book, nauseating ecological PC-talk, had been discovered to have been put into his mouth at a relatively recent date by a Texas script-writer, paid to write for the benefit of the souls of Southern Baptists. This Texas script-writer is now living and teaching in Vermont and professes embarrassment that his Wise Old Indian stick figure has been so widely and willfully misinterpreted.



May 11: 6 A.M. — To Laurel Hillside by Walden.

Earliest gooseberry in garden open. Heard a Maryland yellow-throat about alders at Trillium Woods, where I first heard one last year, but it finds the alders cut down in the winter. Yellow birch apparently open, its leaf as forward as the *blossom* (*comparatively* — with other birches). Many small swallows hovering over Deep Cut, — probably bank swallows (?). Hear the golden robin. It is wonderful how surely these distinguished travellers arrive when the season has sufficiently revolved. *Prunus Americana*, Canada plum, yesterday at least, at Mr. Brooks's. A common plum to-day.

To sum up leafing of trees, etc., since May 5th, add these: —

Creeping juniper.

Larch; bundles fairly separated on some trees May 6th; open slowly.

Early blueberry.

Amelanchier Botryapium. It came forward fast.

High blackberry.

Young rock maple.

" red "

" white (?) [maple].

Alders generally.

Ostrya.

Some trembles suddenly leafed.

Balm-of-Gileads.

Some thorns.

Yellow birch.

Canoe "

White "

Canada plum, I think here.

Pitch pine; some shoots now four inches long.

Norway [pine]?

Cornus sericæ.

P.M. — To Saw Mill Brook.

White pines have started; put them with pitch. *Nepeta* just out. I am in a little doubt about the wrens (I do not refer to the snuff-colored one), whether I have seen more than one. All that makes me doubt is that I saw a ruby, or perhaps it might be called fiery, crest on the last — not golden.

Amelanchier oblongifolia, say yesterday, probably the one whose fruit I gathered last year. It does not leaf till it flowers. Sweet-gale has just begun to leaf. The willows on the Turnpike now resound with the hum of bees, and I hear the yellowbird and Maryland yellow-throat amid them. These *yellow* birds are concealed by the yellow of the willows. The cornets generally have fairly started, excepting the *C. Florida* (have not noticed the bunch-berry and round-leaved), and for aught I have seen yet may be placed in the order of their flowering, — alternate, panicked, sericea, putting all on the day of the sericea, *i.e.* yesterday. Wild red cherry in road near Everett's open.

The most forward oak *leafets* are, I think, in one place a red, say just started, but I see shrub oak and swamp AN-kite catkins in a few places an inch long. Some shrub oak flower-buds are Yellowish, some reddish. The *Thalictrum arremonoides* is a perfect and regular white star, but methinks lacks the interesting red tinge of the other. Some young chestnuts have begun the lower branches — and are earlier than any oaks. White birches are suddenly leafing in some places, so as to make an open veil or gauze of green against the other trees. Young hornbeams just before cornels; the old ones just begun to leaf. Various slender ferns, without wool, springing apparently at Saw Mill Brook; some quite dark; also brake a foot high. The arrow-wood has just begun. The *young* black birch leafing with others.

While at the Falls, I feel the air cooled and hear the muttering of distant thunder in the northwest and see a dark cloud in that direction indistinctly through the wood. That distant thunder-shower very much cools our atmosphere. And I make haste through the woods homeward *via* Hubbard's Close. Hear the evergreen-forest note. The true poet will ever live aloof from society, wild to it, as the finest singer is the wood thrush [*Catharus*  *mustelina*], a forest bird. The shower is apparently going by on the north. There is a low, dark, blue-black arch, crescent-like, in the horizon, sweeping the distant earth there with a dusky, rainy brush, and all men, like the earth, seem to wear an aspect of expectation. There is an -uncommon stillness here, disturbed only by a rush of the wind from time to time. In the village I meet men making haste to their homes, for, though the heavy cloud has gone quite by, the shower will probably strike us with its tail. Rock maple keys, etc., now two inches long, probably been out some days. Those by the path on Common not out at all. Now I have got home there is at last a still cooler wind with a rush, and at last a smart shower, slanting to the ground, without thunder. My errand this afternoon was chiefly to look at the gooseberry at Saw Mill Brook. We have two kinds in garden, the earliest of same date to leaf with that in the swamp, but very thorny, and one later just open. The list is apparently the same with that by Everett's, also just open, and with that this side of E. Wood's. I also know one

other, *i.e.* the one at Saw Mill Brook, plainly distinct, with long petioled and glossy heart-shaped leaves, but as yet I find no flowers. I will call this for the, present the swamp gooseberry [May 17th, the green shoots are covered with bristly prickles, but t can find no flowers. Is it the same with that by maple swamp in Hubbard's Close with young fruit?]. *Stellaria media*, apparently not long. Butternut beginning to leaf.

Over meadows in boat at sunset to Island, etc.

The rain is over. There is a bow in the east. The earth is refreshed; the grass is wet. The air is warm again and still. The rain has smoothed the water to a glassy smoothness. It is very beautiful on the water now, the breadth of the flood not yet essentially diminished. The ostrya will apparently shed its pollen to-morrow. High blueberry is just leafing. I see the kingbird. It is remarkable that the radical leaves of goldenrod should be already so obvious, *e.g.* the broadleaved at Saw Mill Brook. What need of this haste? Now at last I see crow blackbirds without doubt. They have probably been here before, for they are put down under April in the bird book (for '37). They fly as if carrying or dragging their precious long tails, broad at the end, through the air. Their note is like a great rusty spring, and also a hoarse chuck. On the whole I think they must have been rusty grackles which I mistook for this bird, and I think I saw their silvery irides; look like red-wings without the red spot. Ground-ivy just begins to leaf. I am surprised to find the great poplar at the Island conspicuously in leaf, — leaves more than an inch broad, from top to bottom of the tree, and are already fluttering in the wind, — and others near it — conspicuously before any other native tree, as tenderly green, wet, and glossy as if this shower had opened them. The full-grown white maples are as forward in leafing now as the young red and sugar ones are now, only their leaves are smaller than the last. Put the young, at a venture, after the low blackberry, the old just before the other maples. The balm-of-Gilead is rapidly expanding, and I scent it in the twilight twenty rods off.

The earliest of our indigenous trees, then, to leaf *conspicuously* is the early tremble. (The one or more willows which leaf when they flower, like the *Salix alba*, with their small leaves, are *shrubs*, hardly trees.) Next to it, — close upon it, — some white birches, and, apparently close upon this, the balm-of-Gilead and white maple. Two days, however, *may* include them all. The wild red cherry and black cherry, though earlier to begin, are not now conspicuous, but I am not sure that some of the other birches, where young in favorable places, may not be as forward as the white. [Probably not, to any extent. *Vide* P.M. of 17th inst. *Vide* list.] But the *S. alba*, etc., precede them all. It is surprising what an electrifying effect this shower appears to have had. It is like the christening of the summer, and I suspect that summer weather may be always ushered in in a similar manner, — thunder-shower, rainbow, smooth water, and warns night. A rainbow on the brow of summer. Nature lens placed this gem on the brow of her daughter. \of only the wet grass looks many shades greater its the twilight, but the old pine-needles also. The toads are heard to ring more generally and louder than before, and the bullfrogs trump regularly, though not very loudly, reminding its that they are at hand and not drowned out by the freshet. All creatures are more awake than ever. — Now, some time after sunset, the robins scold and sing (but their great, singing time is earlier in the season), and the 11 daryland yellow-throat is heard amid tie alders and willows lay the waterside, and the peetweet and blackbirds, and sometimes a kingbird, and the tree-toad somewhat. Sweet-briar just beginning to leaf generally (?).

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

 May 12, Friday: [Henry Thoreau](#) left at 5:30 AM for Nawshawtuct, and in the afternoon visited a climbing fern.

Anton Rubinstein departed from St. Petersburg for a long concert tour of Europe.

 May 13, Saturday: [Henry Thoreau](#) went at 4:00PM to V. Muhlenbergii Brook.

...The great –and good, I believe– White Chief sends us word that he wants to buy our land. But he will reserve us enough so that we can live comfortably. This seems generous, since the red man no longer has rights he need respect. It may also be wise, since we no longer need a large country.... Let us hope that the wars between the red man and his white brothers will never come again. We would have everything to lose and nothing to gain. Young men view revenge as gain, even when they lose their own lives. But the old men who stay behind in time of war, mothers with sons to lose– they know better. Our great father Washington ... sends us word that he will protect us if we do what he wants.... His brave soldiers will be a strong wall for my people.... Then our ancient enemies to the north– the Haidas and Tsimshians – will no longer frighten our women and old men.... But how can that ever be? Your God loves your people and hates mine... He makes your people stronger every day. Soon they will flood all the land. But my people are an ebb tide, we will never return.... No, we are two separate races, and we must stay separate. There is little in common between us.... Your religion was written on tablets of stone by the iron finger of an angry God lest you forget. The red man could never comprehend nor remember it. Our religion is the tradition of our ancestors, the dreams of our old men, given to them in the solemn hours of the night by the great spirit and the visions of our leaders, and it is written in the hearts of our people. Your dead cease to love you and the land of their nativity as soon as they pass the portals of the tomb; they wander far away beyond the stars and are soon forgotten and never return. Our dead never forget this beautiful world that gave them being. They always love its winding rivers, its sacred mountains, and its sequestered vales, and they even yearn in tenderest affection over the lonely-hearted living and often return to visit guide and comfort them. We will ponder your proposition, and when we decide we will tell you. But should we accept it, I here and now make this the first condition that we will not be denied the privilege, without molestation, of visiting at will the graves, where we have buried our ancestors, and our friends, and our children. Every part of this country is sacred to my people. Every hillside, every valley, every plain and grove has been hallowed by some fond memory or some sad experience of my tribe. Even the rocks which seem to lie dumb as they swelter in the sun along the silent seashore in solemn grandeur thrill with memories of past events connected with the lives of my people. And when the last red man shall have perished from the earth and his memory among the white men shall have become a myth these shores will swarm with the invisible dead of my tribe; and when your children's children shall think themselves alone in the fields, the store, the shop, upon the highway, or in the silence of the pathless woods, they will not be alone. In all the earth there is no place dedicated to solitude. At night when the streets of your cities and villages will be silent and you think them deserted, they will throng with returning hosts that once filled and still love this beautiful land. The white man will never be alone. Let him be just and deal kindly with my people for the dead are not powerless. Dead – did I say? There is no death, only a change of worlds.

 May 14, Sunday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Hill.

"Downriver," "To Great Meadow," and "To Hill" signified a northward trip down the Concord River below the triple point of the confluence. After passing through a straight reach aligned by the local bedrock strike, arched by two bridges, and flanked by gravel bars of historic sediment that were repeatedly dredged, he entered the north side of Great Meadow. Bounded by the site of the Old North Bridge to the southwest and Ball's Hill to the northeast, it was two miles long and half a mile across. When in flood, the meadow was his favorite inland sea to sail upon because the wind was least impeded and the waves were highest.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 11




May 14: A St. Domingo cuckoo [[Black-billed Cuckoo](#) [Coccyzus erythrophthalmus](#)], black-billed with red round the eye, a silent, long, slender, graceful bird, dark cinnamon(?) above, pure white beneath. It is in a leisurely manner picking the young caterpillars out of a nest (now about a third of an inch long) with its long, curved bill. Not timid.

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

 May 15, Monday: The United States Inebriate Asylum, the 1st hospital organized for the treatment of alcoholism, was founded in Binghamton, New York.

At the conclusion of the [Dred Scott](#) trial the white judge instructed the all-white jury that the white man "Sandford" had the law on his side, and so the jury in due course decided in favor of the white man. The implication of this was that the lawsuits brought by the Scotts, since they had always been Negroes, had always been null and void. Under such circumstances, normally a judge would dispose of the issue simply by dismissing such a lawsuit, but in this case the judge allowed the decision of the jury to stand.

In May, 1854, the cause went before a jury, who found the following verdict, viz: "As to the first issue joined in this case, we of the jury find the defendant not guilty; and as to the issue secondly above joined, we of the jury find that before and at the time when, &c., in the first count mentioned, the said Dred Scott was a negro slave, the lawful property of the defendant; and as to the issue thirdly above joined, we, the jury, find that before and at the time when, &c., in the second and third counts mentioned, the said Harriet, wife of said Dred Scott, and Eliza and Lizzie, the daughters of the said Dred Scott, were negro slaves, the lawful property of the defendant."

Whereupon, the court gave judgment for the defendant.

After an ineffectual motion for a new trial, the plaintiff filed the following bill of exceptions.

On the trial of this cause by the jury, the plaintiff, to maintain the issues on his part, read to the jury the following agreed statement

of facts, (see agreement above.) No further testimony was given to the jury by either party. Thereupon the plaintiff moved the court to give to the jury the following instruction, viz:

"That, upon the facts agreed to by the parties, they ought to find for the plaintiff. The court refused to give such instruction to the jury, and the plaintiff, to such refusal, then and there duly excepted."

The court then gave the following instruction to the jury, on motion of the defendant:

"The jury are instructed, that upon the facts in this case, the law is with the defendant."

The plaintiff excepted to this instruction.

Upon these exceptions, the case came up to this court.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went up the [Assabet River](#).

"Up Assabet" is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau's two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.
— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 10



Have just been looking at Nuttall's "North American Sylva." Much research, fine plates and print and paper, and no objectionable periods, but no turpentine, or balsam, or quercitron, or salicin, or birch wine, or the aroma of the balm-of-Gilead.... The plates are greener and higher-colored than the words, etc., etc. It is sapless, if not leafless.

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



May 16, Tuesday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went in his boat to [Conantum](#), probably with [Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau](#).





May 16.

[Transcript]

"Up Assabet" is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau's two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.
 — [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 10

Looked into several red-wing [Red-winged Blackbird [Agelaius phoeniceus](#)] blackbirds' nests which are now being built, but no eggs yet. They are generally hung between two twigs, say of button-bush. I noticed at one nest what looked like a tow string securely tied about a twig at each end about six inches apart, left loose in the middle. It was not a string, but I think a strip of milkweed pod, etc., —water asclepias probably,— maybe a foot long and very strong. How remarkable that this bird should have found out the strength of this, which I was so slow to find out!

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



May 17, Wednesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) left at 5:30 AM by boat for the Island. There he caught a snapping turtle and took it home to measure it and to observe its behavior. In the afternoon he went on the [Assabet River](#) to Cedar Swamp.



May 17: 5.30 A.M. — To Island.

[Transcript]

The water is now tepid in the morning to the hands (may have been a day or two), as I slip my hands down the paddle. Hear the wood pewee, the warmweather sound. As I was returning over the meadow this side of the Island, I saw the snout of a mud turtle above the surface, — little more than an inch of the point, — and paddled toward it. Then, as he moved slowly on the surface, different parts of his shell and head just appearing looked just like the scalloped edges of some pads which had just reached the surface. I pushed up and found a large snapping turtle on the bottom. He appeared of a dirty brown there, very nearly the color of the bottom at present. With his great head, as big as an infant's, and his vigilant eyes as he paddled about on the bottom in his attempts to escape, he looked not merely repulsive, but to some extent terrible even as a crocodile. At length, after thrusting my arm in up to the shoulder two or three times, I succeeded in getting him into the boat, where I secured him with a lever under a seat. I could get him from the landing to the house only by turning him over and drawing him by the tail, the hard crests of which afforded a good hold; for he was so heavy that I could not hold him off so far as to prevent his snapping at my legs. He weighed thirty and a half pounds.

- Extreme length of shell.....15½ inches
- Length of shell in middle.....15 "
- Greatest width of shell.....12½ "
- (This was toward the rear.)
- Tail (beyond shell).....11½ "

His head and neck it was not easy to measure, but, judging from the proportions of one described by Storer, they must have been 10 inches long at least, which makes the whole length 37 inches. Width of head 4½ inches; with the skin of the neck, more than 5. His sternum, which was slightly depressed, was 10½ by 5½. Depth from back to sternum about 7 inches. There were six great scallops, or rather triangular points, on the hind edge of his shell, three on each side, the middle one of each three the longest, about ¾ of an inch. He had surprisingly stout hooked jaws, of a gray color or bluish-gray, the upper shutting over the under, a more or less sharp triangular beak corresponding to one below; and his flippers were armed with very stout claws 1¼ inches long. He had a



very ugly and spiteful face (with a vigilant gray eye, which was never shut in any position of the head), surrounded by the thick and ample folds of the skin about his neck. His shell was comparatively smooth and free from moss, — a dirty black. He was a dirty or speckled white beneath. He made the most remarkable and

awkward appearance when walking. The edge of his shell was lifted about eight inches from the ground, tilting now to this side, then to that, his great scaly legs or flippers hanging with flesh and loose skin, —slowly and gravely (?) hissing the while. His walking was perfectly elephantine. Thus he stalked along, — a low conical mountain, — dragging his tail, with his head turned upward with the ugliest and most venomous look, on his flippers, half leg half fin. But he did not proceed far before he sank down to rest. If he could support a world on his back when lying down, he certainly could not stand up under it. All said that he walked like an elephant. When lying on his back, showing his dirty white and warty under side, with his tail curved round, he reminded you forcibly of pictures of the dragon. He could not easily turn himself back; tried many times in vain, resting betweenwhiles. Would inflate himself and convulsively spring with head and all upward, so as to lift his shell from the ground, and he would strike his head on the ground, lift up his shell, and catch at the earth with his claws. His back was of two great blunt ridges with a hollow between, down the middle of which was a slight but distinct ridge also. There was also a ridge of spines more or less hard on each side of his crested tail. Some of these spines in the crest of the tail were nearly half an inch high. Storer says that they have five claws on the fore legs, but only four on the hind ones. In this there was a perfectly distinct fifth toe (?) on the hind legs, though it did not pierce the skin; and on the fore legs it did not much more. S. does not say how many foes he has. These claws must be powerful to dig with.

This, then, is the season for catching them, now that the weather is warmer, before the pads are common, and the water is getting shallow on the meadows. E. Wood, Senior, speaks of two seen fighting for a long time in the river in front of his house last year. I have heard of one being found in the meadow in the winter surrounded by frozen mud. Is not this the heaviest animal found wild in this township? Certainly none but the otter approaches it. Farrar says that, when he was eleven, one which he could not lift into the boat towed him across the river; weighed twenty-nine.

Lilac is out and horse-chestnut. The female flowers — crimson cones — of the white [sic] spruce, but not yet the staminate.

The turtle was very sluggish, though capable of strength. He would just squeeze into a flour barrel and would not quite lie flat in it when his head and tail were drawn in. There was [a] triangular place in the bottom of his mouth and an orifice within it through which, apparently, he breathed, the orifice opening and shutting. I hear



of a man who injured his back seriously for many years by carrying one some distance at arm's length to prevent his biting him. They are frequently seen fighting and their shells heard striking together.

P.M. — To Cedar Swamp via Assabet.

"Up Assabet" is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau's two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.
 — [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 10

The tupelo began to leaf apparently yesterday. The large green keys of the white maples are now conspicuous, looking like the wings of insects. *Azalea nudiflora* in woods begins to leaf now, later than the white kind. *Viola Muhlenbergii* out, say yesterday. It is a pale violet. Judging from the aspect of the *Lentago* yesterday, I should put its leafing decidedly before *Viburnum nudum*. Also apparently the late rose soon after the one observed, and the moss about same time with first. The swamp white and white oak are slow to leaf. Large maples, too, are not rapid; but the birches, aspens, and balm-of-Gileads burst out suddenly into leaf and make a great show. Also the young sugar maples in the street now and for some days have made a show of broad luxuriant leaves, early and rapidly. In the case of the early aspen you could almost see the leaves expand and acquire a darker green— this to be said the 12th or 13th or 14th—under the influence of the sun and genial atmosphere. Now they are only as big as a ninepence, to-morrow or sooner they are as big as a pistareen, and the next day they are as big as a dollar. So too the green veils or screens of the birches rapidly thickened. This from its far greater prevalence than the aspens, balm-of-Gilead, white maples, etc., is the first to give the woodlands anywhere generance a (fresh) green aspect. It is the first to clothe large tracts of deciduous woodlands with green, and perchance it marks an epoch in the season, the transition decidedly and generally from bare twigs to leaves. When the birches have put on their green sacks, then a new season has come. The light reflected from their tender yellowish green



is like sunlight.

The turtle's snapping impressed me as something mechanical, like a spring, as if there were no volition about [it]. Its very suddenness seemed too great for a conscious movement. Perhaps in these cold-blooded and sluggish animals there is a near approach to the purely material and mechanical. Their very tenacity of life seems to be owing to their insensibility or small amount of life, — indeed, to be an irritation of the muscles. One man tells me of a turtle's head which, the day after it was cut off, snapped at a dog's tail and made him run off yelping, and I have witnessed something similar myself. I can think of nothing but a merely animated jaw, as it were a piece of mechanism. There is in this creature a tremendous development of the jaw, and, long after the head is cut off, this snaps vigorously when irritated, like a piece of mechanism. A naturalist tells me that he dissected one and laid its heart aside, and he found it beating or palpitating the next morning. They are sometimes baited with eels and caught with a hook. Apparently the best time to hunt them is in the morning when the water is smooth.

There is a surprising change since I last passed up the Assabet; the fields are now clothed with so dark and rich a green, and the wooded shore is all lit up with the tender, bright green of birches fluttering in the wind and shining in the light, and red maple keys are seen at a distance against the tender green of birches and other trees, tingeing them.

The wind is easterly, having changed, and produces an agreeable raw mistiness, unlike the dry blue haze of dog-days, just visible, between a dew and a fog for density. I sail up the stream, but the wind is hardly powerful enough to overcome the current, and sometimes I am almost at a standstill where the stream is most contracted and swiftest, and there I sit carelessly waiting for the struggle between wind and current to decide itself. Then comes a stronger puff, and I see by the shore that I am advancing to where the stream is broader and runs less swiftly and where lighter breezes can draw me. In contracted and swift-running places, the wind and current are almost evenly matched. It is a pleasing delay, to be referred to the elements, and meanwhile I survey the shrubs on shore. The white cedar shows the least possible life in its extremities now. Put it with the arbor-vitæ, or after it. Poison dogwood beginning to leaf, say yesterday. Nemopanthes out; leafed several days ago. And the clustered andromeda leafed apparently a day or more before it. Gold-thread out. *Viola palmata*. I cannot well examine the stone-heaps, the water is so deep. Muskrats are now sometimes very bold; lie on the surface and come swimming directly toward the boat as if to reconnoitre — this in two cases within a few days. Pretty sure to see a crescent of light under their tails when they dive. The splendid rhodora now sets the swamps on fire with its masses of rich color. It is one of the first flowers to catch the eye at a distance in masses, — so naked, unconcealed by its own leaves. Observed a rill emptying in above the stone-heaps, and afterward saw where it ran out of June-berry Meadow, and I considered how surely it would have conducted me to the meadow, if I had traced it up. I was impressed as it were by the intelligence of the brook, which for ages in the wildest regions, before science is born, knows so well the level of the ground and through whatever woods or other obstacles finds its way. Who shall distinguish between the law by which a brook finds its river, the instinct [by which] a bird performs its migrations, and the knowledge by which a man steers his ship round the globe? The globe is

THOREAU ON NORMATIVE SCIENCE

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

the richer for the variety of its inhabitants. Saw a large gray squirrel near the split rock in the Assabet. He went skipping up the limb of one tree and down the limb of another, his great gray rudder undulating through the air, and occasionally hid himself behind the main stem. The *Salix nigra* will open to-morrow.

Here is a David Wagoner poem, "Thoreau and the Snapping Turtle":

[It] looked not merely repulsive, but to some extent terrible even as a crocodile... a very ugly and spiteful face.
-Thoreau, Journal, May 17, 1854

As his boat glided across a flooded meadow,
He saw beneath him under lily pads,



1854

1854

Brown as dead leaves in mud, a yard-long
Snapping turtle staring up through the water
At him, its shell as jagged as old bark.

He plunged his arm in after it to the shoulder,
Stretching and missing, but groping till he caught it
By the last ridge of its tail. Then he held on,
Hauled it over the gunwale, and flopped it writhing
Into the boat. It began gasping for air

Through a huge gray mouth, then suddenly
Heaved its hunchback upward, slammed the thwart
As quick as a spring trap and, thrusting its neck
Forward a foot at a lunge, snapped its beaked jaws
So violently, he only petted it once,

Then flinched away. And all the way to the landing
It hissed and struck, thumping the seat
Under him hard and loud as a stake-driver.
It was so heavy, he had to drag it home,
All thirty pounds of it, wrong side up by the tail.

His neighbors agreed it walked like an elephant,
lilting this way and that, its head held high,
A scarf of ragged skin at its throat. It would sag
Slowly to rest then, out of its element,
Unable to bear its weight in this new world.

Each time he turned it over, it tried to recover
By catching at the floor with its claws, by straining
The arch of its neck, by springing convulsively,
Tail coiling snakelike. But finally it slumped
On its spiky back like an exhausted dragon.
He said he'd seen a cutoff snapper's head
That would still bite at anything held near it
As if the whole of its life were mechanical,
That a heart cut out of one had gone on beating
By itself like clockwork till the following morning.

And the next week he wrote: It is worth the while
To ask ourselves... Is our life innocent
Enough? Do we live inhumanely, toward man
Or beast, in thought or act? To be successful
And serene we must be at one with the universe.

The least conscious and needless injury
Inflicted on any creature is
To its extent a suicide. What peace-
Or life-can a murderer have?... White maple keys
Have begun to fall and float downstream like wings.

There are myriads of shad-flies fluttering
Over the dark still water under the hill.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



May 18, Thursday: [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Pedrick's meadow.

1854

1854

 May 19, Friday: [Henry Thoreau](#) left at 5:30 AM for Nawshawtuct and the Island.

In [California](#), F.A. Bonnard's [Daily Sun](#) began to be published as a weekly.

 May 20, Saturday: [Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed for [David Loring](#) (this would be rerun during May 1855). He made a rough plan of land near the Railroad Depot in Concord: "Frances Monroe and Rail Road." 

The British Navy bombarded Hangö, Finland.

 May 21, Sunday: A thunderstorm kept [Henry Thoreau](#) indoors until late in the afternoon, when he went to the Deep Cut on the railroad tracks. Then in the evening he sailed on the river.

 May 22, Monday: The San Francisco Board of Engineers made a report to the Town Council of local street grades.

[CALIFORNIA](#)

[William Cooper Nell](#)'s "Equal School Rights."

[Henry Thoreau](#) left at 5:30 AM to go up the [Assabet River](#). At 10 AM he went by boat to Fair Haven.



May 22. A hummingbird [[Ruby-throated Hummingbird](#)  [Archilochus colubris](#)] dashes by like a loud bumblebee.

[HUMMINGBIRDS](#)

Senator Clayton proposed:

"Resolved, That the Committee on Foreign Relations be instructed to inquire into the expediency of providing by law for such restrictions on the power of American consuls residing in the Spanish West India islands to issue sea letters on the transfer of American vessels in those islands, as will prevent the abuse of the American flag in protecting persons engaged in the African slave trade." On June 26, 1854, this committee would report "a bill (Senate, No. 416) for the more effectual suppression of the slave-trade in American built vessels." This would pass the Senate but be postponed in the House. SENATE JOURNAL, 33rd Congress, 1st session, pages 404, 457-8, 472-3, 476; HOUSE JOURNAL, 33rd Congress, 1st session, pages 1093, 1332-3; CONGRESSIONAL GLOBE, 33rd Congress, 1st session, pages 1257-61, 1511-3, 1591-3, 2139.

[INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE](#)

 May 23, Tuesday: An earthquake was felt in San Francisco.

[CALIFORNIA](#)

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) sailed up the [Assabet River](#) to Cedar Swamp.



May 23. Tuesday. P.M. —To Cedar Swamp by Assabet.

[Transcript]

"Up Assabet" is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau's two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 10



The cobwebs, apparently those I saw on the bushes the morning of the 12th, are now covered with insects, etc. (small gnats, etc.), and are much dilapidated where birds have flown through them. As I paddle up the Assabet, off the Hill, I hear a loud rustling of the leaves and see a large scared tortoise sliding and tumbling down the high steep bank a rod or more into the water. It has probably been out to lay its eggs. The old coal-pit heap is a favorite place for them. The wood pewee [**Eastern Wood-Pewee**  *Contopus virens*] sings now in the woods behind the spring in the heat of the clay (2 P.M.), sitting on a low limb near me, *pe-a-wee, pe-a-wee*, etc., five or six times at short and regular intervals, looking about all the while, and then, naively, *pee-a-oo*, emphasizing the first syllable, and begins again. The last is, in emphasis, like the scream of a hen-hawk. It flies off occasionally a few feet, and catches an insect and returns to its perch between the bars, not allowing this to interrupt their order. Scare up a splendid wood (?) duck, alternate blue and chestnut (?) forward, which flew into and lit in the woods; or was it a teal? Afterward two of them, and my diver of yesterday.

The bent grass now lies on the water (commonly light-colored) for two feet. When I first saw this on a pool this spring, with the deep dimple where the blade emerges from the surface, I suspected that the water had risen gently in calm weather and was heaped about the dry stem as against any surface before it is wetted. But now the water is rapidly falling, and there is considerable wind. Moreover, when my boat has passed over these blades, I am surprised on looking back to see the dimple still as perfect as before. I lift a blade so as to bring a part which was under water to the surface, and still there is a perfect dimple about it; the water is plainly repelled from it. I pull one up from the bottom and passing it over my lips am surprised to find that the front side is perfectly dry from the root upward and cannot be wet, but the back side is wet. It has sprung and grown in the water, and yet one of its surfaces has never been wet. What an invaluable composition it must be coated with! The same was the case with the other erect grasses which I noticed growing in the water, and with those which I plucked on the bank and thrust into it. But the flags were wet both sides. [*Vide* scrap-book.] The one surface repels moisture perfectly.

The barbarea has been open several days. The first yellow dor-bug struggling in the river. The white cedar has now grown quite *perceptibly*, and is in advance of any red cedar which I have seen. Saw a hummingbird [**Ruby-throated Hummingbird**  *Archilochus colubris*] on a white oak in the swamp. It is strange to see this minute creature, fit inhabitant of a parterre, on an oak in the great wild cedar swamp. The clustered andromeda appears just ready to open; say to-morrow. [Rather the 25th.] The smilacina is abundant and well out here now. A new warbler (?).

HUMMINGBIRDS

We soon get through with Nature. She excites an expectation which she cannot satisfy. The merest child which has rambled into a copsewood dreams of a wilderness so wild and strange and inexhaustible as Nature can never show him. The red-bird which I saw on my companion's string on election days I thought but the outmost sentinel of the wild, immortal camp, — of the wild and dazzling infantry of the wilderness, — that the deeper woods abounded with redder birds still; but, now that I have threaded all our woods and waded the swamps, I have never yet met with his compeer, still less his wilder kindred. [Cf. Week, pp. 56, 57; Riv. 70, 71.] The red-bird which is the last of Nature is but the first of God. The White Mountains, likewise, were smooth molehills to my expectation. We *condescend* to climb the crags of earth. It is our weary legs alone that praise them. That forest on whose skirts the red-bird flits is not of earth. I expected a fauna more infinite and various, birds of more dazzling colors and more celestial song. How many springs shall I continue to see the common sucker (*Catostomus Bostoniensis*) floating dead on our river! Will not Nature select her types from a new fount? The vignette of the year. This earth which is spread out like a map around me is but the lining of my inmost soul exposed. In me is the sucker that I see. No wholly extraneous object can compel me to recognize it. I am guilty of suckers. I go about to look at flowers and listen to the birds. There was a time when the beauty and the music were all within, and I sat and listened to my thoughts, and there was a song in them. I sat for hours on rocks and wrestled with the melody which possessed me. I sat and listened by the hour to a positive though faint and distant music, not sung by any bird, nor vibrating any earthly harp. When you walked with a joy which knew not its own origin. When you were an organ of which the world was but one poor broken pipe. I lay long on the

1854

JENNY LIND

rocks, foundered like a harp on the seashore, that knows not how it is dealt with. You sat on the earth as on a raft, listening to music that was not of the earth, but which ruled and arranged it. Man *should be* the harp articulate. When your cords were tense.¹⁰⁴

Think of going abroad out of one's self to hear music, — to Europe or Africa! Instead of so living as to be the lyre which the breath of the morning causes to vibrate with that melody which creates worlds — to sit up late and hear Jane Lind!

You may say that the oaks (all but the chestnut oak I have seen) were in bloom yesterday; *i.e.*, shed pollen more or less. Their blooming is soon over. Waterbugs and skaters coupled. Saw in Dakin's land, near the road, at the bend of the river, fifty-nine bank swallows' holes in a small upright bank within a space of twenty by one and

1854

AEOLIAN HARP

104. [William M. White](#)'s version of the journal entry is:

*There was a time when the beauty and the music
Were all within,
And I sat and listened to my thoughts,
And there was a song in them.*

*I sat for hours on rocks
And wrestled
With the melody which possessed me.*

*I sat and listened by the hour
To a positive
Though faint and distant music,
Not sung by any bird,
Nor vibrating any earthly harp.*

*When you walked with a joy
Which knew not its own origin.
When you were an organ
Of which the world
Was but one poor broken pipe.*

*I lay long on the rocks,
Foundered like a harp on the seashore,
That knows not how it is dealt with.*

*You sat on the earth
As on a raft,
Listening to music
That was not of the earth,
But which ruled and arranged it.*

[Walter Roy Harding](#) pointed out that in his [JOURNAL](#) for May 23, 1854, in speaking of blue flags, Thoreau has a footnote saying "Vide scrap-book." Professor Harding was wanting to know to what scrap-book [Henry Thoreau](#) was referring, and where it is now.

a half feet (in the middle), part above and part below the sand-line. This would give over a hundred birds to this bank. They continually circling about over the meadow and river in front, often in pairs, one pursuing the other, and filling the air with their twittering.
Mulberry out to-day.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

➡ May 24, Wednesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) left at 4:30AM for the Cliffs, and in the afternoon went to Pedrick's meadow.

This would turn out, in Boston, to be the day of [Anthony Burns](#)'s arrest. It seems Burns, a 6-footer classifiable as an "escaped slave," had made the mistake of attempting to send a note to a brother still held in Virginia. The note had of course been intercepted by his brother's "owner," who had thus discovered where he was hiding.



He was arrested by [US Marshall Asa O. Butman](#) while working as a presser in a tailor shop on Brattle Street in Boston, and accused of running away from his owner Mr. Charles Francis Suttle.¹⁰⁵ [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#) would lead an assault on the jail, and in the attempt to rescue Burns, a deputized truckman named

105. At the time of the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law, according to Lawrence Lader's THE BOLD BRAHMINS (NY: Dutton, 1961, page 140), there were some 600 "runaway slaves" living and working in the city of [Boston](#).

1854

1854

[James Batchelder](#) would be killed, some say by a blunderbuss.¹⁰⁶



A [telegram](#) originating in [Washington DC](#), allegedly from President of the United States of America Franklin Pierce,¹⁰⁷ sided with the kidnapers of Burns but offered a quite ambiguous sentiment,

The law must be executed.

indeed one with which all anarchists everywhere would be able **most heartily** to concur:

**ROSS/ADAMS
COMMENTARY**

[Richard Henry Dana, Jr.](#) would be the attorney for the defense. The trial would cost more than \$40,000.⁰⁰ and would be lost. In the course of all this lawyer Dana would be assaulted at night by a hired thug.¹⁰⁸

RESISTING THE FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW

Democrats had dragged cannon from the Custom House to the Common, and were there firing off salutes to the new [Kansas/Nebraska Act](#) extending the territory of American slavery, at 8PM while Anthony Burns was being taken into custody as he walked home along Brattle Street. (Caleb Page, a Boston truckman who had

106. [James Batchelder](#) was either shot or stabbed, either by an abolitionist on purpose or by accident or by another police agent on purpose or by accident. What we know for sure is that he quickly bled out after his femoral artery was “nearly divided.” It would be said that he had received the wages for his sin of favoring human enslavement, but it needs to be mentioned that we do not know how many children this [Irish](#) immigrant truckman had in some Boston tenement, to feed and clothe.

107. Although this telegram must have been a fraud—since President Pierce was never indicted as a co-conspirator in this kidnapping of Burns—our history books say nothing further about the source of the telegram and appear to have little interest in uncovering who it was in [Washington](#) who could have been behind such a slanderous misuse of a President’s name. —And recently, when Rodney King was attacked and abused by the “LAPD,” an armed and exceedingly dangerous group of bigoted criminals operating in the Los Angeles area, the same sort of slanderous attack was made on the good name of President George Herbert Walker Bush!

108. Hopefully, this hired thug was not in the employ of the White House plumbers.



1854

1854

gone along with Butman to arrest Burns, would later be outraged when informed that he had helped in the recapture of an escaped slave — Butman had assured his hired day-deputy that he was merely assisting in the capture of a thief which technically under the law was a correct explanation as, under the law as it then existed, Burns was stealing himself and his services from their rightful owner. The next day in court there a broken bone would be seen to be protruding from his right hand, but this had not been the result of harm he had sustained while he was being taken into custody, for as a child that hand had been damaged in some machinery at a shop to which his owner had hired out his labor. Dana would describe the “scarred” right hand for the court record as “a bone stands out from the back of it, a hump an inch high, and it hangs almost useless from the wrist, a huge scar or gash covering half its surface.” I do not know whether this meant that the white bone was protruding permanently through the skin, or whether this meant that the deformed bone made a pronounced lump under the skin.)

Brad Dean summarized: “In September 1850 the United States Congress passed the Fugitive Slave Law, which granted slaveholders the right to seize runaway slaves anywhere in the U.S. and carry them back to the South. The first attempt at rendition in February 1851 failed when abolitionists rescued a runaway called [Shadrach \(Frederick Jenkins\)](#) from his captors in Boston and sent him on to safety in [Canada](#). Less than two months later, however, another runaway, [Thomas Simms \(Sims\)](#), was seized in Boston, but on that occasion local, state, and federal troops ensured that Sims’s owners were able to carry him back to Georgia. Thoreau and hundreds of thousands of others in the North were outraged by the Fugitive Slave Law and the Sims rendition, which seemed to them flagrant violations by the federal government of the rights guaranteed to states under the US Constitution. As a consequence of these and similar actions by the federal government, the [Nullification](#) movement, which posited that a state had a right to nullify laws mandated by the federal government, garnered more serious attention in the North than it had before been accorded. Two key events immediately preceded and helped set the stage for the meeting sponsored by the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society on July 4, 1854. On May 24, [Anthony Burns](#), a fugitive slave working in a Boston clothing store, was arrested and slated to be shipped back to Virginia. Abolitionists protested at [Faneuil Hall](#), and the [Reverend Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#) led a failed attempt to rescue Burns from the Boston jail. Burns was escorted under heavy guard by the militia to a revenue cutter, which returned him to slavery. The 2d key event was the passage of the [Kansas/Nebraska Act](#), which became law on May 30. One provision of the Act was the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, an action that removed the explicit prohibition of slavery in the northern reaches

1854

1854

of the Louisiana Purchase. [Thoreau](#) was incensed over the Burns affair. On May 29, he began a long, scathing



journal entry with these 2 sentences, the 2d of which would echo again in [“SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS”](#): “These days it is left to one Mr. Loring to say whether a citizen of Massachusetts is a slave or not. Does any one think that Justice or God awaits Mr. Loring’s decision?”¹⁰⁹ The arrangements by which Thoreau joined [William Lloyd Garrison](#), [Wendell Phillips](#), and the others on the podium at [Framingham, Massachusetts](#) are not known. The absence of his name from announcements of the event suggests that he was a last-minute addition, but we do not know whether he was asked to speak or sought the opportunity. In view of his aroused emotions at the moment and of his apparent difficulty getting Concordians to talk about the North rather than the South, it is certainly possible that the announced rally struck him as an ideal forum to get things off his chest. Minimal time to prepare was not really a problem because on the issue of slavery and Massachusetts his long-stewing thought and rhetoric had already reached the boiling point. Indeed, in writing “Slavery in Massachusetts,” he essentially mined his still fresh journal entries on Burns and earlier passages on the [Thomas Simms \(Sims\)](#) case.”



May 25, Thursday: This was [Waldo Emerson](#)’s 51st birthday. [Henry Thoreau](#) left at 5:30AM for a walk to the Hill.

A copy of the Sonata in b minor for piano by Franz Liszt, dedicated to Robert Schumann (presently in an insane asylum), arrived in Düsseldorf at the home of Clara Schumann. She deemed it “merely a blind noise — no healthy ideas anymore, everything confused, one cannot find a single, clear harmonic progression.” Tell us what you really think, Clara: “It really was too awful.”

109. THE JOURNAL OF HENRY D. THOREAU, ed. Bradford Torrey and [Francis Henry Allen](#), 14 volumes. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1906, 6:313.



1854

1854

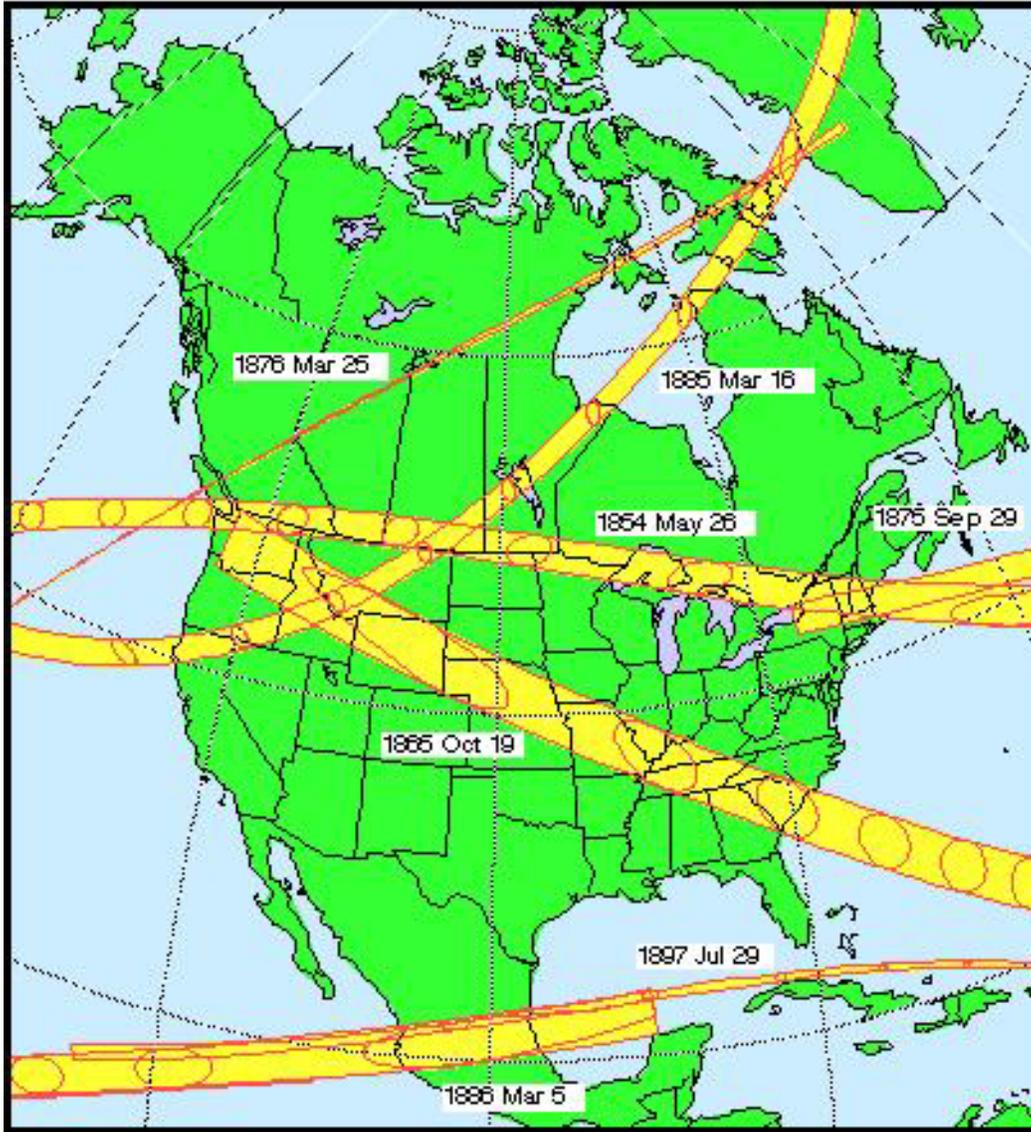
1854

1854



May 26, Friday: An annular solar [eclipse](#) (#7298) was visible (local weather conditions permitting) in a path from Washington state along the Canadian border and across New England and Nova Scotia:

Annular Solar Eclipses: 1851 - 1900



ASTRONOMY

In Boston, the solar eclipse was precluded by clouds and rain. However, in Roxbury, Caroline Barrett White got a view and was able to mark down the totality as occurring precisely at 5:40 PM. In Cambridge, [Henry Wadsworth Longfellow](#) wrote in his journal that “Yesterday a fugitive slave was arrested in Boston! To-day there is an eclipse of the sun. ‘Hung be the heavens in black!’”

When, after declaring a blockade of Greece on account of their attempt to attack Turkey, Great Britain and France occupied Piraeus, Greece quickly assented to neutrality.

Pièce pour Grand Orgue in A was performed for the initial time, in the Church of Saint-Eustache, Paris, by its composer [César Franck](#).

1854

1854

At 5:30 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) visited the climbing ivy, and in the afternoon he went to [Walden Pond](#). Presumably he caught no glimpse of the eclipse through the clouds.

[Moncure Daniel Conway](#) heard the Reverend [Theodore Parker](#)'s incendiary oration at [Faneuil Hall](#):

There is a means, and there is an end; liberty is the end, and sometimes peace is not the means toward it.



Hey, that's not bad, coming from a white man who believed his own Caucasian race to be uniquely humane, civilized, and progressive, never enslaved because able to conquer by use of the head as well as by use of the hand. (Yeah, that's just about a quote unquote, for the Reverend Parker besides being a warmonger was also a racist.) Let's have a war so that superior and inferior races can live together in harmony!

The lawyer Seth Webb, Jr. managed to persuade Judge Daniel Wells of Boston's Court of Common Pleas to issue to Boston's coroner, Charles Smith, a writ of personal replevin according to which US Marshal Watson Freeman was to surrender "the body of Anthony Burns." Freeman, however, refused to comply with this writ. Meanwhile, there were maneuvers to raise \$1,200 to purchase the escaped slave in order directly to manumit him.¹¹⁰

MANUMISSION

This [Anthony Burns](#) affair made Conway (among others) into an abolitionist, by forcing him to choose sides. As the industrialist [Amos Adams Lawrence](#) of the [Secret "Six"](#) conspiracy commented,

We went to bed one night old-fashioned, conservative, Compromise Union Whigs and waked up stark mad Abolitionists.

110. It would have been at best problematic, for such a sale of Burns to the abolitionists for \$1,200 to have gone through. Under Massachusetts law, the sale of a slave within the Commonwealth would have been a criminal offense committed by the seller and punishable by a fine of \$1,000 plus ten years in prison. Even if Mr. Charles Francis Suttle were to carefully phrase the transaction as a [manumission](#) financed by others rather than as a financial transaction for gain, he very well knew that this would provide his enemies with a pretext for indefinite legal harassment — a pretext upon which in the utter absence of all good will they would be quite likely to act.



1854

1854

[Bronson Alcott](#) took the train from Boston for [Worcester](#) on a mission for the Boston Vigilance Committee. He was to attract the Reverend [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#), who had organized the guerrilla action of 1851 which had failed to rescue [Thomas Simms \(Sims\)](#), to head the Vigilance Committee and to take action in regard to the kidnapping of Burns.¹¹¹

[RESISTING THE FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW](#)

111. For the attempt at rescuing [Anthony Burns](#), see the [Reverend Higginson](#)'s CHEERFUL YESTERDAYS (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1898).

1854

1854

 May 27, Saturday: The Marine Telegraph from Fort Point to San Francisco was completed.

CALIFORNIA

US Commissioner Robert McLane visited the rebel kingdom at Nanjing in his warship, the *Susquehanna*. The Reverend [Issachar J. Roberts](#) 罗孝全 had asked to be taken along to respond to his standing invitation from his old friend [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全 who had proclaimed himself the real emperor, but the Commissioner had refused this.



Meanwhile, the [Chinese Christian Army](#) invading North China had been encircled by *Qing* troops loyal to the emperor of Beijing, and by mobilized corvee labor of peasants an entire river had been redirected into their camp to swamp them, and they had elected to make a last stand in the city of Lianzhen — where in a siege that would last fully eight months they were being slowly annihilated.

THE TAEPING REBELLION

1854

1854

This was Zheng Guo-fan, the loyalist general:



May 27, Saturday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Saw Mill Brook.

In London, the [Athenaeum](#) reported that although [Thoreau](#) was a graduate of Harvard College and therefore qualified as a minister, instead he had chosen to manufacture pencils and had moved into a hut on the shore of a pond in order to live in a primitive manner and write. The article described WEEK as “a curious mixture of dull and prolix dissertation, with some of the most faithful and animated descriptions of external nature which has [*sic??*] ever appeared.”

In [Worcester](#), [Bronson Alcott](#) succeeded in persuading the [Reverend Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#) to take charge of the Boston vigilantes, and the two took the train into Boston. Martin Stowell of Worcester came also. When they reached Boston, however, they found that the Committee was unable to agree upon a plan of action, and it appears that the Reverend took matters into his own hands. He went out and purchased a dozen axes with which to attack the door of the courthouse. That night, at the mass rally at [Faneuil Hall](#) at which the committee intended to instigate the sort of howling mob which would be needed in order to cover their purposive activity and distract the guards, the committee members slipped out early and took up their positions at the courthouse and waited for the mob to be marshaled. When Martin Stowell gave the signal, a black man ran to the west door and hammered it open with a 12-foot beam and leaped inside, with the Reverend Higginson close behind him. The people who managed to get inside the courthouse were immediately, however, repulsed by a group of policemen with clubs. The Reverend Higginson was badly beaten on the head and face, and one of the policemen was killed either by knife or gunshot to the midriff. The police began

1854

1854

arresting individual rioters, and the mob began to pull back, but the Reverend Higginson, and a lawyer named Seth Webb who had been one of his classmates in college, held firm. Then they were joined by Alcott, came in hand, who walked right up to the door of the courthouse and looked in. A shot was fired inside the building, or was not fired (although some claimed this, Alcott himself never made any mention of having heard such a sound), as Alcott turned around and came back away from the courthouse.



A little-known fact is that [Newport, Rhode Island](#) businessman [George Thomas Downing](#) was one of those involved in this attack on the Boston courthouse.

One of the onlookers to these events, who would take no part in them but would suffer in his home town for having so much as been present, was [Moncure Daniel Conway](#). Word that he had been present would circulate in Virginia, so that when he attempted to return to visit his father and mother, a crowd of young men would confront him and order him to leave the town immediately or suffer the consequences.

The Boston mayor, [Dr. Jerome Van Crowninshield Smith](#), a local-politics weathervane, issued the following declaration:

Under the excitement that now pervades the city, you are respectfully requested to cooperate with the Municipal authorities in the maintenance of peace and good order. The law must be obeyed, let the consequences be what they may.

Of course, just as the courthouse officials could agree with peace with quiet, the abolitionists could agree with peace with justice. –They could agree that the ideal of peace and good order was utterly incompatible with kidnapping, and with human enslavement. They could agree that the higher law, which was the law of



righteousness, and the law of nature and of God, must be obeyed — whatever the consequences.

RESISTING THE FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW

HIGHER LAW

A jury, meeting in the building in which [Anthony Burns](#) was being held and judged, rendered a verdict of guilty at 10:15 PM — James Wilson was to [hang](#).

Because there had been an alert that Peter Dunbar's¹¹² truckmen were planning to attack the home of [Wendell Phillips](#), Phillips being elsewhere but his family being in the home, [Bronson Alcott](#), [Henry Kemp](#), [Francis Jackson](#), and the [Reverend Samuel Joseph May](#) each armed themselves with a pistol, to sit out the night in the Phillips parlor. They would sit out this night with their pistols in their laps, however, without incident.

Because there were fears that the slavemaster, Mr. Charles Francis Suttle, and his attorney at law, William Brent, might be attacked at their lodgings on the 1st floor of the Revere House, an honor guard of southern students was recruited from Harvard College.¹¹³ Suttle and Brent then relocated to a room in the hotel's garret, for greater security inside their cordon of armed students.

Knowing that during the attack on the courthouse he had discharged his pistol toward Watson Freeman but that Freeman had been unharmed, [Lewis Hayden](#) considered it entirely possible that it had been his bullet that had

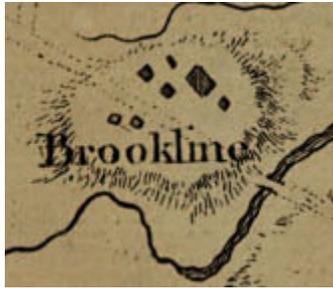
112. What relation would this Peter Dunbar, a member of the management team at the Customs House on the waterfront, and his son Peter Dunbar, Jr., the captain of the guard at the courthouse guarding [Anthony Burns](#), have been to Concord's [Cynthia Dunbar Thoreau](#)?

113. [Moncure Daniel Conway](#), as a Harvard student from the South, was recruited to take part in this armed guard at the hotel. The two visitors to Boston were not unknown to him, but rather, they were close neighbors or distant relatives. Nevertheless, he declined to get involved in the affair.

1854

1854

struck deputized truckman [James Batchelder](#) in the major vein of his leg, causing him to bleed out and promptly killing him. Therefore in the evening some activist friends got Hayden into a carriage and conveyed him to the home of Dr. Henry Ingersoll Bowditch in Brookline. (In that period, no-one would have imagined



that a person of color could have been permitted to ride inside such a horse-and-carriage. Thus, drawing the carriage's window curtains was in and of itself adequate to provide complete concealment.) Hayden was met at his destination by a group of black men resolved to prevent the re-enslavement of Burns.



The [Reverend Higginson](#) in a note to his wife in Worcester, written in haste from a home in Boston in which he had sought refuge after the attempted rescue of [Anthony Burns](#): “There has been an attempt at rescue, and failed. I am not hurt, except for a scratch on the face which will probably prevent me from doing anything more about it, lest I be recognized.”

1854

1854



May 28, Sunday: Early in the morning, Judge [Lemuel Shaw](#) of the Supreme Judicial Court sentenced the murderer James Wilson to be “confined to hard labor in the House of Correction for one year from the 26th of May, 1854, and then to be taken to the place of execution, and hanged by the neck until dead.” He then left the courthouse, freeing it for the important proceedings of the Burns case.



Judge [Edward Greeley Loring](#) then sat, and ruled that since the defense would be allowed more time to prepare if someone was accused of writing a bad check for \$25.00, he considered that in a case affecting a man’s liberty, it was reasonable and within the discretion of the court to allow some further delay.

In his Ascension Sunday sermon the [Reverend Theodore Parker](#) condemned [Edward Greeley Loring](#), a teacher at Harvard College who doubled as a judge of probate in the Massachusetts court system, for issuing the warrant as United States Commissioner for [Anthony Burns](#)’s arrest, and thus, in effect, for causing the murder of the 1 out of the 184 courthouse guards, [James Batchelder](#) who had been unfortunately shot to death during the citizen riot. The Woburn ladies of the congregation took up a collection and sent Commissioner Loring thirty pieces of silver.

After a siege of a month, a major Russian assault on the Turkish defenders of Silistria, just over the Danube southeast of Bucharest, was repelled with heavy cost.

Alexandros Nikolaou Mavrokordatos replaced Antonios Georgiou Kriezis as Prime Minister of Greece.

Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka arrived at Tsarskoye Selo, where he was planning to spend the summer, 7 weeks after leaving Paris.

Erzherzog Wilhelm Genesungs-Marsch op.149 by [Johann Baptist Strauss II](#) was performed for the initial time, in Ungers Casino, Vienna.



May 28. Sunday. The *F. hyemalis*, fox-colored sparrow, rusty grackles, tree sparrows, have all gone by; also the purple finch. The snipe has ceased (?) to boom. I have not heard the phoebe of late, and methinks the bluebird and the robin are not heard so often (the former certainly not). Those tumultuous morning concerts of sparrows, tree and song, hyemalis, and grackles, like leaves on the trees, are past, and the woodland quire will rather be diminished than increased henceforth. But, on the other hand, toads and frogs and insects, especially at night, all through June, betray by the sounds they make their sensitiveness to the increasing temperature, and theirs especially is the music which ushers in the summer. Each warmer night, like this, the toads and frogs sing with increased energy, and already fill the air with sound, though the bullfrogs have not yet begun to trump in earnest. To this add the hum and creak of insects. These still herald or expect the summer. The birds do not foretell that.

[Transcript]

12 M. — By boat to Lee’s Cliff.

Larch cones are now conspicuous and handsome, — dark-crimson, about half an inch long. Pitch pine cones, too, are now handsome. The larch has a little of the sweetness of the fir, etc. Pontederias, flags, *Polygonum*

hydropiperoides (just showing itself), that coarse utricularia, often floating, potamogetons, etc., etc., now begin to make a conspicuous border to the river, and its summer limits begin to be defined. Pads began to be eaten by insects as soon as they appeared, though it is still so high that I am obliged to lower my mast at the bridges. Even this spring the arches of the stone bridge were completely concealed by the flood, and yet at midsummer I can sail under them without lowering my mast, which is [a blank space was left here] feet high from the bottom of the boat. Critchicrotches have been edible some time in some places. It must be a kind of water milfoil, whose leaves I now see variously divided under water, and some nearly two feet long. [Probably *Sium*.]

At the *old* bridge at the hill, the water being quite smooth, I saw a, water-hug cross straight from the south to the north side, about six rods, furrowing the water in a waving line, there being no other insects near him on the surface. It took but about a minute. It was an interesting sight, proving that this little insect, whose eyes are hardly raised above the plane of the water, sees, or is cognizant of, the opposite shore. I have no doubt that they cross with ease and rapidity lakes a mile wide. It looked like an adventurous voyage for it. Probably he is in danger from fishy monsters, — though it must be difficult for a fish to catch one.

I see the exuviae or cases of sonic insects on the stems of water plants above the surface. The large devil's-needles are revealed by the reflection in the water, when I cannot see them in the air, and at first mistake them for swallows. Broom-rape, perhaps yesterday. Thimble-berry out, — at Lee's Cliff day before yesterday at least. Distinguished by the downy under sides of its leaves. I see those large, thin, transparent radical heart (?) leaves [*Nuphar Kalmiana*] floating on the surface, as if bitten off by some creature. I see breams' nests which have been freshly cleared out and are occupied. The red choke-berry is fully out, and I do not know but it is as early as the black. Red clover at Clamshell, a day or two. Saw that common snake *Coluber eximius* of De Kay, checkered adder, etc., etc., — forty-one inches long. A rather light brown above, with large dark-brown, irregularly quadrangular blotches, margined with black, and similar small ones, on the sides; abdomen light salmon-white, — whitest toward the head, — checkered with quadrangular blotches; very light bluish-slate in some lights and dark-slate or black in others. Abdominal plates 201, caudal scales 45. I should think from Storer's description that his specimen had lost its proper colors in spirits. He describes not the colors of a living snake, but those which alcohol might impart to it(?). It is as if you were to describe the white man as very red in the face, having seen a drunkard only.

The huckleberries, excepting the late, are now generally in blossom, their rich clear red contrasting with the light-green leaves; frequented by honey-bees, full of promise for the summer. One of the great crops of the year. The blossom of the *Vaccinium vacillans* is larger and paler, but higher-colored on one side and more transparent (?), less concealed by leaves. These are the blossoms of the *Vaccinieæ*, or Whortleberry Family, which affords so large a proportion of our berries. The crop of oranges, lemons, nuts, and raisins, and figs, quinces, etc., etc., not to mention tobacco and the like, is of no importance to us compared with these. The berry-promising flower of the *Vaccinieæ*. This crop grows wild all over the country, — wholesome, bountiful, and free, — a real ambrosia (one is called *V. Vitis-Idæa*, Vine of Mt. Ida), — and yet men — the foolish demons that they are — devote themselves to culture of tobacco, inventing slavery and a thousand other curses as the means, — with infinite pains and inhumanity go raise tobacco all their lives. Tobacco is the staple instead of huckleberries. Wreaths of tobacco smoke go up from this land, the incense of a million sensualists. With what authority can such distinguish between Christians and Mahometans?

Finding the low blackberry nearly open, I looked long and at last, where the vine ran over a rock on the south hillside, the reflected heat had caused it [to] open fully its large white blossoms. In such places, apparently yesterday. The high blackberry in similar places, at least to-day. At these rocks I hear a sharp peep, — methinks of a peewee dashing away. Pour pale-green (?) eggs, finely sprinkled with brown, in a brown thrasher's nest, on the ground (!) under a barberry bush. The [night-warbler](#) , after his strain, drops down almost perpendicularly into a tree-top and is lost. The crickets, though it is everywhere an oppressively warm day (yesterday I had a fire!!) and I am compelled to take off any thinnish coat, are heard, particularly amid the rocks at Lee's Cliff. They must love warmth. As if it were already autumn there. White clover under the rocks. I see the ebony spleenwort full-grown. The pitch pines are *rather* past bloom here, — the cobwebs they contain yellowed with their dust, — probably generally in bloom elsewhere. *Turritis stricta*, apparently out of bloom. Young wild cherry under rocks, fully out two or three days; generally or elsewhere not quite out; probably will begin to-morrow.

It would be worth the while to ask ourselves weekly, Is our life innocent enough? Do we live *inhumanly*, toward man or beast, in thought or act? To be serene and successful we must be at one with the universe. The least conscious and needless injury inflicted on any creature is to its extent a suicide. What peace — or life — can a murderer have?

Fair Haven Cliffs.

The lint has begun to come off the young leaves. The birches are still the darkest green to be seen in large masses, except evergreens. The last begin to be less conspicuous, beginning to be lost in the sea of verdure. The shrub oak plain is now fairly greened again, only slightly tinged with redness here and there, where are the youngest white oak leaves.

As I sail down toward the Clamshell Hill about an hour before sunset, the water is smoothed like glass, though

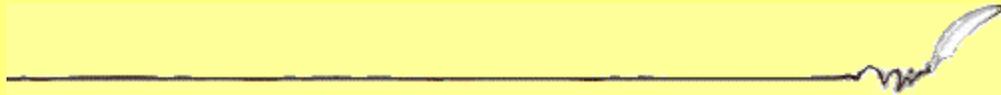
the breeze is as strong as before. How is this? Yet I have not seen much smooth water this spring. I think the fall must be the time. The rounded green hills are very fair and elysian. The low clumps of bushes on their sides, just clothed with tender verdure, look like islets half sunk and floating in a cool sea of grass. They do not stand, but float on the cool glaucous swells. Though the grass is really short and thin there. Whole schools of fishes leap out of water at once with a loud plashing, even many rods distant, scared by my sail. Cracks in the earth are still visible, and hips of the late rose still hold on under water in some places. The inhumanity of science concerns me, as when I am tempted to kill a rare snake that I may ascertain its species. I feel that this is not the means of acquiring true knowledge.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

THOREAU ON NORMATIVE SCIENCE

During the last decade of his life, Thoreau visited his rivers more than twice as often as the upland woods and lakes that he is far better known for writing about.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 3



 May 29, Monday: [Henry Thoreau](#) sailed up the [Assabet River](#) to Cedar Swamp.

The Reverend [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#) in a letter to his mother Louisa Storow Higginson, from his home in Worcester: “Of course, I as in Boston on Friday night and had something to do with the demonstration in court.... That attack was a great thing for freedom, and will echo all over the country. It came within an inch of success at any rate. Of course, I was unarmed, hurt nothing but a door, and was unhurt myself but for some knocks and a scratch.... I am sorry for the death of the man it is my clear conviction that he was killed by one of his own blundering comrades.... At any rate, they are making arrests, and I think it more than probable that I may come in for a share. I shall consider it the highest honor yet attained by a Higginson.”

The US Senate abrogated a portion of the Treaty of Washington:

Resolved, “that, in the opinion of the Senate, it is expedient, and in conformity with the interests and sound policy of the United States, that the eighth article of the treaty between this government and Great Britain, of the 9th of August, 1842, should be abrogated.” Introduced by Slidell, and favorably reported from Committee on Foreign Relations in Executive Session, June 13, 1854. SENATE JOURNAL, 34th Congress, 1-2d session, pages 396, 695-8; SENATE REPORTS, 34th Congress, 1st session, I. No. 195.

INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE

 May 30, Tuesday: Stephen Douglas introduced to Congress, and obtained, the bill establishing Kansas and Nebraska as territories whose legislatures would decide whether they'd be slave or free. It was anticipated that under the Popular Sovereignty clause of the [Kansas/Nebraska Act](#), despite the game-rules set down in the Missouri Compromise Nebraska would choose to be a free state and [Kansas](#) a slave state.

READ THE FULL TEXT

There were two governments in the Kansas Territory, one proslavery and the other, in Topeka, antislavery. President [Franklin Pierce](#) sided with the proslavery government, denouncing the Topeka government as “revolutionary.” Opponents of the act began to coalesce into a new political party, its members calling themselves [Republicans](#). New England Abolitionists rushed to finance the sending of likeminded antislavery settlers into Kansas. Bloody fights and raids erupted between pro- and antislavery settlements. Separate territorial governments were established, one slave and one free. Each had its own capital. Though he represented only a minority, the territorial governor was appointed by President Pierce and could officially recognize only the proslavery government.

“My understanding is that anti-slavery and anti-black went hand in hand. This is a modern political assumption that to be anti-slavery was to be pro-black. In fact, the fight against the extension of slavery into Kansas was as much a fight to keep the blacks out, even as slaves. Racist whites did not want blacks in their territory, so they were anti the extension of slavery and its aristocratic culture as well as anti black. See Foner’s FREE SOIL, FREE LABOR, FREE MEN for a great summary of the whole free soil mentality.” – Dave Williams

1854

1854

This Kansas/Nebraska Compromise set aside the Missouri Compromise of 1820 and undermined the Compromise of 1850. The US government had thrown the Kansas Territory open to white settlement despite the fact that there were 10,000 Native American inhabitants of the territory and despite the fact that Congress had not yet ratified any treaty providing for their cession of this land to the intrusives.



“BLEEDING KANSAS”



KANSAS-NEBRASKA ACT OF 1854

AN ACT TO ORGANIZE THE TERRITORIES OF NEBRASKA AND KANSAS.



Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That all that part of the territory of the United States included within the following limits, except such portions thereof as are hereinafter expressly exempted from the operations of this act, to wit: beginning at a point in the Missouri River where the fortieth parallel of north latitude crosses the same; then west on said parallel to the east boundary of the Territory of Utah, the summit of the Rocky Mountains; thence on said summit northwest to the forty-ninth parallel of north latitude; thence east on said parallel to the western boundary of the territory of Minnesota; thence southward on said boundary to the Missouri River; thence down the main channel of said river to the place of beginning, be, and the same is hereby, created into a temporary government by the name of the Territory of Nebraska; and when admitted as a State or States, the said Territory or any portion of the same, shall be received into the Union with or without slavery, as their constitution may prescribe at the time of the admission: Provided, That nothing in this act contained shall be construed to inhibit the government of the United States from dividing said Territory into two or more Territories, in such manner and at such time as Congress shall deem convenient and proper, or from attaching a portion of said Territory to any other State or Territory of the United States: Provided further, That nothing in this act contained shall be construed to impair the rights of person or property now pertaining the Indians in said Territory, so long as such rights shall remain unextinguished by treaty between the United States and such Indians, or include any territory which, by treaty with any Indian tribe, is not, without the consent of said tribe, to be included within the territorial line or jurisdiction of any State or Territory; but all such territory shall be excepted out of the boundaries, and constitute no part of the Territory of Nebraska, until said tribe shall signify their assent to the President of the United States to be included within the said Territory of Nebraska, or to affect the authority of the government of the United States to make any regulations respecting such Indians, their lands, property, or other rights, by treaty, law, or otherwise, which it would have been competent to the government to make if this act had never passed.

SECTION 2. And Be it further enacted, That the executive power and authority in and over said Territory of Nebraska shall be vested in a Governor who shall hold his office for four years, and until his successor shall be appointed and qualified, unless sooner removed by the President of the United States. The Governor shall reside within said Territory, and shall be commander-in-chief of the militia thereof. He may grant pardons and respites for offences against the laws of said Territory, and reprieves for offences against the laws of the United States, until the decision of the President can be made known thereon; he shall commission all officers who shall be appointed to office under the laws of the aid Territory, and shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed.

SECTION 3. And Be it further enacted, That there shall be a Secretary of said Territory, who shall reside therein, and hold



his office for five years, unless sooner removed by the President of the United States; he shall record and preserve all the laws and proceedings of the Legislative Assembly hereinafter constituted, and all the acts and proceedings of the Governor in his executive department; he shall transmit one copy of the laws and journals of the Legislative Assembly within thirty days after the end of each session, and one copy of the executive proceedings and official correspondence semi-annually, on the first days of January and July in each year to the President of the United States, and two copies of the laws to the President of the Senate and to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to be deposited in the libraries of Congress, and in or case of the death, removal, resignation, or absence of the Governor from the Territory, the Secretary shall be, and he is hereby, authorized and required to execute and perform all the powers and duties of the Governor during such vacancy or absence, or until another Governor shall be duly appointed and qualified to fill such vacancy.

SECTION 4. And be it further enacted, That the legislative power and authority of said Territory shall be vested in the Governor and a Legislative Assembly. The Legislative Assembly shall consist of a Council and House of Representatives. The Council shall consist of thirteen members, having the qualifications of voters, as hereinafter prescribed, whose term of service shall continue two years. The House of Representatives shall, at its first session, consist of twenty-six members, possessing the same qualifications as prescribed for members of the Council, and whose term of service shall continue one year. The number of representatives may be increased by the Legislative Assembly, from time to time, in proportion to the increase of qualified voters: Provided, That the whole number shall never exceed thirty-nine. An apportionment shall be made, as nearly equal as practicable, among the several counties or districts, for the election of the council and representatives, giving to each section of the Territory representation in the ratio of its qualified voters as nearly as may be. And the members of the Council and of the House of Representatives shall reside in, and be inhabitants of, the district or county, or counties for which they may be elected, respectively. Previous to the first election, the Governor shall cause a census, or enumeration of the inhabitants and qualified voters of the several counties and districts of the Territory, to be taken by such persons and in such mode as the Governor shall designate and appoint; and the persons so appointed shall receive a reasonable compensation therefor. And the first election shall be held at such time and places, and be conducted in such manner, both as to the persons who shall superintend such election and the returns thereof, as the Governor shall appoint and direct; and he shall at the same time declare the number of members of the Council and House of Representatives to which each of the counties or districts shall be entitled under this act. The persons having the highest number of legal votes in each of said council districts for members of the Council, shall be declared by the Governor to be duly elected to the Council; and the persons having the highest number of legal votes for the House of Representatives, shall be declared by the Governor to be duly elected members of said



house: Provided, That in case two or more persons voted for shall have an equal number of votes, and in case a vacancy shall otherwise occur in either branch of the Legislative Assembly, the Governor shall order a new election; and the persons thus elected to the Legislative Assembly shall meet at such place and on such day as the Governor shall appoint; but thereafter, the time, place, and manner of holding and conducting all elections by the people, and the apportioning the representation in the several counties or districts to the Council and House of Representatives, according to the number of qualified voters, shall be prescribed by law, as well as the day of the commencement of the regular sessions of the Legislative Assembly: Provided, That no session in any one year shall exceed the term of forty days, except the first session, which may continue sixty days.

SECTION 5. And be it further enacted, That every free white male inhabitant above the age of twenty-one years who shall be an actual resident of said Territory, and shall possess the qualifications hereinafter prescribed, shall be entitled to vote at the first election, and shall be eligible to any office within the said Territory; but the qualifications of voters, and of holding office, at all subsequent elections, shall be such as shall be prescribed by the Legislative Assembly: Provided, That the right of suffrage and of holding office shall be exercised only by citizens of the United States and those who shall have declared on oath their intention to become such, and shall have taken an oath to support the Constitution of the United States and the provisions of this act: And provided further, That no officer, soldier, seaman, or marine, or other person in the army or navy of the United States, or attached to troops in the service of the United States, shall be allowed to vote or hold office in said Territory, by reason of being on service therein.

SECTION 6. And Be it further enacted, That the legislative power of the Territory shall extend to all rightful subjects of legislation consistent with the Constitution of the United States and the provisions of this act; but no law shall be passed interfering with the primary disposal of the soil; no tax shall be imposed upon the property of the United States; nor shall the lands or other property of non-residents be taxed higher than the lands or other property of residents. Every bill which shall have passed the Council and House of Representatives of the said Territory shall, before it become a law, be presented to the Governor of the Territory; if he approve, he shall sign it; but if not, he shall return it with his objections to the house in which it originated, who shall enter the objections at large on their journal, and proceed to reconsider it. If, after such reconsideration two thirds of that house shall agree to pass the bill, it shall be sent, together with the objections, to the other house, by which it shall likewise be reconsidered, and if approved by two thirds of that house, it shall become a law. But in all such cases the votes of both houses shall be determined by yeas and nays, to be entered on the journal of each house respectively. If any bill shall not be returned by the Governor within three days (Sundays excepted) after it shall have been presented to him, the same shall be a law in like manner as if



he had signed it, unless the Assembly, by adjournment, prevents its return, in which case it shall not be a law.

SECTION 7. And be it further enacted, That all township, district, and county officers, not herein otherwise provided for, shall be appointed or elected, as the case may be, in such manner as shall be provided by the Governor and Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Nebraska. The Governor shall nominate, and, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council, appoint all officers not herein otherwise provided for; and in the first instance the Governor alone may appoint all said officers, who shall hold their offices until the end of the first session of the Legislative Assembly; and shall lay off the necessary districts for members of the Council and House of Representatives, and all other officers.

SECTION 8. And be it further enacted, That no member of the Legislative Assembly shall hold, or be appointed to, any office which shall have been created, or the salary or emoluments of which shall have been increased, while he was a member, during the term for which he was elected, and for one year after the expiration of such term; but this restriction shall not be applicable to members of the first Legislative Assembly; and no person holding a commission or appointment under the United States, except Postmasters, shall be a member of the Legislative Assembly, or hold any office under the government of said Territory.

SECTION 9. And be it further enacted, That the judicial power of said Territory shall be vested in a Supreme Court, District Courts, Probate Courts, and in Justices of the Peace. The Supreme Court shall consist of a chief justice and two associate justices, any two of whom shall constitute a quorum, and who shall hold a term at the seat of government of said Territory annually, and they shall hold their offices during the period of four years, and until their successor shall be appointed and qualified. The said Territory shall be divided into three judicial districts, and a district court shall be held in each of said districts by one of the justices of the Supreme Court, at such times and places as may be prescribed by of law; and the said judges shall, after their appointments, respectively, reside in the districts which shall be assigned them. The jurisdiction of the several courts herein provided for, both appellate and original, and that of the probate courts and of justices of the peace, shall be as limited by law: Provided, That justices of the peace shall not have jurisdiction of any matter in controversy when the title or boundaries of land may be in dispute, or where the debt or sum claimed shall exceed one hundred dollars; and the said supreme and districts courts, respectively, shall possess chancery as well as common law jurisdiction. Each District Court, or the judge thereof, shall appoint its clerk, who shall also be the register in chancery, and shall keep his office at the place where the court may, be held. Writs of error, bills of exception, and appeals, shall be allowed in all cases from the final decisions of said district courts to the Supreme Court, under such regulations as may be prescribed by law; but in no case removed to the Supreme Court shall trial by jury be allowed in said court. The Supreme Court,



or the justices thereof, shall appoint its own clerk, and every clerk shall hold his office at the pleasure of the court for which he shall have been appointed. Writs of error, and appeals from the final decisions of said Supreme Court, shall be allowed, and may be taken to the Supreme Court of the United States, in the same manner and under the same regulations as from the circuit courts of the United States, where the value of the property, or the amount in controversy, to be ascertained by the oath or affirmation of either party, or other competent witness, shall exceed one thousand dollars; except only that in all cases involving title to slaves, the said writs of error, or appeals shall be allowed and decided by the said Supreme Court, without regard to the value of the matter, property, or title in controversy; and except also that a writ of error or appeal shall also be allowed to the Supreme Court of the United States, from the decision of the said Supreme Court created by this act, or of any judge thereof, or of the district courts created by this act, or of any judge thereof, upon any writ of habeas corpus, involving the question of personal freedom: Provided, that nothing herein contained shall be construed to apply to or affect the provisions to the "act respecting fugitives from justice, and persons escaping from the service of their masters," approved February twelfth, seventeen hundred and ninety-three, and the "act to amend and supplementary to the aforesaid act," approved September eighteen, eighteen hundred and fifty; and each of the said district courts shall have and exercise the same jurisdiction in all cases arising under the Constitution and Laws of the United States as is vested in the Circuit and District Courts of the United States; and the said Supreme and District Courts of the said Territory, and the respective judges thereof, shall and may grant writs of habeas corpus in all cases in which the same are granted by the judges of the United States in the District of Columbia; and the first six days of every term of said courts, or so much thereof as shall be necessary, shall be appropriated to the trial of causes arising under the said constitution and laws, and writs of error and appeal in all such cases shall be made to the Supreme Court of said Territory, the same as in other cases. The said clerk shall receive in all such cases the same fees which the clerks of the district courts of Utah Territory now receive for similar services.

SECTION 10. And Be it further enacted, That the provisions of an act entitled "An act respecting fugitives from justice, and persons escaping from the service of their masters," approved February twelve, seventeen hundred and ninety-three, and the provisions of the act entitled "An act to amend, and supplementary to, the aforesaid act," approved September eighteen, eighteen hundred and fifty, be, and the same are hereby, declared to extend to and be in full force within the limits of said Territory of Nebraska.

SECTION 11. And be it further enacted, That there shall be appointed an Attorney for said Territory, who shall continue in office for four years, and until his successor shall be appointed and qualified, unless sooner removed by the President, and who shall receive the same fees and salary I as the Attorney



of the United States for the present Territory of Utah. There shall also be a Marshal for the Territory appointed, who shall hold his office for four years, and until his successor shall be appointed and qualified, unless sooner removed by the President, and who shall execute all processes issuing from the said courts when exercising their jurisdiction as Circuit and District Courts of the United States; he shall perform the duties, be subject to the same regulation and penalties, and be entitled to the same fees, as the Marshal of the District Court of the United States for the present Territory of Utah, and shall, in addition, be paid two hundred dollars annually as a compensation for extra services.

SECTION 12. And be it further enacted, That the Governor, Secretary, Chief Justice, and Associate Justices, Attorney and Marshal, shall be nominated, and, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, appointed by the President of the United States. The Governor and a Secretary to be appointed as aforesaid, shall, before they act as such, respectively take an oath or affirmation before the District Judge or some Justice of the Peace in the limits of said Territory, duly authorized to administer oaths and affirmations by the laws now in force therein, or & before the Chief Justice, or some Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, to support the Constitution of the United States, and faithfully to discharge the duties of their respective offices, which said oaths, when so taken, shall be certified by the person by whom the same shall have been taken; and such certificates shall be received and recorded by the said Secretary among the Executive proceedings; and the Chief Justice and Associate Justices, and all other civil officers in said Territory, before they act as such, shall take a like oath or affirmation before the said Governor or Secretary, or some Judge or Justice of the Peace of the Territory, who may be duly commissioned and qualified, which said oath or affirmation shall be certified and transmitted by the person taking the same to the Secretary, to be by him recorded as aforesaid; and, afterwards, the like oath or affirmation shall be taken, certified, and recorded, in such manner and form as may be prescribed by law. The Governor shall receive an annual salary of two thousand five hundred dollars. The Chief Justice and Associate Justices shall each receive an annual salary of two thousand dollars. The Secretary shall receive an annual salary of two thousand dollars. The said salaries shall be paid quarter-yearly, from the dates of the respective appointments, at the Treasury of the United States; but no such payment shall be made until said officers shall have entered upon the duties of their respective appointments. The members of the Legislative Assembly shall be entitled to receive three dollars each per day during their attendance at the sessions thereof, and three dollars each for every twenty miles' travel in going to and returning from the said sessions, estimated according to the nearest usually travelled route; and an additional allowance of three dollars shall be paid to the presiding officer of each house for each day he shall so preside. And a chief clerk, one assistant clerk, a sergeant-at-arms, and doorkeeper, may be chosen for each house; and the chief clerk shall receive four dollars per day, and the said other officers



three dollars per day, during the session of the Legislative Assembly; but no other officers shall be paid by the United States: Provided, That there shall be but one session of the legislature annually, unless, on an extraordinary occasion, the Governor shall think proper to call the legislature together. There shall be appropriated, annually, the usual sum, to be expended by the Governor, to defray the contingent expenses of the Territory, including the salary of a clerk of the Executive Department; and there shall also be appropriated, annually, a sufficient sum, to be expended by the Secretary of the Territory, and upon an estimate to be made by the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, to defray the expenses of the Legislative Assembly, the printing of the laws, and other incidental expenses; and the Governor and Secretary of the Territory shall, in the disbursement of all moneys intrusted to them, be governed solely by the instructions of the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, and shall, semi-annually, account to the said Secretary for the manner in which the aforesaid moneys shall have been expended; and no expenditure shall be made by said Legislative Assembly for objects not specially authorized by the acts of Congress, making the appropriations, nor beyond the sums thus appropriated for such objects.

SECTION 13. And be it further enacted, That the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Nebraska shall hold its first session at such time and place in said Territory as the Governor thereof shall appoint and direct; and at said first session, or as soon thereafter as they shall deem expedient, the Governor and Legislative Assembly shall proceed to locate and establish the seat of government for said Territory at such place as they may deem eligible; which place, however, shall thereafter be subject to be changed by the said Governor and Legislative Assembly.

SECTION 14. And be it further enacted, That a delegate to the House of Representatives of the United States, to serve for the term of two years, who shall be a citizen of the United States, may be elected by the voters qualified to elect members of the Legislative Assembly, who shall be entitled to the same rights and privileges as are exercised and enjoyed by the delegates from the several other Territories of the United States to the said House of Representatives, but the delegate first elected shall hold his seat only during the term of the Congress to which he shall be elected. The first election shall be held at such time and places, and be conducted in such manner, as the Governor shall appoint and direct; and at all subsequent elections the times, places, and manner of holding the elections, shall be prescribed by law. The person having the greatest number of votes shall be declared by the Governor to be duly elected; and a certificate thereof shall be given accordingly. That the Constitution, and all Laws of the United States which are not locally inapplicable, shall have the same force and effect within the said Territory of Nebraska as elsewhere within the United States, except the eighth section of the act preparatory to the admission of Missouri into the Union approved March sixth, eighteen hundred and twenty, which, being inconsistent



with the principle of non-intervention by Congress with slaves in the States and Territories, as recognized by the legislation of eighteen hundred and fifty, commonly called the Compromise Measures, is hereby declared inoperative and void; it being the true intent and meaning of this act not to legislate slavery into any Territory or State, nor to exclude it therefrom, but to leave the people thereof perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States: Provided, That nothing herein contained shall be construed to revive or put in force any law or regulation which may have existed prior to the act of sixth March, eighteen hundred and twenty, either protecting, establishing, prohibiting, or abolishing slavery.

SECTION 15. And Be it further enacted, That there shall hereafter be appropriated, as has been customary for the Territorial governments, sufficient amount, to be expended under the direction of the said Governor of the Territory of Nebraska, not exceeding the sums heretofore appropriated for similar objects, for the erection of suitable public buildings at the seat of government, and for the purchase of a library, to be kept at the seat of government for the use of the Governor, Legislative Assembly, Judges of the Supreme Court, Secretary, Marshal, and Attorney of said Territory, and such other persons, and under such regulations as shall be prescribed by law.

SECTION 16. And be it further enacted, That when the lands in the said Territory shall be surveyed under the direction of the government of the United States, preparatory to bringing the same into market, section; numbered sixteen and thirty-six in each township in said Territory shall be, and the same are hereby, reserved for the purpose of being applied to schools in said Territory, and in the States and Territories hereafter to be erected out of the same.

SECTION 17. And be it further enacted, That, until otherwise provided by law, the Governor of said Territory may define the Judicial Districts of said Territory, and assign the judges who may be appointed for said Territory to the several districts; and also appoint the times and places for holding courts in the several counties or subdivisions in each of said Judicial Districts by proclamation, to be issued by him; but the Legislative Assembly, at their first or any subsequent session, may organize, alter, or modify such Judicial Districts, and assign the judges, and alter the times and places of holding the courts, as to them shall seem proper and convenient.

SECTION 18. And be it further enacted, That all officers to be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, for the Territory of Nebraska, who, by virtue of the provisions of any law now existing, or which may be enacted during the present Congress, are required to give security for moneys that may be intrusted with them for disbursement, shall give such security, at such time and place, and in such manner, as the Secretary of the Treasury may prescribe.

SECTION 19. And be it further enacted, That all that part of the Territory of the United States included within the following limits, except such portions thereof as are hereinafter



expressly exempted from the operations of this act, to wit, beginning at a point on the western boundary of the State of Missouri, where the thirty-seventh parallel of north latitude crosses the same; thence west on said parallel to the eastern boundary of New Mexico; thence north on said boundary to latitude thirty-eight; thence following said boundary westward to the east boundary of the Territory of Utah, on the summit of the Rocky Mountains; thence northward on said summit to the fortieth parallel of latitude, thence east on said parallel to the western boundary of the State of Missouri; thence south with the western boundary of said State to the place of beginning, be, and the same is hereby, created into a temporary government by the name of the Territory of Kansas; and when admitted as a State or States, the said Territory, or any portion of the same, shall be received into the Union with or without slavery, as their Constitution may prescribe at the time of their admission: Provided, That nothing in this act contained shall be construed to inhibit the government of the United States from dividing said Territory into two or more Territories, in such manner and at such times as Congress shall deem convenient and proper, or from attaching any portion of said Territory to any other State or Territory of the United States: Provided further, That nothing in this act contained shall be construed to impair the rights of person or property now pertaining to the Indians in said Territory, so long as such rights shall remain unextinguished by treaty between the United States and such Indians, or to include any territory which, by treaty with any Indian tribe, is not, without the consent of said tribe, to be included within the territorial limits or jurisdiction of any State or Territory; but all such territory shall be excepted out of the boundaries, and constitute no part of the Territory of Kansas, until said tribe shall signify their assent to the President of the United States to be included within the said Territory of Kansas, or to affect the authority of the government of the United States to make any regulation respecting such Indians, their lands, property, or other rights, by treaty, law, or otherwise, which it would have been competent to the government to make if this act had never passed.

SECTION 20. And be it further enacted, That the executive power and chin authority in and over said Territory of Kansas shall be vested in a Governor, who shall hold his office for four years, and until his successor shall be appointed and qualified, unless sooner removed by the President of the United States. The Governor shall reside within said Territory, and shall be commander-in-chief of the militia thereof. He may grant pardons and respites for offences against the laws of said Territory, and reprieves for offences against the laws of the United States, until the decision of the President can be made known thereon; he shall commission all officers who shall be appointed to office under the laws of the said Territory, and shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed.

SECTION 21. And be it further enacted, That there shall be a Secretary of said Territory, who shall reside therein, and hold his office for five years, unless sooner removed by the President of the United States; he shall record and preserve all



the laws and proceedings of the Legislative Assembly hereinafter constituted, and all the acts and proceedings of the Governor in his Executive Department; he shall transmit one copy of the laws and journals of the Legislative Assembly within thirty days after the end of each session, and one copy of the executive proceedings and official correspondence semi-annually, on the first days of January and July in each year, to the President of the United States, and two copies of the laws to the President of the Senate and to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to be deposited in the libraries of Congress; and, in case of the death, removal, resignation, or absence of the Governor from the Territory, the Secretary shall be, and he is hereby, authorized and required to execute and perform all the powers and duties of the Governor during such vacancy or absence, or until another Governor shall be duly appointed and qualified to fill such vacancy.

SECTION 22. And be it further enacted, That the legislative power and authority of said Territory shall be vested in the Governor and a Legislative Assembly. The Legislative Assembly shall consist of a Council and House of Representatives. The Council shall consist of thirteen members, having the qualifications of voters, as hereinafter prescribed, whose term of service shall continue two years. The House of Representatives shall, at its first session, consist of twenty-six members possessing the same qualifications as prescribed for members of the Council, and whose term of service shall continue one year. The number of representatives may be increased by the Legislative Assembly, from time to time, in proportion to the increase of qualified voters: Provided, That the whole number shall never exceed thirty-nine. An apportionment shall be made, as nearly equal as practicable, among the several counties or districts, for the election of the Council and Representatives, giving to each section of the Territory representation in the ratio of its qualified voters as nearly as may be. And the members of the Council and of the House of Representatives shall reside in, and be inhabitants of, the district or county, or counties, for which they may be elected, respectively. Previous to the first election, the Governor shall cause a census, or enumeration of the inhabitants and qualified voters of the several counties and districts of the Territory, to be taken by such persons and in such mode as the Governor shall designate and appoint; and the persons so appointed shall receive a reasonable compensation therefor. And the first election shall be held at such time and places, and be conducted in such manner, both as to the persons who shall superintend such election and the returns thereof, as the Governor shall appoint and direct; and he shall at the same time declare the number of members of the Council and House of Representatives to which each of the counties or districts shall be entitled under this act. The persons having the highest number of legal votes in each of said Council Districts for members of the Council, shall be declared by the Governor to be duly elected to the Council; and the persons having the highest number of legal votes for the House of Representatives, shall be declared by the Governor to be duly elected members of said house: Provided, That in case two or more persons voted for shall have an equal number of votes, and



in case o a vacancy shall otherwise occur in either branch of the Legislative Assembly, the Governor shall order a new election; and the persons thus elected to the Legislative Assembly shall meet at such place and on such day as the Governor shall appoint; but thereafter, the time, place, and manner of holding and conducting all elections by the people, and the apportioning the representation in the several counties or districts to the Council and House of Representatives, according to the number of qualified t voters, shall be prescribed by law, as well as the day of the commencement of the regular sessions of the Legislative Assembly: Provided, That no session in any one year shall exceed the term of forty days, except the first session, which may continue sixty days.

SECTION 23. And be it further enacted, That every free white male inhabitant above the age of twenty-one years, who shall be an actual resident of said Territory, and shall possess the qualifications hereinafter prescribed, shall be entitled to vote at the first election, and shall be eligible to any office within the said Territory; but the qualifications of voters, and of holding office, at all subsequent elections, shall be such as shall be prescribed by the Legislative Assembly: Provided, That the right of suffrage and of holding office shall be exercised only by citizens of the United States, and those who shall have declared, on oath, their intention to become such, and shall have taken an oath to support the Constitution of the United States and the provisions of this act: And, provided further, That no officer, soldier, seaman, or marine, or other person in the 'army or navy of the United States, or attached to troops in the service of the United States, shall be allowed to vote or hold office in said Territory by reason of being on service therein.

SECTION 24. And be it further enacted, That the legislative power of the Territory shall extend to all rightful subjects of legislation consistent with the Constitution of the United States and the provisions of this act; but no law shall be passed interfering with the primary disposal of the soil; no tax shall be imposed upon the property of the United States; nor shall the lands or other property of non-residents be taxed higher than the lands or other property of residents. Every bill which shall have passed the Council and House of Representatives of the said Territory shall, before it become a law, be presented to the Governor of the Territory; if he approve, he shall sign it; but if not, he shall return it with his objections to the house in which it originated, who shall enter the objections at large on their journal, and proceed to reconsider it. If, after such reconsideration, two thirds of that house shall agree to pass the bill, it shall be sent, together with the objections, to the other house, by which, it shall likewise be reconsidered, and, if approved by two thirds of that house, it shall become a law. But in all such cases the votes of both houses shall be determined by yeas and nays, to be entered on the journal of each house, respectively. If any bill shall not be returned by the Governor within three days (Sundays excepted) after it shall have been presented to him, the same shall be a law in like manner as if he had signed it, unless the Assembly, by



adjournment, prevent its return, in which case it shall not be a law.

SECTION 25. And be it further enacted, That all township, district, and; county officers, not herein otherwise provided for, shall be appointed or elected as the case may be, in such manner as shall be provided by the Governor and Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Kansas. The Governor shall nominate, and, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council, appoint all officers not herein otherwise provided for; and, in the first instance, the Governor alone may appoint all said officers, who shall hold their offices until the end of the first session of the Legislative Assembly; and shall lay off the necessary districts for members of the Council and House of Representatives, and all other officers.

SECTION 26. And be it further enacted, That no member of the Legislative Assembly shall hold, or be appointed to, any office which shall have been created, or the salary or emoluments of which shall have been increased, while he was a member, during the term for which he was elected, and for one year after the expiration of such term; but this restriction shall not be applicable to members of the first Legislative Assembly; and no person holding a commission or appointment under the United States, except postmasters, shall be a member of the Legislative Assembly, or shall hold any office under the government of said Territory.

SECTION 27. And be it further enacted, That the judicial power of said Territory shall be vested in a supreme court, district courts, probate courts, and in justices of the peace. The Supreme Court shall consist of chief justice and two associate justices, any two of whom shall constitute a quorum, and who shall hold a term at the seat of government of said Territory annually; and they shall hold their offices during the period of four years, and until their successors shall be appointed and qualified. The said Territory shall be divided into three judicial districts, and a district court shall be held in each of said districts by one of the justices of the Supreme Court, at such times and places as may be prescribed by law; and the said judges shall, after their appointments, respectively, reside in the districts which shall be assigned them. The jurisdiction of the several courts herein provided for, both appellate and original, and that of the probate courts and of justices of the peace, shall be as limited by law: Provided, That justices of the peace shall not have jurisdiction of any matter in controversy when the title or boundaries of land may be in dispute, or where the debt or sum claimed shall exceed one hundred dollars; and the said supreme and district courts, respectively, shall possess chancery as well as common law jurisdiction. Said District Court, or the judge thereof, shall appoint its clerk, who shall also be the register in chancery, and shall keep his office at the place where the court may be held. Writs of error, bills of exception, and appeals shall be allowed in all cases from the final decisions of said district courts to the Supreme Court, under such regulations as may be prescribed by law; but in no case removed to the Supreme Court shall trial by jury be allowed in said court. The Supreme Court,



or the justices thereof, shall appoint its own clerk, and every clerk shall hold his office at the pleasure of the court for which he shall have been appointed. Writs of error, and appeals from the final decisions of said supreme court, shall be allowed, and may be taken to the Supreme Court of the United States, in the same manner and under the same regulations as from the Circuit Courts of the United States, where the value of the property, or the amount in controversy, to be ascertained by the oath or affirmation of either party, or other competent witness, shall exceed one thousand dollars; except only that in all cases involving title to slaves, the said writ of error or appeals shall be allowed and decided by said supreme court, without regard to the value of the matter, property, or title in controversy; and except also that a writ of error or appeal shall also be allowed to the Supreme Court of the United States, from the decision of the said supreme court created by this act, or of any judge thereof, or of the district courts created by this act, or of any judge thereof, upon any writ of habeas corpus, involving the question of personal freedom: Provided, That nothing herein contained shall be construed to apply to or affect the provisions of the "act respecting fugitives from justice, and persons escaping from the service of their masters," approved February twelfth, - seventeen hundred and ninety-three, and the "act to amend and supplementary to the aforesaid act," approved September eighteenth, eighteen hundred and fifty; and each of the said district courts shall have and exercise the same jurisdiction in all cases arising under the Constitution and laws of the United States as is vested in the Circuit and District Courts of the United States; and the said supreme and district courts of the said Territory, and the respective judges thereof, shall and may grant writs of habeas corpus in all cases in which the same are granted by the judges of the United States in the District of Columbia; and the first six days of every term of said courts, or so much thereof as may be necessary, shall be appropriated to the trial of causes arising under the said Constitution and laws, and writs of error and appeal in all such cases shall be made to the Supreme Court of said Territory, the same as in other cases. The said clerk shall receive the same fees in all such cases, which the clerks of the district courts of Utah Territory now receive for similar services.

SECTION 28. And be it further enacted, That the provisions of the act entitled "An act respecting fugitives from justice, and persons escaping from, the service of their masters," approved February twelfth, seventeen hundred and ninety-three, and the provisions of the act entitled "An act to amend, and supplementary to, the aforesaid act," approved September eighteenth, eighteen hundred and fifty, be, and the same are hereby, declared to extend to and be in full force within the limits of the said Territory of Kansas.

SECTION 29. And be it further enacted, That there shall be appointed an attorney for said Territory, who shall continue in office for four years, and until his successor shall be appointed and qualified, unless sooner removed by the President, and who shall receive the same fees and salary as the Attorney



of the United States for the present Territory of Utah. There shall also be a marshal for the Territory appointed, who shall hold his office for four years, and until his successor shall be appointed and qualified, unless sooner removed by the President, and who shall execute all processes issuing from the said courts where exercising their jurisdiction as Circuit and District Courts of the United States; he shall perform the duties, be subject to the same regulations and penalties, and be entitled to the same fees, as the Marshal of the District Court of the United States for the present Territory of Utah, and shall, in addition, be paid two hundred dollars annually as a compensation for extra services.

SECTION 30. And be it further enacted, That the Governor, Secretary, Chief Justice, and Associate Justices, Attorney, and Marshal, shall be nominated, and, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, appointed by the President of the United States. The Governor and Secretary to be appointed as aforesaid shall, before they act as such, respectively take an oath or affirmation before the district judge or some justice of the peace in the limits of said Territory, duly authorized to administer oaths and affirmations by the laws now in force therein, or before the Chief Justice or some Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, to support the Constitution of the United States, and faithfully to discharge the duties of their respective offices, which said oaths, when so taken, shall be certified by the person by whom the same shall have been taken; and such certificates shall be received and recorded by the said secretary among the executive proceedings; and the Chief Justice and Associate Justices, and all other civil officers in said Territory, before they act as such, shall take a like oath or affirmation before the said Governor or Secretary, or some Judge or Justice of the Peace of the Territory who may be duly commissioned and qualified, which said oath or affirmation shall be certified and transmitted by the person taking the same to the Secretary, to be by him recorded as aforesaid; and, afterwards, the like oath or affirmation shall be taken, certified, and recorded, in such manner and form as may be prescribed by law. The Governor shall receive an annual salary of two thousand five hundred dollars. The Chief Justice and Associate Justices shall receive As an annual salary of two thousand dollars. The Secretary shall receive an annual salary of two thousand dollars. The said salaries shall be paid quarter-yearly, from the dates of the respective appointments, at the Treasury of the United States; but no such payment shall be made until said officers shall have entered upon the duties of their respective appointments. The members of the Legislative Assembly shall be entitled to receive three dollars each per day during their attendance at the sessions thereof, and three dollars each for every twenty miles' travel in going to and returning from the said sessions, estimated according to the nearest usually travelled route; and an additional allowance of three dollars shall be paid to the presiding officer of each house for each day he shall so preside. And a chief clerk, one assistant clerk, a sergeant at-arms, and door-keeper, may be chosen for each house; and the chief clerk shall receive four dollars per day, and the said other officers three dollars per



day, during the session of the Legislative Assembly; but no to other officers shall be paid by the United States: Provided, That there shall be but one session of the Legislature annually, unless, on an extraordinary occasion, the Governor shall think proper to call the Legislature together. There shall be appropriated, annually, the usual sum, to be expended by the Governor, to defray the contingent expenses of the Territory, including the salary of a clerk of the Executive Department and there shall also be appropriated, annually, a sufficient sum, to be expended by the Secretary of the Territory, and upon an estimate to be made by the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, to defray the expenses of the Legislative Assembly, the printing of the laws, and other incidental expenses; and the Governor and Secretary of the Territory shall, in the disbursement of all moneys intrusted to them, be governed solely by the instructions of the secretary of the Treasury of the United States, and shall, semi-annually, account to the said secretary for lit the manner in which the aforesaid moneys shall have been expended; and no expenditure shall be made by said Legislative Assembly for objects not specially authorized by the acts of Congress making the appropriations, nor beyond the sums thus appropriated for such objects.

SECTION 31. And be it further enacted, That the seat of government of said Territory is hereby located temporarily at Fort Leavenworth; and that such portions of the public buildings as may not be actually used and needed for military purposes, may be occupied and used, under the direction of the Governor and Legislative Assembly, for such public purposes as may be required under the provisions of this act.

SECTION 32. And be it further enacted, That a delegate to the House of Representatives of the United States, to serve for the term of two years, who shall be a citizen of the United States, may be elected by the voters qualified to elect members of the Legislative Assembly, who shall be entitled to the same rights and privileges as are exercised and enjoyed by the delegates from the several other Territories of the United States to the said House of Representatives, but the delegate first elected shall hold his seat only during the term of the Congress to which he shall be elected. The first election shall be held at such time and places, and be conducted in such manner, as the Governor shall appoint and direct; and at all subsequent elections, the times, places, and manner of holding the elections shall be prescribed by law. The person having the greatest number of votes shall be declared by the Governor to be duly elected, and a certificate thereof shall be given accordingly. That the Constitution, and all laws of the United States which are not locally inapplicable, shall have the same force and effect within the said Territory of Kansas as elsewhere within the United States, except the eighth section of the act preparatory to the admission of Missouri into the Union, approved March sixth, eighteen hundred and twenty, which, being inconsistent with the principle of non-intervention by Congress with slavery in the States and Territories, as recognized by the legislation of eighteen hundred and fifty, commonly called the Compromise Measures, is hereby declared inoperative and void; it being the



true intent and meaning of this act not to legislate slavery into any Territory or State, nor to exclude it therefrom, but to leave the people thereof perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States: Provided, That nothing herein contained shall be construed to revive or put in force any law or regulation which may have existed prior to the act of sixth of March, eighteen hundred and twenty, either protecting, establishing, prohibiting, or abolishing slavery.

SECTION 33. And be it further enacted; That there shall hereafter be appropriated, as has been customary for the territorial governments, a sufficient amount, to be expended under the direction of the said Governor of the Territory of Kansas, not exceeding the sums heretofore appropriated for similar objects, for the erection of suitable public buildings at the seat of government, and for the purchase of a library, to be kept at the seat of government for the use of the Governor, Legislative Assembly, Judges of the Supreme Court, Secretary, Marshal, and Attorney of said Territory, and such other persons, and under such regulations, as shall be prescribed by law.

SECTION 34. And be it further enacted, That when the lands in the said Territory shall be surveyed under the direction of the government of the United States, preparatory to bringing the same into market, sections numbered sixteen and thirty-six in each township in said Territory shall be, and the same are hereby, reserved for the purpose of being applied to schools in said Territory, and in the States and Territories hereafter to be erected out of the same.

SECTION 35. And be it further enacted, That, until otherwise provided by law, the Governor of said Territory may define the Judicial Districts of said Territory, and assign the judges who may be appointed for said Territory to the several districts; and also appoint the times and places for holding courts in the several counties or subdivisions in each of said judicial districts by proclamation, to be issued by him; but the Legislative Assembly, at their first or any subsequent session, may organize, alter, or modify such judicial districts, and assign the judges, and alter the times and places of holding the courts as to them shall seem proper and convenient.

SECTION 36. And be it further enacted, That all officers to be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, for the Territory of Kansas, who, by virtue of the provisions of any law now existing, or which may be enacted during the present Congress, are required to give security for moneys that may be intrusted with them for disbursement, shall give such security, at such time and place, and in such manner as the Secretary of the Treasury may prescribe.

SECTION 37. And be it further enacted, That all treaties, laws, and other, engagements made by the government of the United States with the Indian tribes inhabiting the territories embraced within this act, shall be faithfully and rigidly observed, notwithstanding any thing contained in this act; and that the existing agencies and superintendencies of said Indians be continued with the same powers and duties which are now

prescribed by law, except that the President of the United States may, at his discretion, change the location of the office of superintendent.

Approved, May 30, 1854.

 May 30, Tuesday: In [California](#), Lone Mountain Cemetery was dedicated.

Kibrisli Mehmed Pasha replaced Mustafa Naili Pasha as Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire.

The [Kansas/Nebraska Act](#) was passed by the United States Congress. This left the question of slavery in these territories open to popular vote. Those opposed to slavery would perceive this as a supremely dangerous incursion of slavery into the north.

[THE 2D GREAT AMERICAN DISUNION](#)

Within a month of the organization of the [Kansas and Nebraska territories](#), President [Franklin Pierce](#) appointed [Physic Rush Elmore](#), the owner of 14 slaves, as an associate judge of the supreme court for the territory of [Kansas](#).

In [Boston](#), the New England Anti-Slavery Society met to try to figure out what to do, while the presser of the Brattle Street tailor shop, [Anthony Burns](#), was on trial in the courthouse, on the charge of being a fugitive from enslavement. Behind barricades of ropes stretched across Courthouse Square, the courthouse was being guarded by regiments of US troops. The night was so cold that Thoreau had to go out and cover his watermelon plants.

[RESISTING THE FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW](#)

The [Boston Post](#), a Democratic mouthpiece, was editorializing that “What these bold, bad men [the paper instances the Reverend [Theodore Parker](#) and aristocrat [Wendell Phillips](#) by name] are doing, is nothing more nor less than committing treason.”

A false report had appeared in the [Boston Daily Times](#), on Monday, May 29th, that Friend [John Greenleaf Whittier](#) had offered “any aid, by money or muscle,” to effect a violent rescue of Anthony Burns. (Whittier had in fact incautiously commented in a message that had become generally known, that “anything” would be preferred to sending Burns “out of Boston as a slave.”) On this day Whittier wrote to the newspaper, offering as further explanation of the attitude he was seeking to express, that “I regard all violence as evil and self-destructive.”

In [Concord](#) in the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Clintonia [swamp](#) and Pond.



May 30. Tuesday. Whiteweed. *Spergularia rubra*, apparently a day or two, side of railroad above red house. Yarrow. [Transcript]

P.M. — To Clintonia Swamp and Pond.

Saw a black snake, dead, four feet three inches long, slate-colored beneath. Saw what was called a California cat which a colored man brought home from California, — an animal at least a third smaller than a cat and shaped more like a polecat or weasel, brown-gray, with a cat-like tail of alternate black and white rings, very large ears, and eyes which were prominent, long body like a weasel, and sleeps with its head between its fore paws, curling itself about; a rank smell to it. It was lost several days in our woods, and was caught again in a tree; about a crow’s nest.¹¹⁴

Ranunculus repens, perhaps a day or two; channelled peduncle and spreading calyx and conspicuously spotted leaves. The leaves of the tall buttercup are much larger and finely cut and, as it were, peltate. Pickerel are not

114. Ringtail (*Bassariscus astutus*) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ring-tailed_Cat

easily detected, — such is their color, — as if they were transparent. Vetch. I see now green high blueberries, and gooseberries in Hubbard’s Close, as well as shad-bush berries and strawberries.

In this dark, cellar-like maple swamp are scattered at pretty regular intervals tufts of green ferns, *Osmunda cinnamomea*, above the dead brown leaves, broad, tapering fronds, curving over on every side from a compact centre, now three or four feet high. Wood frogs skipping over the dead leaves, whose color they resemble. Clintonia. Medeola. The last may be earlier. I am surprised to find arethusas abundantly out in Hubbard’s Close, maybe two or three days, though not yet at Arethusa Meadow, probably on account of the recent freshet. It is so leafless that it shoots up unexpectedly. It is all color, a little hook of purple flame projecting from the meadow into the air. Some are comparatively pale. This high-colored plant shoots up suddenly, all flower, in meadows where it is wet walking. A superb flower. Cotton-grass here also, probably two or three days for the same reason. *Eriophorum polystachyon* var. *latifolium*, having rough peduncles.

The twigs of the dwarf willow, now gone to seed, are thickly invested with cotton, containing little green seed-vessels, like excrement of caterpillars, and the shrubs look at a little distance like sand cherries in full bloom. These are among the downy seeds that fly.

Found a ground-robin’s nest, under a tuft of dry sedge which the winter had bent clown, in sprout-land on the side of Heywood Peak, perfectly concealed, with two whitish eggs very thickly sprinkled with brown; made of coarse grass and weed stems and lined with a few hairs and stems of the mahogany moss.

The pink is certainly one of the finest of our flowers and deserves the place it holds in my memory. It is now in its prime on the south side of the Heywood Peak, where it grows luxuriantly in dense rounded tufts or hemispheres, raying out on every side and presenting an even and regular surface of expanded flowers. I count in one such tuft, of an oval form twelve inches by eight, some three hundred fully open and about three times as many buds, — more than a thousand in all. Some tufts consist wholly of white ones with a very faint tinge of pink. This flower is as elegant in form as in color, though it is not fragrant. It is associated in my mind with the first heats of summer, or [those] which announce its near approach. Few plants are so worthy of cultivation. The shrub oak pincushion (?) galls are larger, whiter, and less compact than those of the white oak. I find the linnaea, and budded, in Stow’s Wood by Deep Cut.

Sweet flag. Waxwork to-morrow. I see my umbrella toadstool on the hillside has already pierced the ground.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



May 31, Wednesday: [Ann Flannery](#) arrived in the port of Boston aboard the vessel *Meredian* (she was listed as “Ann Flaney,” age 40, with John, age 5), with her son [John Joseph Flannery](#) (her son [Patrick Flannery](#), not quite 4 years of age, apparently had needed to be left behind due to illness, and would arrive on July 11, 1855 aboard the vessel *Chariot of Fame*).

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went by boat to Miles Meadow.

“Up Assabet” is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau’s two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.
 — [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 10

In reading the following, please to bear in mind that one of the perennial joke explanations for the complexion of the black race, which every white Bostonian was hearing in barbershops and church socials and other venues, was that when God had made those people, He had inadvertently left them in the oven too long. They were like God’s burned cookies. This was a joke that could be made to play real well, in the case of a black man who happened to bear a name such as “Burns.” (Even a white man can be bright enough to figure



1854

1854

out how to play around with such obvious materials.)

OK, now here's the material of the day. There appeared in a Boston newspaper an advertisement for a burn medication known as "Russian Salve," and this advertisement was for the nonce posing the trick question, precisely what was the difference between a slavemaster and salve. (The answer these people were poking at, we can figure out, was that while salve is good for burns, the slavemaster was bad for Burns.)

The Reverend [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#) wrote again from his home in Worcester, after having obtained the benefit of legal counsel, to his mother Louisa Storrow Higginson: "I think it altogether probable, now, that I shall be arrested soon, imprisoned till the trial and perhaps after again."

[ANTHONY BURNS](#)

 May 31, Wednesday: The Boston [Post](#), noting Friend [John Greenleaf Whittier](#)'s letter to the [Times](#), commented misleadingly that Friend John had "come out in favor of the law."

The [Reverend Dr. David Livingstone](#) arrived at St. Paul de Loanda (Luanda), 1,300 kilometers from the beginning of his trek Linyanti. He was very ill.

JUNE 1854

 June: The New England Emigrant Aid Company dispatched Dr. Charles Robinson of Fitchburg and Mr. Charles Henry Branscomb of Holyoke to explore the [Kansas Territory](#) and select a site for a colony.

[THE 2D GREAT AMERICAN DISUNION](#)

When a museum opened on the island of [St. Helena](#) its exhibits included a sea serpent and a flying lizard. Were these extinct local species?

 June: This month's issue of [Harper's New Monthly Magazine](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE

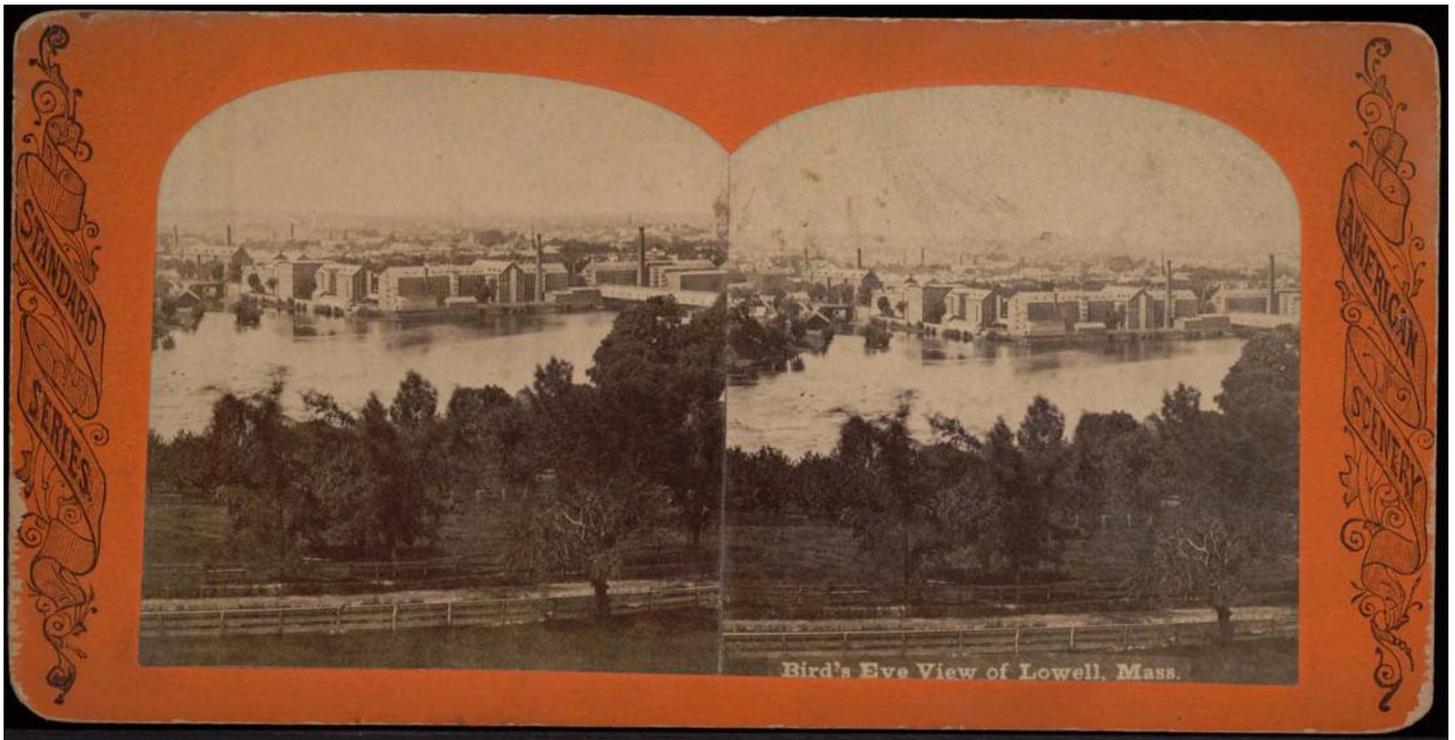
 June: James Spicer, Esq. invited the Reverend [Samuel Ringgold Ward](#) to dine with the Company of Fishmongers, and the Reverend was enabled there to make remarks on the topic of civil and religious liberty.

1854

1854

→ June: When the Five Cent Savings Bank began operations, the [Reverend Horatio Wood](#), whose father had been president of the Mechanics Bank of Newbury port, was chosen as its president. He would fill that function until resigning in January 1885 in consequence of physical disability.

Horatio Wood



FIGURING OUT WHAT AMOUNTS TO A “HISTORICAL CONTEXT” IS WHAT THE CRAFT OF HISTORICIZING AMOUNTS TO, AND THIS NECESSITATES DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN THE SET OF EVENTS THAT MUST HAVE TAKEN PLACE BEFORE EVENT E COULD BECOME POSSIBLE, AND MOST CAREFULLY DISTINGUISHING THEM FROM ANOTHER SET OF EVENTS THAT COULD NOT POSSIBLY OCCUR UNTIL SUBSEQUENT TO EVENT E.

Read [Henry Thoreau's Journal for June 1854 \(æf. 36\)](#)

1854

1854

 June 1, Thursday: At 4:30 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) went to the Hill, and in the afternoon he went on the Walden Pond road to [Goose Pond](#) and thence to Bare Hill.

Dr. Shattuck purchased the [Waterford](#) "[Water Cure](#)" (now, because of a more careful regard for the truth, known as "The Lake House and Annex" :-).

 June 2, "Bad Friday": [Louis D'Entremont Surette](#) was born in [Concord](#) to [Louis A. Surette](#) and [Frances Jane Shattuck Surette](#).

By 6AM, crowds were already beginning to accumulate outside the [Boston](#) courthouse.



At 7:30AM, to maintain order and to make some sort of gesture that this is after all America, a brace of horses dragged a cannon onto the square before the courthouse and a squad of [U.S. Marines](#) trained its load of 6 pounds of grapeshot on the crowd.

At 8AM a martial law notice was posted, which someone read aloud to the crowd:

TO THE CITIZENS OF BOSTON.

To secure order throughout the city this day, Major-General Edmands and the Chief of Police will make such disposition of the respective forces under their commands as will best promote that important object; and they are clothed with full discretionary power to sustain the laws of the land. All well-disposed citizens and other persons are urgently requested to leave those streets which it may be found necessary to clear temporarily, and under no circumstances to obstruct or molest any officer, civil or military, in the lawful discharge of his duty.

J.V.C. SMITH, Mayor.

BOSTON, June 2, 1854.



At 8:45AM the defendant's attorney, [Richard Henry Dana, Jr.](#), entered the courtroom, and was startled to observe his client [Anthony Burns](#) attired in a stylish new suit.

At 9AM [Judge of Probate Edward Greeley Loring](#) entered the chamber, and the troops outside began to drive the citizenry out of the courthouse square. The Marines began ostentatiously to "train" by going through the motions of loading, firing, and reloading their cannon, while the police began to make arrests. Judge Loring, in regard to the objection that was being raised that his rôle as a Fugitive Slave Bill Commissioner of the United States of America was an unconstitutional one for judges to play, commented mildly that his duties as a Fugitive Slave Commissioner were "ministerial rather than judicial."

[Horace Mann, Sr.](#) and E.G. Loring were old buddies from the Litchfield Law School. It had been just a brief period since Loring, who was an officer of Harvard College, had been rejected as a candidate for a law professorship because of his favoring the Fugitive Slave Law as written by [James Murray Mason](#) of Virginia.

To prove to the court what everyone knew to be the fact, the slavemaster and his attorney displayed to the judge a copy of the Revised Code of Virginia.

"On the law and facts of the case, I consider the claimant entitled to the certificate from me which he claims."

Judge Loring then signed the certificate and outside upon a signal the bells of Boston's churches began to toll. In response to the pealing of the bells, the townspeople began to hang black bunting, and women's black shawls and mantles, out of their windows. The streets of Boston were being patrolled by the National Guard, and by US Army cavalry, and by marines, and by artillery brigades, totaling some 2,000 soldiers—President Pierce having ordered that no expense be spared—but no quantity of mere soldiering could force local citizens to raise their flags above half-mast or take down their drapings of black bunting.

At 2:30PM the procession of troops, each with pistol by his left hand and drawn cutlass in his right, began to move toward the waterfront and, eventually, the government revenue cutter *Morris* that was being kept at a safe distance in the harbor, out at the mooring at Minot's Light. Burn was moved along quick-step by the troops "down that sworded street" from the Boston courthouse in the custody of [US Marshall Asa O. Butman](#). The Marine Band attempted to incite the crowds of citizens lining the streets to riot by playing the tune "Carry Me Back to Old Virginy," so that the army would have an opportunity to do what it does best, but could not get a firefight started. The colored man was heard to comment,

There was a lot of folks to see a colored man walk through the streets.

The New England Woman's Rights Convention was getting little done, for the delegates were out on State Street watching the colored man in the new suit being marched past. [William Lloyd Garrison](#) and the Reverend [Moncure Daniel Conway](#) watched together from the window of a law office (this would get Conway in big trouble in his home town in Virginia). On the way down to Dock T, it seems that by coincidence a druggist's stockboy from Roxbury, William Ela, who had been sent into town that afternoon to procure a bottle of ink, was in the vicinity lugging his bottle — and the troops presumed that the bottle he was carrying contained vitriol which he intended to hurl at them. The bottle of ink was smashed and the boy would be brain-damaged from being assaulted with the butts of muskets (later there would be a lawsuit for his maintenance: *Ela v. J.V.C. Smith*). The nervous troops also bayoneted a carthorse that happened to get in their way as [Anthony Burns](#) was being marched to the dock. There was a dock, and there was a street leading down to it; the cutter was at the end of the dock, and sometimes a cart driver does not mean to get in the way. What to do? Where a human being means nothing, what the hell is a horse supposed to mean? The white soldiers, having gotten all keyed up to bayonet citizens, of course bayoneted the horse. The driver of the cart was lucky they didn't bayonet him as well.



At 3:20PM, after the troops had loaded their black captive and their brass cannon aboard the steamer *John Taylor* at Dock T, the steamer pulled away from the dock and began to make its way through the massed small craft in the harbor toward Minot's Light, where the federal revenue cutter *Morris* was waiting.

That afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) had taken his mother [Cynthia Dunbar Thoreau](#) and sister [Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau](#) in his boat up the [Assabet River](#) to Castilleja and Annursnack (they wouldn't return until about 7 PM).

By 8:30PM, [Richard Henry Dana, Jr.](#) had finished writing out a version of the closing argument which he had offered, and had sent it off to the Boston [Traveller](#) to be published in their next edition. When he met [Anson Burlingame](#), the 9PM omnibus to Cambridge having already departed, Burlingame offered to escort Dana home. As they walked together on Court Street, however, Dana was struck from behind. The lawyer's glasses flew off and shattered. His eye was blackened and some of his teeth were chipped.¹¹⁵

RESISTING THE FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW

Friend [John Greenleaf Whittier](#) would turn the [Anthony Burns](#) episode into one of his occasional poems, but –poetry to the contrary notwithstanding– the man of color's wrists had not been in handcuffs as he had been quick-stepped “hand-cuffed down that sworded street” of sordid downtown Boston:

The Rendition, by [John Greenleaf Whittier](#).

I HEARD the train's shrill whistle call,
I saw an earnest look beseech,
And rather by that look than speech
My neighbor told me all.

And, as I thought of Liberty
Marched handcuffed down that sworded street,
The solid earth beneath my feet
Reeled fluid as the sea.

I felt a sense of bitter loss, —
Shame, tearless grief, and stifling wrath,
And loathing fear, as if my path
A serpent stretched across.

All love of home, all pride of place,
All generous confidence and trust,
Sank smothering in that deep disgust
And anguish of disgrace.

Down on my native hills of June,
And home's green quiet, hiding all,
Fell sudden darkness like the fall
Of midnight upon noon!

And Law, an unloosed maniac, strong,
Blood-drunken, through the blackness trod,
Hoarse-shouting in the ear of God
The blasphemy of wrong.

“O Mother, from thy memories proud,
Thy old renown, dear Commonwealth,
Lend this dead air a breeze of health,

115. The men were later identified as Luigi Varelli and Henry Huxford, who had been serving that day as part of the marshal's guard and who were celebrating their earnings at Allen's Saloon when they recognized [Richard Henry Dana, Jr.](#) as he passed on the sidewalk. [Anthony Burns](#) would turn out to be the last escapee from slavery to be returned from Massachusetts. His owner would not, as was feared at the time, torture him to death. He would be kept in the traders' jail in Richmond, Virginia until sold to a white man from North Carolina. This man would then retail him to a Massachusetts minister at Barnum's Hotel in [Baltimore](#) in February 1855 for the sum of \$1,325.⁰⁰ On March 7, 1855 Burns would be feted at [Tremont Temple](#) and handed [manumission](#) papers. He would attend the School of Divinity at [Oberlin College](#) and, bless him, he would become a minister of the gospel.

And smite with stars this cloud.

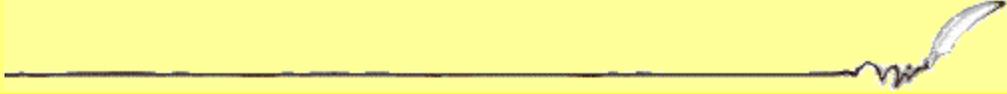
“Mother of Freedom, wise and brave,
Rise awful in thy strength;” I said;
Ah me! I spake but to the dead;
I stood upon her grave!



June 2. Friday. P.M. — Up Assabet to Castilleja and Annurnsack.

[Transcript]

“Up Assabet” is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau’s two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.
— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 10



While waiting for Mother and Sophia I look now from the yard to the waving and slightly glaucous-tinged June meadows, edged by the cool shade –gelid– of shrubs and trees, — a waving shore of shady bays and promontories, — yet different from the August shades. It is beautiful and elysian. The air has now begun to be filled with a bluish haze. These virgin shades of the year, when everything is tender, fresh and green, — how full of promise! promising bowers of shade in which heroes may repose themselves! I would fain be present at the birth of shadow. It takes place with the first expansion of the leaves.

I find sanicle just out on the Island. The black willows are already beautiful, and the hemlocks with their bead-work of new green. Are these not kingbird days, when, in clearer first June days full of light, this aerial, twittering bird flutters from willow to willow and swings on the twigs, showing his white-edged tail? The *Azalea nudiflora* has about done, or there was apparently little of it. I see some breams’ nests near my old bathing-place above the stone-heaps, with sharp, yellow, sandy edges, like a milk-pan from within, showing considerable art (?) as well as labor. Also there are three or four small stoneheaps formed. We went near to the



stone bridge and crossed direct *via* the house-leek, of which I brought home a bunch. No *Stellaria longiflora* nor *Ranunculus abortivus* to be found yet in bloom, though probably some of the first, apetalous, have opened now. Lambkill. The Painted-Cup Meadow is all lit up with ferns, on its springy slopes. The handsome flowering fern, now rapidly expanding and fruiting at the same time, colors these moist slopes afar with its now commonly reddish fronds. And then there are the interrupted and the cinnamon ferns in very handsome and regular tufts, and the brakes standing singly and more backward. The rue, just budded, smells remarkably like a skunk and also like a rank dog. Strange affinity! Took tea at Mrs. Barrett’s.

When we returned to our boat at 7 P.M., I noticed first, to my surprise, that the river was all alive with leaping fish, their heads seen continually darted above water, and they were large fish, too. Looking up I found that the whole atmosphere over the river was full of shad-flies. It was a *great flight of ephemerae*. It was not so when I landed an hour and a half before. They extended as high as I could see. It was like a dense snow-storm, and all (with very few exceptions) flying as with one consent up the stream. Many coupled in the air, and many more with the bodies curved. They reached a mile or more from the stone-harps to the mouth of the Assabet, but were densest where there were woods on both sides, whether they came out of them, or they made the air more still for them. Those I examined had three very long streamers behind, the two outside about an inch and a quarter. The fishes I saw rise for such as were struggling on the water close to the boat were, I am pretty sure, suckers. This is like what the French fishermen call “manna.” There were also swarms of small black millers close above the surface, and other small ones. Several dead suckers were floating. It seemed as if the suckers were now ascending the river. In the air there was one or more at least to every foot. Apparently this phenomenon reached on this stream as far as it was wooded.

Caraway naturalized, and out apparently two or three days, in S. Barrett’s front yard.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



1854

1854

The following commentary on Thoreau's journal entry for this day is from H. Daniel Peck's *THOREAU'S MORNING WORK: MEMORY AND PERCEPTION IN A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS, THE JOURNAL, AND WALDEN* (Yale UP, 1994):

To "improve these seasons as much as a farmer his" is to cultivate them richly through perception and to fix them in enduring phenomenological categories. One of the most obvious signs of Thoreau's ongoing revision of the traditional calendar in the Journal is his unceasing recording of first-observed appearances of seasonal phenomena. These observations cluster in the spring, when their myriad occurrences signify the vigorous rebirth of nature celebrated in the climatic chapter of *WALDEN*. Yet a close reading of the Journal reveals that Thoreau was closely attentive to "first facts" at all seasons. There are hundreds of such observations in the Journal, recorded at all times of the year and usually without commentary. In part, they are an expression of Thoreau's deep preoccupation with origins. By searching the world for the first visible appearances of natural growth, he hopes to participate through observation in the creativity of nature – to be there at the moment of genesis. A passage from a Journal entry of June 2, 1854, expresses this desire poignantly: "I would fain be present at the birth of shadow. It takes place with the first expansion of the leaves." But as this example shows, the concept of beginning as it is usually expressed in the Journal is defined not by pure origination but by repetition. The necessary context for observing the "first" appearance of a seasonal phenomenon is the natural cycle; any "first" in nature is recognizable only because it has happened before. That is, Thoreau has already prepared, or recognized, a category for anticipating it; he is keyed for the observation of first facts. In the spring of 1860, we find him "on the alert for several days to hear the first birds" (March 9, 1860). Reporting the appearance of these "first birds" to his Journal is an act of confirmation as much as an act of origination; the beginning, in Thoreau, always pivots between memory and anticipation. As he puts it in a Journal entry of June 6, 1857, "Each annual phenomenon is a reminiscence and prompting." But even the most vigilant of nature's observers cannot "be present at the birth of shadow," and Thoreau is acutely aware of this, as he shows in an entry of March 17, 1857: "No mortal is alert enough to be present at the first dawn of the spring."

The new lighthouse on Bird Island in San Francisco Bay (also known as Alcatraz Island, due to its *alcatraces* or pelicans), its new lens finally in position, was illuminated for the 1st time. The light could be seen 12 miles at sea.

CALIFORNIA



1854

1854

 June 3, Saturday: [H.G.O. Blake](#) and [Theophilus Brown](#) arrived from [Worcester](#) and went with [Henry Thoreau](#) to Fair Haven. They dined at Lee's Cliff.

The Austrian government requested that Russian troops be withdrawn from Moldavia and Wallachia.

A new organ was inaugurated in Winchester Cathedral by its organist, Samuel Sebastian Wesley, before a large audience. His virtuosic display was followed by a service consisting of his music, including the 1st performance of an anthem written for the occasion, "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made."

 June 4, Sunday: At 8 AM [Henry Thoreau](#), [H.G.O. Blake](#), and [Theophilus Brown](#) went up the Assabet River to Barbarea Shore, and thence to [Walden Pond](#).

20,000 [nativists](#) invaded the [Irish](#) districts of Brooklyn, injuring scores before troops arrived.

A Chapel for [Chinese](#) was founded at Sacramento Street and Stockton Street in San Francisco. H.C. Beales was one of the trustees.

[CALIFORNIA](#)

At the base of Fisher's Peak in the Raton Range, the column of cavalymen led by Lieutenant Philip St. George Cooke managed to surprise a camp of 22 lodges of the Jicarilla Apache.

[WHITE ON RED, RED ON WHITE](#)

In Worcester, the Reverend [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#), minister of the Worcester Free Church, preached a sermon entitled "Massachusetts in Mourning" which would first be published in the Worcester Daily Spy and then reprinted as a pamphlet by James Munroe and Company of Boston at the press of Prentiss and Sawyer of No. 19, Water Street.

Massachusetts in Mourning.

Shall the iron break the Northern iron and the steel? — Jeremiah xv. 12.

You have imagined my subject beforehand, for there is but one subject on which I could preach, or you could listen, to-day. Yet, how hard it is to say one word of that. You do not ask, at a funeral, that the bereaved mourners themselves should speak, but you call in one a little farther removed, to utter words of comfort, if comfort there be. But to-day is, or should be, to every congregation in Massachusetts, a day of funeral service — we are all mourners — and what is there for me to say?

Yet, even in this gloom, the faculty of wonder is left; as at funerals, men ask in a low tone, around the coffin, what was the disease that smote this fair form, and are we safe from the infection? So we now ask, what is lost, and how have we lost it, and what have we left? Is it all gone, (men say,) that old New England heroism and enthusiasm? Is there any disinterested love of Freedom left in Massachusetts? And then they think with joy, (as I do,) that, at least, Freedom did not die without a struggle, and that it took thousands of armed men to lay her in the grave at last.

I am thankful for all this. Words are nothing — we have been surfeited with words for twenty years. I am thankful that this time there was action also ready for Freedom. God gave men bodies, to live and work in; the powers of those bodies are the



first things to be consecrated to the Right. He gave us higher powers, also, for weapons, but, in using those, we must not forget to hold the lower ones also ready; else we miss our proper manly life on earth, and lay down our means of usefulness before we have outgrown them. "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and unto God the things which are God's." Our souls and bodies are both God's, and resistance to tyrants is obedience to Him.

If you meet men whose souls are contaminated, and have time enough to work on them, you can deal with them by the weapons of the soul alone; but if men array brute force against Freedom – pistols, clubs, drilled soldiers, and stone walls – then the body also has its part to do in resistance. You must hold yourself above men, I own, yet not too far above to reach them. I do not like even to think of taking life, only of giving it; but physical force that is forcible enough, acts without bloodshed. They say that with twenty more men at hand, that Friday night, at the Boston Court House, the Slave might have been rescued without even the death of that one man – who was perhaps killed by his frightened companions, then and there. So you see force may not mean bloodshed; and calm, irresistible force, in a good cause, becomes sublime. The strokes on the door of that Court House that night for instance – they may perchance have disturbed some dreamy saint from his meditations, (if dreamy saints abound in Court Square,) – but I think they went echoing from town to town, from Boston to far New Orleans, like the first drum beat of the Revolution – and each reverberating throb was a blow upon the door of every Slave-prison of this guilty Republic.

That first faint throb of Liberty was a proud thing for Boston; Boston which was a scene so funereal a week after. Men say the act of one Friday helped prepare for the next; I am glad if it did. If the attack on the Court House had no greater effect than to send that Slave away under a guard of two thousand men, instead of two hundred, it was worth a dozen lives. If we are all Slaves indeed – if there is no law in Massachusetts except the telegraphic orders from Washington—if our own military are to be made Slave-catchers—if our Governor is a mere piece of State ceremony, permitted only to rise at a military dinner and thank his own soldiers for their readiness to shoot down his own constituents, without even the delay of a riot act—if Massachusetts is merely a conquered province and under martial law—then I wish to know it, and I am grateful for every additional gun and sabre that forces the truth deeper into our hearts. Lower, Massachusetts, lower, kneel still lower! Serve, Irish Marines! the kidnappers, your masters; down in the dust, citizen soldiery! before the Irish Marines, and for you, O Governor, a lower humility yet, and your homage must be paid, at second hand, before the stained and soiled "citizen soldiery."

I remember the great trades-procession in Boston, a few years since, in honor of the visitors from the North, from the free soil of Canada. Then all choice implements, which Massachusetts had invented to supply the industry of the world, were brought forth for exhibition, and superb was the show. This time we had visitors from the South – the South which uses tools also – and



imports them all, "hoes, spades, axes, politicians, and ministers." So the last new implements, for her use, were to be exhibited now. There were twenty-one specimens of Boston military companies. There were the two hundred more confidential bullies, for whom the city was ransacked, men so vile, that it was said the police had no duties left, for all the dangerous persons were employed as policemen themselves,— men whom a Police Judge having inspected, recognized criminal after criminal, who had been sentenced by himself to the House of Correction; these came next. Truly as there is joy in heaven over one sinner who repenteth, so there was joy in Boston that day, over one sinner who had not repented, — over every man in whom the powers of hell were strong enough, aided by public brandy, to fit him for that terrible service. Those were the tools marshalled forth for exhibition. But why were these only shown? Why were the finer, the more precious implements kept invisible that day, the real engines of that Slaveholder's triumph? Why not make the picture perfect? Place, O Chief Marshal, between the Slave and the guardian cannon, the crowning glory of that sad procession, the Slaveholder in his carriage, and chain) on the one side, the Mayor of Boston, and, on the other side, the Governor of the Commonwealth, with the motto, "The Representative Men of Massachusetts, — These tools she gives, Virginia, to thee!"

I mean no personality. The men who occupy these offices, are men who (I have always thought) did them honor. I suppose that neither would own a Slave, nor (personally) catch one. No doubt they favorably represent the average of Massachusetts men. But I introduce them for precisely this reason, to show the tragedy of our American institutions, that they take average Massachusetts men, put them into public office, and then, demanding more of them than their education gives them manliness to meet, — use them, crush them, and drop them, into the dishonor with which these hitherto honored men are suddenly overwhelmed to-day.

If such be the influence of our national organization, what good do our efforts do? Our labor to reform the North, with the whole force of nationalized Slavery to resist, is like the effort of Sir John Franklin; on his first voyage, to get north-ward by travelling on the ice. He travelled toward the pole for six weeks, no doubt of that; but at the end of the time he was two hundred miles farther from it than when he started. The ice had floated southward — and our ice floats southward also. And so it will be, while this Union concentrates power in the hands of Slaveholders, and gives the North only commercial prosperity, the more thoroughly to enervate and destroy it.

Here, for instance, is the Nebraska Emigration Society; it is indeed, a noble enterprise; and I am proud that it owes its origin to a Worcester man — but where is the good of emigrating to Nebraska; if Nebraska is to be only a transplanted Massachusetts, and the original Massachusetts has been tried and found wanting? Will the stream rise higher than its source? Settle your Nebraska ten years, and you will have your New England harvest of corn and grain, more luxuriant in that virgin soil;— ah, but will not the other Massachusetts crop come also, of political demagogues and wire-pullers, and a sectarian

religion, which will insure the passage of the greatest hypocrite to heaven, if he will join the right church before he goes? And give the emigrants twenty years more of prosperity, and then ask them, if you dare, to break law and disturb order, and risk life, merely to save their State from the shame that has just blighted Massachusetts?

In view of these facts, what stands between us and a military despotism? "Sure guarantees," you say. So has every nation thought until its fall came. "The outward form of Roman institutions stood uninjured till long after [Caligula](#) had made his horse consul." What is your safeguard? Nothing but a parchment Constitution, which has been riddled through and through whenever it pleased the Slave Power; which has not been able to preserve to you the oldest privileges of Freedom – Habeas Corpus and Trial by Jury! Stranger still, that men should think to find a security in our material prosperity, and our career of foreign conquest, and our acquisition of gold mines, and forget that these have been precisely the symptoms which have prophesied the decline of every powerful commercial state – Rome, Carthage, Tyre, Venice, Spain, Holland, and all the rest. In the third century after the birth of Jesus, Terullian painted that brilliant picture of the Roman power, which describes us, as if it were written for us:

"Certainly," says he, "the world becomes more and more our tributary; none of its secret recesses have remained inaccessible, all are known, frequented, and all have become the scene or the object of traffic. Who now dreads an unknown island? who trembles at a reef? our ships are sure to be met with everywhere—everywhere is a people, a state; everywhere is life. We crush the world beneath our weight – onerosi sumus mundo."

And Rome perished, almost when the words were uttered!

How simple the acts of our tragedy may be! Let another Fugitive Slave case occur, and more blood be spilt (as might happen another time;)- let Massachusetts be declared insurrectionary, and placed under martial law, (as it might;)- let the President be made Dictator, with absolute power; let him send his willing Attorney General to buy up officers of militia, (which would be easy,) and frighten Officers of State, (which would be easier;)- let him get half the press, and a quarter of the pulpits, to sustain his usurpation, under the name of "law and order";- let the flame spread from New England to New York, from New York to Ohio, from Ohio to Wisconsin;- and how long would it take for some future [Franklin Pierce](#) to stand where Louis Napoleon stands, now? How much would the commercial leaders of the East resist, if an appeal were skilfully made to their pockets?- or the political demagogues of the West, if an appeal were made to their ambition? It seems inconceivable! Certainly—so did the coup d' etat of Louis Napoleon, the day before it happened!

"Do not despair of the Republic," says some one, remembering the hopeful old Roman motto. But they had to despair of that one in the end,— and why not of this one also? Why, when we were going on, step by step, as older Republics have done, should we expect to stop just as we reach the brink of Niagara? The love of Liberty grows stronger every year, some think, in some places. Thirty years ago, it cost only \$25 to restore a Fugitive Slave from Boston, and now it costs \$100,000;-but still the Slave is



restored. I know there are thousands of hearts which stand pledged to Liberty now, and these may save the State, in spite of her officials and her military; but can they save the Nation? They may give us disunion instead of despotism, but can they give us anything better? Can they even give us anything so good? We talk of the Anti-Slavery sentiment as being stronger; but in spite of your Free Soil votes, your Uncle Tom's Cabin, and your New York Tribunes, here is the simple fact: the South beats us more and more easily every time. So chess-players, when they have once or twice overcome a weak antagonist, think it safe, next time, to give up to him a half dozen pieces by way of odds;— and after all gain the victory. Compare this Nebraska game with the previous ones. The Slave Power could afford to give us the Whig party on our side, this time—could give up to us the commercial influence of Boston and New York, so strong an ally before—it has not had the name and presence of Daniel Webster to help it now, nor the voices of clergymen, nor the terror of disunion, nor the weariness after a long Anti-Slavery excitement: it has dispensed with all these;— nay, the whole contest was on our own sail, to defend the poor little landmark we had retreated to long before;— and for all this, the Slave Power has conquered us, just as easily as it conquered us on Texas, Mexico, and the compromises of 1850.

No wonder that this excitement is turning Whigs and Democrats into Free Soilers, and Free Soilers into disunionists. But this is only the eddy, after all; the main current sets the wrong way. The nation is intoxicated and depraved. It takes all the things you count as influential,— all the "spirit of the age," and the moral sentiment of Christendom," and the best eloquence and literature of the time,— to balance the demoralization of a single term of Presidential patronage. Give the offices of the nation to be controlled by the Slave Power, and I tell you that there is not one in ten, even of professed Anti-Slavery men, who can stand the fire in that furnace of sin; and there is not a plot so wicked, but it will have, like all its predecessors, a sufficient majority when the time comes.

Do you doubt this? Name, if you can, a victory of Freedom, or a defeat of the Slave Power, within twenty years, except on the right of petition, and even that was only a recovery of lost ground. Do you say, the politicians are false, but the people mark the men who betray them! True, they mark them, but as merchants mark goods, with the cost price, that they may raise the price a little, when they want to sell the same article again. You must go back to the original Missouri Compromise, if you wish to prove that even Massachusetts punishes traitors to Freedom, by any severer penalty than a seat on her Supreme Bench. For myself, I do not believe in these Anti-Slavery spasms of our people, for the same reason that Coleridge did not believe in ghosts, because I have seen too many of them myself. I remember when our Massachusetts delegation in Congress, signed a sort of threat that the State would withdraw from the Union if Texas came in, but it never happened. I remember the State Convention at Faneuil Hall in 1845, where the lion and the lamb lay down together, and George T. Curtis and John G. Whittier were Secretaries; and the Convention solemnly pronounced the annexation of Texas to be the "over-throw of the Constitution,



1854

1854

the bond of the existing Union." I remember how one speaker boasted that if Texas was voted in by joint resolution, it might be voted out by the same. But somehow, we have never mustered that amount of resolution; and when I hear of State Street petitioning for the repeal of its own Fugitive Slave Law, I remember the lesson.

For myself, I do not expect to live to see that law repealed by the votes of politicians at Washington. It can only be repealed by ourselves, upon the soil of Massachusetts. For one, I am glad to be deceived no longer. I am glad of the discovery—(no hasty thing, but gradually dawning upon me for ten years)—that I live under a despotism. I have lost the dream that ours is a land of peace and order. I have looked thoroughly through our Fourth of July," and seen its hollowness; and I advise you to petition your City Government to revoke their appropriation for its celebration, (or give the same to the Nebraska Emigration Society,) and only toll the bells in all the churches, and hang the streets in black from end to end. O shall we hold such ceremonies when only some statesman is gone, and omit them over dead Freedom, whom all true statesmen only live to serve!

At any rate my word of counsel to you is to learn this lesson thoroughly—a revolution is begun! not a Reform, but a Revolution. If you take part in politics henceforward, let it be only to bring nearer the crisis which will either save or sunder this nation—or perhaps save in sundering. I am not very hopeful, even as regards you; I know the mass of men will not make great sacrifices for Freedom, but there is more need of those who will. I have lost faith forever in numbers; I have faith only in the constancy and courage of a "forlorn hope." And for aught we know, a case may arise, this week, in Massachusetts, which may not end like the last one.

Let us speak the truth. Under the influence of Slavery, we are rapidly relapsing into that state of barbarism in which every man must rely on his own right hand for his protection. Let any man yield to his instinct of Freedom, and resist oppression, and his life is at the mercy of the first drunken officer who orders his troops to fire. For myself, existence looks worthless under such circumstances; and I can only make life worth living for, by becoming a revolutionist. The saying seems dangerous; but why not say it if one means it, as I certainly do. I respect law and order, but as the ancient Persian sage said, "always to obey the laws, virtue must relax much of her vigor." I see, now, that while Slavery is national, law and order must constantly be on the wrong side. I see that the case stands for me precisely as it stands for Kossuth and Mazzini, and I must take the consequences.

Do you say that ours is a Democratic Government, and there is a more peaceable remedy? I deny that we live under a Democracy. It is an oligarchy of Slaveholders, and I point to the history of a half century to prove it. Do you say, that oligarchy will be propitiated by submission? I deny it. It is the plea of the timid in all ages. Look at the experience of our own country. Which is most influential in Congress—South Carolina, which never submitted to anything, or Massachusetts, with thrice the white population, but which always submits to everything? I tell you, there is not a free State in the Union which would dare



treat a South Carolinian as that State treated Mr. Hoar; or, if it had been done, the Union would have been divided years ago. The way to make principles felt is to assert them—peaceably, if you can; forcibly, if you must. The way to promote Free Soil is to have your own soil free; to leave courts to settle constitutions, and to fall back (for your own part,) on first principles: then it will be seen that you mean something. How much free territory is there beneath the Stars and Stripes? I know of four places—Syracuse, Wilkesbarre, Milwaukie, and Chicago: I remember no others. "Worcester," you say. Worcester has not yet been tried. If you think Worcester County is free, say so and act accordingly. Call a County Convention, and declare that you leave legal quibbles to lawyers, and parties to politicians, and plant yourselves on the simple truth that God never made a Slave, and that man shall neither make nor take one here! Over your own city, at least, you have power; but will you stand the test when it comes? Then do not try to avoid it. For one thing only I blush—that a Fugitive has ever fled from here to Canada. Let it not happen again, I charge you, if you are what you think you are. No longer conceal Fugitives and help them on, but show them and defend them. Let the Underground Railroad stop here! Say to the South that Worcester, though a part of a Republic, shall be as free as if ruled by a Queen! Hear, O Richmond! and give ear, O Carolina! henceforth Worcester is Canada to the Slave! And what will Worcester be to the kidnapper? I dare not tell; and I fear that the poor sinner himself, if once recognized in our streets, would scarcely get back to tell the tale.

I do not discourage more peaceable instrumentalities; would to God that no other were ever needful. Make laws, if you can, though you have State processes already, if you had officers to enforce them; and, indeed, what can any State process do, except to legalize nullification? Use politics, if you can make them worth using, though a coalition administration proved as powerless, in the Sims case, as a Whig administration has proved now. But the disease lies deeper than these remedies can reach. It is all idle to try to save men by law and order, merely, while the men themselves grow selfish and timid, and are only ready to talk of Liberty, and risk nothing for it. Our people have no active physical habits; their intellects are sharpened, but their bodies, and even their hearts, are left untrained; they learn only (as a French satirist once said,) the fear of God and the love of money; they are taught that they owe the world nothing, but that the world owes them a living, and so they make a living but the fresh, strong spirit of Liberty droops and decays, and only makes a dying. I charge you, parents, do not be so easily satisfied; encourage nobler instincts in your children, and appeal to nobler principles; teach your daughter that life is something more than dress and show, and your son that there is some nobler aim in existence than a good bargain, and a fast horse, and an oyster supper. Let us have the brave, simple instincts of Circassian mountaineers, without their ignorance; and the unfaltering moral courage of the Puritans, without their superstition; so that we may show the world that a community may be educated in brain without becoming cowardly in body; and that a people without a standing army may yet rise

as one man, when Freedom needs defenders. May God help us so to redeem this oppressed and bleeding State, and to bring this people back to that simple love of Liberty, without which it must die amidst its luxuries, like the sad nations of the elder world. May we gain more iron in our souls, and have it in the right place;- have soft hearts and, hard wills, not as now, soft wills and hard hearts. Then will the iron break the Northern iron and the steel no longer; and "God save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts!" will be at last a hope fulfilled.

June 5, Monday: [Henry Wadsworth Longfellow](#) was reading the Finnish epic *KALEVALA*.

[Stephen Collins Foster](#) copyrighted "Jeanie With the Light Brown Hair."

[Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed land that one of the Hoars had bought from James Heywood, near Factory Quarter near Stow Road and the land of William Brown. For many years the pond on this land was known as Hoar Pond. At 6 PM Thoreau went to the Cliffs.



June 5: I see at a distance a kingbird [[Eastern Kingbird](#) [Tyrannus tyrannus](#)] or blackbird pursuing a crow lower down the hill, like a satellite [*sic*] revolving about a black planet.

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

June 6, Tuesday: At 6:30 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) went up the [Assabet River](#). In the afternoon he visited Assabet Bathing-Place, returning by way of the stone bridge.

"Up Assabet" is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau's two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.
- [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 10



June 6: A crow blackbird's nest in a white maple this side the Leaning Hemlocks, in a crotch seven or eight feet from ground; somewhat like a robin's but larger, made of coarse weed stems, mikania, and cranberry vines (without leaves), fish-lines, etc., without, and of mid lined with finer fibres or roots within; four large but blind young covered with dark brown.

[Transcript]

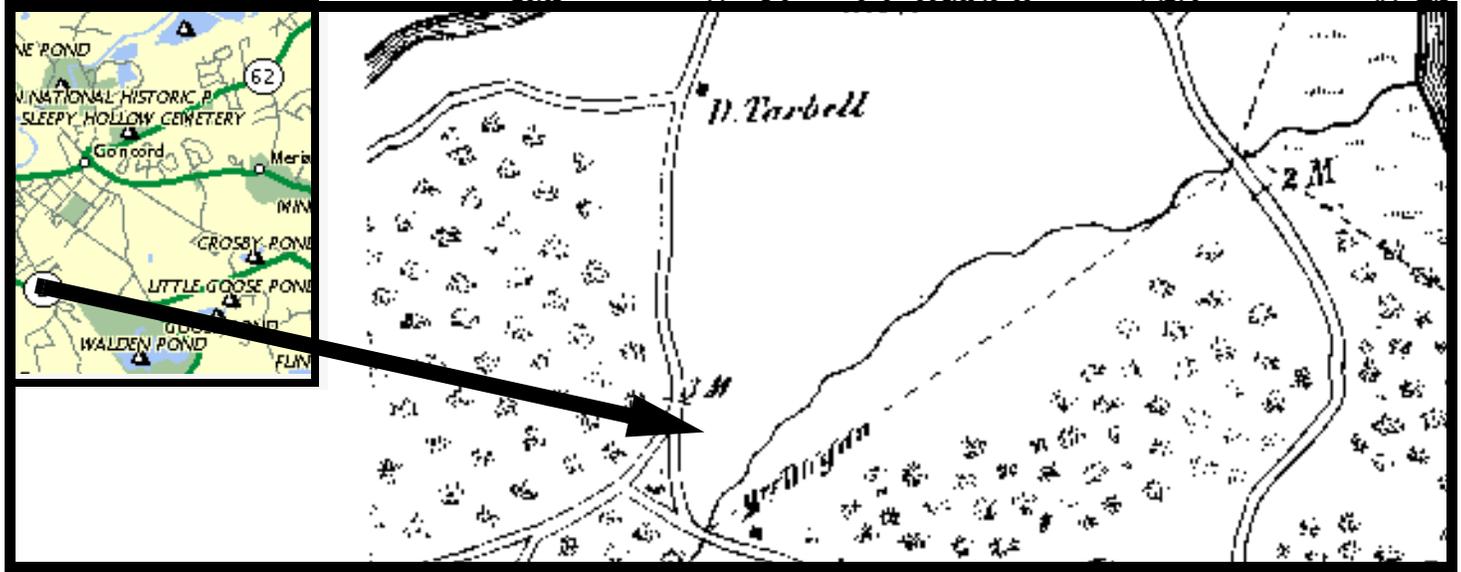
THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

1854

1854

 June 7, Wednesday: At 6 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) walked up the railroad tracks. In the afternoon he visited the Linnaea Hills and then the [Dugan Desert](#):

[JENNY DUGAN](#)



 June 8, Thursday: In the afternoon, [Henry Thoreau](#) went up the river. Reports from Boston of the [Anthony Burns](#) affair began to furnish material for “Slavery in Massachusetts.” Thoreau made an entry in his journal that he was later to copy into his early lecture [“WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT”](#) as:

[Paragraph 55] Lieutenant [Herndon](#), whom our Government sent to explore the Amazon, and, it is said, to extend the area of Slavery,¹ observed that there was wanting there “an industrious and active population, who know what the comforts of life are, and who have artificial wants to draw out the great resources of the country.” But what are the “artificial wants” to be encouraged? Not the love of luxuries, like the tobacco and slaves of, I believe, his native Virginia,² nor the ice and granite and other material wealth of our native New England; nor are “the great resources of a country” that fertility or barrenness of soil which produces these. The chief want is ever a life of deep experiences, — that is, character.³ This alone draws out “the great resources” of Nature, and at last taxes her beyond her resources, for man naturally dies out of her. When we want culture more than potatoes, and illumination more than sugar plums, then the great resources of a world are taxed and drawn out, and the result or staple production, is, not slaves, nor operatives, but men, those rare fruits called, heroes, saints, poets, philosophers, and redeemers.

1. William Lloyd Garrison, in his review of [Herndon](#)’s book, charged that “the prime motive” of the exploration of the Amazon was “to discover new fields and open new resources for the Slave Power, whereby its domains shall be illimitable, and its existence perpetuated as long as a tropical soil and climate can endure its pestiferous presence” (“Exploration of the Amazon, and Designs of the Slave Power,” [The Liberator](#), 21 April 1854, page 2, columns 3-4).

2. [Herndon](#) was from Fredericksburg, Virginia.

3. This sentence is taken from the journal source of this paragraph. Preceding this sentence is essay copy-text; after it is manuscript copy-text. Authority for the inclusion of the sentence at this point is derived from the journal source and the sentence “The chief want is ever a life of deep experiences — that is — character, which alone draws out Nature and at last goes beyond her” in the Nantucket [Inquirer](#) summary.

**Brad Dean’s
Commentary**

We may note that this entry indicates that he had been reading in a set of volumes that according to an inscription inside had been presented to him by [Horace Mann, Sr.](#), to wit: [William Lewis Herndon](#) (Part I) and Lardner Gibbon (Part II), EXPLORATION OF THE VALLEY OF THE AMAZON, MADE UNDER DIRECTION OF THE NAVY DEPARTMENT, BY WM. LEWIS HERNDON AND LARDNER GIBBON, LIEUTENANTS UNITED STATES NAVY (Washington: Robert Armstrong, Public Printer, Part I, 1853; A.O.P. Nicholson, Public Printer, Part II, 1854).¹¹⁶

[Thoreau](#) also made an entry that he would later copy into [“WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT”](#) as:

[Paragraph 56] What we name civilization does not yet substitute this for the barren simplicity of the savage.

**Brad Dean’s
Commentary**



June 8. *Thursday*. A.M. — Gentle, steady rainstorm.
The *Rosa nitida* bud which I plucked yesterday has blossomed to-day, so that, notwithstanding the rain, I will

[Transcript]

116. In the absence of some specific indication, we should beware any presumption that this gift indicated the existence of some particular bond between Mann, Sr. and Thoreau. The fact is that due to the largesse of members of the federal congress in playing games with your tax dollars, at this moment there happened to be literally **thousands** of freebee copies of this expensive government report in float across the nation.

put it down to to-day.

P.M. — On river.

Sidesaddle, apparently to-morrow (?). Earliest and common potamogeton. *Erigeron strigosus* slowly opening, perhaps to-morrow. [Vide 14th.] Meadow-rue, with its rank dog-like scent. Ribwort plantain is abundantly in bloom, fifteen or sixteen inches high; how long? *Utricularia vulgaris*. Young robins in nest.

Herndon, in his "Exploration of the Amazon," says that "there is wanting an industrious and active population, who know what the comforts of life are, and who have artificial wants to draw out the great resources of the country." But what are the "artificial wants" to be encouraged, and the "great resources" of a country? Surely not the love of luxuries like the tobacco and slaves of his native(?) Virginia, or that fertility of soil which produces these. The chief want is ever a life of deep experiences, — that is, character, — which alone draws out "the great resources" of Nature. When our wants cease to be chiefly superficial and trivial, which is commonly meant by artificial, and begin to be wants of character, then the great resources of a country are taxed and drawn out, and the result, the staple production, is poetry. Have the "great resources" of Virginia been drawn out by such "artificial wants" as there exist? Was that country really designed by its Maker to produce slaves and tobacco, or something more even than freemen and food for freemen? Wants of character, aspirations, — this is what is wanted; but what is called civilization does not always substitute this for the barren simplicity of the savage.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

➡ June 9, Friday: In the afternoon Henry Thoreau went to Well Meadow. At 7 PM he went up the Assabet River.

"Up Assabet" is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau's two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.
— Professor Robert M. Thorson, THE BOATMAN, page 10

In San Francisco there was rioting, precipitated by squatters, on Green Street near Stockton Street. Several arrests were made.

CALIFORNIA



June 9: I should like to know the birds of the woods better. what birds inhabit our woods? I hear their various notes ringing through them. What musicians compose our woodland quire? They must be forever strange and interesting to me.

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

THOREAU AS ORNITHOLOGIST

1854

1854



June 10, Saturday: The new Crystal Palace opened in Sydenham, London, having not only been moved from its 1851 Hyde Park location, but also enlarged. It had come to comprise 150,000 square meters of rough sheet-rolled glass. The gardens had come to cover more than 80 hectares. The ceremonies were overseen by Queen Victoria.

Earlier in the year [Bernhard Riemann](#) had proposed an interpretation of the integral for non-continuous functions. On this day he delivered “Über die Hypothesen welche der Geometrie zu Grunde liegen” in which he revealed that a variety of non-Euclidean geometries were possible (although the lecture was immediately influential, it would not be published until 1868).

In San Francisco there was a mass meeting to prevent squatting on anyone else’s property, but Judge Freelon of the Court of Sessions issued an order preventing action being taken against these squatters.

CALIFORNIA

[Henry Thoreau](#) walked to Conantum. He was being written to by [William Davis Ticknor](#) of [Ticknor & Co.](#) in Boston, to advise that Mr. [James Thomas Fields](#) would be carrying proof sheets of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) to England in order to secure the English copyright.¹¹⁷



TIMELINE OF WALDEN

Boston June 10/54

Dear Sir

Our Mr. Fields who left by the Steamer of the 7th for England took the proof sheets of Walden, — In order to secure a Cop't in England the book must be published there as soon as here, and at least 12 Copies published and offered for Sale. If Mr. F. succeeds in making a sale of the Early sheets, it will doubtless be printed in London so as to cause very little delay here but if it be necessary to print and send out the Copies it will delay us 3 or 4 weeks. Probably not more than three weeks. You will probably prefer to delay the publication that you may be sure of your Cop't in England.

Truly Yours

W.D. Ticknor & Co.

Henry D. Thoreau Esq



June 11, Sunday: While her husband Robert Schumann resided in an asylum, Clara Schumann gave birth to their 8th and final child, whom she named Felix in honor of Felix Mendelssohn.

When a couple of immigrant [Irishmen](#) threw rocks at a [nativist](#) speaker in Brooklyn, a mob of 10,000 rioted in the city and troops were deployed.

The day was cloudy and cool but without rain. At 8:30 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) escorted Mrs. Brown to [Framingham, Massachusetts](#). At noon he walked up the [Sudbury River](#) above Frank’s to Ashland “at first through the meadows, then over the high hills in the vicinity.”

From a [Connecticut](#) letter written by Lizzie Goodwin to her Aunt Emma Whipple:

... I like Mr. Whipple myself very much and if he wasn't an abolitionist I should feel much more amicably disposed towards

117. Actually, this wouldn’t happen because [Fields](#) would be so seasick as to turn back. [WALDEN](#) would not see publication in England until 1886.



1854

1854

him, but since mother is married to him I am afraid he may make her ... a violent abolitionist too, which she never was before. I was so afraid [that] in the great fugitive slave excitement in Boston she might be drawn into some extravagance of conduct. I am glad he was carried off in triumph. Frank is very well and I will give your love to him the next time I write which will be soon.

ABOLITIONISM

 June 12, Monday: Incidental music to Plouvier's comédie *Le Songe d'une nuit d'hiver* by Jacques Offenbach was performed for the initial time, at the Comédie-Française, Paris.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went to [Walden Pond](#), and by sunset he was on [Clamshell Hill](#).

 June 13, Tuesday: The Leavenworth Town Company was organized (these early [Kansas Territory](#) settlers were primarily from Missouri).

THE 2D GREAT AMERICAN DISUNION

At 2 PM [Henry Thoreau](#) went by boat to Bittern Cliff, and from there he went to Lee's Cliff.

[Jefferson Davis](#) and [Varina Davis](#)'s son Samuel Emory Davis died.

[Charles Algernon Parsons](#) was born in London.

Documentation of the [international slave trade](#), per [W.E. Burghardt Du Bois](#): "Report submitted by Mr. Slidell, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, on a resolution relative to the abrogation of the eighth article of the treaty with Great Britain of the 9th of August, 1842, etc."—SENATE REPORTS, 34 Cong. 1 sess. I. No. 195. (Injunction of secrecy removed June 26, 1856.)

[W.E. Burghardt Du Bois](#): During the decade there was some attempt at reactionary legislation, chiefly directed at the Treaty of Washington. June 13, 1854, Slidell, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, made an elaborate report to the Senate, advocating the abrogation of the 8th Article of that treaty, on the ground that it was costly, fatal to the health of the sailors, and useless, as the trade had actually increased under its operation.¹¹⁸ Both this and a similar attempt in the House failed,¹¹⁹ as did also an attempt to substitute life imprisonment for the death penalty.¹²⁰ Most of the actual legislation naturally took the form of appropriations. In 1853 there was an attempt to appropriate \$20,000.¹²¹ This failed, and the appropriation of \$8,000 in 1856 was the first for ten years.¹²² The following year brought a similar appropriation,¹²³ and in 1859¹²⁴ and 1860¹²⁵ \$75,000 and \$40,000 respectively were

118. SENATE JOURNAL, 34th Congress, 1-2 session, pages 396, 695-8; SENATE REPORTS, 34th Congress, 1st session, I. No. 195.

119. HOUSE JOURNAL, 31 Congress, 2d session, page 64. There was still another attempt by Sandidge. Cf. 26TH REPORT OF THE AMERICAN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY, page 44.

120. SENATE JOURNAL, 36th Congress, 1st session, page 274; CONGRESSIONAL GLOBE, 36th Congress, 1st session, page 1245.

121. Congressional Globe, 32d Congress, 2d session, page 1072.

122. I.e., since 1846: STATUTES AT LARGE, XI. 90.

123. STATUTES AT LARGE, XI. 227.

124. STATUTES AT LARGE, XI. 404.

125. STATUTES AT LARGE, XII. 21.



appropriated. Of attempted legislation to strengthen the laws there was plenty: e.g., propositions to regulate the issue of sea-letters and the use of our flag;¹²⁶ to prevent the "coolie" trade, or the bringing in of "apprentices" or "African laborers;"¹²⁷ to stop the coastwise trade;¹²⁸ to assent to a Right of Search;¹²⁹ and to amend the Constitution by forever prohibiting the slave-trade.¹³⁰

The efforts of the executive during this period were criminally lax and negligent. "The General Government did not exert itself in good faith to carry out either its treaty stipulations or the legislation of Congress in regard to the matter. If a vessel was captured, her owners were permitted to bond her, and thus continue her in the trade; and if any man was convicted of this form of piracy, the executive always interposed between him and the penalty of his crime. The laws providing for the seizure of vessels engaged in the traffic were so constructed as to render the duty unremunerative; and marshals now find their fees for such services to be actually less than their necessary expenses. No one who bears this fact in mind will be surprised at the great indifference of these officers to the continuing of the slave-trade; in fact, he will be ready to learn that the laws of Congress upon the subject had become a dead letter, and that the suspicion was well grounded that certain officers of the Federal Government had actually connived at their violation."¹³¹ From 1845 to 1854, in spite of the well-known activity of the trade, but five cases obtained cognizance in the New York district. Of these, Captains Mansfield and Driscoll forfeited their bonds of \$5,000 each, and escaped; in the case of the notorious Canot, nothing had been done as late as 1856, although he was arrested in 1847; Captain Jefferson turned State's evidence, and, in the case of Captain Mathew, a *nolle prosequi* was entered.¹³² Between 1854 and 1856 thirty-two persons were indicted in New York, of whom only thirteen had at the latter date been tried, and only one of these convicted.¹³³ These dismissals were seldom on account of insufficient evidence. In the notorious case of the "Wanderer," she was arrested on suspicion, released, and soon after she landed a cargo of slaves in Georgia; some who attempted to seize the Negroes were arrested for larceny, and in spite of the efforts of Congress the captain was never punished. The yacht was afterwards started on another voyage, and being brought back to Boston was sold to her former owner for about

126. E.g., Clay's resolutions: CONGRESSIONAL GLOBE, 31 Congress, 2d session, pages 304-9. Clayton's resolutions: SENATE JOURNAL, 33d Congress, 1st session, page 404; HOUSE JOURNAL, 33d Congress, 1st session, pages 1093, 1332-3; CONGRESSIONAL GLOBE, 33d Congress, 1st session, pages 1591-3, 2139. Seward's bill: SENATE JOURNAL, 33d Congress, 1st session, pages 448, 451.

127. Mr. Blair of Missouri asked unanimous consent in Congress, Dec. 23, 1858, to a resolution instructing the Judiciary Committee to bring in such a bill; Houston of Alabama objected: CONGRESSIONAL GLOBE, 35th Congress, 2d session, page 198; 26TH REPORT OF THE AMERICAN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY, page 44.

128. This was the object of attack in 1851 and 1853 by Giddings: HOUSE JOURNAL, 32d Congress, 1st session, page 42; 33d Congress, 1st session, page 147. Cf. HOUSE JOURNAL, 38 Congress, 1st session, page 46.

129. By Mr. Wilson, March 20, 1860: SENATE JOURNAL, 36th Congress, 1st session, page 274.

130. Four or five such attempts were made: December 12, 1860, HOUSE JOURNAL, 36th Congress, 2d session, pages 61-2; January 7, 1861, CONGRESSIONAL GLOBE, 36th Congress, 2d session, page 279; January 23, 1861, CONGRESSIONAL GLOBE, 36th Congress, 2d session, page 527; February 1, 1861, CONGRESSIONAL GLOBE, 36th Congress, 2d session, page 690; February 27, 1861, CONGRESSIONAL GLOBE, 36th Congress, 2d session, pages 1243, 1259.

131. "The Slave-Trade in New York," in the Continental Monthly, January, 1862, page 87.

132. New York Herald, July 14, 1856.

133. New York Herald, July 14, 1856. Cf. SENATE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 37th Congress, 2d session, V. No. 53.



one third her value.¹³⁴ The bark "Emily" was seized on suspicion and released, and finally caught red-handed on the coast of Africa; she was sent to New York for trial, but "disappeared" under a certain slave captain, Townsend, who had, previous to this, in the face of the most convincing evidence, been acquitted at Key West.¹³⁵

The squadron commanders of this time were by no means as efficient as their predecessors, and spent much of their time, apparently, in discussing the Right of Search. Instead of a number of small light vessels, which by the reports of experts were repeatedly shown to be the only efficient craft, the government, until 1859, persisted in sending out three or four great frigates. Even these did not attend faithfully to their duties. A letter from on board one of them shows that, out of a fifteen months' alleged service, only twenty-two days were spent on the usual cruising-ground for slavers, and thirteen of these at anchor; eleven months were spent at Madeira and Cape Verde Islands, 300 miles from the coast and 3,000 miles from the slave market.¹³⁶ British commanders report the apathy of American officers and the extreme caution of their instructions, which allowed many slavers to escape.¹³⁷

The officials at Washington often remained in blissful, and perhaps willing, ignorance of the state of the trade. While Americans were smuggling slaves by the thousands into Brazil, and by the hundreds into the United States, Secretary Graham was recommending the abrogation of the 8th Article of the Treaty of Washington;¹³⁸ so, too, when the Cuban slave-trade was reaching unprecedented activity, and while slavers were being fitted out in every port on the Atlantic seaboard, Secretary Kennedy naïvely reports, "The time has come, perhaps, when it may be properly commended to the notice of Congress to inquire into the necessity of further continuing the regular employment of a squadron on this [i.e., the African] coast."¹³⁹ Again, in 1855, the government has "advices that the slave trade south of the equator is entirely broken up;"¹⁴⁰ in 1856, the reports are "favorable;"¹⁴¹ in 1857 a British commander writes: "No vessel has been seen here for one year, certainly; I think for nearly three years there have been no American cruizers on these waters, where a valuable and extensive American commerce is carried on. I cannot, therefore, but think that this continued absence of foreign cruizers looks as if they were intentionally withdrawn, and as if the Government did not care to take measures to prevent the American flag being used to cover Slave Trade transactions;"¹⁴² nevertheless, in this same year, according to Secretary Toucey, "the force on the coast of Africa has fully

134. 27TH REPORT OF THE AMERICAN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY, pages 25-6. Cf. 26TH REPORT OF THE AMERICAN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY, pages 45-9.

135. 27TH REPORT OF THE AMERICAN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY, pages 26-7.

136. 26TH REPORT OF THE AMERICAN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY, page 54.

137. BRITISH AND FOREIGN STATE PAPERS, 1859-60, pages 899, 973.

138. Nov. 29, 1851: HOUSE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 32d Congress, 1st session, II. pt. 2, No. 2, page 4.

139. Dec. 4, 1852: HOUSE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 32d Congress, 2d session, I. pt. 2, No. 1, page 293.

140. HOUSE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 34th Congress, 1st session, I. pt. 3, No. 1, page 5.

141. HOUSE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 34th Congress, 3d session, I. pt. 2, No. 1, page 407.

142. Commander Burgess to Commodore Wise, Whydah, Aug. 12, 1857: PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS, 1857-8, vol. LXI. SLAVE TRADE, Class A, page 136.



accomplished its main object."¹⁴³ Finally, in the same month in which the "Wanderer" and her mates were openly landing cargoes in the South, President Buchanan, who seems to have been utterly devoid of a sense of humor, was urging the annexation of Cuba to the United States as the only method of suppressing the slave-trade!¹⁴⁴

About 1859 the frequent and notorious violations of our laws aroused even the Buchanan government; a larger appropriation was obtained, swift light steamers were employed, and, though we may well doubt whether after such a carnival illegal importations "entirely" ceased, as the President informed Congress,¹⁴⁵ yet some sincere efforts at suppression were certainly begun. From 1850 to 1859 we have few notices of captured slavers, but in 1860 the increased appropriation of the thirty-fifth Congress resulted in the capture of twelve vessels with 3,119 Africans.¹⁴⁶ The Act of June 16, 1860, enabled the President to contract with the Colonization Society for the return of recaptured Africans; and by a long-needed arrangement cruisers were to proceed direct to Africa with such cargoes, instead of first landing them in this country.¹⁴⁷



June 14, Wednesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was visited by another amateur [botanist](#), [Austin Bacon](#) of [Natick](#), and they walked to Concord's limekiln.

[\[George Partridge\] Bradford](#) [of [Plymouth](#), a Brook Farmer], [\[the Reverend John Lewis\] Russell](#) [of [Salem](#)], and [Austin Bacon](#) of [Natick](#) are acknowledged in the preface to [George B. Emerson's](#) report on the trees and shrubs of Massachusetts. This preface approximates a directory of Massachusetts botanists in 1846. Austin Bacon (1813-88) was a surveyor-naturalist. [Thoreau](#) paid a visit to him on August 24, 1857, and was shown a number of Natick's botanical highlights. Thoreau's interest in Natick no doubt arose from his reading of Oliver N. Bacon's HISTORY OF NATICK, which included a list of unusual plants (January 19, 1856, JOURNAL).

— [Ray Angelo](#), "Thoreau as Botanist"

Turkey and Austria entered into an accord whereby Wallachia would be occupied by the troops of both nations, while Moldavia would be occupied by the troops of the Austrians alone.

On page 2 of the New York [Daily Times](#) appeared an article about [steamboating](#) on the upper Mississippi River, identified only as by a "special correspondent," "W":

Perhaps you have beheld such sublimity in dreams, but surely never in daylight walking elsewhere in this wonderful world. Over one hundred and fifty miles of

143. HOUSE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 35th Congress, 1st session, II. pt. 3, No. 2, page 576.

144. HOUSE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 35th Congress, 2d session, II. pt. 1, No. 2, pages 14-15, 31-33.

145. SENATE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 36th Congress, 2d session, I. No. 1, page 24. The Report of the Secretary of the Navy, 1859, contains this ambiguous passage: "What the effect of breaking up the trade will be upon the United States or Cuba it is not necessary to inquire; certainly, under the laws of Congress and our treaty obligations, it is the duty of the executive government to see that our citizens shall not be engaged in it": SENATE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 36th Congress, 1st session, III. No. 2, pages 1138-9.

146. SENATE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 36th Congress, 2d session, III. pt. 1, No. 1, pages 8-9.

147. STATUTES AT LARGE, XII. 40.

unimaginable fairy-land, genii-land, and world of visions, have we passed during the last twenty-four hours.... Throw away your guide books; heed not the statements of travelers; deal not with seekers after and retailers of the picturesque; believe on man, but see for yourself the Mississippi River above Dubuque.¹⁴⁸



[Transcript]

June 14. Pm to Lime kiln with Mr Bacon of Natic
Sisymbrium amphibium (?) of Big. some days at foot of Loring's land. Common Mallows well out how long? What is that sisymbrium or Mustard-like plant at foot of Loring's? *Erigeron strigosum*?? out earliest say yesterday >>> Observed a ribwort near Simon Brown's barn by road with elongated spikes & only pistillate flowers— Hedge mustard how long? Pepper grass how long — sometime— *Scirpus lactustris* maybe some days. I see a black caterpillar on the black willows nowadays with red spots. Mr Bacon thinks that cherry birds are abundant where canker worms are — says that only female mosquitoes sting (not his observation alone) That there is one or two arbor vitae's native in Natic— He has found the *lygodium palmatum* there— Pearl I think he called her. He thought those the exuviae of mosquitoes on the river weeds under water— Makes his own microscopes & uses garnets— He called the huckleberry apple a parasitic plant — pterospora which grows on & changes the nature of the huckleberry.— Observed a diseased andromed paniculata twig prematurely in blossom— Caught a locust properly Harvest-fly — (*cicada*) drumming on a birch — which Bacon & Hill (of Waltham) think like the septemdecim except that ours has not red eyes, but black ones. Harris's other kind the Dog day Cicada (*canicularis*) or harvest fly — He says it begins to be heard invariably at the beginning of Dog days — he Harris heard it for many years in succession with few exceptions on the 25th of July. Bacon says he has seen pitch pine pollen in a cloud going over a hill a mile off is pretty sure—

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



June 15, Thursday: At 5:30 AM Henry Thoreau went to the Island and Hill, and in the afternoon he took his boat up the Assabet River to Garlic Wall.

"Up Assabet" is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau's two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.
 — Professor Robert M. Thorson, THE BOATMAN, page 10

At 7 PM he walked along the railroad tracks to the Cliff, and found a nest of 10 buried tortoise eggs which he took home and reburied in his garden.

At Tsarskoye Selo, Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka began writing his memoirs.

The funeral of Jefferson Davis and Varina Davis's son Samuel Emory Davis was at home.

Charles Wesley Slack wrote from New-York to Eva Evelina E. Vannevar Slack in Boston, detailing his activities.

148. Notice, please, that this is precisely the steamboat adventure upon which Thoreau would embark during May 1861, in order to approach Minnesota.



June 16, Friday: The Reverend Doctor William Andrew Scott lectured before the Mercantile library Association, at Musical Hall in [San Francisco, California](#), on the topic of the influence of great cities.

According to page 139 of [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#)'s 2017 book out of Harvard University Press, THE BOATMAN: [HENRY DAVID THOREAU](#)'S RIVER YEARS, [Henry Thoreau](#) went out before dawn this morning to hear the fragrant white water lilies on the river "pop open." Quote unquote. Well, as you can see in the journal entry, recorded below, Thoreau actually did not report any such sound effects. There had indeed been a Sunday on which he had gone out onto the river before dawn to watch the water lilies as they opened, but that had been a Sunday morning that had gone down several years earlier, on July 4th, 1852. And, in his journal entry for that Sunday dawn several years earlier, Thoreau had paid meticulous attention to the early light and had paid meticulous attention to exactly when the 1st water lily opened in the golden rays, and then had reported other water lilies as they also opened. Although Thoreau had mentioned in that earlier journal entry a sound, the sound of a humming bird, he had mentioned there no other such sound, nothing such as a "pop," as any lily had opened in the early rays of the Sunday morning sun!

So how is it that Professor Thorson has committed such an error? I am unable to find, in the literature, any mention that any water lily blossom ever makes any audible sound as it opens in the morning — because, in actual fact, water lily blossoms do not make any sound whatever as they open! Nothing. Nada. Never. Although there does happen to be a popping sound associated with this plant, it is a popping sound that is associated not with its flower, not with the opening of its flower in the golden rays of the dawn, but with its pads, which is to say, its roundish leaves that lie flat on the surface of the water. This "pad pop" occurs frequently and randomly during both day and night, because it is generated when some fish such as a sunfish randomly comes up underneath a lily pad and sucks an insect, and a fragment of the green pad, into its mouth, leaving a little oval hole in the green pad. That "pad pop" sound is in no way to be associated with the opening of this plant's flower, or with the dawn. No way. Nope.



June 16. 5 A.M. — Up railroad.

[Transcript]

As the sun went down last night, round and red in a damp misty atmosphere, so now it rises in the same manner, though there is no dense fog. Poison-dogwood yesterday, or say day before, *i.e.* 11th. *Rubus hispidus*, perhaps yesterday in the earliest place, over the sand. Mullein, perhaps yesterday.

Observed yesterday the erigeron with a purple tinge. I cannot tell whether this, which seems in other respects the same with the white, is the *strigosus* or *annuus*. The calla which I plucked yesterday sheds pollen to-day; say to-day, then. A *Hypericum perforatum* seen last night will probably open to-day. I see on the *Scirpus lacustris* and *pontederia* leaves black patches for some days, as if painted, of minute closely placed ova, above water. I suspect that what I took for milfoil is a sium. Is not that new mustard-like plant behind Loring's, and so on down the river, *Nasturtium hispidum*, or hairy cress? Probably the first the 19th. Heart-leaf. *Nymphaea odorata*. Again I scent the white water-lily, and a season I had waited for is arrived. How indispensable all these experiences to make up the summer! It is the emblem of purity, and its scent suggests it. Growing in stagnant and muddy [water], it bursts up so pure and fair to the eye and so sweet to the scent, as if to show us what purity and sweetness reside in, and can be extracted from, the slime and muck of earth. I think I have plucked the first one that has opened for a mile at least. What confirmation of our hopes is the fragrance of the water-lily! I shall not soon despair of the world for it, notwithstanding slavery, and the cowardice and want of principle of the North. It suggests that the time may come when man's deeds will smell as sweet. Such, then, is the odor our planet emits. Who can doubt, then, that Nature is young and sound? If Nature can compound this fragrance still annually, I shall believe her still full of vigor, and that there is virtue in man, too, who perceives and loves it. It is as if all the pure and sweet and virtuous was extracted from the slime and decay of earth and presented thus in a flower. The resurrection of virtue! It reminds me that Nature has been partner to no Missouri compromise. I scent no compromise in the fragrance of the white water-lily. In it, the sweet, and pure, and innocent are wholly sundered from the obscene and baleful. I do not scent in this the time-serving irresolution of a Massachusetts governor, nor of a Boston Mayor. All good actions have contributed to this fragrance. So behave that the odor of your actions may enhance the general sweetness of the atmosphere, that, when I behold or scent a flower, I may not be reminded how inconsistent are your actions with it; for all odor is but one form of advertisement of a moral quality. If fair actions had not been performed, the lily would not smell sweet. The foul slime stands for the sloth and vice of man; the fragrant flower that springs from it, for the purity and courage which springs



from its midst. It is these sights and sounds and fragrances put together that convince us of our immortality. No man believes against all evidence. Our external senses consent with our internal. This fragrance assures me that, though all other men fall, one shall stand fast; though a pestilence sweep over the earth, it shall at least spare one man. The genius of Nature is unimpaired. Her flowers are as fair and as fragrant as ever.

Three days in succession, — the 13th, 14th, and 15th, — thunder-clouds, with thunder and lightning, have risen high in the east, threatening instant rain, and yet each time it has failed to reach us, and thus it is almost invariably, methinks, with thunder-clouds which rise in the east; they do not reach us. Perhaps they are generated along, and confined to, the seacoast.

The warmer, or at least *drier*, weather has now prevailed about a fortnight. Once or twice the sun has gone down red, shorn of his beams. There have been showers all around us, but nothing to mention here yet. Yet it is not particularly dry. I hear nowadays the anxious notes of some birds whose young have just flown, — crow blackbirds, etc., etc.

As for birds, I think that their quire begins now to be decidedly less full and loud. I hear the phœbe note of the chickadee occasionally. I see only a stray, probably summer, duck very rarely on the river. The blue-bird is lost and somewhat rare-looking. The quail begins to be *heard*. Very few if any hawks are commonly noticed. The cow troopials have [been] seen in small flocks flitting about within a week. Along low roads, the song sparrows, bay-wings, Savannah (?), and yellow-winged (?) (*i.e.* ochreous-throated) quite commonly sing. Woodpeckers not noticeable as in spring. Rush sparrow at sundown. Methought I heard a pine warbler to-day. Many chip-birds have flown. The blue herons appear not to remain here this summer, and wood thrushes are not so numerous within my range as formerly. Kingfishers are quite common, perhaps especially at Walden, where the water is clear, and on the Assabet. The black and white creeper sings much. The pine warbler, as usual, and the evergreen forest note (golden-winged (?) warbler). Thrasher and catbird sing still; summer yellowbird and Maryland yellow-throat sing still; and oven-bird and veery. The bobolink, full strains, but further between. The red-eye incessant at midday. Goldfinches twitter over as usual. The wood pewee prominent. The nighthawk in full blast. Cherry-birds numerous, — the bold, combative-looking fellows, — etc., etc.

Since spring — say for a month or so — we have had no *tumultuous* water, — waves running, with whitecaps. Caterpillars have some time been grown on apple and cherry trees, and now the trees are leafing again. Other caterpillars on oaks, black willows, etc. Dragonflies of various sizes and colors are now extremely abundant, hovering just over the surface of the river and coupling there, — a blue and brown or a blue and green one united. Alighting on the least surface of a weed. One kind of cicada, at least, began a fortnight ago, — a sort of black-eyed *septendecim*. Shad-flies are *probably* disappearing. *Great* moths now abroad. Rose-bugs have just come. Various plants are frothy.

Tortoises, of all kinds, as I have seen, but *odoratus*, are laying their eggs for some time. I find their eggs dropped. Apparently young breams over nests. Frog-spawn apparently, in river; stringy, ash-color.

The effect of a good government is to make life more valuable, — of a bad government, to make it less valuable. We can afford that railroad and all merely material stock should depreciate, for that only compels us to live more simply and economically; but suppose the value of life itself should be depreciated. Every man in New England capable of the sentiment of patriotism must have lived the last three weeks with the sense of having suffered a vast, indefinite loss. I had never respected this government, but I had foolishly thought that I might manage to live here, attending to my private affairs, and forget it. For my part, my old and worthiest pursuits have lost I cannot say how much of their attraction, and I feel that my investment in life here is worth many per cent. less since Massachusetts last deliberately and forcibly restored an innocent man, Anthony Burns, to slavery. I dwelt before in the illusion that my life passed somewhere only *between* heaven and hell, but now I cannot persuade myself that I do not dwell wholly within hell. The sight of that political organization called Massachusetts is to me morally covered with scorïæ and volcanic cinders, such as Milton imagined. If there is any hell more unprincipled than our rulers and our people, I feel curious to visit it. Life itself being worthless, all things with it, that feed it, are worthless. Suppose you have a small library, with pictures to adorn the walls, — a garden laid out around, — and contemplate scientific and literary pursuits, etc., etc., and discover suddenly that your villa, with all its contents, is located in hell, and that the Justice of the peace is one of the devil's angels, has a cloven foot and a forked tail, — do not these things suddenly lose their value in your eyes? Are you not disposed to sell at a great sacrifice?

I feel that, to some extent, the State has fatally interfered with my just and proper business. It has not merely interrupted me in my passage through Court Street on errands of trade, but it has, to some extent, interrupted me and every man on his onward and upward path, on which he had trusted soon to leave Court Street far behind. I have found that hollow which I had relied on for solid.

I am surprised to see men going about their business as if nothing had happened, and say to myself, "Unfortunates! they have not heard the news;" that the man whom I just met on horseback should be so earnest to overtake his newly bought cows running away, — since all property is insecure, and if they do not run away again, they may be taken away from him when he gets them. Fool! does he not know that his seed-corn is worth less this year, — that all beneficent harvests fail as he approaches the empire of hell? No prudent man will build a stone house under these circumstances, or engage in any peaceful enterprise which it requires a long time to accomplish. Art is as long as ever, but life is more interrupted and less available for a man's proper pursuits.

It is time we had done referring to our ancestors. We have used up all our inherited freedom, like the young bird the albumen in the egg. It is not an era of repose. If we would save our lives, we must fight for them.

The discovery is what manner of men your countrymen are. They steadily worship mammon — and on the seventh day curse God with a tintamarre from one end of the *Union* to the other. I heard the other day of a meek and sleek devil of a Bishop Somebody, who commended the law and order with which Burns was given up. I would like before I sit down to a table to inquire if there is one in the company who styles himself or is styled Bishop, and he or I should go out of it. I would have such a man wear his bishop's hat and his clerical bib and tucker, that we may know him.

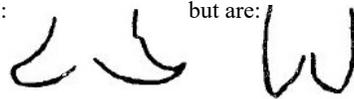
Why will men be such fools as [to] trust to lawyers for a *moral* reform? I do not believe that there is a judge in this country prepared to decide by the principle that a law is immoral and therefore of no force. They put themselves, or rather are by character, exactly on a level with the marine who discharges his musket in any direction in which he is ordered. They are just as much tools, and as little men.

P.M. To Baker Ditch *via* almshouse.

Autumnal dandelion, some time, in Emerson's Meadow pasture. *Potentilla Norvegica*, a day or two, in low ground; very abundant at Baker Ditch with other weeds, on a cleared and ditched swamp. Veiny-leaved hawkweed at Heywood Peak appears shut up at midday, — also the autumnal dandelion. A veiny-leaved hawkweed without veins. Is not this my *Gronovii*? [Think not. *Vide* forward, July 1st.] Panicked cornet well out on Heywood peak. There is a cool east wind, — and has been afternoons for several days, — which has produced a very thick haze or a fog. I find a tortoise egg on this peak at least sixty feet above the pond. There is a fine ripple and sparkle on the pond, seen through the mist. But what signifies the beauty of nature when men are base? We walk to lakes to see our serenity reflected in them. When we are not serene, we go not to them. Who can be serene in a country where both rulers and ruled are without principle? The remembrance of the baseness of politicians spoils my walks. My thoughts are murder to the State; I endeavor in vain to observe nature; my thoughts involuntarily go plotting against the State. I trust that all just men will conspire.

Dogsbane, apparently to-morrow. I observed that the *Viburnum dentatum* was very conspicuous and prevalent along the river, as if few other flowers were in bloom.

An abundance of *Galium trifidum* in low grounds, some smooth, some rough, with four leaves, or five or six; I do not distinguish the varieties. Am in doubt whether the polygonum which I find just opening at the ditch (say to-morrow) is *sagittatum* [Yes] — a rank one — or *arifolium* [crossed out; *Vide* Aug. 19]. The lobes of the leaves do not spread thus:



Three or four styles and four or five angled pods. Epilobium, probably *coloratum*, yet rather downy, to-morrow. It is worth the while to see the rank weeds which grow here on this cleared and ditched swamp, — *Potentilla Norvegica*, touch-me-not, *Polygonum sagittatum* (?), night-shade, etc., etc. The *Rosa nitida* grows along the edge of the ditches, the half-open flowers showing the deepest rosy tints, so glowing that they make an evening or twilight of the surrounding afternoon, seeming to stand in the shade or twilight. Already the bright petals of yesterday's flowers are thickly strewn along on the black mud at the bottom of the ditch.

The *R. nitida*, the earlier (?) with its narrow shiny leaves and prickly stem and its moderate-sized rose-pink petals.

The *R. lucida*, with its broader and duller leaves. but larger and perhaps deeper-colored and more purple petals, perhaps yet higher scented, and its great yellow centre of stamens.

The smaller, lighter, but perhaps more delicately tinted *R. rubiginosa*.

One and all drop their petals the second day. I bring home the buds of the three ready to expand at night, and the next day they perfume my chamber. Add to these the white lily (just begun), also the swamp-pink, and probably morning-glory, and the great orchis, and mountain laurel (now in prime), and perhaps we must say that the fairest flowers are now to be found. Or say a few days later. (The arethusa is disappearing.)

It is eight days since I plucked the great orchis; one is perfectly fresh still in my pitcher. It may be plucked when the spike is only half opened, and will open completely and keep perfectly fresh in a pitcher more than a week. Do I not live in a garden, — in paradise? I can go out each morning before breakfast — I do — and gather these flowers with which to perfume my chamber where I read and write, all day. The note of the cherry-bird is fine and ringing, but peculiar and very noticeable. With its crest it is a resolute and combative-looking bird. The mountain laurel is remarkable for its great dense and naked (for it runs to flower now) corymbs of large and handsome flowers. And this is a prevailing underwood on many of our mountainsides! Perhaps it is more appreciated in this neighborhood, where it is comparatively rare, — rare as poetry. Whitest in the shade. Meadow-sweet tomorrow.

➡ June 17, Saturday: At 5 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) went to climbing fern.

On this day, in [New-York](#), the anti-immigrant [Know-Nothing](#) Party was meeting under the name “Order of the Star Spangled Banner.”

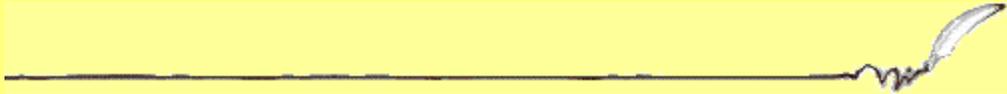


➡ June 18, Sunday: [Henry Thoreau](#) had to reappraise the idea that the [tortoise eggs](#) he had found had been laid just before he discovered them, for he learned that [J. Dugan](#) had seen the nest on June 7th.

JENNY DUGAN

➡ June 19, Monday: In the afternoon, despite the threat of a thunderstorm, [Henry Thoreau](#) went by boat up the [Assabet River](#).

"Up Assabet" is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau's two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.
— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 10



1854

1854

 June 20, Tuesday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Shad-bush Meadow.

In San Francisco, Volunteer Engine Co. No. 7 was organized and quartered on Pine Street between Montgomery Street and Sansome Street.

CALIFORNIA

The Reverend [Samuel Joseph May](#) wrote to his son Joseph May:



The most angry, warlike passions have at times been stirred within me. But I know these are not right and so I have been in conflict with myself.





1854

1854

 June 21, Wednesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) walked to [Walden Pond](#).

Russian forces abandoned their siege of Silistria, retreating north across the Danube.

The US Senate for obvious reasons approved a bill to provide more federal regulation of American vessels with destinations on the coast of Africa.

"Mr. Seward asked and obtained leave to bring in a bill (Senate, No. 407) to regulate navigation to the coast of Africa in vessels owned by citizens of the United States, in certain cases; which was read and passed to a second reading." June 22d, ordered to be printed. SENATE JOURNAL, 33rd Congress, 1st session, pages 448, 451; CONGRESSIONAL GLOBE, 33rd Congress, 1st session, pages 1456, 1461, 1472.

INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE

1854

1854

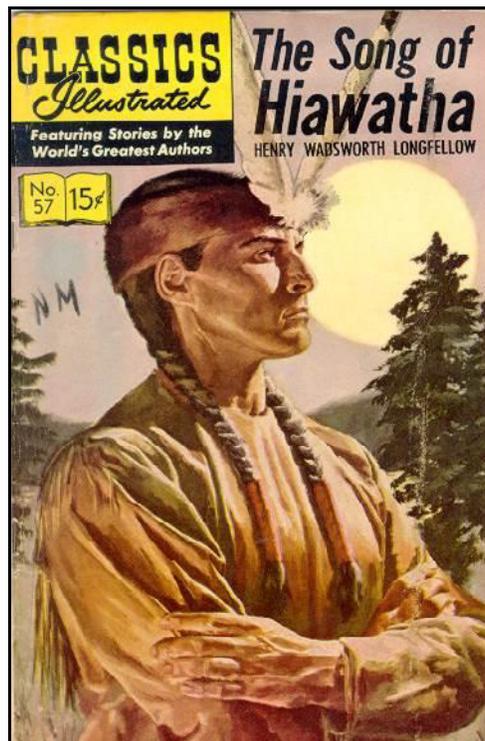


June 22, Thursday: [Charles Wesley Slack](#) wrote from Concord, New Hampshire to Eva Evelina E. Vannevar Slack in Boston, detailing his travel plans.

There was a political convention at [Concord](#) attended by [George Frisbie Hoar](#), with the objective of fusing the Free Soilers and the more dissident members of the Whigs of Massachusetts into a new political party, to which few Whigs came.



[Henry Wadsworth Longfellow](#) determined to utilize the trochaic dimeter measure of the Finnish epic KALEVALA for an epic poem of his own, on the American Indians. This would become THE SONG OF "HIAWATHA". Begun at Nahant, continued in [Newport, Rhode Island](#), the poem would be finished in Cambridge on March 21, 1855.



→ June 23, Friday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked to [Walden Pond](#) and the Cliffs.

→ June 24, Saturday: Alfonso und Estrella D.732, an opera by [Franz Schubert](#) to words of Schober, was performed for the initial time, in Weimar, conducted by Franz Liszt on the birthday of Grand Duke Carl Alexander. Also premiered by Liszt was the Solemn Overture for chorus, organ and orchestra by Anton Rubinstein. The composer had received the commission 6 days earlier.

[Emma Hart Willard](#) traveled to London to attend the World's Educational Convention. With her family she would tour France, Switzerland, Northern Italy, Germany, and Belgium. She would visit [Louise Swanton Belloc](#) and [Adélaïde Jeanne Emilie de Montgolfier](#) in Paris. She would be appointed to represent women on the editorial board of the [New York Teacher](#).

→ June 25, Sunday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Assabet Bathing-Place and Derby Bridge.

→ June 26, Monday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) took his boat to Purple Utricularia Shore on the [Sudbury River](#).

The US Senate approved the bill that had been proposed by Senator Clayton on May 22d.

"A bill for the more effectual suppression of the slave trade in American built vessels."

INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE



June 26. Monday. P.M. — Up river to Purple Utricularia Shore.

[Transcript]

"Upriver," "To Fairhaven," and "To Clamshell" were other common opening phrases. This signified a southward trip up the lakelike [Sudbury River](#), which zigzagged between rocky cliffs and lush meadows. Its current could be detected only at narrows and shallows. Parallel lines of sweet-scented lily pads, aquatic flowers rooted in shoreline mud, and buttonbush swamps flanked the river for much of its length. With a breeze from the north or east, he would usually sail. Otherwise he would row.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 11

Cornus sericca, yesterday at least. Small front-rank polygonum, a smut-like blast in the flower. Small form of arrowhead in Hubbard's aster meadow, apparently several days. I am struck, as I look toward the Dennis shore from the bathing-place, with the peculiar agreeable dark shade of June, a clear air, and bluish light on the grass and bright silvery light reflected from fresh green leaves. *Sparganium*, apparently *ramosum*, two or three days. The largest apparently the same, but very rarely in blossom; found one, however, with a branched scape, but not concave leaves except below. *Gratiola. Cicuta maculata*, apparently to-morrow.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

1854

1854



June 27, Tuesday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked through Hubbard meadow to the Cliffs. He was being written to from Cambridge by the [entomologist Thaddeus William Harris](#), about the [cicada](#).

Cambridge, Mass. June 27. 1854.

Mr. Henry D. Thoreau.

Dear Sir.

Your letter of the 25th, the books, and the Cicada came to hand this evening, — and I am much obliged to you for all of them; — for the books, — because I am very busy with putting the Library in order for examination, & want every book to be in its place; — for the letter, because it gives me interesting facts concerning Cicadas; and for the specimen because it is new to me, as a species or as a variety.

The Cicada seems to be a female, and of course when living could not make the noise peculiar to the other sex. It differs from my specimens of Cicada septemdecim (& indeed still more from all the other species in my collection).

It is not so large as the C. 17; it has more orange about its thorax; the wing-veins are not so vividly stained with orange, and the dusky zigzag on the anterior or upper wings, which is very distinct in the C. 17, is hardly visible in this specimen. It has much the same form as the female C. 17; but I must see the male in order to determine positively whether it be merely a variety or a different species. I should be very glad to get more specimens and of both sexes. Will you try for them?

Your much obliged

Thaddeus William Harris.





1854

1854



June 28, Wednesday: The 1st interment in San Francisco's Laurel Hill Cemetery.

CALIFORNIA

Generals D. Dulce and Leopoldo O'Donnell launched a right-wing revolt against the Spanish crown and its liberal ministry.

The following item has been extracted from page 3, column 4 of the [Worcester Palladium](#) of this date by [Bradley P. Dean](#), to add to our understanding of the context for [Henry Thoreau](#)'s delivery of a portion of "[SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS](#)" on a mourning-crepe-draped platform of the 4th of July commemoration at the Harmony Grove in [Framingham, Massachusetts](#):

Meeting for True Freedom ON THE FOURTH OF JULY.

THE Managers of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society invite, without distinction of party or sect, and without reference to varieties of opinion, ALL who mean to be known as on LIBERTY'S side, in the great struggle which is now upon us, to meet in full and earnest convention, at THE GROVE IN FRAMINGHAM, on the approaching FOURTH OF JULY, there to pass the day in no idle and deceptive glorying in our country's liberties, but in deep humiliation for her Disgrace and Shame, and in resolute purpose —God being our leader— to rescue old Massachusetts at least from being bound forever to the car of Slavery.

SPECIAL TRAINS will run on that day, to the Grove, from Boston, Worcester, and Milford — leaving each place at 9.25 A.M. Returning — leave the Grove about 5 1-2 P.M. FARE, by all these Trains, to the Grove and back, FIFTY CENTS.

The beauty of the Grove, and the completeness and excellence of its accommodations, are well known. Eminent Speakers, from different quarters of the State, will be present.

RESISTING THE FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW

In the morning of this Wednesday [Thoreau](#) went by boat to the Island. On this day [Senator Charles Sumner](#) was speechifying, quite falsely, that "In all her annals, no person was ever born a slave on the soil of Massachusetts."¹⁴⁹ In fact, it had been in the Bay Colony, in 1639, that there had occurred one of the earliest —if not the very earliest— project on this continent for the breeding of slaves. As the honest historian [George H. Moore](#) would point out in 1866, although there were no longer any slaves in Massachusetts, slavery was **still** theoretically possible as a point of Massachusetts law as of the very day of the passage of the XIIIth Amendment to the US Constitution in 1865.

149. How could someone get elected who was this ignorant, or this obtuse? According to [Bliss Perry](#), it had been Friend [John Greenleaf Whittier](#) the behind-the-scenes political manipulator who had "sent Sumner to the US Senate." According to Claude M. Fuess, it was this Quaker single-issue-advocate politician's "avowed aim to extort from the Massachusetts Congressmen every concession to anti-slavery principles which could be secured by any kind of strategy short of criminal methods."



1854

1854

 June 29, Thursday: The US federal congress ratified the [Gadsden Purchase](#), adding to the United States of America parts of present-day New Mexico and Arizona. In connection with this purchase a Delegate Elect, Sylvester Mowry, had written a Memoir of the Proposed Territory of Arizona:

READ THE FULL TEXT

[President Franklin Pierce](#), a proslavery white man, appointed [Andrew Horatio Reeder](#), a Democrat and therefore another proslavery white man, to the office of the governor of the [Kansas Territory](#). Let's make sure what goes down in this venue, shall we?

THE 2D GREAT AMERICAN DISUNION

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked to the limekiln.

The Surveyor General's Office completed its survey of the southern portion of the De Haro Rancho near San Francisco.

CALIFORNIA

 June 30, Friday: Spanish government troops engaged conservative rebels at Vicálvaro without strategic result.

The Emperor [Napoléon III](#) decreed that henceforward the Paris Opéra would be controlled by the Minister of State.

[Alfred Hawkins](#) died in Québec (the body would be placed at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity).

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked to [Walden Pond](#) and Hubbard's Close.



1854

1854

SUMMER 1854

 Summer: [Brownson's Quarterly Review](#), No. 2

CATHOLICISM

- I. Uncle Jack and His Nephew
- II. Protestantism Developed
- III. Temporal Power of the Popes
- IV. Where is Italy?
- V. The Mercesburg Hypothesis
- VI. Literary Notices and Criticisms

MAGAZINES

ORESTES AUGUSTUS BROWNSON

As the very difficult and very long-distance courtship between [Henry Browne Blackwell](#) and [Lucy Stone](#) had continued, Blackwell had learned to shift his argument in the direction of how couples could simply disregard society's norms while shaping in private their own intimate relationships. After 9 additional months of such reasoning, and some brief meetings, he and she met in Pittsburgh for a clandestine 3-day rendezvous. Nobody but them now knows what went on during those days and nights in Philadelphia, but afterward Stone would agree to marry him. Through continued correspondence the couple would arrange the terms of a private agreement aimed at protecting their financial independence and personal liberty. Blackwell proposed that their marriage be considered a business partnership, in economic matters, with husband and wife as "joint proprietors of everything except the results of previous labors." Neither would have claim to lands belonging to the other nor any obligation for the other's costs of holding them. While married and living together they would share earnings but, if they should separate, they would relinquish claim to the other's subsequent earnings. Each would be able to will their property to whomever they pleased unless they had children. Blackwell advised Stone to secure all her money in the hands of a trustee for her benefit.

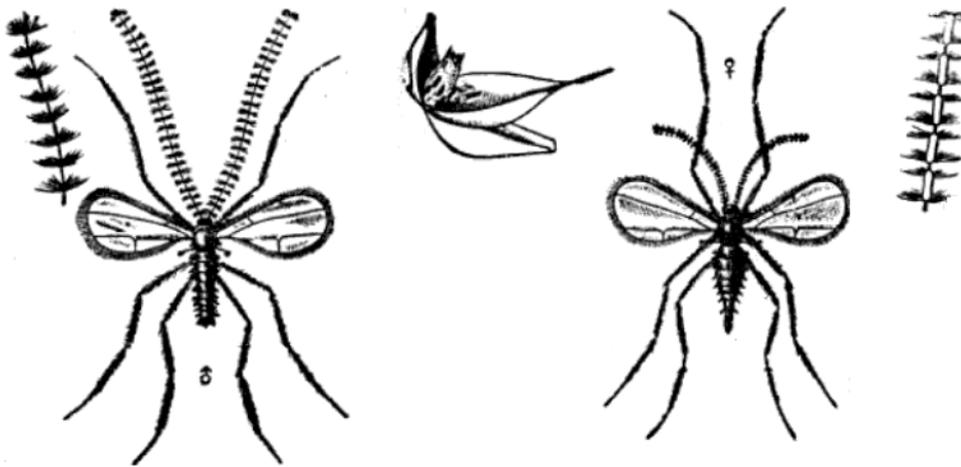
In addition to financial independence, the couple agreed that each would enjoy personal independence and autonomy: "Neither partner shall attempt to fix the residence, employment, or habits of the other, nor shall either partner feel bound to live together any longer than is agreeable to both." And Blackwell agreed that Stone would choose "when, where and how often" she would "become a mother." This was Blackwell's way of agreeing that Stone would control their sexual relations as advocated by [Henry C. Wright](#) in his 1854 [MARRIAGE AND PARENTAGE: OR, THE REPRODUCTIVE ELEMENT IN MAN, AS A MEANS TO HIS ELEVATION AND HAPPINESS](#) Stone had earlier given to Blackwell, and asked him to accept its principles. Stone disagreed on the issue of marital support, insisting that after a divorce she would be responsible for half their mutual expenses. When Blackwell objected strenuously, Stone would remain on this point adamant.

The western end of the State of [New York](#) had its hottest summer as yet on record. Severe drought conditions throughout the state would result in poor crop yields. The city of Albany cracked down on the sows running loose in its streets by rounding up some 15,000 of these mothers.

1854

1854

➡ Devastation by the wheat midge *Diplosis tritici* (known generally to American farmers as “Red Weevil” due to the color of its larvae on the wheat kernel when young — in the illustration, the flower of the wheat plant is shown at the center with larvae of the midge around its kernel) was more serious than ever before, causing some \$15,000,000 in agricultural losses in the state of New York alone. Losses as far west as Indiana were nearly as severe. This species had been known perhaps since 1741 in England, and certainly in 1795 it was observed by the Reverend William Kirby in the vicinity of Ipswich in Suffolk. The species had been introduced into the region of Quebec, Canada, and from there had spread by 1820 to Vermont. In 1835/1836 the insect destroyed wheat crops across Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine and in the northern regions of New York state, leading to abandonment of wheat as a crop in that region. The pest would do further damage to crops in 1861 in conjunction with the grain aphid *Siphonophora avenae*. The adult male appears, as marked, to the left, and the female to the right. Enlargements of the antenna of the male are to the left, and of the female to the right.



➡ Late Summer: Someone in Missouri offering the name “Samuel Clemens” contacted Frederick Jackson, the treasurer of the Boston Vigilance Committee, and wheedled from him \$24.50 for train fare to [Boston](#), by representing himself as a northern [abolitionist](#) who had been imprisoned for a couple of years in Missouri for “aiding fugitives to escape.” However, no Missouri record of the incarceration of any such person has ever been found and there is no abolitionist record of any publicity due to this hero Samuel Clemens’s arrival in Boston. The only person we can find in Missouri records who used any similar name was in fact the [Samuel Langhorne Clemens](#) who would later begin to write for publication, and therefore Professor Robert Sattelmeyer believes that this may well have been an early scam by the personage who would later make himself well known to the world as “[Mark Twain](#).” It is known that Clemens was not at that time particularly concerned over the fact of human enslavement — and so it is plausible that he would not have had moral scruples about the diversion of funds into his own pocket that would otherwise be used for the functioning of the Underground Railroad. It is also known that for a brief period during this year, Clemens was at Washington DC.



1854

1854

 Summer or Early Fall: [Mr. and Mrs. Eben J. Loomis](#) stayed at the Thoreau boarding house in [Concord](#) while [Samuel Worcester Rowse](#) was in town, at work on his commissioned portrait of [Waldo Emerson](#):¹⁵⁰

Mrs. Thoreau invited Mrs. Loomis and myself to spend the summer of 1854 with her at Concord.... I was very much interested in watching him [Rowse] while he was watching the Expression of Henry's face.... It is for me, on the whole, the most satisfactory likeness, for it represents Henry just as he was in that summer, so memorable to me ... memorable for my intimacy with Henry.

 Late Summer: Someone in Missouri offering the name "Samuel Clemens" contacted Frederick Jackson, the treasurer of the Boston Vigilance Committee, and wheedled from him \$24.50 for train fare to [Boston](#), by representing himself as a northern [abolitionist](#) who had been imprisoned for a couple of years in Missouri for "aiding fugitives to escape." However, no Missouri record of the incarceration of any such person has ever been found and there is no abolitionist record of any publicity due to this hero Samuel Clemens's arrival in Boston. The only person we can find in Missouri records who used any similar name was in fact the [Samuel Langhorn Clemens](#) who would later begin to write for publication, and therefore Professor Robert Sattelmeyer believes that this may well have been an early scam by the personage who would later make himself well known to the world as "[Mark Twain](#)." It is known that Clemens was not at that time particularly concerned over the fact of human enslavement — and so it is plausible that he would not have had moral scruples about the diversion of funds into his own pocket that would otherwise be used for the functioning of the Underground Railroad. It is also known that for a brief period during this year, Clemens was at Washington DC.

JULY 1854

 July: This month's issue of [Harper's New Monthly Magazine](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE

150. Unfortunately the original crayon has deteriorated to the point at which its copies are now better than it.

HDT

WHAT?

INDEX

1854

1854



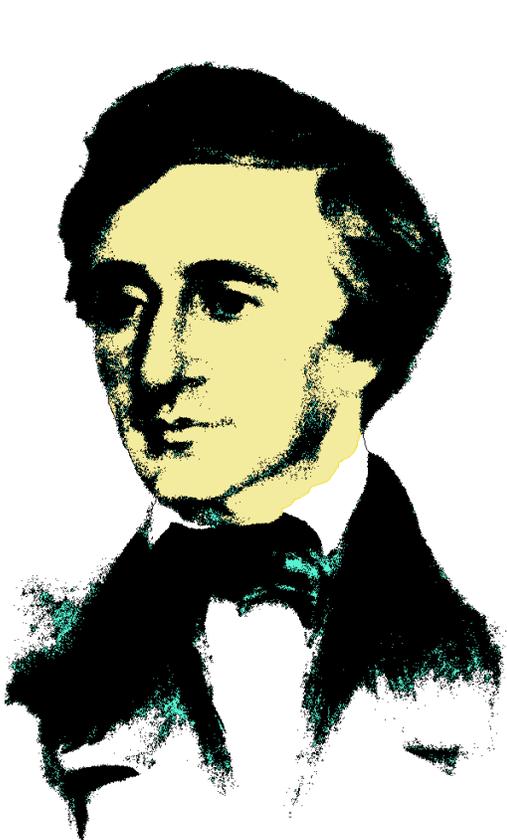
HDT

WHAT?

INDEX

1854

1854



So: Who Knew First When It Started To Rain?

1854

1854

→ July: 650 people died of [cholera](#) in the Brooklyn suburb of [New-York](#).



[New-York](#)'s Fulton Street Ferry went into operation, connecting Brooklyn to Washington Avenue in the Bronx.

→ July: Someone bombed the [Catholic](#) Church in [Dorchester](#).

ANTI-CATHOLICISM

→ July: In anticipation of the national black emigration convention being organized by [Martin Robison Delany](#) in Cleveland, Ohio, [Frederick Douglass](#) declared that American blacks "will ever remain the principal inhabitants of the United States, in some form or other."



Four members of the [Matthew Flounoy Ward](#) jury were indicted by a grand jury on charges of perjury. Only one of the jurors, T.M. Yates, would be tried, and when he would be acquitted in December, charges against other jurors would be dismissed.

→ July: During this period we indulged ourselves in a week of naval shelling and burning at the port of San Juan del Norte (Greytown) on the coast of Nicaragua, in order to avenge ourselves for some sort of insult the country had allegedly made to our American Minister. —Or so 'twas being explained.

US MILITARY INTERVENTIONS

1854

1854

➡ At about the middle of this year [Louisa May Alcott](#) wrote to her older sister [Anna Bronson Alcott](#) about the stories which she had created while she was doing babysitting at the age of 16, for the amusement of little [Ellen Emerson](#), the little volume which eventually would be entitled FLOWER FABLES:

I've shed my quart [of tears] ... over the book not coming out, for that was a sad blow, and I waited so long it was dreadful when my castle in the air came tumbling about my ears. Pride made me laugh in public, but I wailed in private, and no one knew it.

[THE ALCOTT FAMILY](#)

➡ July: The New York [Times](#) reported that, according to its Paris correspondent, there had been a sad accident. An inventor, M. Leroy, had devised a vehicle powered by steam, which he had for a decade been attempting to run upon the ordinary post roads of France. However, in descending a hill while heading toward the English Channel, where he was to ship his device to London for exhibition, the engine struck an obstacle, tipped over, and poured the contents of its boiler on to M. Leroy, who was too badly scalded to hope for recovery. The [Scientific American](#) magazine for July 15th, 1854 picked up this story, editorializing that locomotives might make sense on rail roads but made no sense at all on post roads, and adding the observation that [M. Leroy](#) had been “foolish” to re-produce steam carriages for common roads, after the invention of railroads and locomotives. He might as well have been “going to mill with corn in a bag, having a stone in one end to balance the grain in the other.”

[ROAD VEHICLES](#)
[STEAM ENGINES](#)

[WALDEN](#): If we read of one man robbed, or murdered, or killed by accident, or one house burned, or one vessel wrecked, or one steamboat blown up, or one cow run over on the Western Railroad, or one mad dog killed, or one lot of grasshoppers in the winter, -we never need read of another. One is enough.

[TIMELINE OF ACCIDENTS](#)

➡ [Henry David Thoreau](#)'s 38th stanza began on his birthday, July 12th, Wednesday, 1854.

- Thoreau's profile was sketched by the Reverend [William Henry Furness](#).



- Publication of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) by Ticknor and Fields. The book was scathingly condemned in the pages of the [New-York Times](#). Its author, [Mr. Henry D. Thoreau](#) or “Thorrau” was erratic, impracticable, and apt to confuse rather than arrange the order of things mental and physical. He imagines himself a philosopher but presents us with no philosophy. He is not a Christian but, perhaps, is a Communist. His new manifesto is of interest only as a contribution to the comic literature of America, yada yada yada. The book was reviewed in the [Daily Alta California](#) as a very strange book, the history of a philosopher living in the woods, a sort of

Robinson Crusoe life. It shows the simplicity with which life can be conducted, stripped of some of its conventionalities, and the whole narrative is imbued with a deep philosophic spirit. All together besides being beautifully written, it has an air of originality which is quite taking.

- [“SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS”](#) appeared in Garrison’s [The Liberator](#) and in [The National Anti-Slavery Standard](#).
- A new lecture [“WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT”](#) was advertised in [The Liberator](#) and in all 4 of [Providence](#), [Rhode Island](#)’s major newspapers—the [Daily Post](#), [Daily Journal](#), [Bulletin](#), and [Daily Tribune](#).

THOREAU’S SERMON

- [Various versions of [“LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE”](#), variously titled, would be delivered:
[“WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT”](#) on December 6, 1854 at Railroad Hall in [Providence](#)
[“WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT”](#) on December 26, 1854 in the [New Bedford](#) Lyceum
[“WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT”](#) on December 28, 1854 at the Athenaeum on [Nantucket Island](#)
 On January 4, 1855 in the [Worcester](#) Lyceum, as “The Connection between Man’s Employment and His Higher Life”
[“WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT”](#) on February 14, 1855 in the [Concord](#) Lyceum
[“WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT”](#) on November 16, 1856 for the [Eagleswood](#) community
 “Getting a Living” on December 18, 1856 in the vestry of the [Congregational Church](#) of Amherst, [New Hampshire](#)
[“LIFE MISSPENT”](#) on Sunday morning, October 9, 1859 to the Reverend [Theodore Parker](#)’s 28th Congregational Society in [Boston Music Hall](#)
[“LIFE MISSPENT”](#) on Sunday, September 9, 1860 at Welles Hall in [Lowell](#).]
- At the new opera-house in [New-York](#), Thoreau attended a performance of [Vincenzo Bellini](#)’s final opera [Lpuritani](#) featured dramatic soprano [Madame the Marquise Giulia Grisi](#) as the Puritan roundhead revolutionary daughter Elvira and her husband or consort the tenor [Sir Giovanni Matteo de Candia](#) as Lord Arthur Talbot, one of [King Charles I](#)’s cavalier loyalists.

BACKGROUND EVENTS OF 1854
BACKGROUND EVENTS OF 1855

Read █ Henry Thoreau’s Journal for July 1854 (æf. 36-37)

 July 1, Saturday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked to the Cliffs.

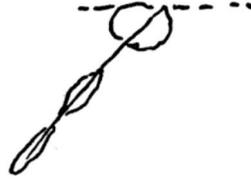


July 1. Saturday. P.M.—To Cliffs.

From the hill I perceive that the air is beautifully clear after the rain of yesterday, and not hot; fine-grained. The landscape is fine as behind a glass, the horizon-edge distinct. The distant vales toward the northwest mountains lie up open and clear and elysian like so many Tempes. The shadows of trees are dark and distinct. On the river I see the two broad borders of pads reflecting the light, the dividing line between them and the water, their irregular edge, perfectly distinct. The clouds are separate glowing masses or blocks floating in the sky, not threatening rain. I see from this hill their great shadows pass slowly here and there over the top of the green forest. Later a breeze rises and there is a sparkle on the river somewhat as in fall and spring. The wood thrush and tanager sing at 4 P.M. at Cliffs. The anychia in steep path beyond springs, almost. Some boys brought me

 Transcript]

to-night a singular kind of spawn found attached to a pole floating in Fair Haven Pond. Some of it six feet below



the surface, some at top, the uppermost as big as a water-pail; a very firm and clear jelly, the surface covered with small rayed or star-shaped spawn (?) A great quantity of it.



July 2, Sunday: At 4 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Hill. In the afternoon he and [Ellery Channing](#) went to Flint's Pond and Smith's Hill.

"Downriver," "To Great Meadow," and "To Hill" signified a northward trip down the Concord River below the triple point of the confluence. After passing through a straight reach aligned by the local bedrock strike, arched by two bridges, and flanked by gravel bars of historic sediment that were repeatedly dredged, he entered the north side of Great Meadow. Bounded by the site of the Old North Bridge to the southwest and Ball's Hill to the northeast, it was two miles long and half a mile across. When in flood, the meadow was his favorite inland sea to sail upon because the wind was least impeded and the waves were highest.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 11



The Reverend [Theodore Parker](#)'s sermon this morning at [Boston Music Hall](#) in beautiful downtown [Boston](#) would be taken down "phonographically" (which is to say, stenographically) by [Rufus Leighton](#) and printed by James Manning Winchell Yerington as [A SERMON OF THE DANGERS WHICH THREATEN THE RIGHTS OF MAN IN AMERICA](#); PREACHED AT THE MUSIC HALL, ON SUNDAY, JULY 2, 1854, BY THEODORE PARKER, MINISTER OF THE XXVIII. CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY. {PHONOGRAPHICALLY REPORTED BY MESSRS. YERINGTON AND LEIGHTON.]



July 2. Sunday. 4A.M. — To Hill.

Hear the chip-bird and robin very lively at dawn.

From the Hill, the sun rising, I see a fine river fog wreathing the trees — elms and maples — by the shore. I mark the outlines of the elms and *Salix Purshiana*, now so still and distinct, looking east. It is clear summer now. The cocks crow hoarsely, ushering in the long-drawn thirsty summer day. A day for cows. The morning the spring of the day. A few bullfrogs trump.

P.M. — To Flint's Pond and Smith's Hill with [C.](#)

Thimble-berries. Parsnip at Tuttle's. Tobacco-pipe well up. Spatulate or long-leaved sundew, some days. *Hypericum Canadense*, some days. *Pyrola elliptica*, apparently some days, or directly after *rotundifolia*, on east side of Smith's Hill. *Asclepias phytolaccoides*, a new plant, apparently two or three days on Smith's Hill. A blue high blueberry ripe. An abundance of red lilies in the upland dry meadow, near Smith's Spring trough; low, —

 Transcript]



1854

from one to two feet high, — upright-flowered, more or less dark shade of red, freckled and sometimes wrinkle-edged petals; must have been some days. This has come with the intense summer heats, a torrid July heat like a red sunset threatening torrid heat. (Do we not always have a dry time just before the huckleberries turn?) I think this meadow was burnt over about a year ago.

Did that make the red lily grow? The spring now seems far behind, yet I do not remember the interval. I feel as if some broad invisible lethean gulf lay behind, between this and spring. *Geum strictum*, a new plant, apparently a week or ten days; some of the heads already five eighths of an inch in diameter; roadside at Gourgas sproutland; aspect of a buttercup and *Potentilla Norvegica* with burs. I see some *Lysimachia stricta* (?), with ends of petals coppery-reddish.

1854



1854

1854



July 3, Monday: Leos Janáček was born in Hukvaldy, northern Moravia, the 10th of 14 children born to Jirí Janáček, a teacher and musician, and Amálie Grulichová, daughter of a weaver (5 of the 14 would not survive into adulthood). This child was christened Leo Eugen.

The 1st herd of Texas longhorns reached [New-York](#).

Streetcars were put into service in Brooklyn.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went by boat to Hubbard's Bridge.

HDT

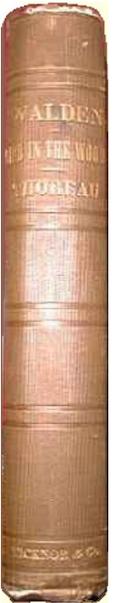
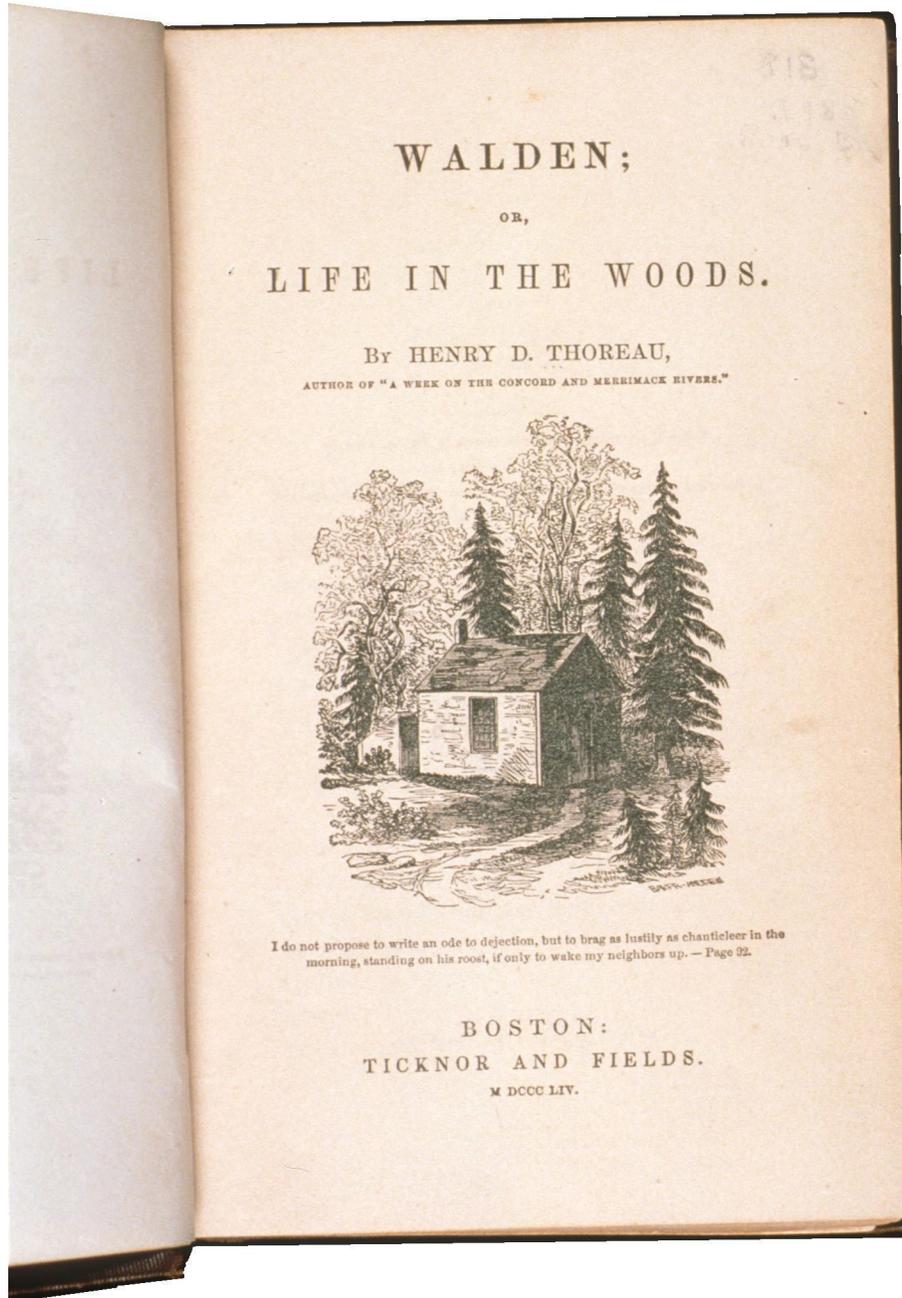
WHAT?

INDEX

1854

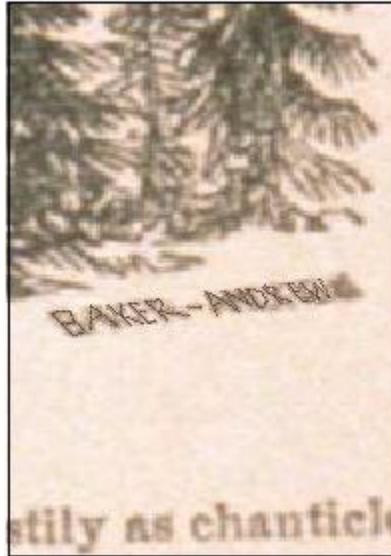
1854

In [Boston](#), the sheets of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) were passing through the printing press!



The firm of Baker & Andrew, Engravers of Boston had rendered [Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau](#)'s drawing of the shanty on the pond as an engraving for the title page.

WILLIAM JAY BAKER
JOHN ANDREW
TIMELINE OF WALDEN



[Judge Ebenezer Rockwood Hoar](#), considering the death of one of the members of the Marshall's posse, a deputized truckman named [James Batchelder](#), during the attempt to rescue [Anthony Burns](#) from the slavecatchers, issued the following pronouncement:

A man whose private conscience leads him to disobey a law recognized by the community [the federal Fugitive Slave Law] must take the consequences of that disobedience. It is a matter solely between him and his Maker. He should take good care that he is not mistaken, that his private opinion does not result from passion or prejudice, but, if he believes it to be his duty to disobey, he must be prepared to abide by the result; and the laws as they are enacted and settled by the constituted authorities to be constitutional and valid, must be enforced, although it may be to his greivous harm.

RESISTING THE FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW



July 3. Monday. I hear the purple finch these days about the houses,-a. twitter witter weeter wee, a witter witter wee.

Transcript]

P.M. — To Hubbard Bridge by boat.

On the great hummock dropped on Dennis's meadow last winter, I see now flourishing, of small plants, water milkweed, *Lysimachia stricta*, hedgehog (?) grass, horse-mint, arrowhead, onoclea, *Viola lanceolata*, gratiola, and the small-flowered hypericum, as well as meadow-grass.

The river and shores, with their pads and weeds, are now in their midsummer and hot-weather condition, now when the pontederias have just begun to bloom. The seething river is confined within two burnished borders of pads, gleaming in the sun for a mile, and a sharp snap is heard from them from time to time. Next stands the upright phalanx of dark-green pontederias. When I have left the boat a short time the scats become intolerably hot. What a luxury to bathe now! It is gloriously hot, — the first of this weather. I cannot get wet enough. I must let the water soak into me. When you come out, it is rapidly dried on you or absorbed into your body, and you

want to go in again. I begin to inhabit the planet, and see how I may be naturalized at last. The clams are so thick on the bottom at Hubbard's Bathing-Place that, standing up to my neck in water, I brought my feet together and lifted up between them, so as to take off in my hand without dipping my head, three clams the first time, though many more dropped off. When you consider the difficulty of carrying two melons under one arm and that this was in the water, you may infer the number of the clams. A cone-flower (newplant), — *Rudbeckia hirta* (except that I call its disk not dull brown but dull or dark purple or maroon; however, Wood calls it dark purple), — in Arethusa Meadow. Saw one plucked June 25; blossomed probably about that time. Many yesterday in meadows beyond almshouse. Probably introduced lately from West. *Pycnanthemum muticum* at Hypericum corymbosum Ditch. Proserpinaca at Skull-cap Pool, apparently five or six days. Touch-me-not, good while, — ten days at least; some seeds now spring. As I return down the river, the sun westering, I admire the silvery light on the tops and extremities of the now densely leaved golden willows and swamp white oaks and maples from the under sides of the leaves. The leaves have so multiplied that you cannot see through the trees; these are solid depths of shade, on the surface of which the light is variously reflected. Saw a fresh cherry-stone (must be cultivated cherry; wild not ripe) in the spring under Clamshell Hill, nearly half a mile from a cherry tree. Must have been dropped by a bird. Mulberries some time.



Our national birthday, Tuesday the 4th of July: This was [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#)'s 50th birthday.



Rowland Hussey Macy (1822-1919) had gotten started in retail in 1851 with a dry goods store in downtown [Haverhill](#). Macy's policy from the very first was "His goods are bought for cash, and will be sold for the same, at a small advance." On this date Macy's 1st parade marched down the main drag of the little New England village. It was too hot and only about a hundred people viewed his celebration. In 1858 Macy would sell this store and, with the financial backing of Caleb Dustin Hunking of Haverhill, relocate the retail business to easier pickings in New-York. (So, have you heard of the New York Macy's department store? –Have you shopped there?)

When the mayor of Wilmington, Delaware jailed City Council member Joshua S. Valentine for setting off firecrackers, he was mobbed by a group of indignant citizens.

CELEBRATING OUR B-DAY

[Henry Thoreau](#) went at "8 A.M. – To Framingham."

At this abolitionist picnic celebrating our nation's birthday and the [Declaration of Independence](#) and the successful completion of the [1st Great American Disunion](#), attended by some 600, a man the [Standard](#) described as "a sort of literary recluse," name of Henry David Thoreau, **declared for dissolution of the**



1854

1854

federal union.

**ROSS/ADAMS
COMMENTARY**

[Thoreau](#) was a secessionist — he believed that New Englanders should secede from the federal union of the United States of America, as the necessary step in disentangling themselves from the US national sin of race slavery.

THE 2D GREAT AMERICAN DISUNION

[Sojourner Truth](#) was another of the speakers, although we do not know whether she spoke before or after Thoreau (the newspaper reporter who was present failed entirely to notice that Sojourner took part), nor whether he sat on the platform beside her. [Stephen Symonds Foster](#) and [Abby Kelley Foster](#) were present



(Abby probably brought her daughter Alla to the pic nic, for it was always a family affair, with swings for the children, boating on a nearby pond, and a convenient refreshment stand since the day would be quite hot,

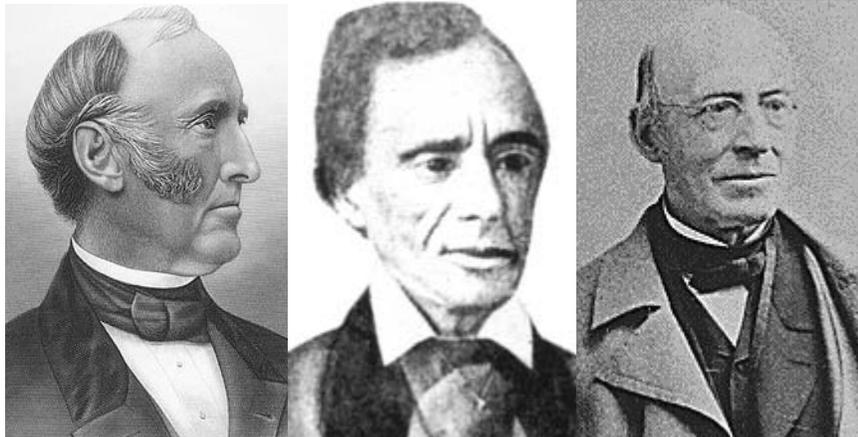
1854

1854

and confined her remarks to an appeal for funds), and [Lucy Stone](#), as were [Wendell Phillips](#), [Charles Lenox](#)



[Remond](#), and [William Lloyd Garrison](#).¹⁵¹





1854

1854

When the meeting in the shady amphitheater was called to order at 10:45AM by Charles Jackson Francis, the first order of business had to be election of officials for the day. [Garrison](#) became the event's president and [Francis Jackson](#) of Boston, [William Whiting](#) of [Concord](#), Effingham L. Capron of Worcester, Dora M. Taft of Framingham, [Charles Lenox Remond](#) of Salem, [John Pierpont](#) of Medford, Charles F. Hovey of Gloucester, [Jonathan Buffum](#) of Lynn, Asa Cutler of Connecticut, and [Andrew T. Foss](#) of [New Hampshire](#) its vice presidents. The Reverend [Samuel J. May, Jr.](#), of Leicester, William H. Fish of Milford, and R.F. Wallcut of Boston became its secretaries. [Abby Kelley Foster](#), Ebenezer D. Draper, Lewis Ford, Mrs. Olds of Ohio, [Lucy Stone](#), and Nathaniel B. Spooner would constitute its Finance Committee. Garrison then read from Scripture, the assembly sang an [Anti-Slavery](#) hymn, and Dr. Henry O. Stone issued the Welcome.

A.D. FOSS

151. There was an active agent of the Underground railroad on that platform, we may note, and it was not the gregarious Truth but the “sort of literary recluse” Thoreau. That is, please allow me to state the following in regard to the existence of eyewitness testimony, that the Thoreau home in Concord was in the period prior to the Civil War a waystation on the Underground Railway: we might reappraise [Thoreau](#)'s relationship with [Sojourner Truth](#), of whom it has been asserted by [Ebony Magazine](#) that she was a “Leader of the Underground Railroad Movement” (February 1987), by asking whether there is any comparable eyewitness testimony, that Truth ever was involved in that risky and illegal activity? Her biographer refers to her as a “loose cannon,” not the sort of close-mouthed person who could be relied upon as a participant in a quite secret and quite illegal and quite dangerous endeavor, and considers also that no such evidence has ever been produced. The Thoreaus, in contrast, not only were never regarded as loose in this manner, but were, we know, regarded as utterly reliable — and in the case of the Thoreau family home the evidence for total involvement exists and is quite conclusive.

I will quote a couple of paragraphs about the course of the meeting from the Foster biography, AHEAD OF HER TIME:

Heading the finance committee, Abby made her usual appeal for funds, Stephen called on the friends of liberty to resist the Fugitive Slave Law, "each one with such weapons as he thought right and proper," and Wendell Phillips, Sojourner Truth, and Lucy Stone held the audience in thrall with their "soul-eloquence." After an hour's break for refreshments Henry Thoreau castigated Massachusetts for being in the service of the Slaveholders and demanded that the state leave the Union. "I have lived for the last month—and I think that every man in Massachusetts capable of the sentiment of patriotism must have had a similar experience—with the sense of having suffered a vast and indefinite loss. I did not know what ailed me. At last it occurred to me that what I had lost was a country." Thoreau's speech is still reprinted, but William Lloyd Garrison provided the most dramatic moment of that balmy July day. Placing a lighted candle on the lectern, he picked up a copy of the Fugitive Slave Law and touched it to the flame. As it burned, he intoned a familiar phrase: "And let all the people say Amen." As the shouts of "Amen" echoed, he burned the U.S. commissioner's decision in the Burns case. Then he held a copy of the United States Constitution to the candle, proclaiming, "So perish all compromises with tyranny." As it burned to ashes, he repeated, "And let all the people say Amen." While the audience responded with a tremendous shout of "Amen," he stood before them with arms extended, as if in blessing. No one who was present ever forgot the scene; it was the high point of unity among the Garrisonian abolitionists.

This biography of [Abby Kelley](#), with its suggestion that [Thoreau](#)'s speech, which it condenses to three sentences, must have been significant because it is "still reprinted," overlooks the fact that Thoreau had not been granted an opportunity to read his entire lecture. A contemporary comment on the speech was more accurate:



Henry Thoreau, of Concord, read portions of a racy and ably written address, the whole of which will be published in [The Liberator](#).

That is, Thoreau delivered a 4th-of-July oration at [Framingham, Massachusetts](#) on "[SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS](#)", criticizing the governor and the chief justice of Massachusetts who were in the audience.



1854

1854

–But, he was not allowed the opportunity to read his entire essay.

The whole military force of the State is at the service of a Mr. Suttle, a slaveholder from Virginia, to enable him to catch a man whom he calls his property; but not a soldier is offered to save a citizen of Massachusetts from being kidnapped! Is this what all these soldiers, all this training has been for these seventy-nine years past? Have they been trained merely to rob Mexico, and carry back fugitive slaves to their masters? These very nights, I heard the sound of a drum in our streets. There were men training still; and for what? I could with an effort pardon the cockerels of Concord for crowing still, for they, perchance, had not been beaten that morning; but I could not excuse this rub-a-dub of the "trainers." The slave was carried back by exactly such as these, i.e., by the soldier, of whom the best you can say in this connection is that he is a fool made conspicuous by a painted coat.

Note that on paper, at least, if not verbally as well, he made a reference to martyrdom by [hanging](#): “I would side with the light, and let the dark earth roll from under me, calling my mother and my brother to follow.” In other words, lets us New Englanders secede from the federal union of the United States of America, as the necessary step in our clearing ourselves of this US national sin of race slavery.

Here is another account of the actual speech, as opposed to what was printed later, from one who was there in



1854

1854

the audience standing before that platform draped in mourning black:

He began with the simple words, "You have my sympathy; it is all I have to give you, but you may find it important to you." It was impossible to associate egotism with Thoreau; we all felt that the time and trouble he had taken at that crisis to proclaim his sympathy with the "Disunionists" was indeed important. He was there a representative of Concord, of science and letters, which could not quietly pursue their tasks while slavery was trampling down the rights of mankind. Alluding to the Boston commissioner who had surrendered Anthony Burns, Edward G. Loring, Thoreau said, "The fugitive's case was already decided by God, -not Edward G. God, but simple God." This was said with such serene unconsciousness of anything shocking in it that we were but mildly startled.

— AUTOBIOGRAPHY, MEMORIES, AND EXPERIENCES OF MONCURE DANIEL CONWAY (Boston MA: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.), Volume I, pages 184-5.
[[Moncure Daniel Conway](#)]

DISUNION

ANTHONY BURNS

EDWARD GREELEY LORING

At the end of the morning meeting [Thoreau](#) was on the platform while [Garrison](#), the featured speaker, burned [the federal Constitution](#) on a pewter plate as a "covenant with death" because it countenanced the return of runaway slaves to their owners — [Margaret Fuller](#)'s grandfather Timothy Fuller Sr., who had refused to consent to that document when it was originally promulgated because of its ridiculous mincing about slavery, would have been proud of him! Thoreau's inflammatory oratory was less inflammatory than addresses made on that occasion by Garrison, [Wendell Phillips](#), and [Charles Lenox Remond](#), for their speeches drew comments but Thoreau's did not.

TIMELINE OF ESSAYS

On our nation's birthday the platform had been draped in black crepe as a symbol of mourning, as at a state funeral, and carried the insignia of the State of Virginia, which stood as the destination of [Anthony Burns](#), and this insignia of the State of Virginia was decorated with — with, in magnificent irony, ribbons of triumph! Above the platform flew the flags of [Kansas](#) and Nebraska, emblematic of the detested new [Kansas/Nebraska Act](#). As the background of all this, the flag of the United States of America was hung, but it was upside down, the symbol of distress, and it also was bordered in black, the symbol of death.

I think no great public calamity, not the death of [Daniel Webster](#), not the death of [Charles Sumner](#), not the loss of great battles during the War, brought such a sense of gloom over the whole State as the surrender of [Anthony Burns](#).

RESISTING THE FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW

1854

1854

[Garrison](#) placed a lighted candle on the lectern, and touched a corner of the Fugitive Slave Law to the flame. As it burned, he orated “And let all the people say **Amen**” and the crowd shouted “Amen!” Then he touched a corner of the US commissioner’s decision in the Burns case to the candle flame. Then he touched a corner of a copy of [the federal Constitution](#) to the candle flame, and orated “So perish all compromises with tyranny.” As the paper was reduced to ashes, he orated “And let all the people say **Amen**” and stood with his arms extended as if in blessing.



[William Lloyd Garrison \(in 1865\)](#)

[Moncure Daniel Conway](#)’s comment, later, about the moment when [Garrison](#) set the match to the constitution, and the few scattered boos and hisses were drowned out by the thunderous “Amen” of the crowd, was:

That day I distinctly recognized that the antislavery cause was a religion.

In the afternoon [Moncure Daniel Conway](#) spoke, as a Virginian aristocrat, a child of position and privilege. Look at me! It was his 1st antislavery attempt at identity politics grandstanding. Leaning on the concept, he insisted that the force of public opinion in his home state was so insane and so hotheaded that every white man with a conscience, “or even the first throbbings of a conscience,” was a **slave** to this general proslavery public posture. He offered that to resist this Southern certitude, each Northerner would need to “abolish slavery in his

heart.”¹⁵²

AUTOBIOGRAPHY VOLUME II



(So, you see, the white man has been self-enslaved: the problem is not so much that slavery harms the black man as that slavery harms the white man, shudder.)

Then [Wendell Phillips](#) spoke.

We know that [Sojourner Truth](#) spoke from that mourning-draped platform after a white man from Virginia had described his being thrown in jail there on account of his antislavery convictions, because in her speech she commented on this: how helpful it was for white people to obtain some experience of oppression. She warned that “God would yet execute his judgments upon the white people for their oppression and cruelty.” She asked why it was that white people hated black people so. She said that the white people owed the colored race a debt so huge that they would never be able to pay it back — but would have to repent so as to have this debt forgiven them. Nell Painter has characterized this message as “severe and anguished,” and has commented that despite the cheers and applause, “Her audiences preferred not to grapple with all she had to say.” Her humor must have been such, Painter infers, as to allow her white listeners to exempt themselves from this very general denunciation:

They did not hear wrath against whites, but against the advocates of slavery. It is understandable, no doubt, that Truth’s audiences, who wanted so much to love this old black woman who had been a slave, found it difficult to fathom the depths of her bitterness.

152. We may note how different this was from the Reverend [Theodore Parker](#)’s “kill the Negro in us.”

Carleton Mabee's BLACK FREEDOM

Americans at large often held the abolitionists responsible for the war. They argued that the abolitionists' long agitation, strident as it often was, had antagonized the South into secession, thus beginning the war, and that the abolitionists' insistence that the war should not end until all slavery had been abolished kept the war going. In 1863 the widely read New York Herald made the charge devastatingly personal. It specified that by being responsible for the war, each abolitionist had in effect already killed one man and permanently disabled four others. ... While William Lloyd Garrison preferred voluntary emancipation, during the war he came to look with tolerance on the abolition of slavery by military necessity, saying that from seeming evil good may come. Similarly, the Garrisonian-Quaker editor, Oliver Johnson, while also preferring voluntary emancipation, pointed out that no reform ever triumphed except through mixed motives. But the Garrisonian lecturer Pillsbury was contemptuous of such attitudes. Freeing the slaves by military necessity would be of no benefit to the slave, he said in 1862, and the next year when the Emancipation Proclamation was already being put into effect, he said that freeing the slaves by military necessity could not create permanent peace. Parker Pillsbury won considerable support for his view from abolitionist meetings and from abolitionist leaders as well. Veteran Liberator writer Edwin Percy Whipple insisted that "true welfare" could come to the American people "only through a **willing** promotion of justice and freedom." Henry C. Wright repeatedly said that only ideas, not bullets, could permanently settle the question of slavery. The recent Garrisonian convert, the young orator Ezra Heywood, pointed out that a government that could abolish slavery as a military necessity had no antislavery principles and could therefore re-establish slavery if circumstances required it. The Virginia aristocrat-turned-abolitionist, Moncure Daniel Conway, had misgivings that if emancipation did not come before it became a fierce necessity, it would not reflect true benevolence and hence could not produce true peace. The Philadelphia wool merchant, Quaker Alfred H. Love, asked, "Can so sublime a virtue as ... freedom ... be the offspring of so corrupt a parentage as war?" The long-time abolitionist Abby Kelley Foster—the speak-inner and Underground Railroader— predicted flatly, if the slave is freed only out of consideration for the safety of the Union, "the hate of the colored race will still continue, and the poison of that wickedness will destroy us as a nation." Amid the searing impact of the war—the burning fields, the mangled bodies, the blood-splattered hills and fields—a few abolitionists had not forgotten their fundamental belief that to achieve humanitarian reform, particularly if it was to be thorough and permanent reform, the methods used to achieve it must be consistent with the nature of the reform. ... What abolitionists often chose to brush aside was that after the war most blacks would still be living in the South, among the same Confederates whom they were now trying to kill.



July 4. A sultry night the last; bear no covering ; all windows open.
8A.m — To Framingham.

Great orange-yellow lily, some clays, wild yellow, lily, drooping, well out. Asclepias obtusifolia, also day or two. Some chestnut trees show at distance as if blossoming. Buckwheat, how long? I probably saw Asclepias purpurascens (? ?) over the walls. A very hot day.

 [transcript]

CHANGE IS ETERNITY, STASIS A FIGMENT

 July 5, Wednesday: The following item has been extracted from page 2, column 2 of the Boston Commonwealth of this date by [Bradley P. Dean](#), to add to our understanding of the context for [Henry Thoreau](#)'s delivery "[SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS](#)" during the previous day, on the mourning-crepe-draped platform of the 4th of July commemoration at the Harmony Grove in [Framingham](#):

ANTI-SLAVERY CELEBRATION AT FRAMINGHAM

A meeting of Anti-Slavery people, called under the auspices of the Mass. Anti-Slavery Society, was held at Framingham yesterday. A beautiful grove near the lake, furnished a fine place for the meeting. Many people entertained themselves by taking a sail upon the lake. About two thousand persons were present, extra trains being there from Boston and Worcester. Mr. [William Lloyd] Garrison presided, and speeches were made by him, Wendell Phillips, C. L. Remond, Lucy Stone, John Pierpont, S.S. Foster, John C. Cluer, and others. At the close of Mr. Garrison's speech he burned the Fugitive Slave Act, Commissioner Loring's decision and the Constitution of the United States. The burning of the Slave Act and Loring's decision was received with decided approbation; but the burning of the Constitution was witnessed with disgust and indignation by a large number of those who were assembled, some of whom vented their feelings by hisses and ou[t]cries.

[RESISTING THE FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW](#)

[JOHN PIERPONT](#)

[THE 2D GREAT AMERICAN DISUNION](#)



1854

1854

It is no more than fair to state that Mr. Garrison said that he did not do this as the act of the meeting, but as his own individual expression of opinion[.] But this furnishes no excuse for the proceeding. By the printed notice of the meeting, all "friends of Impartial Freedom and Universal Emancipation," "all who reject with indignation the wild and guilty fantasy that man can hold property in man," were invited to be present at Framingham. Under this invitation, anti-slavery men, who hold that the Constitution of the United States furnishes no aid whatever to slavery and that under it, the most radical anti-slavery action is legal and proper, had a right to be present, without having their feelings and principles insulted by such a performance. We speak now only of the act of discourtesy: whether it was worth while to perform an act, at this time, which could gratify only a few men, and must inevitably tend to increase the odium under which all true anti-slavery men have to labor, is another question which we do not now discuss. We take the occasion, speaking as we have no doubt we do, in behalf of a very large majority of the "friends of impartial freedom and universal emancipation," in this community, to repudiate this act of Mr. Garrison's, and say that they have no sympathy with it or approved of it.

WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON

WENDELL PHILLIPS

CHARLES LENOX REMOND

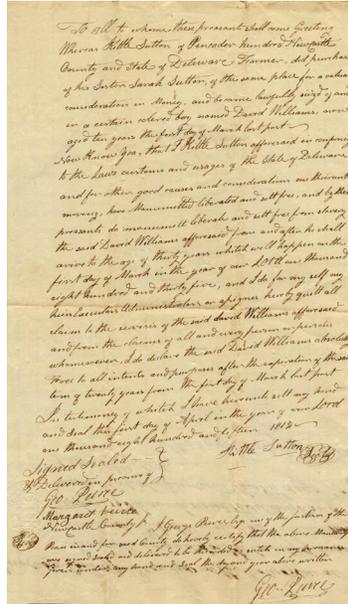
LUCY STONE

JOHN PIERPONT

STEPHEN S. FOSTER

EDWARD GREELEY LORING

At this last moment [Henry Thoreau](#) would be adding admonitions to avoid despair and desperate haste to Chapter 1 of his [WALDEN](#) manuscript. To me, it seems likely that he did this because of Mr. [Garrison](#)'s ill-advised act of desperation on that black-mourning-bunting-draped platform.



July 5. Another very hot night, and scarcely any dew this morning. *Lysimachia lanceolata*, var. *hybrida*, a day or two, at Merrick's Bathing-Place. Bass at Island.

 [Transcript]

P.M. — To White Pond.

One hundred and nine swallows on telegraph-wire at bridge within eight rods, and others flying about. *Stachys aspera*, Clamshell Ditch. The blue-curls and fragrant everlasting, with their refreshing aroma, show themselves now pushing up in dry fields, bracing to the thought. Horse-mint under Clamshell, apparently yesterday. On Lupine Knoll, picked up a dark-colored spear-head three and a half inches long, lying on the bare sand; so hot that I could not long hold it tight in my hand. Now the earth begins to be parched, the corn curls, and the four-leaved loose-strife, etc., etc., wilt and wither. *Sericocarpus*. Small circaea at Corner Spring, some days. *Rosa Carolina*, apparently a day or two, Corner causeway; dull leaves with fine serrations, twenty-five to thirty, plus, on a side, and narrow closed stipules. *Asclepias incarnata* var. *pulchra*.

To all to whom these presents shall come Greeting
 Whereas Little Sutton of Pencader hundred New Castle
 County and State of Delaware Farmer, did purchase
 of his Sister Sarah Sutton, of the same place for a valuable
 consideration in Money, and became lawfully seized of and
 in a certain colored boy named David Williams, now
 aged ten years the first day of March last past
 Now Know you, that I Little Sutton aforesaid in conformity
 to the laws customs and usages of the State of Delaware
 and for other good cause and considerations on their
 moving, have Manumitted liberated and set free, and by these
 presents do manumitt liberate and set free from slavery
 the said David Williams aforesaid from and after he shall
 arrive to the age of thirty years whitch will happen on the
 first day of March in the year of our Lord one thousand
 eight hundred and thirty five, and I do for my self my
 heirs Executors Administrators or assignes hereby quit all
 claim to the service of the said David Williams aforesaid
 and from the claims of all and every person or persons
 whomsoever, I do declare the said David Williams absolutely
 free to all intents and purposes after the expiration of the said
 term of twenty years from the first day of March last past
 In testimony of whitch I have hereunto set my hand
 and Seal this first day of April in the year of our Lord
 one thousand eight hundred and fifteen

Signed Sealed
 & Delivered in presence of
 Geo. P. Little
 Margaret Little
 New Castle County

Little Sutton

In presence of George Peverly one of the Justices of the
 Peace in and for said County do hereby certify that the above Manumitt
 was signed sealed and delivered to be the said Little Sutton in my presence
 from under my hand and Seal the day and year above written

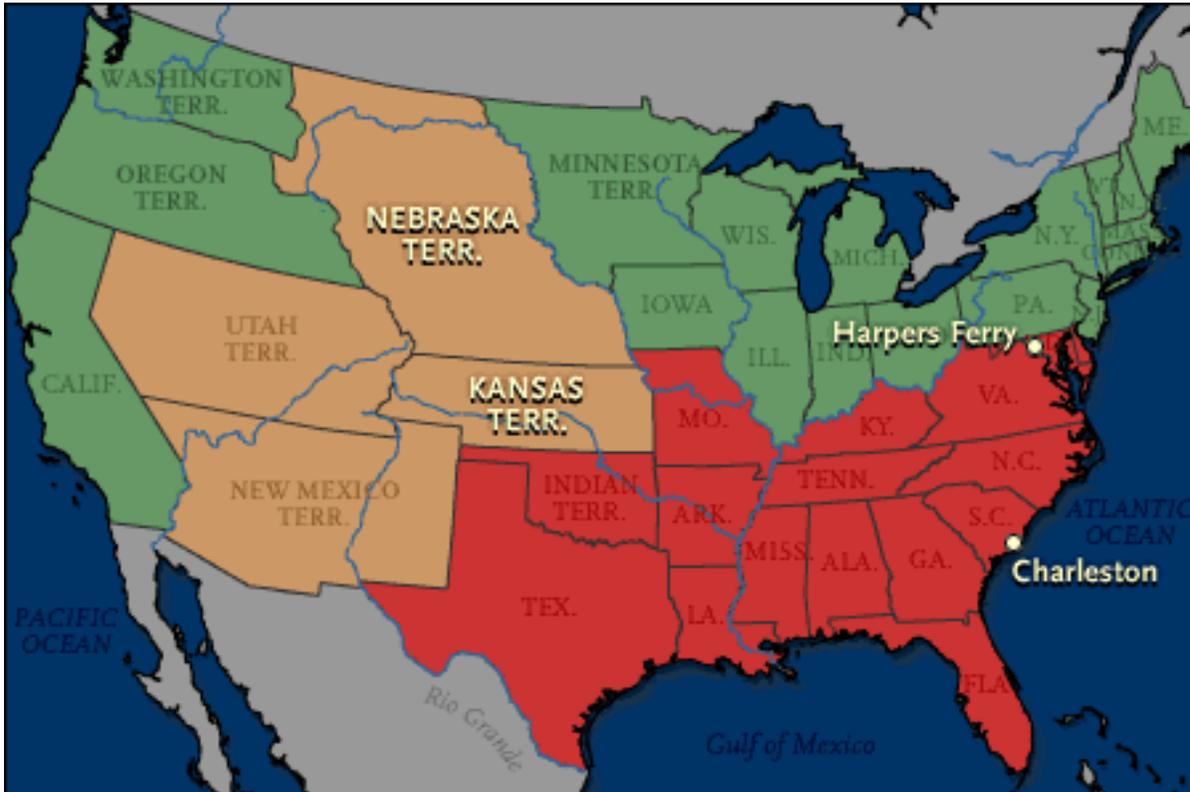
Geo. P. Little

In the inserted paragraph he contrasted Christianity's preoccupation with past and future to the neglect of the present. Paganism would have had it right had paganism recognized that

The morning wind forever blows, the poem of creation is uninterrupted; but few are the ears that hear it. Olympus is but the outside of this earth every where.



 July 6, Thursday: The “[Republican Party](#)” was founded at a convention in Jackson, Michigan (continuous with but substantially different from today’s “Republican Party” in the same manner in which the prehistoric *moeritherium* is continuous with but substantially different from today’s African and Indian elephants :-). This launching was ratified by a group of former Whigs, Democrats, and Free-Soilers opposed to the Kansas-Nebraska Act.



In the Manzanares Proclamation (an obvious appeal for leftist support) General O'Donnell pledged that once he gained control of the Spanish government he would restore the militia.

Lloyd Tabb Hubard was born to Mary Troutman Hubard and [William James Hubard](#).

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked to Beck Stow's Swamp.



July 6. P.M. — To Beck Stow's.

Euphorbia maculata, good while. *Polygonum aviculare*, a day or two. Now a great show of elder blossoms. *Polygala sanguinea*, apparently a, day or more. *Galium asprellum* in shade; probably earlier in sun. Partridges [Ruffed Grouse  *Bonasa umbellus* (Partridge)] a third grown.

Veery still sings and toad rings.

On the hot sand of the new road at Beck Stove's, headed toward the water a rod or more off, what is probably *Cistudo Blandingii*; had *some* green conferva (?) on its shell and body. Length of upper shell, 6½ inches; breadth behind, 4²/₈; tail beyond shell, 2¼. Did not see it shut its box; kept running out its long neck four inches or more; could bend it directly back to the posterior margin of the second [?] dorsal plate. Ran out its head further and oftener than usual. The spots pale-yellow or buff. Upper half of head and neck blackish, the former quite smooth for 1⁵/₈ inches and finely sprinkled with yellowish spots, the latter warty. The snout lighter, with five perpendicular black marks. Eyes large (?), irides dull green-golden. Under *jaw and throat clear chrome-yellow*. Under parts of neck and roots of fore legs duller yellow: inner parts behind duller yellow still. Fore legs with black scales, more or less yellow spotted above; at root and beneath pale-yellow and yellowish. Hind legs uniformly black above and but little lighter beneath. Tail black all round. No red or orange about the animal. No hook or notch to jaw.

 [manuscript]



Plantain, some days, and gnaphalium, apparently two or three days.

 July 7, Friday: [Henry Thoreau](#) visited the lycopodium.



July 7. P.M. — To lycopodium.

Verbena urticaria. Spiranthes, three or four days back, flat east of Clamshell Shore. Large form of arrowhead, two or more days. Woodcock at the spring under Clamshell. Campanula aparinoides, apparently three or four days. The clover heads are turned brown and dry, and white-weed is also drying up. I think that that is the water dock just opening in J.I. Brown's meadow. Disturbed two broods of partridges this afternoon, — one a third grown, flying half a dozen rods over the bushes, yet the old, as anxious as ever, rushing to me with the courage of a hen. Columbines still.

Lygodium palmatum hardly yet in flower, I should say; for the most very green and tender atop and not much flattened out. Saw a pretty large hawk with narrow, and long wings, black-tipped beneath, and white rump, light beneath, circling over the Ministerial Swamp with a loud, shuffling, jay-like and somewhat flicker-like sound.

 Transcript]

 July 8, Saturday: The 1st railroad line in Portugal opened between Sacavém and Vila Franca de Xira.

Albany, [New York](#)'s Lumber District was reported to contain 46 businesses that were taking in more than \$500,000 annually (an additional 29 of them were taking in more than \$100,000).

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Assabet Bathing-Place. That evening at 8 PM, by the light of a full moon, he took his boat to Hubbard's Bend. The following handbill was distributed:



July 8. Saturday. P.M.-To Assabet Bathing-place.

Alchilot, ; i play or two. Spiraidh.e., gracilis, a day or two(?). A Lysimachia. stricla (?) by birch fence in path beyond Shad-bush Meadow,withwhorls of threeleaves and spike about eight inches long, about June 26th ; lower half now out of bloom, one quarter in bloom, upper quarter budded. Ludwigia. The 4th and 5th were the hot bathing days thus far ; thermometer at 98 and 96 respectively. Sium almost ; say 9th.

8 P. M.-Full moon ; by boat to Hubbard's Bend.

There is wind, making it cooler and keeping off fog, delicious on water. The moon reflected from the rippled surface like a stream of dollars. I hear a few toads still. See a bat ; how long? The bullfrogs trump from time to time. It iscommonlya full round err, err, err, err (gutturally, and increasing in volume), and then coarsely trilled (?), er-er-er, er-er-er, er-er-er ; occasionally varied like the looing of a bull. The whip-poor-wills are heard, and the baying of dogs.

The Rosa nitida I think has [been] some time done; the lucida generally now ceasing, and the Carolina (?) just begun.

The middle lechea not quite.

 Transcript]

LAND SURVEYING

Of all kinds, according to the best methods known; the necessary data supplied, in order that the boundaries of Farms may be accurately described in Deeds; *Woods* lotted off distinctly and according to a regular plan; *Roads* laid out, &c., &c. Distinct and accurate Plans of Farms furnished, with the buildings thereon, of any size, and with a scale of feet attached, to accompany the Farm Book, so that the land may be laid out in a winter evening.

Areas warranted accurate within almost any degree of exactness, and the Variation of the Compass given, so that the lines can be run again. Apply to

HENRY D. THOREAU.

*near the Depot
Concord Mass*

1854

1854

→ July 9, Sunday: The [Reverend Thomas Starr King](#) of the Universalist Church in [Charlestown, Massachusetts](#) thanked [James Thomas Fields](#) for a “luscious copy” of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#).¹⁵³



TIMELINE OF WALDEN

The Reverend would review the gift for the [Christian Register](#):

A young man, eight years out of college, of fine scholarship and original genius, revives, in the midst of our bustling times, the life of an anchorite. By the side of a secluded pond in Concord, he builds with his own hands a hut which cost him twenty-eight dollars and twelve and a half cents; and there he lived two and a half years, “cultivating poverty,” because he “wanted to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and suck out all its marrow.”

Here he found that the labor of six weeks would support him through the year; and so he had long quiet days for reading, observation, and reflection, learning to free himself from all

153. James T. Fields. BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES AND PERSONAL SKETCHES. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 188, page 89.



1854

1854

the hollow customs and false shows of the world, and to pity those who by slavery to inherited property seemed to be doing incredible and astonishing penance.

In the account he gives us of his clothes, house, food, and furniture, we find mingled many acute and wise criticisms upon modern life; while in his descriptions of all living things around him, birds, fishes, squirrels, mice, insects, trees, flowers, weeds, it is evident that he had the sharpest eye and the quickest sympathy.

One remarkable chapter is given to the sounds that came to his ear, with suggestions, full of poetry and beauty, of the feelings which these sounds awakened. But nothing interested him so much as the Pond, whose name gives the title to his book. He describes it as a clear sheet of water, about a mile in circumference; he bathed in it every morning; its cool crystal depths were his well, ready dug; he sailed upon its bosom in summer, he noted many curious facts pertaining to its ice in winter; in short, it became to him a living thing, and he almost worshiped it.

But we must not describe the contents of this book any farther. Its opening pages may seem a little caustic and cynical; but it mellows apace, and playful humor and sparkling thought appear on almost every page....

Rarely have we enjoyed a book more, or been more grateful for many and rich suggestions...

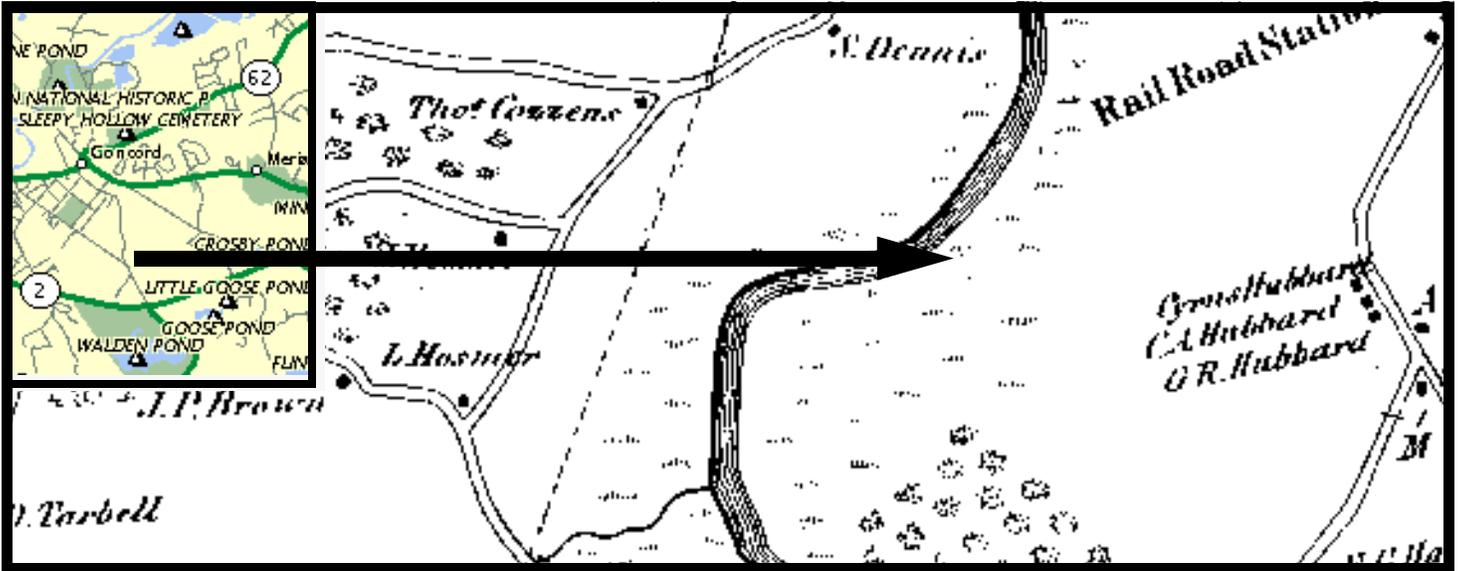
As we shut the book up, we ask ourselves, will the great lesson it teaches of the freedom and beauty of a simple life be heeded? Shall this struggle for wealth, and this bondage to the impedimenta of life, continue forever? Will the time ever come when it will be fashionable to be poor, that is, when men will be so smitten with a purpose to seek the true ends of life that they will not care about laying up riches on the earth?

Such times we know there have been, and thousands listened reverently to the reply, given in the last of these two lines, to the inquiry contained in the first; "O where is peace, for thou its path hast trod?" "In poverty, retirement, and with God." Who can say that it is impossible that such a time may come round, although the fashion of this world now runs with such a resistless current in the opposite direction.

1854

1854

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Hubbard's Bathing-Place (and from there to Fair Haven).



This day saw the first meeting of Concord's "Vigilance Committee," organized in the wake of [Anthony Burns](#)'s return to slavery earlier that year ([Thoreau](#) doesn't mention such a meeting in his journal entry for the day). Attendees were: Mary Merrick Brooks, Waldo and Lidian Emerson, [Cynthia Dunbar Thoreau](#) and [John Thoreau](#), Mary Rice, Charles Bowers, Joshua R. Brown, Nathan B. Stowe, Nathan Henry Warren, James Weir, Stearns Wheeler, and [William Whiting](#). Since, at this informal meeting, the attenders signed a pledge that they would do whatever was in their power to aid fleeing slaves, some incautious commentators have presumed that this meeting, and this new committee, had something to do with the [Underground Railroad](#)! What the attenders did, however, was merely to agree to sponsor a weekly series of public meetings on the topic of slavery. Emerson for instance agreed to invite the Reverend Theodore Parker to deliver an opening lecture. Of course they would honor their pledge, but of course, the Emersons couldn't be expected to invite persons of color to enter their home, so it wouldn't be within their power to interpret this pledge as including the aiding of any actual fleeing slave individuals. Surely such a pledge should be categorized as pious attitudinizing, or as righteous posturing, or as good public relations proselytizing, rather than as some incautious historians have supposed, the sort of Underground Railroad activism in which Cynthia and John and Henry Thoreau, were involved, for which they were putting their own persons and the assets of their family on the line. (I cannot presently cite any occasion on which any person of color ever was allowed to enter the Emerson home in Concord at any point during the 19th Century, before or after the Civil War, even as a servant. If a person is to be categorized as "vomit" on the basis of the color of his or her skin, would they then proceed to allow such a "vomit" person through the door — just because they were in need?)

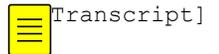
My guess would be that we can take a clue from the fact that [Thoreau](#) hadn't bothered to attend this meeting, and recognize from that, that actually this meeting didn't have one doggone thing to do with the [Underground Railroad](#). (If it did have something to do with such covert agendas — then this would be the very first instance of which we have any record of anyone ever putting anything having to do with that clandestine operation into incriminating ink on an incriminating piece of paper other than Bronson Alcott scribbling in a voluminous personal journal that he could be quite confident nobody but himself would trouble themselves to glance at.)

We need constantly to bear in mind that there were two very distinct types of white abolitionist, the non-racist abolitionist and the racist abolitionist. The non-racist abolitionists wanted to help improve the lives of black Americans and were opposed to race slavery because it harmed the lives of black Americans. The racist abolitionists didn't think there even ought to be such a thing as a black American, and were opposed to race

slavery because it created a place for black people in America, where they ought not to have any place at all. Likewise, there were two reasons for being in favor of the [Underground Railroad](#), because it helped black people who needed help, and because it helped remove black people from the local area by shuffling them off toward the north where there might or might not be a place for them and that didn't matter. (The genius of the abolition movement was to make strange bedfellows of these two very different sorts of personality, the non-racist Thoreau personality and the racist Emerson personality, enabling them to work together at a common task.) The point is that people like [Thoreau](#), who wanted to help improve people's lives, would sometimes be willing to place their own homes at risk of confiscation, but people like Emerson who just wanted weeds to grow somewhere else than in their own vicinity would never place their fine homes at risk of confiscation. That, to mix a metaphor, would be to risk throwing the clean white baby out with the dirty black bathwater!



July 9. Sunday.P.M. — Fair Haven Hill via Hubbard's Bathing-Place.



Vaccinium vacillans berry, four or five days; common blue huckleberry. Hubbard aster, some days. Is it not Tradescanti-like? Begins to blossom low in the grass. Hypericum corymbosum, not yet. Tansy by railroad causeway, a day or more. Chenopodium album.

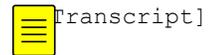
Examined a lanceolate thistle which has been pressed and laid by a year. The papers being taken off, its head sprang up more than an inch and the downy seeds began to fly off.



July 10, Monday: [Henry Thoreau](#) dug up one of the small tortoise eggs he had buried in his garden on June 15th. "The eye was remarkable, developed in the colorless and almost formless head, one or two large dark circles of the full diameter; a very distinct pulsation where the heart should be and along the neck was perceptible; but there seemed to be no body but a mass of yellow yolk." [Tortoise Eggs](#) In the afternoon Thoreau went to Hubbard's Close and to [Walden Pond](#).



July 10. Took up one of the small tortoise eggs which I had buried June 15th. The eye was remarkable, developed in the colorless and almost formless head, one or two large dark circles of the full diameter; a very distinct pulsation where the heart should be and along the neck was perceptible; but there seemed to be no body but a mass of yellow yolk.



P.M. — To Hubbard's Close, spotted pyrola, and Walden.

Gaultheria, apparently two or three days in open ground. Some choke-berry leaves in dry places are now red, some locust leaves and elm leaves yellow.

Lycopus sinuatus, a day or two. Platanthera laces, in one place, apparently a week; Stow's strawberry meadow ditch. Ludwigia palustris, same place, apparently, three or four days. Pycnanthemum lanceolatum, two or three days. Polygala cruciata, Hubbard's Close, two or three days. I find that most of the wild gooseberries are dried up and blackened. Solidago stricta, apparently to-morrow or next day. Northern wild red cherry ripe apparently some, days. Low blackberry. A sericocarpus (?) in Poorhouse Meadow with linear, or narrowly-spatulate, entire, blunt leaves.

The following are the birds I chanced to hear in this walk (did not attend much): The seringos on fences, link of bobolink, crow, oven-bird, tanager, chewink, huckleberry-bird (pretty often and loud), flicker cackle, wood thrush, robin (?), before 3 P.M.; then red-eye, veery trill, catbird rigmarole, etc., etc.

This is what I think about birds now generally: See a few hawks about.

Have not heard owls lately, not walking at night.

Crows are more noisy, probably anxious about young.

Hear phoebe note of chickadee occasionally; otherwise inobvious.

Partridge, young one third grown.

Lark not very common, but sings still.

Have not beard conqueree of blackbird for about a month, methinks. [Heard one conqueree July 11th.

Chattering flocks now of females and young over river.]

Robin still sings, and in morning; song sparrow and bay-wing.

See no downy woodpeckers nor nuthatches.

Crow blackbirds occasionally chatter.



1854

Hear flicker rarely.
Rush sparrow, common and loud.
Saw a snipe within two or three days. [And July 11th.]
Woodcock seen within two or three days.
Think I have heard pine warbler within a week.
Cuckoo and quail from time to time.
Barnswallow, bankswallow, etc., numerous with their young for a week or two.
I hear the plaintive note of young bluebirds.
Chip-sparrow in morning.
Purple finch about and sings.
Martin lively.
Warbling vireo still, and wood thrush, and red-eye, and tanager, all at midday.
Catbird's rigmarole still.
Chewink sings; and veery trill from out shade.
Whip-poor-will at evening.
Summer yellowbird and yellow-throat rarely..
Goldfinch oftener twitters over.
Oven-bird still.
Evergreen-forest note, I think, still.
Night-warbler of late.
Hardly a full bobolink.
Kingbird lively.
Cherry-bird commonly heard.
Think I saw turtle dove within a day or two.
The singing birds at present are: —
Villageous: Robin, chip-bird, warbling vireo, swallows.
Rural: Song sparrow, seringos, flicker, kingbird, goldfinch, link of bobolink, cherry-bird.
Sylvan: Red-eye, tanager, wood thrush, chewink, veery, oven-bird, — all even at midday. Catbird full strain, whip-poor-will, crows.

1854

 July 11, Tuesday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) took his boat to Fair Haven.

"Up Assabet" is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau's two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.
 — [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 10



[Ellen Channing](#) recorded that subsequent to her separation from [Ellery Channing](#) due to her fear of him in his mental condition ("Oh Wentworth I am really **afraid of him**") and her resettlement with their children in Dorchester, Massachusetts, the forlorn husband had been writing letters replete with affectionate regard:

He really persuades himself that he has been a fond & devoted father.

SPLITSVILLE		
1851	Edwin Forrest	Catherine Sinclair
1852	Ellery Channing	Ellen Kilshaw Fuller Channing
1853	Lola Montez	Patrick Purdy Hull

Commodore Matthew Perry signed an agreement with the "King of the Lew Chew (Ryukyu) Islands" recognizing the islands as independent of [Japan](#) and [China](#) and opening them to western trade.

An armed [nativist](#) mob attacked the [Irish](#) district of Lawrence, Massachusetts.

William T. Sherman completed the construction of a bank building for Lucas, Turner & Company at 800 Montgomery Street in San Francisco.

CALIFORNIA



July 11. Tuesday. P.M. — By boat to Fair Haven.

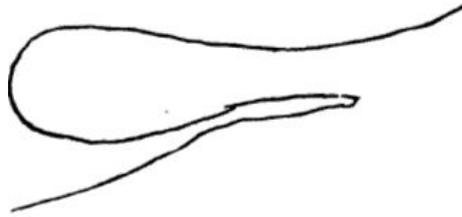
White gum, probably about the 5th (not the 3d).

Pontederia now makes a handsome show. The female red-wings and their young now fly in small chattering flocks over the river. The smallest-flowered hypericum, several days; have I mentioned it? Purple utricularia well out since the 5th; say 7th. The black high blueberries are a trifle earlier, small and acid. The *Rosa lucida* still common. *Utricularia cornuta* at Fair Haven, apparently two days. The water-target is common off this shore. *Hypericum corymbosum* in front of Lee's Cliff, a day or two. The drought is very obvious on these rocks now, which are so verdurous in spring.

The ivy (*Toxicodendron*), *Arenaria serpyllifolia*, etc., are quite sere and brown. Pennyroyal, thimble-berries, and ferns also are withering. Some huckleberries quite as if dried on a pan. Ampelopsis out three or four days on the rock. Parietaria, apparently two or three days against rock. Handsome now from these rocks the bay (on

 Transcript]

the south side of Fair Haven at the inlet of river), with its spit of shining pads. *Lobelia inflata*, a day or more.



Veronica serpyllifolia about done. There is much large bur-reed leaves afloat and lodged in the middle of the river at Clamshell Bend. Did the wind tear it up? I heard Conant's cradle cronching the rye behind the fringe of bushes in the Indian field. Reaping begun. Sun set when I was off Nut Meadow. A straight edge of massy cloud had advanced from the south-southeast and now stretched overhead from west-southwest to east-northeast, and after sunset reflected a soft fawn-colored (?) light on the landscape, lighting up with harmonious light the dry parched and shorn hillsides, the soft, mellow, fawn-colored light seeming to come from the earth itself.

Read  [Henry Thoreau's Journal for July 1854 \(æf. 36-37\) in the 1906 version](#) 

 July 12, Wednesday: [George Eastman](#) was born in Waterville, New York.

In the afternoon our birthday boy went to Dodge's Brook.

[Frederick Douglass](#) was rising to prominence in a world that was excited and anxious about new inventions such as railroad trains and telegraph wires, but was fully aware that the ends to which science could be used were forever bound up with the moral choices of its practitioners. "It is the province of prejudice to blind; and scientific writers, not less than others, write to please, as well as to instruct, and even unconsciously to themselves, (sometimes,) sacrifice what is true to what is popular," he said during a speech to the [Philozetian Society of Western Reserve College](#) in Hudson, Ohio, "[The Claims of the Negro, Ethnologically Considered: an address before the literary societies of Western Reserve College, at commencement, by Frederick Douglass, July 12, 1854](#)," "Fashion is not confined to dress; but extends to philosophy as well — and it is fashionable now, in our land, to exaggerate the differences between the Negro and the European." In that lecture he attacked one of the most prominent scientific fields of the era, ethnology, sometimes then deemed the "science of race." The ethnologists of that day were forever scientifically discovering stuff that they were proclaiming to be scientifically true, that today we would merely laugh at as pseudoscientific prejudicial nonsense. The most accomplished professors engaged in this and the general public of course ate it up — except in the case of persons such as Douglass who were privileged to see right through it.



July 12. P.M. — To Dodge's Brook.

The early cotton-grass is now about gone from Hubbard's Close. With this month began the reign of river-weeds obstructing the stream. Potamogetons — & heart-leaves, etc., now for a long time covered with countless mosquito cases (?). They catch my oars and retard the boat. A rail will be detained a month by them in mid-stream, and tortoises (*Sternotherus* or *Emys picta*), four or five or more in a row, lie along it. Many young learn (r) swallows (they have a darker crescent on the breast and long tail-feathers not grown) sit in flocks on the bared dead willows over the water and let me float within four or five feet. Birds do not distinguish a man sitting in a boat. I see a green bittern wading in a shallow muddy place, with an awkward teetering, fluttering pace. Button-bush XXX. Observed a pickerel in the Assabet, about a foot long, headed upstream, quasi-transparent (such its color), with darker and lighter parts contrasted, very still while I float quite near. There is a constant motion of the pectoral fins and also a waving motion of the ventrals, apparently to resist the stream, and a slight waving of the anal, apparently to preserve its direction. It darted off at last by a strong sculling motion of its tail. See white maple leaves floating bottom up, covered with feathery aphides. A liliun Canadense (at Dodge Brook corner by road), approaching Superbum, four and a half feet high, with a

 [transcript]

whorl of four flowers, and two more above, somewhat pyramidal, and petals recurved.



 July 13, Thursday: At 2PM [Henry Thoreau](#) went along the Fitchburg Railroad tracks and then to Bare or Pine Hill in Lincoln (Gleason J9).

Abbas I, Turkish Viceroy of [Egypt](#), was murdered by 2 of his slaves. He was succeeded by Mohammed Said.

Having been sent by [President Franklin Pierce](#) to demand reparations from the town of San Juan del Norte, Nicaragua for an alleged slight of the US Minister to that country, the USS *Cyane* began bombarding the town. Over the course of 7 hours they fired over 200 rounds into San Juan, which consisted of about 50-60 thatched huts. At the end of the bombardment, [U.S. Marines](#) were sent ashore. They looted what they could find, including a large cache of liquor, and burned the rest. Merchants of 6 countries demand \$2,000,000 compensation for their destroyed goods, which of course would never be paid.

In San Francisco, the Lady Washington Engine Company changed its name to Manhattan Engine Company No. 2.

CALIFORNIA



July 13. Thursday. 2 P.M. — To Bare Hill, Lincoln, by railroad.
 Have heard a faint locust-like sound from crickets a week or two. In the midst of July heat and drought. Tho season is trivial as noon. I hear the hot-weather and noonday birds, red-eye, tanager, wood pewee, etc. Plants are curled and withered. The leaves dry, ripe like the berries. The point of a lower leaf of a smooth sumach is scarlet, and some geranium leaves.
 Many birch leaves are yellow and falling. Leaves are very much eaten (June is the time to collect perfect ones); of some kinds hard to find a perfect specimen, unless of a firm texture. The *Pyrus arbutifolia* is very thick and glossy dark green. The tupelo leaf is pretty firm and perfect, not so glossy, more or less winding, and the shoots are zigzag or winding. *Polygonum Hydropiper* at Baker Swamp. Thoroughwort, tomorrow or next day. *Scutellaria lateriflora*, some days at least. The chestnuts, now in full bloom, are conspicuous from the hills (Bare Hill), like a yellowish or creamy-tinged rime.
Vaccinium vacillans on Bare Hill ripe enough to pick, now considerably in advance of huckleberries; sweeter than last and grow in dense clusters. The *V. Pennsylvanicum* is soft and rather thin and tasteless, mountain andspring like, with its fine light-blue bloom, very handsome, simple and ambrosial. This *vacillans* is more earthy, like solid food. Many of the huckleberries here on the hilltop have dried black and shrivelled before ripening.
 Boys go after the cows now about 5.30 o'clock.
 Decodon not distinctly flower-budded yet. Gnaphalium (pearly) well out, say yesterday. If there is an interregnum in the flowers, it is when berries begin.
 Scent the bruised leaves of the fragrant goldenrod along the Lincoln road now. What I have called *Solidago arguta* at Walden (*vide* radical leaves), also an aster, probably *Diplopappus utnbellatus*, at Baker Swamp, will open in a few days.

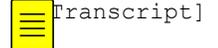
 [Transcript]

 July 14, Friday: The Sultan of Muscat ceded the Kuria Muria Islands to Great Britain.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went over Nawshawtuct or Lee's Hill (Gleason F6) to James P. Brown's Pond-Hole or Cold Pool (Gleason H4).



July 14. Friday. Awake to day of gentle rain, very much needed; none to speak of for nearly a month, methinks. The cooler and stiller day has a valuable effect on my spirits.
 P. M. — Over the Hill to Brown's watering-place.
 It holds up from time [to time], and then a fine, misty rain falls. It lies on the fine reddish tops of some grasses, thick and whitish like morning cobwebs. The stillness is very soothing. This is a summer rain.
 The earth is being bedewed. There is no storm or violence to it. Health is a sound relation to nature.
 Anychia plenty by the watering-place (with the amphicarp[ae]a), but calyx apparently not expanded. Amphicarp[ae]a, not yet. Penthorum, three or four days.
 Xyris, apparently three or four days in meadow close by. Hardhack, two or three days. A hedyotis still.
 Elodea to-morrow. The red capsules of the *Hypericum ellipticum*, here and there. This one of the fall-ward phenomena in still rainy days.

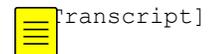


July 15, Saturday: Russian forces defeated the Turks on the Cholok River and forced them back to Batum (Batumi).

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) took the [Sudbury River](#) to Hubbard's Bridge (Gleason H6) causeway.



July 15. Saturday P.M. — To Hubbard's Bridge causeway [via](#) river.
 Rained still in forenoon; now cloudy. Fields comparatively deserted to-day and yesterday. Hay stands cocked in them on all sides. Some, being shorn, are clear for the walker. It is but a short time that he has to dodge the haymakers. This cooler, still, cloudy weather after the rain is very autumnal and restorative to our spirits. The robin sings still, but the gold-finch twitters over oftener, and I hear the [link link](#) finch of the bobolink (one perfect strain!), and the crickets creak more as in the fall. All these sounds dispose our minds to serenity. Perhaps the mosquitoes are most troublesome such days in the woods, if it is warm enough. We seem to be passing, or to have passed, a dividing line between spring and autumn, and begin to descend the long slope toward winter. On the shady side of the hill I go along Hubbard's walls toward the bathing-place, stepping high to keep my feet as dry as may be. All is stillness in the fields. The calamint (*Pycnanthemum muticum*), standing by the wall with its hoary upper leaves, full of light even this cloudy day and reminding of the fragrance which I know so well, is an agreeable sight. I need not smell it; it is a balm to my mind to remember its fragrance.
 I hear a bay-wing on the wall near by, sound[ing] far away, — a fainter song sparrow strain, somewhat. I see its open mouth and quivering throat, yet can hardly believe the seemingly distant strain proceeds from it, [yaw yaw, twee twee, twitter twitter, te twee twe tw tw tw](#), and so ends with a short and rapid trill.
 Again I am attracted by the Clamshell reach of the river, running east and west, as seen from Hubbard's fields, now beginning to be smoothed as in the fall. First, next the meadow, is the broad dark-green rank of pickerel-weeds, etc., etc. (polygonum, etc.), then the light-reflecting edging of pads, and then the smooth, still, cloud-reflecting water. My thoughts are driven inward, even as clouds and trees are reflected in the still, smooth water. There is an inwardness even in the mosquitoes' hum, while I am picking blueberries in the dank wood.
 Rhexia near the *Rhus copallina*, apparently yesterday.
 The flicker still, and the veery full, and Maryland yellow-throat, and nuthatch. Many birds begin to fly in small flocks like grown-up broods. Green grapes and cranberries also remind me of the advancing season. The former are as large as ripe cranberries, the latter as big as peas, though the vines are still full of blossoms. Cvmbidiums are quite fresh and pogonias linger still. *Drosera rotundifolia*, end of Hubbard's bank wall, Corner road, some days, perhaps a fortnight, for it was nearly out on the 2d, its lower flowers first, and now dry.
 The stems and leaves of various asters and goldenrods, which ere long will reign along the way, begin to be conspicuous. *Ameranthus hybridus*, several days at least. It has come out quite fair and warm.
 There many butterflies, yellow and red, about the *Asclepias incarnata* now.



 July 16, Sunday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked along the Fitchburg Railroad tracks and then to Saw Mill Brook (Gleason G9).

In New-York, Elizabeth Jennings (who would later add the married name Graham) and a friend Sarah Adams boarded the 3d Avenue streetcar on their way to church. The conductor advised these two women of color that they needed to get off, since during that period people of color were not allowed to ride should any white passenger object. When Jennings refused, the conductor attempted to eject her physically, but she held onto a window ledge and then clutched the conductor's jacket. Only after a police officer joined in the effort was she shoved into the street. She was sore and injured and her Sunday attire was in tatters. She would write about this and her letter would be published by both Frederick Douglass and Horace Greeley — she described how the police officer “without listening to anything I had to say thrust me out and tauntingly told me to get redress if I could.” Her fellow church members would stage a protest the following day. She would file a lawsuit against the Third Avenue Railway Company, using a young Chester A. Arthur as her attorney, and would be awarded \$225 in damages.



July 16. Sunday. A thick fog began last night and lasts till late this morning; first of the kind, methinks.

 [transcript]

P.M. — Via railroad and pond to Saw Mill Brook.

Many yellow butterflies and red on clover and yarrow.

Is it the yellow-winged or Savannah sparrow with yellow alternating with dark streaks on throat, as well as yellow over eye, reddish flesh-colored legs, and two light bars on wings? *Solidago nemoralis* yesterday.

Woodcock by side of Walden in woods. Methinks there were most devil's-needles a month ago. *Lycopus Virginicus* by Target Meadow, a day or two; maybe as long as the other elsewhere. *Ludwigia palustris* [^Box kind] grows there. *Goodyera repens* to-morrow. *Polygala verticillata*, apparently some days. The *Rhus Toxicodendron* leaves are turned clear light yellow in some places, in others, many dried and brown. *Mimulus ringens* at Saw Mill Brook, apparently two days. The large (?) circ[ae]a (it is the *lutetiana*, though the flowers are white), apparently two or three days. *Trientalis*, ash-colored fruit. After the late rains and last night's fog, it is somewhat dog-dayish, and there is a damp, earthy, mildewy scent to the ground in wood-paths.

Aralia nudicaulis berries well ripe. The *Polygala sanguinea* heads in the grass look like sugar-plums.



 July 17, Monday: In San Francisco, the Calvary Presbyterian Church was organized.

CALIFORNIA

As Madrid rose in revolt, Queen Isabella dismissed the liberal prime minister Luis José Sartorius Tapia, conde de San Luis and appointed the Fernando Fernández de Córdoba y Valcárcel (before this point the districts of Barcelona, Valencia, St. Sebastian, and Valladolid had already declared against the government).

At 11 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) went up the [Sudbury River](#) to Fair Haven Bay (Gleason J7).



July 17. Monday. Last night and this morning another thick dogdayish fog. I find my chamber full this morning. It lasts till 9 n. n.

 [transcript]

11 A.M. — By river to Fair Haven.

I go to observe the lilies. I see a rail lodged in the weeds with seven tortoises on it, another with ten, another

with eleven, all in a row sunning now at mid-day, hot as it is. They are mostly the painted tortoise. Apparently no weather is too hot for them thus to bask in the sun. The pontederia is in its prime, alive with butterflies, yellow and others. I see its tall blue spikes reflected beneath the edge of the pads on each side, pointing down to a heaven beneath as well as above. Earth appears but a thin crust or pellicle. The river was at its lowest thus far probably on the 31th. The rains succeeding the drought have now raised it a little, and this forenoon, though a little air is stirring, the water is smooth and full of reflections here and there, as if there had been oil in those rains, which smoothed it. In that hottest and driest weather about the 4th, there was yet considerable air stirring. Methinks that about this time the waters begin to be more glassy, dark and smooth. The cuckoo cows at midday. At Purple Utricularia Shore, there are, within a circle of four or five rods' diameter, ninety-two lilies fairly open and about half a dozen which appear to have already partly closed. I have seen them far more numerous. I watch them for an hour and a half.

At 11.4592 fairly open
 At 12 ...88
 At 12.15 ...75
 At 12.30 ...46
 At 12.45 ...26
 At 1 ...4 which are more or less stale

By about 1.30 they are all shut up, and no petal is to be seen up and down the river unless a lily is broken off. You may therefore say that they shut up between 11.30 and 1.30, though almost all between 12 and 1. I think that I could tell when it was 12 o'clock within half an hour by the lilies. One is about an hour about it. The petals gradually draw together, and the sepals raise themselves out of the water and follow. They do not shut up so tight but that a very little white appears at the apex. Sometimes a sepal is held back by a pad or other weed, leaving one side bare. Many fall over on their sides more or less, but none withdraw under water as some have said. The lilies reach from the water's edge, where they are raised two or three inches above the surface, out five or six rods to where the water is four feet deep, and there succeed the small yellow lily. Meanwhile large yellowish devil's-needles, coupled, are flying about and repeatedly dipping their tails in the water. Why are not all the white lily pads red beneath? On the muddy bottom, under the pads and between their stems, are countless red bugs crawling about. The birds are quite lively at this hour of noon,—therobin, red-eye, wood pewee, martins, and kingbirds, etc. The cuckoo [**Black-billed Cuckoo** █ *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*] is a very neat, slender, and graceful bird. It belongs to the nobility of birds. It is elegant. Here and there a phalanx of bluish-green large bulrushes rises near the shore, and all along a troop of pontederias, fronted and often surrounded by a testudo of pads. I feel an intense heat reflected from the surface of the pads. The rippled parts of the stream contrast with the dark smooth portions. They are separated as by an invisible barrier, yet, when I paddle into the smoothness, I feel the breeze the same. I see where a *Juncus militaris* has grown up through a white lily pad and stands two feet above it. Its hard, sharp point pierced it, instead of lifting it off the water. It reminds me of the Saladin's cutting a silk handkerchief in the air with his cimetar. This continual snapping of the pads which I hear appears to be made underneath and may be produced by minnows darting at the insects which feed on them.



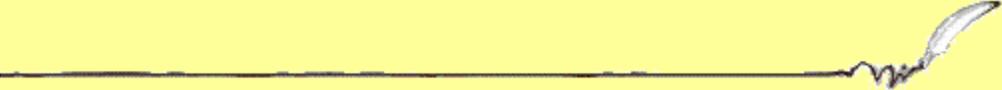
At Cardinal Shore, *Lobelia cardinalis* a day or more. *Pycnanthenauna incanum*, apparently several days. It also is hoary at top. Staghorn sumach in fruit. The fall of hellebore and cabbage has begun. The former lies along, yellow and black and decaying. The stinging spotted flies are very troublesome now. They settle in the hollows of the face, and pester us like imps. The clams lie on their edges or ends like buds or bulbs crowded together. *Desmodium acuminatuna* at Conant Orchard Grove, perhaps two or three days. One four feet high, its leaves making a flat cricket, a foot from the ground. Agrimony here almost done. *Diplopappus cornifolius*, a day or more. I was surprised by the loud humming of bees, etc., etc., in the bass tree; thought it was a wind rising at first. Methinks none of our trees attract so many. I am surprised to see crossing my course in middle of Fair Haven Pond great yellowish devil's-needles, flying from shore to shore, from Island to Baker's Farm and back, about a foot above the water, some against a head wind; also yellow butterflies; suggesting that these insects see the distant shore and resolve to visit it. In fact, they move much faster than I can toward it, yet as if they were conscious that they were on a journey, flying for the most part straight forward. It shows more enterprise and a wider range than I had suspected. It looks very bold. If devil's-needles cross Fair haven, then man may cross the Atlantic. Seeing him, I am reminded of Horace's lines about the breast of triple brass. Pasture thistle on Lee's Cliff, three or four days. Woodbine on rocks begun to redden there. I start two green bitterns in different places amid the weeds by the shore. In Conant's meadow just behind Wheeler's, the smaller fringed orchis not quite reached by the mowers. It may have been out four or five days. It is a darker purple for being so exposed. None yet opening in the shade. *Aralia racemosa* at Spring a short time. The sarothra tomorrow. The late rose not fairly begun along the river, now when *lucida* is leaving off.



July 18, Tuesday: Ángel de Saavedra y Ramírez de Baquedano, duque de Rivas replaced Fernando Fernández de Córdoba y Valcárcel as Prime Minister of Spain.

At 5 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) went up the Turnpike. In the afternoon he went by boat on the [Assabet River](#) to [Samuel Barrett](#)'s (Gleason 6/E5), and the old Wheeler house.

"Up Assabet" is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau's two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.
 — [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 10




July 18. Tuesday. 5 P.M. — Up Turnpike.

A haymaking morning fog, through and above which the trees are glorious in the sun. The elm leaves appear to be drinking the moisture along the dusty, debauched highway; some of them yellowing. Whence these fogs and this increase of moisture in the air? The kingbird, song sparrows, and quail are lively. The centaurea, not yet. I think I have not heard a night-warbler for a fortnight. *Erigeron Canadensis*. *Erigeron strigosus* I must call the other.



Transcript]

P.M. — To Sam Barrett's by boat, and old Wheeler house.

A hot midsummer day with a sultry mistiness in the air and shadows on land and water beginning to have a peculiar distinctness and solidity. The river, smooth and still, with a deepened shade of the elms on it, like midnight suddenly revealed, its bed-curtains shoved aside, has a sultry languid look. The atmosphere now imparts a bluish or glaucous tinge to the distant trees. A certain debauched look, as the highway in the morning. This a crisis in the season. After this the foliage of some trees is almost black at a distance.

I do not know why the water should be so remarkably clear and the sun shine through to the bottom of the river, making it so plain. Methinks the air is not clearer nor the sun brighter, yet the bottom is unusually distinct and obvious in the sun. There seems to be no concealment for the fishes. On all sides, as I float along, the recesses of the water and the bottom are unusually revealed, and I see the fishes and weeds and shells.

I look down into the sunny water. In midsummer, when its foliage is thickest and stems most concealed, the *Salix Purshiana* is most beautiful. Its leafy sails are now all set, concealing its spars, and it appears to float in light masses buoyantly on the water.

Methinks the asters and goldenrods begin, like the early ripening leaves, with midsummer heats. Now look out for these children of the sun, when already the fall of some of the very earliest spring flowers has commenced. The Island is now dry and shows few flowers. Where I looked for early spring flowers I do not look for midsummer ones. Such places are now parched and withering. Blue vervain, apparently a day; one circle is open a little below the top. As I go along the Joe Smith road, I see some of the lower leaves of the white vervain turned a faint, mulberry-color. Brooks has let out some of his pigeons [American Passenger Pigeons  *Ectopistes migratorius*], which stay about the stands or perches to bait others. Wild ones nest in his woods quite often. He begins to catch them the middle of August.

I found so many berries on that rocky road, between and about the careless farmers' houses and walls, that the soil seemed more fertile than where I live. Every bush and bramble bears its fruit; the sides of the road are a fruit garden; blackberries, huckleberries, thimble-berries, fresh and abundant, no signs of drought; all fruits in abundance; the earth teems. What are the virtues of the inhabitants that they are thus blessed? Do the rocks hold moisture, or are there no fingers to pluck them? I seem to have wandered into a land of greater fertility, some up-country Eden. Are not these the delectable hills? It is a land flowing with milk and honey. Great shining blackberries peep out at me from under the leaves upon the rocks. There the herbage never withers. There are abundant dews.

Now comes the dews and fogs to save the berries and the transplanted trees.

Elecampane will apparently open in two or three days; begins to show some yellow. Choke-cherry, though not dark. [^Say a week later; ate some black, August 8th.] By the elecampane and the Wheeler house, to my great

surprise growing abundantly in the road, the *Monarda fistulosa*, apparently a week at least, — three or more feet high with a few heads containing a whorl of large, very showy crimson flowers, with crimsoned bracts in whorls beneath, with a balm or summer savory or sweet marjoram fragrance. These: things out of the heavenward northwest. Perhaps it is Wood's variety *mollis*. It cannot be the *didyma*, for the corolla is not more than one and three eighths inches long.

Two common milkweeds I do not identify. First apparently *Asclepias Syriaca* of Linn[ae]us and Bigelow; nectaries "with in oblique ridge on each side the fissure;" horns long; with a slender point as high as the nectaries; leaves gradually acute. It appears to be *A. Cornuti* of Gray, but what does he mean by leaves "with a slight point"? Can He refer to the mucronate-leaved kind? Apparently *A. Cornuti* of Wood, but in his plate he gives the short, stout, recurved horn of the mucronate kind. Vide if the heads are spinous, as *A. Cornuti*.

Then there is a common [kind] with many thick, elliptical, short-petioled leaves (up railroad, June 25); mucronated; stout-stemmed. Is it *purpurascens* of Bigelow? It is not dark-purple. Not *purpurascens* of Gray, ~when he says that the pedicels are only about twice the length of the divisions of the corolla and that only the lower leaves are mucronate. Are the pods smooth? [^The pods have soft spinous projections, and it must be *A. Cornuti* of Gray (July 30th).The first kind, opposite the monarda, has no spinous projections.]

This side the sunflower house, against woods, in road, just beyond large pine, *Hedyotis longifolia*, a good while tufted, but without stri[ae]. in throat, many-flowered.

We have very few bass trees in Concord, but walk near them at this season and they will be betrayed, though several rods off, by the wonderful susurrus of the bees, etc., which their flowers attract. It is worth going a long way to hear. I was warned that I was passing one in two instances on the river, — the only two I passed, — by this remarkable sound. At a little distance [it] is like the sound of a waterfall or of the cars; close at hand like a factory full of looms.

They were chiefly bumblebees, and the great globose tree was all alive with them. I heard the murmur distinctly fifteen rods off. You will know if you pass within a few rods of a bass tree at this season in my part of the town, by this loud murmur, like a waterfall, which proceeds from it.

During the last decade of his life, Thoreau visited his rivers more than twice as often as the upland woods and lakes that he is far better known for writing about.
 — Professor Robert M. Thorson, THE BOATMAN, page 3



 July 19, Wednesday: Henry Thoreau walked to Beck Stow's Swamp (Gleason E9) and to Walden Pond.

Joaquín Baldomero Fernández Espartero, duque de la Victoria replaced Ángel de Saavedra y Ramírez de Baquedano, duque de Rivas as Prime Minister of Spain.



July 19. P.M. — To Beck Stow's and Walden.

Alisma, apparently a day or more. Polygonum Careyi to-morrow. In Moore's Swamp I pluck cool, though not very sweet, large red raspberries in the shade, making themselves dense thickets. Wild holly berries, a day or two. The throttled sound of a cuckoo from out the shade of a grove. How lustily the poison-dogwood grows, - five feet from the ground this year and still growing, covered with a rich glaucous bloom! The more smothering, furnace-like heats are beginning, and the locust days. Crotalaria's but few, apparently a day or two only. The tall, wand-like, large-leaved *Desmodium Canadense*, some days at least in the dry, rough sunflower field. Black

 Transcript]

choke-berry, several days. High blueberries scarce, but a few half an inch or more in diameter. Apparently a catbird's nest in a shrub oak, lined with root-fibres, with three green-blue eggs. Erigeron annuus perhaps fifteen rods or more beyond the Hawthorn Bridge on right hand.

— a new plant, — probably last month. Thinner leaves than the strigosus. The white cotton-grass now (and how long?) at Beck Stow's appears to be the Eriophorum gracile (?). I see no rusty ones. In the maple swamp at Hubbard's Close, the great cinnamon ferns are very handsome now in tufts, falling over in handsome curves on every side, — a rank undergrowth about three feet high, completely hiding the dead leaves. Some are a foot wide and raised up six feet long. Clintonia berries in a day or two. I am surprised to see at Walden a single Aster patens with a dozen flowers fully open a day or more. Smooth sumach berries. The anychia shows some small pods; probably flowered about July 1st. Lechea minor shows stamens.

A wood thrush to-night. Veery within two or three days.



July 20, Thursday: A political convention at Worcester was attended by [George Frisbie Hoar](#), again with the objective of fusing the Free Soilers and the more dissident members of the Whig party of Massachusetts, and again few Whigs attended.



July 20. A very hot day, a bathing day. Warm days about this.



Transcript]

P.M. — To Hubbard Bath.

That long, narrow sparganium, which is perhaps the smaller one, growing long in our river, stands thick, with the heart-leaf and potamogeton, in the middle in shallow places. Methinks there begins to be a bluish scum on the water at this season, somewhat stagnant-looking. This may be the oil which smooths it. The large potamogeton in midstream is ten feet long.

There is an immense quantity of dams there in the middle where it is four feet deep, I dived and took up four large ones in one hand at the first grip. Now and for several days I have seen, on the leaves of the red and black oaks, minute caterpillars feeding, with very small pearly, dewdrop-like ova near them partly hatched. Skunk-cabbage fruit some days; cut by the mowers.

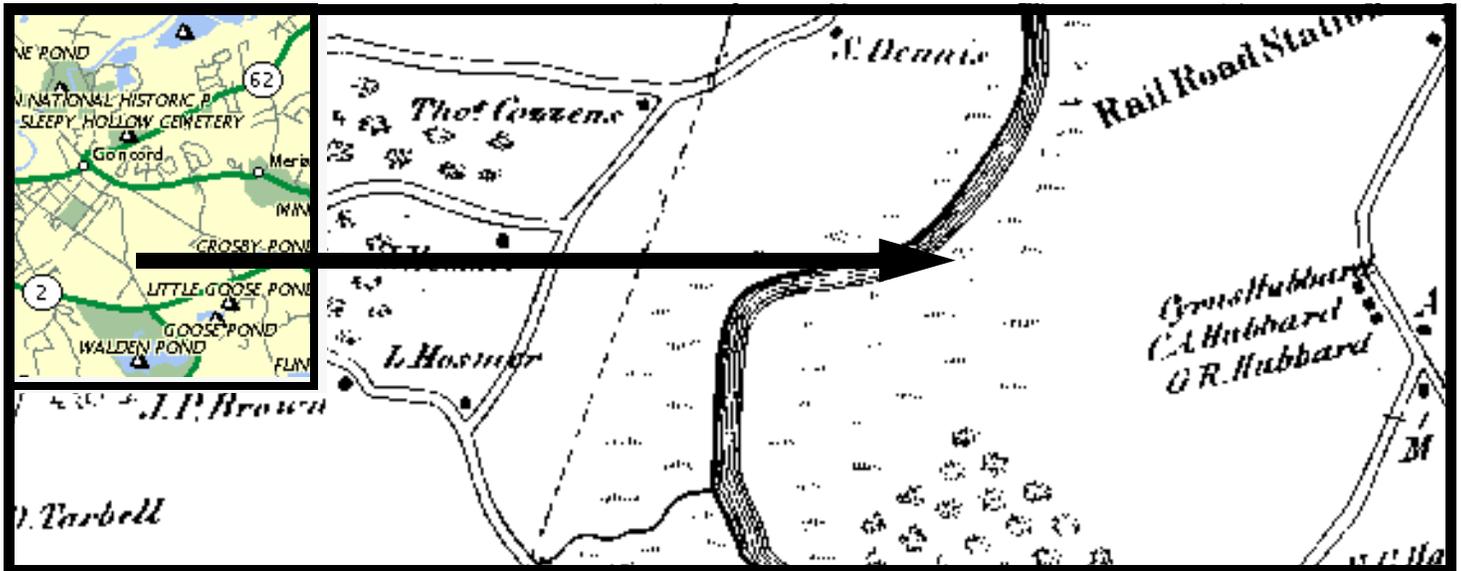
A muttering thunder-cloud in northwest gradually rising and with its advanced guard hiding in the sun and now and then darting forked lightning. The wind rising ominously also drives me home again. At length down it comes upon the thirsty herbage, beating down the leaves with grateful, tender violence and slightly cooling the air; but all the thunder and lightning was in its van. How soon it swept over and we saw the flash in the southeast! Corn in blossom these days.

1854

1854



July 20, Thursday: This was a very hot day, a bathing day, and in the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Hubbard's Bath:

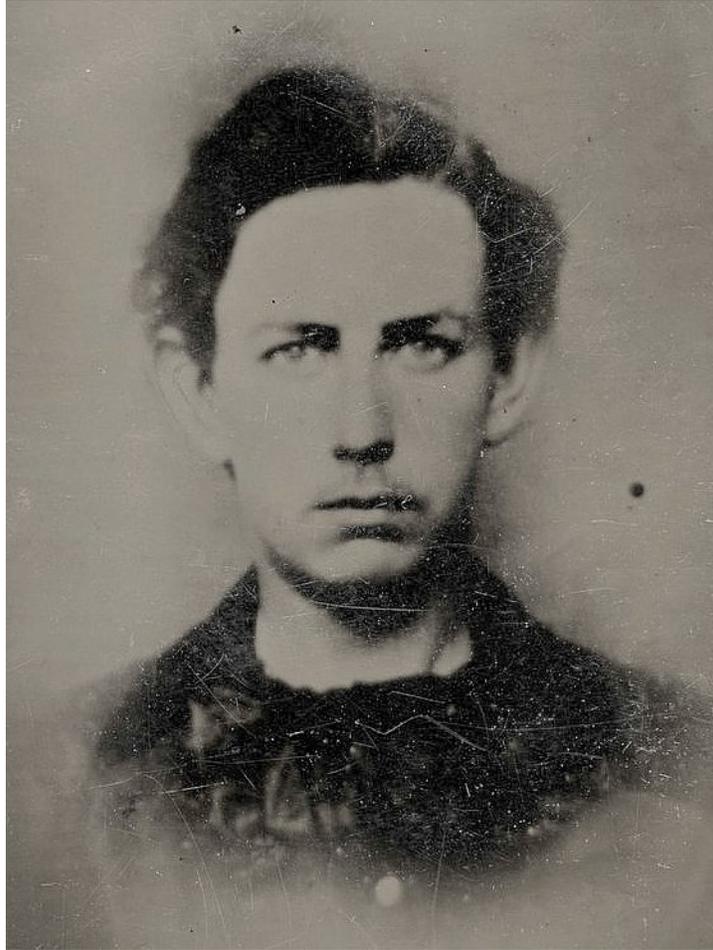


Meanwhile, on this day, at [Harvard University](#), [Moncure Daniel Conway](#) was being graduated from the [Divinity School](#), and ordained. However, for good and sufficient reason his classmate [William H. Leeman](#) of

1854

1854

Hallowell, Maine, was not graduating with him:



THEOLOGY SCHOOLS

This fellow had drunk some illicit alcohol that Conway had smuggled onto campus, and then refilled Conway's illicit bottles with water — and so the indignant Conway had turned him in to the college administration.

Refused graduation on grounds of moral turpitude, [William H. Leeman](#) was warned to make no attempt to preach. He would be dropping out of sight, evidently in a great deal of anguish. At a later point he will reappear, or his mutilated body will reappear — salvaged from the Potomac River after being used for target practice by passing drunken Virginians, and, barely recognizable, thrown onto the common pit at [Harpers Ferry](#) at midnight.¹⁵⁴ 

(From the manner in which this story appears in Conway's reliably self-promotional [autobiography](#), we can be quite confident that he took no direct part in any of these proceedings and that here he was merely recounting events of which someone else had informed him.)

While I loved Theodore Parker and honoured him as the standard-bearer of religious liberty, and derived instruction from his discourses, I received no important aid from his philosophy or his theology. Indeed, none of our class in the [Harvard Divinity School](#) adopted "Parkerism" but we all felt -and I suspect our professors felt- that Parker was defending our right to enter on an unfettered ministry. We unanimously resolved to ask him to give the sermon at our graduation. When one or two of us conveyed to Parker this invitation, we were received in his library, where he sat at his desk. The conspicuous musket borne by his grandfather at Lexington was in curious contrast with the tenderness which this captain in a nobler revolution displayed for his antagonists. He was moved by our invitation, and after some moments of silence said, "I should rejoice to do it; but the professors have already been embarrassed at the reputation of your class for radicalism, and this would embarrass them further; get some one less notorious." After some discussion we took his advice, and the address was given by Rev. Dr. Furness of Philadelphia. After us came a class which without consulting Parker invited him to deliver their address. The Faculty having refused consent, and the young men to elect another, the address that year was an eloquent silence.

THEODORE PARKER
WILLIAM HENRY FURNESS

154. (Nothing was done to [Moncure Daniel Conway](#) for having merely broken the rules, rules being of course made to be broken. :-) See pages 87-8 and 240-1 of d'Entremont, where this account of William Leeman was put together for the first time.

1854

1854



July 21, Friday: A prepublication notice for [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) was on the first page of the Boston [Transcript](#): “Ticknor and Fields have allowed us to read the proof sheets of one of the most remarkable books for originality of thought and beauty of style yet written in our day. Walden, or Life in the Woods, by Henry D. Thoreau, will attract as much attention and be as widely read as if it were a new book by Hawthorne or Emerson.”

[TIMELINE OF WALDEN](#)

[Henry Thoreau](#)’s “[SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS](#)” appeared in Garrison’s [The Liberator](#) (Volume 24, Number 29).It was so hot in [Concord](#) that it was almost impossible to work outdoors, and there were few people to be

[TIMELINE OF ESSAYS](#)



[ROSS/ADAMS COMMENTARY](#)

seen.

That night was the hottest yet that year. It was beginning to be too hot for Henry to disappear upstairs into his attic room as he would have liked, and so for a number of evenings he would be forced to endure the boardinghouse society.

[August Bondi](#) became a naturalized American citizen. For one year he would be in the clothing business at St. Louis, Missouri.



In the service journal of Charles Usherwood, serving in the British army in Crimea, there is indication of an outbreak of cholera: “Coming home from bathing in the evening I passed a number of Turkish labourers who it appears were on their way from work. After they had passed me which was from the direction of the marshy part of the valley and reached away at only a few yards distance, an old man with grey beard and hair suddenly became ill, who falling upon the ground rolled about in extreme agony of pain and vomiting very much. I stood by and watched his companions who did all in their power to relieve him but not being able to speak the language and having never seen such an occurrence before I wondered to myself of what could it be, as in a very short time only a few minutes the Turk died.”



July 22, Saturday: Early in the morning the boiler in the Bridgefield Mill of Sparth, Rochdale, Lancashire, England, owned by Mr George Williamson and used as a weaving shed, exploded killing 10 lives and severely injuring 15. Debris was scattered a quarter of a mile in every direction. Two children and a man were rescued out of the local river, where they “had been lifted a distance of twenty-six yards” still wrapped in the ruins of their bed.

In the service journal of Charles Usherwood, serving in the British army in Crimea, there is indication of an outbreak of cholera: “Early this morning I got up, went down to the river to bathe and on my way passed the corpse of the old man who died yesterday evening and who was now lying upon the top of an Araba, or native conveyance. On reaching camp from bathing loaded as I was with milk and eggs, I learned that the cholera had suddenly attacked the Division, several men being in hospital at the time with scarcely any hopes of recovery. In 8 days from today 92 men of the Division died of this scourge.”

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Assabet Bath (Gleason 4/E5).



July 22. The hottest night, — the last.

It was almost impossible to pursue any work out-of-doors yesterday. There were but few men to be seen out. You were prompted often, if working in the sun, to step into the shade to avoid a sunstroke. At length a shower passing in the west slightly cooled the air.

The domestic animals suffer much. Saw a dog which had crawled into a corner and was apparently dying of heat. Fogs almost every morning now. First noticed the dry scent of corn-fields a week ago.

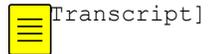
Now clouds have begun to hang about all day, which do not promise rain, as it were the morning fogs elevated but little above the earth and floating through the air all day

P.M. — To Assabet Bath.

Centaurea, one or two flowerets. There is a cool wind from east, which makes it cool walking that way while it is melting hot walking westward. Spear-leaved thistle, apparently several days, some being withered.

The larger pinweed, apparently a few days, probably same date with the minor, its lower leaves dull-red, those of Lechea minor equally red or brighter. Some Amelanchier obovala leaves a light dirty scarlet. Zizania, a day, with a handsome light-green panicle a foot or more long, a long slender stem, and corn-like leaves frequently more than an inch wide. Diervilla leaves dull red and green. The large primrose lower leaves a clear clad red. The Epilobium coloratura lower leaves very dark red. Gerardia flava, apparently two or three days, Lupine Hillside up railroad, near fence. Also Solidago odora, a day or two, xxxxxxxxxxxxxx, and what I will call S. puberula — to-morrow.

altissima on railroad, a day or two. When the flower S. buds of the boehmcria, just ready to open, are touched with a pin, the stamens spring out remarkably, scattering their pollen.



1854

1854



July 23, Sunday: In the service journal of Charles Usherwood, serving in the British army in Crimea, there is indication of an outbreak of cholera: "In consequence of the rapid prevalence of cholera among the regiments of the Division the whole of the troops comprising the Division were ordered to march and take up a new encampment at Monestue about 5 or 6 miles away. The Division moved and arrived at its new encampment in the course of the afternoon of same day where Serg. Murphy, Sergeant of the Guard was taken ill and died. After the arrival of the Division the two Brigades were separated at about a mile from each other and the Corps placed so as not to be too near each other. Here a Bazaar was established and the natives were induced to bring in produce of every description. Water too was plentiful and good, and which always seemed to be plentiful in this country. The houses of the inhabitants were constructed of mud and wood work and were generally encircled by a high mud wall. Within the enclosure they kept their cattle and from what I have observed found in general the interior of the dwellings of the Bulgarians very trim and clean that is to say according to their means."

[Henry Thoreau](#) walked to Hubbard's Grove (Gleason 69/G5), Fair Haven Hill (Gleason H7), and Walden Pond.



July 23. Sunday. P.M. — To Walden via Hubbard's Grove and Fair Haven Hill.



Transcript]

Carrot by railroad, soirée time; Say ten days. Eupatorium metacarpus. There is a peculiar light reflected in the shorn fields, as later in the fall, when rain and coolness have cleared the air. Eupatorium pubescens, icy-corrow. The white orchis at same place, four or five clays at least; spike one and three quarters by three inches. I see small flocks of song sparrows, etc., rustle down the wall, and faeces. Lonicera Ciliata, alcatvctly several days, Corner causeway, right sick.

Boehmeria there also. Since the 19th, have heard locusts oftener. Aster acum.irtatus at Hadula Swamp, in a day or two. My three-leaved Lysimachia stricta (?) at Hadula Swamp, common. A Radula (?) a day.

Saw yesterday on edge of Lee House Meadow a low blueberry (?) bush with large oblongish black berries and narrow leaves, with little or no bloom, conspicuous calyx, apparently between Vaccinium vacillans and V. corymbosum. Some elsewhere two and a half feet high. I also have seen on Fair Haven Hill-side, near west spring, a sort of larger V. Pennsylvanicum with oblong black berries and conspicuous calyx. Lespedeza capitata, Lupine Bank, a day. Cerasus pumila berries, some time. Hazel leaves in dry places have begun to turn yellow and brown. Lespedeza violacea, apparently several days. I see broods of partridges later than the others, now the size of the smallest chickens. Onoclea green fruit conspicuous. See a thunder-cloud coming up in northwest, but as I walk and wind in the woods, lose the points of compass and cannot tell whether it is travelling this way or not. At length the sun is obscured by its advance guard, but, as so often, the rain comes, leaving thunder and lightning behind.



July 24, Monday: A pre-publication review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#), titled "[Thoreau's Life in the Woods](#)," appeared on the first page of the New York [Evening Post](#).

Reprinted in **CRITICAL ESSAYS ON HENRY DAVID THOREAU'S WALDEN**, ed. Joel Myerson (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1988), pages 17-18.

[TIMELINE OF WALDEN](#)



July 24. The last four or five days it has been very hot and [we] have been threatened with thundershowers every afternoon, which interfered with my long walk, though we had not much. Now, at 2 P.M., I hear again the loud thunder and see the dark cloud in the west. Some small and nearer clouds are floating past, white against the dark-blue distant one. Burdock, probably xxxxxxxxxxxxth.



Transcript]

 July 25, Tuesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) walked on the Fitchburg Railroad tracks to Bare or Pine Hill in Lincoln (Gleason J9).

A pre-publication announcement of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) titled “The Hounds in Walden Woods” appeared on the 1st page of the Boston [Commonwealth](#), in columns 6 and 7.

Messrs. Ticknor & Fields will publish in a few days a new volume by Henry D. Thoreau, author of “A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers.” It will be entitled, “Walden, or Life in the Woods.” Mr. Thoreau once built him a house, at a cost of something less than thirty dollars, near Walden Pond, in Concord, and lived there many months upon what he could raise, beans or muskrats, in the neighborhood. In this book he gives an account of his life during the summer in the woods. The following is an extract in advance of publication:

[Reprints “Winter Animals,” pages 276.31-280.9.]

TIMELINE OF WALDEN



July 25. A decided rain-storm to-day and yesterday, such as we have not had certainly since May. Are we likely ever to have two days' rain in June and the first half of July? There is considerable wind too

 Transcript]

P.M.-To Bare Hill, Lincoln, via railroad.

High blackberries, a day or two. The middle umbel of the bristly aralia in some places, also a day or more. Solidago bicolor, to-morrow. I still see the cracks in the ground in old pastures, made last winter. The turtle dove dashes away with a slight note from midst of open pastures. Diplopappus umbellatus just beyond Baker Swamp, on right hand of road, probably about ten days; say July 15. I see some oak sprouts from the stump, six feet high. Some are now just started again after a pause, with small red leaves as in the spring. Clematis, apparently a day or two.

Iledyotis longifolia on Bare Hill still. Decodon, not yet, but will apparently open in two or three days .

The rain has saved the berries. They are plump and large . The long chestnut flowers have fallen and strew the road. Arabis Canadensis, sickle-pod, still in flower and with pods not quite two inches long. Pennyroyal, a day or two. Hear a wood thrush . Desmodium midillor-int., a week at least. Have I not noticed it before ? I now start some packs of partridges, old and young, going off together without mewing. Saw in woods a toad, dead-leaf color with black spots.

 July 26, Wednesday: Druids' Hall, owned by the Ancient Order of Druids, was being rented over a period of 18 months during the Crimean War to a Mr. Harris. The event of this night was a “bal masqué.” Joseph Brundell, a city policeman on duty near the establishment, noticed men attending in female attire and reported this to his sergeant, only to be instructed to interfere only if there was “disgusting conduct” in the public street. On the following day Inspector Teague would report: “From information I received relative to the frequent congregation of certain persons for immoral practices at the Druids’-hall, I proceeded thither in company with Sergeant Goodeve about 2 o’clock this morning. I saw a great many persons dancing there, and among the number were the prisoners, who rendered themselves very conspicuous by their disgusting and filthy conduct. I suspected that the prisoners and several others who were present in female attire were of the male sex, and I left the room for the purpose of obtaining further assistance, so as to secure the whole of the parties, but when we got outside Campbell came out after us, and, taking us by the arms, was about to speak, when I exclaimed,

“That is a man,” upon which he turned round and ran back immediately to the Druids’-hall. I returned and took Campbell into custody and observing Challis, whom I have frequently seen there before, behaving with two men as if he were a common prostitute, I took charge of him also.” John Challis, 60, wearing “the pastoral garb of a shepherdess of the golden age,” and George Campbell, 35, a lawyer, “completely equipped in female attire of the present day,” were arrested on the charge of disguising themselves as women with the purpose of exciting others to commit an unnatural offence. Madeleine Vincent testified that she had attended to the refreshment department in the ballroom and saw the prisoners there, but found nothing disgusting in their conduct.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked out the Old Carlisle Road to the limekiln (Gleason 79/C6).



July 26. Wednesday. *Polygonum hydropiperoides* first obvious. Mikania, a day or two. Lilies open about 6 A.M. Methinks I have heard toads within a week.
A white mildew on ground in woods this morning.

 Transcript]

P.M. — To lime-kiln via rudbeckia.

Ate an early apple from one of my own trees. Amaranthus, apparently three or four days. The under sides of its lower leaves are of a rich pale lake-color.

This appears to have nothing to do with their maturity, since very young and fresh ones are so. I see these in Hosmer’s onion garden, where he is weeding, and am most attracted by the weeds.

One reason why the lately shorn fields shine so and reflect so much light is that a lighter-colored and tender grass, which has been shaded by the crop taken off, is now exposed, and also a light and fresh grass is springing up there. Yet I think it is not wholly on this account, but in a great measure owing to a clearer air after rains which have succeeded to misty weather.

I am going over the hill through Ed. Hosmer’s orchard, when I observe this light reflected from the shorn fields, contrasting affectingly with the dark smooth Assabet, reflecting the now dark shadows of the woods. The fields reflect light quite to the edge of the stream.

The peculiarity of the stream is in a certain languid or stagnant smoothness of the water, and of the bordering woods in a dog-day density of shade reflected darkly in the water. Alternate cornel berries, a day or two.

To-day I see in various parts of the town the yellow butterflies in fleets in the road, on bare damp sand (not dung), twenty or more collected within a diameter of five or six inches in many places. They are a greenish golden, sitting still near together, and apparently headed one way if the wind blows. At first, perhaps, you do not notice them, but, as you pass along, you disturb them, and the air is suddenly all alive with them fluttering over the road, and, when you are past, they soon settle down in a new place. How pretty these little greenish-golden spangles! Some are a very pale greenish yellow. The farmer is not aware how much beauty flutters about his wagon. I do not know what attracts them thus to sit near together, like a fleet in a haven; why they collect in groups. I see many small red ones elsewhere on the sericocarpus, etc., etc.

Rudbeckia, apparently three or four days at least; only the middle flower yet for most part. Musty cotton grass how long. Green grapes have for some days been ready to stew. *Diplopappus linariifolius*. *Aster dumosus*. Almost every bush now offers a wholesome and palatable diet to the wayfarer, large and dense clusters of *Vaccinium vacillans*, largest in most moist ground, sprinkled with the red ones not ripe; great high blueberries, some nearly as big as cranberries, of an agreeable acid; huckleberries of various kinds, some shining black, some dull-black, some blue; and low blackberries of two or more varieties. The broods of birds just matured find thus plenty to eat. *Gymnadcina* [*sic*], maybe five or six days in swamp southeast of lime-kiln; one without any spurs. It is a windy day and hence worse [?] in respect to birds, like yesterday, yet almost constantly I hear borne on the wind from far, mingling with the sound of the wind, the z-ing of the locust, scarcely like a distinct sound. Vernonia, begun in centre a day.

1854

1854

 July 27, Thursday: A pre-publication announcement of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) titled "Walden Ice" appeared on the 1st page of the Boston [Commonwealth](#), in column 7.

**Reprints "The Pond in Winter," pages 296.31-298.23,
followed by the words:**

H.D. Thoreau's forthcoming book.

[TIMELINE OF WALDEN](#)



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR JULY 27th]

1854

1854

 July 28, Friday: Charles Henry Branscomb, a lawyer from Holyoke, Massachusetts serving as a general agent for the Emigrant Aid Society in the [Kansas Territory](#), traveled up the [Kansas River](#) as far as Fort Riley with a pioneer party of 30 persons to select a location for an antislavery town. He and Dr. Charles Robinson of Fitchburg would agree on the site of Lawrence.

THE 2D GREAT AMERICAN DISUNION



William B. Sheppard, who had hoped to get married with his boss Henry C. Day's daughter, had, when his employer had refused to consent, stabbed him to death. On this day Sheriff William Gorham officiated over the [hanging](#) of the murderer on "Government Reserve property" near the Presidio in [San Francisco](#), before a crowd of 10,000 citizens. The body of the executed man would hang for an hour before Sheriff Gorham would permit it to be cut down.



FINAL EXECUTIONS		
August 30, 1850	John White Webster	last Harvard College professor to be hanged by the neck in Boston
July 28, 1854	William B. Sheppard	last public open-air hanging in San Francisco , at the Presidio before a crowd of not less than 10,000
July 25, 1857	John Lewis	hanged outside the municipal prison of Cardiff before a crowd of 12,000, the final public hanging in Wales

Also, in San Francisco on this day, [California](#) Freemasons adopted a constitution and installed officers.

A pre-publication announcement of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) titled "Life in the Woods. Former Inhabitants" appeared on the 4th page of the Boston [Daily Evening Traveller](#), in columns 1 and 2.

EXTRACT FROM MR. THOREAU'S "WALDEN." (In press, by Ticknor & Fields.)

[Reprints "Former Inhabitants; and Winter Visitors," pages 256.1-264.3.]

TIMELINE OF WALDEN



July 28. Friday. Clethra. Methinks the season culminated about the middle of this month, — that the year was of indefinite promise before, but that, after the first intense heats, we postponed the fulfillment of many of our hopes for this year, and, having as it were attained the ridge of the summer, commenced to descend the long slope toward winter, the afternoon and down-hill of the year. Last evening it was much cooler, and I heard a decided fall sound of crickets.
 Partridges begin to go off in packs.
 Lark still sings, and robin.
 Small sparrows still heard.
 Kingbird lively.
 Veery and wood thrush (?) not very lately, nor oven bird.
 Red-eye and chewink common.
 Night-warbler [^see forward] and evergreen-forest note not lately.
 Cherry-bird common.
 Turtle dove seen.

 Transcript]



July 29, Saturday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went a-berrying to Brooks Clark’s (Gleason D6) on the Old Carlisle Road.

The [Bunker-Hill Aurora and Boston Mirror](#), on its 1st page in columns 5 and 6, under the heading “Hounds in Walden Woods,” provided its readers with an 1,100-word excerpt from the “Winter Animals” chapter of WALDEN (this had been presumably supplied by William W. Wheildon).

Review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#), presumably by [Horace Greeley](#), titled “A Massachusetts Hermit,” on the 3d page of the [New-York Daily Tribune](#), columns 2-6:

Ticknor & Fields have in press a work by HENRY D. THOREAU entitled “Life in the Woods,” describing the experience of the author during a solitary residence of two years in a hut on the shore of Walden Pond in Concord, Massachusetts. The volume promises to be one of curious interest, and by the courtesy of the publishers we are permitted to take some extracts in advance of the regular issue.

THE HERMIT BUILDS HIS HUT.

[Reprints “Economy,” pages 40.30-45.28.]

THE HERMIT PLANTS BEANS.

[Reprints “Economy,” pages 54.16-56.13.]

THE HERMIT COMMENCES HOUSEKEEPING.

[Reprints “Economy,” pages 65.14-67.24.]

THE HERMIT’S FIRST SUMMER.

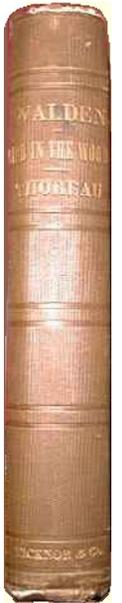
[Reprints “Sounds,” pages 111.18-114.21.]

THE HERMIT FINDS A FRIEND.

[Reprints “Visitors,” pages 144.13-150.27.]

THE HERMIT HAS VISITORS, MANY OF THEM BORES.

[Reprints “Visitors,” pages 150.28-154.17.]



TIMELINE OF WALDEN



July 29. P.M. — Berrying to Brooks Clark’s.

Rich-weed, how long? *Amaranthus hypochondriacus*, apparently some days, with its interesting spotted leaf, lake beneath, and purple spike; amid the potatoes.



[Transcript]

 July 30, Sunday: [Henry Thoreau](#) went to lygodium and Dugan Desert (Gleason 39/H4). “Opened one of the snapping turtle’s eggs at Dugan Desert, laid June 7th. There is a little mud turtle squirming in it, apparently perfect in outline, shell and all, but all **soft** and of one consistency, –a bluish white, with a mass of yellowish yolk (?) attached. Perhaps it will be month before it is hatched.” [Tortoise Eggs](#)



July 30. Sunday. To lygodium.

Cuscuta, not long. *Desmodium Canadense* is to be found at Clamshell Hill oaks. I have found the new rudbeckia in five distinct and distant parts of the town this year, — beyond almshouse, Arethusa Meadow, Sam. Wheeler meadow, Abel Hosmer meadow, and J. Hosmer meadow. Also in last place, beyond ditch, the rusty cotton-grass is now common. *Cicuta bulbifera*, apparently a week or more. Is that goose-grass near yellow thistles? Opened one of the snapping turtle’s eggs at Dugan Desert, laid June 7th. There is a little mud turtle squirming in it, apparently perfect in outline, shell and all, but all soft and of one consistency, — a bluish white, with a mass of yellowish yolk (?) attached.

Perhaps it will be [a] month more before it is hatched.

There are some of what I will call the clustered low blackberries on the sand just beyond the Dugan Desert.

There are commonly a few larger grains in dense clusters on very short peduncles and flat on the sand, clammy with a cool subacid taste. Small rough sunflower, apparently two days.

I have seen a few new fungi within a week. The tobacco-pipes are still pushing up white amid the dry leaves, sometimes lifting a canopy of leaves with them four or five inches. *Bartonia*, apparently some days.

Bunch-berries. Mountain sumach, apparently two or three days. *Nabalus albus*, apparently three or four days.

Mulgedium, apparently four or five days.

Barn swallows still.

 [Transcript]

 July 31, Monday: US Army Captain [Ulysses S. Grant](#) resigned his commission at Fort Humboldt, [California](#) because his commanding officer considered his weakness for liquor to be sufficient cause for court martial or resignation. Captain Grant then came to San Francisco, where he would reside at the What Cheer House.



July 31. Blue-curls. Wood thrush still sings. *Desmodium rotundifolium*. *Lespedeza hirta*, say 26th, at Heywood Peak.

[Transcript]



AUGUST 1854

 August: This month’s issue of [Harper’s New Monthly Magazine](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE

1854

1854

 August: Charles H. Branscomb, a lawyer from Holyoke, Massachusetts, appointed as a general agent for the Emigrant Aid Society in the [Kansas Territory](#), would be working in various advisory capacities until he would during Summer 1857 be caught padding his expense account (he has been characterized as “less dishonest than incompetent”).

[New-York](#)'s Bowery Theatre reopened as the German-language Stadt Theater.

In this timeframe [Judge Phisic Rush Elmore](#) was moving his family and its 14 black slaves to Tecumseh in Shawnee County in the [Kansas Territory](#).

[Martin Robison Delany](#) sponsored a national black emigration convention in Cleveland, Ohio, and lectured on “The Political Destiny of the Colored Race on the American Continent.”



The [Reverend Samuel Ringgold Ward](#) was accompanied on a visit to Wales by Richard Griffiths, Esq., who could speak Welsh.

We visited Bangor, Holyhead, Beaumaris, Caernarvon, Llanberris, Snowdon, Aberystwyth, Welshpool, and so forth. My stay was so short that I can say but little of Wales, but must say that little with very great pleasure; for no country, no people, ever pleased me so much – excepting black people, of course.

I spent a Sabbath at Bangor, preaching three times to audiences of whom some could not understand sufficient English to follow a discourse. They came, however, because they wished to encourage the cause I represented, and to show their interest in the gospel, though preached in a language of which they could understand but few words. In one instance, however, there was a sermon in Welsh from one of the native ministers. This gave those who could not understand me an opportunity to receive benefit in their own tongue.

I had a very large anti-slavery meeting in Bangor, and the kind feeling of the audience was peculiar to that most benevolent people.... At Beaumaris I spoke on temperance, part of the evening, and the other part, on anti-slavery; the same at Holyhead and Caernarvon. On one of the days of our sojourn at Bangor we visited the Penryn slate quarries, belonging to the Honourable Colonel Tennant. It is a most gigantic work: the number of men employed would make quite a town, in Canada. The good order, steady industry, and regular habits, of the workmen, were quite evident. The village near the castle, composed of the labourers' cottages, and the schoolhouse and gardens, are the most beautiful and the most comfortable cottages in North Wales: indeed, I know of none equal to them anywhere. Lady Louisa, Colonel Tennant's wife, had them erected according to models of her own drawing. The school, I believe, is at her expense. Neglected as the labourers of Wales generally are, it was most gratifying to see this specimen of kind carefulness.



Beaumaris is quite a fashionable watering-place, and it is a very quiet, neat little town. It has a most capital hotel, quite equal to the great majority of English ones. The same may be true of Bangor; but the kindness of Mr. Edwards, our host, would not allow us to know. Caernarvon is, of course, rich in historic interest: its castle is a fine ruin. I spent some two or three days there very agreeably, being the guest of Mr. Hughes, a most kind and hospitable gentleman. From his house we made up a party to visit Snowdon – ascending it on foot, and returning in the same way. A more fatiguing journey of five miles it was never my fortune, good or ill, to make. What added to the discomfort of it was, that on reaching the top, we saw nothing but a thick Welsh mountain fog! but we had a most delightful view of the neighbouring hills and dales, from a point about half way to the summit. Being obliged to drive eight miles and speak that night at Caernarvon – to travel ninety-seven miles the next day, in a stage coach – and to preach three times the third day – made no small affair of the exercise.

Reaching Aberystwyth late on Saturday night, I was glad to take the comfortable quarters offered to the weary in the Royal Hotel. It had rained all day; but, in spite of rain, it was most delightful to travel amid the beautifully diversified scenery betwixt Caernarvon and Aberystwyth. It is bolder than Irish scenery, and the cultivation is far better – though not so good, I thought, as the Scotch; but the farming of Wales is far from being indifferent. I spent some four or five days in Aberystwyth, making some acquaintances I shall ever remember: among them are the excellent pastors of the Churches, and the Rev. Mr. Davies and his excellent mother. I had the honour, too, of making the acquaintance of Mr. Lloyd, one of the leading gentry of the country, now Lord Lieutenant of Cardiganshire. Mr. L. took the chair at a meeting which I addressed; and was kind enough to say, one of his inducements to attend was, that the meeting was to be addressed by a gentleman from Canada. Having been in early life stationed there with his regiment, the gallant gentleman had acquired an interest in my adopted country which did not leave him upon his return to Wales.

From Aberystwyth I returned to England by Welshpool, where I spent an evening, and attended a temperance meeting. The drive through that part of Wales is one of the most beautiful in this island of beautiful scenery. It reminds one of the valleys of the Genessee, the Susquehannah, and some portions of the St. Lawrence Valley. I know not when or where I have enjoyed a drive more than those through North and South Wales. Anybody else would be able to describe the scenery: all I can say is, it was most beautiful. What with the waving, ripened corn, the youthful-looking greenness of the recently mown meadows, the sparkling streamlets, the clear sky, and the gorgeously brilliant August sunlight, I was charmed beyond expression. I am sorry I cannot tell it better: please kind reader, accept the best I can perform. Since then, I have passed through portions of Wales in very rapid flying tours, as when returning from Ireland, last autumn and last spring; but have not had the pleasure of making any stay there. I think, however, that I have seen enough of Wales and the Welsh to have formed some tolerably correct views of their character.

First, however, to record an incident of no small interest to me, which occurred during my sojourn at Aberystwyth. A gentleman named Williams, an agent for one of the wealthiest landlords in Wales, lives about a mile from Aberystwyth. I learned that a little boy, a son of Mr. Williams, who was ill, was anxious to see me, and that his parents wished me to call. The Rev. Mr. Davies kindly consented to accompany me, and we drove there. We found Mr. and Mrs. Williams most kind and affable persons; and upon being introduced to the chamber where their son lay, we were struck with his emaciated appearance; but in spite of this, his eyes beamed with intelligence, and about his lips a most cheerful smile played constantly. His mother told us he had been a great sufferer. His bones were but slightly covered with a wasted colourless skin. He could not stand or walk, from lameness; and I believe there was but one position in which he could lie. When we saw the helplessness of the child, we were glad that we had visited him. He had read "Uncle Tom's Cabin"; he felt interested in the slaves, and daily prayed for them; he had carefully laid by the little presents of money which had been given him, and had a donation to give me, for the cause of the slave. But what made the deepest impression upon us was, his mother's telling us that, in the midst of the very severe pains which tortured the little sufferer, he would cry out, but immediately check himself, saying "Mamma, I ought not to complain so. How much more did Jesus suffer, for me!"

We left that house feeling that we had been highly privileged. We had learned the lesson of patient suffering at the bedside of that dear child - had seen a babe, as it were, praising God. That the child could long live, seemed out of the question; but the wheat of the surrounding fields was no more ripe for the sickle, than was that child to be gathered unto God. Since that day, I never suffer pain, complainingly, without fancying I see the bright, beaming eye of little Williams rebuking me, as he hushes his own cries, in the midst of anguish, by the recollection of "how much more Jesus suffered for him." That child may, ere this, have been called to his rest; he may be with Him whose sufferings he learned so early to contemplate: but until I meet him in another world, I shall ever remember the lesson learned at his bedside. Since that time, some of the severest pangs I ever felt have been mine, both in body and mind; but their coming is accompanied by the remembrance of what that beloved child learned, in agony. And, blessed be God! the divine consolations which lulled his pains are abundant, infinite in efficacy!

Wales is the most moral and most religious country, and her peasantry the best peasantry, that I know. Doubtless, many will differ from me; but such is my very decided opinion, based on the following reasons: -

1. The courts in Wales have fewer cases of scandalous crimes and misdemeanors to deal with than the courts of any other part of the kingdom, of the same population. The difference betwixt Wales and Ireland, in this respect, is immense.

2. But go to a Welsh town (such as Bangor), and how quiet and moral is it, compared with any town of the like population you can name in England, Ireland, or Scotland! Not a woman walking the streets for lewd purposes, not a drunkard brawling in the



highways, no rows or fights; quietness and order reign everywhere. Holyhead is a seaport; it is the same there, and so in every town I visited.

3. The temperance cause has done more for Wales than for any other part of the kingdom. A drunken peasant is, indeed, a rare sight in Wales. The miners, the farm servants, and the ordinary labourers, all agree, somehow or other, to be temperate. Not that all are abstainers; but a more temperate peasantry, I am free to confess, there is not, even in Maine!

4. There is no begging in Wales. There are children who run after the carriages of tourists and cry, "ha'penny!" about the only English word they know; and this more for sport than halfpence. But there is little or no encouragement given to it by the inhabitants; and there is no such thing as a swarm of beggars at every corner, door, hotel, church-gate, and everywhere else, as in every part of Ireland.

5. The Welsh are poor as well as the Irish; and their landlords sufficiently neglect them, as to their dwellings: but the cleanliness of the peasantry is most striking. The contrast betwixt Holyhead and Kingstown, within four hours' sail of each other, is most remarkable. One can scarcely believe that he has not been to two opposite sides of the globe, instead of across a narrow channel. The reader will now see why I blame the Irish for their defects, in contrast with the Welsh.

6. The industry of the poorer classes in the Principality is most commendable. I know this has much to do with any people's moral and religious character. No one believes, as no one ought, in a very high-toned and exemplary morality, or a very devoted religion, conjoined with idleness. I do believe that the Welsh labouring classes are more correct in this than even the Highlanders in Scotland. Patient though not overpaid toil, mitigated by few comforts, is not only the lot, but to all appearance the choice, of the Welsh peasant. I have seen more idlers in one street, in Kingstown – in a circumference of 300 yards, in Glasgow – or in a small village, in Essex or Norfolk – than one can see in the whole of Wales.

7. The Welsh population not only attend divine service, but are religious: I say "the population," because it is not true, as in England, of a few persons only out of the many, but, like the Scotch, of the people generally. There are some curious and interesting facts in connection with this. In the first place, the Welsh are not Episcopalians: nine tenths of them dissent from the Establishment. It is most ridiculous to tax them for its support, for they do not go near it. Still, they quietly go to their chapels, and as quietly pay for their support. In the next place, they are not mere nominal members of Churches. The majority belong to the Calvinistic Methodist denomination, whose rules are highly and properly rigid. No laxity in morals is allowed to pass unrebuked. Besides, in travelling through Wales, it is seen that almost wherever there are a dozen houses, one of them is a chapel. The people feel their religious wants, and supply them. Moreover, the ministers of the denomination alluded to, and all others, take especial care and pains in looking after their flocks. Their preaching is deeply earnest, practical, scriptural, plain, and personal; also, most pathetic and affectionate. These combined influences are in constant

operation, and are producing the very best effects upon a remarkably straightforward, simpleminded people.

Compare these sturdy, honest preachers, with the priests of Romanism! Compare their flocks with the Papal populations of, I care not what country! I cannot consent to argue the case: in the living history of present fact it stands out in bold relief. It speaks for itself, in language clear and intelligible; its truths are undeniable, unquestionable: and though our fellow subjects of the Principality are less wealthy and less learned than some more flattered inhabitants of other portions of these islands, they excel us all in some of the best, noblest, traits that ever adorned human character. Should they diffuse education more thoroughly, cling with less tenacity to their mother tongue, draw more largely from the "well of English undefiled," and mingle more with the other elements of British population, then that brave little Principality will one day be more often visited and considered: it will take rank as high in other matters, as in morals; and, in peculiar distinctive character, appear, to its present despisers, beautiful as its own valley scenery, elevated as Snowdon's loftiest summit!

I have spoken mostly of the labouring classes in Wales; and have only to add, that the better and higher classes are essentially Englishmen – with the exception, I must once more remark, of being very far behind Englishmen and Scotchmen (and, according to the papers of the day, behind Irishmen as well!) as landlords. They need to follow more closely the example set by the Honourable Colonel Tennant and the Lady Louisa, in caring for those who minister to their comforts and convenience. I am sure an one who visits the village referred to will join me in this remark.

I know what will be said, in other countries than Wales, in reply to what I say of the chastity of the Welsh female peasantry. Reference will be made to the stupid system of courtship called "bundling" – a practice for which there is no defence: most certainly, I have no word to utter in its behalf. That it has not been attended with far worse consequences, is to me a marvel. But I have the great happiness to know, that the pulpit, which is more powerful in Wales than in any Protestant country elsewhere, has turned its whole power and influence against this barbarous practice, so that not even it, to any extent, forms a drawback to the remarks I have made upon the morality of the Welsh peasantry. It is to be hoped that a custom which has nothing better than its antiquity for its apology, but is liable to the very gravest objections on the score of morality and decency, will soon be known merely as a matter of history. Surely, when a custom so pernicious shall once be put away, all will rejoice, and all will wonder that a people of such sterling sense should have suffered it to continue so long. It certainly has outlived the former bad taste of the people; and therefore, if for no higher reason, it ought to live no longer. Most earnestly is it to be hoped that this abominable relic of ancient British barbarism will soon be so completely banished, as no longer to mar the otherwise good and exemplary character of the honest youths and maidens of that delightful Principality.

1854

1854

In addition to the Rowse portraits of [Henry Thoreau](#)¹⁵⁵ and [Waldo Emerson](#) from this period, we have a photograph of Eddie, Waldo, and Edith that evidently dates to approximately this year:

DR. EDWARD WALDO EMERSON



[I find I am unable to show you Eddie Emerson's sketch of his memory of [Thoreau](#).]

155. Unfortunately the original crayon of [Henry Thoreau](#) has deteriorated to the point at which its copies are now better than it.

1854

1854



August: [Thomas Cholmondeley](#) came to [Concord](#) with a letter of introduction, to visit [Waldo Emerson](#). When he commented that he would like to spend a few weeks there, Emerson recommended that he try boarding at the Thoreau boardinghouse. One may wonder what sort of conversations Emerson had with this Brit colonialist who was having so many interesting things to say, in his *ULTIMA THULE; OR, THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY A RESIDENCE IN NEW ZEALAND* published in this year, about how right Lord Chancellor Bacon had been all along as to humankind being the master of the world:



Mankind is the master of the world, as far as it stands at present under his feet; as far as he dares trust himself to understand it. He is to live, and govern, and do his duty, and all things in his world are to minister to him and further his progress. In this sense, the world is meant for man, if one thing ever was contrived for another: he needs but to assert his supremacy, having perfect faith that he possesses it. So, too, with supreme nations, and master-minds: they are intended to exercise dominion. The whole world around them comes to submit itself, just as the beasts were said to have been brought to Adam, that he might name them. Increase, therefore, and empire, are based upon the perfect faith in a national greatness, to begin with; — a greatness which can require no addition in itself from the gifts or submission of others; instead of which it gives itself, and takes the stranger into its own life, being strong enough to carry many States, and to make them parts of itself. This is the duty which is set over against sovereignty, so that sovereignty can only thrive by acknowledging it, and thrive by the discharge of such duty. The wonderful spread of the British empire is nothing more than a comment upon these words. The nation colonizes on the one hand, while it assimilates on the other. The world hereby grows upon them, and becomes a part of their greatness. Hence, too, we may gather the secret of the real difference between the brute dominion of force, and a dominion of justice, civilisation, and humanity. The first takes all, and gives nothing; the second takes, in order that it may give a tenfold return, and raise the subject State to its own level. The first destroys and ruins; the second educates and endows.

READ CHOLMONDELEY

HDT

WHAT?

INDEX

1854

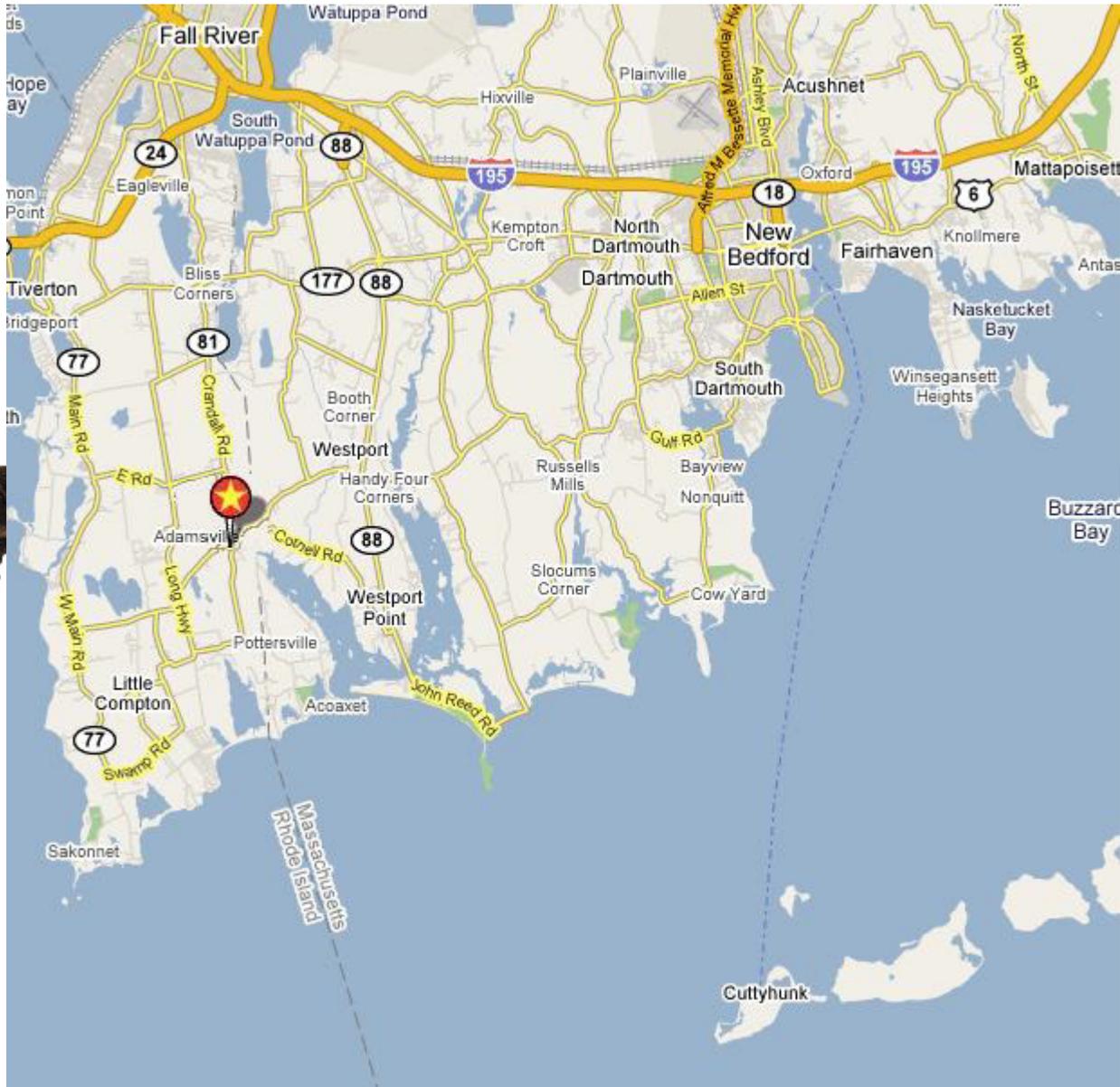
1854



1854

1854

 August: A farmer in Adamsville in the district known as Little Compton, [Rhode Island](#) obtained a red cock from a sailor in [New Bedford](#) who said it was a “Malay” or a “Chittagong.” William Tripp would grant his acquisition the run of his hen-yard, and the result, by 1896, would be the breed once known as the “Tripp fowl” and now known as the “Rhode Island Red.” (This Rhode Island Red, “the bird we gave to the nation,” has been of course, since May 3, 1954, our state’s totem bird.)



Read  [Henry Thoreau’s Journal for August 1854 \(æ. 37\) in the 1906 version](#)

1854

1854



August 1, Tuesday: At 6 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) went on the river. In the afternoon he went to Peter's (Peter's Path, Gleason E7-E9?).

Charles Henry Branscomb guided the initial group of eastern emigrants who would settle an antislavery town that they would name "Lawrence" in the [Kansas Territory](#): "... a party of about 30 settlers, chiefly from New England ... Mr. C.H. Branscomb, of Boston, on a tour in the territory a few weeks earlier in the summer, had selected this spot as one of peculiar loveliness for a town site."

THE 2D GREAT AMERICAN DISUNION

In a letter to his friend the Reverend [William Rouseville Alger](#), a Unitarian clergyman, T. Starr King commented on [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#): "The latter half is wonderful ... I envy you your approaching rapture."¹⁵⁶ The Reverend Alger had been awaiting Thoreau's 2nd book ever since, in 1849, he had read *A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS* (he had condemned it for failing to be a simple story of a vacation sailboat adventure by two brothers, saying "[f]ew books need expurgation more than this one") and thus it was that, in Boston on this day when the very 1st copy of [WALDEN](#) was sold for one dollar at the Old Corner Bookstore, the Boston retail outlet of Ticknor & Fields, it was sold to the Reverend Alger. 



156. Charles W. Wendte. THOMAS STARR KING: PATRIOT AND PREACHER (Boston: Beacon Press, 1921, pages 45-46). [Walter Roy Harding](#), "The First Year's Sales of Thoreau's Walden," [Thoreau Society Bulletin](#), number 117 (Fall 1971): 1; Gary Scharnhorst, "'He Is Able to Write a Work That Will Not Die': W. R. Alger and T. Starr King on Thoreau," [Thoreau Journal Quarterly](#), 13, numbers 1-2 (January-April 1981): 5-17.



1854

1854

A review of [WALDEN](#) titled "A Massachusetts Philosopher" in the organ of the Oneida, New York utopian community, the [Circular](#), on pages 410-11. On this day [Henry James, Sr.](#) had a Daguerreotype made of him

A very curious book is in press, entitled 'Life in the Woods,' by H. D. Thoreau; from which the [New-York] [Tribune](#) prints a few extracts in advance. It is a narrative of the author's experience and mode of life during a two years' solitary hermitage in the woods, by the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, Mass. The writer, being of a philosophical turn, and much given to Homer, and similar antique models, seems to have proposed to himself to reduce his mode of life to the standard nearest to primitive nature. So he took an axe, and went into the woods, to a pleasant hill-side overlooking the pond, and built himself a cabin. Of his furniture, and his views on the subject of furniture in general, he gives the following account:

[Reprints "Economy," pages 65.14-67.10.]

There is evident spice of truth in this. We like **Communism** particularly for its effect in relieving folks from the great mass of furniture—useless *exuvia* as Thoreau says,—that accumulates about them and seems necessary, in isolation. The Communist moves freely without being tied to any such trap. He goes from one home to another, without care for what he leaves or carrying anything with him and finds all needed furnishing in the Commune where he sits down. This is better we think than our hermit's method of getting rid of incumbrance. Here follows his agricultural experience:

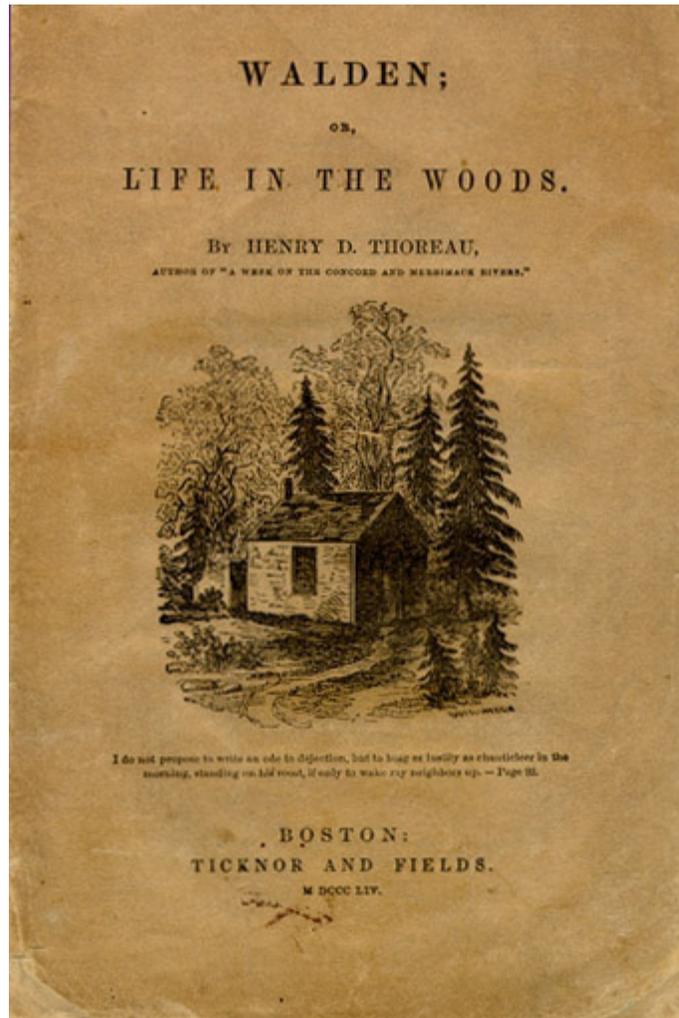
[Reprints "Economy," pages 54.16-56.13.]

Bating the solitude, we think Thoreau's plan of agriculture is worth consideration. There is a simplicity and independence about it, that is rather fascinating, and if practicable in single solitude it would be certainly no less so in Association. In fact our method at Oneida and the other agricultural Associations in confining ourselves mostly to thorough garden-tillage, is substantially carrying things out to a similar result.

TIMELINE OF WALDEN

1854

1854



and his son [Henry James, Jr.](#) This is now at the Houghton Library of Harvard University:



The material about [WALDEN](#) from the July 29th edition of the New-York [Daily Tribune](#) was repeated on pages 6 and 7 of this day's issue of the [Semi-Weekly Tribune](#).



Aug. 1. 6 A.M. On river. — *Bidens Beckii*. Bass probably out of bloom about a week. Corallorhiza, some days at Fair Haven Pond.

[Transcript]

P.M. — To Peter's.
Sunflower. Meadow-haying begun for a week.
Erechthites, begun for four or five days in Moore's Swamp. Two turtle doves in the stubble beyond. *Hieracium Canadense*, apparently a day or two. Do not see stamens of thyme-leaved pinweed, but perhaps petals. Ground-nut well out.



August 2, Wednesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed in the east part of Lincoln.

View [Thoreau](#)'s personal working drafts of his surveys courtesy of AT&T and the Concord Free Public Library:

http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_Surveys/Thoreau_Surveys.htm



(The official copy of this survey of course had become the property of the person or persons who had hired this Concord town surveyor to do their surveying work during the 19th Century. Such materials have yet to be recovered.)

On this day our author received a specimen copy of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#).¹⁵⁷

[TIMELINE OF WALDEN](#)

[Thoreau](#)'s holograph title page draft for [WALDEN](#), as preserved in the photograph on page 140 of Van Doren's

157. On this day, also, a copy was purchased for \$1.⁰⁰ by [F.W. Kellogg](#). This Member of Congress representing a district in Michigan may have purchased a copy of a new book of such a title merely due to a known genealogical connection with a Kellogg family of the 16th Century in the town of Saffron Walden in England.



1854

1854

1970 ANNOTATED WALDEN, contains an epigraph from [Mosleh Od-Din Sa'di](#)'s *GULESTAN* that differs considerably from what is found in the Francis Gladwin translation: "The clouds, wind, moon, sun and sky act in cooperation that thou mayest get thy daily bread, and not eat it with indifference; all revolve for thy sake, and are obedient to command; it must be an equitable condition, that thou shalt be obedient also." Whereas the Gladwin translation has it on page 94 as "Clouds and wind, the moon, the sun, and the sky are all busied, that thou, O man, mayest obtain thy bread, and eat it not in neglect. For thy sake, all these revolve and are obedient: it is not therefore consistent with the rules of justice that thou only shouldst not obey." This is also something of a mystery for another reason, for either the epigraph had been omitted by the point at which the manuscript reached the typesetter, or the typesetter for some reason left it out and then Henry neglected to register a correction in his personal print copy:

ابر و باد و مه و خورشید و فلک در کارند
تا تو نانی به کف آری و به غفلت نخوری
همه از بهر تو سرگشته و فرمانبردار
شرط انصاف نباشد که تو فرمان نبری

This is of considerable significance, and [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#) has pointed out on page 54 of *THE BOATMAN* the significance of what was here somehow being erased:

"Give us this day our daily bread." Those words from the Christian Lord's Prayer would have been heard night after night in candlelit colonial homes. Bread made of cereal grains, mainly corn and rye, was the final link in a food chain that is eight links long, beginning with the river. The river gave them muck. The muck gave them hay. The hay gave them cattle fodder. The cattle gave them manure. The manure was used as fertilizer. With fertilizer, the otherwise lean upland soils produced the grain on which their subsistence depended. And finally, that grain gave them their daily bread.

1854

1854

At 5 PM [Thoreau](#) walked to Conantum (“J6” on the Gleason map of the Concord vicinity) along Hubbard’s Path. Here is a painting “Thoreau’s Path” by Cindy Kassab:



The full text of [Thoreau](#)’s “[SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS](#)” having been published in [The Liberator](#), at this point [Horace Greeley](#) used that as the basis for a republication in the [New-York Daily Tribune](#), without paragraphing and with an editorial entitled “A Higher- Law Speech”:

The lower-law journals so often make ado about the speeches in Congress of those whom they designate champions of the Higher Law, that we shall enlighten and edify them, undoubtedly, by the report we publish this morning of a **genuine** Higher Law Speech — that of Henry D. Thoreau at the late celebration of our National Anniversary in Framingham, Mass., when Wm. Lloyd Garrison burned a copy of the Federal Constitution. No one can read this speech without realizing that the claims of Messrs. [[Charles Sumner](#), [William Henry Seward](#) and [Salmon Portland Chase](#)] to be recognized as Higher-Law champions are of a very questionable validity. Mr. Thoreau is the Simon-Pure article, and his remarks have a racy piquancy and telling **point** which none but a man thoroughly in earnest and regardless of self in his fidelity to a deep conviction ever fully attains. The humor here so signally evinced is born of pathos — it is the lightning which reveals to hearers and readers the speaker’s profound abhorrence of the sacrifice or subordination of one human being to the pleasure or convenience of another. A great many will read this speech with unction who will pretend to blame us for printing it; but

our back is broad and can bear censure. Let each and all be fairly heard.

TIMELINE OF ESSAYS



[Transcript]

Aug. 2. Wednesday. Surveying in Lincoln. *Solidago lanceolata*, two or three days. Decodon. *Polygonum arifolium* in swamp. *Chenopodium hybridum* probably now open. Surveyed east part of Lincoln.

5 P.M. — To Conantum on foot.

My attic chamber has compelled me to sit below with the family at evening for a month. I feel the necessity of deepening the stream of my life; I must cultivate privacy. It is very dissipating to be with people too much. As C. [Ellery Channing] says, it takes the edge off a man's thoughts to have been much in society. I cannot spare my moonlight and my mountains for the best of man I am likely to get in exchange.

I am inclined now for a pensive evening walls. Methinks we think of spring mornings and autumn evenings. I go via Hubbard Path. Chelone, say two days, at Conant's meadow beyond Wheeler's. July has been to me a trivial month. It began hot and continued drying, then rained some toward the middle, bringing anticipations of the fall, and then was hot again about the 20th. It has been a month of haying, heat, low water, and weeds. Birds have grown up and flown more or less in small flocks, though I notice a new sparrow's nest and eggs and perhaps a catbird's eggs lately. The woodland quire has steadily diminished in volume.

At the bass I now find that that memorable hum has ceased and the green berries are formed. Now blueberries, huckleberries, and low blackberries are in their prime. The fever-bush berries will not be ripe for two or three weeks. At Bittern Cliff the *Gerardia quercifolia* (?), apparently four or five days at least. How interesting the small alternate cornel trees, with often a flat top, a peculiar ribbed and green leaf, and pretty red stems supporting its harmless blue berries inclined to drop off! The sweet viburnum, not yet turning. I see apparently a thistle-down over the river at Bittern Cliff; it is borne toward me, but when it reaches the rock sonic influence raises it high above the rock out of my reach. What a fall-like look the decayed and yellow leaves of the large Solomon's-seal have in the thickets now! These, with skunk cabbage and hellebore, suggest that the early ripeness of leaves, etc., has somewhat normal in it, — that there is a fall already begun. *Eupatorium sessilifolium*, one or two stamens apparently for two days; its smooth leaf distinguishes it by the touch from the sunflower.

I sat on the Bittern Cliff as the still eve drew on There was a man on Fair Haven furling his sail and bathing from his boat. A boat on a river whose waters are smoothed, and a man disporting in it! How it harmonizes with the stillness and placidity of the evening! Who knows but he is a poet in his yet obscure but golden youth? Few else go alone into retired scenes without gun or fishing-rod. He bathes in the middle of the pond while his boat slowly drifts away. As I go up the hill, surrounded by its shadow, while the sun is setting, I am soothed by the delicious stillness of the evening, save that on the hills the wind blows. I was surprised by the sound of my own voice. It is an atmosphere burdensome with thought. For the first time for a month, at least, I am reminded that thought is possible. The din of trivialness is silenced. I float over or through the deeps of silence. It is the first silence I have heard for a month. My life had been a River Platte, tinkling over its sands but useless for all great navigation, but now it suddenly became a fathomless ocean. It shelved off to unimagined depths.

I sit on rock on the hilltop, Rearm with the heat of the departed sun, in my thin summer clothes. Here are the seeds of some berries in the droppings of sonic The sun has been set fifteen minutes, bird on the rock, and a long cloudy finger, stretched along the northern horizon, is held over the point where it disappeared. I see dark shadows formed on the south side of the woods east of the river. The creaking of the crickets becomes clear and loud and shrill, — a sharp tinkling, like rills bubbling up from the ground. After a little while the western sky is suddenly suffused with a pure white light, against which the hickories further east on the hill show black with beautiful distinctness. Day does not furnish so interesting a ground. A few sparrows sing as in the morning and the spring; also a peawai and a chewink. Meanwhile the moon in her first quarter is burnishing her disk. Now suddenly the cloudy finger and the few scattered clouds glow with the parting salute of the sun; the rays of the sun, which has so long sunk below the convex earth, are reflected from each cloudy promontory with more incomparable brilliancy than ever. The hardhack leaves stand up so around the stem that now, at first starlight, I see only their light under sides a rod off. Do they as much by day?

The surface of the forest on the east of the river presents a singularly cool and wild appearance, cool as a pot of green paint, — stretches of green light and shade, reminding me of some lonely mountainside. The nighthawk flies low, skimming over the ground now. How handsome lie the oats which have been cradled in long rows in the field, a quarter of a mile uninterruptedly! The thick stub ends, so evenly laid, are almost as rich a sight to me as the graceful taps. A few fireflies in the meadows. I am uncertain whether that so large and bright and high was a firefly or a shooting star. Shooting stars are but fireflies of the firmament. The crickets on the causeway make a steady creak, on the dry pasture-tops an interrupted one. I was compelled to stand to write where a soft, faint light from the western sky came in between two willows.

Fields to-day sends me a specimen copy of my "Walden." It is to be published on the 12th inst.



August 3, Thursday: One H. Woodman, presumably the Boston lawyer Horatio Woodman who was a friend of [Waldo Emerson](#)'s, purchased a copy of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) for \$1.⁰⁰.

TIMELINE OF WALDEN

There isn't conclusive evidence but it does seem likely that perusing this copy of [WALDEN](#) would fail to enable this Boston lawyer in learning to live a life of simplicity and straightforwardness — for in a later timeframe it appears that while under considerable stress due to self-induced financial and legal difficulties, he would commit [suicide](#) by dropping from a steamboat into the Long Island Sound:

MR. WOODMAN'S DISAPPEARANCE.

A BOSTON LAWYER'S SUPPOSED SUICIDE FROM A FALL RIVER STEAM-BOAT.

No light has yet been thrown upon the mystery surrounding the disappearance of Horatio Woodman, a well-known Boston lawyer, who, after several days' sojourn in this City, embarked for home on the steamer Newport, and did not reach his destination, as far as can be learned. Mr. Woodman had been in financial straits for years, and the object of his visit here was to raise money to refund amounts owed by him to estates which he managed, and to clear off old scores growing out of his pension business. He met with no success, and started on his return trip as stated above. The only person on board the Newport who knew him was the barber, Revallion, who has also a shop in Boston. He had often shaved Mr. Woodman in his Boston shop, and knew him well. Revallion says that the steamer was well on its way when Woodman entered the barber's shop. He seemed to be in excellent spirits, and chatted pleasantly with the barber. Baggage Agent King was questioned by Woodman as to the time the steamer landed at Newport. He said that he had engaged to meet a man there, and was perplexed to know how he could get word to his wife, who expected him home by the Fall River train which the steamer connected with. Agent King offered to carry a letter and forward it by the railway baggage agent. The proposition struck Woodman favorably, and he wrote the note and intrusted it to King. He walked off in the direction of the state-rooms, and has not been seen since. The steamer lay at Fall River while two trains were dispatched. After leaving Newport, according to custom, Pursor Bowles made his rounds collecting the Providence tickets.

He found the door of the state-room occupied by Woodman open. The bedding was disordered and a hand-sachel and shawl were lying on the floor. Who owned them was not known until a week afterward. A nephew of Mr. Woodman, who inquired concerning him in Fall River, identified the articles, and ascertained the few circumstances related above. The letter to his wife had been duly forwarded. It was brief, but in cheerful tone, and assigned a business engagement in Newport as the cause of his detention. It contained no hint of a suicidal purpose or prolonged absence. The officers of the company made diligent inquiry at Newport, Providence, and Fall River, but found nothing that served as a clue. His friends have concluded that he fell, was thrown, or jumped, overboard.

Notwithstanding Mr. Woodman's cheerfulness of demeanor, the condition of his affairs has been found to be rather bad, and it is not improbable that he committed suicide to be rid of his difficulties. During most of his 40 years at the Bar he made a specialty of the land-warrant business, and secured a large and very lucrative practice in claims before the War and Pension Departments at Washington. For the past 10 years he has been considerably embarrassed financially, and on July 19, 1870, went into bankruptcy. Though that was over eight years ago, he has not yet been discharged, nor has his Assignee been yet able to declare a dividend. From the court records it appears that his liabilities footed up \$199,896, while his assets, including large tracts of Western lands of doubtful value, are set down at \$93,641. His bounty and pension business was the main source of his troubles. In one case it was shown that Woodman had exacted illegal fees for procuring a pension for Mrs. Martha A. Towner, the widow of Walter R. C. Towner, of the Forty-eighth Massachusetts Volunteers. He was tried and fined \$250, besides the costs, which amounted to \$102.45. In addition to this charge, there was a more serious one, namely, that of having forged Mrs. Towner's name. An indictment for forgery against him on account of this transaction is now pending, and was to have been put on the February docket for trial in Boston.

[Kathryn Schulz](#), who writes for [The New Yorker](#), has glanced into the cold eyes of a "Pond Scum" [Henry Thoreau](#), and has engaged in a deep reading of [WALDEN](#), coming to the considered conclusion that this writing amounts to mere "cabin porn." —Could that help explain why one of the first readers of the book then killed himself?

Like many canonized works, [WALDEN] is more revered than read, so it exists for most people only as a dim impression retained from adolescence or as the source of a few famous lines: "I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately." "If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them." "Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity!"

Extracted from their contexts, such declarations read like the text on inspirational posters or quote-a-day calendars – purposes to which they are routinely put. Together with the bare facts of the retreat at Walden, those lines have become the ones by which we adumbrate Thoreau, so that our image of the man has also become simplified and inspirational. In that image, Thoreau is our national conscience: the voice in the American wilderness, urging us to be true to ourselves and to live in harmony with nature.

This vision cannot survive any serious reading of "Walden." The real Thoreau was, in the fullest sense of the word, self-obsessed: narcissistic, fanatical about self-control, adamant that he required nothing beyond himself to understand and thrive in the world. From that inward fixation flowed a social and political vision that is deeply unsettling. It is true that Thoreau was an excellent naturalist and an eloquent and prescient voice for the preservation of wild places. But "Walden" is less a cornerstone work of environmental literature than the original cabin porn: a fantasy about rustic life divorced from the reality of living in the woods, and, especially, a fantasy about escaping the entanglements and responsibilities of living among other people.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR AUGUST 3d]



August 4, Friday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked down the Cambridge Turnpike to Smith's Hill (Gleason G10).

The Nisshōki or Hinomaru "circle of the sun" was established by the Tokugawa shogunate as the official identifying flag to be flown by [Japanese](#) ships.

[WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) was reviewed under the heading "A New Book by Henry Thoreau" on the 2d page of the Dedham, Massachusetts gazette, [Norfolk Democrat](#).

Ticknor & Fields will issue in a few days a book by the eccentric Thoreau, of Concord, entitled, "Walden, of Life in the Woods." It is a record of Mr. Thoreau's life and experience during a residence of two or three years in a house of his own building, on the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord. From several extracts which we have seen in the Commonwealth, Tribune, N. Y. Evening Post, and other papers, we conclude that it will be one of the most attractive books of the year.



Aug. 4. Friday. P.M. — Via Turnpike to Smith's Hill.

A still, cloudy day with from time to time a gentle August rain. Rain and mist contract our horizon and we notice near and small objects. The weeds — fleabane, etc. — begin to stand high in the potato-fields, overtopping the potatoes. This hardhack interests me with its bedewed pyramid. Rue is out of bloom. Sicyos, apparently in a few days. The buttonwoods are much improved this year and may recover. Sonchus in one place out of bloom. Purple gerardia, by brook. The autumnal dandelion is now more common. *Ranunculus aquatilis* var. *fluviatilis*, white petals with a yellow claw, small flowers on surface of Hosmer's ditch, west end, by Turnpike. A new plant. Say July 1st. Is it open in sunny weather? The lower leaves of the sharp-angled lycopus are a dull red and those of the elodea are a fine, clear, somewhat crimson red. Fragrant everlasting. The swamp blackberry on high land, ripe a day or two. I hear the pigeon woodpecker still, — wickoff, wickoff, wickoff, wickoff, from a neighboring oak. See a late rose still in flower. On this hill (Smith's) the bushes are black with huckleberries. They droop over the rocks with the weight and are very handsome. Now in their prime. Some glossy black, some dull black, some blue; and patches of *Vaccinium vacillans* intermixed. *Hieracium paniculatum* in woods by Saw Mill Brook, a day or two. The leaves of some weeds, perhaps goldenrods, are eaten in a ribbon character like some strange writing apparently half-way through the leaf, often along the edge. This for some time. *Goodyera pubescens*, a day or two. *Hieracium scabrum*, apparently two or three days. It is already fall in low swampy woods where the cinnamon fern prevails. There: are the sight and scent of beginning decay. I see a new growth on oak sprouts, three to six inches, with reddish leaves as in spring. Some whole trees show the lighter new growth at a distance, above the dark green. *Cannabis sativa*. After sunset, a very low, thick, and flat white fog like a napkin, on the meadows, which ushers in a foggy night.

[Transcript]



August 5, Saturday: Russian forces devastated the main Turkish army of the Caucasus at Kurudere, forcing them to retreat to Kars. The battle left 11,000 total casualties.

At 8:30 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) went by boat to Coreopsis Bend. A subscription library in New York City, the "Mercantile Library," purchased two copies of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) for \$1.³⁹.

[WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) was reviewed under the heading "Life in the Woods" on the 1st page of the [Bunker-Hill Aurora and Boston Mirror](#), columns 6-7:

[Thoreau] says that he lived alone two years, a mile from any neighbor, in a house which he built himself, on the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, Massachusetts, where he earned his living by the labor of his own hands. How he lived, a few extracts from his own story will best delineate:

BUILDING THE HOUSE.

**[Reprints "Where I Lived, and What I Lived For,"
page 90.32-34; and "Economy,"
pages 40.30-42.5, 42.34-45.28, 48.28-49.22.]**

Reprint of the July 29th review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) [by [Horace Greeley?](#)] titled "A Massachusetts Hermit" in the New-York [Weekly Tribune](#), 6:6-7:1-3.

Ticknor & Fields have in press a work by HENRY D. THOREAU entitled "Life in the Woods," describing the experience of the author during a solitary residence of two years in a hut on the shore of Walden Pond in Concord, Massachusetts. The volume promises to be one of curious interest, and by the courtesy of the publishers we are permitted to take some extracts in advance of the regular issue.

THE HERMIT BUILDS HIS HUT.

[Reprints "Economy," pages 40.30-45.28.]

THE HERMIT PLANTS BEANS.

[Reprints "Economy," pages 54.16-56.13.]

THE HERMIT COMMENCES HOUSEKEEPING.

[Reprints "Economy," pages 65.14-67.24.]

THE HERMIT'S FIRST SUMMER.

[Reprints "Sounds," pages 111.18-114.21.]

THE HERMIT FINDS A FRIEND.

[Reprints "Visitors," pages 144.13-150.27.]

THE HERMIT HAS VISITORS, MANY OF THEM BORES.

[Reprints "Visitors," pages 150.28-154.17.]

TIMELINE OF WALDEN



Aug. 5. Saturday. 8.30 A.M. — By boat to Coreopsis Bend.

[Transcript]

A general fog in the morning, dispersed by 8 o'clock. At first the air still and water smooth, afterward a, little breeze from time to time, — judging from my sail, from the north-northeast. A platoon of haymakers has just attacked the meadow-grass in the Wheeler meadow.

Methinks the river's bank is now [[^]Vide Aug. 15.] in its most interesting condition. On the one hand are the light, lofty, and wide-spread umbels of the sium, pontederias already past their prime, white lilies perhaps not diminished in number, heart-leaf flowers, etc.; on the other the *Salix Purshiana*, full-foliaged, but apparently already slightly crisped and imbrowned or yellowed with heat, the button-bush in full blossom, and the mikania now covering it with its somewhat hoary bloom. The immediate bank is now most verdurous and florid, consisting of light rounded masses of verdure and bloom, and the river, slightly raised by the late rains, takes all rawness from the brim. Now, then, the river's brim is in perfection, after the mikania is in bloom and before the pontederia and pads and the willows are too much imbrowned, and the meadows all shorn. But already very many pontederia leaves and pads have turned brown or black. The fall, in fact, begins with the first heats of July. Skunk-cabbage, hellebores, convallarias, pontederias, pads, etc., appear to usher it in. It is one long acclivity from winter to midsummer and another long declivity from midsummer to winter. The mower's scythe, however, spares a fringe of to him useless or noxious weeds along the river's edge, such as sium, wool-grass, various sedges and bulrushes, pontederias, and polygonums. The pontederia leaves have but a short life, the spring so late and fall so early. Smaller flowers I now observe on or by the river are yellow lilies, both kinds; the larger polygonum (*hydropiperoides*), with slender white spikes, and the small front-rank rose-colored one; the *Bidens Beckii*, three to six or seven inches above the surface, on that very coarse, stout-stemmed, somewhat utricularia-like weed which makes dense beds in the water; the three water utricularias especially the purple;

the cardinal-flower; water asclepias; and a few late roses. As I go past the white ash, I notice many small cobwebs on the bank, shelf above shelf, promising a fair day.

I find that we are now in the midst of the meadow-haying season, and almost every meadow or section of a meadow has its band of half a dozen mowers and rakers, either bending to their manly work with regular and graceful motion or resting in the shade, while the boys are turning the grass to the sun. I passed as many as sixty or a hundred men thus at work to-day. They still; up a twig with the leaves on, on the river's brink, as a guide for the mowers, that they may not exceed the owner's bounds. I hear their scythes crouching the coarse weeds by the river's brink as I row near. The horse or oxen stand near at hand in the shade on the firm land, waiting to draw home a load anon. I see a platoon of three or four mowers, one behind the other, diagonally advancing with regular sweeps across the broad meadow and ever and anon standing to whet their scythes. Or else, having made several bouts, they are resting in the shade on the edge of the firm land. In one place I see one sturdy mower stretched on the ground amid his oxen in the shade of an oak, trying to sleep; or I see one wending far inland with a jug to some well-known spring.

There is very little air stirring to-day, and that seems to blow which way it listeth. At Rice's Bend the river is for a long distance clogged with weeds, where I think my boat would lodge in midstream if I did not more than guide it. The potamogeton leaves almost bridge it over, and the bur-reed blades rise a foot or more above the surface. The water weeps, or is strained, through. Though yesterday was rainy, the air to-day is filled with a blue haze. The coreopsis is (many) fairly but yet freshly out, I think not more than a week, from one foot to a foot and a half high, some quite white, commonly the petals reflexed a little, just on the edge of or in the water. The meadow-grass not yet cut there. In crossing the meadow to the Jenkins Spring at noon, I was surprised to find that the dew was not off the deep meadow-grass, but I wet the legs of my pants through. It does not get off, then, during the day. I hear these days still those familiar notes — of a vireo? — somewhat peawai-like, — two or more, whe-tar che. Near Lee's (returning), saw a large bittern, pursued by small birds, alight on the shorn meadow near the pickerel-weeds, but, though I rowed to the spot, he effectually concealed himself.

Now Lee and his men are returning to their meadow-haying after dinner, and stop at the well under the black oak in the field. I too repair to the well when they are gone, and taste the flavor of black strap on the bucket's edge. As I return down-stream, I see the haymakers now raking with hand or horse rakes into long rows or loading, one on the load placing it and treading it down, while others fork it up to him, and others are gleaning with rakes after the forkers. All farmers are anxious to get their meadow-hay as soon as possible for fear the river will rise. On the 2d, Hagar told me he had clone all his haying, having little or no meadow, and now the chief business was to fell weeds in the orchard, etc. Formerly they used to think they had nothing to do when the haying was (lone and might go a-fishing for three weeks.

I see very few whorled or common utricularias, but the purple ones are exceedingly abundant on both sides the river, apparently from one end to the other. The broad pad field on the southwest side of Fair Haven is distinctly purpled with them. Their color is peculiarly high for a water plant. In Sudbury the huckleberries, etc., appeared to be dried up. At Lee's Cliff, I meet in the path a woodchuck, — probably [a] this year's one — which stood within seven feet and turned the side of its head to me as if deaf of one ear, and stood listening till I advanced. A very large flock of blackbirds, — perhaps grackles and cowbirds and maybe (?) young red-wings, — with a roar of wings, flying from this side the river to that and alighting on the sedge and willows and ground.

During the last decade of his life, Thoreau visited his rivers more than twice as often as the upland woods and lakes that he is far better known for writing about.

— Professor Robert M. Thorson, THE BOATMAN, page 3



 August 6, Sunday: [Charles Wesley Slack](#) wrote from Brandon, Vermont to Evelina E. Vannevar Slack; in Boston, describing his trip to Brandon.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went on the Concord River to Tarbell Hills (Buttrick's Hill, Davis's Hill, and Ball's Hill at the W. Tarbell place, Gleason C8-D9).

On this day and the following one there would be anti-Catholic rioting by the [nativists](#) of Louisville, Kentucky (the [Irish](#) district of town would be attacked with small arms and cannon).

ANTI-CATHOLICISM



Aug. 6. P.M. — To Tarbell Hills by boat.

[Transcript]

Rather cool with a strong wind, before which we glide. The rippled surface of the water and the light under sides of the white maples in rounded masses bordering the stream, and also the silvery tops of the swamp white oaks, give a pleasing breezy aspect to the shores, etc. Surprised to see the hibiscus just out nearer Flint's and also at Ball's Hill Bend. Apparently always earlier in those places. I noticed yesterday that the fields of *Juncus militaris* on the south side of Fair Haven showed a stripe six or eight inches wide next the water and bounded by a very level line above of a different color, more or less reddish or as if wet, as if there had been a subsidence of the water to that extent. Yet it has actually risen, rather. The sun is quite hot to-day, but the wind is cool and I question if my thin coat will be sufficient. Methinks that after this date there is commonly a vein of coolness in the wind. The Great Meadows are for the most part shorn. Small light-green sensitive ferns are springing up full of light on the bank. I see some smaller white maples turned a dull red, — crimsonish, — a slight blush on them. Grape-vines, the downy under sides of their leaves turned up by the wind, [[^]Vide Aug. 20.] are methinks more conspicuous now at a distance along the edge of the meadow, where they round and mass the trees and bushes, — long, irregular bowers, here and there marked with the white, downy under sides of the leaves. The wind is very unsteady and flirts our sail about to this side and that. We prefer to sail to-day (Sunday) because there are no haymakers in the meadow.

Landed at Tarbell's Hills. I am more pleased with the form of the ground there than with anything else, — with the huckleberry hills, and hollows, the cow-paths, and perhaps the old corn-hills. There are very agreeable slopes and undulations, and the light is very agreeably reflected from the barren surface of the earth. It is at length cloudy, and still behind the hills, and very grateful is this anticipation of the fall, — coolness and cloud, and the crickets steadily chirping in mid-afternoon. The huckleberries are somewhat shrivelled and drying up. As I look westward up the stream, the oak, etc., on Ponkawtasset are of a very dark green, almost black, which, methinks, they have worn only since midsummer. Has this anything to do with the bluish mistiness of the air? or is it an absolute deepening of their line? We row back with two big stones in the stern. Interesting here and there the tall and slender zizania waving on the shore, with its light panicle eighteen inches or more in length.

During the last decade of his life, Thoreau visited his rivers more than twice as often as the upland woods and lakes that he is far better known for writing about.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 3



 August 7, Monday: The Barony of Knyphausen was annexed by Oldenburg.

On this day and the following one there would be anti-Catholic rioting by the nativists of St. Louis, Missouri (10 would be killed and 30 injured).

ANTI-CATHOLICISM

In the afternoon Henry Thoreau walked on Peter's Path (Gleason E7-E9) to Beck Stow's Swamp (Gleason E9), and thence to Walden Pond.

A remark was made about WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS by "Algoma" (Charles Creighton Hazewell) in his column titled "Our Boston Correspondence" in the New-York Herald, page 6, column 2.

Mr. Thoreau's new work, "Walden, or Life in the Woods," is advertised to be out on the 9th.

TIMELINE OF WALDEN



Aug. 7. It is inspiring at last to hear the wind whistle and moan about my attic, after so much trivial summer weather, and to feel cool in my thin pants.

[Transcript]

Do you not feel the fruit of your spring and summer beginning to ripen, to harden its seed within you? Do not your thoughts begin to acquire consistency as well as flavor and ripeness? How can we expect a harvest of thought who have not had a seed-time of character? Already some of my small thoughts — fruit of my spring life — are ripe, like the berries which feed the first broods of birds; and other some are prematurely ripe and bright, like the lower leaves of the herbs which have felt the summer's drought.

Seasons when our mind is like the strings of a harp which is swept, and we stand and listen. A man may hear strains in his thought far surpassing any oratorio. Sicyos.

P.M. — To Peter's, Beck Stow's, and Walden.

Liatrix. Still autumnal, breezy with a cool vein in the wind; so that passing from the cool and breezy into the sunny and warm places, you begin to love the heat of summer. It is the contrast of the cool wind with the warm sun. I walk over the pinweed-field. It is just cool enough in my thin clothes. There is a light on the earth and leaves, as if they were burnished. It is the glistening autumnal side of summer. I feel a cool vein in the breeze, which braces my thought, and I pass with pleasure over sheltered and sunny portions of the sand where the summer's heat is undiminished, and I realize what a friend I am losing. The pinweed does not show its stamens — I mean the *L. thymifolia*. It was open probably about July 25. This off side of summer glistens like a burnished shield. The waters now are some degrees cooler. Winds show the under sides of the leaves. The cool nocturnal creak of the crickets is heard in the mid-afternoon. Tansy is apparently now in its prime, and the early goldenrods have acquired a brighter yellow. From this off side of the year, this imbricated slope, with alternating burnished surfaces and shady ledges, much more light and heat are reflected (less absorbed), methinks, than from the springward side. In midsummer we are of the earth, — confounded with it, — and covered with its dust. Now we begin to erect ourselves somewhat and walk upon its surface. I am not so much reminded of former years, as of existence prior to years.

From Peter's I look over the Great Meadows. There are sixty or more men in sight on them, in squads of half a dozen far and near, revealed by their white shirts. They are alternately lost and reappear from behind distant clump of trees. A great part of the farmers of Concord are now in the meadows, and toward night great loads of hay are seen rolling slowly along the river's bank, — on the firmer ground there, — and perhaps fording the stream itself, toward the distant barn, followed by a troop of tired haymakers. The very shrub oaks and hazels now look curled and dry in many places. The bear oak acorns on the former begin to be handsome. Tansy is in full blaze in some warm, dry places. It must be time, methinks, to collect the hazelnuts and dry them; many of their leaves are turned. The Jersey tea fruit is blackened. The bushy gerardia is apparently out in some places. Blueberries pretty thick in Gowing's Swamp. Some have a slightly bitterish taste.

A wasp stung me at one high blueberry bush on the forefinger of my left hand, just above the second joint. It was very venomous; a white spot with the red mark of the sting in the centre, while all the rest of the finger was red, soon showed where I was stung, and the finger soon swelled much below the joint, so that I could not completely close the finger, and the next finger sympathized so much with it that at first there was a little doubt which was stung. These insects are effectively weaponed. But there was not enough venom to prevail further

than the finger.
Trillium berry.

 August 8, Tuesday: [Zenaide Laetitia Julie Bonaparte](#) died.

Eva Evelina E. Vannevar Slack wrote from Boston to [Charles Wesley Slack](#) on family and business matters.

In Vienna, Austria, France, and Great Britain presented their Four Points for peace with Russia. Russia would need to abandon its claim of protection over Christians in Ottoman lands, would need to agree to a revision of the Straits Settlement, would need to agree to free passage of the mouth of the Danube, and would need to guarantee the integrity of Moldavia, Wallachia, and Serbia.

Horace Smith of the Smith & Wesson Company of Norwich, Connecticut patented the “Volcanic” metal bullet cartridge for use in revolver handguns having a bored-through cylinder.

The Albany, [New York](#) City Hospital opened for patients.

[Henry Thoreau](#) went by boat up the [Assabet River](#) to Annursnack Hill (Gleason D3). The official date of publication of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) was remarked on the 2d page of the Boston [Daily Bee](#), in column 3: [Thoreau](#) wrote to [H.G.O. Blake](#).

LIFE IN THE WOODS comes out tomorrow.

[TIMELINE OF WALDEN](#)

Concord Aug 8th '54

Mr Blake,

Methinks I have spent a rather unprofitable summer thus far. I have been too much with the world, as the poet might say. The completest performance of the highest duties it imposes would yield me but little satisfaction. Better the neglect of all such because your life passed on a level where it was impossible to recognize them. Latterly I have heard the very flies buzz too distinctly, and have accused myself because I did not still this superficial din. We must not be too easily distracted by the crying of children—or of dynasties. The Irishman erects his styè, and gets drunk, and jabbars more and more under my eaves, and I am responsible for all that filth and folly. I find it, as ever, very unprofitable to have

much to do with men. It is sowing the wind, but not reaping even the whirlwind,— only reaping an unprofitable calm and stagnation. Our conversation is a smooth and civil and never-ending speculation merely. I take up the thread of it again in the morning [sic] with very much such courage as the invalid takes his prescribed Seidlitz powders. Shall I help you

Page 2

you to some of the mackerel? It would be more respectable if men, as has been said before, instead of being such pygmy desperates, were Giant Despairs. Emerson says that life is so unprofitable and shabby for the most part, that he is driven to all sorts of [resources], and among the rest to men. I tell him that we differ only in our resources. Mine is to get away from men. They very rarely affect me as grand or beautiful; but I know that there is a sunrise & a sunset every day. In the summer this world is a mere watering-place—a Saratoga—drinking so [many] tumblers of Congress water; and in the winter, is it any better, with its oratorios? I have seen more men than usual lately, and well as I was acquainted with one, I am surprised ~~I am surprised~~ to find what vulgar fellows they are. They do a little business commonly each day, in order to pay their board, and then they congregate in sitting rooms and feebly fabulate and paddle in the social slush, and when I think that they have sufficiently relaxed, and am prepared to see them steal away to their shrines (They) go unashamed to their beds, and take on a new layer of sloth. They

Page 3

may be single or have families in their faineancy. I do not meet men who can have nothing to do with me because they have so much to do with themselves. However, I trust that a very few cherish

purposes which they never declare. Only think, for a moment, of a man about his affairs! How we should respect him! How glorious he would appear! Not working for any Corporation—its agent or President, but fulfilling the end of his being! A man about his business would be the cynosure of all eyes.

The other evening I was determined that I would silence this shallow din—that I would walk in various directions & see if there was not to be found any depth of silence around. As Buonaparte sent out his ~~mounted~~ horsemen in the Red Sea on all sides to find shallow water—so I sent forth my mounted thoughts to find deep water. I left the village & paddled up the river to Fair Haven Pond. As the sun went down, I saw a solitary boatman disporting on the smooth lake. The falling dews seemed to strain & purify the ~~y~~ air, and I was soothed with an infinite stillness. I got the world, as it were, by the

Page 4

nape of the neck, and held it under in the tide of its own events till it was drowned, and then I let it go down stream like a dead dog. Vast hollow chambers of silence stretched away on every side, & my being expanded in proportion and filled them. Then first could I appreciate ~~the din which the world sound~~ and find it musical.

But now for your news. Tell us of the year. Have you fought the good fight? What is the state of your crops? Is your harvest agoing to answer well to the seed-time, and are you cheered by the prospect of stretching cornfields. Is there any blight on your fields, any murrain in your herds? Have you tried the size and quality of your potatoes? It does one good to see their balls dangling in the low

*lands. Have you got your meadow
hay before the fall rains shall
set in? Is there enough in your
barns to keep your cattle over?
Are you killing weeds now-a-days?
Or have you earned leisure to go
a fishing? Did you plant any
Giant Regrets last spring—such as
I saw advertised. It is not a new spe-
cies but the result of cultivation,*

Page 5

*and a fertile soil. They are ex-
cellent for sauce. How is it with
your marrow squashes for winter
use? Is there likely to be a sufficiency
of fall feed in your neighborhood?
What is the state of your springs?
I read that in your county there
is more water [in] the hills than in
the valleys. Do you find it easy to
get all the help you require?
Work early and late, and let your
men & teams rest at noon. Be
careful not to drink too much
sweetened water while at your
hoeing this hot weather. You can
bear the heat much better for it*

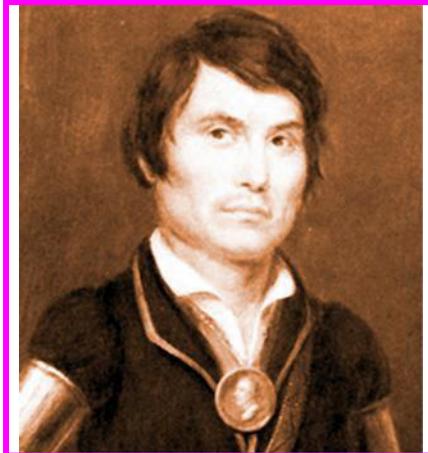
H. D. T.

“I have been too much with the world.”

1854

1854

Also appearing in Boston's Daily Bee in this day's issue was a report on [Joe Polis](#) by a correspondent named "D.S.":



TIMELINE OF THE MAINE WOODS

THE PENOBSCOT INDIANS — SOMETHING INTERESTING IN RELATION TO THEM.
— The following interesting information on the Penobscot Indians, is taken from a recent letter in the Puritan Recorder of this city. It was written at Oldtown, Me.

My special object in writing this communication is to give some facts respecting the Penobscot Tribe of Indians, from whom this town derived its name. Their residence is upon the islands in the Penobscot, extending some fifty miles and containing some thousand of acres. Most of the tribe dwell upon the south part of the islands, nearest to this town. The tribe like others all over the land has been gradually wasting away. It numbers less than five hundred, of whom many are constantly absent to secure the means of living. The tribe still clings to its ancient custom of retaining at its head, a Chief, or King, or Governor, whose office is hereditary. Some are anxious to have the office elective. Hence two parties were formed who became mutually hostile, and for a time were in open and bitter conflict. At length the parties agreed upon terms of peace, and pledged to each other to bury the Tomahawk at the foot of the Liberty Pole which they had erected at the place of mutual concord for the future. Here was their common rallying point, until the Catholic Bishop and Priests came with the design to cut down that Pole and erect in its stead the cross, the emblem of Romanism. The day came for this transaction. The Indians assembled. The Bishop and Priests appeared in their gorgeous robes and imposing movements to the spot. — There, the preparatory measures having been taken, the Bishop was just giving his orders to apply the axe; when, directly before him, stepped up one of the Indians, a noble, athletic and fearless man, and taking his stand between him and the Liberty Pole — he said to the Bishop: — "You go too far, Bishop. This Pole my



property. He part my property. No white man any right to touch 'em. Suppose Governor of State himself come here; he no right to touch 'em, - Indian property. Who are you? Foreigner, - you come from Massachusetts, - and you go to destroy Indian property. You no touch 'em." The Bishop replied, "You Indians can't understand, - I am your Bishop. - I know what is best for you. You are ignorant, - you don't know." To which the Indian replied: "You say true, Bishop, - the Indian be ignorant, - but who make him ignorant? - You Bishop, and you Priests. You been here on Indian island 125 years. You never teach Indian to read one word. You bury Indian one foot deeper in darkness every year. Now you get him 125 feet deep, and then you tell him, 'He no see.' The Priests tell him, 'Learning is not suitable for Indian, learning was not made for Indian. That which is good for white man is not good for them.' Now, Bishop, you show me one place in Bible where it says learning is good for white man, - he no good for Indian, - and let me carry 'em to Oldtown and show to my friend (meaning Rev. Mr. Merrill,) and see if you read 'em right."

With such reasoning the Indian stood his ground; the Bishop and Priests were compelled to retire; and the Liberty Pole is still standing. After a little time, the same Indian said to the Priest who had been residing there for years - and only to depress the people: "I guess the best way you live somewhere else. Suppose you live here; may be you get hurt." The Priest took the hint, left the island, and has not resided there since. This young man, who took such a decided stand for the tribe, is now one of the Counsel of the Nation, and was their representative two years since to the Legislature of Maine. His deep feeling and earnest efforts for the improvement of his brethren, are traceable to a striking event. Some ten years since, among those who visited the Island, was a pious lady from Boston. She sought those who could read, and finding a young Indian near the church, who answered her inquiry in the affirmative, she presented him with a bible. He was a boy in whom the Priest had expressed great interest, had taken him to his house and had learned [sic] him thus to read the English language. That boy was then residing with the Priest. He received the Bible gratefully and read it with deep interest. He soon found its teachings to be unlike those of the priest. This increased his interest in it, and caused him to conceal the Book in his bosom when not reading it. At length, by accident, he was called suddenly from his room, where he left the bible upon his table; the Priest on coming in saw it, and asked him how he obtained it. The boy frankly told him. The priest then said, "It is a bad book," and threw it into the fire. This, however, did not settle the questions with the youth; he secured another copy and read and reflected, and was hopefully led to Christ as the only hope of his soul. Not long after he was called to his dying scene; when he entreated his elder brother



to labor for the improvement of the tribe, and for its relief from the degradation to which Romanism had so long reduced it. That elder brother is the same person who has been described above. He and others are now active in efforts to elevate the character of the tribe; and, to furnish means of education for the children and youth, they have had, at times, a school upon the island. The pupils have learned rapidly, and as they improve, have an increasing desire to improve.

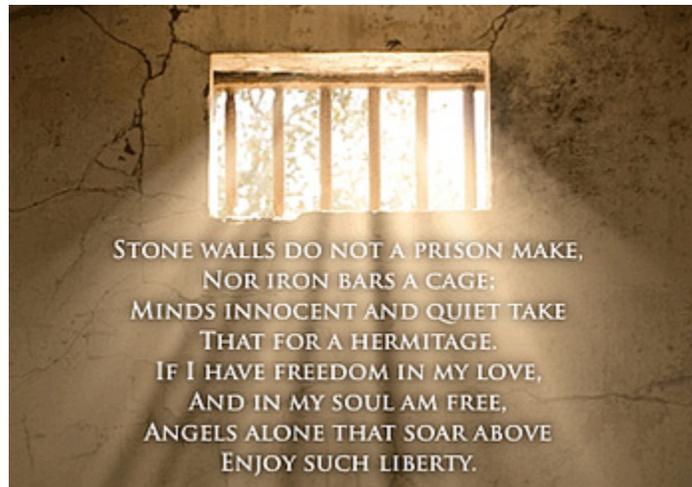
Two years since the legislature paid an extra grant of \$200 to furnish means of improvement. Last year they increased the amount to \$300; and, under the direction of their real and valued friend, Rev. Mr. Merrill, the tribe are receiving advantages for continued improvement. They are feeling more and more the need of it. Obstacles exist which they are laboring to remove. They are compelled to leave the Islands and traverse the country to obtain support; thus taking the children away from a settled home and means of instruction. It is hoped relief on this point will be obtained, by establishing a deposit for the articles manufactured by them, and in return supplying them with the means of living. In respect to religion they are in a transition state. Many of them are totally dissatisfied with Romanism, and disgusted with the priests; and could a judicious course be taken, by those in whom they confide, the light of the Gospel might reach them, and its precious hopes be theirs. They are a very interesting people. No one can visit them and converse with them, without deep sympathy. As a people they are honest and upright in all their dealings, and are treated with respect and kindness by the surrounding communities. They cherish and practice principles of peace. They were never known, in our revolutionary struggles, to act against the Colonies, nor since, against the nation. Nor have they been in conflict with other tribes, except in cases of self-defence and protection. It is hoped that amid the benevolent activities of this age, they will not be overlooked by Christians who know them and can fully appreciate their condition.

Yours truly, D.S.

WALDEN: Consider first how slight a shelter is absolutely necessary. I have seen Penobscot Indians, in this town, living in tents of thin cotton cloth, while the snow was nearly a foot deep around them, and I thought that they would be glad to have it deeper to keep out the wind. Formerly, when how to get my living honestly, with freedom left for my proper pursuits, was a question which vexed me even more than it does now, for unfortunately I am become somewhat callous, I used to see a large box by the railroad, six feet long by three wide, in which the laborers locked up their tools at night, and it suggested to me that every man who was hard pushed might get such a one for a dollar, and, having bored a few auger holes in it, to admit the air at least, get into it when it rained and at night, and hook down the lid, and so have freedom in his love, and in his soul be free. This did not appear the worst, nor by any means a despicable alternative. You could sit up as late as you pleased, and, whenever you got up, go abroad without any landlord or house-lord dogging you for rent. Many a man is harassed to death to pay the rent of a larger and more luxurious box who would not have frozen to death in such a box as this. I am far from jesting. Economy is a subject which admits of being treated with levity, but it cannot so be disposed of.

PEOPLE OF
WALDEN

RICHARD LOVELACE



1854



Aug. 8. P.M. — To Annursnack via Assabet.

1854

[Transcript]

"Up Assabet" is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau's two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 10

A great spider three quarters of an inch long, with large yellow marks on the sides, in middle of a flat web. This is a day of sunny water. As I walk along the bank of the river, I look down a rod and see distinctly the fishes and the bottom. The cardinals are in perfection, standing in dark recesses of the green shore, or in the open meadow. They are fluvial, and stand along some river or brook, like myself. I see one large white maple crisped and tinged with a sort of rosaceous tinge, just above the Golden Horn. The surface is very glassy there. The foliage of most trees is now not only most dense, but a very dark green, — the swamp white oak, clethra, etc. The *Salix Purshiana* is remarkable for its fine and narrow leaves, feathers, — of a very light or yellowish green, as if finely cut, against the dark green of other trees, yet not drooping or curved downward, but remarkably concealing its stems. Some silky cornet leaves are reddish next water. Very many leaves on hills are crisped and curled with drought. Black cherry ripe. The meadow-hay is sprinkled here and there on the river. On Annursnack I scare up many turtle doves from the stubble. Hear a supper horn — J. Smith's? — far away, blown with a long-drawn blast, which sounds like a strain of an æolian harp. The distance has thus refined it. I see some slight dun clouds in the east horizon, — perhaps the smoke from burning meadows.

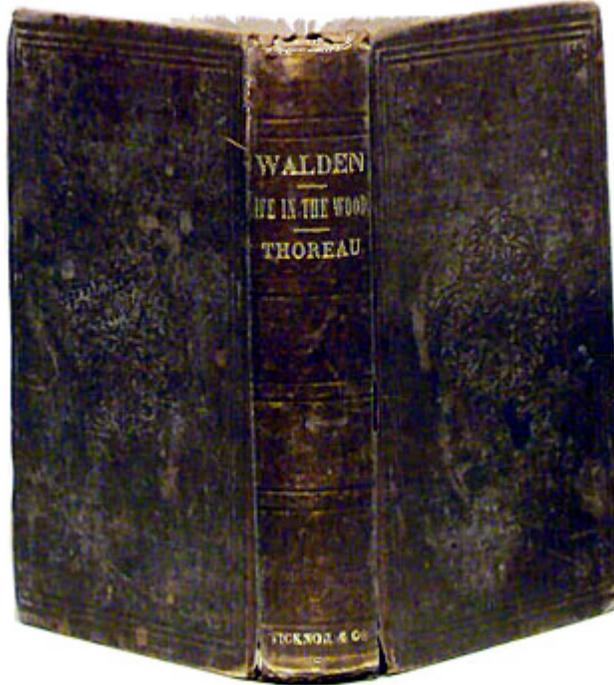
1854

1854



August 9, Wednesday: King Friedrich August II of Saxony died in the Tirol and was succeeded by his brother Johann.

“‘[WALDEN](#)’ published” (JOURNAL); Ticknor and Fields had printed 2,000 copies.



TIMELINE OF WALDEN

The drawing provided by [Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau](#) for the title page of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) has been criticized in a number of particulars. The evergreens shown are firs rather than the pines which surrounded the actual shanty, the deciduous trees are far too large and omnipresent, the slope against which the shanty was positioned is not clearly depicted, and, as [Henry Thoreau](#) himself pointed out, the door and the roof projection above it were not accurately portrayed.

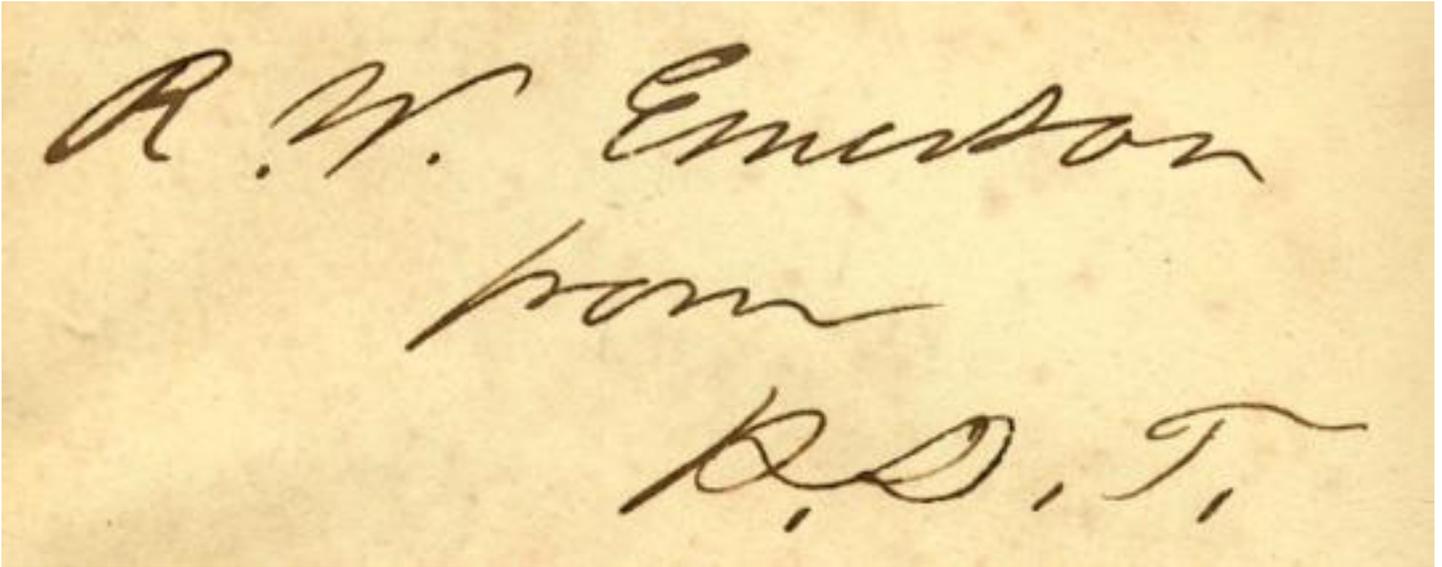
Thoreau went in to the publisher's offices to pick up copies of his book.



1854

1854

Presumably it was one of these copies, that he presented to [Waldo Emerson](#):



Did Waldo ever read it? Did Waldo ever comment on it?

HDT

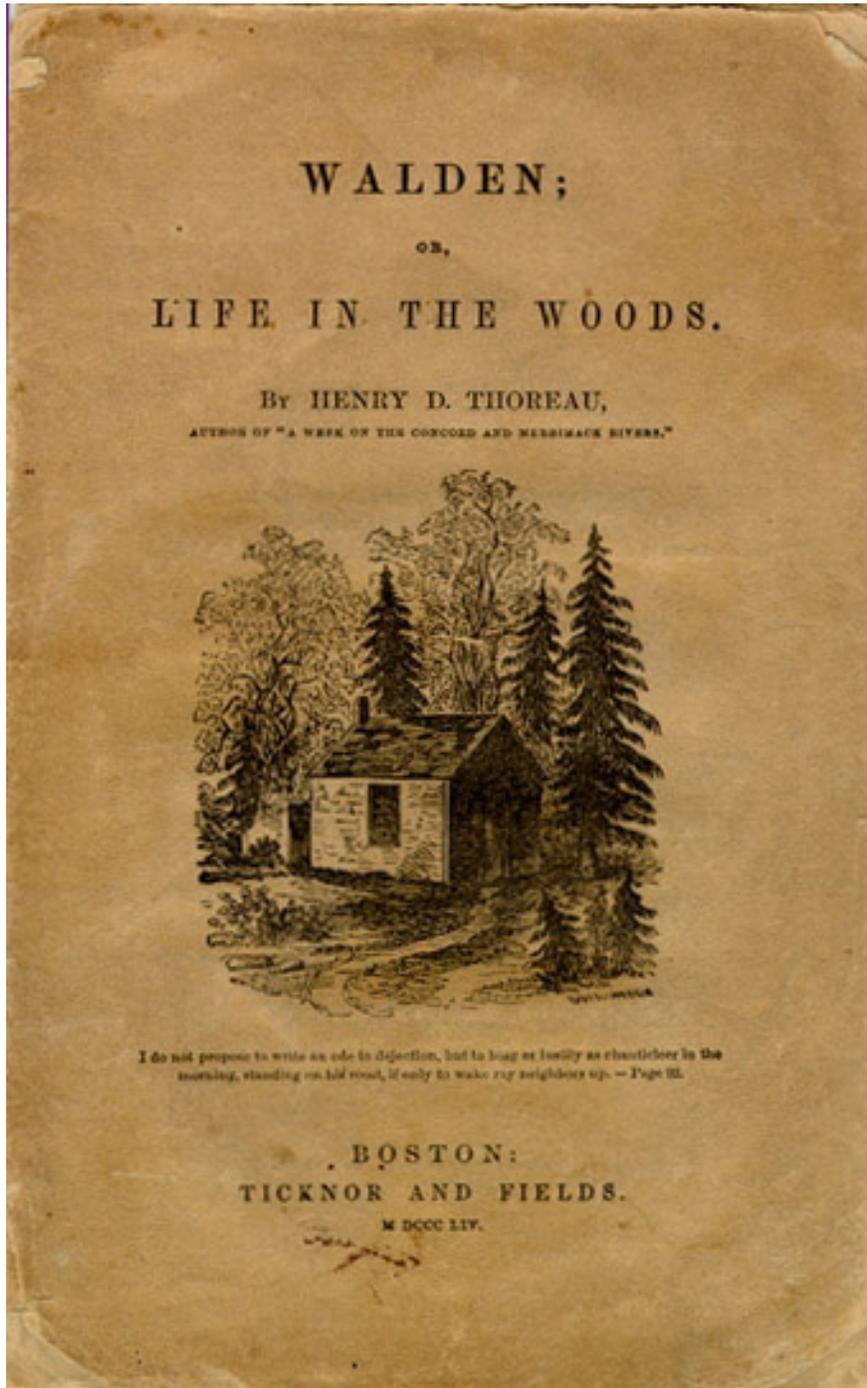
WHAT?

INDEX

1854

1854

A 2-inch announcement of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) appeared in the New-York Daily Tribune.



ROSS/ADAMS
COMMENTARY

Of this 1st edition of 2,000 copies of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#), as many as 500 may have been lacking the map of [Walden Pond](#)  that should have faced page 307.

Review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) under “New Publications” in the Boston [Daily Bee](#), 2:6.



An original book, this, and from an original man—from a very eccentric man. It is a record of the author’s life and thoughts while he lived in the woods—two years and two months. It is a volume of interest and value—of interest because it concerns a very rare individual, and of value because it contains considerable wisdom, after a fashion. It is a volume to read once, twice, thrice—and then think over.—There is a charm in its style, a philosophy in its thought. Mr. Moreau [sic] tells us of common things we know, but in an uncommon manner. There is much to be learned from this volume. Stearn [sic] and good lessons in economy; contentment with a simple but noble life, and all that, and much more. The author “lived like a king” on “hoe cakes,” and drank water; at the same time outworking the lustiest farmers who were pitted against him. Get the book. You will like it. It is original and refreshing; and from the brain of a **LIVE** man.

Review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) on the front page of the Boston [Daily Evening Traveller](#): That evening [Thoreau](#) dined with [Bronson Alcott](#) and presented him also with a copy of his new book.

By the day of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#)’s publication, Ticknor & Fields had received advance orders for only 402 copies. Another 164 would be ordered during the first week of publication. As the number of reviews dwindled, so would sales. Over the following month, the firm would receive orders for merely 123 copies, which would bring total sales during the first five weeks after publication to a very disappointing 689. Only about 65 more copies would be sold between mid-September 1854 and early-August 1855.¹⁵⁸ Not until 1859 would the printed stocks of the book be depleted — and then it would remain out of print until after Thoreau’s demise.



Aug. 9. Wednesday. — To Boston.
“Walden” published. Elder-berries. Waxwork yellowing.

[Transcript]

158. The information about the sale of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) is per [Professor Walter Roy Harding](#)’s “The First Year’s Sales of Thoreau’s Walden,” 1-2. Harding noted that we have no sales records for April 1st to June 29th, 1855 but that average monthly sales figures suggest that at most 20 copies would have flown off the bookstore shelves during the period.

 August 10, Thursday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) purchased a copy of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#):

Bought a book this morning named Walden, or Life in the Woods, by Henry D. Thoreau, who spent several years upon the shore of Walden Pond near Concord, Mass., living in a rough board house of his own building. Much of his experience in his out-of-door and secluded life I fully understand and appreciate.

[Henry Wadsworth Longfellow](#) also purchased a copy.

[Bronson Alcott](#) completed a reading of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#).

[TIMELINE OF WALDEN](#)

At 4:30 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) went to the Cliffs of Fair Haven Hill (Gleason 26/J7). In the afternoon Thoreau went to Conantum (Gleason J6) and thence to Clematis Brook (Gleason K7). He had a conversation with [Eben J. Loomis](#).

During the [Reverend John Lewis Russell](#)'s 3-day visit to Concord, [Thoreau](#) showed him all around town, examining local specimens with him and consulting him on [botanical](#) identification (these two seem not to have met prior to this point).



1854

1854

Review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) on the 2d page of the Boston Atlas:

Reprinted in CRITICAL ESSAYS ON HENRY DAVID THOREAU'S
WALDEN, ed. Joel Myerson (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co.,
1988), page 18.

[WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) was reviewed under the heading "New Publications" on the front page of the Boston Daily Journal, column 6:



This is a remarkable book. The thread of the work is a narrative of the personal experience of the eccentric author as a hermit on the shores of Walden Pond. The body consists of his reflections on life and its pursuits. Mr. Thoreau carried out his ideas of "communism" by building with his own hands an humble hut, cultivating his own garden patch, earning with the sweat of his brow enough of coarse food to sustain life, and living independent of the world and of its circumstances. He continued this selfish existence for two years, and then returned to society, but why, he does not inform his readers. Whether satisfied that he had mistaken the "pleasures of solitude," or whether the self-improvement which the world has charitably supposed was the object of his retirement had been accomplished, it is certain that he was relieved of none of his selfish opinions—that he left behind in the woods of Concord none of his misanthropy, and that he brought back habits of thought which, though profound, are erratic, and often border on the transcendental. The narrative of the two years hermit life of such a man can hardly fail to be attractive, and the study of the workings of a mind so constituted must possess a peculiar interest. But the attraction is without sympathy—the interest is devoid of admiration. The outre opinions of a mind like that of Mr. Thoreau, while they will attract attention as the eccentric outbursts of real genius, so far from finding a response in the bosom of the reader, will excite a smile, from their very extravagance, and we can easily imagine that if Mr. Thoreau would banish from his mind the idea that man is an oyster, he might become a passable philosopher. Mr. Thoreau has made an attractive book—more attractive than his "Week on the Concord and Merrimac[k]." But while many will be fascinated by its contents, few will be improved. As the pantheistic doctrines of the author marred the beauty of his former work, so does his selfish philosophy darkly tinge the pages of "Walden," and the best that can be said of the work in its probable effects is, that while many will be charmed by the descriptive powers of the author, and will smile at his extravagant ideas, few will be influenced by his opinions. This is a negative virtue in a book which is likely to be widely circulated, and which might do much mischief if the author could establish a bond of sympathy with the reader.

Review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) under the heading "New Publications" in the Salem [Register](#), page 2 column 3.

This is a remarkable book, the production of one of the eccentric geniuses who seem to swarm in old Concord, either because they are to the manor born, as was the case with Thoreau, or because there is something sympathetic in the atmosphere which induces an immigration of oddities thither. The author affects to be a philosopher, and is a sort of compound of Diogenes and Timon, flavored with the simplicity of a hermit and a pure child of nature. There is nothing in literature, that we know of, exactly like his book. Mr. Thoreau is a graduate of Harvard College, in the class of 1837, where he was a diligent student. Subsequently, in one of his whimsical freaks, he built himself a hut in the woods, a mile from any neighbor, on the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, Massachusetts, where he lived alone, and earned his living by the labor of his hands only, for the space of two years and two months, at the end of which time he became a sojourner in civilized life again. The book was written principally during this seclusion, and is, in some sort, a digested record of his life there, with sage reflections on the social condition and the ordinary aims of human ambition. It is a strikingly original, singular, and most interesting work. Several passages from the narrative portion have appeared in journals which were favored with sheets in advance. We avail ourselves of the following brief extract near the conclusion, which gives a little insight into his philosophy:-

[Reprints "Conclusion," pages 328.5-329.16.]

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Ticknor & Fields, of Boston, have just sent us this handsome volume, by Henry D. Thoreau, author of "A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers." Mr Thoreau, who lived nearly three years in the woods, has been called 'the Concord Diogenes,' as Ralph Waldo Emerson has been called the Concord Platonist or American Plato. This is one of the most singular, as well as one of the best of works. It is no romance, though most of it is of a narrative character. The press all over the country have given the most flattering notices of it; and without doubt it will command a very extensive sale. It surely deserves it.



Aug. 10. 4.30 A.M. — To Cliffs.

A high fog. As I go along the railroad, I observe the darker green of early-mown fields. A cool wind at this hour over the wet foliage, as from over mountain-tops and uninhabited earth. The large primrose conspicuously in

[Transcript]



1854

1854

bloom. Does it shut by day? The woods are comparatively still at this season. I hear only the faint peeping of some robins (a few song sparrows on my way), a wood pewee, kingbird, crows, before five, or before reaching the Springs. Then a chewink or two, a cuckoo, jay, and later, returning, the link of the bobolink and the goldfinch. That is a peculiar and distinct hollow sound made by the pigeon woodpecker's wings, as it flies past near you. The *Aralia nudicaulis* is another plant which for some time, and perhaps more generally than any, yellows the forest floor with its early fall, or turning, as soon as its berries have ripened, along with hellebore, skunk-cabbage, convallarias, etc. Ambrosia. At length, as I return along the back road, at 6.30, the sun begins to eat through the fog.

The tinkling notes of goldfinches [**American Goldfinch**  *Carduleis tristis*] and bobolinks which we hear nowadays are of one character and peculiar to the season. They are not voluminous flowers, but rather nuts of sound, —ripened seed of sound. It is the tinkling of ripened grain in Nature's basket. It is like the sparkle on water, a sound produced by friction on the crisped air.

For a day or two I have inclined to wear a thicker, or fall, coat.

P.M. — Clematis Brook via Conantum.

A cloudy afternoon and rather cool, but not threatening rain soon. Dangle-berries ripe how long? one of the handsomest berries.

On the southwest side of Conant's Orchard Grove, saw, from twenty rods off some patches of purple grass, [*Poa hirsuta* according to Russell, now in bloom, abundant; in the J. Hosmer hollow.] which painted a stripe of hillside next the woods for half a dozen rods in length. It was as high-colored and interesting, though not so bright, as the patches of rhexia. On examination I found it to be a kind of grass a little less than a foot high, with but few green blades and a fine spreading purple top in seed; but close at hand it was but a dull purple and made but little impression on the eye, was even difficult to detect where thin. But, viewed in a favorable light fifteen rods off, it was of a fine lively purple color, enriching the earth very much. It was the more surprising because grass is commonly of a sombre and humble color. I was charmed to see the grass assume such a rich color and become thus flower-like. Though a darker purple, its effect was similar to that of the rhexia. [*Excursions*, p. 252; Riv. 309. There the name of the grass appears as *Eragrostis pectinacea*.]

Hardly any dog-days yet. The air is quite clear now. *Aster macrocephalus* near beaked hazel by roadside, sometime. That sort of sweet-william (?) pink, with viscidness below the joints, but not pubescent, against the Minott house; how long?

The *Arum triphyllum* fallen some time and turned quite white. *Asclepias Cornuti* leaves begun to yellow; and brakes. etc. *Rhus Toxicodendron* along the Minott house ditch in the midst of its fall, almost all of its leaves burnt brown and partly yellow.

First muskmelon in garden.

Mr. Loomis says that he saw a mockingbird at Fair Haven Pond to-day.



1854

1854

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1854

1854

Review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) under the heading "New Publications" in the Salem [Register](#), page 2 column 3.

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August 11, Friday: [Henry Thoreau](#) sent a book, presumably [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#), to Senator [Charles Sumner](#), and also wrote (presumably) to [James Thomas Fields](#).

Concord Aug 11th '54
 Mr Fields,
 Dear Sir[,]
 I shall feel still more under obligations to you if you will send the accompanying volume to Mr. Sumner in one of your parcels. I find that I omitted to count the volume sent to Greeley — & so have one more than my due.
 Will you please charge me with it.
 Yrs truly
 Henry D. Thoreau

In the afternoon he went to Assabet Bath (Gleason 4/E5). There was a review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) under the heading “New Publications” in the Salem, Massachusetts [Gazette](#), page 2, column 6.

This is a very noticeable work, the production of an educated, eccentric man, who thinks much, and often justly, and expresses his thoughts in a clear and agreeable style. The author lived more than two years alone in the woods of Concord, Mass., a mile from any neighbors, earning his living by the labor of his hands, and his life-like sketches of solitary and rural life will be read with interest and pleasure. At present he is a sojourner in civilized life again. He says:

[Reprints “Conclusion,” pages 323.29-324.6.]

Review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) on the front page of the Providence, Rhode Island [Daily Journal](#):

Reprinted in **CRITICAL ESSAYS ON HENRY DAVID THOREAU'S WALDEN**, ed. Joel Myerson (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1988), page 19.



Aug. 11. P.M. — To Assabet Bath.

[Transcript]

“Up Assabet” is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau’s two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), *THE BOATMAN*, page 10

I have heard since the 1st of this month the steady creaking cricket. Some are digging early potatoes. I notice a new growth of red maple sprouts, small reddish leaves surmounting light-green ones, the old being dark-green. Green lice on birches. *Aster Tradescanti*, two or three days in low ground; flowers smaller than *A. dumosus*, densely racemed, with short peduncles or branchlets, calyx-scales narrower and more pointed. *Ammannia*

humilis (?) (a new plant), perhaps three weeks at northeast end of Wheeler's brush fence meadow, like an erect isnardia, i.e. *Lcdwigia palustris*, with small wrinkled yellowish petals with a purplish vein.



August 12, Saturday: In his journal, [Henry Thoreau](#) noted the 1st watermelon of the season. He went by boat to Conantum (Gleason J6). He walked the Fitchburg Railroad tracks to Bare or Pine Hill in Lincoln (Gleason J9).

[Bronson Alcott](#) completed a re-reading of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#), and also of [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#).

[TIMELINE OF WALDEN](#)

The Concord librarian, [Albert Stacy](#), purchased a copy of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) for the town library at a cost of \$0.⁷⁵, and the Reverend [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#) purchased two copies for \$2.⁰⁰. A favorable review under the heading "Editorial Correspondence" presumably by the Reverend [John Sullivan Dwight](#) appeared in [Dwight's Journal of Music, A Paper of Art and Literature](#) (5:149-50):

... Thoreau is one of those men who has put such a determined trust in the simple dictates of common sense, as to earn the vulgar title of "transcendentalist" from his sophisticated neighbors. ... Of course, they find him strange, fantastical, a humorist, a theorist, a dreamer. It may be or it may not.... Walden's literary style is admirably clear and terse and elegant; the pictures wonderfully graphic; for the writer is a poet and a scholar as well as a tough wrestler with the first economical problems of nature, and a winner of good cheer and of free glorious leisure out of what men call the "hard realities" of life. Walden Pond, a half mile in diameter, in Concord town, becomes henceforth as classical as any lake of Windermere. And we doubt not men are beginning to look to transcendentalists for the soberest reports of good hard common-sense, as well as for the models of the clearest writing.

Review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) under the heading "New Publications" in the [Boston Commonwealth](#), 2:4.

The [Bunker-Hill Aurora and Boston Mirror](#) provided a [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) review entitled "[H.D. Thoreau](#)'s Life at Walden Pond," presumably by William W. Wheildon, on its page 2 in columns 3-5: "Thoreau's book we earnestly commend to the perusal of our friends. It is refreshing to week day mortals during these blistering summer days. It is a 'psalm of life,' of consolation and healing, to those whom the wolf of want has driven into a corner. It shows at least what can be done by man, if he reaches, by any untoward circumstances, an extremity. It opens the heart of a man deeply enamored of Nature. It is a book with which men cannot quarrel. It can have no counterpart. No man ever lived as Thoreau lived, before, for a similar purpose. No man will imitate his example. Yet his forest life has lessons of the deepest wisdom."



1854

1854

We mean, before long, to say how delightful a book this is [no subsequent notice located]; but it is now Saturday, the very day when people buy books, and we can only say that it is just the pleasantest and most readable, the most thought-provoking book of the present season. It is a better work than the author[']s previous one, "A [W]eek on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers," though we reckon that as a book which will live in American literature a good while. "Walden" is a record of two years' sojourning in a house built by the author with his own hands, near Walden Pond. He was a squatter upon the land, and his sovereignty was over all he surveyed. Most lively accounts he gives of his life there, mingled with pages of philosophical (sensible or other) reflections upon all sorts of topics. No more attractive book has been printed for a long time. It ought, to be sure, considering the author's theories of food and raiment, to be printed upon birch-bark, but it is, on the contrary, issued in Ticknor & Fields' best style.

Review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) under the heading "New Publications" in the Boston Olive Branch, 3:3-4.

This is indeed a quaint book, as any person, who is in the least familiar with the character of the author, might expect. It gives a full account of his experience during his sojourn on the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, Mass. Having imbibed the idea that the daily life of his neighbors, with its cares, its trials and its conformity to fashion and custom was little better than a penance, he made himself a home in that secluded spot. He built a house, which cost him about thirty dollars; furnished it scantily and began to keep "bachelor's hall." There in his solitary abode he read the great book of Nature; watched the stars, the birds and the waters, and mused and philosophized after his own fashion. Besides, he had a small piece of land near this cottage, which he cultivated, and which yielded him a small harvest. His expenditures for food and clothing were very trifling, and it will no doubt, astonish many to know that so moderate a sum supported a person two years. He gives the details of his life and we presume they will entertain the reader as they have us.

["SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS"](#) appeared in The National Anti-Slavery Standard.



Review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) under the heading "New Publications" on the second page of the New Bedford, Massachusetts Mercury, column 3:

This is a remarkable history of remarkable experiences. Mr. Thoreau is an eccentric genius, and affects the philosopher, despising all the ordinary aims and petty ambitions of the world, looking in a half cynical, half amused mood upon men and things, and meanwhile retiring into a semi barbarous state builds with his own hands a hut on Walden Pond in Connecticut [sic], where for twenty-six months he lives like a hermit on the labor of his hands, looking to nature, 'kindest mother still,' for the supply of his physical wants, and as a perpetual fountain of delight to his eye and soul. This volume is in some measure a record of his external and internal being during his retiracy, and is perfectly unique in experience and expression. A simple, pure heart, high cultivation and a luxuriant fancy, give to Mr. Thoreau a vigorous intellectual life, and impart a freshness and charm to his style which leads one on quite enchanted. For its fine descriptions of nature, it will bear more than one reading, while its stern and true lessons on the value of existence, its manly simplicity, its sage reflections, will drop many a good seed for content and true living, to spring up and flourish and beautify new homes, albeit in civilized life, for we do not think any will be so enamored of Mr. Thoreau's experience, as to seek it in his way.

Review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) on the second page of the Roxbury Norfolk County Journal,



1854

1854

column 6:

Mr. Thoreau is an eccentric genius as well as an original thinker and good writer. His eccentricity led him to build a hut upon the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, in which he lived alone for two years, laboring in his garden patch to raise food for the support of life, and all that he might experience the pleasures of solitude and a perfectly independent life. But Mr. Thoreau is a man of education, of intellect, of taste, — though he did not show much of the latter in his odd sort of life, according to the general estimation of the world, — and he did not live alone in the woods like a savage. He mused and studied — mused somewhat on the works of nature, somewhat more on mankind, and not in the most loving and gentle spirit, and he studied his own erratic mind. The latter occupation might have been more profitable, perhaps, had he observed it from a different point of view. The book which he now gives to the world after coming out from his self imposed exile, is a sort of history of his hermitage, an account of his solitary mode of living, a description of the external things which occupied his attention, colored throughout with a sort of philosophy which is little else than the peculiarities of Mr. Thoreau's mind. The narrative and descriptions are certainly very interesting and attractive, full of life and nature, and the book is in this respect quite a charming one. In other respects it may find fewer admirers, but altogether, from its origin and character, it may be set down as a remarkable book, which will command the attention of the tasteful reader and of the thoughtful student. It is hardly necessary to say that it is published in the neat style which characterizes all the volumes issued by these publishers.

In [New Bedford](#), [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) completed a reading of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) and began

to cultivate the author:

Finished this morning reading *Walden, or Life in the Woods*, by H. D. Thoreau. I have been highly interested in this book, the most truly original one I ever read, unless the life of John Bunce, an old book written by an eccentric English Gentleman. The experience of Thoreau and his reflections are like those of every true lover of Nature. His views of the artificial customs of civilized life are very correct. Mankind labor and suffer to supply themselves with the unnecessaries of life, — leisure for enjoyment is rarely obtained. I long for mankind to be emancipated from this thralldom which has spread its nets and snares over so large a portion of the human family. A love for a more simple life increases with me, and I hope that the time will ere long come when I may realize the peace to be derived therefrom. Simplicity in all things, house, living, dress, address, &c. &c. My fortune, though not large, is ample, and were my style of living less expensive I might have considerable for charitable purposes. One of my greatest luxuries has been in books, — good books I value beyond most all else in the world of earthly treasure, after my family, — handsome editions of my favorite authors. Such I want in the best of paper, type, and binding and English, for my reading is confined pretty much to my native language. England, Scotland, or rather Great Britain and America, have furnished nearly all the authors I am acquainted with. Genuine English literature is my line of reading.

On this day or the following one, [Thoreau](#) was written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in [New Bedford](#).

Mailed a letter to Henry D. Thoreau expressive of my satisfaction in reading his book, "*Walden, or Life in the Woods*." His volume has been a source of great comfort to me in reading and will I think continue to be so, giving me cheerful views of life and feeling of confidence that misfortune cannot so far as property is concerned deprive me or mine of the necessities of life, and even that we may be better in every respect for the changes.

[Friend Daniel](#) included on this day the interesting information that [William Cowper](#)'s "The Task" was his "greatest favorite." (I think it no exaggeration to say that you could count on the fingers of one foot the people for whom Cowper's "The Task" would their "greatest favorite," or even readable — Thoreau is one of the few

people I have heard of, who had their own personal copy of this poem.)



Brooklawn, near New Bedford

Mass. Aug. 12th. 1854—

Dear Sir,

I have just finished reading “Walden” and hasten to thank you for the great degree of satisfaction it has afforded me. Having always been a lover of Nature, in man, as well as in the material universe, I hail with pleasure every original production in literature which bears the stamp of a genuine and earnest love for the true philosophy of human life.— Such I assure you I esteem your book to be. To many, and to most, it will appear to be the wild musings of an eccentric and strange mind, though all must recognize your affectionate regard for the gentle denizens of the woods and pond as well as the great love you have shewn for what are familiarly called the beauties of Nature. But to me the book appears to evince a mind most thoroughly self possessed, highly cultivated with a strong vein of common sense. The whole book is a prose poem (pardon the solecism) and at the same time as simple as a running brook.

I have always loved ponds of pure translucent water, and some of my happiest and most memorable days have been passed on and around the beautiful Middleboro’ Ponds, particularly the largest, Assawampset—here King Philip frequently came, and a beautiful round hill near by, is still known as “King Philip’s look-out.” I have often felt an inclination when tired of the noise and strife of society, to retire to the shores of this noble old pond, or rather lake, for it is some 5 or 6 miles in length and 2 broad. But I have a wife and four children, & besides have got a little too far along, being in my fortysecond year, to undertake a new mode of life. I strive however, and have striven during the whole of my life, to live as free from the restraint of mere forms & ceremonies as I possibly can. I love a quiet, peaceful rural retirement; but it was not my fate to realize this until a little

past thirty years of age—since then I have been a sort of rustic, genteel perhaps, rustic. Not so very genteel you might reply, if you saw the place where I am writing. It is a rough board Shanty 12 x 14 three miles from New Bedford in a quiet & secluded spot—here for the present I eat & sleep, read, write, receive visitors &c. My house is now undergoing repairs &c and my family are in town.

A short time since a whip-poor-will serenaded me, and later at night I hear the cuckoos near my windows. It has long been my delight to observe the feathered tribes, and earlier in life I was quite an ornithologist. The coming of the first Blue bird in early Spring is to me still a delightful circumstance. But more particularly soothing to me is the insect hum so multitudinous at this season.— Now as I write the crickets & other little companions are sweetly & soothingly singing around my dwelling, & occasionally in my room. I am quite at home with partridges, Quails, rabbits skunks & woodchucks. But Winter is my best time, then I am a great tramper through the woods. O how I love the woods. I have walked thousands of miles in the woods hereabouts. I recognize many of my own experiences in your “Walden”. Still I am not altogether given up to these matters—they are my pastimes. I have a farm to attend to, fruit trees & a garden & a little business occasionally in town to look after, but much leisure nevertheless. In fact I am the only man of leisure I know of, every body here as well as elsewhere is upon the stir. I love quiet, this you know friend Thoreau don't necessarily imply that the body should be still all the time. I am often quietest, ar'nt you, when walking among the still haunts of Nature or hoeing perhaps beans as I have oftentimes done as well as corn & potatoes &c &c.

Poetry has been to me a great consolation amid the jarring elements of this life. The English poets some of them at least, and one Latin, our good old Virgil, have been like household gods to me.—

Cowper's Task, my greatest favorite now lies before me in which I had been reading & alternately looking at the western sky just after sunset before I commenced this letter. Cowper was a true lover of the country. How often have I felt the force of these lines upon the country in my own experience

*“I never framed a wish, or formed a plan,
That flattered me with hopes of earthly bliss
But there I laid the scene.”*

All through my boyhood, the country haunted my thoughts. Though blessed with a good home, books & teachers, the latter however with one exception were not blessings, I would have exchanged all for the life of a rustic. I envied as I then thought the freedom of the farmer boy. But I have long thought that the life of the farmer, that is most

farmers, possessed but little of the poetry of labour. How we accumulate cares around us. The very repairs I am now making upon my house will to some considerable extent increase my cares. A rough board shanty, rye & indian bread, water from the spring, or as in your case, from the pond, and other things in keeping, do not burden the body & mind. It is fine houses, fine furniture, sumptuous fare, fine clothes, and many in number, horses & carriages, servants &c &c, these are the harpies, that so disturb our real happiness.

My next move in life I hope will be into a much more simple mode of living. I should like to live in a small house, with my family, uncarpeted white washed walls, simple old fashioned furniture & plain wholesome old fashioned fare. Though I have always been inclined to be a vegetarian in diet & once lived in capital health two years on the Graham system.

Well this will do for myself. Now for you friend Thoreau. Why return to "the world" again? a life such as you spent at Walden was too true & beautiful to be abandoned for any slight reason.

The ponds I allude to are much more secluded than Walden, and really delightful places. Should you ever incline again to try your "philosophy of living" I would introduce you into haunts, that your very soul would leap to behold. Well, I thought I would just write you a few lines to thank you for the pleasure I have received from the reading of your "Walden", but I have found myself running on till now. I feel that you are a kindred spirit and so fear not. I was pleased to find a kind word or two in your book for the poor down trodden slave. Wilberforce, Clarkson and John Woolman & Anthony Benezet were household words in my father's house.— I early became acquainted with the subject of slavery for my parents were Quakers, & Quakers were then all Abolitionists. My love of Nature, absolute, undefiled nature makes me an abolitionist. How could I listen to the woodland songs—or gaze upon the outstretched landscape, or look at the great clouds & the starry heavens and be aught but a friend of the poor and oppressed coloured race of our land. But why do I write—it is in vain to portray these things—they can only be felt and lived, and to you of all others I would refrain from being prolix.

I have outlived, or nearly so, all ambition for notoriety. I wish only to be a simple, good man & so live that when I come to surrender up my spirit to the Great Father, I may depart in peace.

I wrote the above last evening. It is now Sunday afternoon, and alone in my Shanty I sit down to my desk to add a little more. A great white cloud which I have been watching for the past half hour is now majestically moving off to the north east before the fine s. w. breeze

which sets in here nearly every summer afternoon from the ocean. We have here the best climate in New England—shelter ed on the north & east by dense pine woods from the cold winds which so cut up the healths of eastern folk, or rather are supposed to—but I think if the habits of our people were right the north easters would do but little harm. I never heard that the Indians were troubled by them—but they were nature’s philosophers and lived in the woods. I love to go by my instincts, inspiration rather. O how much we lose by civilization! In the eyes of the world you & I are demi savages— But I rather think we could stand our hand at the dinner table or in the drawing room with most of folks. I would risk you any where, and as for myself I have about done with the follies of “society.” I never was trump’d yet.

I have lived out all the experiences of idle youth—some gentle, & some savage experiences but my heart was not made of the stuff for a sportsman or angler—early in life I ranged the woods, fields & shores with my gun, or rod, but I found that all I sought could be obtained much better without the death dealing implements. So now my rustic staff is all the companion I usually take, unless my old dog joins me—taking new track as he often does, and bounding upon me in some distant thicket. My favorite books are—Cowper’s task, Thomson’s Seasons Milton, Shakespeare, &c &c—Goldsmith Gray’s Elegy—Beattie’s Minstrel (parts) Howitt, Gil. White, (Selbourne) Bewick (wood engraver) moderns—Wordsworth Ch. Lamb—De Quincy, Macauly, Kit. North, &c &c

These and others are more my companions than men. I like talented women & swear lustily by Mary Wolstoncroft, Md^e— Roland, Joan d’arc & somewhat by dear Margaret Fuller.

The smaller fry, I let go by—

Again permit me to thank you for the pleasure & strength I have found in reading “Walden.”

Dear Mr Walden good bye for the present.

Yours most respectfully

Daniel Ricketson

Henry D. Thoreau Esq



Aug. 12. Saturday. Watermelon.

P. M. — To Conantum by boat.

Methinks I heard a few toads till about the middle of July. Today there is an uncommonly strong wind, against which I row, yet in shirt-sleeves, trusting to sail back. It is southwest. I see twelve painted tortoises on a rail only five feet long, and perhaps some were scared off before I observed them. The *Bidens Beckii* yellows the side of the river just below the Hubbard Path, but is hardly yet in fullest flower generally. I see goldfinches nowadays on the lanceolate thistles, apparently after the seeds. It takes all the heat of the year to produce these yellow flowers. It is the 3 o'clock P.M. of the year when they begin to prevail, — when the earth has absorbed most heat, when melons ripen and early apples and peaches. The cranberry cheeks begin to redden. *Viburnum dentatum* berries. Hazelnut husks now have a reddish edge, being ripe. Is not this a sign? It already the yellowing year.

Viburnum nudum berried generally green, but some, higher and more exposed, of a deep, fiery pink on one cheek and light green on the other, and a very few dark purple or without bloom, black already I put a bunch with only two or three black ones in my hat, the rest pink or green. When I got home more than half were turned black, — and ripe!! A singularly sudden chemical change. Another cluster which had no black ones was a third part turned. It is surprising how very suddenly they turn from this deep pink to a very dark purple or black, when the wine which they contain is mature. They are a very pretty, irregularly elliptical berry, one side longer than the other, and particularly interesting on account of the mixture of light-green, deep-pink, and dark-purple, and also withered berries, in the same cyme.

The wind is autumnal and at length compels me to put on my coat. I bathe at Hubbard's. The water is rather cool, comparatively. As I look down-stream from southwest to northeast, I see the red under sides of the white lily pads about half exposed, turned up by the wind to [an] angle of 45° or more. These hemispherical red shields are so numerous as to produce a striking effect on the eye, as of an endless array of forces with shields advanced; sometimes four or five rods in width. Off Holden Woods a baffling counter wind as usual (when I return), but looking up-stream I see the great undulations extending into the calm from above, where the wind blows steadily. I see no maples changed yet along this stream. There are but few haymakers left in the meadows.

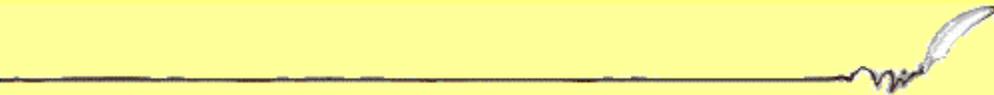
On Conantum saw a cow looking steadily up into the sky for a minute. It gave to her face an unusual almost human or wood-god, faun-like expression, and reminded me of some frontispieces to Virgil's *Bucolics*. She was gazing upward steadily at an angle of about 45°. There were only some downy clouds in that direction. It was so unusual a sight that any one would notice it. It suggested adoration.

The woodbine on rocks in warm and dry places is now more frequently turned, a few leaflets bright-scarlet. The now quite common goldenrods fully out are what I have called *stricta* and also the more strict *puberula* (?). The *arguta* and *odora* are not abundant enough to make an impression. The *Solidago nemoralis* is not yet generally out. The common asters now are the *pateus*, *dumosus*, *Radula*, and *Diplopappus umbellatus*. This is a famous year for huckleberries, etc. They are now drying up for the most part before spoiling. The bushes on Conantum are quite black with them. They are clustered like *Vaccinium vacillans* apparently. High blackberries are in prime. And I see some great low blackberries on long peduncles, lifted above the huckleberries, composed of great grains, as large as the largest high blackberries. Poke berries, also poke stems, are purple; not yet peduncles. Plucked a small *Hieracium scabrum*, hairy, which I may have called *Gronovii*.

I think I should not notice the shadow of Conantum Cliff now; perhaps because the grass is so sere and russet. It should be a tender green.

During the last decade of his life, Thoreau visited his rivers more than twice as often as the upland woods and lakes that he is far better known for writing about.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), *THE BOATMAN*, page 3



For birds: —

I think that I begin to see a few more hawks █ than of late. A white-rumped to-day.

Partridges (**Ruffed Grouse** █ *Bonasa umbellus*) fly in packs.
 Bluebirds [**Eastern Bluebird** █ *Sialia sialis*] sound oftener plaintively.
 Larks [**Eastern Meadowlark** █ *Sturnella magna*] are still seen.
Blackbirds fly in great flocks.
 Robin [**American Robin** █ *Turdus migratorius*] peeps occasionally.
 Song sparrow [**Song Sparrow** █ *Melospiza melodia*] sings clearly in morning, etc.
 Hear pigeon woodpecker's [**Yellow-shafted Flicker** █ *Colaptes auratus*] wickoff still occasionally.
 Pigeons [**American Passenger Pigeon** █ *Ectopistes migratorius*] begin to be seen.
 Hear rush sparrow [**Field Sparrow** █ *Spizella pusilla*] still.
 No seringos [**Savannah Sparrow** *Passerculus sandwichensis*] for some time.
 Turtle doves [**Mourning Dove** █ *Zenaida macroura*] common in small flocks in stubble.
 White-bellied swallows [**Tree Swallow** █ *Tachycineta bicolor*] still.
 Barn swallows [**Barn Swallow** █ *Hirundo rustica*] still.
 Perhaps chip-sparrows [**Chipping Sparrow** █ *Spizella passerina*] are silent.
 Have not heard a wood thrush [**Wood Thrush** █ *Hylocichla mustelina*] since last week of July.
 Catbird [**Gray Catbird** █ *Dumetella carolinensis*] and thrasher [**Brown Thrasher** █ *Toxostroma rufum*] done singing.
 Chewink [**Rufous-sided Towhee** █ *Pipilo erythrophthalmus*] still heard.
 Wood pewee [**Eastern Wood-Pewee** █ *Contopus virens*] "
 No night-warbler [**Ovenbird** █ *eiurus aurocapillus*, or **Common Yellowthroat** █ *Geothlypis trichas?*] [[^]Heard one at evening, Aug. 14.], or tweezer [**Northern Parula** █ *Parula americana*], or evergreen-forest note; nor veery [**Veery** █ *Catharus fuscescens*].
 Kingbird [**Eastern Kingbird** █ *Tyrannus tyrannus*] twitters still.
 No red-eyes [[^]Heard one today.] [**Red-eyed Vireo** █ *Vireo olivaceus*] nor tanagers [**Scarlet Tanager** █ *Piranga olivacea*] heard since 5th.
 Goldfinch [**American Goldfinch** █ *Carduelis tristis*] common.
 Cherry-bird [**Cedar Waxwing** *Bombycilla cedrorum*] heard.
 Cuckoo [**Yellow-billed Cuckoo** █ *Coccyzus americanus*].
 Gold robin [**Northern Oriole** █ *Icterus galbula*] sometimes heard partially. [[^]The nighthawk squeaks at sunset and the whip-poor-will sings, Aug. 14. The screech owl screams at evening.]

1854

1854



August 13, Sunday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by the Reverend [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#) in Newburyport.¹⁵⁹



NEWBURYPORT, Aug 13, 1854.

Dear Sir:

Let me thank you heartily for your paper on the present condition of Massachusetts, read at Framingham and printed in [The Liberator](#). As a literary statement of the truth, which every day is making more manifest, it surpasses everything else (so I think), which the terrible week in Boston has called out. I need hardly add my thanks for "[Walden](#)," which I have been awaiting for so many years. Through Mr. Field's kindness, I have read a great deal of it in sheets:— I have just secured two copies, one for myself, and one for a young girl here, who seems to me to have the most remarkable literary talent since [Margaret Fuller](#), —and to whom your first book has been among the scriptures, ever since I gave her that.

[FRAMINGHAM MA](#)
[TIMELINE OF WALDEN](#)



Aug. 13. First marked dog-day; sultry and with misty clouds. For ten days or so we have had comparatively cool, fall-like weather. I remember only with a pang the past spring and summer thus far. I have not been an early riser. Society seems to have invaded and overrun me. I have drunk tea and coffee and made myself cheap and vulgar. My days have been all noontides, without sacred mornings and evenings. I desire to rise early henceforth, to associate with those whose influence is elevating, to have such dreams and waking thoughts that my diet may not be indifferent to me.

[Transcript]

P.M. — To Bare Hill, Lincoln, via railroad.

I have not chanced to hear the bullfrogs trump much, if any, since the middle of July. This is a quite hot day again, after cooler weather. A few small red maples about [^{^written in pencil: "Pond?"} Thus, written in pencil, evidently at a later date, seems to indicate that at the time he inserted it he had forgotten just where the trees were.] blush now a dull red. For about a month I think I have particularly noticed the light under sides of leaves, especially maples. I see small flocks of grass-birds, etc. In Macintosh's field (pasture), some dwarf acalypha some time out. The crechthites down begins to fly. Some of these plants are six feet high. I see where the pasture thistles have apparently been picked to pieces (for their seeds? by the goldfinch?), and the seedless down strews the ground.

Huckleberries begin to be wormy, but are still sound on Bare Hill. Now the mountains are concealed by the dog-day haze, and the view is of dark ridges of forest, one behind the other, separated by misty valleys. Squirrels have begun to eat hazelnuts, and I see their dry husks on the ground turned reddish-brown.

The change, decay, and fall of the brakes in woods, etc., is perhaps more autumnal than any sight. They make

159. No MS — printed copy from Franklin Benjamin Sanborn's RECOLLECTIONS.

more show than the aralia. Some are quite brown and shrivelled, others yellow, others yellow and brown, others yellow, brown, and green, making a, very rich and parti-colored or checkered work, as of plaited straw, — bead or straw work or ivory; others are still green with brown spots. In respect to these and many other plants of this size and habit, it is already fall. They stand yellow and yellowing all through the woods, — none perhaps so conspicuous as the brake. At Thrush Alley, was surprised to behold how many birch leaves had turned yellow, — every other one, while clear, fresh, leather-colored ones strewed the ground with a pretty thick bed under each tree. So far as the birches go it is a perfect autumnal scene there.

 August 14, Monday: [Henry Thoreau](#) donated a copy of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) to the Harvard Library, gave a copy to [Richard F. Fuller](#) inscribed “from H.D.T.,” and presented a copy to [Mrs. Lidian “Asia” Jackson Emerson](#) inscribed “from her friend Henry Thoreau.”¹⁶⁰ After a cursory scan of the copy of [WALDEN](#) which he had just purchased, [John Greenleaf Whittier](#) commented to its publisher [James Thomas Fields](#) that it was

capital reading, but very wicked and heathenish. The practical moral of it seems to be that if a man is willing to sink himself into a woodchuck he can live as cheaply as that quadruped; but after all, for me I prefer walking on two legs.

Well, but this was a bit different, as a reaction, from the reaction Whittier had had when he had received a presentation copy of [Walt Whitman](#)'s [LEAVES OF GRASS](#): after looking that book over, he had tossed it — into the fireplace.¹⁶¹

160. These three copies are now in the Houghton Library of [Harvard University](#). The records of the Boston Society of Natural History indicate that [Thoreau](#) had donated copies of [A WEEK](#) and [WALDEN](#) to them as well.

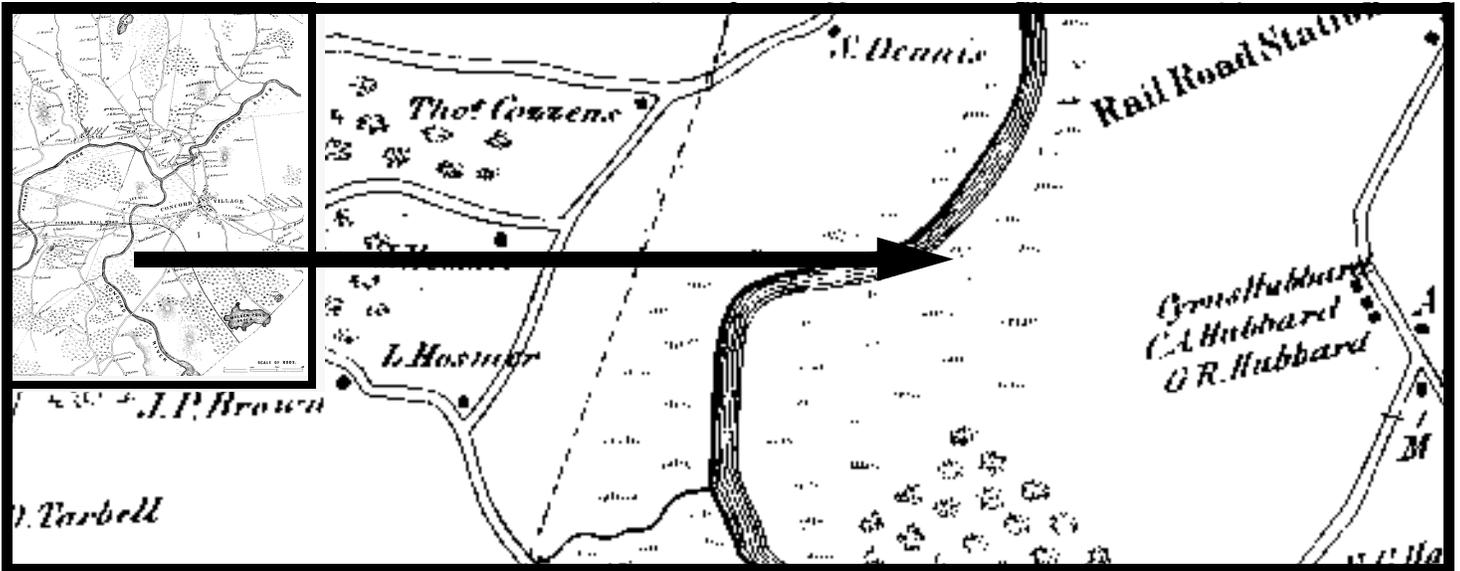
161. [Thoreau](#)'s copy of [LEAVES OF GRASS](#) would be knocked down on auction at Sotheby's in 2002 or 2003, evidently to a [Walt Whitman](#) collector, for US\$119,500.

1854

1854



August 14, Monday: At 3 PM on this day, [Henry Thoreau](#) and [Edward Sherman Hoar](#) went to the location to which Henry had given the name Climbing Fern. At 6 PM Thoreau went on to Hubbard's Bath



and then on to Fair Haven Hill (Gleason H7).¹⁶²

That evening, in Boston, at a meeting of colored citizens in the Belknap Street Church, [William Cooper Nell](#) reported on the National Council meeting that had taken place in Cleveland, Ohio.



Aug. 14. No rain, — only the dusty road spotted with the few drops which fell last night. — but there is quite a high and cool wind this morning. Since August came in, we have begun to have considerable wind, as not since May, at least. The roads nowadays are covered with a light-colored, powdery dust (this yesterday), several inches deep, which also defiles the grass and weeds and bushes, and the traveller is deterred from stepping in it. The dusty weeds and bushes leave their mark on your clothes. Mountain-ash berries orange (?), and its leaves half yellowed in some places.

[Transcript]

3 P.M. — To climbing fern with E. Hoar.

It takes a good deal of care and patience to unwind this fern without injuring it. Sometimes same frond is half leaf, half fruit. E. talked of sending one such leaf to G. Bradford to remind him that the sun still shone in America. The uva-ursi berries beginning to turn.

6 P.M. — To Hubbard Bath and Fair Haven Hill.

I notice now that saw-like grass [*Paspalum ciliatifolium*] seed where the mowers have done. The swamp blackberries are quite small and rather acid. Though yesterday was quite a hot day, I find by bathing that the river grows steadily cooler, as yet for a fortnight, though we have had no rain here. Is it owing solely to the cooler air since August came in, both day and night, or have rains in the southwest cooled the stream within a week? I now, standing on the shore, see that in sailing or floating down a smooth stream at evening it is an advantage to the fancy to be thus slightly separated from the land. It is to be slightly removed from the commonplace of earth. To float thus on the silver-plated stream is like embarking on a train of thought itself. You are surrounded by water, which is full of reflections; and you see the earth at a distance, which is very agreeable to the imagination.

I see the blue smoke of a burning meadow. The clethra must be one of the most conspicuous flowers not yellow at present. I sit three-quarters up the hill. The crickets creak strong and loud now after sunset. No word will spell it. It is a short, strong, regular ringing sound, as of a thousand exactly together, — though further off some alternate, — repeated regularly and in rapid time, perhaps twice in a second. Methinks their quire is much fuller

162. We can be certain that they were very careful not to start any fires that would get away from them.

and louder than a fortnight ago. Ah! I need solitude. I have come forth to this hill at sunset to see the forms of the mountains in the horizon, — to behold and commune with something grander than man. Their mere distance and unprofanedness is an infinite encouragement. It is with infinite yearning and aspiration that I seek solitude, more and more resolved and strong; but with a certain genial weakness that I seek society ever. I hear the nighthawk squeak and a whip-poor-will sing. I hear the tremulous squealing scream of a screech owl in the Holden Woods, sounding somewhat like the neighing of a horse, not like the snipe. Now at 7.45, perhaps a half-hour after sunset, the river is quite distinct and full of light in the dark landscape, — a silver strip of sky, of the same color and brightness with the sky. As I go home by Hayden's I smell the burning meadow. I love the scent. It is my pipe. I smoke the earth.

During the last decade of his life, Thoreau visited his rivers more than twice as often as the upland woods and lakes that he is far better known for writing about.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 3



1854

1854

 August 15, Tuesday: At 5:15AM [Henry Thoreau](#) went by boat to Nawshawtuct or Lee's Hill (Gleason F6). Beginning at 9AM, he and [Ellery Channing](#) walked all day, northwest into Acton and [Carlisle](#). In the evening, at Miss MacKay's, Thoreau looked through Mr. Russell's microscope at a section of pontederia leaf.

There appeared a review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#), by "W," under the heading "New Publications" in the Albany, New York [Argus](#), 2:7:

The book purports to have been written chiefly while the author resided in the woods, and earned his living by the labor of his hands. It contains a record of a strange experience, in connection with the many bright thoughts on various subjects that were suggested by it. It is an intensely entertaining production.

TIMELINE OF WALDEN

A review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) appeared under the heading "New Publications, &c" in the [Massachusetts Life Boat: Devoted to Temperance, Morals, Education, Business and General Information](#), 2:6:

The author is certainly a great genius, and though something of a hermit, is making his mark in the world.... While we admire many passages in the book, and not a few of the author's thoughts, we cannot subscribe to all his sentiments. [Long Quotation from the final chapter of the book]

Meanwhile Elizabeth Rogers Mason Cabot,¹⁶³ a Boston debutante who ordinarily lived at 63 Mount Vernon Street in Boston but who was vacationing at the Cabots' summer home in New Hampshire, was writing

163. Any relation to the [Nathaniel Peabody Rogers](#) of [Concord, New Hampshire](#) who put out the [Herald of Freedom](#) prior to his death in 1846, and about whom [Thoreau](#) wrote in the last issue of [THE DIAL](#)? –Or to Thoreau's friend [James Elliot Cabot](#) who had written on the philosophy of the Hindoos?

in her diary:

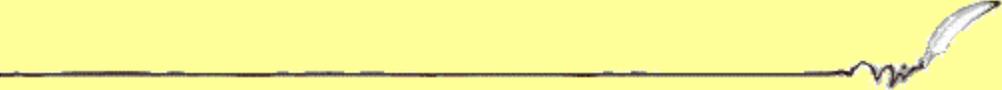
I have finished this morning Thoreau's CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS; it has given me a little tidbit of reading every day for a long time, and is far from exhausted yet, for I am eager to go back and examine some of the truths more thoroughly. It is a life-giving book and gives a picture of life from a point of view entirely unaffected by the artificial world created by man. He is a man without money, not poor, because able to get his daily bread with small toil, and desiring nothing more, untrammelled entirely (as no man with very warm affections I think could be) by the opinions or feelings of others, afraid of nothing, intimate with nature as a bosom friend, learned in all the wisdom of the world handed down in books, ignoring ambition, position, aimless as far as concerns this world, and as unbiased as I can imagine possible. Added to these advantages are a pure large nature, vigorous intellect, and healthy life moral and physical. He is all-convincing at the time, and ought to be, for he is merely putting in practice, the principles which all daily preach, but none entirely make facts. Yet when we would follow him, our old habits of feeling rush back on us, making his purer practice a sort of dream, from which we awake, sorry that it is gone, and almost doubting still which is the unreality, the world we have left, or the world we awake to. I believe solemnly and sincerely that the spiritual life should be first, material last, and needs a very small corner, and yet we place it practically first, because other people do. I know no better reason. -FROM MORE THAN COMMON POWERS OF PERCEPTION: THE DIARY OF ELIZABETH ROGERS MASON CABOT edited by P.A.M. Taylor (Boston MA: Beacon Press, 1991).



Aug. 15. Tuesday. 5.15 A.M. — To Hill by boat.

[Transcript]

"Up Assabet" is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau's two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.
 - [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 10



By 5.30 the fog has withdrawn from the channel here and stands southward over the "Texas Plain, forty or fifty feet high.

Some birds, after they have ceased to sing by day, continue to sing faintly in the morning now as in spring. I hear now a warbling vireo, a robin (half strain), a golden robin whistles, bluebirds warble, pigeon woodpecker; not to mention the tapping of a woodpecker and the notes of birds which are heard through the day, as wood peawai, song sparrow, cuckoo, etc. On the top of the Hill see the goldfinch eating the seeds (?) of the Canada thistle.

I rarely approach a bed of them or other thistles nowadays but I hear the cool twitter of the goldfinch about it. I hear a red squirrel's reproof, too, as in spring, from the hickories. Now, just after sunrise, I see the western steeples with great distinctness, tall white lines. The fog eastward over the Great Meadows appears indefinitely far, as well as boundless. Perhaps I refer to, too great a distance. It is interesting when the fluvial trees begin to be seen through it and the sun is shining above it. By 6 o'clock it has risen up too much to be interesting. The button-bush is now nearly altogether out of bloom, so that it is too late to see the river's brink in its perfection. It must be seen between the blooming of the mikania and the going out of bloom of the button-bush, before you feel this sense of lateness in the year, before the meadows are shorn and the grass of hills and pastures is thus withered and russet.

9A.M. — Walk all day with [W.E.C.](#), northwest into Acton and Carlisle.

A dog-day, comfortably cloudy and cool as well as still. The river meadows, where no mowing, have a yellowish and autumnal look, especially the wool-grass. I see large flocks of bobolinks on the Union Turnpike. Are the darker ones with some yellowish (?) on side heads young red-wings or male bobolinks changing? Forded the Assabet at the bathing-place. Saw carrion-flower berries just-begun to turn; say in a day or two. Panicked cornel berries on College Road. Many of the trees in Barrett's orchard on Annurnack touch the ground all around like a dish cover, weighed down with fruit, and the branches are no thicker over head than around. Is not this the best form for an apple tree, — a hollow hemisphere nearly resting on the earth, the branches equally dispersed over the superficies, and light and air equally admitted?



Hills and pastures are now dry and slippery. They seem as completely russet as in winter. I associate the mist of this dog-day with the burning of meadows. Crossed from top of Annurnack to top of Strawberry Hill, past a pigeon-bed. Measured the great chestnut. At about seven feet from ground, the smallest place I could find, it is 14 3/4 feet in circumference; at six feet from ground, 15 1/12 feet in circumference; at five feet, 15 4/12.; at one foot from ground not including some bulgings, 22 feet in circumference. It branches first at about nine feet from ground. The top has some dead limbs and is not large in proportion to trunk. There are great furrows in the bark. *Desmodium Marylandicum* on Strawberry Hill by wall, some days out. We took our dinner on the north side of the wall on top of the Hill. The dog-clay haze conceals the distant hills and mountains, but some new and nearer elms, etc., stand out with new distinctness against it. It is remarkable; how far and widely the smoke of a meadow burning is visible, and how hard to locate. That in the meadow near Joe Merriam's, [^It is the Brooks meadow on fire. [Vide Aug. 23](#)] half a dozen miles off, which has lasted some days, appears to possess the whole east horizon, as if any man who lived two or three miles east of this must smell it and know all about [it], but most who live within a mile of it may not have noticed it. It impresses me as if all who dwelt in the eastern horizon must know of it and be interested in it, — as if it were a sort of public affair and of moment to a whole town, — yet hardly the next neighbors observe it, and the other day, when I passed within half a mile of it, it did not make nearly so great a show as from this very distant eminence. The white smoke is now seen slanting upward across half a township and gradually mingled and confounded with the haze of the day, so that it may even seem to have produced the latter. West, by Nagog, is a dense dark, almost black smoke, and another less dark in the south. the owner of the meadow little thinks how. It is the Brooks meadow on fire. far the smoke of his burning is seen by the inhabitants of the country and by travellers, filling their horizon and giving a character to their day, shutting out much sky to those who dwell half a dozen miles away. So far a man's deformities are seen by and affect his fellows. They help to blot out the sky to those [who] dwell far away.

Looking from this Strawberry Hill to the long range behind William Brown's, northeast by east, I see that it and other hills are marked finely by many parallel lines, apparently the edges of so many terraces, arranging the crops and trees in dark lines, as if they were the traces of so many lake-shores. Methinks this is an almost universal phenomenon. When farthest inland we are surrounded by countless shores or beaches, terrace above terrace. It is the parallelism of green trees, bushes, and crops which betrays them at a distance. The locomotive whistle, far southwest, sounds like a bell. *Lycopodium dendroideum* pollen, apparently some days.

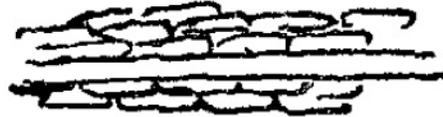
From this hill we steered northeast toward the east point of a wood in the direction of Hutchinson's, perhaps two miles off. Before starting on this walk I had studied the map to discover a new walk, and decided to go through a large wooded tract west and northwest of the Paul Dudley house, where there was no road, there at last to strike east across the head of Spencer Brook Meadow, perhaps to the old Carlisle road. A mile and a half northeast of Strawberry Hill, two or three large and very healthy and perfect sassafras trees (three large at least), very densely clothed with dark-green lemon (?) or orange (?) tree shaped leaves, singularly healthy. This half a mile or so west of the Dudley house. Comparatively few of the leaves were of the common form, *i.e.* three-lobed, but rather simple. There was much mountain sumach close by, turning scarlet, and sweet-ferns also browning and yellowing. Keeping on through a somewhat swampy upland, we fell into a path, which Channing

preferring, though it led us through woods widely out of our course westward, I soon corrected it, and, descending through swampy land, at length saw through the trees and bushes into a small meadow completely surrounded by woods, in which was a man haying only eight or ten rods off. We felt very much like Indians stealing upon an early settler, and naturally inclined to one side to go round the meadow through the high blueberry bushes. The high blueberries were from time to time very abundant, but have acquired a dead and flat taste, lost their raciness. Soon after, we followed an indistinct path through a dense birch wood, leading quite out of our course, i.e. westward. We were covered from head to foot with green lice from the birches, especially conspicuous on dark clothes, but going through other woods soon brushed them off again.

At length, when I endeavored to correct my course by compass, it pointed so that I lost my faith in it, and we continued to go out of our way, till we came out on a side-hill immediately overlooking a stream and mill and several houses and a small mill-pond undoubtedly on the Nashoba in the northern part of Acton, on the road to Chelmsford. We were completely lost, and saw not one familiar object. At length saw steeples which we thought Westford, but the monument proved it Acton. Took their bearings, calculated a new course, and pursued it at first east-northeast, then east, and finally southeast, along rocky hillsides covered with weeds, where the fall seemed further advanced than in Concord, with more autumnal colors, through dense oak woods and scrub oak, across a road or two, over some pastures, through a swamp or two, where the cinnamon fern was as high as our heads and the dogwood, now fruiting, was avoided by C. After travelling about five miles, for the most part in woods, without knowing where we were, we came out on a hill from which we saw, far to the south, the open valley at head of Spencer Brook.

In the meanwhile we came upon another pigeon-bed, where the pigeons were being baited, a little corn, etc., being spread on the ground, and, [as?] at the first, the bower was already erected. What I call *Solidago arguta* is exceedingly handsome, a pyramidal head with rather horizontal branchlets with a convex surface of erect flowers ; quite a splendid flower it would be in a garden. Aster miser. In Carlisle, on high land, that kind of viburnum with smaller, darker (with rusty patches), and less oblong berries and more obtuse leaves (at both ends),-a large spreading bush eight or nine feet high at least. Russell said it was the *V. prunifolium*, but the leaves are not sharply serrate but nearly entire, only crenate at most, commonly short and broad, the peduncle not half an inch long.

At evening, Mr. Russell showed his microscope at Miss Mackay's. Looked at a section of pontederia leaf.



Saw what answered to the woody fibre and the cells on each side, also the starch in potato, lime in rhubarb, fern seeds (so called), and lichen ditto, of which last there were fifty or sixty in one little wart this size.



The power of this glass was nine hundred diameters. All the objects were transparent and had a liquid look, crystalline, and reminded me of the moon seen through a telescope. They suggested the significance or insignificance of size, and that the moon itself is a microscopic object to us, so little it concerns us.

1854

1854

 August 16, Wednesday: [Duncan Phyfe](#) died at the age of 86 in [New-York](#).

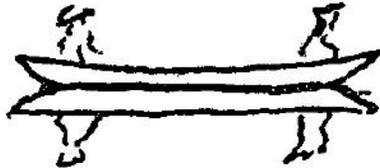
French forces took the Russian garrison at Bomarsund (Sund) in the Åland (Ahvenanmaa) Islands. Aboard the French fleet was young volontaire aspirant Louis Berlioz, son of the composer.

[William Cooper Nell](#) visited with [Charlotte L. Forten](#), who was staying with the family of [Charles Lenox Remond](#).



In [Henry Thoreau](#)'s journal: "R. showed me the [ginseng](#) in my collection."

At 8 AM [Thoreau](#) and [John Russell](#) went to climbing fern, and in the afternoon they went by boat to Fair Haven Bay (that's the Reverend in the front of the boat; they both have hats on).



"Extracts from [WALDEN](#)" were printed on the first page of the Worcester, Massachusetts [Palladium](#), column 4:

From Thoreau's new work, just published by Ticknor & Fields, we take the following extracts:

WALDEN ICE.

[Reprints "The Pond in Winter," pages 296.31-298.23.]

EMERSON & ALCOTT AS VISITORS TO THOREAU'S HUT.

**[Reprints "Former Inhabitants; and Winter Visitors,"
pages 267.35-270.11.]**

And the review itself, on page 3 of the Palladium:

INSERT REVIEW HERE, AS OCR-SCANNED FROM PS1638 EMERSON AND THOREAU: THE CONTEMPORARY REVIEWS, EDITED BY JOEL MYERSON, NEW YORK: CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1992, PAGE 376.

TIMELINE OF WALDEN

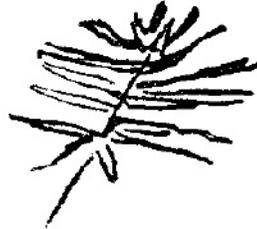


Aug. 16. 8 A.M. — To climbing fern with [John Russell](#).

[Transcript]

He says that my winkle fungus is a *Boletus* of Linn[ae]us, *Polyporus* of others, *Auricularia* (car-like) now. My beautiful purple grass, now in flower, the *Poa hirsuta*.

Peppermint has just begun. Walked along the Dennis shore. That sedge by edge of river with three-ranked linear leaves is *Dulichium spathaceum*. My wool-grass is a trichophorum. Says that in Chelmsford they rub the pigeon bait with the *Solidago odora* to attract pigeons. That fuzzy-topped sedge with slender spikes in straw-colored ovate heads, arranged umbel-like, he thought *Scirpus* (probably *Cyperus*) *strigosus*.



Aster puniceus, a day or two. That saw-like spiked grass which is an autumnal sight in the mown fields is *Paspalum ciliatifolium*. Choke-cherry leaves are now many reddened. *Scirpus capillaris*, turned yellow, only two or three inches high, now covers the sand on Lupine Hill. A bluet still. *Aster longifolius*, a day or two. A pear-formed puffball (*Lycoperdon*), in Yellow Thistle Meadow, now dry, buff-colored.



That concave, chocolate-colored one I have is a *Lycoperdon bovi*(something) — from being in pastures.



That potamogeton in Nut Meadow Brook at the watering-place beyond Jenny's is *P. Claytoni*, with many long, linear, pellucid immersed leaves half an inch wide and some floating. My stag-horn lichen is the [*Parmelia*] *Borreri*. The former grows on the ground and is more like a cladonia. *Aster l[oe]vis*, two or three days, if I have not mentioned it before. *Hypnum riparium* in the Harrington trough. *Viola pedata* again. Uva-ursi berries reddened, but R. says not ripe or soft till spring. Saw the variolaria on the white pines on Harrington Road, and opegrapha, like Arab characters. Showed me the Prussian eagle in the stem of the brake. *Aster corymbosus* (?), some time by this road. (Russell thought it *cordifolius*, but the flowers are white and petioles not winged.) In the T. Wheeler pasture, showed me the *Cladonia rangiferina* (the common white one), the *C. sylvestris* (the green one with it), also the *furcata*, and spoke of the *alpina* as common in woods.

This day and yesterday, and when I was last on the river, the wind rose in the middle of the day, blowing hardest at noon, — quite hard, — but went down toward night. Pointed out an *Erigeron strigosus* without rays. He had read of it as a variety. Some had small rays, leaves narrower. Above Rogers house, on right.

P.M. — With Russell to Fair Haven by boat.

That coarse, somewhat *B.Beckii*-looking weed, standing upright under water in the river, is hornwort (*Ceratophyllum echinatum*). That moss on the button-bushes is a fontinalis or else dichelyma. A coarser species is on the bridges. Cannot see the fruit now for some reason. On the rock at Bittern Cliff, the *Parmelia detonsa*. R. mistook a black pony in the water with a long mane behind some weeds for a heron. *Nuphar lutea* pads nearly all eaten, mere skeletons remaining. Saw where a partridge had dusted herself at a wood-chuck's hole. Methinks

1854

that for about three weeks past the light under sides of the upper leaves of maples, swamp oak, etc., etc., have been permanently conspicuous, while in June to middle of July they were observable only when there was more wind than usual. As if, owing to the dry weather and heat, those leaves were permanently held up, like those of the hardback, etc., — various weeds and shrubs on dry land, perhaps had risen in the night and had not vitality enough to fall again. Now, accordingly, I see the dark-green upper sides of the lower leaves alone, and various agreeable shades of green thence upward. Now is the season to observe these various shades, especially when the sun is low in the West. At the steam-mill sand-bank was the distinct shadow of our shadows, — first on the water, then the double one on the bank bottom to bottom, one being upside down, — three in all, — one on water, two on land or bushes.



R. showed me the ginseng in my collection. Thinks that one of my Maine asters is a northern form of the *cordifolius*.

No haymakers in meadows now.

Prince's-feathers, how long? Woodcock in garden. *Polygonum dumetorum* at Bittern Cliff.

1854

1854

1854

 August 17, Thursday: Haute-volée-Polka op.155 by [Johann Baptist Strauss II](#) was performed for the initial time, in the Volksgarten, Vienna.

Sale at public auction by Selover & Sinton of water lot property in the city of San Francisco.

CALIFORNIA

A review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) appeared on page 2, column 3 of Worcester's [Daily Transcript](#):

This is the result of the Authors' [sic] experience while living alone in the woods, and during a Sojourn of two years and two months on the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, Mass. His object in going there was, in his own words, "not to live cheaply nor dearly; but to transact some private business with the fewest obstacles; to be at once Pilot, captain and owner; to be hindered from accomplishing which for want of a little energy and business talent, appeared not so sad as foolish." Though we cannot readily yield to many of the Author's opinions, yet we will not with[h]old from him our share of the praise which the work merits. It is neatly issued by Ticknor & Co.

Another review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) has been turned up, in the Burlington, Vermont [Sentinel](#), page 3, column 1, quite recently, by Richard E. Winslow III (and the total number of known reviews during [Henry Thoreau](#)'s lifetime is now up to 69):

 This is altogether a very remarkable book, and will attract much attention. It is devoted to a detailed account of the most interesting features of the life of a hermit, "in the woods," and is at once scholarly, philosophical, agricultural, statistical, satirical and poetical. The writers themes are as various and unique as could be desired - such as "Economy," "Where I lived and what I lived for," "Reading," "Sounds," "Solitude," "Visitors," "The Bean-field," "Higher Laws," "Brute Neighbors," "House-Warming," "Winter Animals," &c., &c. It is something to say of "Walden" in these days of abject and drivelling imitations, that the work is thoroughly original both in its faults and excellencies, and will be found a very readable and spicy volume. It is neatly printed, -contains 356 pages, and is sold by SAML. B. NICHOLS.

TIMELINE OF WALDEN



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR AUGUST 17th]



1854

1854



August 18, Friday: As a Mormon wagon train passed, a Brulé Dakota by the name of [High Forehead](#) had shot an arrow into the flank of one of the oxen. Reaching Fort Laramie on this day, the owner of this ox made report of this incident.

WHITE ON RED, RED ON WHITE

[The Liberator](#) published a letter submitted by [Daniel Foster](#) in Princeton, Massachusetts on August 8th in regard to a petition from an escaped slave, the Reverend Thomas H. Jones:

Dear Mr. Garrison – The Rev. Thomas H. Jones, a fugitive slave, has been laboring in this vicinity a little, of late. You know him, and do not, therefore, require any recommendation. He is soliciting aid for the redemption of his son. An enemy has published a notice in the Worcester Transcript, cautioning people not to aid Mr. Jones, and saying that he is the owner of a home, and that his son is free. This is a malicious falsehood. I am intimately acquainted with Mr. Jones, and testify to his integrity, to his need of aid, to his ability as a speaker, and to the fact that his son, for whose redemption he is toiling, is still in bonds, and hopelessly bound, unless anti-slavery friends respond to the appeal of a bereaved and sorrowing father. Will you do him the kindness to insert this correction in your paper?

and oblige

Yours, fraternally, DANIEL FOSTER,
East Princeton, August 8, 1854

New-York Tribune reporter [James Redpath](#), assigned to cull for republication articles from Southern newspapers that usefully described the “Facts of Slavery,” came upon [the following sensational material](#):



The Deacon had an old slave that had been in the habit of running away, but had always been caught, until finally about two weeks ago he made another escape. No sooner was the old thing missing than cousin H borrowed neighbor P’s hounds and started in search of him. He had not proceeded far in the woods before he found the old man perched upon a limb of a large tree. He ordered him several times to come down, but the old man, stubborn as an ass, still maintained his position. The deacon then becoming excited, fired his gun at him. The ball passed through his ankle and mangled it in such a manner that it mortified and he died.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked over the Great Meadows (Gleason D8).



Aug. 18. Warbling vireo in morning, — one.

Russell thought it was the *Salix discolor* or else *eriocephala* which I saw, not *sericea*, which is not common; also that my cone-bearing one was *S. humilis*. Barratt the best acquainted with them. That the *Rubus triflorus* was badly described. That we had three gooseberries, -the common smooth, the prickly fruited, and the prickly branched. Said we had two strawberries, the *Virginiana* and the *vesca*, — the last not uncommon. That the *Thalictrum dioicum* was only about a foot high. That the seed of flowering fern was heavy, and hence it fell in circles and so grew. That the *Cratæsgus Crus-Galli* was a variety of the white thorn. Best time for seaside flowers middle of July, for White Mountains 4th of July. Robbins of Uxbridge best acquainted now with the potamogetons. Tuckerman thought it would be impossible to arrange them at present, European specimens being inaccessible or fragmentary. That the smaller sparganium was my taller one of the river and should rather

[Transcript]

be called *minor*, being only narrower. That we had but one urtica hereabouts. Of the rose-colored water-lily in a pond-hole in Barnstable, into which Parker stripped and went; and the farmer dug it all up and sold it. The Spanish moss is a lily, — *Tillandsia*, — so named by Linnæus because it dislikes moisture as much as his friend Tillands the sea. All these spots on my collection of leaves-crimson, etc. — are fungi. The transparent globes on the hornwort are an alga, *Nostoe*.

Almost impossible to find fishworms now it is so dry. I cannot find damp earth anywhere but where there is water on the surface or near.

P.M. — Over Great Meadows.

A great drought now for several weeks. The haymakers have been remarkably uninterrupted this year by rain. Corn and potatoes are nearly spoiled. Our melons suffer the more because there was no drought in June and they ran to vine, which now they cannot support. Hence there is little fruit formed, and that small and dying ripe. Almost everywhere, if you dig into the earth, you find it all dusty. Even wild black cherries and choke-cherries are drying before fairly ripe, all shriveled. Many are digging potatoes half grown. Trees and shrubs recently set out, and many old ones, are dying. A good time to visit swamps and meadows. I find no flowers yet on the amphicarpæa.

In a ditch behind Peter's a small *Cistudo Blandingii* swimming off rapidly. Its shell is four and a quarter inches long by three and a quarter wide in rear, three wide in front; and its depth is nearly two inches, with a slight dorsal ridge, which the large one has not. I distinguished it from the *Emys guttata* at first glance by its back being sculptured concentrically about the rear side, leaving a smooth space within, a half-inch in diameter. My large one is almost entirely smooth on back, being sculptured only an eighth of an inch wide on circumference of each scale. It has small, rather indistinct yellow spots, somewhat regularly arranged in the middle of each scale. Head peppered with dull-yellow spots above; head, legs, and tail black above; head light-yellow beneath, and also legs about roots, passing into a dirty white. It is a very restless and active turtle, not once inclosing itself or using its valve at all, at once walking off when put down, keeping its head, legs, and tail out, continually running out its neck to its full extent, and often bending it backward over the shell. Its neck with the loose skin about it has a squarish form. Readily turns itself over with its head when on its back. Upper shell black; sternum light-brown, with a large black blotch on the outside after part of each scale and about half its area; five claws on fore feet, four and a rudiment or concealed one on hind feet. In this small one, the sculptured part occupies nearly the whole scale and is from a half to three quarters of an inch wide, while in the large one it is only an eighth of an inch wide, a mere border. Apparently as it grows the smooth rear is extended or shoves forward and a portion of the sculptured part scales off.

In this ditch an interesting green jelly, conferva-like at a little distance, perhaps a hind of frog-spawn, but without any eyes in it, of various forms, floating; often a sort of thick ring made of a hollow cylinder. Was that a proserpinaea in that ditch with all but two or three small leaves at top, pectinate? Saw there the large semipellucid, raved, heart-shaped radical leaves of a heart-leaf, green and purplish, sometimes all purplish, more delicate than the waved radical leaves of yellow lilies, etc., — a dimple of leaves. We can walk across the Great Meadows now in any direction. They are quite dry. Even the pitcher-plant leaves are empty. [The meadows] are covered with spatular sundew. Saw a snipe. There are fifteen or twenty haymakers here yet, but almost done. They and their loads loom at a distance. Men in their white shirts look taller and larger than near at hand.

I have just been through the process of killing the cistudo for the sake of science; but I cannot excuse myself for this murder, and see that such actions are inconsistent with the poetic perception, however they may serve science, and will affect the quality of my observations. I pray that I may walk more innocently and serenely through nature. No reasoning whatever reconciles me to this act. It affects my day injuriously. I have lost some self-respect. I have a murderer's experience in a degree.

The bobolinks alight on the wool-grass. Do they eat its seeds? The zizania on the north side of the river near the Holt, or meadow watering-place, is very conspicuous and abundant. Surprised to find the *Ludwigia spærocarpa* apparently some time out (say August 1st), in a wet place about twenty rods off the bars to the path that leads down from near Pedrick's; two to two and a half feet high, with a thick but unbroken bark about the base much like the decodon; no petals; yellowish seed-vessels. I think I saw a mockingbird on a black cherry near Pedrick's. Size of and like a catbird; bluish-black side-head, a white spot on closed wings, lighter breast and beneath; but he flew before I had fairly adjusted my glass. There were brown thrashers with it making their clicking note. The leaves of the paniced cornel are particularly curled by the heat and drought, showing their lighter under sides. Low blackberry vines generally are reddening and already give an October aspect to some dry fields where the early potentilla grows, as that plain of Pedrick's.

At Beck Stow's on new Bedford road, what I had thought a utricularia appears to be *Myriophyllum ambiguum*. One is floating, long and finely capillary leaves, with very few emersed and pectinate; another variety is on the mud, short, with linear or pectinate leaves. Perhaps they are the varieties *natans* and *limosum*. The last out some days, the first perhaps hardly yet. The green bitter there, leaving its tracks on the mud. The *Solidago nemoralis* is now abundantly out on the Great Fields.

The “found poet” [William M. White](#)’s version of a portion of this journal entry is:

*I have just been through the process of killing
The cistudo
For the sake of science;
But I cannot excuse myself for this murder,
And see that such actions are inconsistent
With the poetic perception,
However they may serve science,
And will affect the quality of my observations.*

*I pray that I may walk more innocently
And serenely through nature.
No reasoning whatever reconciles me to this act.
It affects my day injuriously.
I have lost some self-respect.
I have a murderer’s experience in a degree.*



August 19, Saturday: On this day in the wild and wooly west, [Lieutenant John Lawrence Grattan](#) having been dispatched from Fort Laramie to take High Forehead under arrest for having shot an arrow into the flank of a Mormon ox, when High Forehead refused to surrender himself the soldiers were ordered to fire indiscriminately into the native American village and headman Conquering Bear was fatally wounded. The Brulé Dakota warriors, assisted by Oglala Dakota warriors, overwhelmed this troop detachment. Soon a detachment under [General William Selby Harney](#) would be sent out to “punish” the Brulé group.

HDT

WHAT?

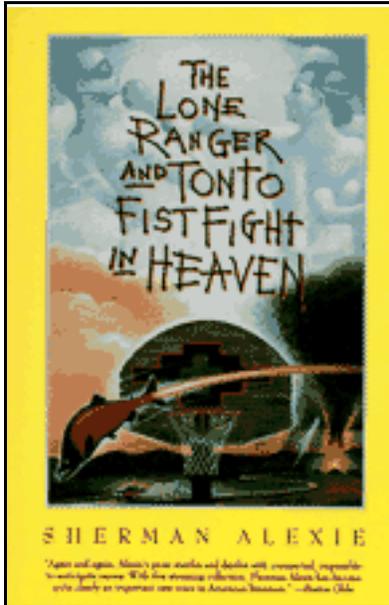
INDEX

1854

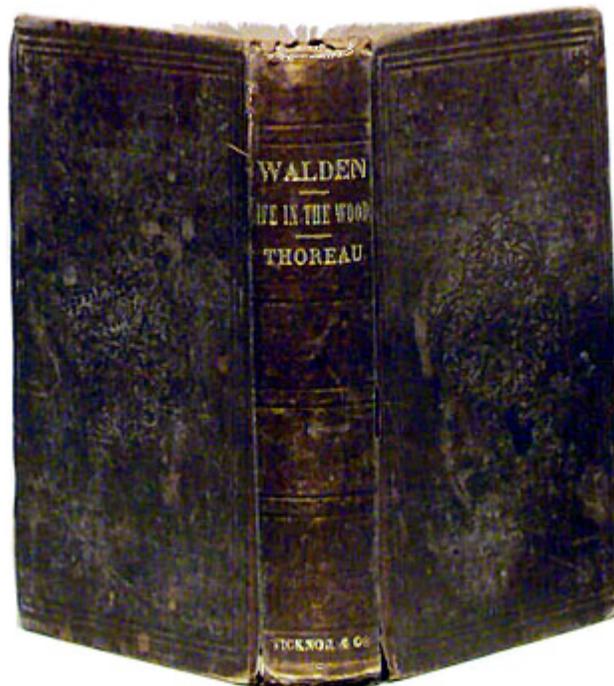
Escalation, sound at all familiar?

1854

WHITE ON RED, RED ON WHITE



In [Concord](#) during the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) and [Eben J. Loomis](#) walked the Fitchburg Railroad tracks to Flint's, or Sandy, Pond (Gleason J10).



There was a review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) under the heading “New Publications” on the 1st



1854

1854

page of the Cincinnati, Ohio (Daily?) Gazette, column 8:

Mr. Thoreau is an eccentric young man, who chose to build himself a house in the woods, with his own hands, and dwell there two years and two months, during which period the greater portion of the contents of this volume were written. He is an utterly fearless thinker and writer, of which his book will give sufficient evidence. To those who are not familiar with his writings, the following title of some of the chapters of his book will be an acceptable hint of what they may expect to find in it: Sounds, Solitude, The Bean Field, The Village, The Ponds, Higher Laws, Brute Neighbors, Winter Animals, The Pond in Winter, and Spring.

TIMELINE OF WALDEN

There was also a review of WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS in the Boston Saturday Evening Gazette, 2:6.

A quaintly-philosophic work, evidently the production of an acute, as well as a peculiar intellect. It is a work which, we judge, would be to some extent "caviar to the general," yet when in a meditative mood, one cannot find a cheerier closet companion. Philosophy, politics, economy, mathematics, mechanics, with a dash of romance, thrown together very neatly by a polished verbalist, go to make up this very agreeable book.

There was also a review of WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS under the heading "Recent Publications" in Philadelphia's Cummings' Evening Bulletin, 2:2.

In the multiplied and confused recollection of the hundreds of books that have passed under our notice within a year or two, there is a distinct and pleasant impression of a volume called "A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers," as a quaint, but original record of rural experiences. "Walden" is by the same hand, and we recognize in it the same refined appreciation of nature and her beauties, and the same benevolent and human way of treating external and moral topics. It is, in fact, the history of a sort of hermit life passed by the author, in a house built by his own hands on the shore of Walden Pond, in the town of Concord, Massachusetts. It was written, indeed, in that house, and the narrative has all the vividness of true portraiture. If the author is eccentric, there is a great deal of good sense in his eccentricity, and he has certainly made a book which will be read with pleasure by all.

There was also a review of WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS in the Portsmouth Journal of Literature and



1854

1854

Politics, 2:3.

The quaint writer of this volume resided for more than two years alone in the woods, in a house of his own building, a mile from any neighbor, on the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, Mass. It has been said that it takes all sorts of people to make up a world. The writer of this book, full of quaint notions, quaint sayings, and withal a philosopher and a wit, is one of the rare ones which, like the sea-serpent, is only now and then visible—never two of them seen at the same time. The style is attractive, and although there may be some ideas which we do not readily adopt, there is not a page you wish to omit in the perusal.

There was also a review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) in the Portland, Maine Transcript, page 151.

Reprinted in **CRITICAL ESSAYS ON HENRY DAVID THOREAU'S WALDEN**, ed. Joel Myerson (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1988), page 21.

There was also a review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) under the heading "New Books" in the Daily Ohio State Journal, page 3, column 2.

Those who have read "A Week on the Concord and Merrimac[k] Rivers," by the same author, will thank him for the opportunity of enjoying a second call from the same author. We shall recur to the volume again. [No subsequent notice located.]

Another review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) has been turned up in Boston's New England Farmer, page 2, column 3, quite recently, by Richard E. Winslow III, and the total number of known reviews during

[Thoreau](#)'s lifetime is now up to 69:

WALDEN.

Messrs. Ticknor & Fields, of this city, have recently issued a highly attractive and original volume, entitled, "Walden; or Life in the Woods," by Henry D. Thoreau, author of "A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers." Mr. Thoreau, who is a philosopher of the Emerson school, give in this volume some items of experience and lessons of wisdom which he gathered during a residence of over two years alone in the woods, in a cabin built with his own hands, on the borders of Walden Pond, in Concord, Mass. He thus explains his object, in choosing this solitary abode: -

Quotes WALDEN 90:32-91:11

An idea may be formed of the scope of the book, from the title of the chapters, which are as follows: -

Lists all 18 chapters of the book

Mr. Thoreau handles his subjects in his own erratic way, weaving into his pages many charming descriptions of nature, and shrewd and caustic criticisms of men; mingling some brave truths and noble thoughts with much that is extravagant and outre; and throwing around the whole the cold mists of a selfish philosophy, which mystifies the head and repels the sympathies of the reader. Still, the book is a fresh and entertaining one, and will be widely read and admired, as the production of a mind of gifted powers and curious mould.

In addition, on this day an extract from the "Sounds" chapter of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) was presented under the heading "Wood Sounds" in [Dwight's Journal of Music, A Paper of Art and Literature](#), as shown on the following screens:

JOHN SULLIVAN DWIGHT

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.

PEOPLE OF
WALDEN

BEN JONSON

EURIPIDES

AEOLIAN HARP

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 chickadee 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.

We may well ask ourselves what [Thoreau](#) had intended, by describing the nighttime hooting of the male Eastern screech owl as “Ben Jonsonian.” Since Emerson had a 6-volume set of THE WORKS OF [BEN JONSON](#) in his library, we can presume that our Henry would have made himself pretty familiar with these materials. About all I have been able to come up with to date as an explanation for this ascription (since I have never myself read or seen performed any of Jonson’s plays) is that some of these plays have down through the years been critiqued as suffering from “an inner poverty in the humanities of the heart.” I note that Samuel Taylor Coleridge, for instance, has commented that “there is no goodness of heart in any of the prominent characters.”



Aug. 19. P.M. — To Flint’s Pond via railroad with Mr. Loomis.
The hills and fields generally have such a russet, withered, — wintry look that the meadows by the railroad

[Transcript]

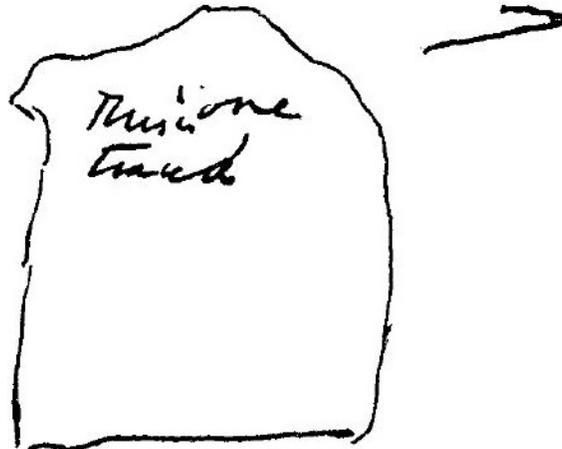
appear to have got an exceedingly fresh and tender green. The near meadow is very beautiful now, seen from the railroad through this dog-day haze, which softens to velvet its fresh green of so many various shades, blending them harmoniously, — darker and lighter patches of grass and the very light yellowish-green of the sensitive fern which the mowers have left. It has an indescribable beauty to my eye now, which it could not have in a clear day. The haze has the effect both of a wash or varnish and of a harmonizing tint. It destroys the idea of definite distance which distinctness suggests. It is as if you had painted a meadow of fresh grass springing up after the mower, — here a dark green, there lighter, and there again the yellowish onoclea, — then washed it over with some gum like a snap and tinted the paper of a fine misty blue. Thus is an effect of the dog-days. There is now a remarkable drought, some of whose phenomena I have referred to during several weeks past, q.v. Of large forest trees the red maples appear to suffer most. Their leaves are very generally wilted and curled, showing the under sides. Perhaps not only because they require so much moisture, but because they are more nearly ripe, and there is less life and vigor in them. The *Populus grandidentata* perhaps suffers equally, and its leaves hang down wilted; even many willows. Many white birches long since lost the greater part of their leaves, which cover the ground, sere and brown as in autumn. I see many small trees quite (lead-, birches, etc. I see amelanchier leaves scarlet, and black birch and willow yellowing. Various ferns are yellow and brown. When I see at the brick-sand cutting how thin a crust of soil and darker sand, only three or four feet thick, there is above the pure white sand which appears to compose the mass of the globe itself, and this apparently perfectly dry, I am surprised that the trees are not all withered, and wonder if such a soil could sustain a large growth. After digging through ordinary soil and yellow sand three or four feet, you come to a pure white sand very evenly, abruptly, and distinctly separated from the former, and this is laid open to the depth of ten feet, — I know not how much deeper it extends, — so that the forest grows as it would in a wholly artificial soil made on a rock, perchance. I presume you would not now anywhere on these plains find any moisture in that four-foot crust, and there is never any in the sand beneath. I am surprised to see how shallow and dry all the available earth is there, in which the forest grows.

So like tinder is everything now that we passed three places within a mile where the old sleepers heaped up by the track had just been set on fire by the engine, — in one place a large pile.

Plenty of *Polygonum arifolium* in the ditch in the second field. Some barberries are red, and some thorn berries. A linear-leaved epilobium in Baker's, i.e. Mackintosh's, Swamp.

Flint's Pond has fallen very much since I was here. The shore is so exposed that you can walk round, which I have not known possible for several years, and the outlet is dry. But Walden is not affected by the drought. There is such a haze we see not further than our Annurnsack, which is blue as a mountain. *Lobelia Dortmanna* is still abundantly in flower, and hedge-hyssop, etc.; some elethra. There is a good deal of wind, but I see where the waves have washed ten feet further within an hour or two over the south shore. The wet sand is covered with small bird-tracks, perhaps pectweets', and is marked all over with the galleries of some small creatures, — worms or shellfish perhaps, — of various sizes, — some quite large, — which have passed under the surface like a meadow mouse. Are not these food for the water-birds? I find growing densely there on the southeast shore and at the ball shore, where it appears to have been covered with water recently, the *Myriophyllum tenellum*, another species of that of which I found two varieties yesterday; perhaps since August 1st. A new plant.

The balls again, somewhat stale, left high and dry apparently a month ago. Some five inches in diameter. I find here and there, washed up, what I take to be the inner scales of a tortoise, and, in one place, where it fitted over the edge of the shell, thin and transparent like isinglass or parchment.



Plucked, about 4.30, one bunch of *Viburnum nudum* berries, all green, with very little pink tinge even. When I got home at 6.50, nine were turned blue, the next morning thirty. It seems that they do not always pass through

the deep-pink stage. They are quite sweet to eat, like raisins.
 I noticed these birds in this walk: —
 A lark [Eastern Meadowlark  *Sturnella magna*], which sang.
 White-bellied wallows [Tree Swallow  *Tachycineta bicolor*] on telegraph-wire.
 Barn swallows [Barn Swallow  *Hirundo rustica*], I think.
 Nighthawks [Common Nighthawk  *Chordeiles minor*], which squeaked.
 Heard a chewink [Rufous-sided Towhee  *Pipilo erythrophthalmus*] chewink.
 Saw cherry-birds [Cedar Waxwing *Bombycilla cedrorum*] flying lower over Heywood meadow like swallows, apparently for flies, and heard them, cricket-like.
 Kingbirds [Eastern Kingbird  *Tyrannus tyrannus*] quite common, twittering; one on telegraph-wire.
 Bluebirds [Eastern Bluebird  *Sialia sialis*], saw and heard.
 Chickadees [Black-capped Chickadee  *Parus atricapillus*], lispng note.
 Jays [Blue Jay  *Cyanocitta cristata*], scream.
 A woodcock [American Woodcock  *Scolopax minor*], in wood-path, goes off with rattling sound.
 Wilson's thrush [Veery  *Catharus fuscescens*]'s yorrick.
 Saw crows [American Crow  *Corvus brachyrhynchos*].
 Grouse [Ruffed Grouse  *Bonasa umbellus*].
 Song sparrows [Song Sparrow  *Melospiza melodia*], chirp.
 Grass-bird [Vesper Sparrow  *Pooecetes gramineus*] and perhaps another sparrow.
 Goldfinch [American Goldfinch  *Carduelis tristis*], heard.



August 20, Sunday: At 5:15 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Nawshawtuct or Lee's Hill (Gleason F6). In the afternoon he went by boat to Assabet Bath (Gleason 4/E5). Review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) on the 1st page of the Philadelphia [Sunday Dispatch](#), column 6:



This is certainly a curious book, and a superior one, also. The author is an original thinker, and having built himself a house near Walden Pond, in Massachusetts, where he lived in solitude more than two years, he writes the present volume as a sort of answer to the thousand inquiries which have been made of him since his return to the social world, as to his way of life and his occupations. A tone of philosophy and sterling good sense runs through the book. The observations of Mr. Thoreau are scholarly, and they extend over a wide series of subjects connected with the hopes and usual desires of men. We recommend this work as one excellent in its class.



Aug. 20. Sunday. I hear no trilling of birds early.

[Transcript]

5.15 A.M. — To Hill.

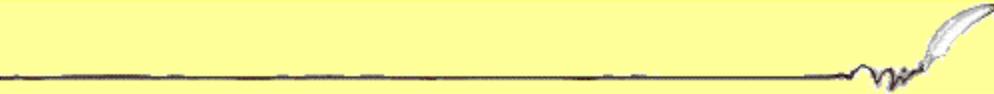
I hear a gold robin, also faint song of common robin. Wood pewee (fresh); red-wing blackbird with fragmentary trill; bobolinks (the males apparently darker and by themselves); kingbirds [Eastern Kingbird  *Tyrannus tyrannus*]; nuthatch heard; yellow-throated vireo, heard and saw, on hickories (have I lately mistaken this for red-eye?); goldfinch [American Goldfinch  *Carduelis tristis*]; slate-colored hawk (with white rump and black wing-tips). The grape leaves even at this hour, after a dewy night, are still many of them curled upward, showing their light under-sides, and feel somewhat crisped by the drought. This, I think, is one with that permanent standing up of the leaves of many trees at this season. Prinos berries have begun to redden. When the red-eye [Red-eyed Vireo  *Vireo olivaceus*] ceases generally, then I think is a crisis, — the woodland quire is dissolved. That, if I remember, was about a fortnight ago. The concert is over. The pewees sit still oil their perch a long time, returning to the same twig after darting at an insect. The yellow-throated vireo is very restless, darting about. I hear a sound as of green pignuts falling from time to time, and see and hear the

chickaree thereabouts!!

P.M. — Up Assabet by boat to Bath.

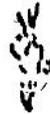
"Up Assabet" is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau's two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 10



A warm but breezy day, wind west by south. Water clear and sunny. I see much of my fresh-water sponge just above the Island, attached to the bottom, rocks, or branches under water. In form it reminds me of some cladonia lichens, for it has many branches like a lichen, being a green, porous, spongy substance, with long, slender, pointed fingers or horns, pointed upward or outward, the thickest about half an inch in diameter, and emits a peculiar, penetrating, strong, rank scent like some chemicals. The whole mass perhaps eight or ten inches in diameter. When raised to the surface it slowly sinks again. The bottom of the south branch is in many places almost covered with the short cut leaves of the sium, — as I call it. On the sandy bottom in midstream (mussel shoals), a dozen rods above the Rock, I notice a small (?) green clam which must be the same with or similar to that which Perkins showed me in Newburyport. It has bright-green rays from the eye (?) on a light-green ground. Found in pure sand. Saw three. The rays show through to the inside. It is handsomer without than the common.

Some chickadees [**Black-capped Chickadee**  *Parus atricapillus*] on the pitch pines over water near the hemlocks look longer than usual, hanging back downward. See a strange bird about size of cedar-bird also on the pitch pine, perhaps greenish-olive above, whitish or ashy beneath, with a yellow vent and a dark line on side-head. [^Could it have been the female rose-breasted grosbeak?] Saw a wood pewee which had darted after an insect over the water in this position in the air:



It often utters a continuous pe-e-e.

The *Polygonum amphibium* at Assabet Rock, apparently several days, rising two or more feet above water. In many places I notice oaks stripped by caterpillars nowadays. Saw yesterday one of those great light-green grubs with spots. I see to-day many — more than a half-dozen — large wood tortoises on the bottom of the river, — some apparently eight to nine inches long in shell, some with their heads out. Are they particularly attracted to the water at this season? They lie quite still on the bottom.

Off Dodge's Brook, saw a fish lying on its side on the surface, with its head downward, slowly steering toward the shore with an undulating motion of the tail. Found it to be a large sucker which had apparently been struck by a kingfisher, fish hawk, or heron and got away. (The mill is not a-going to-day, Sunday.) It had been seized near the tail, which for three inches was completely flayed and much torn, lacerated, a part of the caudal fin being carried off. It had also received a severe thrust midway its body, which had furrowed its side and turned down a large strip of skin. It was breathing its last when I caught it. It was evidently too powerful for the bird which had struck it. I brought it home and weighed and measured it. It weighed two pounds and two ounces and was nineteen and a quarter inches long. Above, it was a sort of blue black or slate-color, darkest on the head, with blotches of the same extending down its sides, which were of a reddish golden, passing into white beneath. There were a few small red spots on the sides, just behind the gills. It had what I should call a gibbous head, but no horns; a line of fine mucous pores above and below eye; eyes at least one and a half inches apart; great corrugated ears on the lower lip; fins all dark like the back; nostrils double; opercula not golden; irides golden; scales on lateral line sixty-five (about), those near tail gone; with skin. Fin rays, as I counted: pectoral, seventeen; ventral, ten; anal, nine; dorsal, thirteen; caudal, some wanting. Looking down on it, it was very broad at base of head, tapering thence gradually to tail. It had a double bladder, nearly six inches long by oil (inch at widest part. I think it must have been a kingfisher, it was so much lacerated at the tail.

Now, at 4 P.M., hear a croaking frog [^Mole cricket.] near the water's edge, sounding like the faint quacking of a duck with more of the r in it, — something like crack crack crack, rapidly repeated. Though I knew that I must be within three feet of it, as I looked from the boat upon the shore, I could see nothing, but several times I interrupted him and caused him to jump. It is surprising how perfectly they are concealed by their color, even



1854

1854

when croaking under one's eyes. It was *Rana palustris*, though I did not see it when it croaked. I after heard them further off, just before sunset, along the edge of the river, and saw that I had often mistaken their note for that of a cricket. So similar are these two earth-sounds. The cricket-like note of this little; frog in the meadow ushers in the evening.

A man tells me to-day that he once saw some black snake's eggs on the surface of a tussock in a meadow just hatching, some hatched. The old one immediately appeared and swallowed all the young. Assabet quite low. Those beds of dirty green ostrich-feather potamogetons are much exposed and dry at top.

I perceive quite a number of furrows of clams in the sand, all leading from the side toward the middle of the river, with the clams at that end. Can then be going down now? They have not moved opposite Hubbard Bath, where they are in middle as well as by shore. Their position in the furrows is on their sharp edges, with what I will call their two eyes forward.

We had a very little drizzling rain on the 4th, and I think that was the last drop.

There is so thick a bluish haze these dog-days that single trees half a mile off, seen against it as a light-colored background, stand out distinctly a dark mass, — almost black, — as seen against the more distinct blue woods. So, also, when there is less haze, the distinct wooded ridges are revealed one behind another in the horizon.

1854

1854

 August 21, Monday: [Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes](#) purchased a copy of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) which –on the evidence of his later writings– did him no good at all. One wonders whether he read it.



[WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) was reviewed under the heading “Recent Publications” in the Newark, New

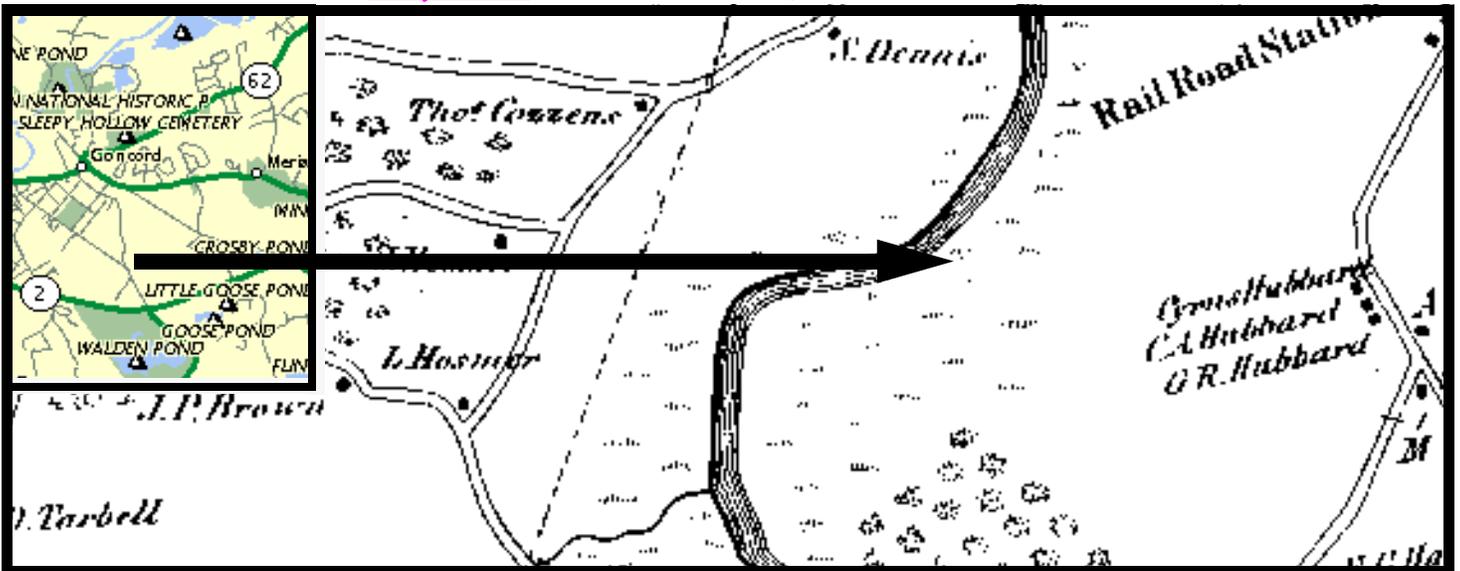
1854

1854

Jersey Daily Advertiser, page 2, column 5:

We have read this volume while lying upon a sick bed, and never before better appreciated the convenience of the light octavo form, so generally adopted by his house for its publications. There were other works which more urgently demanded attention, but the convenience of this gave it the preference. Light as it was, even this was very fatiguing to hold—the others impossible. Thoreau is an original. Although of Harvard education, colleges have not formed him. He has lived according to his whims, and here is his justification. Perhaps there is nothing new in the idea, but his application and incidents are fresh. He lived alone for two years in the Walden woods near Concord, Mass., some miles from the village, away from all society, in a house (shanty) built by himself, raising his own food, principally preparing it himself, and at an actual cost of about \$100 per year, all told—and that earned by himself. This life is a novel one, but his account of it is full as curious. He writes almost as many thoughts as words. Indeed, his pages are more fully peppered with ideas than commas.—The reader cannot fail to be entertained with a book, which took two years of almost entire solitude to write, and will take as many more to think out. We would urge those tired with every day issues of the press, to seek for this, as a fresh bouquet from the wilds, fragrant and inspiring.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Hubbard's Bath,



and then to Conantum (Gleason J6).



Aug. 21. P.M. — To Conantum via Hubbard Bath.

Leaves of small hypericums begin to be red. The river is warmer than I supposed it would become again, yet not so warm as in July. A small, wary dipper, — solitary, dark-colored, diving amid the pads. The same that lingered so late on the Assabet. Red choke-berries are dried black; ripe some time ago. In Hubbard's meadow, between the two woods, I cannot find a pitcher-plant with any water in it. Some of the Hubbard aster are still left, against the upper Hubbard Wood by the shore, which the mowers omitted. It looks like a variety of *A. Tradescanti*, [[^]Vide July 26, '56.] with longer, less rigid, and more lanceolate toothed cauline leaves, with fewer and more distant branchlets, and the whole plant more simple and wand-like. The bayonet rush has not generally blossomed this year. What has, long ago. Have noticed winged grasshoppers or locusts a week or more. Spikenard berries are now mahogany-color. Trillium berries bright-red. I see a woodchuck at a distance, cantering like a fat pig, ludicrously fat, first one end up, then the other. It runs with difficulty. The fever-bush berries are partly turned red, perhaps prematurely. Now, say, is hazel-nut time. I think that my *Aster corymbosus* — at least the early ones — are *A. cordifolius*, since Wood makes this to vary to white and to have a flexuous stem. I see robins in small flocks and pigeon woodpeckers with them. Now see in pastures tufts of grass which have been pulled up by cattle, withered, quite thickly strewn. *Spiranthes cernua*, a day or two. Brought home a great *Eupatorium purpureum* from Miles's Swamp (made species *fistulosum* by Barratt). It is ten and a half feet high and one inch in diameter; said to grow to twelve feet. The corymb, eighteen and a half inches wide by fifteen inches deep; the largest leaves, thirteen by three inches. The stem hollow throughout. This I found, to my surprise, when I undertook to make a flute of it, trusting it was closed at the leaves; but there is no more pith there than elsewhere. It would serve many purposes, as a water-pipe, etc. Probably the Indians knew it and used. They might have blowed arrows through a straight one. It would yield an available hollow tube six feet long. Did I see the yellow redpoll back? Head not conspicuously reddish.

[Transcript]



August 22, Tuesday: Austria occupied the Danubian principalities following withdrawal of Russian troops.

Youngstown was incorporated in Erie County, [New York](#).

Review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) in the [Newport, Rhode Island Daily News](#), 2:2.

This is a singular book, and is the production of a peculiar mind. The author selected a spot on the banks of a Lake from which the book takes its name, situated about a mile from the village of Concord, Massachusetts, and there, in the woods, he erected a small house, where he resided alone for more than two years, subsisting upon plain food, working a portion of the days, and reading, writing and meditating the balance of the time. He appears to have been somewhat impressed with a kind of Utopian idea, and endeavored to test his theory on a small scale. He is a man of a good deal of genius, and the book is exceedingly well written. In many instances his reasoning is sound, and it would be better for the world if some of his notions could be carried into general practice. —Again we say the book is a very peculiar one; and well worth reading. It is issued in good style.
For sale by W.H. Peek and C.E. Hammett, Jr.

WALDEN Print H



Aug. 22. The haze, accompanied by much wind, is so thick this forenoon that the sun is obscured as by a cloud. I see no rays of sunlight.

A bee much like a honey-bee cutting rounded pieces out of rose leaves.

[Transcript]



P.M. — To Great Meadows on foot along bank into Bedford meadows; thence to Beck Stow's and Gowing's Swamp.

Walking may be a science, so far as the direction of a walk is concerned. I go again to the Great Meadows, to improve this remarkably dry season and walk where in ordinary times I cannot go. There is, no doubt, a particular season of the year when each place may be visited with most profit and pleasure, and it may be worth the while to consider what that season is in each case.

This was a prairial walk. I went along the river and meadows from the first, crossing the Red Bridge road to the Battle-Ground. In the Mill Brook, behind Jones's, was attracted by one of those handsome high-colored masses of fibrous pink roots of the willow in the water. It was three or four feet long, five or six inches wide, and four or five inches thick, — long parallel roots nearly as big as a crow-quill, with innumerable short fibres on all sides, all forming a dense mass of a singular bright-pink color. There are three or four haymakers still at work in the Great Meadows, though but very few acres are left uncut. Was surprised to hear a phoebe's pewet pewee and see it. I perceive a dead mole in the path halfway down the meadow.

At the lower end of these meadows, between the river and the firm land, are a number of shallow muddy pools or pond-holes, where the yellow lily and pontederia, *Lysimachia stricta*, *Ludwigia sphaerocarpa*, etc., etc., grow, where apparently the surface of the meadow was floated off some spring and so a permanent pond-hole was formed in which, even in this dry season, there is considerable water left. The great roots of the yellow lily, laid bare by the floating off of the surface crust last spring, two and a half or three inches in diameter and a yard or more of visible length, look like great serpents or hydras exposed in their winter quarters. There lie now little heaps or collections of the singularly formed seed-vessels of the pontederia, as they have fallen on the mud, directly under the nodding but bare spikes.

In these shallow muddy pools, but a few inches deep and few feet in diameter, I was surprised to observe the undulations produced by pretty large fishes endeavoring to conceal themselves. In one little muddy basin where there was hardly a quart of water, caught half a dozen little breams and pickerel, only an inch long, as perfectly distinct as full grown, and in another place, where there was little else than mud left, breams two or three inches long still alive. In many dry hollows were dozens of small breams, pickerel, and pouts, quite dead and dry. Hundreds, if not thousands, of fishes had here perished on account of the drought.

Saw a blue heron [**Great Blue Heron**  *Ardea herodias*] — apparently a young bird, of a brownish blue — fly up from one of these pools, and a stake-driver from another, and also saw their great tracks on the mud, and the feathers they had shed, — some of the long, narrow white neck-feathers of the heron. The tracks of the heron were about six inches long. Here was a rare chance for the herons to transfix the imprisoned fish. It is a wonder that any escaped. I was surprised that any dead were left on the mud, but I judge from what the book says that they do not touch dead fish. To these remote shallow and muddy pools, usually surrounded by reeds and sedge, far amid the wet meadows, — to these, then, the blue heron resorts for its food. Here, too, is an abundance of the yellow lily on whose seeds they are said to feed. There, too, are the paths of muskrats.

In most of the small hollows formed by the crust being carried off in the spring, the proserpinaca grows abundantly. There are now hopping all over this meadow small *Rana palustris*, and also some more beautifully spotted *halecina* or shad frogs. There is a pretty strong wind from the north-northwest. The haze is so thick that we can hardly see more than a mile. The low blue haze around the distant edge of the meadow looks even like a low fog, i.e. at a sufficient distance. I find at length a pitcher-plant with a spoonful of water in it. It must be last night's dew. It is wonderful that in all this drought it has not evaporated. Arum berries ripe. High blueberries pretty thick, but now much wilted and shrivelled.

Thus the drought serves the herons, etc., confining their prey within narrower limits, and doubtless they are well acquainted with suitable retired pools far in the marshes to go a-fishing in. I see in Pedrick's bushy and weedy meadow dense fields of *Salidago arguta*, *stricta* or *puberula* (?), and *altissima*, etc., now in its prime. Corn-stalks begin to be cut and stacked, it is so dry.

I hear that Brooks's meadow (it is what I called the burning by Joe Merriam's) is on fire and cannot be put out. Are not most ardeas (herons and bitterns) seen at this season?

1854

1854

 August 23, Wednesday: Due to Ariana Smith Walker's consumption, the waiting period was cut a bit shorter than the traditional year and she and [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) had their wedding celebration.

British ships destroyed Kola on the Russian Arctic coast.

Review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) under the heading "New Publications" in the Springfield Daily Republican, 2:3.



This is a journal and account of an ascetic life, passed in the woods near Concord, Mass. It opens with a dissertation on the economy of life and wants of human nature, which is radical and austere.

Review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) under the heading "Literary Record" in the Philadelphia Dollar Magazine, 3:3.

There is a good deal of wholesome food for thought in this volume; it is both instructive and entertaining. The author has evidently read much and observed acutely. Indeed most of the articles which compose "Walden," display a knowledge of men and things, which few would expect from the title of the book. They are imbued with good practical sense and sound philosophy, and are written in a terse, animated and attractive style—everywhere exhibiting a cheering freshness and originality. The paper on "Reading" is excellently suggestive, and will be read with profit and pleasure. We would commend it to the reader as a fair specimen of the good things which are so abundant throughout the volume. "Walden" is neatly and substantially got up, on good type and paper, and is well bound in one handsome, library volume.

TIMELINE OF WALDEN



Aug. 23. Wednesday. P.M. — To Gowing's Swamp and Hadlock Meadows. I improve the dry weather to examine the middle of Gowing's Swamp. There is in the middle an open pool, twenty or thirty feet in diameter, nearly full of sphagnum and green froth on the surface (frog-spittle), and what other plants I could not see on account of the danger in standing on the quaking ground; then a dense border,

[Transcript]

1854

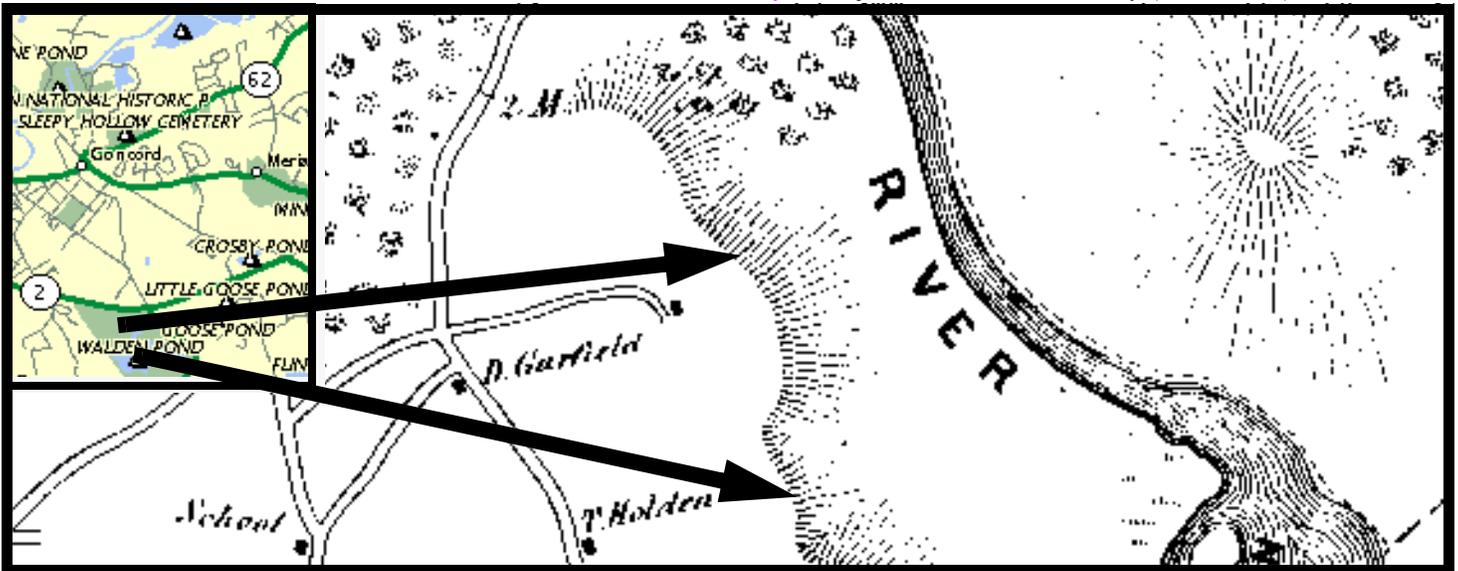
1854

➡ August 24, Thursday: There was a national emigration convention in Cleveland, Ohio.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went upriver by boat to Assabet Bath (Gleason 4/E5).

"Up Assabet" is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau's two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.
— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 10

He mentions Lee's Cliff on the left bank of the [Sudbury River](#) just below Fair Haven Bay (Gleason K6):



There was a review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) under the heading "Literature" in the New-York



1854

1854

Morning Express, 2:4.

Mr. Thoreau is a young but promising writer.—He is a manly thinker; his opinions betray a clear judgment, careful intellectual cultivation, and a great deal of talent. But the tendencies of his mind are at times too speculative. He is too impractical, and although many of the social habits against which he declaims, are susceptible of improvement; yet, he takes the privilege of most men with a “mission,” as the strong-minded philosophers and philosopheresses say, and condemns what cannot well be remedied, or what is so trivial as hardly to be worth the trouble of a chapter of Carlylean rhapsody, or epigrammatic abuse. Yet he is indubitably sound in much of what he says, and right in the main. His style is crude but forcible. Its harshness appears to be in a measure the result either of carelessness or of affectation; for some of the more elaborate passages a reader meets with in turning over the work, display a great mastery of language, much facility in expression that is at once easy and strong, and a happy fancy. When Mr. Thoreau wrote the book, he lived, he says, a mile from any neighbor and alone in the woods in a house which he had built himself on the shore of Walden Pond in Concord, Massachusetts. There he lived for two years and two months and supported himself by the labor of his hands, only. During the whole of this time he appears to have been a sort of anchorite; the eccentricity of his mode of life, as he relates it, is laughable. Yet it has a moral.

Here are the statistics of the first year’s outlay.

[Reprints “Economy,” page 60.10-15, 17-29.]

—The philosophy of such a Pythagoras could not be else than odd, of course, and will repay perusal.

TIMELINE OF WALDEN

There was a review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) under the heading “Notices of New Publications” in the Boston Puritan Recorder, 133:6.

The author of this work represents himself as having played hermit during nearly the whole time that he was writing, having selected for his dwelling place a spot on the shore of Walden Pond in Concord. The author has shown not a little talent, and a world of good humor, in giving us his experiences and observations, though he occasionally lets drop a sentiment, as for instance at the top of the 118th page,¹ which seems to us inconsistent with just views of Christianity.

1. See “Reading,” page 108.11, beginning “peculiar religious experience.”

There was a review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) under the heading “New Books” in the New Orleans [Daily Picayune](#), 2:1.

Mr. B. M. Norman, 14 Camp street, sends us “Walden, a Life in the Woods,” by Henry D. Thoreau, a very handsomely got up volume, from the press of Ticknor & Fields, Boston. We had a specimen of Mr. Thoreau’s quality, in the 4th [of] July oration he delivered at the Abolitionists’ traitor-celebration, where Garrison signalized the occasion by burning a copy of the [C]onstitution.



Aug. 24. P.M. — To Fair Haven Pond by boat.

[Transcript]

A strong wind from the south-southwest, which I expect will waft me back. So many pads are eaten up and have disappeared that it has the effect of a rise of the river drowning them. This strong wind against which we row is quite exhilarating after the stiller summer. Yet we have no rain, and I see the blue haze between me and the shore six rods off.

The bright crimson-red under sides of the great white lily pads, turned up by the wind in broad fields on the sides of the stream, are a great ornament to the stream. It is not till August, methinks, that they are turned up conspicuously. Many are now turned over completely. After August opens, before these pads are decayed (for they last longer than the nuphars of both kinds), the stronger winds begin to blow and turn them up at various angles, turning many completely over and exposing their bright crimson(?)—red under sides with their ribs. The surface being agitated, the wind catches under their edges and turns them up and holds there commonly at an angle of 45°. It is a very wholesome color, and, after the calm summer, an exhilarating sight, with a strong wind heard and felt, cooling and condensing your thoughts. This has the effect of a ripening of the leaf on the river. Not in vain was the under side thus colored, which at length the August winds turn up.

The soft pads eaten up mostly; the pontederias crisped and considerably blackened, only a few flowers left. It is surprising how the maples are affected by this drought. Though they stand along the edge of the river, they appear to suffer more than any trees except the white ash. Their leaves—and also those of the alders and hickories and grapes and even oaks more or less — are permanently curled and turned up on the upper three quarters of the trees ; so that their foliage has a singularly glaucous hue in rows along the river. At a distance they have somewhat of the same effect with the silvered tops of the swamp white oak.

The sight suggests a strong wind constantly blowing.

I went ashore and felt of them. They were more or less crisped and curled permanently. It suggests what to a slight extent occurs every year. On the Cliffs so many young trees and bushes are withered that from the river it looks as if a fire had run over them. At Lee’s Cliff larger ash trees are completely sere and brown,—burnt up. The white pines are parti-colored there.

Now, methinks, hawks are decidedly more common, beating the bush and soaring. I see two circling over the Cliffs. See a blue heron standing on the meadow at fair haven Pond. At a distance before you, only the two waving lines appear, and you would not suspect the long neck and legs.

Looking across the pond, the haze at the water’s edge under the opposite woods looks like a low fog.

To-night, as for at least four or five nights past, and to some extent, I think, a great many times within a month, the sun goes down shorn of his beams, half an hour before sunset, round and red, high above the horizon . There are no variegated sunsets in this dog-day weather.



August 25, Friday: The [HMS Assistance](#), constructed of teak in Calcutta and then outfitted for Arctic service, had sailed with Edward Belcher's expedition in 1852 but had been entrapped in ice off Bathurst Island. At this point the vessel was abandoned, together with its steam tender *Pioneer*.



Outside Sevastopol, Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the East [Marshall Jaques Leroy de Saint-Arnaud](#) issued the Order of the Day: "*L'heure est venue de combattre et de vaincre.*" ("The hour has come to fight and to conquer.")

A Troy, [New York](#) fire damaged 100 buildings.



Aug. 25. I think I never saw the haze so thick as now, at 11 A.M., looking from my attic window. I cannot quite distinguish J. Hosmer's house, only the dark outline of the woods behind it. There appears to be, as it were, a thick fog over the Dennis plains.

[Transcript]

Between me and Nawshawtuct is a very blue haze like smoke. Indeed many refer all this to smoke. Tortoise eggs are nowadays dug up in digging potatoes.

P.M. — Up Assabet by boat to Bath.

"Up Assabet" is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau's two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.
— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 10

I think that the *Polygonum hydropiperoides* is now in its prime. At the poke-logan opposite the bath place, the pools are nearly all dry, and many little pollywogs, an inch long, lie dead or dying together in the moist mud. Others are covered with the dry brown-paper conferva. Some swamp white oaks are yellowish and brown, many leaves. The *Viburnum nudum* berries, in various stages, — green, deep-pink, and also deep-blue, not purple or ripe, — are very abundant at Shad-bush Meadow. They appear to be now in their prime and are quite sweet, but have a large seed. Interesting for the various colors on the same bush and in the same cluster. Also the choke-berries are very abundant there, but mostly dried black. There is a large field of rhexia there now almost completely out of bloom, but its scarlet leaves, reddening the ground at a distance, supply the place of flowers. We still continue to have strong wind in the middle of the day. The sun is shorn of his beams by the haze before 5 o'clock P.M., round and red, and is soon completely concealed, apparently by the haze alone. This blue laze is not dissipated much by the night, but is seen still with the earliest light.



1854

1854



August 26, Saturday: [President Franklin Pierce](#) appointed a proslavery Democrat, [John Calhoun \(1806-1859\)](#), as Surveyor General of the [Kansas Territory](#) so that land surveys might begin (during the frequent absences of the territorial governor, the surveyor general would hold the gubernatorial power).

[THE 2D GREAT AMERICAN DISUNION](#)

The chair that had emptied at the Institute was granted to Antoine Clapisson, rather than [Hector Berlioz](#).

A few days after a minor railway accident, [Phoebe Elizabeth Hough Fowler Watts Carlyle](#) gave birth. The infant was stillborn and the mother did not survive.

In San Francisco, under Commercial Street between Montgomery Street and Kearny Street, workmen discovered the coffin of city pioneer W.C. Rae. Thomas O. Larkin not only identified the body but related that Rae had committed [suicide](#) during January 1845 after having constructed the 1st 2-story house in the municipality.

[CALIFORNIA](#)

The new [USS Constellation](#) was launched at the Gosport Navy Yard in Virginia.



[Henry Thoreau](#) reported that he “Opened one of my snapping turtle’s eggs. The egg was not warm to the touch. The young is now larger and darker-colored, shell and all, more than a hemisphere, and the yolk which maintains it is much reduced.... These eggs, not warm to the touch, buried in the ground, so slow to hatch, are like the seeds of vegetable life.” [Tortoise Eggs](#) William M. White’s version of a portion of the journal entry in

regard to the eggs is:

*We unconsciously step over the eggs of snapping turtles
Slowly hatching the summer through.
Not only was the surface perfectly dry and trackless there,
But blackberry vines had run over the spot
Where these eggs were buried
And weeds had sprung up above.*

*If Iliads are not composed in our day,
Snapping turtles are hatched and arrive at maturity.*

*It already thrusts forth its tremendous head, —
For the first time in this sphere,—
And slowly moves from side to side, —
Opening its small glistening eyes
For the first time to the light,—
Expressive of dull rage,
As if it had endured the trials of this world
For a century.*

A review titled “The Battle of the Ants” appeared in the Portland Transcript, 157:1.

From Thoreau’s “Life in the Woods,” we extract the following interesting account of a curious scene in insect life.

[Reprints “Brute Neighbors,” pages 228.25-231.26.]



1854

1854

Also, a review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#), by the [Reverend Thomas Starr King](#) of the Universalist Church in [Charlestown, Massachusetts](#), under the heading "New Publications" in the [Christian Register](#), 135:5-6.

A young man, eight years out of college, of fine scholarship and original genius, revives, in the midst of our bustling times, the life of an anchorite. By the side of a secluded pond in Concord, he builds with his own hands a hut which cost him twenty-eight dollars and twelve and a half cents; and there he lived two and a half years, "cultivating poverty," because he "wanted to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and suck out all its marrow." Here he found that the labor of six weeks would support him through the year; and so he had long quiet days for reading, observation, and reflection, learning to free himself from all the hollow customs and false shows of the world, and to pity those who by slavery to inherited property seemed to be doing incredible and astonishing penance. In the account he gives us of his clothes, house, food, and furniture, we find mingled many acute and wise criticisms upon modern life; while in his descriptions of all living things around him, birds, fishes, squirrels, mice, insects, trees, flowers, weeds, it is evident that he had the sharpest eye and the quickest sympathy. One remarkable chapter is given to the sounds that came to his ear, with suggestions, full of poetry and beauty, of the feelings which these sounds awakened. But nothing interested him so much as the Pond, whose name gives the title to his book. He describes it as a clear sheet of water, about a mile in circumference; he bathed in it every morning; its cool crystal depths were his well, ready dug; he sailed upon its bosom in summer, he noted many curious facts pertaining to its ice in winter; in short, it became to him a living thing, and he almost worshipped it. But we must not describe the contents of this book any farther. Its opening pages may seem a little caustic and cynical; but it mellows apace, and playful humor and sparkling thought appear on almost every page. We suppose its author does not reverence many things which we reverence; but this fact has not prevented our seeing that he has a reverential, tender, and devout spirit at bottom. Rarely have we enjoyed a book more, or been more grateful for many and rich suggestions. Who would have looked to Walden Pond for a [Robinson Crusoe](#), or for an observer like the author of the [Natural History of Selbo\[u\]rne](#), or for a moralist like the writer of [Religio Medici](#)? Yet paragraphs in this book have reminded us of each of these. And as we shut the book up, we ask ourselves,

TIMELINE OF WALDEN



1854

1854

will the great lesson it teaches of the freedom and beauty of a simple life be heeded? Shall this struggle for wealth, and this bondage to the *impedimenta* of life, continue forever? Will the time ever come when it will be fashionable to be poor, that is, when men will be so smitten with a purpose to seek the true ends of life that they will not care about laying up riches on the earth? Such times we know there have been, and thousands listened reverently to the reply, given in the last of these two lines, to the inquiry contained in the first;

"O where is peace, for thou its path hast trod?"

"In poverty, retirement, and with God."

Who can say that it is impossible that such a time may come round, although the fashion of this world now runs with such a resistless current in the opposite direction.



Also, on this date, a review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) under the heading “New Publications” on the 2d page of the Philadelphia [Saturday Evening Post](#), column 3:

We have, now and then, in this jostling, civilized world, an unmistakable human oddity, and the author of this strange, but interesting book, is one of that class. He is evidently a gentleman of educated and refined tastes; but, before he had attained to middle age, he appears—after having summed up and weighed the matter—to have come to the conclusion that Modern Civilization is a delusion and a sham. He, therefore, hied to the woods—a mile from any neighbor—on the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, Mass., where he had previously built himself a house—which house cost him not quite thirty dollars—and earned his living by the labor of his hands. Here he dwelt—(subsisting on rye and Indian meal without yeast, potatoes, rice, green corn, peas, a little salt pork, and less molasses and salt)—for two years and two months, and then returned to civilized life again, where he is at present a sojourner—probably a wiser, if not a better, man. While thus “alone in his glory,” our eccentric author worked a little, visited now and then, roamed about in the woods, (watching the ways of the birds, squirrels, and coons) by day, and in the evening gazed upon the moon and stars, until he chose to retire to his lonely rest. He does not like the restraints of social life, saying that “it is hard to have a Southern overseer—worse to have a Northern one—and worst of all, when you are the slave-driver of yourself.” In his humble dwelling, he had three pieces of limestone on his table—for ornament, we suppose—but finding, to his horror, that they wanted dusting every morning, he threw them out of the window. He is no believer in either expensive houses, furniture, clothes, food, or anything else—neither does he like to be crowded, and he is a little selfish, withal; for he remarks, “I would rather sit on a pumpkin, and have it all to myself, than be crowded on a velvet cushion.” He grieves for the good old days of Adam and Eve—yea, he sighs, not for the good time coming, but for the good time long since past and gone. He appears to envy the lot of the birds, beasts, and wild Indians, and to entertain strong doubts whether our boasted Civilization is a real advance in the condition of man. He would much prefer the tub of Diogenes to the palace of a monarch—the costume of a South Sea Islander to the robes of a Prince—the simplest and plainest repast to the most delicious and sumptuous banquet. Pity it is, that he was not born a turtle, that his shell might be his shelter, as he styles a house—or a bear, and then his furry hide would serve him both for shelter and raiment. Nevertheless, his ‘Life in the Woods’ is a most fascinating book.



Aug. 26. For a week we have had warmer weather than for a long time before, yet not so warm nearly as in July. I hear of a great many fires around us, far and near, both meadows and woods; in Maine and New York also. There may be some smoke in this haze, but I doubt it.

[Transcript]

P.M. — To Dugan Desert.

"Up Assabet" is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau's two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 10



I hear part of a phœbe's strain, as I go over the railroad bridge. It is the voice of dying summer. The pads now left on the river are chiefly those of the white lily. I noticed yesterday where a large piece of meadow had melted and sunk on a sandy bottom in the Assabet, — and the weeds now rose above the surface where it was five feet deep around. It is so dry that I take the left of the railroad bridge and go through the meadows along the river. In the hollows where the surface of the meadows has been taken out within a year or two, spring up pontederias and lilies, proserpinaca, polygonums, *Ludwigia palustris*, etc., etc. *Nasturtium hispidum* still in bloom, and will be for some time. I think I hear a red-eye. Rudbeckia,—the small one,—still fresh.

The *Poa hirsuta* is left on the upper edge of meadows (as at J. Hosmer's), as too thin and poor a grass, beneath the attention of the farmers. How fortunate that it grows in such places and not in the midst of the rank grasses which are cut! With its beautiful fine purple color, its beautiful purple blush, it reminds me and supplies the place of the rhexia now about done. [Leaving off, though I see some pretty handsome Sept. 4th.] Close by, or held in your hand, its fine color is not obvious,—it is but dull,—but [at] a distance, with a suitable light, it is exceedingly beautiful. It is at the same time in bloom. This is one of the most interesting phenomena of August. [The name of the grass appears in Excursions as *Eragrostis pectinacea*.]

I hear these afternoons the faint, cricket-like note of the *Rana palustris* squatting by the side of the river, easily confounded with that of the interrupted cricket, only the last is more ringing and metallic. How long has it been heard? The choke-cherry leaves the are, some of them, from scarlet inclining to crimson. Radical leaves of the yellow thistle spot the meadow.

Opened one of my snapping turtle's eggs. The egg was not warm to the touch. The young is now larger and darker-colored, shell and all, more than a hemisphere, and the yolk which maintains it is much reduced. Its shell, very deep, hemispherical, fitting close to the shell of the egg, and, if you had not just opened the egg, you would say it could not contain so much. Its shell is considerably hardened, its feet and claws developed, and also its great head, though held in for want of room. Its eyes are open. It puts out its head, stretches forth its claws, and liberates its tail, though all were enveloped in a gelatinous fluid. With its great head it has already the ugliness of the full-grown, and is already a hieroglyphic of snappishness. It may take a fortnight longer to hatch it.

How much lies quietly buried in the ground that we wot not of! We unconsciously step over the eggs of snapping turtles slowly hatching the summer through. Not only was the surface perfectly dry and trackless there, but blackberry vines had run over the spot where these eggs were buried and weeds had sprung up above. If Iliads are not composed in our day, snapping turtles are hatched and arrive at maturity. It already thrusts forth its tremendous head, — for the first time in this sphere, — and slowly moves from side to side, — opening its small glistening eyes for the first time to the light, — expressive of dull rage, as if it had endured the trials of this world for a century. When I behold this monster thus steadily advancing toward maturity, all nature abetting, I am convinced that there must be an irresistible necessity for mud turtles. With what tenacity Nature sticks to her idea! These eggs, not warm to the touch, buried in the ground, so slow to hatch, are like the seeds of vegetable life.

Grapes ripe, owing to the hot dry weather.

Passing by M. Miles's, he told me he had a mud turtle in a box in his brook, where it had lain since the last of April, and he had given it nothing to eat. He wished he had known that I caught some in the spring and let them go. He would have bought them of me. He is very fond of them. He bought one of the two which Ed. Garfield caught on Fair Haven in the spring; paid him seventy-five cents for it. Garfield was in his boat and saw two fighting on the pond. Approached carefully and succeeded in catching both and getting them into the boat. He got them both home by first carrying one along a piece, then putting him down and, while he was crawling off, going back for the other. One weighed forty-three or forty-four pounds and the other forty-seven. Miles gave me the shell of the one he bought, which weighed forty-three or forty-four. It is fifteen and six eighths inches long by fourteen and a half broad, of a roundish form, broadest backward. The smaller ones I have seen are longer in proportion to their length [sic], and the points larger also. The upper shell is more than four and a half inches deep and would make a good dish to bail out a boat with. Above it is a muddy brown, composed of a few great scales. He said he had no trouble in killing them. It was of no great use to cut off their heads. He thrust his

knife through the soft thin place in their sternum and killed them at once. Told of one Artemas (?) Wheeler of Sudbury who used to keep fifteen or twenty in a box in a pond-hole, and fat them and eat them from time to time, having a great appetite for them. Some years ago, in a January thaw, many came out on the Sudbury meadows, and, a cold snap suddenly succeeding, a great many were killed. One man counted eighty or more dead, some of which would weigh eighty to a hundred pounds. Miles himself found two shells on his river meadow of very large ones. Since then they have been scarce. Wheeler, he thought, used to go a-hunting for them the 2d (?) of May. It increases my respect for our river to see these great products of it. No wonder the Indians made much of them. Such great shells must have made convenient household utensils for them. Miles once saw a large bullfrog jump at and catch a green snake ten inches long, which was running along the edge of the water, and hold it crosswise in its mouth, but the snake escaped at last. Even the hinder part of a mud turtle's shell is scalloped, one would say rather for beauty than use. Pigeons with their quivet dashed over the Dugan Desert. Hear by telegraph that it rains in Portland and New York. In the evening, some lightning in the horizon, and soon after a little gentle rain, which —

CONTINGENCY

ALTHOUGH VERY MANY OUTCOMES ARE OVERDETERMINED, WE TRUST THAT SOMETIMES WE ACTUALLY MAKE REAL CHOICES. "THIS IS THE ONLY WAY, WE SAY, BUT THERE ARE AS MANY WAYS AS THERE CAN BE DRAWN RADII FROM ONE CENTRE." 

 August 27, Sunday: A deadly tornado touched down near the intersection of Jefferson and Twentieth Streets in Louisville, Kentucky, unroofing 21 buildings at the German Protestant Orphan Asylum and collapsing the 3d Presbyterian Church at Walnut and 11th Streets during its Sunday services. Boats in the Ohio River, including a steamboat, were blown loose of their moorings and landed on the falls. Out of the 55 worshippers the storm took some 18 to 20. The youngest dead churchgoer had been 9 years of age. Afterward a mother and her 3 children would be discovered grouped in death. During the cleanup after the catastrophe, a Mr. Joseph Bradley would have an eye cut out by a hatchet wielded by a nearby person, who was attacking fallen rafters. However, the rains were generally welcome as the region had been enduring a severe drought. The Louisville Daily Courier would describe this as having been "a whirlwind revolving leftwise."

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went on the Turnpike and via [Walden Pond](#) to Pine Hill. At 4 PM [Bronson Alcott](#) went to Concord, intending to pass the Sunday with [Emerson](#) and [Thoreau](#).



(Aug. 27) I find next day has moistened the ground about an inch down only. But now it is about as dry as ever.

[Transcript]

P.M. — To Pine Hill via Turnpike and Walden.

Small *Bidens chrysanthemoides*, some time by Turnpike. The leaves of the smallest hypericum are very many of them turned to a somewhat crimson red, sign of the ripening year. What I have called the Castile-soap gall, about one inch in diameter, handsomely variegated with a dirty white or pale tawny on a crimson ground; hard

and perfectly smooth; solid and hard except a very small cavity in the centre containing some little grubs; full of crimson juice (which runs over the knife, and has stained this page [There is a brown stain on the page.] and blues my knife with its acid) for an eighth of an inch from the circumference, then lighter-colored. [Vide pp. 482, 483.] Many red oak acorns have fallen. [Were they not cast down?]. The great green acorns in broad, shallow cups. How attractive these forms! No wonder they are imitated on pumps, fence and bed posts. Is not this a reason that the pigeons are about? The yellow birch is yellowed a good deal, the leaves spotted with green. The dogbane a clear yellow. The cinnamon ferns hardly begun to turn or fall. The lice on the birches make it very disagreeable to go through them. I am surprised to find the brook and ditches in Hubbard's Close remarkably full after this long drought, when so many streams are dried up. Rice and others are getting out mud in the pond-hole opposite Breed's. They have cut down straight through clear black muck, perfectly rotted, eight feet, and it is soft yet further. Button-bushes, andromeda, proserpinaca, hardback, etc., etc., grow atop. It looks like a great sponge. Old trees buried in it. On the Walden road some maples are yellow and some chestnuts brownish-yellow and also sere. From Heywood's Peak, I am surprised to see the top of Pine Hill wearing its October aspect, — yellow with changed maples and here and there faintly blushing with changed red maples. This is the effect of the drought. Among other effects of the drought I forgot to mention the fine dust, which enters the house and settles everywhere and also adds to the thickness of the atmosphere.

Fences and roadside plants are thickly coated with it.

I see much froth on alders. As I go up Pine Hill, gather the shrivelled *Vaccinium vacillans* berries, many as hard as if dried on a pan. They are very sweet and good, and not wormy like huckleberries. Far more abundant in this state than usual, owing to the drought. As I stand there, I think I hear a rising wind rustling the tops of the woods, and, turning, see what I think is the rear of a large flock of pigeons.

Do they not eat many of these berries? Hips of the early rose changed. Some *Viburnum Lentago* berries, turned blue before fairly reddening. Blue-stemmed goldenrod, a day or two.

When I awake in the morning, I remember what I have seen and heard of snapping turtles, and am in doubt whether it was dream or reality. I slowly raise my head and peeping over the bedside see my great mud turtle shell lying bottom up under the table, showing its prominent ribs, and realize into what world I have awaked. Before I was in doubt how much prominence my good Genius would give to that fact. That the first object you see on awakening should be an empty mud turtle's shell!! Will it not make me of the earth, earthy? Or does it not indicate that I am of the earth earthy? What life, what character, this has shielded, which is now at liberty to be turned bottom upward!

I can put specimens of all our other turtles into this cavity. This too was once an infant in its egg. When I see this, then I am sure that I am not dreaming, but am awake to this world. I do not know any more terrene fact. It still carries the earth on its back. Its life is between the animal and vegetable; like a seed it is planted deep in the ground and is all summer germinating.

Does it not possess as much the life of the vegetable as the animal?

Would it not be well to describe some of those rough all-day walks across lots? — as that of the 15th, picking our way over quaking meadows and swamps and occasionally slipping into the muddy batter midleg deep; jumping or fording ditches and brooks; forcing our way through dense blueberry swamps, where there is water beneath and bushes above; then brushing through extensive birch forests all covered with green lice, which cover our clothes and face; then, relieved, under larger wood, more open beneath, steering for some more conspicuous trunk; now along a rocky hillside where the sweet-fern grows for a mile, then over a recent cutting, finding our uncertain footing on the cracking tops and trimmings of trees left by the choppers; now taking a step or two of smooth walking across a highway; now through a dense pine wood, descending into a rank, dry swamp, where the cinnamon fern rises above your head, with isles of poison-dogwood; now up a scraggy hill covered with shrub oak, stooping and winding one's way for half a mile, tearing one's clothes in many places and putting out one's eyes, and find[ing] at last that it has no bare brow, but another slope of the same character; now through a corn-field diagonally with the rows; now coming upon the hidden melon-patch; seeing the back side of familiar hills and next not knowing them, — the nearest house to home, which you do not know, seeming further off than the farthest which you do know; in the spring defiled with the froth on various bushes, etc., etc., etc.; now reaching on higher land some open pigeon-place, a breathing-place for us.

I suppose that is a puffball, about two inches through (on the (round), roundish, brownish, cracked, pale wash-leather color, with a handsome, variegated slate-color within, not yet dusty, contrasting with the outside.



1854

1854

 August 28, Monday: Secretary of War [Jefferson Davis](#) would be traveling with President [Franklin Pierce](#) until September 4/5, and would speak in Virginia.

The Revolution of the Left against Espartero was defeated.

Nachtfalter op.157, a waltz by [Johann Baptist Strauss II](#), was performed for the initial time, in Ungers Casino, Vienna.

The [Ticknor & Fields](#) firm's junior partner, [James Thomas Fields](#) had, more than a month prior to official publication, distributed advance copies of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#), to prospective reviewers such as the [Reverend John Sullivan Dwight](#), the [Reverend Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#), and T. Starr King. About three weeks prior to publication, Ticknor & Fields began sending advance sheets to the editors of major New-York and Boston papers. By this point the work had been praised in over 30 newspapers and magazines from Maine to Ohio. A few days prior to publication, Ticknor & Fields had placed advertisements for [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) in several Boston and New-York dailies. Under the banner headline "LIFE IN THE WOODS," the ads had begun appearing on August 4th and had run for three, four, or even five days. A second series of ads had appeared in selected papers in late August, usually every other day for three days. [Waldo Emerson](#) was able to note that "All American kind are delighted with 'Walden' as far as they have dared say."

[TIMELINE OF WALDEN](#)

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked through Great Meadows (Gleason D8) and Bedford meadows on the south side of the Concord River to Carlisle Bridge (Gleason A9), and there crossed the river and came back on its north side, the Carlisle and Concord side, across the lots to the schoolhouse.

Before August 29th a review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) appeared in the [Philadelphia Register](#):

This book was written because the author had something to say. "Walden" may be pronounced a live book—a sincere, hearty production.

[Quoted from advertisement in Boston [Advertiser](#), August 29, 2:7.]

1854

1854

On this day, or one of the two following days (August 28-30), [Emerson](#) wrote [George Partridge Bradford](#) in London:

I do not know if the book has come to you yet; — but it is cheerful, sparkling, readable, with all kinds of merits, & rising sometimes to very great heights. We account Henry the undoubted King of all American lions. He is walking up & down Concord, firm-looking, but in a tremble of great expectation.



On the basis of this letter would you say that it can be established that [Emerson](#) did read [WALDEN](#)?



Aug. 28. Much cooler this morning, making us think of fire. This is gradually clearing the atmosphere, and, as it is about as dry as ever, I think that haze was not smoke; quite as dry as yesterday.

[Transcript]

P.M. — By Great Meadows and Bedford meadows to Carlisle Bridge; back by Carlisle and Concord side across lots to schoolhouse.

Improve the continued drought to go through the meadows. There is a cool east wind (it has been cast a good deal lately in this drought), which has cleared the air wonderfully, revealing the long-concealed woods tend hills in the horizon and making me drink of November even. And now that I am going (along the path to the meadow in the woods beyond Peter's, I perceive the fall shine on the leaves and earth; *i.e.*, a great deal of light is reflected

through the clearer air, which has also a vein of coolness in it. Some crotalaria pods are now black and dry, and rattle as I walk. The farmers improve this dry spell to cut ditches and dig mud in the meadows and pond-holes. I see their black heaps in many places. I see on the Great Meadows circular patches — the stubble of a coarse light-green sedge (apparently cut-grass) — of various dimensions, which look as if they had been brought from other places and dropped there in the spring. Yet they are very numerous and extensive, running into one another, yet with a rounded or coarsely crenate edge. In fact, they probably cover the greater part of the meadow. It must be that the cut-grass merely spreads in circles. There are some in the meadow near the Kibbe Place. It makes firm ground. Between these are the dark-colored patches of cranberries, ferns, and finer grasses (?) of such singular forms as are used in lace-work, like the spaces left between circles, suggesting that this is the groundwork on which the other is dropped. Or does the cut-grass (?) incline to grow in this circular manner?



The meadow is drier than ever, and new pools are dried up. The breams, from one to two and a half inches long, lying on the sides and quirking from time to time, a dozen together where there is but a pint of water on the mud, are a handsome but sad sight, pretty green jewels, dying in the sun. I saved a dozen or more by putting them in deeper pools. Saw a whole school of little pouts, hundreds of them one and a half inches long, many dead, all apparently fated to die, and some full-grown fishes. Several hair worms four or five inches long in this muddy water. The muddy bottom of these pools dried up is cracked into a sort of regular crystals. In the soft mud, the tracks of the great bittern and the blue heron. Scared up one of the former and saw a small dipper on the river. Just after entering the Bedford meadows (travelling north), for perhaps a mile in length and the width of the meadow, the surface on all sides had been lifted or tilted up, showing the blue edges of the soil, so that there was hardly a level square rod, — giving the aspect of waves two feet high or more with numerous holes and trenches, and making it very difficult to mow it, as well as to walk over it, and here and there permanent pools were made in it. I do not know why it should have happened there more than elsewhere. Found the *Ludwigia spærocarpa* down that way.

It seems that the upper surface of the *Victoria regia* is “a light green” and the under “a bright crimson,” according to Schomburgk, its discoverer. In this it is like our white lily pads.

We did not come to a fence or wall for about four miles this afternoon. Heard some large hawks whistling much like a boy high over the meadow.

Observed many of those Castile-soap galls from a tenth of an inch to an inch in diameter on a *Quercus ilicifolia*. They are attached to the outer edge of the cup, commonly filling the space between two acorns, and look as if they had merely lodged between them, dropping out readily, though they are slightly attached to one cup. I see some not much bigger than a pin’s head, in the place, and reminding me of those small abortive acorns which so often grow on the cup of the small chinquapin. May not these galls be connected with those and be also an abortive acorn? I have three, of medium size, on the edge of one acorn-cup, and not occupying more than one third its circumference, unsupported by any neighboring cup, the middle one the smallest, being apparently crowded. Apparently the insect deposits its egg in the edge of the cup, and this egg, as in all galls, is, I should say, at once the seed of vegetable and of animal life: it produces the vegetable gall, and is the seed of it, also the animal. May it not be regarded as the seed of the gall, as well as the ovum of the insect?

Moles make heaps in meadows.

In my experience, at least of late years, all that depresses a man’s spirits is the sense of remissness, — duties neglected, unfaithfulness, — or shamming, impurity, falsehood, selfishness, inhumanity, and the like.

From the experience of late years I should say that a man’s seed was the direct tax of his race. It stands for my sympathy with my race. When the brain chiefly is nourished, and not the affections, the seed becomes merely excremental.

Saw a bushel of hazelnuts in -their burs, which some boy had spread on the ground to dry behind Hodgman’s. Observed yesterday, in a pool in what was Heywood’s peat meadow south of, but near, Turnpike, apparently a utricularia, very small with minute forked green leaves, and bladders on bare threads, rooting in mud at bottom; apparently out of bloom. Also another kind with long stems, many black bladders, and no obviously green leaves, filling the pools in Hubbard’s Close.

1854

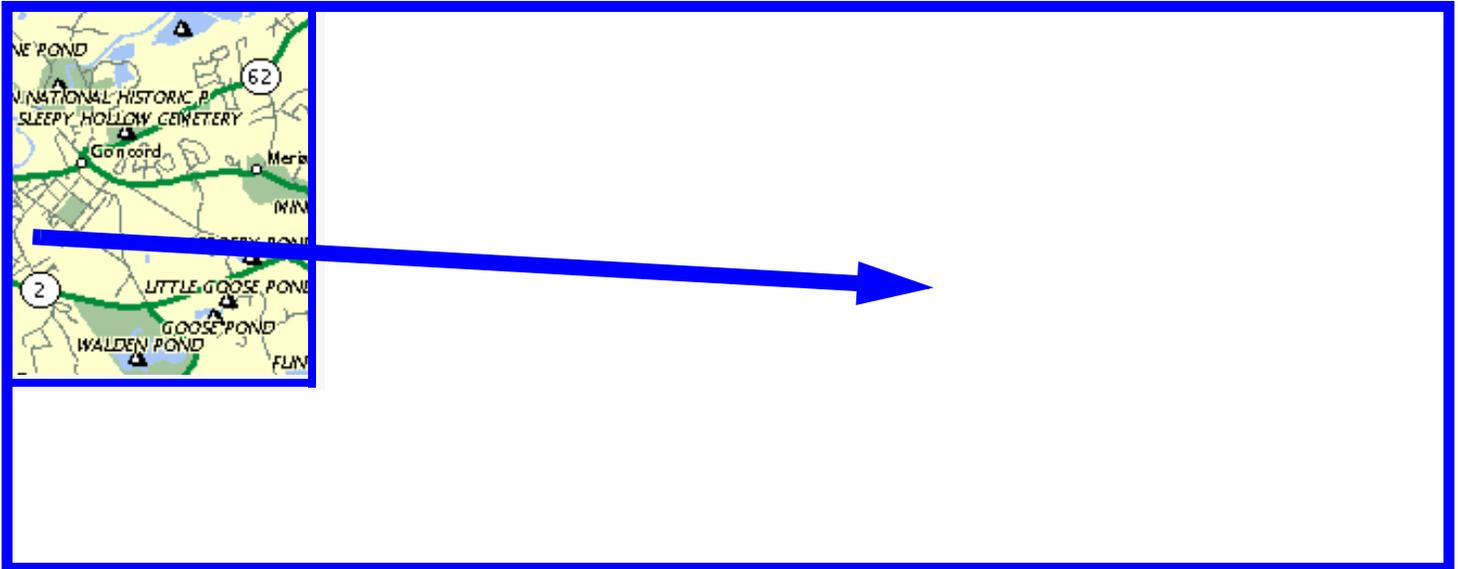
1854

 August 29, Tuesday: Louis Moreau Gottschalk gave the 1st of 4 concerts in Santiago de [Cuba](#).

Daniel Halladay patented a self-governing windmill.

An advertisement for [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) appeared in the [Boston Daily Advertiser](#):
[following screen]

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went to the [Derby's Bridge \(Gleason F4\)](#) neighborhood



“MOONLIGHT”

and the front of D. Tarbell's place (Gleason G4). [Bronson Alcott](#) and Thoreau dined together. What was the “threshing” process which Thoreau referred to in his journal on this day? It appears he was currently splitting “Walking, or the Wild” and adding journal entries in order to produce from this lecture a set of lectures which he would be able to deliver successively. He had selected a few passages about walking at night and about moonlight on the landscape to use as seed material for a new lecture about walking at night in the moonlight, and had assigned as a working title “The Moon.”¹⁶⁴ Thoreau wrote two paragraphs in his journal (6:486-7) that eventually found their way into the MH copy-text for an early version of the [“WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT”](#) lecture as paragraphs 1-2 (see facsimile transcriptions of the manuscripts in Dean, Bradley P., MA thesis “The Sound of a Flail: Reconstructions of Thoreau's Early ‘Life without Principle’ Lectures,” pages 327-29, 330-

164. Four of the leaves of this work product are now in the Harkness Collection in the Manuscript Division of New York Public Library (Manuscript #21), one is at University of Virginia (File Access 6345-e), and another is at Middlebury College in Vermont.

32),¹⁶⁵ but which he removed from that lecture while revising it for "[LIFE MISSPENT](#)":¹⁶⁶

**Brad Dean's
Commentary**

[Paragraph 1] Early for several mornings I have heard the sound of a flail. It leads me to ask, if I have spent as industrious a spring and summer as the farmer, and gathered as rich a crop. If so, the sound of my flail also will be heard, by those who have ears to hear it, separating the kernel from the chaff all the fall and winter, and I trust that it will be a sound no less cheering than the former. If the drought has destroyed the corn let not all harvests fail.
[Paragraph 2] The lecturer must commence his threshing as early as August, that his fine flour may be ready for his winter customers. To him also fall rains will come to make full springs and raise his streams sufficiently to grind his grist. His flail will be heard early and late, even when farmers sleep. It must be made of tougher material than hickory, and tied together with resolution stronger than an eel-skin. For him, when he comes to deal with his native grain—his Indian wheat, there is no husking bee, but he works alone at evening, by lamp light, with the barn door shut, and only the pile of husks behind him for warmth. For him too, I fear, there is no patent corn-sheller, but he does his work, as it were, by hand, ear by ear, on the edge of a shovel over a bushel, on his hearth, often taking up a handful of the yellow grain, and letting it fall again while he blows out the chaff.

Thoreau decided to "winnow" material from his journals for lectures such as "What Shall It Profit?":

**Brad Dean's
Commentary**

Have you commenced to thresh your grain? The lecturer must commence his threshing as early as August, that his fine flour may be ready for his winter customers. (JOURNAL 6:486)

[WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) was reviewed on the 2d page of the Richmond, Virginia [Enquirer](#).

WALDEN Print H

[WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) was reviewed on the 2d page of the Boston [Herald](#).

WALDEN Print H

[WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) was reviewed under the heading "Notices of Books" in the New-

WALDEN Print H

165. Isn't "The Sound of a Flail" wonderfully descriptive for this work about the manner in which Thoreau prepared his materials?
166. [MATTHEW 11:15](#)[MATTHEW 13:9](#) [MARK 4:9](#) [MARK 4:23](#) [LUKE 8:8](#)[LUKE 14:35](#)



Life in the Woods.

TICKNOR & FIELDS

Have just published in 1 vol., 16mo., price \$1,

Mr. Henry D. Thoreau's New Book,

WALDEN;

OR,

Life in the Woods.

"When I wrote the following pages, or rather the bulk of them, I lived alone, in the woods, a mile from any neighbor, in a house which I had built myself, on the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, Massachusetts, and earned my living by the labor of my hands only."

Contents :

ECONOMY,	THE PONDS,
WHERE I LIVED, AND	BAKER FARM,
WHAT I LIVED FOR,	HIGHER LAWS,
READING,	BRUTE NEIGHBORS,
SOUNDS,	HOUSE WARMING,
SOLITUDE,	FORMER INHABITANTS,
VISITORS,	WINTER VISITORS,
THE BEAN-FIELD,	THE POND IN WINTER,
THE VILLAGE,	SPRING,
	CONCLUSION.

This strikingly original and interesting book has been widely commended by the Press. A few extracts from notices are given below.

"This book was written because the author had something to say. 'Walden' may be pronounced a live book—a sincere, hearty production."—[Philadelphia Register.

"Full of eloquent thought and interest from beginning to end."—[New York Tribune.

"A remarkable book. There is nothing like it in literature. Strikingly original, singular, and most interesting."—[Salem Register.

"'Walden' is a prose poem. It is a book to be read, and re-read, and read again."—[Worcester Palladium.

"Thoreau writes almost as many *thoughts* as *words*. Indeed, his pages are more full of ideas than commas."—[Newark Advertiser.

"This is a remarkable history of remarkable experiences."—[New Bedford Mercury.

"This is one of the most singular, as well as one of the best of works."—[Lowell Courier.

august26

SatTu&Th

York Commercial Advertiser, 2:4.

Mr Thoreau is an eccentric genius who removed into the woods near the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, Massachusetts, and there built, with his own hands, a little hut, in which he lived solitarily two years and two months, avoiding all intercourse with his fellow-men as far as possible, and subsisting upon fish, berries and such other food as he could procure in the woods. During this period of solitude he wrote the essays which compose the interesting volume before us. Although so fond of solitude, he is by no means misanthropical, and he manifests an ardent love of nature, but he seems to have a remarkable contempt for the bustle and turmoil of life. See the following semi-serious passage about the popular eagerness for news:—

**[Reprints “Where I Lived, and What I Lived For,”
pages 93.24-94.29.]**



Aug. 29. A cool morning with much fog, — more than yesterday. Have not had much during the warmer part of the drought, methinks.

Cattle are driven down from up-country. Hear the drovers' whoa whoa whoa or whay whay whay.

Where I walked yesterday it appeared as if the whole surface of the meadow had been at one time lifted up, but prevented by shores or bushes or ice from floating oil, then broken up by wind and waves, had and finally melted and sunk irregularly, near where it rose. I repeatedly stepped into the long crack-like intervals between the cakes.

When our meadows are flooded in the spring and our river is changed to a sea, then the gulls, the sea birds, come up here to complete the scene. Or are they merely on their way eastward?

Were not those large, and often pointed, rocks occasionally seen on the meadows brought there by the floating meadow, and so dropped broad end down?

P.M. — To Derby Bridge neighborhood and front of Tarbell's.

It is a great pleasure to walk in this clearer atmosphere, though cooler. How great a change, and how sudden, from that sultry and remarkably hazy atmosphere to this clear, cool autumnal one, in which all things shine, and distance is restored to us! The wind blew quite hard in the midst of that haze, but did not disperse it. Only this cooler weather with a steady east wind has done it. It is so cool that we are inclined to stand round the kitchen fire a little while these mornings, though we sit and sleep with open windows still. I think that the cool air from the sea has condensed the haze, not blown it off. The grass is so dry and withered that it caught fire from the locomotive four or five days ago near the widow Hosmer's, and the fire ran over forty or fifty rods, threatening the house, — grass which should have afforded some pasturage. The cymes of elder-berries, black with fruit, are now conspicuous.

Up railroad. Poison sumach berries begin to look ripe, — or dry, — of a pale straw-color. The zizania is pretty abundant in the river, in rear of Joseph Hosmer's. A small, what his father calls partridge hawk killed many chickens for him last year, but the slate colored hawk never touches them. Very many water-plants-pontederias, lilies, zizania, etc., etc. — are now going to seed, prepared to feed the migrating water-fowl, etc. Saw a hop-hornbeam (*Ostrya*) on which every leaf was curiously marked with a small rather triangular brown spot (eaten) in the axils of the veins next the midrib, oppositely or alternately. Under side lower leaves of *Lycopus Virginicus* lake-color. I see where the squirrels, apparently, have stripped the pitch pine cones, scattering the scales about. Many birds nowadays resort to the wild black cherry tree, as here front of Tarbell's. I see them continually coming and going directly from and to a great distance, — cherry-birds, robins, and kingbirds. I enjoy the warmth of the sun now that the air is cool, and Nature seems really more genial. I love to sit on the withered grass on the sunny side of the wall. My mistress is at a more respectful distance, for, by the coolness of the air, I am more continent in my thought and held aloof from her, while by the genial warmth of the sun I am more than ever attracted to her. I see a boy already raking cranberries. The moss rose hips will be quite ripe in a day or two. Found a new and erect euphorbia (*hypericifolia*) on the slope just east of his lizard ditches, still in bloom

[Transcript]

and pretty, probably open first in July. At Clamshell Bank the barn swallows are very lively, filling the air with their twittering now, at 6 P.M. They rest on the dry mullein-tops, then suddenly all start off together as with one impulse and skim about over the river, hill, and meadow. Some sit on the bare twigs of a dead apple tree. Are they not gathering for their migration?

Early for several mornings I have heard the sound of a flail. It leads me to ask if I have spent as industrious a spring and summer as the farmer, and gathered as rich a crop of experience. If so, the sound of my flail will be heard by those who have cars to hear, separating the kernel from the chaff all the fall and winter, and a sound no less cheering it will be. If the drought has destroyed the corn, let not all harvests fail. Have you commenced to thresh your grain? The lecturer roust commence his threshing as early as August, that his title flour may be ready for his winter customers. The fall rains will make full springs and raise his streams sufficiently to grind his grist. We shall hear the sound of his flail all the fall, early and late. It is made of tougher material than hickory, and tied together with resolution stronger than an eel-skin. For him there is no husking-bee, but he does it all alone and by hand, at evening by lamplight, with the barn door shut and only the pile of husks behind him for warmth. For him, too, I fear there is no patent corn-sheller, but he does his work by hand, ear by ear, on the edge of a shovel over a bushel, on his hearth, and after he takes up a handful of the yellow grain and lets it fall again, while he blows out the chaff and he goes to bed happy when his measure is full.

Channing has come from Chelsea Beach this morning with *Euphorbia polygonifolia* in flower, bayberry in fruit, datura in flower, staghorn sumach fruit, chenopodium (it seems not to be made a distinct species, though very mealy), scarlet pimpernel still in flower, *Salsola Kali* (the prickly plant), and apparently *Solidago sempervirens*.



August 30, Wednesday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) paddled up the [Sudbury River](#) to [Clamshell Bank](#) or Hill (Gleason 23/G5) and meadows, and then to Conantum (Gleason J6).



Aug. 30. Another great fog this morning, which lasts till 8.30. After so much dry and warm weather, cool weather has suddenly come, and this has produced these two larger fogs than for a long time. Is it always so?

Hear a warbling vireo faintly in the elms.

P.M. — To Conantum via Clamshell Hill and meadows.

The clearness of the air which began with the cool morning of the 28th makes it delicious to gaze in any direction. Though there has been no rain, the valleys are emptied of haze, and I see with new pleasure to distant hillsides and farmhouses and a river-reach shining in the sun, and to the mountains in the horizon. Coolness and clarity go together. What I called *Solidago altissima*, a simple slender one with a small head, some time, — perhaps not to be distinguished. Crossed the river at Hubbard's Bath. Apparently as many clams lie up as ever. The two river polygonums may be said to be now in prime. The *hydropiperoides* has a peculiarly slender waving spike. The *Bidens Beckii* made the best show, I think, a week ago, though there may be more of them open now. They are not so widely open. Was not that a meadow-hen which I scared up in two places by the riverside, — of a dark brown like a small woodcock, though it flew straight and low?



I go along the flat Hosmer shore to Clamshell Hill. The sparganium seed bulls begin to brown and come off in the hind. The *Ammannia humilis* is quite abundant on the denuded shore there and in John Hosmer's meadow, now turned red and so detected, reddening the ground. Are they not young hen-hawks which I have seen sailing for a week past, without red tails?

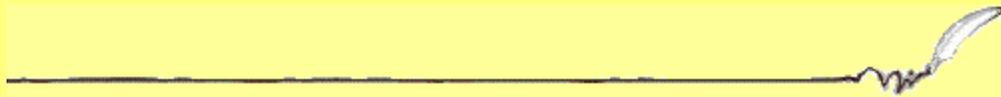
I go along through J. Hosmer's meadow near the river, it is so dry. I see places where the meadow has been denuded of its surface within a few years, four or five rods in diameter, forming shallow platters, in which the *Lysimachia stricta*, small hypericums, lindernia, gratiola, pipes, ammannia, etc., grow. I walk dry-shod quite to the phalanxes of bulrushes of a handsome blue-green glaucous color. The colors of the rainbow rush are now pretty bright. The floating milfoil at Purple Utricularia Shore, with red stem. Blue-eyed grass still. Dogwood leaves have fairly begun to turn. A few small maples are scarlet along the meadow. A dark-brown or black shining, oval or globular, fruit of the skunk-cabbage, with prominent calyx, filaments, and style roughening it, is quite handsome like a piece of carved ebony (or dogwood?). I see its small green spathes already pushing up. The berries are about all dried up or wormy — I am on Conantum — though I still eat the dried blue-berries. There are now none to pluck in a walk, unless it be black cherries and apples. I see brown thrashers on the black

[Transcript]

cherry tree and hear their sharp click like a squirrel. Hazelnut time about a week ago, to be in advance of the squirrels. I see the dried reddened burs and shells under every bush where they have been. The *Bidens frondosa*, some time; distinguished by its being fairly pinnate, with from three to five leaflets. Notice the radical leaves of primrose. The huckleberries are so withered and brown in many places, owing to the drought, that they appear dead and as if they were some which had been broken up by the pickers, or as if burnt. Some white ash trees have suffered more than any others I have noticed, on Cliffs their leaves being quite brown and sere. Minot Pratt here this evening. He tells me he finds a white hardback, bayberry in Holden's pasture, and, on the old Carlisle road, *Cornus florida*, near Bateman's Pond, and what Russell thought a rare *hedysarum* somewhere. Pratt once caught a mud turtle at Brook Farm which weighed forty-six pounds.

During the last decade of his life, Thoreau visited his rivers more than twice as often as the upland woods and lakes that he is far better known for writing about.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 3



August 31, Thursday: Ariana Sanborn, 8 days the bride of [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#), died of consumption.

[Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Richard F. Fuller](#) in Boston, to thank him for his copy of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) and to say that he had enjoyed it, and hoped Thoreau's fame would grow.¹⁶⁷

*Boston 31 Aug. 1854
Dear Thoreau
When I went out to rusti-
cate in Wayland some weeks since, I had seen a
notice of the forthcoming Walden, and regrett[ed]
that I could not obtain the book for my su[m-]
mer retreat. I was obliged to console myself
with the expectation of reading it on my
return to town. On first opening my des[k]
again here what should I see but that very
book and my name therein inscribed in a*

167. At some point during the autumn [Thoreau](#) penciled on his reading draft of "Walking, or The Wild," just below and to the right of the title, the following shattering remark:

I regard this as a sort of introduction to all that I may write hereafter.

Bradley P. Dean infers that Thoreau wrote this a few weeks after [WALDEN](#) was published.

very esteemed hand! He should leave it to his friends to purchase his book, I thought, and then--but how pleasant to obtain it in a way that gives proof of kind remembrance. So I got another copy for the town library in Wayland, and kept yours for myself. Let me congratulate you for the hit you have made in this book. I am glad the world opens a little to its appeal.

Page 2

I have read this book with great satisfaction. I had expected sincerity and truth and intimacy with nature in you: my expectation is surpassed. I congratulate you on that heroic reliance and courageous trail of the leading[]of your own high in-[s]tincts which have borne such fitting fruit. I delight, too, in your affectionate nearness to the bosom of nature and your family [fe]eling for the pure objects of her fostering care. You seem to have something of that tenderness toward them which must pervade the Father's care that cherishes all. Your book is remarkable for what I will call by an old name (for I prefer old names, nothing being in substance new) namely faith--faith in the heavenly within you and the heavenly without you. I esteem a noble quality which transcends common

Page 3

laws being a law unto itself. It transcends, but (mark the distinction) it does not transgress. Your book must furnish gratification to those appetites which still relish nature; and I have one. It is a fruit, too, which will keep and grow more golden mellow and fragrant with the many years. Your book must do good morally by reproofing the growing luxury [of] the times. It has made me also sigh for my[-]self that I have yielded so much to the kingdom of man. Having said some of the things which



1854

1854

*your book is, I need not say what it is
not. For hardly all men and ages, and not
the single individual, make the man.
May your fame grow and de-
velope in your good fruit. Accept my con-
gratulations and thanks
Yours R. F. Fuller*

Page 4
Postage: PAID
Paid
Postmark: BOSTON
31
AUG
3 cts
Address: Henry D. Thoreau
Concord
Mass

1854

1854

He surveyed a Lincoln houselot between Tower Road and Lincoln Road for Marie Green. In the afternoon he did some surveying for William Peirce, after which Peirce brought him to Concord from Lincoln in his wagon.



JOSEPH SMITH.

Thoreau had obtained, from Stacy's Circulating Library in Concord, [Benjamin Gilbert Ferris's](#) UTAH AND THE [MORMONS](#): THE HISTORY, GOVERNMENT, DOCTRINES, CUSTOMS, AND PROSPECTS OF THE LATTER-DAY

1854

1854

SAINTS, FROM PERSONAL OBSERVATION DURING A SIX MONTHS' RESIDENCE AT GREAT SALT LAKE CITY.



UTAH AND THE MORMONS
UTAH AND THE MORMONS



Aug. 31. Warmer this morning and considerably hazy again. Wormwood pollen yellows my clothes commonly.

[Transcript]

Ferris in his "Utah," crossing the plains in '52, says that, on Independence Rock near the Sweetwater, "at a rough guess, there must be 35,000 to 40,000" names of travellers.



P.M. — To Lincoln.

Surveying for William Peirce¹⁶⁸. He says that several large chestnuts appear to be dying near him on account of the drought. Saw a meadow said to be still on fire after three weeks; fire had burned holes one and a half feet deep; was burning along slowly at a considerable depth. P. brought me home in his wagon. Was not quite at his



168. The surveying notebook says, a houselot for Byron Peirce:



ease and in his element; i.e., talked with some reserve, though well behaved, unless I approached the subject of horses. Then he spoke with a will and with authority, betraying somewhat of the jockey. He said that this dry weather was "trying to wagons; it loosened the ties," — if that was the word. He did not use blinders nor a check-rein. Said a horse's neck must ache at night which has been reined up all day. He said that the outlet of F[lint's] Pond had not been dry before for four years, and then only two or three days; now it was a month. Notwithstanding this unprecedented drought our river, the main stream, has not been very low. It may have been kept up by the reservoirs. Walden is unaffected by the drought, and is still very high. But for the most part silent are the watercourses, when I walk in rocky swamps where a tinkling is commonly heard. At nine this evening I distinctly and strongly smell smoke, I think of burning meadows, in the air in the village. There must be more smoke in this haze than I have supposed. Is not the haze a sort of smoke, the sun parching and burning the earth?



FALL 1854

➡ Summer or Early Fall: Mr. and Mrs. Eben J. Loomis stayed at the Thoreau boarding house in Concord while Samuel Worcester Rowse was in town, at work on his commissioned portrait of Waldo Emerson:¹⁶⁹

Mrs. Thoreau invited Mrs. Loomis and myself to spend the summer of 1854 with her at Concord.... I was very much interested in watching him [Rowse] while he was watching the Expression of Henry's face.... It is for me, on the whole, the most satisfactory likeness, for it represents Henry just as he was in that summer, so memorable to me ... memorable for my intimacy with Henry.

➡ Fall: Brownson's Quarterly Review, No. 3

CATHOLICISM

- I. Uncle Jack and His Nephew
II. The Roman Revolution
III. Native Americanism
IV. Schools and Education
V. The Turkish War
VI. Literary Notices and Criticisms

MAGAZINES

ORESTES AUGUSTUS BROWNSON

169. Unfortunately the original crayon has deteriorated to the point at which its copies are now better than it.

HDT

WHAT?

INDEX

1854

1854



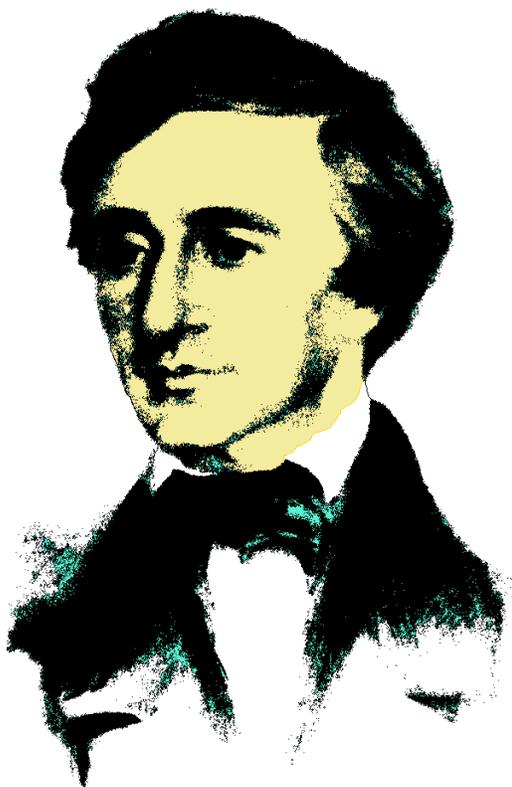
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WHAT?

INDEX

1854

1854



So: Who Knew First When It Started To Rain?

1854

1854

→ Fall: The parents of the racially intermixed child Edward Pindall were having their day in court, and were losing totally. Although their son appeared deceptively to be all white, since in fact he had some black and some red as well as white ancestry, he would need to be attending the segregated [Abiel Smith School](#) with the other students of color.

RACISM

→ Fall: Due to the illness of his wife [Virginia Young Roberts](#), the Reverend [Issachar J. Roberts](#) 罗孝全 was forced to abandon his plan to proceed from [Shanghai](#) to Nanking. The family returned to the United States.

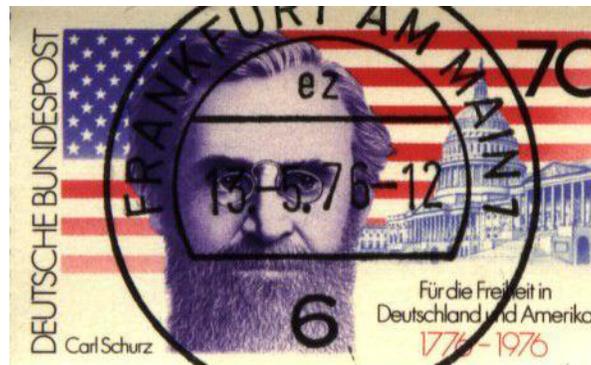
Chacón surrendered himself.

WHITE ON RED, RED ON WHITE

At the convention of the American Unitarian Association, the [Reverend Samuel Joseph May](#) was at the point of acknowledging that although he believed that Jesus had counseled nonresistance, the American institution of chattel servitude had brought him to a point at which he personally could no longer obey Jesus, or insist upon obedience by the oppressed.

In his newspaper [The Citizen](#), [John Mitchel](#) had the unwisdom to take on the Catholic hierarchy of New-York by averring that the Pope should not be allowed to return to power in [Rome](#), Italy — this newspaper was doomed.

→ Fall A Watertown, Wisconsin Kindergarten would be in operation from this point into Fall 1856. It was opened by Mrs. Margarethe Meyer Schurz, who didn't wear a full beard and doesn't have a postage stamp:



(In 1849 [Margarethe Meyer](#) had met [Friedrich Fröbel](#). She then taught at the England Infant Garden. During Fall 1851 in London, Margarethe had met her future husband [Carl Schurz](#). After a civil marriage they relocated via New-York City to a small farm near Watertown, Wisconsin. It was there that she put Fröbel's ideas to use in caring for her daughter Agathe and 4 neighborhood children, channeling their energy and preparing them for primary school by leading them in games, songs, and group activities. Other Watertown parents prevailed upon her to expand into a kindergarten, 1st in the United States of America. Like most such early efforts, her class was conducted in [German](#). She went back to Hamburg, Germany during June 1856 because the mortgage on her home was foreclosed. During Fall 1856 she and her family would relocate to Milwaukee, Wisconsin for the winters, to return to Watertown merely for summers. Then the family would reside in Missouri. This kindergarten would continue until the outbreak of [World War I](#), when it would be forced to close due to the intensity of hostility toward Germany and Germans.)



1854

1854

SEPTEMBER 1854

 September: This month's issue of [Harper's New Monthly Magazine](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE

 September: Friend [William Henry Harvey](#) reached Victoria in [Australia](#). He would collect extensively on the beaches of Port Phillip, Westernport Bays, and Port Fairy.

Brooklyn's Washington Avenue Ferry went into operation, connecting Brooklyn Avenue to Washington Avenue in the Bronx, [New York](#).

Trains began running between Rochester and Avon on the Genesee Valley Railway.

 September: The [Reverend William Silsbee](#) returned to the United States from Europe.

The Reverend [Samuel Ringgold Ward](#) took an opportunity to make a shore visit to [Ireland](#), by crossing from Holyhead to Kingston. He spent a day or two there and at Dublin, and passed rapidly, by rail, from thence to Cork, where he spent a night, and hastened the next day, through Mallow, to Killarney:

I must beg the generous reader to indulge me in saying but little concerning the Emerald Isle. It is a country so full of interest, making such rapid strides of improvement, capable of such vast development, so rich in material and intellectual resources, so deficient in moral and spiritual cultivation, that it would be most unjustifiable presumption, in one who has spent but twenty clays there, ten of which were at Killarney, to attempt to speak of it intelligently. If God spare me, I shall know more of that island at some future day; then it will be time enough to speak of it at length.... We rode, walked, sailed, eat, drank, and slept, daily, with some degree of regularity and perseverance, each accomplishing his task to his own satisfaction. The rich romantic scenery, the beauty of the lakes, the fine old ruins of Mucruss Abbey and Ross Castle, the beautiful grounds of Mr. Herbert, the affability of the company we met, all gave us a variety of most pleasing sights and sounds; and, being favoured with our short sojourn in that picturesque locality.

I must not forget, that Mr. Schiell, the gentlemanly master of the Killarney Junction Railway Hotel, understood as well as any man in that business ever did, the art and science of making his guests comfortable. I went there to rest – another name for being lazy. So did others. We accomplished what we went for. Now, please excuse my giving descriptions of what I saw, for I have no descriptive power or talent whatever. I can only say, that after having lived four-and-thirty years in America, I was not so well prepared to appreciate Irish lake or mountain scenery as those visitors who had never been out of this kingdom. I appreciated the falls on Mr. Herbert's place, on account of his very great kindness in suffering visitors to witness them; but

to one who lives within three hours' sail of Niagara Falls, they certainly did not appear very wonderful. As to lakes, I live on Lake Ontario, and have frequently sailed upon Lake Erie and Lake Michigan. When I tell the reader that one of these is 160 and another 180 miles long, he will not wonder that I was not beyond measure astonished at Killarney lakes. Then, as to small and beautiful lakes, I beg to say, with great deference, but most certainly with truth, that Skaneateles Lake, Geneva Lake, Seneca Lake, and Crooked Lake, in New York State, are neither excelled nor equalled by anything it has been my good fortune to see on this side of the Atlantic. Still I was pleased, greatly pleased, with the scenery of Killarney; and the above is introduced less by way of boasting, than apology for not being more perfectly captivated, charmed, delighted, overwhelmed, and "all that sort of thing," which some persons thought "as in duty bound" I ought to have been.

I met at Cork some friends and relations of my good neighbour, P.P. Hayes, Esq., of Toronto. Not having time to call upon Father Mathew, as I had promised, if I ever visited Cork, and having learned that he was about to proceed to Florence for his health, I had the melancholy pleasure of sending him my card, and an expression of best wishes for the speedy recovery of his wonted strength. I had met the venerable priest at Cleveland, Ohio, in 1851. He was in my native country, pursuing a most laudable work. Differences in religion were of no moment to me, as compared with the great work of philanthropy. I was but too happy, therefore, to receive the invitation of Father Mathew to visit him; and, had circumstances favoured it, should have been delighted to do so.

I had not the good fortune to hear the Rev. Dr. Urwick on the Sunday I was in Dublin; but, at Kingston, had the great pleasure of hearing that most indefatigable and most successful pastor, the Rev. Joseph Denham Smith, whom I had before met in England, and from whom I received the kindest attention. Mr. Smith is one of the English ministers who have gone to Ireland to do good, and have become most enthusiastically fond of Ireland and the Irish. I saw this in all whom it was my pleasure to meet, during both visits to that country. The singular devotion which the Independent ministers show to the people among whom they live, and their great admiration for the land of their labours, tend in no small degree to the almost incredible efficiency and success of their labours. Disconnected from the State, receiving not one penny of State pay, they make manifest to all the disinterestedness of their work; and show as well, that great good can be accomplished now, as in the days of the apostles, by voluntary, persevering, religious effort. In no country is this more manifest than in Ireland, where the class of ministers to which Mr. Smith and his co-labourers belong are obliged to compete with State Churchism in so many forms. This remark is not made offensively. I am giving utterance to my own religious opinions, without disguise; and repeat, that their correctness, in practical working, never struck me so forcibly as during my last visit to Ireland: nor can I bring myself to believe that any honest, honourable Christian, of whatever denomination, will find fault with my refusing so far to play the neutral, as to write as if I had no opinions or were too unmanly to express



1854

them.

1854

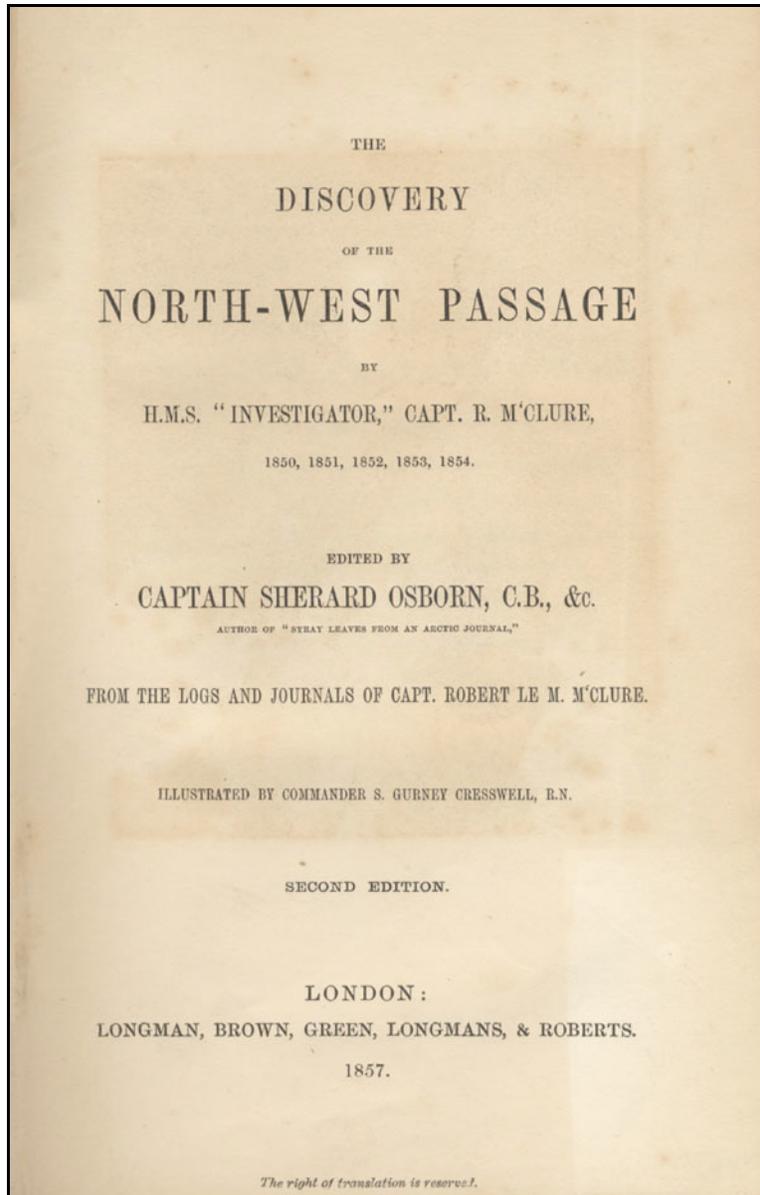


1854

1854



September: After Captain Henry Kellett of *HMS Resolute* had sent Lieutenant Bedford Pim on foot across the ice and found Robert John Le Mesurier McClure and *HMS Investigator* suffering from malnutrition and scurvy, the *Resolute* in turn had become caught in the ice and everyone had been forced to spend a 4th winter in the Arctic. At this point the men arrived back in England without their ships. McClure would be court-martialed for having lost his ship, but then the British would figure that he was more useful as a hero of discovery, and promote him to captain and give him a knighthood. Parliament would vote the men of the expedition a reward of £10,000 for having discovered a Northwest Passage (Franklin's crew had 4 years earlier discovered another such passage but had perished without anyone learning of this).



(Note that it would not be until 1906 that the first ice-cutter ship, under Roald Amundson, would be able to

make its way through the Northwest Passage that had here been discovered by Robert McClure.)



THE FROZEN NORTH

Arctic Explorations

Date	Explorer	Nation	Discovery
1501	Gaspar Corte Real	Portuguese	Newfoundland
1536	Jacques Cartier	French	St. Lawrence River, Gaspe Peninsula
1553	Richard Chancellor	English	White Sea
1556	Stephen Burrough	English	Kara Sea
1576	Martin Frobisher	English	Frobisher Bay
1582	Humphrey Gilbert	English	Newfoundland
1587	John Davis	English	Davis Strait
1597	Willem Barents	Dutch	Spitsbergen, Novaya Zemlya
1611	<u>Henry Hudson</u>	English	Hudson Bay
1616	William Baffin	English	Ellesmere and Devon Islands
1632	Thomas James	English	James Bay
1741	Vitus Bering	Russian	Alaska
1772	<u>Samuel Hearne</u>	English	Coppermine River to the Arctic Ocean
1779	James Cook	British	Vancouver Island, Nootka Sound
1793	<u>Alexander Mackenzie</u>	English	Bella Coola River to the Pacific
1825	Edward Parry	British	Cornwallis, Bathurst, Melville Islands
1833	John Ross	British	North Magnetic Pole
1845	John Franklin	British	King William Island



1854

1854

Arctic Explorations

Date	Explorer	Nation	Discovery
1854	Robert McClure	British	Banks Island, Viscount Melville Sound



1854

1854

Review of WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS in Graham's Magazine, 45:298-300.

WALDEN Print H

**INSERT REVIEW HERE, AS OCR-SCANNED
FROM PS1638 EMERSON AND THOREAU: THE
CONTEMPORARY REVIEWS, EDITED BY JOEL
MYERSON, NEW YORK: CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1992, PAGE 379.**

Review of WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS in National Magazine, 5:284-85.

WALDEN Print H

Reprinted in CRITICAL ESSAYS ON HENRY DAVID THOREAU'S
WALDEN, ed. Joel Myerson (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co.,
1988), page 24.

Review of WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS in the Southern Literary Messenger, 20:575.

WALDEN Print H

Reprinted in CRITICAL ESSAYS ON HENRY DAVID THOREAU'S
WALDEN, ed. Joel Myerson (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co.,
1988), page 24.

Review of WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS (perhaps by Jesse Clements) under the heading

WALDEN Print H



“New Publications” in the Western Literary Messenger, 23:44-46.

Five years ago this sixteenth of August, we started on a visit to the old homestead in Massachusetts, taking with us, as a traveling companion, “A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers,” a work then fresh from the press. The Merrimack being our natal stream, wherein was served our apprenticeship at lamprey-eel catching, any thing “writ” about it naturally interests us, and Thoreau’s book we found especially inviting. Bating some religious sentiments broached in it—for the author is more pagan than Christian—it is a downright pleasant volume, instructive as well as amusing. With all his faults—indeed he has but few—we like Thoreau, and anything from his pen we relish “hugely,” as Dr. South, Milton, Jeremy Taylor, and the old English writers generally, would say. We have had a huge deal of pleasure over the pages of Walden. It is Yankee Doodle with new words and a variety of accompaniments. It is the hummings in prose of Genius in a Cottage of his own hands’ making, as he looks out on Walden Pond, and into the woods and into his own heart and into the heart of the New England cent fisher. In other words, it is the lucubrations of a man who raised his own beans, sat on his own pumpkin and whistled, and killed and ate the woodchuck that became his associate squatter. We have hinted that Thoreau built his own house; and the story of that great “labor”—equal to a twelfth part of all the work Hercules did—shall be told by himself:

[Reprints “Economy,” pages 40.30-45.28.]

Of furniture for his house, our author had “a bed, a table, a desk, three chairs, a looking-glass three inches in diameter, a pair of tongs and andirons, a kettle, a skillet, and a frying-pan, a dipper, a washbowl, two knives and forks, three plates, one cup, one spoon, a jug for oil, a jug for molasses, and a Japanned lamp.” Some of the articles he made himself. Touching the subject of furniture he says:

[Reprints “Economy,” pages 65.25-67.24.]

In this new volume the reader will find quaint ideas on new subjects, and fresh thoughts on s[tal]e subjects. The chapters run thus: Economy, Where I Lived and What I Lived for, Reading, Sounds, Solitude, Visit[o]rs, The Bean Field, The Village, The Ponds, Baker Farm, Higher Laws, Brute Neighbors, House Warming, Winter Visit[o]rs, Winter Animals, and Spring. The “intellectuals” will find first-rate feed in these several pastures. The grass is delicious and abundant. A very little ivy is found here and there, but need not be eaten.

Read  Henry Thoreau's Journal for September 1854 (æf. 37) in the 1906 version



September 1, Friday: Engelbert Humperdinck was born in Siegburg.

British and French troops assaulted the Russian defenders of Petropavlovsk on Kamchatka Island.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went along the river to [Edmund Hosmer](#)'s new place (Gleason E6).



Sept. 1. A misty morning followed by a still, cloudy, misty day, through which has fallen a very little rain this forenoon already. Now I notice a few faint chipping sparrows, busily picking the seeds of weeds in the garden. Are they the Savannah sparrows? They show no white in tail. Yet I see no yellow on brows. Small feathers on back, centred with black and edged with pale brown (?); inner vanes of wing-quills bay; crown without chestnut; brown dash from angle of mouth backward. Do not the sparrows now commonly begin to feed on seeds of weeds in gardens?

[Transcript]

P.M. — Along river to E. Hosmer's.

A very little mizzling. The *Aster Tradescanti* is perhaps *beginning* [*Vide* Sept. 14.] to whiten the shores on moist banks. I see a fine (reddish) topped grass in low lands, whitened like a thin veil with what it has caught of this dewy rain. It wets my feet much.

The *Cornus sericea* berries are now in prime, of different shades of blue, lighter or darker, and bluish white. They are so abundant as to be a great ornament to our causeways and riverside. The white-berried, too, is now in prime, but drops off. The *Viburnum dentatum* berries are smaller and duller. The *Viburnum Lentago* are just fairly begun to have purple cheeks.

Even this rain or mizzling brings down many leaves of elms and willows, etc.,—the first. to notice, since the fall of the birches which began so long ago. Saw two wild ducks go over. Another said they were large gray ducks; also that Simon Brown's boy had got a young wild duck which came home from the river with the tame ones.

 THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



September 2, Saturday: "Opened one of my snapping turtle's eggs [*sic??*]. The young alive, but not very lively, with shell dark grayish black; yolk as big as a hazelnut; tail curled round and is considerably longer than the shell, and slender; three ridges on the back, one at edges of plates on each side of dorsal, which is very prominent. There is only the trace of a dorsal ridge in the old. Eye open." [Tortoise Eggs](#)

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went to the Purple Utricularia Shore on Fair Haven Bay (Gleason 102/ K7).

Review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) under the heading "Literature" in the New-York [Churchman](#), 4:1-4.

[Walden; or, Life in the Woods is] The book of a humourist—a man of humours rather than of humour—and a lover of nature. Mr. THOREAU, living at Concord, is known among literary circles by his association with the good company of EMERSON and HAWTHORNE, and by his production of a book a few years since, "A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers," which, with some unpleasant peculiarities of its school, savouring greatly of a species of irreverent egotism, contained many close and faithful observations of nature, and many shrewd reflections on life. Every man has his humour, though from the present pressure and overlaying of society it is not always easy to discover it. Mr. THOREAU brings his out into prominent relief. It is the stoic affectation of a lover of personal freedom, with a grudge against civilization for its restrictions. He looks upon all the trappings of society, of Church and State, of conventional usages, cities and towns, even clothes and houses, as so many impediments to the free growth of the unfettered man. The only concession he seems disposed to make to the social state is to work for it a sufficiently long time,—in his case it is a very short time,—to secure honestly a portion of the spoils adequate to keep body and soul in company, that the former, strengthened by toil, may enjoy a vigorous sense of existence, and the latter be free to watch its own motions and imbibe the simple thoughts of primitive poetry and philosophy. In all our modern reading, unlike as the situation and circumstances are, and different as Mr. THOREAU is from DIOGENES in many respects, we have not met with so complete a suggestion of what used to be considered, by the vulgar at least, a philosopher. He realizes the popular notion of an impracticable, a man who rails at society and is disposed to submit to as few of its trammels as possible, and who has the credit of resources within himself which the majority of people do not possess, and, in fact, do not much care for. The world is very ready to give the title, for it is of very little mercantile value, and the world can afford to part with it. On his part, the philosopher can return the compliment. He says to the hard workers about him, my friends, you are all wrong, shortening your lives in toil and vanities, working for that which does not profit, and reaping an endless harvest of failure and dismay. Ninety-seven out of every hundred merchants, he continues, according to an old calculation, fail in business, and it is pretty safe to put down the other three as rogues. As in merchandize, [*sic*] so in farming. People are toiling with real pain after imaginary pleasure. The true secret of life is to ask for little; to live on the minimum.

Mr. THOREAU has made the experiment. Entering manhood with a good education and a vigorous frame, he has, after various attempts, come to the conclusion, recorded in his book, that, after all, "the occupation of a day labourer was the most independent of any, especially as it required only thirty or forty days in a year to support one." School-keeping he had tried; but that, as a trade, was a failure. There was no love in it, and it did not gratify the mind; beside, it was expensive:—he was "obliged to dress and train, not to say think and believe accordingly, and time was lost in the bargain." Trade was still worse. It was tried, but the experimentalist for freedom found "it would take ten years to get underway in that, and that then he should probably be on his way to the devil." He was "actually afraid that he might by that time be doing what is called a good business." At one time, when he was looking about to see what he could do for a living, some sad experience in conforming to the wishes of friends being fresh in his mind to tax his ingenuity, **"he thought often and seriously of picking huckleberries"**; which indeed would not be a very self-sacrificing occupation, and certainly has its agreeable features. The difficulty is, the season of huckleberries is short, the demand limited, and it requires so little capital of head or pocket that,—if it would pay,—it would soon be overstocked. We fear it would not be adequate to the support of a family in respectability, and that if it could be generally adopted, much of what is valuable in the present system of society, school-houses, churches, lyceums, architecture, opera, and generally all costly things, would go by the board. However this may be, for more than five years Mr. THOREAU supported himself by about six weeks' labor of his hands *per annum*; and the conclusion to which he came was "a conviction both by faith and experience, that to maintain one's self on this earth is not a hardship, but a pastime, if we will live simply and wisely, **as the pursuits of the simpler nations are still the sports of the more artificial,**" which is a point in illustration exceedingly well made, and is really a poetical defence of the author's theory. He adds, "It is not necessary that a man should earn his living by the sweat of his brow, unless he sweats easier than I do." Mr. THOREAU is thus at war with the political economy of the age. It is his doctrine that the fewer wants man has the better; while in reality civilization is the spur of many wants. To give a man a new want is to give him a new pleasure and conquer his habitual rust and idleness.

The greater his needs and acquisitions, the greater his safety; since he may fall back from one advance post to another, as he is pressed by misfortune, and still keep the main citadel untouched. He may give up his couch and still keep his gig; resign his Madeira and retain at least his small beer; if he fails as an orator he may be eloquent in the parlor or the school-room; a condemned poet may cut down into a profitable prose-writer; the bankrupt citizen may become a proud villager. He has, by his devotion to luxury, the fostering of his spiritual appetites, his deference to the standards set up about him, interposed a long series of steps, which he may gradually descend, before he touches the bottom one, of starvation. As a general thing in the world, the people who aim at most get most. The philosophical negation keeps no account in the bank and starves. Nay, it keeps robbing itself till from him that hath not is taken away even that which he hath. In the woods, on the edge of a fine pond, aloof from markets and amusements, our author begins to doubt even of his favourite and ultimate resource of fishing. Life and reality seem oozing out of his feeble grasp, and he holds to the world only by the slender filament of a metaphysical whim. Says he in his chapter on the "higher laws":

[Reprints "Higher Laws," pages 213.33-214.35.]

With the preparation in his experiences which we have alluded to, Mr. THOREAU, in the spring of 1845, borrowed an axe, and set forth to level a few trees, for the site of a house, on the edge of Walden pond, in a wood near Concord. He did not own the land, but was permitted to enjoy it. He dropped a few pines and hewed timbers, and for boards bought out the shanty of JAMES COLLINS, an Irishman who worked on the Fitchburg railroad, for the sum of four dollars, twenty-five cents. From his allusion, he was assisted, we presume, in the raising, by EMERSON and other friendly literary celebrities of the region. Starting early in the spring, long before winter he had secured, with the labour of his hands, "a tight shingled and plastered house, ten feet wide by fifteen long, and eight feet posts, with a garret and a closet, a large window on each side, two trap doors, one door at the end and a brick fire-place opposite." The exact cost of the house is given:

[Reprints "Economy," page 49.3-26.]



The rest of the account is curious, and will show "upon what meats CAESAR fed," that he has interested the world so greatly in his housekeeping:

[Reprints "Economy," pages 58.33-60.32.]

He had nothing further to do after his "family baking," which, the family consisting of a unit, could not have been large or have come round very often, than to read, think and observe. HOMER was his favourite book; the thinking was unlimited, and the observation that of a man with an instinctive tact for the wonders of natural history. On this last point we cannot give the author too high praise. He has a rare felicity of sight and description, which IZAAK WALTON would have approved of and ALEXANDER WILSON envied. To many of his moral speculations we could take exceptions. He carries his opposition to society too far. A self-pleasing man should have a more liberal indulgence for the necessities of others, and something more cheerful to tell the world than of its miseries. We should be sorry to think this a true picture of the "industrial classes":

[Reprints "Economy," pages 6.25-7.35.]

And again:

[Reprints "Economy," pages 37.17-38.11 and 38.27-32.]

We are all wrong, it seems, and had better go back to savage life. The "lendings" of society and civilization are all impediments. The railroad is a humbug, the post-office an absurdity, for there are really no letters worth reading, it is "a penny for your thoughts": all "mud and slush of opinion and prejudice and tradition and delusion and appearance,—alluvion which covers the globe, through Paris and London, through New York and Boston and Concord, through Church and State, through poetry, philosophy, and religion." Rising to transcendental emotion, our author exclaims,

**[Reprints "Where I Lived, and What I Lived For,"
page 98.19-30.]**

This excessive love of individuality and these constant Fourth-of-July declarations of independence, look very well on paper, but they will not bear the test of a practical examination. We say excessive, for there is no doubt there is such a thing as a neglect of a proper cultivation of a man's isolated, individual self. In many things "the world is too much with us"; the soul needs retirement, sequestration, repose. We are slaves to idle expenses, and "walk in a vain show." "Poor Richard" might come among us with profit and tell us how dearly we are paying for the whistle, and show us how much richer we might become, not by acquiring more but by wanting less. But let us look at Mr. THOREAU's contempt for the labouring of the harassed farmer. We may admit that the yoke is on his shoulder, as well as on the neck of his patient ox; but where is the condition of life which has not its yoke of some fashion or other? We cannot all be philosophers, or affect the pleasures of a hermit life in the wilderness. Even "the mean and sneaking fellows," whom THOREAU, in the kindness of his sublimated philanthropy, so tenderly describes, have their little compensations of pleasure and satisfaction, and no doubt frequently pitied the recluse of Walden at his lone habitation in the wood. **His** pleasure, stretched out on a piece of damp turf, displacing with his frame huge shoals of insect life, and gazing intently on space in an arduous endeavour to think that he is thinking; this sort of enjoyment would be simple misery to the "swinkt hedger," the poor unthinking clown, who

like a lackey, from the rise to set,
Sweats in the eye of Phoebus, and all night
Sleeps in Elysium; next day, after dawn,
Doth rise and help Hyperion to his horse;
And follows so the ever-running year,
With profitable labour, to his grave.

The man of toil, with all his woes, has probably the common permanent consolation of humanity, he does not toil always, and with the sterile harvest of his fields he reaps, too, some bounties of friendly countenances in his little sphere of society, the treasures, perhaps, of wife and children; and though he is sublimely unconscious of Eddas and Zendavestas, he can read his Bible—the best book which any sage has in his library—and learn from it that there is a felicity in labouring patiently and cheerfully in one's vocation, and doing one's duty in that state of life in which it has pleased GOD to call us. Retiring from civilized life, in a vain attempt to escape its ills, must be the casual chance experiment of the few, and those few will hardly prosecute the work with any great degree of consistency.

Even Mr. THOREAU, who loves the society of lizards and mosquitos, and can eat an acorn with as much zest as any man, cuts the pleasing connection after awhile, and hastens back to civilization, to secure the admiration of the very vicious public whose unprofitable heart-aches and barren pursuits he had, for the moment, abandoned. Why was not Mr. THOREAU satisfied with carving his elegies on the bark of trees, mingling his philosophic ejaculations with the wild laugh of the loon, or swelling the brimming flood of Walden Pond with his sympathetic tears? We hold that in publishing he has given up the whole argument. Seriously, he cannot expect many people to follow his example; comically, his experience is published as a curiosity, a piece of quaintness, an affectation for the simple amusement of a wicked world.

Look where the author's principles would carry him were we to listen to his suggestions, and follow this instinct of our nature for idleness and the wilderness. This day, if any, would be a favourable one for putting this experiment in operation. It is sleepy, heavily laden mid August, with a sultry temperature, and we are writing, surrounded by bricks and mortar, in a city which strangers are just now avoiding on suspicion of the lugubrious pestilence lurking in its atmosphere. We should certainly, on his showing, neither stay here to earn money to buy his book, or earn money by reviewing it: yet these are duties which he challenges us to perform, and one or other of which some considerable number of people must execute; or there will be no sale of "Walden," and the philosophic soul of THOREAU will be shaken at Concord, and the face of FIELDS, most beneficent of publishers, will lengthen, and when the author presents himself in Washington street to receive his six months' profits, the results will be small, and, instead of cash, he will be entertained with that most bitter of all receptions for an author, when his publishers take to analyzing his book—a critical proceeding which they never think of attempting unless the book is a failure; when one partner will say it was the too much Zoroaster, and infidelity in it which killed it; another will doubt whether the public cares very much about the infinitesimals of insect life, or is disposed to be imaginative on mosquitos, and a third, taking up the "Barclays of Boston," will venture the suggestion that Mr. THOREAU had better, after all, emigrate to Beacon street and write a book that will sell like that. From this fearful fate, we say, may this author be preserved! Yet he will owe it to the tender mercies and degraded toil of the civilization he despises, if he is.

We are not disposed to throw any unnecessary obstacles in the way of this author, but The Churchman would be reckless of its duty if it were not to ask the question why Mr. THOREAU so frequently throws doubt over and suggests a spirit of disaffection to the sacred Scriptures.

There is not so much of this as in his previous book, The Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers, but a little of this nonsense is quite too much: for example, "Our manners have been corrupted by communication with the saints. Our hymn-books resound with a melodious cursing of GOD and enduring Him forever. One would say that even the prophets and redeemers had rather consoled the fears than confirmed the hopes of man. There is nowhere recorded a simple and irrepressible satisfaction with the gift of life, any memorable praise of GOD." If we may credit the quotations of the writer of this unhappy passage, he enjoys a privileged literary intimacy with CONFUCIUS; if it would not be taken as an impertinence, we should like to ask if he has ever perused the Psalms of DAVID. The fact is, that the great discoveries and revelations of Mr. THOREAU'S solitude turn out to be very familiar affairs after all. Wriggle as he may among his scraps of SHEIK SADI and the VISHNU PURANA, he will find it difficult to bring forward anything of a sacred character, or illustrating human life, which is not included with tenfold more effect in the Bible. His aphorisms from these old oriental sources are frequently very happy; but it is the most pitiful affectation to use them as he occasionally does. Humour is not the author's highest faculty, but we may suspect the exercise at least of an ingenious pleasantry, when he treats us to this significant quotation. "Says the poet Mîr Camar Uddîn Mast, **'Being seated to run through the region of the spiritual world, I have had this advantage in books. To be intoxicated by a single glass of wine; I have experienced this pleasure when I have drunk the liquor of the esoteric doctrines.'**"

We may, after all, be looking at this matter too seriously. The author, in spite of his sarcasm and denunciations, is only playing the part of an individual humourist. He knows as much as any one how much he is indebted to civilization; and is only taking a view of life dramatically, as an on-looker for the moment. In this view he carries out the humour admirably. A book was published some years since, entitled "The Hermit in London," which, though it was quite successful, had not half the humour or philosophical amusement of this volume. Who but a man who had projected himself as it were into another state of being could see so clearly the humours of the village life.

THE VILLAGE.

[Reprints "The Village," pages 167.22-168.33.]



1854

1854

There is some geniality in this, as there is in the sketch of the Homeric or Paphlagonian man who came along from Canada, who is thus introduced.

A CHARACTER.

[Reprints “Visitors,” pages 144.13-145.36.]

We could add to these pleasant extracts many of the natural history observations, which, as we have said, are the writer's *forte*. The agriculture, the woods, the life of the pond, are all eminently well described. He was fortunate one day to witness that remarkable sight, a battle between two forces of red and black ants, of which a rather poetical account, rivalling the combats of Turks and Russians, was once given by a M. HANHART, an improvement upon HUBER which LEIGH HUNT has pleasantly commented upon and the original of which may be found in the Edinburgh Journal of Science for 1828.



1854

1854

Review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) in the New-York Home Journal, 2:1.

Walden is the history of a year passed on the shores of a quiet New England lake. It abounds in pleasant pictures of forest life, enlivened by such incidents and adventures as befall a contemplative dweller in the woods. Incidents which, unimportant in themselves, go to make up the life of almost hermit-like retiracy which our author labours to depict. The seasons have each their novelty and charm, and the ever-varying aspect of the lake furnishes an endless theme for reflection and comment. No utterance of nature is void and trivial when listened to and sympathized with in the spirit that inspires the recluse of Walden Pond. The water-fowl come with the glowing leaves of autumn, and sport on the waters of the lake, and wing their way southward, to return in the spring; the wild pigeons wheel along the mountains, and the jay screams among the shrubs in the clearing; the red squirrel scampers and chatters over the roof, and the large-eyed hare burrows under the floor of the hut where the author, regardless of seasons, (or rather kindly regarding each,) lives a sort of half dreamy, half active life—part philosopher, part hunter, and husbandman. There is a wealth of pure sentiment, and a graphic minuteness of narrative and description in this work, that renders it, beyond doubt, among the most delightful of books. As a companion for a country ramble, or a book for city reading, where rural longings make up for realities, we have seldom met a better.

Review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) in Concord, New Hampshire State Capital Reporter, page 2, column 5.

"WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS." This work, written by HENRY D. THOREAU, and published by MESSRS. TICKNOR & FIELDS, of Boston, a few weeks since, is one of sterling literary merit. It has the merit of *originality*. The author does his own thinking, and uses his own style of expression, which is appropriate, vigorous and beautiful. "Walden" has in it the essential elements of a grand Poem of life spent in the solitude of forests and beside beautiful waters. It is a poem in all except the rythmical [*sic*] arrangement of its words. The author writes in the fullness of the inspiration of genius, and has stored every page of his work with *thoughts*, as well as *words*. A pond of water, a bean-field, and a fight between two species of ants in a door-yard, would not be reckoned by the heedless world as matters of much importance, but the thinking, observing and poetic mind of the author of "Walden," seems much in them, and has found in them themes for pages of most fascinating description. We have wondered at the acuteness of observation manifested by the writer, who seemed to see and hear *everything* in the world of nature around him, and which faculty seems equalled by his powers of expressing, with intelligibility, his ideas thus obtained by observation. The scene of this work is in the woods of Concord, Mass., upon the shores of Walden Pond, where, for two years and upwards, the author dwelt in a house built by his own hands, supporting himself by his own labor, and who chose this retiracy that he might the better commune with Nature in her own solitary retreats. This work will bear reading — indeed, we doubt, if many will be able by a single perusal to gain a full conception of its beauties. It can be found at any of the bookstores here, we presume.

We may presume that this very perceptive but anonymous review must have been composed by the editor of the paper, [Cyrus Barton](#).

The following appears on an inside cover page of the manuscript journal volume that ends with this day's entry (no facsimiles of these prior manuscript pages have as yet been made available on the internet):

"My faults are: — Paradoxes, — saying just the opposite, — a style which may be imitated."



Sept. 2. The second still, misty, mizzling and rainy day. We all lie abed late. Now many more sparrows in the yard, larger than chip-birds and showing ashy under sides as they fly. A *part* the same as yesterday's. Are they Savannahs, or bay-wings, or both? I see but the *slightest touch* of white in the tail of any. Those clear ashy beneath are cinereous about the shoulders above. A tree sparrow too? though I do not see the spot. [Heard a faint warble from one the next afternoon at about 6P.M. on apple trees.]

Opened one of my snapping turtle's eggs. The young alive, but not very lively, with shell dark grayish-black; yolk as big as a hazelnut; tail curled round and is considerably longer than the shell, and slender; three ridges on back, one at edges of plates on each side of dorsal, which is very prominent. There is only the trace of a dorsal ridge in the old. Eye open. [*Vide* next page.]

[Transcript]



P.M. — By boat to Purple Utricularia Shore.

Still and cloudy, all shut in, but no rain. The flags are turned yellow along the river, quite an autumnal scene, with commonly a strip of green left in their centres. The sparganium not changed. The pontederias, half of them, are brown and crisp. Of pads, only the white lily are conspicuous. The button-bushes are generally yellowing, *i.e.*, are of an autumnal yellowish green. The black willows are decidedly crisped and yellowish. The interrupted fern begins to yellow. The autumnal dandelion is conspicuous on the shore. How handsome ripe grapes with the bloom on them! This rubbed off, they show purple or black. I find some quite sweet which have ripened on a rock. They are a noble fruit to the eye. The waxwork is fairly yellow on all hands. Now is the time to gather it. Ivy leaves on some plants are yellow, scarlet, and dull-red besides green.

I see white lilies wide open at 2.30 P.M. They are half open even at 5 P.M. in many places this moist cloudy day and thus late in their season. Still a few pontederias also. I see dogbane still in flower. The *Bidens Beck-ii* is oftenest eaten (?) off just below the blossom. Saw what I think must be a solitary wood (?) duck. Started it several times, driving it before me up the river, getting within twenty rods. It uttered a shrill quacking each time. Bathed at Hubbard's. The water is surprisingly cold on account of the cool weather and rain, but especially since the rain of yesterday morning. It is a very important and remarkable autumnal change. It will not be warm again probably.

To my great surprise I find this morning (September 3d) that the little unhatched turtle, which I thought was sickly and dying, and left out on the grass in the rain yesterday morn, thinking it would be quite dead in a few minutes - I find the shell alone and the turtle a foot or two off vigorously crawling, with neck outstretched (holding up its head and looking round like an old one) and feet surmounting every obstacle. It climbs up the nearly perpendicular side of a basket with the yolk attached. They thus not only continue to live after they are dead, but begin to live before they are alive!

Are those large rigid green clusters the dried fertile flowers of the black ash? The keys are formed and appear ripe.

The moderate mizzling rain of yesterday and to-day is the first (excepting the slight shower in the eve of the 26th ult.) since that moderate one of August 4th. Yet this brings down leaves, cools the rivers and ponds, and brings back ducks and other migratory birds. I see two or three large plump sparrows hopping along on the button-bushes and eating the *nikania* blossoms, sometimes perching on the lower mossy stems and uttering a faint chip, with crown distinctly divided by a light line and another light line over eye, light throat and vent, ashy (?) breast and beneath, without spot. Is it not the white-throated sparrow?

Observed a large clam at the Bath Place, where they have not gone down, — apparently quite old, with a sort of wart-like protuberances, as if the shell were worn into hollows while the harder parts were prominent. The shell, where worn, green, the end shaggy with a kind of moss or alga. A sort of *Aster longifolius*, some days by Mill Brook on Lowell road, but with not long, loose, green-tipped scales, *i.e.* not squarrose. Call this *A. tenuifolius* for present. (It may be *carneus*.)

Two-leaved Solomon's-seal berries red.

I have not allowed enough probably for the smoke mixed with the haze in the late drought. The fires in woods and meadows have been remarkably numerous and extensive all over the country, the earth and vegetation have been so dry, especially along railroads and on mountains and pine plains. Some meadows are said to have been burned three feet deep! On some mountains it burns all the soil down to the rock. It catches from the locomotive, from sportsmen's wadding, and from burning brush and peat meadows. In all villages they smell smoke, especially at night. On Lake Champlain, the pilots of steamboats could hardly see their course, and many complained that the smoke made their eyes smart and affected their throats. Bears, it is said, have in some instances been compelled to migrate.

☰ THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

➡ September 3, Sunday: The 16th anniversary of [Frederick Douglass](#)'s freedom, which we may well elect to celebrate in lieu of **an unknown slave birthday**.

"It has been a source of great annoyance to me, never to have a birthday."

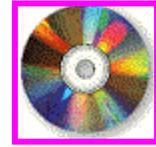
Sunday or not, when Chief Little Thunder, the successor to Brave Bear as headman of the Brulé band of approximately 250, gathered his tribespeople together as part of a surrender process, the troops under General William S. Harney were ordered to open fire on them and many of the band were slaughtered.

WHITE ON RED, RED ON WHITE



"...the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions."

— Declaration of Independence



"To my great surprise I find this morning that the little unhatched turtle, which I thought was sickly and dying, and left out on the grass in the rain yesterday morn, thinking it would be quite dead in a few minutes — I find the shell alone and the turtle a foot or two off vigorously crawling, with neck outstretched (holding up its head and looking round like an old one) and feet surmounting every obstacle. It climbs up nearly perpendicular side of a basket with yolk attached. They thus not only continue to live after they are dead, but they begin to live before they are alive." [Tortoise Eggs](#) In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) and [Minot Pratt](#) went into [Carlisle](#).



Sunday Sep. 3d '54 Fair weather & a clear atmosphere after 2 days of mizzling — cloudy & rainy weather — & some smart showers at daylight & in the night. The street is washed hard & white.

[Transcript]

Pm — With Minott Pratt into Carlisle. Woodbine berries purple. X Even at this season I see some flets of yellow butterflies in the damp road after the rain; as earlier. Pratt showed me a tobacco-flower long & tubular — slightly like a datura. In his yard ap. a new variety of sweet briar which he took out of the woods behind his house — larger bush & leaves — leaves less glandular & sticky beneath — the principal serrations deeper & much sharper — & the whole leaf perhaps less rounded. Saw some winged ants silvering a circular space in the pasture grass about 5 inches in diameter — ~~some~~ a few very large ones among them. Very thick & incessantly moving — one upon another — some without wings — all running about in great excitement — It seemed the object of the winged ones to climb to the top of the grass blades one over another & then take to wing — which they did. In the meadow SW of Hubbards Hill saw white polygala sanguinea, not described. Lambkill again in Hunt pasture. Close to the left hand side of Bridle road — about 100 rods S of the Oak a bay-berry bush without fruit — prob. a male one. It made me realize — that this was only a more distant & elevated sea beech — and that we were within reach of marine influences. My thoughts suffered a sea turn. N. of the oak (4 or 5 rods) on the left of the bridle road in the pasture next to Masons tried to find the white hardhack still out — but it was too late. Found the mt Laurel out again 1 flower close [^sessile] on end of this years shoot — There were numerous blossom buds expanding & they may possibly open this fall. Running over the laurel an amphicarpaea in bloom — some pods nearly an inch long — out prob. a week or 10 days at most. Epilobium molle [^linear] still in flower in the spruce swamp — near my path. A white hardhack out of bloom by a pile of stones on which I put another in Robbins' field & a little south of it a clump of red huckleberries.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL
THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



September 4, Monday: Italian soprano Giulia Grisi performed opera selections at [New-York](#)'s Castle Garden.

“I have provided my little snapping turtle with a tub of water and mud, and it is surprising how fast he learns to use his limbs and this world. He actually runs, with the yolk still trailing from him, as if he had got new vigor from contact with the mud. The insensibility and toughness of his infancy makes our life, with its disease and low spirits, ridiculous. He impresses me as the rudiment of a man worthy to inhabit the earth. He is born with a shell. That is symbolical of his toughness. His shell being so rounded and sharp on the back at this age. He [*sic*??] can turn over without trouble.” [Tortoise Eggs](#) In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went to climbing fern, and at 7:30 PM he went by boat to Fair Haven Bay (Gleason J7).

Thoreau and other Concordians had lent [Michael Flannery](#) enough money to enable him to send for his wife [Ann Flannery](#) and children from Ireland, and Flannery was still repaying this advance by passing on to Thoreau three-quarters of the wages he was earning from [Elijah Wood](#). On this day [Waldo Emerson](#) made an entry in his account book that the latest payment, of \$2.⁵⁰, left a balance due of \$2.⁵⁰ on the funds that Emerson himself had advanced:

Sept. 4 Recd. from Henry Thoreau on a/c of cash loaned
to Mr. Flanery [*sic*] last year 2.50
balance still due 2.50

THOREAU ON THE IRISH

Dr. Bradley P. Dean has expressed the considered opinion on the basis of his research, that “It is likely that Emerson and a few others who had signed the subscription paper Thoreau had circulated on October 12, 1853, had lent Flannery a sum of money that was insufficient for his need, and that Thoreau had lent Flannery the difference. There is evidence that Michael worked for Mr. Thoreau’s [graphite](#) business, and he very likely did so to earn money to pay off what must have been his substantial debts to Thoreau, Emerson, and his other neighbors. But Flannery’s debt to Thoreau was, of course, more than money alone could repay, and this debt continued to mount. When Ann Flannery and her brood arrived from Ireland, the first house they went to was the Thoreaus’ house on Main Street in Concord. There is no record of how long the Flannerys boarded with the Thoreaus before Michael was able to find accommodations for them elsewhere.”



Monday Sep 4th A multiflorus XXX Observed the undersides of a shrub willow by the river lit by the rays of the rising sun—shining like silver or dew drops— Yet when I stood nearer & looked down on them at a different angle they were quite dull.

[Transcript]

I have provided my little snapping turtle with a tub of water & mud—& it is surprising how fast he learns to use his limbs & this world. He actually runs [[^]with the yolk still trailing from him]. The insensibility & as if he had got new vigor from contact with the mud.
toughness of his infancy—make our life with its disease & low spirits ridiculous— He impresses me as the rudiment of a man worthy to inhabit the earth. He is born with a shell— That is symbolical of his toughness. His shell being so rounded & sharp on the back at this age he can turn over without trouble.

Pm to Flowering [written and then canceled in pencil: Climbing] Fern—
Polyg. articulatum ap 3 or 4 days— In the wood paths I find a great many of the cast-steel soap galls—more or less fresh—[[^]some are saddled on the twigs] They are now dropping from the shrub oaks. Is not Art itself a gall? Nature is stung by God & the seed of man planted in her— The artist changes the direction of nature—& makes her grow according to his idea. If the gall was anticipated when the oak was made—so was the canoe when the birch was made. Genius stings nature & she grows according to its idea.

7 1/2 To F.H.P by boat — full moon [vertical pencil line through word] — bats flying about. [[^]skaters &] water bugs? like sparks [3] of fire on the surface between us & the moon The high shore above the RR bridge was very simple & grand—1st the bluish sky with the moon & a few brighter stars—then {drawing} the near high level bank—like a distant mountain ridge or a dark cloud in the E horizon—then its reflection in the water—making it double—& finally the glassy water—& the sheen in 4 one spot on the white lily pads— Some willows for relief in the distance on the right. It was Ossianic.
(I noticed this afternoon that bubbles would not readily form on the water—& soon burst forth on account of

the late rains which have changed its quality. There is prob. less stagnation & scum scum— It is less adhesive [large bracketing mark around “adhesive”].)

A fine transparent mist Lily bay seemed as wide as a lake— you referred the shore back to the clam shell hills— The mere edge which a flat shore presents makes no [vertical pencil line from here through line beginning “moon &...”] [“in” blotted] distinct impression on the [vertical pencil line runs length of page] eye—& if seen at all appears as the base of the distant hills— Commonly a slight mist yet more conceals it. The dim [^low] shore but a few rods distant is seen as the base of the [^distant] hills whose distance you know— The low shore, if not entirely concealed by the low mist—is seen against the distant hills & passes for their immediate base. For the same reason hills near the water appear much more steep than they are. We hear a faint metallic chip from a sparrow on the button bushes or willows now & then. Rowse was struck by the simplicity of nature now— The sky the greater part [vertical pencil line through “part”]—then a little dab of earth— & after some water near you. Looking up the reach beyond Clam [“Clam” altered from lower case (see “Shell”)] Shell—the moon on our east quarter—its sheen was reflected for half a mile from the pads & the rippled water next them on that side—while the willows lined the shore in indistinct black masses—like trees made with India ink— (without distinct branches) & it looked like a sort of Broadway with the sun reflected from its pavements. Such willows might be made with soot or smoke merely—lumpish with fine edges. Meanwhile Fair H. Hill [horizontal pencil line under word runs into margin] *seen blue through the [11] [transparent] mist*—was as large & imposing as Wachusett—& we seemed to be approaching the Highlands of the river. A mt pass. Where the river had burst through mts. A high mt would be no more imposing.

Now I began to hear owls—screech (?) owls at a distance up stream—but we hardly got nearer to them as if they retreated before us— At length when off Wheelers grape & cranberry meadow we heard one near at hand. The rythm of it was *pe-pe-ou* [^this once or twice repeated] but more of a squeal— & somewhat human. Or do not all strange sounds thrill us as human—till we have learned to refer them to their proper source. They appeared to answer one another half a mile apart—could be heard from far woods a mile off.

The wind has risen & the echo is poor—it does not reverberate up & down the river— No sound of a bullfrog, but steadily the [^mole] cricket (like—*rana palustris*) along shore.

Rowse heard a whippoorwill at Sleepy Hollow tonight. No scent of muskrats.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL
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September 5, Tuesday: In the afternoon Henry Thoreau went up the Assabet River to Samuel Barrett's Pond (Gleason D5), and bathed at the swamp white oak.



Sep 5th '54 Were those plump birds which looked somewhat like robins crossing the river yesterday Pm —Golden plover—? I heard the upland plover note at same time, but these were much stouter birds. The dangle-berries—are now the only Whortle berries which are quite fresh. The feverwort berries began to turn about a fortnight ago. Now quite yellow.

[Transcript]

Pm Up Assabet to Sam Barrets Pond.

The river rising {distinctly} The river weeds are now much decayed—almost all pads but the white lily have disappeared[^& they are thinned]— As I wade I trod on the great roots only & in mid stream those dense beds of weeds of the yellow lily— are so much thinned (Potamogetons—heart-leaf—sparganium—&c &c—) as to give one the impression of the river having risen—though it is not more than 6 inches higher on ac— of the rain. I see now against the edge of the pads on each side of the stream a floating wreck—of weeds, [^at first] almost exclusively the sparganium (minor)— The 1st contribution to the river wrack! stood [^so thick] in mid stream. [^which]These ap. become rotten or loose—(though they are still green) and the wind & water wash them to one side. [“These ... side.” circled and canceled in pencil]

They form floating masses of wreck— & [“&” canceled in pencil] a few [^small siums & {I observe} that also] pontederias are already mixed

The Potamogetons are much decayed & washed & blown into a snarl with them. The stream must be fullest & no longer cover the surface with a smooth green shield—nor do the heartleaf of weeds & most verdurous—

(Potamogetons heartleaf—sparganium &c) when the brin brink is in perfection. [pencil line begins over “phenomenon” on the next line and goes over “This is...” through rest of line]
 This is a fall phenomenon. The river weeds [vertical pencil line through word][^become rotten—though many are still green] fall or are loosened.
 the water rises—the winds [vertical pencil line from here through following line] come & they are drifted to the shore—& the water is cleared. [horizontal pencil line under this line runs width of page]
 During the drought I used to see Sam Wheeler’s men carting hogsheads of water from the river to water his shrubbery. They drove into the river—& naked all but a coat & hat—they dipped up the water with a pail—though a shiftless, it looked like an agreeable labor that hot weather—
 Bathed at the Swamp— white oak— [^The water warmer again than I expected] one of these [^larger] oaks is stript nearly bare by the caterpillars. Cranberry-raking is now fairly [pencil line through “fairly”] begun. The very bottom of the river there is loose & crumbly with saw dust. I bring up the coarse *bits* of wood (waterlogged) between my feet. I see much thistle down without the seed 20 floating on the river— Saw a humming bird about a cardinal flower—over the water’s edge— Just this side the rock the water near the shore & pads is quite white [^for 20 rods as with a white sawdust] with the exuviae of small insects mixed with scum & weeds about 1/8 of an inch long—[^ap. like the green lice on birches]—though they want the long antennae of the last— —Yet I suspect did not the rain destroy them? [^they are the same—] What others are so plenty? I see as often before, a dozen doves on the rock—ap for coolness— which fly before me. *Polyg amphibium va terrestre* ap. in prime. I find some *Zizania* grains ps almost black. See a chip bird. See many galls thickly clustered & saddled about the twigs of some young swamp white oaks— dome shaped [^hold on all winter] (with grubs in middle)— —



reddish green A pretty large tupelo on a rock behind Sam Barrets. some [pencil line through “some” and “brilliant scarlet” on following line] of its leaves a very deep & brilliant scarlet—equal to any leaves in this respect. Some waxwork [pencil line through “waxwork” and “green” on following line] leaves variegated greenish yellow & dark green— His Pond has been almost completely dry—more than he ever knew—& is still mostly so— The muddy bottom is exposed high & dry half a dozen rods wide & half covered with great drying yel— & white lily pads & stems— He improves the opportunity to skim off the fertile deposit for his compost heap— Saw some button bush balls going to seed which were really quite a rich red over a green base.— especially in this evening light. They are commonly greener—& much duller reddish— Barrett shows me some very handsome [vertical pencil line from here through line beginning “the common...”] pear-shaped cranberries not uncommon which may be a permanent var. dif. from the common rounded ones.



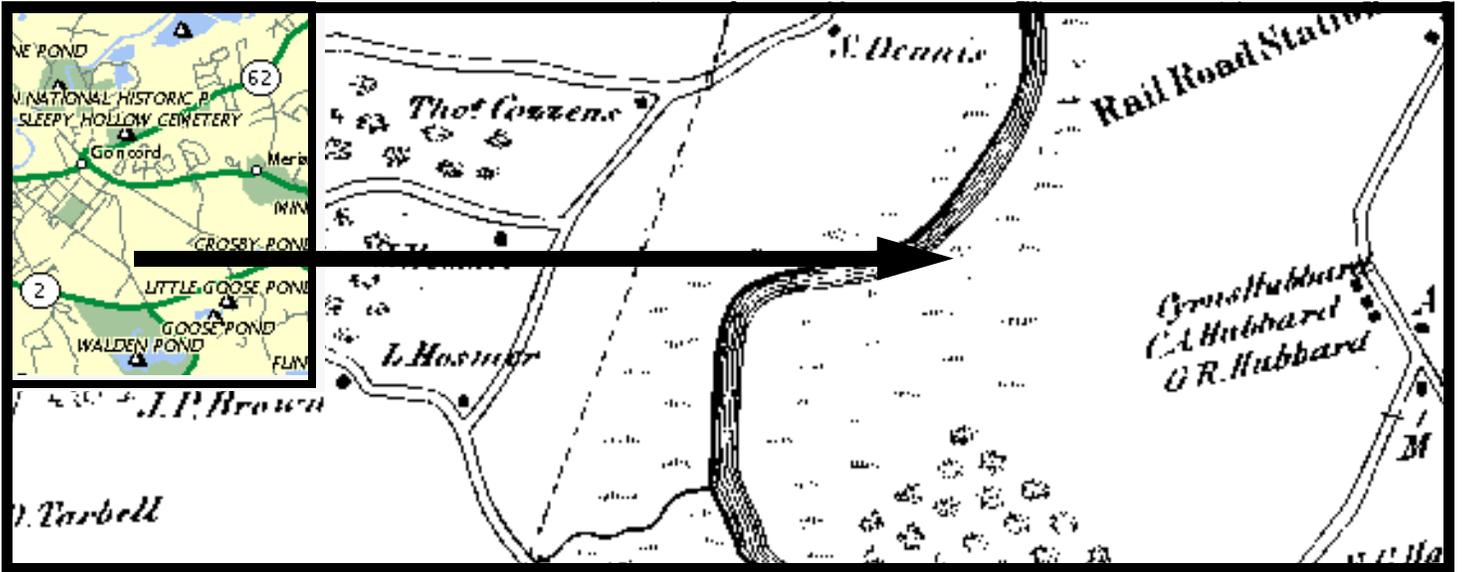
Saw two pigeons [American Passenger Pigeons *Ectopistes migratorius*] which flew about his pond & then lit on the elms over his [Samuel Barret]’s house—he said they had come to drink from Brooks’ as they often did. He sees a blue heron there almost every morning of late— Such is the place for them. A soapwort gentian by river—remarkably early?— The top has been bitten off! I hear the tree-toad today.
 Now at sundown A blue heron flaps away from his perch on an oak over the river before me just above the rock— Hear locusts after sundown.

1854

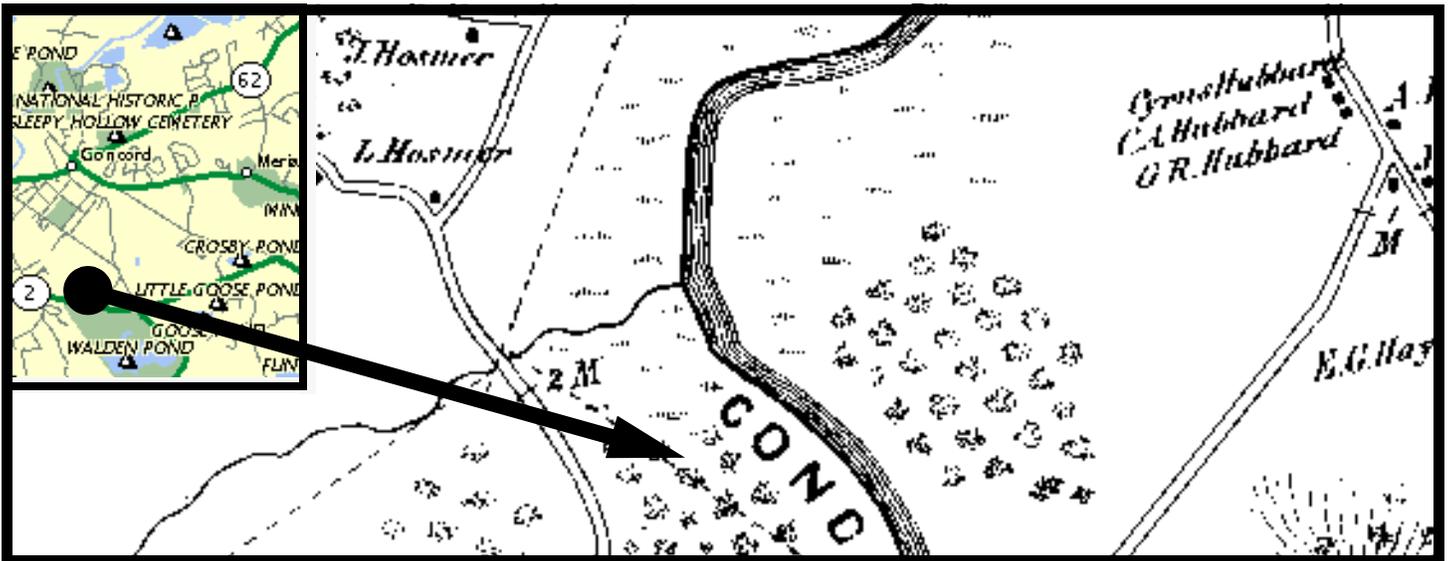
1854

 September 6, Wednesday: In Rochester, [New York](#), the flour merchant Wickens Killick, in his late 30s, died of [cholera](#) (within a 10-day period the disease would also claim his wife, sons 7 and 11 years of age, his father-in-law Mr. Watkins, his mother-in-law Mrs. Watkins, a brother, and a servant girl to the family.)

At 6 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Nawshawtuct or Lee's Hill (Gleason F6) and in the afternoon he went to Hubbard's Bath



and then crossed the river to the [Hollowell Farm](#) (Gleason 64/H5).



Under the heading "Recent Publications," a review of WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS appeared on columns

3-4 of page 2 of the [Dover, New Hampshire Morning Star](#):

Messrs. Ticknor, Reed and Fields have issued a unique book, entitled, "Walden, or Life in the Woods." It is from the pen of Mr. Henry D. Thoreau, who built him a little cabin on the banks of Walden Pond, in Massachusetts, and for some two or three years pursued a very primitive style of living. The book is a record of his doings and thinkings during that time; and has a spice of style and genius which often beguiles the reader on, he can hardly tell why. It forcibly illustrates how fictitious and unreal are many of even our supposed necessities; and on this account is to be hailed as a valuable contribution to our literature. But it is wanting in any earnest purpose; life seems to him altogether a thing to be played with, and thrown away when it fails — as under circumstances it will, and besides contains some sentiments at war not only with society as it is, but as it should be. To those who are given to reflection, and who can properly both guard against error and sift out the wheat from the chaff, it will prove a profitable as well as pleasant book.

William M. White's version is:

*We feel the rush of the cool wind
While the thunder is yet scarcely audible.*

*The flashes are, in fact, incessant for an hour or more,
Though lighting up different parts of the horizon,—
Now the edges of the cloud,
Now far along the horizon,—
Showing a clearer golden space
Beneath the cloud where rain is falling,
Through which stream tortuously to earth
The brilliant bolts.
It is a visible striking or launching of bolts
On the devoted villages.*

*.It crinkles through the clear yellow portion
Beneath the cloud where it rains,
Like fiery snakes or worms,
Like veins in the eye.*

WALDEN: O Baker Farm!

“Landscape where the richest element
Is a little sunshine innocent.” * *

“No one runs to revel
On thy rail-fenced lea.” * *

“Debate with no man hast thou,
With questions art never perplexed,
As tame at the first sight as now,
In thy plain russet gabardine dressed.” * *

“Come ye who love,
And ye who hate,
Children of the Holy Dove,
And Guy Faux of the state,
And hang conspiracies
From the tough rafters of the trees!”



Sep 6th 6 Am to Hill — the sun is rising directly over the E [mag. E] end of the street. Not yet the Equinox. I hear a faint warbling vireo on the elms still—in the morning. My little turtle taken out of the shell Sep 2nd has a shell 1 7/40 inch long or 4/40 longer than the diameter of the egg shell— to say nothing of head & tail— Warm weather again & sultry nights the last 2. The last a splendid moon light & quite warm. I am not sure that I have seen bobolinks for 10 days—nor blackbirds since aug. 28th 9+ pm There is now approaching from the W. one of the heaviest thundershowers—apparently—& with the most incessant flashes that I remember to have seen. It must be 20 miles off at least for I can hardly hear the thunder at all. The almost incessant flashes reveal the form of the cloud—at least the upper & lower edge of it—but it stretches N & S along the horizon further than we see— Every minute I see the crinkled lightning intensely bright dart to earth— or forkedly along the cloud— It does not always dart direct to earth but sometimes [Followed by a mark that might be a canceled period or comma.] very crookedly like the bough of a tree {drawing}

[Transcript]

The forked thunderbolt [written as a caption under drawing] or along the cloud forkedly— It seems like a tremendous dark battery bearing down on us, with an incessant fire kept up behind it. And each time ap— it strikes the earth or something on it with terrific violence. We feel the rush of the cool wind while the thunder is yet scarcely audible. The flashes were in fact incessant for an hour or more though lighting up dif. parts of the horizon—now the edges of the cloud— now far along the horizon— showing a clearer golden space [beneath the cloud] where rain is falling. through which stream tortuously to earth the brilliant bolts. It is a visible striking or launching of bolts on the devoted villages. It crinkles through the clear yellow portion beneath the cloud where it rains—like fiery snakes or worms —like veins in the eye. At first it was a small and very distant cloud in the SW horizon revealed by its own flashes 7 {th} —but it gradually advanced & extended— itself & united with others N & S along and the thunder began to be heard— & wind came &c the horizon²⁷ its rugged upper outline & its whole form revealed by the flashes— [no thunder heard] It seemed like a ship firing broad-sides²⁸ At last came the rain, but not heavy, nor the thunder loud—but the flashes were visible all around us.

Before this in the Pm—to the Hollowell Place—via Hub— Bath crossing the river. A very warm day one of the warmest of the year— The water is again warmer than I should have believed— [say an average summer warmth] yet not so warm as it has been. It makes me the more surprised that only that day & a half of rain should have made it so very cold when I last bathed here. Is not all our really hot weather always contained between the 20th of May & the middle of September?

The checker berries are just beginning to redden XXX The cinnamon ferns along the edge of woods next the meadow are [many] yellow or cinnamon—or quite brown & withered.

The sarsaparilla leaves [vertical pencil line from here through line beginning “is yellow..”] —green—or reddish are spotted with yellow eyes centered with or dull reddish eye with yellow iris reddish.^ They have a very pretty effect held over the forest floor—beautiful in their decay. The sessile leaved bell-wort is yellow green & brown all together or separately.

Some white oak leaves are covered with dull yellow spots. Now ap. is the time to gather the clusters of shrub oak acorns before they drop. [^to adorn a shelf with] some however are ready to fall on account of the late drought— I see where the squirrels have eaten them (the ilicifolia) & left the shells on a stump. See galls on the chinquapin sessile on the stem spherical— & in ap. between that [“that” possibly altered from “the”] of yesterday on the swamp white oak & the cast steel-soap galls. I think I may say that large [pencil vertical line through line] sol-seal berries have begun to be red. I see no swallows now at Clam shell They have probably migrated. Still see the cracks in the ground. and no doubt shall till the snow comes. very few of the A undulatus this year & they late.

Some large roundish or [vertical pencil line through line] squarish vib. nudum berries—by fence bet. Hosmer spring & Lupine Hill near foot of hill—but I see no dif— bet the leaves &c & the others.

An A. longifolius like some days at Hosmer ditch with smaller flower[^27 rayed]—~~le~~ smaller scales—leaves A similar with flesh colored blossom & longer scales at [^A] Heywood ditch. ?A carneus for present ^[rough above & serrate & purple stem [^rough]—I will call it]. It may be a var of what I saw by Mill brook & called Tenuifolius—scales alike but that had smooth leaves.

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1854

1854

 September 7, Thursday: [Augustus Sabin Chase](#) got married with Martha Starkweather in Waterville, Ohio. The union would produce three sons and three daughters.

Senator [Charles Sumner](#) spoke on the slavery question at the Massachusetts state political convention in Worcester.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went to J.B. Moore's [swamp](#) (Gleason E8) and [Walden Pond](#). Just after sunset,



by the light of an almost-full moon that had been full on the previous night, he and [Ellery Channing](#) paddled to [Baker Farm](#) (Gleason K7) and walked up to the old Baker house.



GOD IN CONCORD by Jane Langton © 1992

67

*There are no larger fields than these, no worthier
games that may here be played.
Walden, "Baker Farm"*

Sarah Peel and her friends were homeless no longer. Seven trailers were quickly set up on the Hugh Cargill land, the

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JAMES BAKER

WALDEN: O Baker Farm!

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"Come ye who love,
And ye who hate,
Children of the Holy Dove,
And Guy Faux of the state,
And hang conspiracies
From the tough rafters of the trees!"



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

[Transcript]

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

DOG



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. 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



1854

1854

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.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

1854

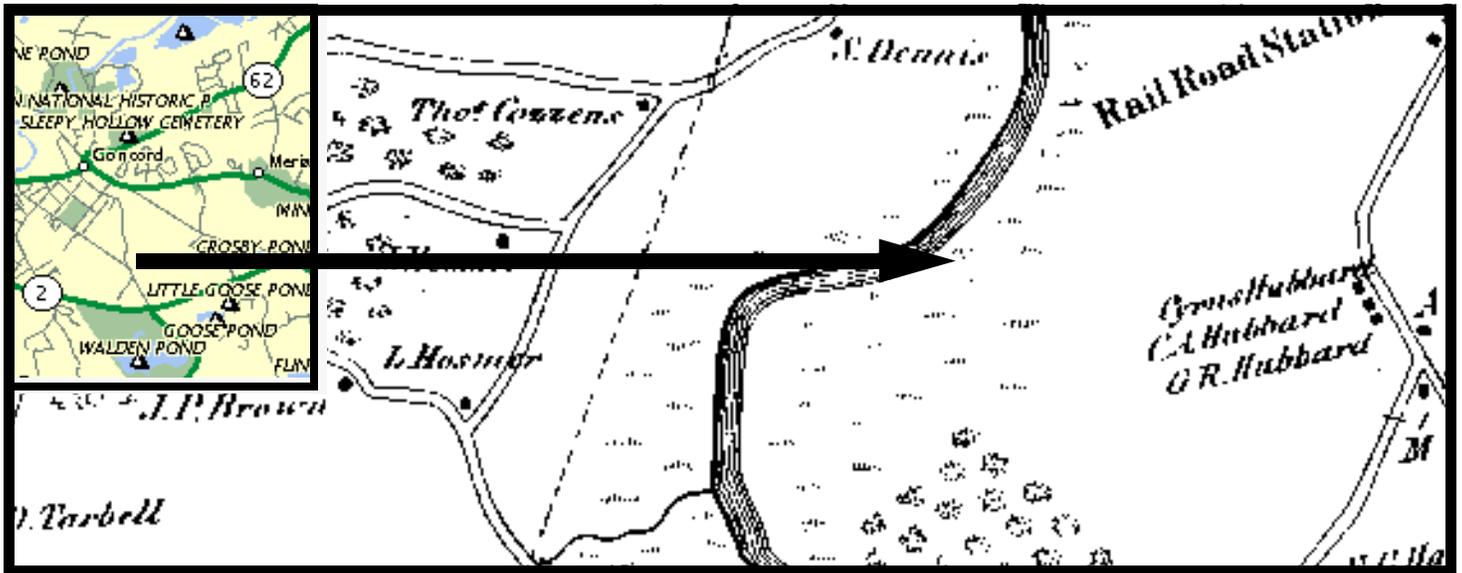
1854



September 8, Friday: After an assault lasting a week, Russian defenders of Petropavlovsk on Kamchatka repulsed a combined Anglo-French attack.

In the midst of a cholera epidemic in London, local officials removed the handle of a water pump on Broad Street. They had been convinced to do so by Dr. John Snow, whose epidemiological study concluded this was the source of the disease (Snow had been an advocate of the “bad water” theory as opposed to the prevailing “bad air” theory for the cause of cholera). The outbreak would subside.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went by boat to Hubbard’s Bath



and then, a-graping, under Fair Haven Hill (Gleason H7). He met and talked to Isaac Garfield, fishing off

his shore. White's version of a journal entry is:

*Sometimes I crawl under low and thick bowers,
Where they have run over the alders
Only four or five feet high,
And see the grapes hanging
From a hollow hemisphere of leaves over my head.*

*At other times
I see them dark-purple or black
Against the silvery undersides of the leaves,
High overhead
Where they have run over birches or maples,
And either climb or pull them down
To pluck them.*

*The witch-hazel on Dwarf Sumach Hill
Looks as if it would begin to blossom in a day or two.*



Sept. 8. P.M. — To boat under Fair Haven Hill via Hubbard Bath, etc., a-graping.

The ivy at ivy tree is scarlet a quarter part. Saw one of my small slate-colored hawks of yesterday, sitting in the midst of the upland field beyond, like a crow. There is a great crop of *Viburnum nudum* berries this year. The green-briar berries not quite ripe. Clams still lie up.

The grapes would no doubt be riper a week hence, but I am compelled to go now before the vines are stripped. I partly smell them out. I pluck splendid great bunches of the purple ones, with a rich bloom on theca and the purple glowing through it like a fire; large red ones, also, with light clots, and some clear green. Sometimes I crawl under low and thick bowers, where they have run over the alders only four or five feet high, and see the grapes hanging from a hollow hemisphere of leaves over my head. At other times I see them dark-purple or black against the silvery undersides of the leaves, high overhead where they have run over birches or maples, and either climb or pull them down to pluck them. The witch-hazel on Dwarf Sumach Hill looks as if it would begin to blossom in a day or two.

Talked with Garfield, who was fishing off his shore. By the way, that shore might be named from him, for he is the genius of it, and is almost the only man. I ever see on that part of the river. He says that the two turtles, of one of which I have the shell, weighed together eighty-nine pounds. He saw one when he was a boy, which his father caught in Fair Haven Pond, which several who saw it thought would have weighed sixty pounds. That the biggest story he could tell. Referred to the year not long since when so many were found dead. There was one rotting right on that shore where we were, "as big as a tray." Once, he and another man were digging a ditch in a meadow in Waltham. (He thought it was the last of September or first of October -and that we did not see them put their heads out much later than this.) They found two mud turtles three feet beneath the surface and no hole visible by which they entered. They laid them out on the grass, but when they went to look for them again, one was lost and the other had buried himself in the meadow all but the tip of his tail.

He heard some years ago a large flock of brant go over "yelling" very loud, flying low and in an irregular dense flock like pigeons. He says the east shore of Fair Haven under the Hill is covered with Heron-tracks. One of his boys had seen marks where an otter had slid and eaten fish near the mouth of Pole Brook (my Bidens Brook). Remembered old people saying that this river used to be a great hunting-place a hundred years ago or more. A still stream with meadows, and the deer used to come out on it. Had heard an old Mr. Hosmer, who lived where E. Conant does, say that he had shot three dozen muskrats at one shot at Birch Island (the island at mouth of Fair Haven Pond). His father caught the great turtle while fishing and sent him up to the house on Baker's farm where a Jones lived, to get an axe to cut his head off. There were two or three risen - Luke Potter, who lived where Hayden does, for one - playing cards, and when they learned what he wanted the axe for, they came down



to the shore to see him, and they judged that he would weigh sixty pounds. Two or three years ago he saw one caught that weighed forty-two pounds.

I saw a muskrat-cabin apparently begun on a small hummock for a core, now just before the first frost and when the river wreck had begun to wash about. Those fine mouthfuls appear to be gathered from the river-bottom, - fine pontederias, sium, fontinalis, etc., etc., decayed but somewhat adhesive. See fresh pontederia blossoms still. Started up ten ducks, which had settled for the night below the bath place, apparently wood ducks.

I doubt if I have distinguished the *Bidens cernua*. It may be the one I have thought a small *chrysanthemoides*. I find these last with smaller rays and larger outer involucres and more or less bristly stems, yet equally connate and as regularly serrate, and it looks like a difference produced by growing in a drier soil.

Many green-briar leaves are very agreeably thickly spotted now with reddish brown, or fine green on a yellow or green ground, producing a wildly variegated leaf. I have seen nothing more rich. Some of these curled leaves are five inches wide with a short point. It is a leaf now for poets to sing about, a leaf to inspire poets. Now, while I am gathering grapes, I see them. It excites me to a sort of autumnal madness. They are leaves for Satyrus and Faunus to make their garlands of. My thoughts break out like them, spotted all over, yellow and green and brown. The freckled leaf. Perhaps they should be poison, to be thus spotted. I fancied these brown were blood-red spots, by contrast, but they are not. Now for the ripening year! Even leaves are *beginning* to be ripe.

Garfield says he found a hen-hawk's nest near Holden's Swamp (the old ones had got his chickens), sixty feet up a white pine. He climbed up and set a trap in it baited with a fish, with a string ten feet long attached. The young, but just hatched, faced him, and he caught the old one by the legs thus.

I have brought home a half-bushel of grapes to scent my chamber with. It is impossible to get them home in a basket with all their rich bloom on them, which, no less than the form of the clusters, makes their beauty. As I paddled home with my basket of grapes in the bow, every now and then their perfume was wafted to me in the stern, and I thought that I was passing a richly laden vine on shore. Some goldfinches twitter over, while I am pulling down the vines from the birch-tops. The ripest rattle off and strew the ground before I reach the clusters, or, while I am standing on tiptoe and endeavoring gently to break the tough peduncle, the petiole of a leaf gets entangled in the bunch and I am compelled to strip them all off loosely.

"Yet once more ...

I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,

And with forc'd fingers rude,

Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year." [The Reverend [John Milton's Lycidas](#)]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

HDT

WHAT?

INDEX

1854

1854



1854

1854



September 9, Saturday: Senator [Charles Sumner](#)'s speech of Thursday on the slavery question, at the state political convention in Worcester, was being reported in the newspapers:

THE SLAVERY QUESTION.

CHARLES SUMNER'S SPEECH,
At the State Convention at Worcester, Mass.,
Sept. 7.

From the Boston Traveller, Extra, Sept. 7.

MR. PRESIDENT AND FELLOW CITIZENS OF MASSACHUSETTS:—After months of anxious, constant service in another place, away from Massachusetts. I am permitted again to stand among you, my fellow-citizens, and to draw satisfaction and strength from your generous presence. [Applause.] Life is full of changes and contrasts. From Slave-Soil I have come to Free-Soil. [Applause.] From the tainted breath of Slavery I have passed to this bracing air of Freedom. [Applause.] And the heated antagonism of debate, shooting forth its fiery cinders, is changed into this brimming, overflowing welcome, where I seem to lean on the great heart of our beloved Commonwealth, as it palpitates audibly in this crowded assembly. [Loud and long applause.]

Let me say at once, frankly and sincerely, that I have not come here to receive applause or to give occasion for any tokens of public regard; but simply to unite with my fellow citizens in new vows of duty. [Applause.] And yet I would not be thought insensible to the good-will now swelling from so many honest bosoms. It touches me more than I can tell.

(Review of [Henry Thoreau](#)'s [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#)):

TIMELINE OF WALDEN

“Notices of New Books,” Morning Courier and New-York Enquirer, p. 2, col. 4.



Half mad, but never silly; and the half that is not mad, full of truths which if they are not entirely new, have at least lain hidden under the crust of fashion, folly, and listlessness so long as to seem new on being dug out and placed boldly before us. Mr. THOREAU built himself with his own hands a hut, shanty, or cottage on the shores of Walden pond, near Concord, Mass., and lived there two years and two months doing all his own working and thinking. In this volume we have such of the results of his work and thought as can be put on paper; and to a reflecting, well trained mind it is a book full of matter for careful consideration. It is at times repulsively selfish in its tone, and might easily help a bad man to be worse; but to readers of an opposite character who peruse it, not with the intent of imitating the author in his mental or physical habits, but for its suggestiveness, it cannot prove other than an occasion for healthy mental exercise. In style it partakes of the characteristics of THOMAS CARLYLE and Sir THOMAS BROWNE: indeed had not the Clothes-Philosophy and the Pseudo-doxia Epidemica and the Urn Burial been written, Walden would probably never have seen the light. The author has CARLYLE'S hatred of shams and CARLYLE'S way of showing it: he has Sir THOMAS BROWNE'S love of pregnant paradox and stupendous joke, and utters his paradoxes and his jokes with a mysterious phlegm quite akin to that of the Medical Knight who "existed only at the periphery of his being." Walden is a book which should have many readers, if readers were always sound thinkers.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE

A column entitled "The Canadian Wood-cutter" in the English Albion, n.s. 13:424, reprinted part of "Visitors," pages 144.13-150.28, followed by the words:

From "Walden; or Life in the Woods," by H. D. Thoreau.

Five pages farther along in Albion, n.s. 13:429:

One of those rare books that stand apart from the herd of new publications under which the press absolutely groans; moderate in compass but eminently suggestive, being a compound of thought, feeling, and observation. Its author, it seems, during 1845, 6, and 7, played the philosophic hermit in a wood that overlooks Walden Pond, in the neighbourhood of Concord, Massachusetts. Here he tested at how cheap a rate physical existence may healthfully be maintained, and how, apart from the factitious excitement of society and the communion of mind with mind, he could cultivate a tranquil and contemplative spirit, yet resolute withal. This experiment was undeniably successful; and he has here set forth the record of his sylvan life and the musings of his happy solitude. He probably errs in believing,

that life in an isolated shanty, and the strict vegetarian system, could be made profitable or pleasant to the men and women of this age. But we shall not discuss the question with this voluntary and most practical hermit. We can admire, without wishing to imitate him; and we can thank him cordially for hints on many topics that interest humanity at large, as well as for page upon page of research and anecdote, showing how lovingly he studied the instincts and the habits of the dumb associates by whom he was surrounded. The choicest and most popular works on natural history contain no descriptions more charming than those that abound in this volume. A little humour and a little satire are the pepper and salt to this part of the entertainment that Mr. Thoreau serves up. Into it we advise the reader – of unvitiated taste and unpalled appetite – to dip deeply. We at least do not come across a Walden, every day.

Possibly our strong commendation may be borne out by the two lengthened and characteristic extracts that we quote. The first may well be called the "The Battle of the Ants."

[\["Brute Neighbors," 228.25-232.11\]](#)

We might have found something writ in gentler strain; but there is a point and a quaintness in the above warlike episode, that catches our fancy. Our second borrowing from this clever book – a sketch of character and a striking one – may be found on another page.

A favorable review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) appeared in [The National Anti-Slavery Standard](#).

"This morning I find a little hole, three quarters of an inch or an inch over, above my small tortoise eggs, and find a young tortoise coming out (apparently in the rainy night) just beneath. It is the *Sternothaerus odoratus* –already has the strong scent– and now has drawn in its head and legs. I see no traces of the yoke, or what-not, attached. It may have been out of the egg some days. **Only one** as yet. I buried them in the garden June 15th."

[Tortoise Eggs](#)



Sept. 9. This morning I find a little hole, three quarters of an inch or an inch over, above my small tortoise eggs, and find a young tortoise coming out (apparently in the rainy night) just beneath. It is the *Sternothaerus odoratus* — already has the strong scent — and now has drawn in its head and legs. I see no traces of the yolk, or what-not, attached. It may have been out of the egg some days. *Only one* as yet. I buried them in the garden June 15th.

[Transcript]

I am affected by the thought that the earth nurses these eggs. They are planted in the earth, and the earth takes care of them; she is genial to them and does not kill them. It suggests a certain vitality and intelligence in the earth, which I had not realized. This mother is not merely inanimate and inorganic. Though the immediate mother turtle abandons her offspring, the earth and sun are kind to them. The old turtle on which the earth rests takes care of them while the other waddles off. Earth was not made poisonous and deadly to them. The earth has some virtue in it; when seeds are put into it, they germinate; when turtles' eggs, they hatch in due time. Though the mother turtle remained and brooded them, it would still nevertheless be the universal world turtle which through her, cared for them as now. Thus the earth is the mother of all creatures.

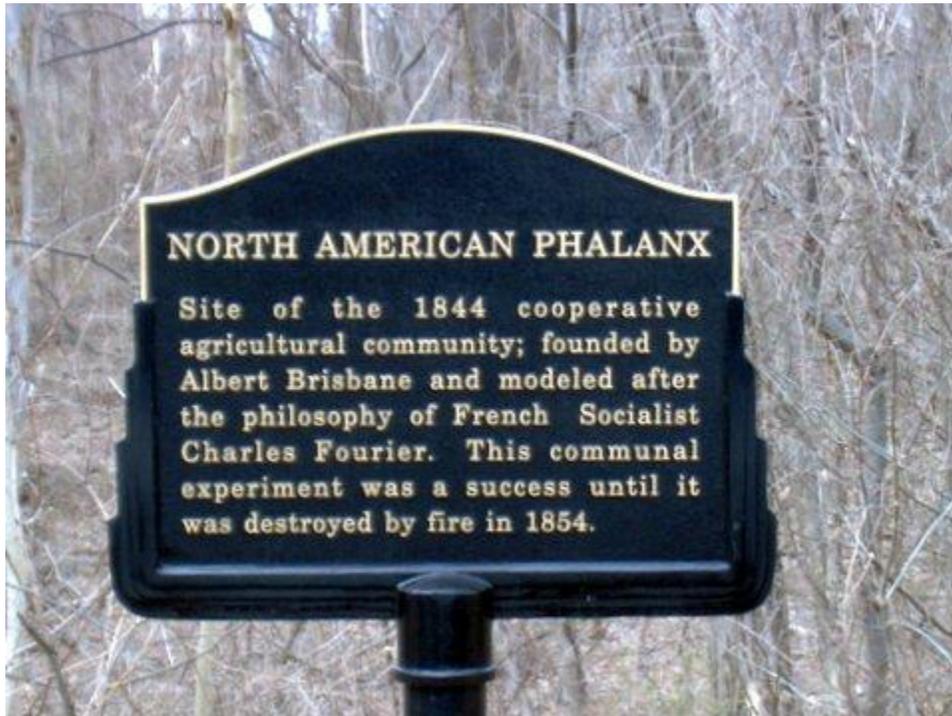
1854

1854

Garfield said that one of his sons, while they were haying in the river meadows once, found a hundred little pickerel, an inch or inch and a half long, in [a] little hole in the meadow not bigger than a bushel basket and nearly dry. He took them out and put them into the river. Another time he himself found many hundred in a ditch, brought them home, and put them into his large tub. They there lived a spell without his feeding them, but, small as they were, lived on one another, and you could see the tails sticking out their mouths. It would seem as if their spawn was deposited in those little muddy-bottomed hollows in the meadows where we find the schools of young thus landlocked.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

→ September 10, Sunday: Just after dawn at the [North American Phalanx](#) intentional community in [New Jersey](#), a fire destroyed the mill and several workshops. The community's insurance company would declare bankruptcy and the association would not be able to deal with the \$10,000 in damages. In June 1855 the community would vote to put its assets on the open market. In early 1856 operations would cease. On January 1, 1857 the association would officially cease to exist. There is now a roadside sign on Phalanx Road in Colt's Neck, New Jersey to inform us:



NORTH AMERICAN PHALANX
Site of the 1844 cooperative
agricultural community; founded by
Albert Brisbane and modeled after
the philosophy of French Socialist
Charles Fourier. This communal
experiment was a success until it was
destroyed by fire in 1854.

The Reverend [Moncure Daniel Conway](#) delivered his first sermon at the Unitarian church of [Washington DC](#). The church had had no permanent minister for the previous three years, while they had been looking to hire one who was adequately soft on the slavery issue. Conway to them looked right, because they were tired of searching, because he was obviously young and evidently malleable, because in this period he was not pressing his anti-slavery sentiments and appeared to be a gentleman of good sense, and because he was, after all, a Virginian to the manner born.



Sept. 10. Yesterday and to-day the first regular rain-storm, bringing down more leaves, — elms, button woods, and apple tree, — and decidedly raising the river and brooks. The still, cloudy, mizzling days, September 1st and 2d, the thunder-shower of evening of September 6th, and this regular storm are the first fall rains after the long drought. Already the grass both in meadows and on hills looks greener, and the whole landscape, this overcast rainy day, darker and more verdurous. Hills which have been russet and tawny begin to show some greenness.

On account of the drought one crop has almost entirely failed this year thus far, which the papers have not spoken of. Last year, for the last three weeks of August, the woods were filled with the strong musty scent of decaying fungi, but this year I have seen very few fungi and have not noticed that odor at all, — a failure more perceptible to frogs and toads, but no doubt serious to those whom it concerns.

As for birds: —

About *ten* days ago *especially* I saw many large hawks, probably hen-hawks and young, about.

Within a week several of the small slate-colored and black-tipped hawks.

August 20th, saw a sucker which I suppose must have been caught by a fish hawk.

Hear screech owls and hooting owls these evenings.

Have not noticed blue jays of late.

Occasionally hear the *phe-be* note of chickadees.

Partridges probably cease to mew for their young.

For about three weeks have seen one or two small dippers.

For ten days a *few* wood and probably black ducks.

Small flocks of bluebirds about apple trees.

Larks common, but have not heard them sing for some time.

Am not sure that I have seen red-wings or other blackbirds for ten days.

About three weeks ago a small flock of robins and pigeon woodpeckers.

Robins common, and still hear some faint notes of woodpeckers.

Saw a downy woodpecker as a rarity within a week.

Believe I hear no song sparrows sing nowadays.

See no *F. hyemalis*, hear no quails.

Heard my last phoebe August 26th.

See no *flocks* of white-in-tails.

I hear the nuthatch as a novelty within a week about street.

Saw first tree sparrow about a week since in first rain. [Probably a mistake. The date is too early.]

Have seen pigeons about a fortnight.

Have not distinguished rush sparrows for a long time, nor Savannah, nor yellow-winged.

Seen no snipe since August 16th.

Turtle doves for more than a month.

A chip-sparrow seen within a few days.

The warbling vireo still heard faintly in the morning.

For three weeks blue herons common on meadows and great bittern.

Green bittern rather earlier for most part.

Have not heard kingfisher of late, — not for three weeks methinks.

Methinks I heard a faint sound from a chewink within a week?

Seen no barn swallows for a week.

Heard no catbirds nor brown thrashers sing for long time, but seen the last at least within ten days.

Whip-poor-wills still common.

Think I saw white-throated (?) sparrows on button-bushes about a week ago, the mizzling day.

Hear no golden robins for the last fortnight.

Bats common.

Not sure I have seen bobolinks since August 20th.

Kingbirds seen within a day or two.

Hummingbird within a week.

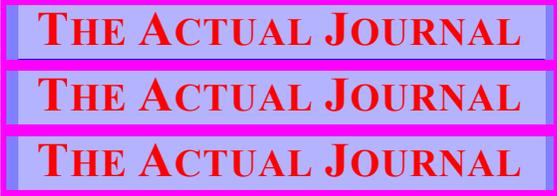


1854

1854

Goldfinches common.
Nighthawks still, but have not noticed the booming lately.
Cherry-birds common.
Cuckoo not heard lately.
Meadow-hen (?) seen August 30th.
Now generally ducks and other migratory birds are returning from north and ours going south. [It is significant that no warblers are included, even negatively, in this list. Compare entry of June 9, 1851.]

Diplopappus linariifolius and *Aster undulatus* apparently now in prime.



September 11, Monday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by an aspiring author Catharine V. Devero or Devereaux in Millbury, Massachusetts.

H.D. Thoreau.
*Millbury, Mass.,
Sept. 11, 1854.
Henry D. Thoreau, Esq.:
My Dear Sir;—
Though personally unknown to you, I doubt not you will pardon any unbecoming liberty which I may be taking, in addressing you this line, for the purpose of kindly soliciting a favor at your hands. Though you probably scarce recall to mind the name of so obscure a laborer, as myself, in the ranks of those who endeavor to serve their race, in some humble degree, in the walks of literature,—you will permit me to refer to a little work on which I am now engaged, the title of which, “The Rainbow around the Tomb: or Rays of Hope and Beauty for Those Who Mourn”, will foreshadow to you mind its scope and object;—and, to render its contents still better adapted to the end in view, I have thought you might not deem it an entirely ungracious exaction upon your time and courtesy, were I to ask of you the very special favor of a fragment—anything—from your own versatile and beautiful pen, pertinent to the use intended. It is with no shadow of mere personal accrument in view, that I make this request (not a small one, I am quite sensible,) and crave your kind response.*

Page 2
My little volume is divided into four departments: Death in the



1854

1854

Springtime of Innocence,—Death in the Summer of Hope and Promise,—Death in the Autumn of Maturity and Wisdom,—Death in the Winter of Silvered Age;—in any one of which, I beg to assure you, I shall be sincerely grateful for a contribution, in prose or verse, from yourself.

Let me add that this is not a mercenary but an eleemosynary effort, on my part, induced by the bereavements which have stricken and saddened my own heart;—an offering of love, hope, sympathy and cheer, for all who mourn, and such an one as I have the utmost confidence you will approve. And yet I feel that I am making a formidable demand upon your good offices, knowing, as I do, that your mind is necessarily occupied with other and more important duties. But if, in some fragmentary moments of comparative leisure, you shall be willing to answer my desire, I will be very grateful to you for your pains-taking kindness, and will most cheerfully compensate you for your trouble.

Hoping, dear sir, that you are well, and that the dealings of providence may always be gently tempered to the necessities of your health and happiness,—I subscribe myself,

Yours,

With sincere respect and esteem,

(Mrs.) Catharine V. Devero.

Page 3

Postmark: MILLBURY

SEP

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MASS.

Postage: PAID

3

Address: *Henry D. Thoreau, Esq.,*

Concord,

Mass.

“Measured to-day the little *Sternotherus odoratus* which came September 9 out in the garden.” Tortoise Eggs: [Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed a woodlot near Great Meadows (Gleason D8) belonging to [Daniel Shattuck](#). His sketch shows the land of the Colonel Holbrook who lived opposite the Concord Free Public Library. Great Meadows land seems to have had numerous owners as the grasses were used to mulch crops.

View [Henry Thoreau](#)'s personal working drafts of his surveys courtesy of AT&T and the Concord Free Public Library:

http://www.concordlibrary.org/collect/Thoreau_Surveys/Thoreau_Surveys.htm

(The official copy of this survey of course had become the property of the person or persons who had hired this Concord town surveyor to do their surveying work during the 19th Century. Such materials have yet to be recovered.)

View this particular personal working draft of a survey in fine detail:

http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_surveys/110.htm



Sept. 11. Measured to-day the little *Sternothærus odoratus* which came out the ground in the garden September 9th. Its shell is thirty-two fortieths of an inch long, by twenty-five fortieths wide. It has a distinct dorsal ridge, and its head and flippers are remarkably developed. Its raised back and dorsal ridge, as in the case of the mud turtle, enable it to turn over very easily. It may have been hatched some time before it came out, for not only there was no trace of the yolk (?), but its shell was much wider than the egg, when it first came out of the ground. I placed a sieve over it, and it remained in the hole it had made mostly concealed the two rainy days, — the 9th and 10th, — but to-day I found it against the edge of the sieve, its head and legs drawn in and quite motionless, so that you would have said the pulses of life had not fairly begun to beat. I put it into the tub on the edge of the mud. It seems that it does not have to learn to walk, but walks at once. It seems to have no infancy such as birds have. It is surprising how much cunning it already exhibits. It is defended both by its form and color and its instincts. As it lay on the mud, its color made it very inobvious, but, besides, it kept its head and legs drawn in and perfectly still, as if feigning death—, but this was not sluggishness. At a little distance I watched it for ten minutes or more. At length it put its head out far enough to see if the coast was clear, then, with its flippers, it turned itself toward the water (which element it had never seen before), and suddenly and with rapidity launched itself into it and clove to the bottom. Its whole behavior was calculated to enable it to reach its proper element safely and without attracting attention. Not only was it made of a color and form (like a bit of coal) which alone almost effectually concealed it, but it was made, infant as it was, to be perfectly still as if inanimate and then to move with rapidity when unobserved. The oldest turtle does not show more, if so much, cunning. I think I may truly say that it uses cunning and meditates how it may reach the water in safety. When I first took it out of its hole on the morning of the 9th, it shrunk into its shell and was motionless, feigning death. That this was not sluggishness, I have proved. When to-day it lay within half an inch of the water's edge, it knew it for a friendly element and, without deliberation or experiment, but at last, when it thought me and all foes unobservant of its motions, with remarkable precipitation it committed itself to it as if realizing a long-cherished idea. Plainly all its motions were as much the result of what is called instinct as is the act of sucking in infants. Our own subtlest [*sic*] is likewise but another kind of instinct. The wise man is a wise infant obeying his finest and never-failing instincts. It does not so much impress me as an infantile beginning of life as an epitome of all the past of turtledom and of the earth. I think of it as the result of all the turtles that have been. The little snapping turtle lies almost constantly on the mud with its snout out of water. It does not keep under water long. Yesterday in the cold rain, however, it lay buried in the mud all day! Surveying this forenoon, I saw a small, round, bright-yellow gall (some are red on one side), as big as a moderate cranberry, hard and smooth, saddled on a white oak twig. So I have seen them on the swamp white, the chinquapin, and the white, not to mention the Castile-soap one on the *ilicifolia* acorn edge. This is a *cold* evening with a white twilight, and threatens frost, the first in *these respects* decidedly autumnal evening. It makes us think of wood for the winter. For a week or so the evenings have been sensibly longer, and I am beginning to throw off my summer idleness. This twilight is succeeded by a brighter starlight than heretofore.

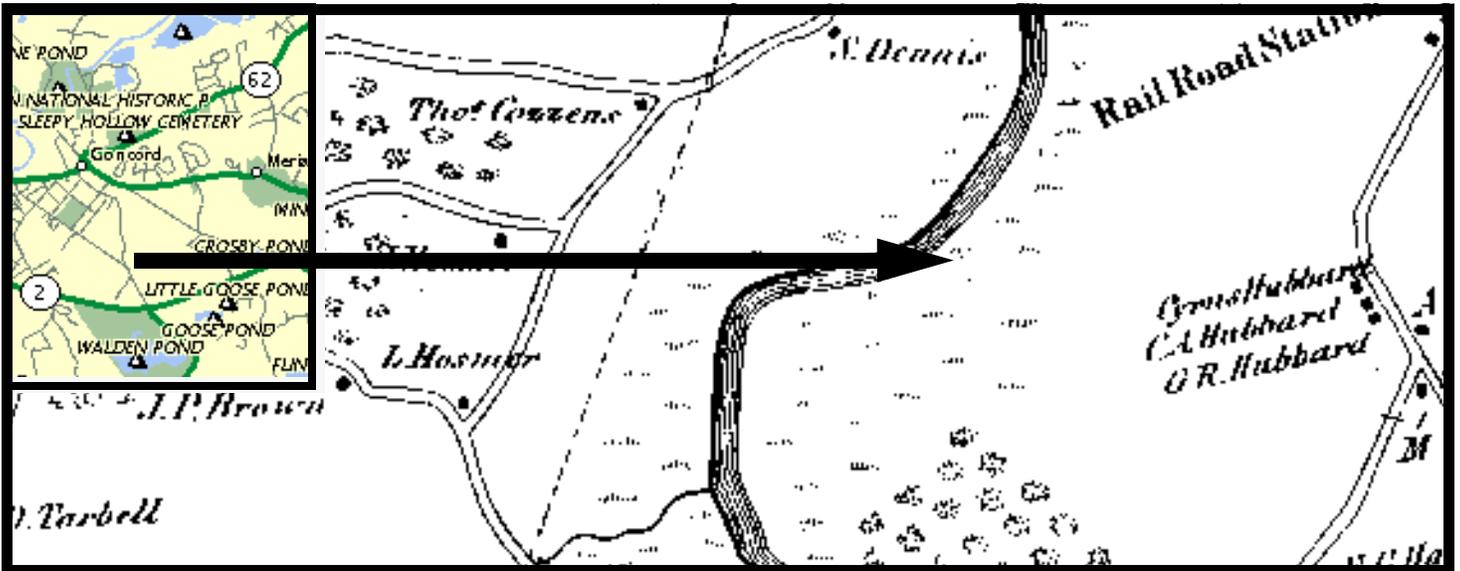
THE ACTUAL JOURNAL
THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

1854

1854



September 12, Tuesday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Hubbard's Bath:



Sept. 12. Tuesday. A cool, overcast day threatening a storm. Yesterday, after the two days' cold rain, the air was very clear and fine-grained. This is a phenomenon we observe now after dog-clays, until it is summed up in Indian summer.

P.M. — To Hubbard Bath.

Methinks these cool cloudy clays are important to show the colors of some flowers, — that with an absence of light their own colors are more conspicuous and grateful against the cool, moist, dark-green earth, — the *Aster puniceus* (the most densely massed), the (now beginning to prevail) *Tradescanti*, purple gerardia, etc., etc. The river has at length risen perceptibly, and bathing I find it colder again than on the 2d, so that t stay in but a moment. I fear that it will not again be warm. The weeds in midstream are mostly drowned and are washing up to the shore, — much vallisneria and heart-leaf (with its threadlike stems) are added to the previous wreck. (*Vide* September 5th.)

A sprinkling drove me back for an umbrella, and I started again for Smith's hill *via* Hubbard's Close. I see plump young bluebirds in small flocks along the fences, with only the primaries and tail a bright blue, the other feathers above dusky ashy-brown, tipped with white. How much more the crickets are heard a cool, cloudy day like this! Is it not partly because the air is stiller? I see the *Epilobium molle* (?) (linear) in Hubbard's Close still out, but I cannot find a trace of the fringed gentian. I scare pigeons [Passenger Pigeons  *Ectopistes migratorius*] from Hubbard's oaks beyond. How like the creaking of trees the slight sounds they make! Thus they are concealed. Not only their *prating* or *quivet* is like a sharp creak, but I heard a sound from them like a dull grating or creaking of bough on bough. I see the small aster (?) in the woods with ink-black spots at the base of the leaves. (It looks like a *dumosus*, but has no flowers.) White oak acorns have many of them fallen. They are small and very neat light-green acorns, with small cups, commonly arranged two by two close together, often with a leaf growing between them; but frequently three, forming a little star with three rays,



looking very artificial. Some black scrub acorns have fallen, and a few black oak acorns also have fallen. The red oak began to fall first. Thorn apples are now commonly ripe and the prinos berries are conspicuous. Beside many white birch I now see many chestnut leaves fallen and brown in the woods. There is now at last some smell of fungi in the woods since the rains.

On a white oak beyond Everett's orchard by the road, I see quite a flock of pigeons, their blue-black droppings and their feathers spot the road. The bare limbs of the oak apparently attracted them, though its acorns are thick on the ground. These are found whole in their crops. They swallow them whole. I should think from the droppings that they had been eating berries. I hear that Weatherbee caught ninety-two dozen last week.

I see maple viburnum berries blue-black with but little bloom. No *full* cymes, and the cymes rather less spreading than the other kinds. Some time. Now, especially, the strong bracing scent of the delicate fern by the

Saw Mill Brook path. Dicksonia? or a coarser? How long has the mitchella been ripe? I see many still perfectly green in the swamp. Fruit of the damp and mossy forest floor ripening amid the now mildewy and bracing fern scent of the damp wood. Medeola berries shining black (or perhaps dark blue-black?) on long peduncles; how long? The whorls of leaves now stand empty for most part like shallow saucers, with their purple centres and bare peduncles.

I hear that many upland plover have been seen on the burnt Brooks's meadow. Marsh speedwell and yellow Bethlehem-star still out.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



September 13, Wednesday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Great Meadows (Gleason D8).

"Downriver," "To Great Meadow," and "To Hill" signified a northward trip down the Concord River below the triple point of the confluence. After passing through a straight reach aligned by the local bedrock strike, arched by two bridges, and flanked by gravel bars of historic sediment that were repeatedly dredged, he entered the north side of Great Meadow. Bounded by the site of the Old North Bridge to the southwest and Ball's Hill to the northeast, it was two miles long and half a mile across. When in flood, the meadow was his favorite inland sea to sail upon because the wind was least impeded and the waves were highest.
— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 11

The Allied Forces (Great Britain, France, Turkey, and Sardinia) landed at Calamita Bay in preparation for their invasion of Russia and their attempt to destroy the Russian naval base at Sevastopol.

The New-York [Tribune](#) reported that there had been a fire just after dawn on the previous Sunday, September 10th, at the mill of the [North American Phalanx](#) across the water in [New Jersey](#).



Sept. 13. Wednesday. P.M. — To Great Fields.

Many butternuts have dropped, — more than walnuts. A few raspberries still fresh. I find the large thistle (*Cirsium muticum*) out of bloom, seven or eight rods, perhaps, north of the potato-field and seven feet west of ditch, amid a clump of raspberry vines.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



September 14, Thursday: [Missa solemnis in B-flat minor for soloists, chorus, orchestra, and organ](#) by Anton Bruckner was performed for the initial time, for the installation of a new prior at St. Florian Priory.

An army of 60,000 British, French, and Turkish troops landed near Eupatoria (Yevpatoriya) in the [Crimea](#), northwest of Simferopol.

At 6 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Nawshawtuct or Lee's Hill (Gleason F6), and at 8 AM he and [Ellery Channing](#) went by boat to opposite Pelham's Pond. On their return they stopped at Fair Haven Hill (Gleason H7). In the course of the day they had rowed some 25 miles. The allied armies of Britain, France, and Turkey invaded the Crimea.

In a letter to [Orestes Augustus Brownson](#), the budding apologist, Father [Isaac Hecker](#), CSSR, summarized the contents of his new book of apologetics, QUESTIONS OF THE SOUL, an irenic treatise on the basic drives of the human emotional system which attempted to make itself attractive not only to the general run of non-Catholics inclined to mysticism and asceticism but also to New England Unitarians and Transcendentalists and others who had given up on Puritanism:



I take an occasion to break a lance with [Ralph Waldo] Emerson [William Ellery] Channing, etc whenever I meet them. There will be no want of boldness & aspiration in it.

WALDO EMERSON

This treatise, although non-traditional, was careful to portray [Roman Catholicism](#) as the only conceivable answer:

My object in view is to bring minds similarly constituted as my own to similar convictions & results, by the same process as I passed through.

The leading idea is to expose the wants of the heart and demand their proper objects, rather than a logical defense of the Church.

Father Thomas depicted the inner exigencies of the human soul as naturally oriented to receive an incarnational and historical revelation; humankind turns toward God as naturally as a field of flowers turn toward the sun. But a clear channel for these communication is mandatory; the sacramental channels of divine grace must be kept open by the necessary dredges of the Church, one of which is its infallible teaching authority.



Sept. 14. Thursday. 6 A.M. — To Hill.

I hear a vireo still in the elms. The banks have now begun fairly to be sugared with the *Aster Tradescanti*. I get very near a small dipper behind Dodd's, which sails out from the weeds fairly before me, then scoots over the surface crosswise the river, throwing the water high, dives, and is lost. A *Viola lanceolata* out on the meadow. The sun soon after rising has gone into a mackerel sky this morning, and, as I come down the hill, I observe a singular mirage (?). There is a large dense field of mackerel sky with a straight and distinct edge parallel with the southeast horizon and lifted above it, apparently about double the height of the highest hills there; beneath this a clear sky, and lower still some level bars of mist, which cut off the top of Pine Hill, causing it to loom. The top, fringed with pines on account of the intervening lower mist, is seen as it were above the clouds, appears much too high, being referred to a far greater distance than the reality. Our humble scenery appears on a grand scale. I see the fair forms of mighty pines standing along a mountain ridge above the clouds and overlooking from a vast distance our low valley. I think that the image is not really elevated, but the bars of mist below make me refer it to too great a distance and therefore it is seen as higher. The appearance of those fine-edged pines, a

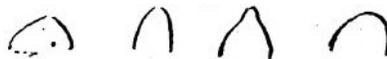
narrow strip of a mountain ridge half a mile in length, is stupendous and imposing. It is as if we lived in a valley amid the Himalaya mountains, a vale of Cashmere. There was a fog last night which I think prevented a frost.

8 A.M. — To opposite Pelham's Pond by boat.

Quite cool, with some wind from east and southeast. Took a watermelon for drink. I see many new and perfect upright cobwebs on the sium gone to seed by the side of the river. Now, instead of haying, they are raking cranberries all along the river. The raker moves slowly along with a basket before him, into which he rakes (hauling) the berries, and his wagon stands one side. It is now the middle of the cranberry season. The river has risen about a foot within a week, and now the weeds in midstream have *generally* disappeared, washed away or drowned. The ranunculus stems and leaves are added to the floating wreck. Now our oars leave a broad wake of large bubbles, which are slow to burst. Methinks they are most numerous, large, and slow to burst near the end of a warm and dry spell, and that the water loses some of this tenacity in a rain. But now we have had rain. At any rate on the 4th, just after the first rains (of the 1st and 2d), they would not readily form to the hand. There is such a difference in the state of the water. As we go up the Clamshell Reach I see the reflections of oaks very much prolonged by the fine ripple. Perhaps it is re-reflected from ripple to ripple. The rainbow portion of the bayonet rush is just covered now by the rise of the river. This cooler morning methinks the jays are heard more. Now that the pontederias have mostly fallen, the polygonums are the most common and conspicuous flowers of the river. The smaller one has not shown more before. I see a stream of small white insects in the air over the side of the river. W. Wheeler is burning his hill by the Corner road, just cut over. I see the scarlet flame licking along the ground, not in a continuous rank, but upright individual tongues of flame, undulating, flashing, forked, - narrow erect waves about the size of a man or boy; next the smoke rising perpendicularly, blue against the pines and fuscous against the sky. Not till high in the sky does it feel the southerly wind. When I look round for those light under sides of the crisped leaves, which were so conspicuous in the drought three weeks and more ago, I see none. Methinks they have not so much flattened out again since the rains, but have fallen, and that thus there are two falls every year. Those leaves which are curled by the drought of July and August apparently fall with the first fall rains, about the first week of September, and those which remain are green as usual and go on to experience their regular October change. The only difference this year will be that there will not be so many leaves for the second fall. The first fall is now over. [For example, on the 17th I see that all those which lead changed on Pine Hill have fallen and many tree-tops, maple and chestnut, are bare.]

Crossing Fair Haven, the reflections were very fine, - not quite distinct, but prolonged by the fine ripples made by an east wind just risen. At a distance, entering the pond, we mistook some fine sparkles, probably of insects, for ducks in the water, they were so large, which when we were nearer, looking down at a greater angle with the surface, wholly disappeared. Some *large-leaved* willow- bushes in the meadow southeast of Lee's reflected the light from the under sides of a part of their leaves, as if frost-covered, or as if white asters were mingled with them. We saw, but two white lilies on this voyage; they are now clone. About a dozen pontederia spikes, no mikania (that is now white or gray), four or five large yellow lilies, and two or three small yellow lilies. The *Bidens Beckii* is drowned or dried up, and has given place to the great bidens, *the* flower and ornament of the riversides at present, and now in its glory, — especially at I. Rice's shore, where there are dense beds. It is a splendid yellow — Channing says a lemon yellow — and looks larger than it is (two inches in diameter, more or less). Full of the sun. It needs a name. I see tufts of ferns on the edge of the meadows at a little distance, handsomely tipped on edge with cinnamon brown. Like so many brown fires they light up the meadows. The button-bush everywhere *yellowing*. We see half a dozen herons in this voyage. Their wings are so long in proportion to their bodies that there seems to be more than one undulation to a wing as they are disappearing in the distance, and so you can distinguish them. You see another begin before the first has ended. It is remarkable how common these birds are about our sluggish and marshy river. We must attract them from a wide section of country. It abounds in those fenny districts and meadow pondholes in which they delight. A flock of thirteen telltales, great yellow-legs, start up with their shrill whistle from the midst of the great Sudbury meadow, and away they *sail in a flock*, — a *sailing* (or *skimming*) *flock*, that is something rare methinks, — showing their white tails, to alight in a more distant place. We see some small dippers and scare up many ducks, black mostly, which probably came as soon as the earliest. The great. bittern, too, rises from time to time, slowly flapping his way along at no great height above the meadow.

The small polygonum is first particularly abundant in the bend above the coreopsis, but it is [in] greatest abundance and perfection at three quarters through the great meadow, in great beds one to three rods wide, very dense and now rising but six or eight inches or so above the water. It is now apparently in perfection. See swallow *like* a barn swallow. Counted twenty haycocks in the great meadow, on staddles, of various forms, — tied round with hay ropes. They are picturesque objects in the meadow.



Little as the river has risen, these meadows are already wet. The phragmites is still green. Why does not that large typha above the Causeway bear fruit? [It does. *Vide* July 31, 1859.] Just above the Mill Village Bridge

there is an interesting view of Nobscot, clad with wood, up the broad meadows on Larned Brook, which comes in there. Above the Pelham Pond Bridge, a short distance further, we dined; then went on. An interesting view and part of the river, — quite broad at the Great Chestnut house, — and a good landing just before on the left. Went half a mile or more above the Chestnut house. Plenty of hibiscus out of bloom just above the Chestnut house on the northeast side, and some opposite some elms where we had dined, — all in Wayland. What is than large, sharply triangular, hollow-sided sedge about four feet high (in the north edge of the river in middle of the great meadow, Coarse, grasslike somewhat. [Vide July.31 1859.] We went up thirteen or fourteen miles at least, and, as we stopped at Fair Haven Hill returning, rowed about twenty-five miles to-day.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

September 15, Friday: The 1st proceedings of the California Academy of Sciences were published.

Bradley P. Dean indicates that it was in this timeframe probably that Henry Thoreau finished searching through his journal for passages about moonlit nights.

Brad Dean's Commentary

The Leavenworth, Kansas Territory Herald was 1st published (it would be generally pro-government, which is to say, pro-slavery).

Thoreau responded to a request by Sarah E. Webb, for a copy of his July 4th speech at Framingham MA, by informing her of the copies published by The Liberator and the Times. In the afternoon he went by boat under Fair Haven Hill (Gleason H7) and down the river.



Sept. 15. P.M. — To boat under Fair Haven Hill and down river. Desmodium (?) or lespedeza ticks cover my clothes. I know not when I get them. The witch-hazel has opened since the 8th; say 11th. [it was abundantly out the 14th (yesterday) on Wachusett Mountain, where it is probably more exposed to the sun and drier. Sophia was there.] Its leaves, a third or a half of them, are yellow and brown. Solidago speciosa at Clamshell out several clays. Goodwin, the one-eyed fisherman, is back again at his old business (and Haynes also). He says he has been to Cape Cod a-haying. He says that their "salt grass cuts about the same with our fresh meadow." Saw a chewink. Mrs. Mowatt, the actress, describes a fancy ball in Paris, given by an American millionaire, at which "one lady ... wore so many diamonds (said to be valued at two hundred thousand dollars) that she was escorted in her carriage by gendarmes, for fear of robbery." This illustrates the close connection between luxury and robbery, but commonly the gendarmes are further off.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



1854

1854

1854

1854

 September 16, Saturday: [Cynthia Dunbar Thoreau](#) and [Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau](#) returned from Wachusett.

In the afternoon Thoreau went to Fringed Gentian Meadow over the [Assabet River](#) and to Dugan Desert (Gleason 39/H4), where he found the mud turtle's eggs all hatched. [Tortoise Eggs](#) Review of WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS under the heading "News" in the Portland ME [Transcript](#), 179:3.

Thoreau in his recently published work "Walden" thus hits off the popular eagerness for news:—

**[Reprints "Where I Lived, and What I Lived For,"
pages 93.24-94.2.]**

The book was also reviewed on the second page of the Rochester NY [Daily American](#).

Commander David Glasgow Farragut assumed command of the Navy yard at [California's](#) Mare Island.

[Joshua Abraham Norton](#) appeared in the office of the San Francisco [Call](#) attired in a comic-opera uniform, with a document in hand that proclaimed him to be the Emperor of the United States and the Protector of Mexico.¹⁷⁰



(Review of [Henry Thoreau's WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#)): "Book Notices," Rochester Daily American, p. 2, col. 5.

The author of this is well known to those who sympathize with Reform and Reformers, and who keep track of the literary oddities that center at, or at least gyrate around Boston and its "notions." He lived in the woods a mile from Concord, and near Emerson, when he wrote this book, and passed his time as a sort of Hermit, at least so the denizens of that region thought. They wanted to know what he eat [sic], if he was lonesome, or afraid, if he was charitable, and if he supported poor children. What he did do, is here written out, not as an egotistic narrative, but rather as the experience and the views of life which a solitary thinker with Radical tendencies might have. Every way it is a capital book, and well worth perusal.

(Review of [Henry Thoreau's WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#)): "News," Portland Transcript, p. 179, col. 3.

Thoreau in his recently published work "Walden" thus hits off the popular eagerness for news:-
 [Reprints "Where I Lived, and What I Lived For," pp. 93.24-94.2.]



Sept. 16. Sophia and mother returned from Wachusett. S. saw much bayberry in Princeton.

[Transcript]

P.M. — To Fringed Gentian Meadow over Assabet and to Dugan Desert.
 I see a wood tortoise in the woods. Why is it there now — One man thinks there are not so many pigeons as last week, that it is too cold for them. There have been a few slight frosts in some places. The clematis is feathered. One *Asclepias Cornuti* begun to discount. I see many hardhacks in the lichen pasture by Tommy Wheeler's which are *leafing* out again *conspicuously*. I see little flocks of chip-birds along the roadside and on the apple trees, showing their light under sides when they rise.
 I find the mud turtle's eggs at the Desert all hatched. There is a small hole by which they have made their exit some time before the last rain (of the 14th) and since I was here on the 4th. There is, however, one still left in the nest. As the eggs were laid the 7th of June, it makes about three months before they came out of the ground. The nest was full of sand and eggshells. I saw no tracks of the old one. I took out the remaining one, which perhaps could not get out alone, and it began slowly to crawl toward the brook about five rods distant. It went about five feet in as many minutes. At this rate it would have reached the water in a couple of hours at most. Then, being disturbed by my moving, stopped, and, when it started again, retraced its steps, crossed the hole which I had filled, and got into a rut leading toward another part of the brook, about ten rods distant. It climbed

170. Refer to *ZANIES: THE WORLD'S GREATEST ECCENTRICS* by Jay Robert Nash (New Century Publishers, 1982, pages 267-74).

☰
 "Son — they say there isn't any royalty in this country, but do you want me to tell you how to be king of the United States of America? Just fall through the hole in a privy and come out smelling like a rose."

directly over some weeds and tufts of grass in its way. Now and then it paused, stretched out its head, looked round, and appeared to be deliberating, waiting for information or listening to its instinct. It seemed to be but a blundering instinct which it obeyed and as if it might be easily turned from its proper course. Yet in no case did it go wholly wrong. Whenever I took it up, it drew in its head and legs, shut its eyes, and remained motionless. It was so slow that I could not stop to watch it, and so carried it to within seven or eight inches of the water, turning its bead inland. At length it put out its head and legs, turned itself round, crawled to the water, and endeavored as soon as it entered it to bury itself at the bottom, but, it being sand, it could not. I put it further into the stream, and it was at once carried down head over heels by the current. I think they come out in the night. Another little sternothærus has come out of the ground since eight this morning (it is now 11 A.M.). [Another, Sept. 17th, found in morning. Another the 18th, between 8 and 11 A.M. Another the 18th, between 11 A.M. and 1 P.M. Another between 1 and 3 P.M, the 18th. Another found out on the morning of the 19th. Another was dug out the 25th. (All hatched, then, but one egg which I have.)

A snapping turtle had come out on the morning of the 20th, one at least. Another on the morning of the 23d Sept. Another on the morning of the 26th.]

The first sternothærus has remained buried in the mud in the tub from the first, and the snapping turtle also for the last few days.

The locust sounds rare now. I make the oak at the southeast corner of the Agricultural Ground to be a scarlet oak, — not yellow-barked; leaf more deeply cut, lighter green, narrower at point; acorn more pointed, its upper scales not recurved off from the acorn like the black.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



September 17, Sunday: The Manifesto of the Liberal Union was issued in Spain.

Henry Thoreau was being written to by Benjamin Marston Watson in Plymouth, asking that he lecture there and mentioning the postmaster's son James Walter Spooner who was staying at Watson's "Hillside" estate in Plymouth, and Bronson Alcott, and suggesting an honorarium of at least \$10.⁰⁰.

Plymouth Mass
Sept 17.
My dear Sir—
Mr James Spooner
and others here, your friends,
have clubbed together and raised
a small sum in hope of persuading
you to come down and read them
a paper or two some Sunday. They
can offer you \$10 at least. Mr
Alcott is now here, and I thought
it might be agreeable to you to
come down next Saturday and
read a paper on Sunday morning
and perhaps on Sunday Evening also,

Page 2
if agreeable to yourself. I can
assure you of a very warm reception
but from a small party only.
Very truly yrs



1854

1854

*B.M. Watson
I will meet you at the Depot
on Saturday Evening, if you so advise me.
Last train leaves at 5—*

*This is not a “Leyden Hall Meeting” but
a private party—social gathering—almost
sewing circle. Tho’ perhaps we may meet
you at Leyden Hall.*



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR SEPTEMBER 17th]

1854

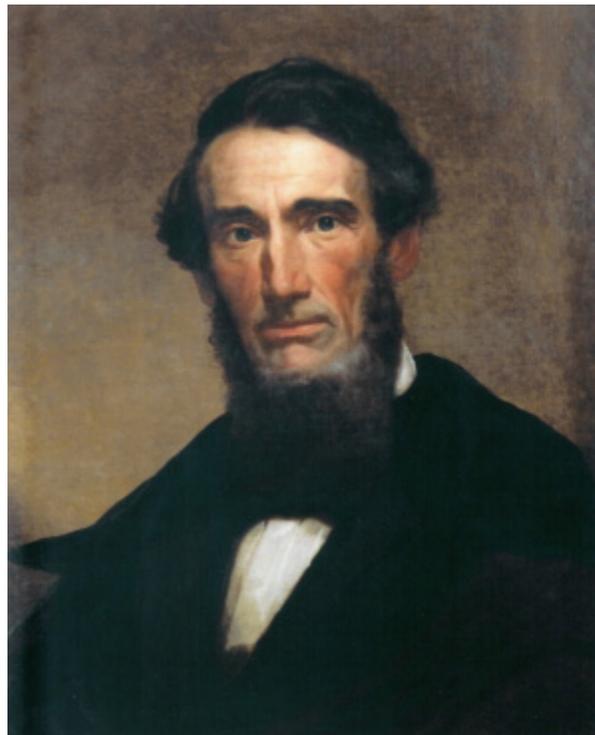
1854

September 18, Monday: [Moncure Daniel Conway](#)'s father wrote warning him not to attempt to return to his family home in Falmouth, Virginia until he was able to assent to the righteousness of enslavement.



After describing his son's views on religion as "horrible," he commended him to "the mercy of God, through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

AUTOBIOGRAPHY **VOLUME II**



His Lord and Savior was Jesus Christ.

[Henry Thoreau](#) observed that some potatoes had turned black, from frosts in the past few nights.



Sept. 18. Monday. Viburnum nudum flower again. Fringed gentian near Peter's out a short time, but as there is so little, and that has been cut off by the mowers, and this is not the leading stem that blooms, it may after all be earlier than the hazel. [Frost-bitten in Hubbard's Close the 21st (or before).] I see the potatoes all black with frosts that have occurred within a night or two in Moore's Swamp.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

September 19, Tuesday: San Francisco began the paving of Montgomery Street at California Street.

CALIFORNIA

On this day and the following one, [Emily Dickinson](#) and her sister [Lavinia](#) again visited [Josiah Gilbert Holland](#) and [Elizabeth Holland](#) in Springfield, Massachusetts.



In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Conantum (Gleason J6). That day he mused on the writing of his new lecture “What Shall It Profit?”:

Thinking this afternoon of the prospect of my writing lectures and going abroad to read them the next winter, I realized how incomparably great the advantages of obscurity and poverty which I have enjoyed so long (and may still perhaps enjoy). I thought with what more than princely, with what poetical, leisure I had spent my years hitherto, without care or engagement, fancy-free... Ah, how I have thriven on solitude and poverty! I cannot overstate this advantage. I do not see how I could have enjoyed it, if the public

Brad Dean's Commentary

Thoreau completed his searching through the journal for passages about walking in the moonlight, and accepted Marston Watson's invitation to deliver a lecture to “a small and private audience of friends” in [Plymouth](#), Massachusetts on October 1st (scheduling difficulties caused postponement). The full title of the lecture he would deliver in Plymouth on October 8th would be “Moonlight (Introductory to an Intended Course of Lectures)” (this is part of a pencil jotting at the top of what is apparently the first leaf of Thoreau's working draft of the lecture, preserved at Middlebury College in Vermont, evidently a part he did not read to his audience).

“MOONLIGHT”



[Thoreau](#) wrote to [Benjamin Marston Watson](#), accepting his invitation from to deliver on October 1st a lecture to “a small and private audience of friends” in Plymouth.

*Concord Mass Sep 19th '54
Dear Sir
I am glad to hear from you & the Plymouth men again. The world still holds together between Concord and Plymouth, it seems. I should like to be with you while Mr Alcott is there, but I cannot come next Sunday. I will come Sunday after next, that is Oct 1st, if that will do, – and look out for you at the Depot.*

I do not like to promise now more than one discourse. Is there a good precedent for 2?

Yrs Concordially
Henry D. Thoreau.

That evening, in Plymouth, [Bronson Alcott](#) read from a criticism of [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#) that he had entered in his journal of 1847, and read other passages of his diary from the family's "Hillside" period in Concord.



Sept. 19. Tuesday. P.M. — To Conantum.

Viburnum Lentago berries now perhaps in prime, though there are but few blue ones.

Thinking this afternoon of the prospect of my writing lectures and going abroad to read them the next winter, I realized how incomparably great the advantages of obscurity and poverty which I have enjoyed so long (and may still perhaps enjoy). I thought with what more than princely, with what poetical, leisure I had spent my years hitherto, without care or engagement, fancy-free. I have given myself up to nature, I have lived so many springs and summers and autumns and winters as if I had nothing else to do but *live* them, and imbibe whatever nutriment they had for me; I have spent a couple of years, for instance, with the flowers chiefly, having none other so binding engagement as to observe when they opened; I could have afforded to spend a whole fall observing the changing tints of the foliage. Ah, how I have thriven on solitude and poverty! I cannot overstate this advantage. I do not see how I could have enjoyed it, if the public had been expecting as much of me as there is danger now that they will. If I go abroad lecturing, how shall I ever recover the lost winter?

It has been my vacation, my season of growth and expansion, a prolonged youth.

An upland plover goes off from Conantum top (though with a white belly), uttering a sharp *white, tu white*. That drought was so severe that a few trees here and there — birch, maple, chestnut, apple, oak — have lost nearly all their leaves. I see large flocks of robins with a few flickers, the former keeping up their familiar peeping mid chirping.

Many pignuts have fallen. Hardhack is very commonly putting forth new leaves where it has lost the old. They are half in inch or three quarters long, and green the stems well. The stone-crop fruit has for a week or more had a purplish or pinkish (?) tinge by the roadside. Fallen acorns in a few days acquire that wholesome shining dark chestnut (?) color. Did I see a returned yellow redpoll fly by?

I saw, some nights ago, a great deal of light reflected from a fog-bank over the river upon Monroe's white fence, malting it conspicuous almost as by moonlight from my window.

Scarlet oak acorn (commonly a broader cup with more shelf). [*Vide* another figure in fall of '58.]



THE ACTUAL JOURNAL
THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

[Transcript]



September 20, Wednesday: In the 1st engagement in the [Crimea](#), British and French forces drove the [Russians](#) from their positions on the [Alma River](#) leaving 9,000 total casualties.

After recuperating for 3 months, David Livingstone began the return journey from St. Paul de Loanda (Luanda) to Linyanti, some 1,300 kilometers to the southeast.

1854



Sept. 20. Windy rain-storm last night.
See to-day quite a flock of what I think must be rusty grackles about the willows and button-bushes.

1854

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL
THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

1854

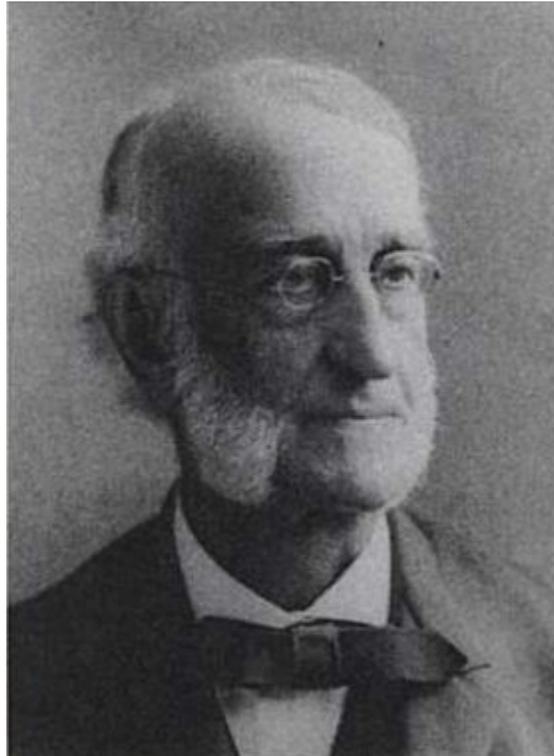
1854

 September 21, Thursday: The USS *Porpoise*, a 10-gun brig with approximately 80 men on board, was somehow lost at sea sometime after this date. No trace has ever been found.

LOST AT SEA



By this date [Henry Thoreau](#) had asked his publisher to send a copy of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) to [H.G.O. Blake](#) in Worcester. He wrote Blake about this, and his letter helps us date the first delivery of his





“What Shall It Profit?” sermon:

I have agreed to go a-lecturing to Plymouth, Sunday after next (October 1) and to Philadelphia in November, and thereafter to the West, if they shall want me; and, as I have prepared nothing in that shape, I feel as if my hours were spoken for. (CORRESPONDENCE 339)

*Concord [S]ep 21st '54
Blake,
I have just read your
letter, but do not mean now to
answer it, solely for want of time
to say what I wish. I directed a
copy of Walden to you at Ticknor's on*

*Page 2
the day of its publication, and it should
have reached you before. I am encour-
aged to know that it interests you
as it now stands — a printed book —
for you apply a very severe test to
it — you make the highest de-
mand on me.*

*Page 3
[As for the excursion you
speak of, I should like it right
well, indeed I thought of pro-
posing the same thing to you &
Brown some months ago. Per-
haps it would have been better if
I had done so then, for in that
case I should have been able
to enter into it with that in-
finite margin to my views--
spotless of all engagements--*

*Page 4
which I think so necessary. A[s]
it is, I have agreed to go a-
lecturing to Plymouth Sunday af[ter]
next (Oct 1st) and to Philadelp[hia]
in November — and thereafter to
the [west,] if they shall want me,
and as I have prepared nothing
in that shape, I feel as if [my]*

Page 5
*However, I think that after
 having been to Plymouth I may
 take a day or two. — if that
 date will suit you & Brown. At
 any rate, I will write to you
 then[.]*
Henry D. Thoreau.

In the afternoon [Thoreau](#) went to Flint's, or Sandy, Pond (Gleason J10).



Sept. 21. Thursday. P.M. — To Flint's Pond.

[Transcript]

The first frost in our yard last night, the grass white and stiff in the morning. The muskmelon vines are now blackened in the sun. There have been some frosts in low grounds about a week. The forenoon is cold, and I have a fire, but it is a fine clear day, as I find when I come forth to walk in the afternoon, a fine-grained air with a seething or shimmering in it, as I look over the fields, — days which remind one of the Indian summer that is to come. Do not these days always succeed the first frosty mornings?

The woods generally may now be said to be fairly *beginning* to turn (this with the first noticeable frost). The red maples, especially at a distance, *begin* to light their fires, some, turning yellow, and within the woods many oak, *e.g.* scarlet and black and chestnut, and other leaves begin to show their colors. Those leaves of the young white oaks which have changed dull salmon, crimson, scarlet (many incline to crimson) are mostly within the tree and partially concealed by the green leaves. They are handsomest looking up from below, the light through them.

With this bright, clear, but rather cool air the bright yellow of the autumnal dandelion is in harmony and the heads of the dilapidated goldenrods. The gentian is already frost-bitten, [A question-mark in pencil is inserted here.] almost as soon as it is open. Those pretty little white oak acorn stars of three rays are now quite common on the ground.

Utricularia (the leafiness) abundant, and *Lobelia Dortmanna* still out at Flint's Pond. That small erect milfoil is very abundant now. The pond is low near the bathing-rock.

I hear many jays since the frosts began. The nuthatch is common in woods and on street. Hear the chewink and the cluck of the thrasher.

I sometimes seem to myself to owe all my little success, all for which men commend me, to my vices. I am perhaps more willful than others and make enormous sacrifices, even of others' happiness, it may be, to gain my ends. It would seem even as if nothing good could be accomplished without some vice to aid in it.

The leaves of the wild cherry, being sound and entire, are in some places a particularly handsome clear, uniform what you may call *cherry* red, perhaps inclining to crimson, — perhaps like the stain of cherry juice., [Vide Sept. 30.]

I am surprised to see how many leaves in the woods have been apparently eaten through on the edges by some insect, leaving only a faded network of veins there, contrasting with the green centres. In some places almost every leaf of the young white oaks (and black or shrub oak) and chestnuts has this very handsome and regular pale edging as of lace-work. It is about one twelfth of an inch in diameter, and is exceedingly regular, following strictly the outline of the leaf, however cut or lobed, by nature or accident, and preserving the same width. As these leaves (of young oaks, etc.) are commonly several together in one plane disposed ray-wise, — rosettes, — the effect of this edging is enhanced. These young leaves are still of a clear and delicate and now somewhat precious green. The extreme edge is left firm and entire, and the pulp of the leaf is eaten through only just within it.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL
 THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



1854

1854



September 22, Friday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went over Nawshawtuct or Lee's Hill (Gleason F6).

[WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) was scathingly condemned in "Notices of New Publications" in the pages of the [New-York Times](#). Its author, [Mr. Henry D. Thoreau](#) or "Thorrau" is erratic, impracticable, and apt to confuse rather than arrange the order of things mental and physical. He imagines himself a philosopher but presents us with no philosophy. He is not a Christian but, perhaps, is a Communist. His new manifesto is of



1854

1854

interest only as a contribution to the comic literature of America:

The author of this book—Mr. HENRY D. THOREAU—is undoubtedly a man of genius. It is not possible to open twenty pages without finding plentiful indications of that fact. Unfortunately, however, he is an erratic genius, thoroughly impracticable, and apt to confuse rather than arrange the order of things, mental and physical.

Mr. THOREAU, it will be remembered, was one of the earliest contributors to EMERSON'S remarkable transcendental publication, the Dial. His eccentricities constituted one of the features of that very eccentric journal, and were well suited to it. Subsequently he published a volume called [A] Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers. A great deal of observation and quaintness were incorporated in the latter work, and obtained for it some popularity here and in Europe. Influenced by a peculiar philosophy of his own, Mr. THOREAU abandoned literature in 1845. He was probably disgusted with social life, and thought an experience of its savage phase might be agreeable. With this idea he "borrowed an axe" and went down to Walden Pond, in the vicinity of Concord, with the intention of building a house and living in it. The Cabin was constructed, and Mr. THOREAU occupied it for two years. Why he returned to society after that period he does not inform us. The present book was written in solitude, and occupied those spare moments when the author was not more profitably engaged in the labors of the field.

As a contribution to the Comic Literature of America, Walden is worthy of some attention, but in no other respect. The author evidently imagines himself to be a Philosopher, but he is not. He talks constantly of "vast cosmogonical themes," but narrows them all down to the nearest line of self. The mere fact of existence seems to satisfy Mr. THOREAU. He wonders why men aspire to anything higher than the cultivation of a patch of beans, when by that they may live—perhaps grow fat. Mr. THOREAU has been accused of communistic principles. This is his idea of communism: "I would rather sit on a pumpkin, and have it all to myself, than be crowded on a velvet cushion. I would rather ride on earth, in an ox cart, with a free circulation, than go to Heaven in the fancy car of an excursion train, and breathe a malaria all the way."

This is one of Mr. THOREAU'S "vast cosmogonical themes": "While civilization has been improving our houses, it has not equally improved the men who are to inhabit them. It has created palaces, but it was not so easy

Red!

WALDEN ; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS. Boston : TICK-
NOR, REED & FIELDS.

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Mr THORRAU denounces everything that indicates progress. Railroads, telegraphs, steam-engines, newspapers, and everything else which the world values, offend him. There is nothing estimable in his eyes but a log hut and a patch of beans. On the latter he dwells with infinite delight. It is one of the few things that does not disgust his philosophical mind. Ascetics who have a taste for beans will find comfort in this volume.

Mr. THOREAU is a good writer, possessed of great comic powers, and able to describe accurately many peculiar phases of nature. But the present work will fail to satisfy any class of readers. The literary man may be pleased with the style, but he will surely lament the selfish *animus* of the book.

THE GEOGRAPHY OF STRABO. Literally translated with notes. The first six books by H. C. ...

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Sept. 22. Friday. Another hard frost this morning, notwithstanding some fog at same time, and another fine day after it.

[Transcript]

P.M. — Over Nawshawtuct.

The river is peculiarly smooth and the water clear and sunny as I look from the stone bridge. A painted tortoise with his head out, outside of the weeds, looks as if resting in the air in that attitude, or suggests it. — an angle of forty-five degrees, with head and flippers rs outstretched. I see no particular effects of frost on the pontederias; they have been falling steadily without regard to it. It would be worth the while to observe all the effects of the first frosts on vegetation, etc., etc., etc.

Celtis berries begin to yellow. As I look off from the hilltop, I wonder if there are any finer days in the year than these. The air is so fine and more bracing, and the landscape has acquired some fresh verdure withal. The frosts come to ripen the Year, the days, like fruits, — persimmons.

What if we were to walk by sunlight with equal abstraction and aloofness, yet with equally impartial observation and criticism. As if it shone not for you, nor you for it, but you had come forth into it for the nonce to admire it. In moonlight we are not of the earth earthy, but we are of the earth spiritual. So might we walk by sunlight, seeing the sun but as a moon, a comparatively faint and reflected light, and the day as a brooding night, in which we glimpse some stars still.

Some shrub oak acorns are prettily rayed, green and yellowish. Some white oak ones are turned salmon-color, or blushing like the leaves. Grape leaves in low grounds are frost-bitten and crisped before they have yellowed. [Vide Sept. 23]

Crossing the bill behind Minot's just as the sun is preparing to dip below the horizon, the thin haze in the atmosphere north and south along the west horizon reflects a purple tinge and bathes the mountains with the same, like a bloom on fruits. I wonder if this phenomenon is observed in warm weather, or before the frosts have come. Is it not another evidence of the ripe days? I saw it yesterday.

I am surprised to see balls on the scarlet oak. Its acorn and cup are peculiarly top-shaped, the point of the acorn being the bottom. The cup is broader than in the black oak, making a broader shelf about the acorn, and is more pear-shaped or prolonged at top. The acorn is not so rounded, but more tapering at point. And some scarlet oak leaves which I [see] have their two *main* veins and diverging ribs nearly opposite, while in a black oak leaf these veins, and hence lobes, are not nearly opposite.

By moonlight all is simple. We are enabled to erect ourselves, our minds, on account of the fewness of objects. We are no longer distracted. It is simple as bread and water. It is simple as the rudiments of an art, - a lesson to be taken before sunlight, perchance, to prepare us for that.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL
THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

 September 23, Saturday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Gowing's Swamp (Gleason F9) and then Great Meadows (Gleason D8).

Frederick Billings officiated at the dedication of a schoolhouse in the Fifth District of San Francisco.

CALIFORNIA

(Review of [Henry Thoreau](#)'s [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#)): "New Publications," New-York [Family Courier](#), p. 1, col. 3.

[Reprinted from the 9 September 1854 Morning Courier and New-York Enquirer.]

WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS was reviewed in the [Daily Alta California](#), 5:264.

Walden; or Life in the Wood. By Henry D. Thoreau. Boston: Ticknor & Fields.
 This is a very strange book, the history of a philosopher living in the woods, a sort of Robinson Crusoe life. It shows the simplicity with which life can be conducted, stripped of some of its conventionalities, and the whole narrative is imbued with a deep philosophic spirit. All together besides being beautifully written, it has an air of originality which is quite taking. We commend it to our reader.

TIMELINE OF WALDEN

Father [Isaac Hecker](#), CSSR, wrote to [Orestes Augustus Brownson](#).



Arthur Martineau Alger was born at Roxbury. (He would study for the law at Boston University, and then in the office of the Honorable N.B. Bryant.)



Sept. 23. P.M. — To Great Meadows via Gowing's Swamp.

[Transcript]

I was struck with the peculiar and interesting colors of the naked arms of the buttonwood at the brick house, delicate tints seen from the ground, — whitish, greenish, and fawn-colored (?). They look as if recently bared by the scaling off of the old bark. The buttonwoods are in a flourishing condition thus year. The first time. My pink azaleas which had lost their leaves in the drought are beginning to leave out again.

The *Helianthus tuberosus* (Jerusalem artichoke) beyond Moore's shows a little yellow, but will not open there for some days yet. Low blackberry vines generally red. There are many lice on birches still, notwithstanding the frosts. The high blueberry bushes scattered here and there, the higher islands in Beck Stow's Swamp, begin to paint it bright-red. Now look out for redness on the face of the earth, such as is seen on the cheek of the sweet viburnum, or as [a] frosty morning walk imparts to a man's face. Very brilliant and remarkable now are the prinus berries, so brilliant and fresh when most things — flowers and berries — have withered. I gather pretty good wild pears near the new road, — now in prime. The *Cornus sericea* bushes along the edge of the Great Meadows are now turned mulberry, and here is an end of its berries then. The hard frosts of the 21st and 22d have put an end to several kinds of plants, and probably berries, for this year. This is the crisis when many kinds conclude their summer.

Bull says it is only the immature leaves of his new grape which are crisped by the frost as yet. Here, on the east edge of the Great Meadows, all the flowering fern is turned brown and withered (I am not sure but it began before the frost), and the common eupatoriums are a very dark brown or black for the same reason. All along

the river the upper half of the button-bushes is turned brown and withered in consequence of the frost, while many other plants in their midst are untouched. As it began late, it falls early. Its balls are equally browned, and may now be said to be ripened by frost. After those frosts a day's sun revealed what mischief the frost had done by the withering and blackened leaves. Many plants fall with the first frosts, — grapes, button-bushes; what else? Probably some asters and goldenrods.

Monroe has shot a loon to-day.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL
THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



September 24, Sunday: At 6 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Nawshawtuct or Lee's Hill (Gleason F6), and in the afternoon went by boat to Grape Cliff. Bathing, he found the water chilling cold, and determined that it was time to give this up for the winter.



[Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Benjamin Marston Watson](#) in [Plymouth](#).

{No transcript from TC—this transcript is an amalgamation of transcript from Plymouth Society and MS}

Page 1

Plymouth, Mass

Sept 27.

My dear Sir:

There is to be a meeting here on Oct 1st that we think will interfere with yours, and so if the Lord is willing and you have no objections we will expect you on the next Sunday 8th October.

I think [] that time.

I have been lately adding to my garden, and now have all that joins me — so I am ready

Page 2

to have it surveyed by you; a pleasure I have long promised myself. So, if you are at leisure and inclined to the field I hope I may be so fortunate as to engage your services.

Very truly yr

B.M. Watson

The survey might be before the Sunday or after as you please, and I will meet you at the Depot any time you say—

Page 3

Postmark: []

SEP

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[]

Address: to H.D. Thoreau

Concord

Mass



Sept. 24. Sunday. 6 A.M. — To Hill.

[Transcript]

Low fog-like veil on meadows.

On the large sassafras trees on the hill I see many of the handsome red club-shaped pedicels left, with their empty cups which have held fruit; and I see one or two elliptical but still green berries. Apparently the rest have ripened and fallen or been gathered by birds already, unless they fell prematurely. Gray says that the berries are dark-blue and ripen in September.

Catnep still in bloom. Hear the flicker note. See a song-sparrow-like bird singing a confused low jingle. Afterward hear from a willow by river a *clear strain* from a *song sparrow!*

Man identifies himself with earth or the material, just as he who has the least tinge of African blood in his veins regards himself as a negro and is identified with that race. Spirit. is strange to him; he is afraid of ghosts.

The *Viburnum Lentago* berries now turn blue-black in pocket, as the *nudum* did, which last are now all gone, while the *Lentago* is now just in season.

P.M. — By boat to Grape Cliff.

These are the stages in the river fall: first, the two varieties of yellow lily pads begin to decay and blacken (long ago), second, the first fall rains come after dog-days and arise and cool the river, and winds wash the decaying sparganium, etc., etc., to the shores and clear the channel more or less; third, when the first harder frosts come (as this year the 21st and 22d *inst.*), the button-bushes, which before had attained only a dull mixed yellow, are suddenly bitten, wither, and turn brown, all but the protected parts.

The *first* fall is so gradual as not to make much impression, but the last suddenly and conspicuously gives a fall aspect to the scenery of the river. The button-bushes thus withered, covered still with the gray, already withered mikania, suddenly paint with a rich brown the river's brim. It is like the crust, the edging, of a boy's turnover, done brown. And the black willows, slightly failed and crisped with age or heat, enhance my sense of the year's maturity. There, where the land appears to lap over the water by a mere edging, these thinner portions are first done brown. I float over the still liquid middle.

I have not seen any such conspicuous effect of frost as this sudden withering of the button-bushes. The muskrats make haste now to rear their cabins and conceal themselves.

I see still what I take to be small flocks of grackles feeding beneath the covert of the button-bushes and flitting from bush to bush. They seldom expose themselves long. The water begins to be clear of weeds, and the fishes are exposed. It is now too cold to bathe with comfort, yet the clams have not gone down. The river is still low. I scared up a duck (wood?) (white under side wings), which circled round four times, twice (middle times) high in the air a diameter of a hundred rods, and finally alighted with a long, slanting flight near where it rose. The sumachs (though I have not observed the poison (*venenata*)) ire. now turned before trees. Green-briar berries ripe, blue-black, or purplish, apparently with the frosts of 21st and 22d. The red maple leaves along the river are much curled and show their whitish under sides even more than a month ago, owing probably to their age as well as the summer's drought (from which last they had partly recovered a fortnight (?) ago).

Saw a warbler which inquisitively approached me creeper-wise along some dead brush twigs. It may have been the pine-creeping warbler, though I could see no white bars on wings. I should say all yellow-olivaceous above; clear lemon-yellow throat and breast — and vent (?); narrow white ring around eye; black bill, straight; clay-colored (?) legs; edge of wings white.

Young hickories, pretty generally, and some black oaks are frost-bitten, but no young white oaks. On the shrub oak plain under Cliffs, the young white oaks tire generally now tending to a dull inward red. The *ilicifolia* generally green still; with a few yellowish or else scarlet leaves. The young black oaks with many red, scarlet, or yellowish leaves. The chinquapin pretty generally a clear brilliant dark reel. The same will, a few twigs of the scarlet oat.; but not brilliant, *i.e. glossy*. The tupelo green, reddish, and brilliant scarlet, all together. The brightest hazel dim vermilion. Some red maple sprouts clear scarlet deepening to purplish. The paniced cornet green with a tinge of reddish purple. Only these young trees and bushes are yet conspicuously changed. The tupelo and the chinquapin the most brilliant of the above. The scarlet oak the clearest red.

But little *bright Solidago nemorosa* is left. It is generally withered or dim.

What name of a natural object is most poetic? That which he has given for convenience whose life is most nearly related to it, who has known it longest and best.

The perception of truth, as of the duration of time, etc., produces a pleasurable sensation.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL
THE ACTUAL JOURNAL
THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

September 25, Monday: In the afternoon Henry Thoreau went up the Sudbury River by boat to the Cliffs of Fair Haven Hill (Gleason 26/J7) and then opposite Bittern or Tupelo Cliff. (Gleason J6).

In San Francisco, A.J. Lafontaine started the German newspaper *Abend Zeitung*.

CALIFORNIA



Sept. 25. P.M. — To boat opposite Bittern Cliff via Cliffs.

[Transcript]

I suspect that I know on what the brilliancy of the autumnal tints will depend. On the greater or less drought of the summer. If the drought has been uncommonly severe, as this year, I should think it would so far destroy the vitality of the leaf that it would attain only to a dull, dead color in autumn, that to produce a brilliant autumn the plant should be full of sap and vigor to the last.

Do I see an *F. hyemalis* in the Deep Cut? It is a month earlier than last year.

I am detained by the very bright red blackberry leaves strewn along the sod, the vine being inconspicuous. How they spot it!

On the shrub oak plain, as seen from Cliffs, the red *at least*, balances the green. It looks like a rich, shaggy rug now, before the woods are changed. I see several smokes in the distance, of burning brush (?). The button-bush leaves are rapidly falling and covering the ground with a rich brown carpet. The pontederias, too, show decidedly the effect of the frost. The river is as low [as] ordinarily in summer, eight or nine inches below the long stone, and the stripe of the bayonet rush, now clear dark pink, eight or nine inches wide, is again exposed. Saw at a distance a fox or an otter withdrawing from the riverside. I think that if that August haze had been much of it smoke, I should have smelt it much more strongly, for I now smell strongly the smoke of this burning half a mile off, though it is scarcely perceptible in the air.

There was a splendid sunset while I was on the water, beginning at the Clamshell reach. All the lower edge of a very broad dark-slate cloud which reached up backward almost to the zenith was lit up through and through with a dun golden fire, the sun being below the horizon, like a furze plain densely on fire, a short distance above the horizon, for there was a clear, pale robin's-egg sky beneath, and some little clouds on which the light fell high in the sky but nearer, seen against the upper part of the distant uniform dark-slate one, were of a fine grayish silver color, with fine mother-o'-pearl tints unusual at sunset (?). The *furze* gradually burnt out on the lower edge of the cloud, changed into a smooth, hard pale pink vermilion, which gradually faded into a gray satiny pearl, a fine Quaker-color. All these colors were prolonged in the rippled reflection to five or six times their proper length. The effect was particularly remarkable in the case of the reds, which were long bands of red perpendicular in the water.



Bats come out fifteen minutes after sunset — and then I hear some clear song sparrow strains, as from a early spring.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL
THE ACTUAL JOURNAL
THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

September 26, Tuesday: On a warm and very pleasant afternoon, [Henry Thoreau](#) walked along the riverside in Merrick's pasture but did not attempt to swim.

[Richard Wagner](#) completed the full score of *Das Rheingold*.



Sept. 26. Took my last bath the 24th. Probably shall not bathe again this year. It was chilling cold. It is a warm and very pleasant afternoon, and I walk along the riverside in Merrick's pasture. I hear a faint jingle from some sparrows on the willows, etc., — tree or else song sparrows. Many swamp white oak acorns have turned brown on the trees. Some single red maples are very splendid now, the whole tree bright-scarlet against the cold green pines; now, when very few trees are changed, a most remarkable object in the landscape; seen a mile off. It is too fair to be believed, especially seen against the light. Some are a reddish or else greenish yellow, others with red or yellow cheeks. I suspect that the yellow maples had not scarlet blossoms. The bunches of panicked cornet are purple, though you see much of the gray under sides of the leaves. *Viburnum dentatum* berries still hold on.

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

September 27, Wednesday: [Giacomo Meyerbeer](#) conducted a gala performance of his opera *Der Nordstern* (L'Etoile du nord) before the court of Württemberg in Stuttgart.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR SEPTEMBER 27th]

September 28, Thursday: Review of WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS (perhaps by [Gamaliel Bailey](#)) in the *National Era*, 8:155.



Sept. 28. R.W.E.'s pines are parti-colored, preparing to fall, some of them. The sassafras trees on the hill are now wholly a bright orange scarlet as seen from my window, and the small ones elsewhere are also changed. Sweet-briar hips ripe. As I complain that the voyager to arctic regions, in his description of the scenery, does not enough remind the reader directly or indirectly of the peculiar dreariness of the scene or of the perpetual twilight of the arctic night, so he whose theme is moonlight will find it difficult to illustrate it with the light of the moon alone.

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL
THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

1854

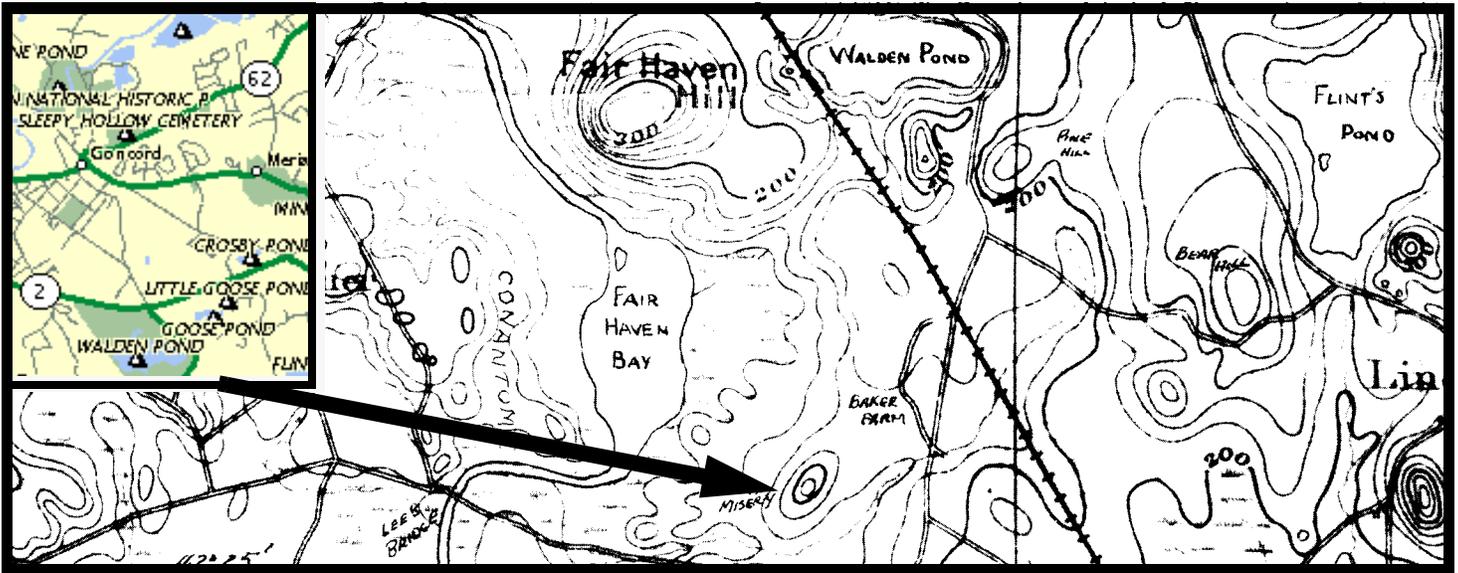
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September 29, Friday: The USS Albany, a 20-gun sloop of war with approximately 210 men on board, was somehow lost at sea sometime after this date. No trace has ever been found.

LOST AT SEA



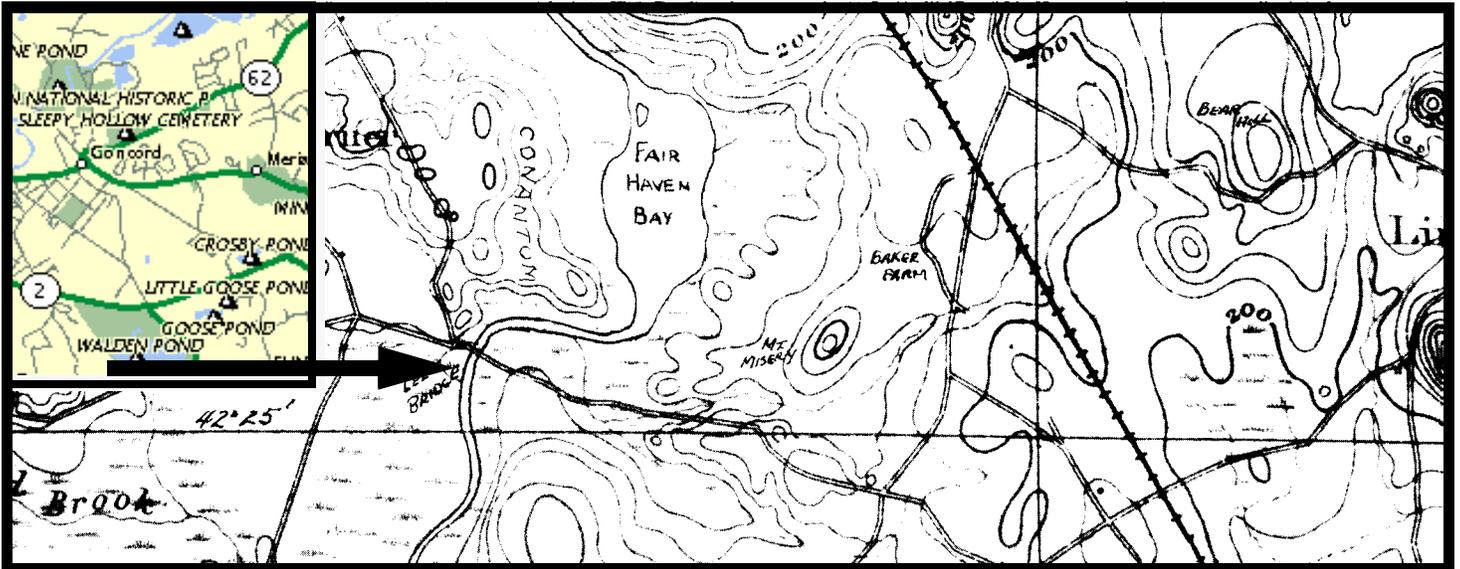
James Walter Spooner visited Henry Thoreau and ate at the Thoreau boarding house, and they went for a tramp to Mt. Misery:



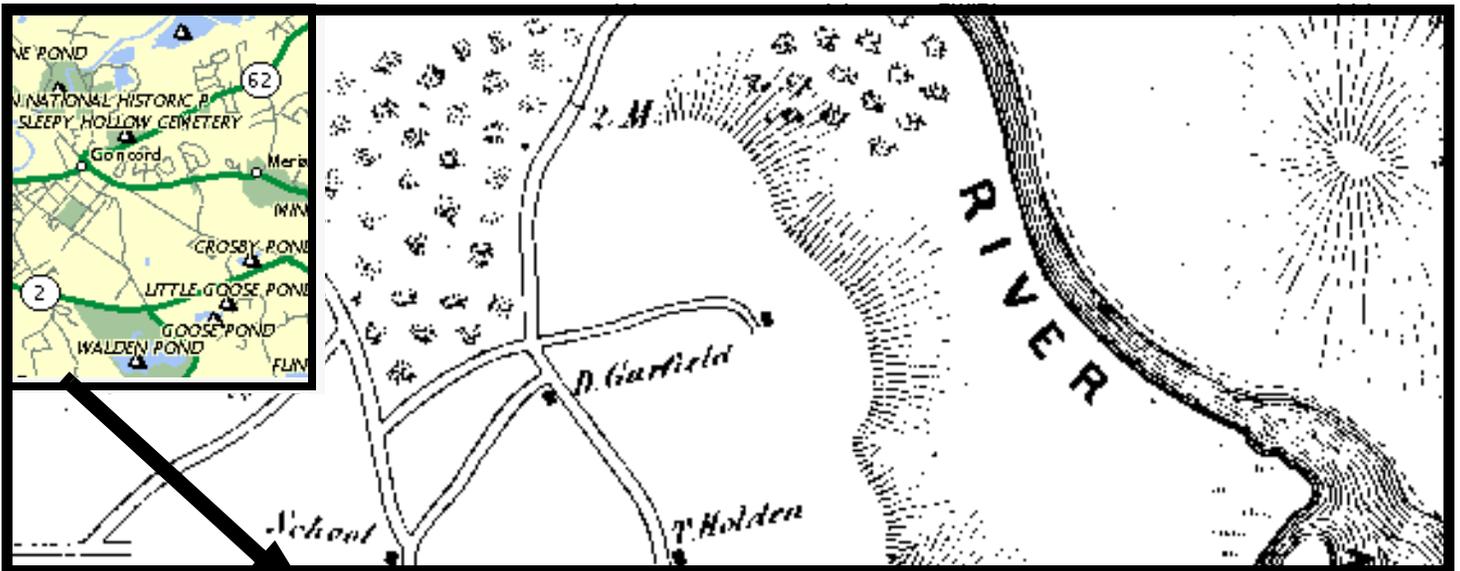
and then Lee's, or Corner, Bridge:

1854

1854



returning by way of Conantum:



I dined at Mr. Thoreau's today. I went in and knocked gently, but as no one heard, for the family was in the next room, walked in & made myself at home reading Walden. There was an English Gentleman, with an unpronounceable name which I wish I had written just for curiosity, there. By going in so I had the opportunity of hearing Mr. Thoreau play upon his flute in the next room, which was very fine. He accompanied his sister upon the piano, Mrs. T. Says. They must be pretty well off by the look of things. Mr. T. showed me another large white two story house short distance over the fields which he said his father owned. He said he dug the cellar while he lived at Walden & stoned it. They lived there when it was built but his mother &

1854

1854

sister preferred living down nearer & so they moved down. He said he didn't care where they lived, so long as it was in Concord, if he could only get off the back way into the woods, which you can do from almost every house by going across the fields or meadows.



Sept. 29. P.M. — To Lee's Bridge via Mt. Misery and return by Conantum.

[Transcript]

Yesterday was quite warm, requiring the thinnest coat. To-day is cooler. The elm leaves have in *some* places more than half fallen and strew the ground with thick rustling beds, — as front of Hubbard's, — perhaps earlier than usual. [In the margin against this paragraph the words "The dry year" are written in pencil.]

Bass berries dry and brown. Now is the time to gather barberries.

Looking from the Cliffs, the young oak plain is now probably as brightly colored as it will be. The bright reds appear here to be next the ground, the lower parts of these young trees, and I find on descending that it is commonly so as yet with the scarlet oak, which is the brightest. It is the lower half or two thirds which have changed, and this is surmounted by the slender, still green top. In many cases these leaves have only begun to be sprinkled with bloody spots and stains, — sometimes as if one had cast up a quart of blood from beneath and stained them. I now see the effect of that long drought on some young oaks, especially black oaks. Their leaves are in many instances all turned to a clear and uniform brown, having so far lost their vitality, but still plump and full-veined and not yet withered. Many are so affected and, of course, show no bright tints. They are hastening to a premature decay. The tops of many young white oaks which had turned are already withered, apparently by frost.

Saw two either pigeon or sparrow hawks, apparently male and female, the one much larger than the other. I see in *many places* the fallen leaves quite thickly covering the ground in the woods. A large flock of crows wandering about and cawing as usual at this season. I hear a very pleasant and now unusual strain on the sunny side of an oak wood from many — I think *F. hyemalis* (?) though I do not get a clear view of them. Even their slight jingling strain is remarkable at this still season. The catbird still mews. I see two ducks alternately (living in smooth water near the shore of Fair Haven Pond. Sometimes both are under at once. The milkweed down is flying at Clematis Ditch.

This evening is quite cool and breezy, with a prolonged white twilight, quite Septemberish.

When I look at the stars, nothing which the astronomers have said attaches to them, they are so simple and remote. *Their* knowledge is felt to be all terrestrial and to concern the earth alone. It suggests that the same is the case with every object, however familiar; our so-called knowledge of it is equally vulgar and remote.

One might say that all views through a telescope or microscope were purely visionary, for it is only by his eye and not by any other sense — not by his whole man — that the beholder is there where he is presumed to be. It is a disruptive mode of viewing as far as the beholder is concerned.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



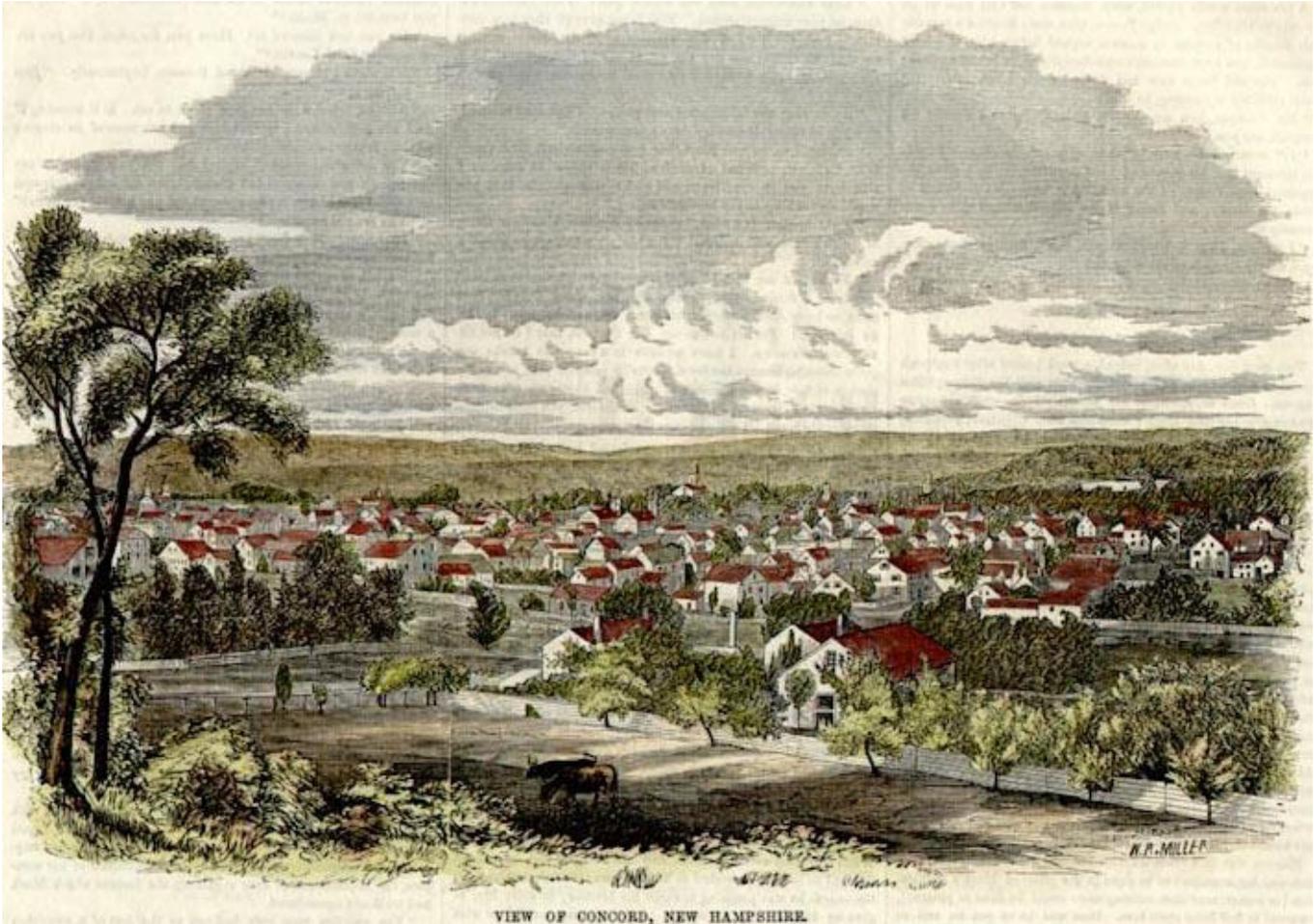
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1854

1854

1854

 September 30, Saturday: [Gleason's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion](#) presented an image of [Concord, New Hampshire](#):



VIEW OF CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE.

CONSULT THE WIKIPEDIA

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went on the [Assabet River](#) to the Monarda Road.

(Review of [Henry Thoreau's WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#)): “Walden; or, Life in the Woods,” [Christian](#)

Inquirer [New-York], p. 2, col. 6.

A gentleman who lives five [sic] years all alone by himself, by the side of a pond in the woods, in a house costing \$28.12, and whose yearly expenses for food, raiment, and luxuries, amount to \$19.44, and who thinks that is the best way of living, will hardly persuade his readers that he is free from all extravagance. If any one, however, thinks "this is some crazy man," he will find himself much mistaken if he reads his book. The great value of the work consists in the nice observation of nature which it shows. Its author has a rare gift not only of observing, but of describing all he saw and heard in the woods. He is also a scholar and a great admirer of the Greek and Latin classics. He keeps up his college studies, loves books, music, and pictures, though he lives in a shanty. Whatever may be thought of his oddities, no one can deny that he has written a work full of suggestion, and having here and there considerable wisdom. Almost every page is marked by a quaint humor which few can resist, and the style throughout is singularly nervous and racy.



Sept. 30. P.M. — *Via* Assabet to the monarda road.

[Transcript]

I am surprised to see that *some* red maples, which were so brilliant a day or two ago, have already shed their leaves, and they cover the land and the water quite thickly. I see a countless fleet of them slowly carried round in the still bay by the Leaning Hemlocks. I find a fine tupelo near Sam Barrett's now all turned scarlet. I find that it has borne much fruit -small oval bluish berries, those I see - and a very little not ripe is still left. Gray calls it blackish-blue. It seems to be contemporary with the sassafras. Both these trees are now particularly forward and conspicuous in their autumnal change. I detect the sassafras by its peculiar orange scarlet half a mile distant. Acorns are generally now turned brown and fallen or falling; the ground is strewn with them and in paths they are crushed by feet and wheels. The white oak ones are dark and the most glossy.

'rite clear bright-scarlet, leaves of the smooth sumach in many places are curled and drooping, banging straight down, so as to make a funereal impression, reminding me [of] a red sash and a soldier's funeral. They impress me quite as black crape similarly arranged, the bloody plants.

The conventional acorn of art is of course of no particular species, but the artist might find it worth his while to study Nature's varieties again.

The song sparrow is still about, and the blackbird. Saw a little bird with a distinct white spot on the wing, yellow about eye, and whitish beneath, which I think must be one of the wrens I saw last spring.

At present the river's brim is no longer browned with button-bushes, for those of their leaves which the frost had touched have already fallen entirely, leaving a thin crop of green ones to take their turn.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL
THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



1854

1854

[Giacomo Meyerbeer](#) was invested with the Order of the Württemberg Crown in Stuttgart, an honor which would allow him into the nobility if he should so desire (he would not pursue this).

Review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) under the heading “New Books” in the Harrisburg PA Morning Herald, 2:1.

“A Yankee Diogenes”—a review of Thoreau’s “Walden” [in the October Putnam’s]—comes up to our idea of that eccentric work.

Review of “Walden; or, Life in the Woods” in the New York Christian Inquirer, 2:6.

WALDEN Print H

A gentleman who lives five [*sic*] years all alone by himself, by the side of a pond in the woods, in a house costing \$28.12, and whose yearly expenses for food, raiment, and luxuries, amount to \$19.44, and who thinks that is the best way of living, will hardly persuade his readers that he is free from all extravagance. If any one, however, thinks “this is some crazy man,” he will find himself much mistaken if he reads his book. The great value of the work consists in the nice observation of nature which it shows. Its author has a rare gift not only of observing, but of describing all he saw and heard in the woods. He is also a scholar and a great admirer of the Greek and Latin classics. He keeps up his college studies, loves books, music, and pictures, though he lives in a shanty. Whatever may be thought of his oddities, no one can deny that he has written a work full of suggestion, and having here and there considerable wisdom. Almost every page is marked by a quaint humor which few can resist, and the style throughout is singularly nervous and racy.

From England, [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#) had written to Ticknor & Fields asking for some “good,” “original” books “with American characteristics” to show to Monckton Milnes. Ticknor & Fields responded by sending [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) and [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#), and three other books.



There was a treaty with the Chippewa:

Articles of a treaty made and concluded at La Pointe, in the State of Wisconsin, between Henry C. Gilbert and David B. Herriman, commissioners on the part of the United States, and the Chippewa Indians of Lake Superior and the Mississippi, by their chiefs and headmen.

ARTICLE 1.

The Chippewas of Lake Superior hereby cede to the United States all the lands heretofore owned by them in common with the Chippewas of the Mississippi, lying east of the following boundary line, to wit: Beginning at a point, where the east branch of Snake River crosses the southern boundary line of the Chippewa country, running thence up the said branch to its source, thence nearly north, in a straight line, to the mouth of East Savannah River, thence up the St. Louis River to the mouth of East Swan River, thence up the East swan River to its source, thence in a straight line to the most westerly bend of Vermillion River, and thence down the Vermillion River to its mouth.

The Chippewas of the Mississippi hereby assent and agree to the foregoing cession and consent that the whole amount of the consideration money for the country ceded above, shall be paid to the Chippewas of Lake Superior, and in consideration thereof the Chippewas of Lake Superior hereby relinquish to the Chippewas of the Mississippi, all their interest in and claim to the lands heretofore owned by them in common, lying west of the above boundary-line.

ARTICLE 2.

[Designation of boundary lines]

ARTICLE 3.

The United States will define the boundaries of the reserved tracts, whenever it may be necessary, by actual survey, and the President may, from time to time, at his discretion, cause the whole to be surveyed, and may assign to each head of a family or single person over twenty-one years of age, eighty acres of land for his or their separate use: and he may, at his discretion, as fast as the occupants become capable of transacting their own affairs, issue patents therefor to such occupants, with such restrictions of the power of alienation as he may see fit to impose. And he may also, at his discretion, make rules and regulations, respecting the disposition of the lands in case of the death of the head of a family, or single person occupying the same, or in case of its abandonment by them. And he may also assign other lands in exchange for mineral lands, if any such are found in the tracts herein set apart. And he may also make such changes in the boundaries of such reserved tracts or otherwise, as shall be necessary to prevent interference with any vested rights. All necessary roads, highways, and railroads, the lines of which may run through any of the reserved tracts, shall have the right of way through the same, compensation being made therefor as in other cases.



ARTICLE 4.

In consideration of and payment for the country hereby ceded, the United States agree to pay to the Chippewas of Lake Superior, annually, for the term of twenty years, the following sums, to wit: five thousand dollars in coin; eight thousand dollars in goods, household furniture and cooking utensils; three thousand dollars in agricultural implements and cattle, carpenter's and other tools and building materials, and three thousand dollars for moral and educational purposes, of which last sum, three hundred dollars per annum shall be paid to the Grand Portage band, to enable them to maintain a school at their village. The United States will also pay the further sum of ninety thousand dollars, as the chiefs in open council may direct, to enable them to meet their present just engagements. Also the further sum of six thousand dollars, in agricultural implements, household furniture, and cooking utensils, to be distributed at the next annuity payment, among the mixed bloods of said nation. The United States will also furnish two hundred guns, one hundred rifles, five hundred beaver traps, three hundred dollars' worth of ammunition, and one thousand dollars' worth of ready made clothing, to be distributed among the young men of the nation, at the next annuity payment.

ARTICLE 5.

The United States will also furnish a blacksmith and assistant, with the usual amount of stock, during the continuance of the annuity payments, and as much longer as the President may think proper, at each of the points herein set apart for the residence of the Indians, the same to be in lieu of all the employees to which the Chippewas of Lake Superior may be entitled under previous existing treaties.

ARTICLE 6.

The annuities of the Indians shall not be taken to pay the debts of individuals, but satisfaction for depredations committed by them shall be made by them in such manner as the President may direct.

ARTICLE 7.

No spirituous liquors shall be made, sold, or used on any of the lands herein set apart for the residence of the Indians, and the sale of the same shall be prohibited in the Territory hereby ceded, until otherwise ordered by the President.

ARTICLE 8.

It is agreed, between the Chippewas of Lake Superior and the Chippewas of the Mississippi, that the former shall be entitled to two-thirds, and the latter to one-third, of all benefits to be derived from former treaties existing prior to the year 1847.

ARTICLE 9.

The United States agrees that an examination shall be made, and all sums that may be found equitably due to the Indians, for arrearages of annuity or other thing, under the provisions of former treaties, shall be paid as the chiefs may direct.



ARTICLE 10.

All missionaries, and teachers, and other persons of full age, residing in the territory hereby ceded, or upon any of the reservations hereby made by authority of law, shall be allowed to enter the land occupied by them at the minimum price whenever the surveys shall be completed to the amount of one quarter section each.

ARTICLE 11.

All annuity payments to the Chippewas of Lake Superior, shall hereafter be made at L'Anse, La Pointe, Grand Portage, and on the St. Louis River, and the Indians shall not be required to remove from the homes hereby set apart for them. And such of them as reside in the territory hereby ceded, shall have the right to hunt and fish therein, until otherwise ordered by the President.

ARTICLE 12.

In consideration of the poverty of the Bois Forte Indians who are parties to this treaty, they having never received any annuity payments, and of the great extent of that part of the ceded country owned exclusively by them, the following additional stipulations are made for their benefit. The United States will pay the sum of ten thousand dollars, as their chiefs in open council may direct, to enable them to meet their present just engagements. Also the further sum of ten thousand dollars, in five equal annual payments, in blankets, cloth, nets, guns, ammunition, and such other articles of necessity as they may require.

They shall have the right to select their reservation at any time hereafter, under the direction of the President; and the same may be equal in extent, in proportion to their numbers, to those allowed the other bands, and be subject to the same provisions.

They shall be allowed a blacksmith, and the usual smith shop supplies and also two persons to instruct them in farming, whenever in the opinion of the President it shall be proper, and for such length of time as he shall direct.

It is understood that all Indians who are parties to this treaty, except the Chippewas of the Mississippi, shall hereafter be known as the Chippewas of Lake Superior. Provided, That the stipulation by which the Chippewas of Lake Superior relinquishing their right to land west of the boundary line shall not apply to the Bois Forte band who are parties to this treaty.

ARTICLE 13.

This treaty shall be obligatory on the contracting parties, as soon as the same shall be ratified by the President and Senate of the United States.

In testimony whereof, the said Henry C. Gilbert, and the said David B. Herriman, commissioners as aforesaid, and the undersigned chiefs and headmen of the Chippewas of Lake Superior and the Mississippi, have hereunto set their hands and seals, at the place aforesaid, this thirtieth day of September, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-four.

Henry C. Gilbert,
David B. Herriman,
Commissioners



1854

1854

OCTOBER 1854

Read  [Henry Thoreau's Journal for October 1854 \(æf. 37\)](#)



October: Frost commenced in eastern France, and would endure there until April 28th. Mean temperatures for January in England would be 31° F and for February would be 29° F. The [Thames River](#) froze in London. In Paris there were 50 frost days, 17 of them being in succession. The weather was severe in southern [Russia](#), just as in Denmark, England, France, Spain, and Italy. The British army in the Crimea was suffering terribly.

[Henry Thoreau](#) was presumably written to by [Mary Moody Emerson](#) at this point:

If Mr. Thoreau took the least dislike at the close of his last visit to me – why it is not the home of genius to notice trifles. Why not have visited my deeper solitude? Why not bring me the Plymouth lecture? And a budget of literary news? Are you under no obligation to benefit or gratify your neighbours? Age loves the old fashion of catechising the young. Love to your parents & Aunts & forget not

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1854

1854

 October: Review of [Henry Thoreau's WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#), in "Review of New Books," [Peterson's Magazine](#) 26: 254.



The author of this volume would be called by some a modern Diogenes; but all will admit that he is a close, though somewhat eccentric observer of Nature. Disgusted with the ordinary conventional life, he retired to the shores of Walden Pond in Massachusetts, where building himself a log hut, he lived a sort of half hermit life for two years. The present book is a narrative of his experience during that period. The style is graceful, the reflections often profound, the thought always robust and healthy. On the excessive luxury of the homes the author makes war a la outrance, as a man who has lived on fifty dollars a year, we think, has a right. The book is so out of the beaten track that it cannot fail to set people to thinking; while no one, who once picks it up, will lay it down till he has finished it. The author, in his love of Nature, reminds us of old Isaa[k] Walton, as in other particulars he often recalls Sir Thomas Browne. Naturalists will learn many curious facts from the volume, while the poetical admirer of Nature will linger over its pages with delight. The publishers have issued it in their usual neat style.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE

"Literary Notices," in [Godey's Magazine and Lady's Book](#), Issue #49, page 370:

This ought to be a very profound and excellent book, a character which we think it will pretty fairly sustain among quiet and thoughtful readers. When he wrote it, the author says he lived a mile from any neighbor, in a house which he had built with his own hands, on the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, Massachusetts, and earned his living by the labor of his hands only. He lived there for the space of two years and two months, and, since his return to society, has prepared this volume of practical philosophy for the benefit of the world at large. It records his manner of life in his seclusion, and obstacles he met with, and the interesting reflections to which they gave birth in a mind disposed to make the most of every object brought under its observation.



1854

1854

An anonymous review probably by the Reverend [Andrew Preston Peabody, D.D.](#) on page 536 of this month's issue of his [North American Review](#):

The economical details and calculations in this book are more curious than useful; for the author's life in the woods was on too narrow a scale to find imitators. But in describing his hermitage and his forest life, he says so many pithy and brilliant things, and offers so many piquant, and, we may add, so many just, comments on society as it is, that his book is well worth the reading, both for its actual contents and its suggestive capacity.

[TIMELINE OF WALDEN](#)

An anonymous review "A Yankee [Diogenes](#)" by [Charles Frederick Briggs](#), on pages 443-48 of this month's issue of [Putnam's Monthly Magazine of American Literature, Science and Art](#).

[READ THE FULL TEXT](#)



October: This month's issue of [Harper's New Monthly Magazine](#).

[CONSULT THIS ISSUE](#)

[Louisa May Alcott](#), back from maid job with \$32.⁰⁰ saved over the course of the summer, re-opened her home parlor school.

In [Boston](#), the 1st issue of an anti-Catholic newspaper, [The Wide-Awake](#). We mustn't let those [Catholics](#) take over.

The Irish Columbian Artillery Company of [Boston](#) was proscribed. We mustn't let those [Irish](#) take over.

Charles Henry Branscomb conducted a 2d party of [anti-slavery](#) immigrants to Lawrence in the [Kansas Territory](#). We mustn't let those pro-slavery Southerners take over.

1854

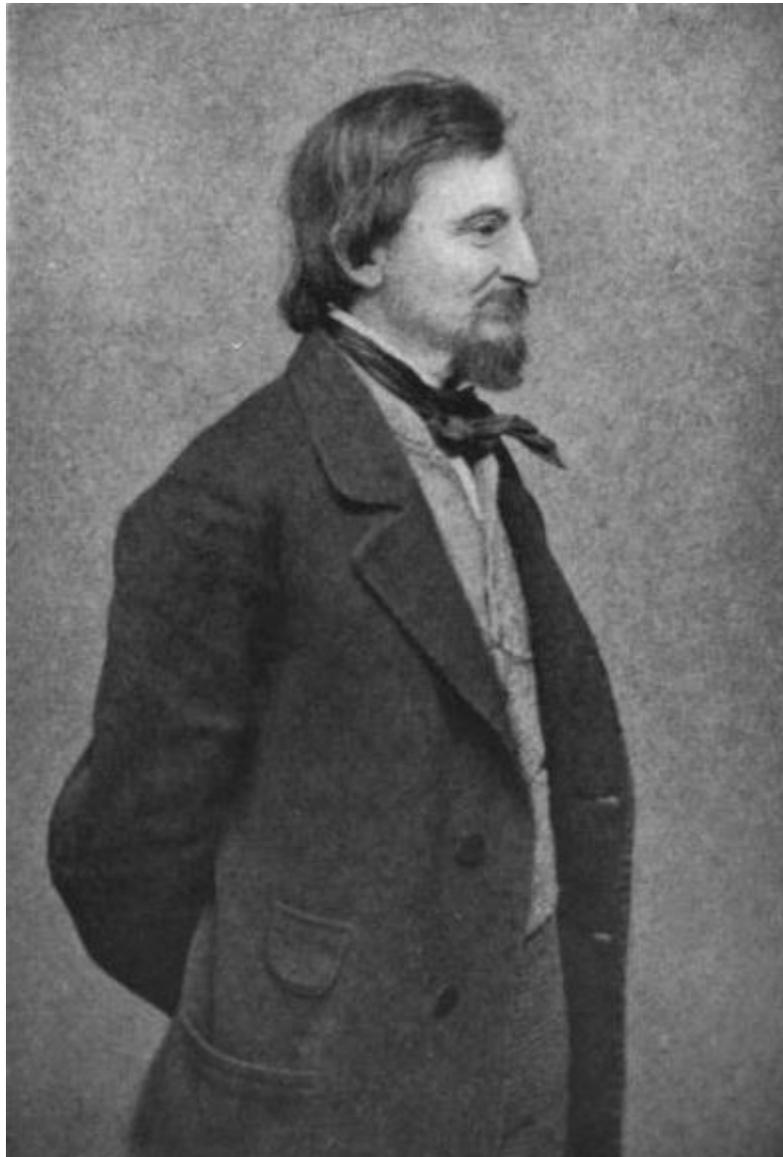
1854

 October 1, Sunday: In Syracuse, New York, the 3d annual “Jerry Celebration” sponsored by the Unitarian congregation of the Reverend [Samuel Joseph May](#), honoring the freeing of [Jerry McHenry](#) from the federal marshals who had been seeking to “return” him to his “owner” on October 1st, 1851. Father [Isaac Hecker](#), CSSR, wrote to [Orestes Augustus Brownson](#).



The watch company Dennison, Howard & Davis that [Aaron Lufkin Dennison](#) had founded in 1850 in Roxbury, Massachusetts relocated to a new factory building in Waltham and named itself the Boston Watch Company (the name “Waltham Watch Company” is merely a generic term for any manufacturer located in Waltham who manufactures watches anywhere in the world; in fact many of the watches said to have been manufactured by a so-called “Waltham Watch Company” actually had been crafted in Birmingham, England).

Scheduling difficulties had forced the postponement of [Henry Thoreau](#)’s lecture in [Plymouth](#), Massachusetts by one week. He responded to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#)’s letter of August 12th, talking about visiting Middleboro Ponds and recommending [William Gilpin](#)’s books on nature, which he was just then reading.



1854

1854

Concord Mass, Oct 1st '54

Dear Sir,

I had duly received your very kind and frank letter, but delayed to answer it thus long because I have little skill as a correspondent, and wished to send you something more than my thanks.

I was gratified by your prompt and hearty acceptance of my book. Yours is the only word of greeting I am likely to receive from a dweller in the woods like myself, from where the whippoorwill and cuckoo are heard, and there are better than moral clouds drifting over, and real breezes blow.

Your account excites in me a desire to see the Middleboro Ponds, of which I had already heard somewhat; as also of some very beautiful ponds on the Cape, in Harwich I think, near which I once passed. I have sometimes also thought of visiting that remnant of our Indians still living near you.— But then, you know there is nothing like ones native fields and lakes. The best news you send me is, not that Nature with you is so fair and genial, but that there is one there who likes her so well. That proves all that was asserted.

Homer, of course, you include in your list of lovers of nature – and, by the way, let me mention here, – for this is “my thunder” lately – [W^m Gilpin](#)’s long series of books on the Picturesque, with their illustrations. If it chances that you have not met with these, I cannot just now frame a better wish than that you may one day derive as much pleasure from the inspection of them as I have.

Much as you have told me of yourself, you have still I think a little the advantage of me in this correspondence, for I have told you still more in my book. You have therefore the broadest mark to fire at. A young English author, Thomas Cholmondeley, is just now waiting for me to take a walk with him – therefore excuse this very barren note from

*Yrs, hastily at last,
Henry D. Thoreau*



Oct. 1. The young black birches about Walden, next the south shore, are now commonly clear pale-yellow, very distinct at distance, like bright-yellow white birches, so slender amid the dense growth of oaks and evergreens on the steep shores. The black birches and red maples are the conspicuous trees changed about the pond. Not yet the oaks.

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

1854

1854

October 2, Monday: The Academy of Music in [New-York](#) opened at 14th street and Irving Place with a performance of Bellini's "Norma."

In San Francisco, John W. McKenzie was appointed as the City Marshal.

CALIFORNIA

[William Jackman](#) took a land patent for 40 acres, and for 123.89 acres, in St. Croix and Pierce Counties in Wisconsin. An existing undated handbill printed in River Falls, Wisconsin asserts:

"A Lecture by Wm. Jackman giving an account of His Shipwreck, Life among the Natives, their Manners and Customs, and his Final Escape"

...

Will deliver ___ Lecture AT ___ ON ___.

Admittance 25 cents.

Children under 12 years, 15 cents.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 2d]

October 3, Tuesday: [Charles Wilkes](#) married again, this time to Mary H. Lynch Bolton. They would produce 4 children.



[Bronson Alcott](#) wrote [Abba Alcott](#) in Boston from [Benjamin Marston Watson](#)'s "The Hillside" mansion in [Plymouth](#), Massachusetts, indicating that he planned to remain there until [Henry Thoreau](#) arrived and had an opportunity to deliver his talk so that he could then escort Thoreau back to Boston — therefore she and the girls would see him by Wednesday or Thursday of the following week.

[Watson](#) wrote [Thoreau](#) from Plymouth, mentioning [James Walter Spooner](#):

*Plymouth Oct 30
My dear Sir—
I am glad to learn
from Mr Spooner that you
are really coming down,*





1854

1854

*with the tripod too, which
is so good news that I hardly
dared to expect it.
It seems a little un-
certain whether you intend
to read in the morning as*

Page 2
*well as evening, and
so I write to enquire,
that there may be no
mistake in the announcement.
Please let me know by return
mail which will be in
time.
Very truly yr
B.M. Watson*

Page 3
Postmark: []
OCT
3
[]
Postage: *PAID 3*
Address: *H. D. Thoreau*
Concord
Mass



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 3d]



1854

1854



October 4, Wednesday: [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) evaluated [Henry Thoreau](#)'s letter of October the 1st:



Received a letter from Henry D. Thoreau to-day in reply to mine to him. Letter hastily written and hardly satisfactory, evidently well meant though overcautious.

[WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) was reviewed on the 2d page of the Louisville, Kentucky [Daily Courier](#).

The author of this was engaged in Emerson's Dial, a periodical devoted to transcendentalism. The work before us shows decided evidences that the author has not forgotten his early love. There are numerous sentences in the work, from which we have not been able to draw any satisfactory meaning. But there are also a multitude of charming pictures of natural scenery, which will repay the reader for searching after them.

The book is beautifully printed in a style which does credit to the typographical taste and skill of Ticknor & Fields.

[Abraham Lincoln](#) made his 1st political speech, at the Illinois State Fair.

[Thoreau](#) wrote to [Benjamin Marston Watson](#).



*Concord Oct 4th '54
Dear Sir,
I meant to read
to you but once;—in the eve-
ning, if it is convenient for all
parties. That is as large a taste
of my present self as I dare offer
you in one visit.
Yrs*

Henry D. Thoreau.

Page 2
Postage: *p^d*
Address: *B.M. Watson Esq.
Plymouth
Mass.*



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 4th]



1854

1854



October 5, Thursday: Eva Evelina E. Vannevar Slack wrote to [Charles Wesley Slack](#) on family matters.

On this day a review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) was appearing in a weekly gazette of the American Baptist Church, the [Watchman and Reflector](#), on its page 158:

WALDEN; OR LIFE IN THE WOODS. By Henry D. Thoreau. Author of "A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers." Boston: Ticknor, Reed & Fields.

"A Life in the Woods," within twenty miles of Boston may strike the reader as hardly affording enough of material in the shape of incident and adventure, for a fair sized volume like the present. But he must read and learn his mistake, for this beyond dispute is one of the most original, eccentric and suggestive books which the season has brought out. The writer, in relating his own experience, which he does with naivete, shows much power of reflection, and a philosophic knowledge of men and things.

We do not know on what date [Thomas Cholmondeley](#) had arrived at the Thoreau boardinghouse, but by this day he had been in residence long enough to have become acquainted with [Henry Thoreau](#), and for Thoreau to have invited him along on a planned climb of Mount Wachusett. One may wonder what sort of conversations Thoreau had with this Brit colonialist who was having so many interesting things to say, in his *ULTIMA THULE; OR, THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY A RESIDENCE IN NEW ZEALAND* published in this year, about how "the true principle of imperial connection is *faith in the laws of nature and of man*".¹⁷¹

Union may consist materially in a balance of interests; but yet it is not an interest; it represents the soul and intelligence, proceeding from men indeed, but which in its turn governs men; which confers a conscience upon the otherwise lifeless machinery of government, and gives it a life analogous to that of an organised living creature. The great law of organisation is well known; we may behold and study it, whether we look downwards at the flowers under our feet, or gaze upwards at the stars of heaven; from both we learn to take good heart, and have confidence in the kind intention of the great Creator and disposer of the universe, and the thorough goodness of the laws established by Him; one of the greatest of which may thus be interpreted in its application to men: **that as long as a tolerably good common Government exists, men will hold together and respect a common cause;** that it is **not** the nature and tendency



of families or nations to fall into pieces, but that they do so from long-continued, unbearable misgovernment.

READ CHOLMONDELEY



Thoreau wrote [H.G.O. Blake](#) in [Worcester](#) telling about Cholmondeley being there in [Concord](#), and suggested that he bring him along on their trip to Mount Wachusett.

Concord Oct 5th '54
Mr Blake,

171. The use of *italics* for emphasis is Cholmondeley's.

*After I wrote to you Mr Watson postponed my going to Plymouth one week i.e. till next Sunday, and now he wishes me to carry my instruments & survey his grounds, to which he has been adding. Since I want a little money, though I contemplate but a short excursion, I do not feel at liberty to decline this work. I do not know exactly how long it will detain me — but there is plenty of time yet — & I will write to you again — perhaps from Plymouth—
There is a Mr Thomas Cholmondeley (pronounced Chumly) a young English author, staying at our house at present — who asks me to teach him botany — i.e. anything which I know — and also to make an excursion to some mountain with him. He is a well-behaved person, and possibly I may propose his taking that run to Wachusett with us — if it will be agreeable to you. Nay If I do not hear any objection from you I will consider myself at liberty to invite him.
In haste. H. D. Thoreau*



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 5th]



October 6, Friday: In [San Francisco, California](#) “Honest Henry” Meiggs, prominent citizen accused of forging city warrants, “took it on the lam.” Yeah, bye-bye Honest Henry.

Shortly after midnight a great fire began in Newcastle and Gateshead, England, that would produce 53 fatalities and hundreds of injuries.

Eva Evelina E. Vannevar Slack wrote to [Charles Wesley Slack](#) about travel plans.



“[Henry D. Thoreaux](#)” was written to by [William Thomas](#) in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to set the date for a lecture as November 21st.

*Phil Oct. 6th. 1854[]
Henry D Thoreaux Esq
Dear Sir
You will please accept our thanks for your prompt response to our invitation. We have entered you for the 21st Nov.
Please inform us as early as possible upon what subject you will speak
Yours Truly
W^mB Thomas
Chairman*



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 6th]



October 7, Saturday: [Governor Andrew Horatio Reeder](#) established his office at [Fort Leavenworth](#) in the [Territory](#).



“Went to [Plymouth](#) to lecture and survey Watson’s grounds.”

View [Henry Thoreau](#)’s personal working drafts of his surveys courtesy of AT&T and the Concord Free Public Library:

http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_Surveys/Thoreau_Surveys.htm



(The official copy of this survey of course had become the property of the person or persons who had hired this Concord town surveyor to do their surveying work during the 19th Century. Such materials have yet to be recovered.)

The arrangement was that [Thoreau](#) would share [Bronson Alcott](#)’s bedchamber. On the way, Thoreau stopped at Harvard Library to check out *BHAGVAT-GEETA*; OR, *DIALOGUES OF KREESHNA AND ARJOON*. When Thoreau arrived for supper, he and Alcott discussed the Genesis until bedtime. Review of *WALDEN*; OR, *LIFE IN THE WOODS* titled “Ticknor, Reed and Fields” in the New York [Home Journal](#), 7:3.

Then comes a unique volume, which might be called the æsthetics of country life; it is entitled “Life in the Woods,” and records the experiences, physical and moral, of a hermit of Concord, Massachusetts, a friend of Emerson and Hawthorne—Henry D. Thoreau. The book is remarkable for its graphic descriptions, its original vein of reasoning, and its earnest introspection: a work derived from solitude and nature is a rarity in American letters; and no contemplative or imaginative reader can fail to discover in its pages refreshment and delight.



Oct. 7. Went to [Plymouth](#) to lecture and survey Watson's grounds. Returned the 15th. The *Decodon verticillatus* (swamp loosestrife) very abundant, forming isles in the pond on Town Brook on Watson's farm, now turned (methinks it was) a somewhat orange (?) scarlet. Measured a buckthorn on land of N. Russell & Co., bounding on Watson, close by the ruins of the cotton-factory, in five places from the ground to the first branching, or as high as my head. The diameters were 4 feet 8 inches, 4-6, 4-3, 4-2, 4-6. It was full of fruit now quite ripe, which Watson plants. The birds eat it.

[Transcript]

Saw a small goldenrod in the woods with four very broad rays, a new kind to me. Saw also the English oak; leaf much like our white oak, but acorns large and long, with a long peduncle, and the bark of these young trees, twenty or twenty-five feet high, quite smooth. Saw moon-seed, a climbing vine. Also the leaf of the ginkgo tree, of pine-needles run together. Spooner's garden a wilderness of fruit trees. Russell is not sure but Eaton has described my rare polygonum.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



October 8, Sunday: The Reverend Albert Williams resigned as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of San Francisco, and delivered a farewell sermon.

CALIFORNIA

A review of WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS, titled "Letter from a Lady Correspondent" and presumably by Elizabeth Barstow Stoddard, appeared in the Daily Alta California, 5:279.

TIMELINE OF WALDEN

In Plymouth, Massachusetts, Henry Thoreau for the 1st time delivered his lecture "MOONLIGHT". Well, actually, the full title of the lecture Thoreau delivered at Leyden Hall on this occasion was:



"Moonlight (Introductory to an Intended Course of Lectures)"

According to Pliny, there is a stone in Arabia called Selenites, "wherein is a white, which decreases and increases with the moon." My journal for the last year or two has been selenitic in this sense.

PLINY

In his "Moonlight" lecture, Thoreau made a reference to Augustine:

As S Augustine says, "Deus regit inferiora corpora per superioria"



Although he would continue to work on this essay for a few days, Thoreau would begin to pay more attention to "Walking, or the Wild." The two new lectures he planned to generate from this earlier lecture presumably were to become the 2d and 3d lectures in his "Intended Course of Lectures" (refer to William L. Howarth's "Successor to WALDEN? Thoreau's 'Moonlight-An Intended Course of Lectures'," page 101).



1854

1854



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 8th]



"Moonlight"¹⁷²

DATE	PLACE	TOPIC
July 4, Tuesday, 1854, about 3:30PM	<u>Framingham, Massachusetts</u> ; Harmony (also "Framingham" and "Island") Grove	"Slavery in Massachusetts"
October 8, 1854, Sunday; 7:00 PM	Leyden Hall, <u>Plymouth</u>	<u>"Moonlight"</u>
November 21, 1854, Tuesday; 7:30 PM	Spring Garden Institute, Philadelphia PA	"The Wild"

172. From Bradley P. Dean and Ronald Wesley Hoag's THOREAU'S LECTURES AFTER WALDEN: AN ANNOTATED CALENDAR."



1854

1854

NARRATIVE OF EVENT: On September 17th, 1854, [Henry Thoreau](#)'s Plymouth friend and former Harvard schoolmate [Benjamin Marston Watson](#) sent him this invitation to lecture in Plymouth:

Mr James Spooner and others here, your friends, have clubbed together and raised a small sum in hope of persuading you to come down and read them a paper or two some Sunday. They can offer you \$10 at least. Mr Alcott is now here, and I thought it might be agreeable to you to come down next Saturday and read a paper on Sunday morning and perhaps on Sunday Evening also, if agreeable to yourself. I can assure you of a very warm reception but from a small party only.

In a postscript Watson added:

I will meet you at the Depot on Saturday evening, if you so advise me. Last train leaves at 5 –

This is not a "Leyden Hall Meeting" but a private party -social gathering- almost sewing circle. Tho' perhaps we may meet you at Leyden Hall. (THE CORRESPONDENCE OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU, pages 337-38)

Two days later, on September 19th, Thoreau responded to Watson with an acceptance and a question:

I am glad to hear from you & the Plymouth men again. The world still holds together between Concord and Plymouth, it seems. I should like to be with you while Mr Alcott is there, but I cannot come next Sunday. I will come Sunday after next, that is Oct 1st, if that will do, – and look out for you at the Depot.

I do not like to promise now more than one discourse. Is there a good precedent for 2? (THE CORRESPONDENCE OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU, page 338)

The acceptance is no surprise at all, but Thoreau's question is. In 1852, on both of his previous lecture trips to Plymouth, Thoreau had made two lecture presentations on each visit. Thoreau's concern over presenting the requested two lectures is understandable, however, as at that time he had only one lecture that he wished to use, and all indications are that it was not yet written.¹⁷³

[Henry Thoreau](#) faced a larger problem at this time than the need to hurry a lecture into shape for a just-made engagement. He was, in fact, caught in a dilemma, on the one hand wanting to take advantage of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#)'s publication to propel his career as a lecturer, on the other hand fearful of the loss of authentic life that stepped-up lecturing might entail. His journal entry for 19 September, the day of his acceptance message to Watson, conveys these two conflicting attitudes, one overtly and the other at least in

173. According to William L. Howarth, "Between 26 September and 7 October [1854] Thoreau labored constantly on the lecture, so constantly during the last five days that he wrote no Journal entries at all" ("Successor to WALDEN? Thoreau's 'Moonlight — An Intended Course of Lectures,'" [Proof](#), 2 [1972]: 101).



1854

1854

part by implication:

Thinking this afternoon of the prospect of my writing lectures and going abroad to read them the next winter, I realized how incomparably great the advantages of obscurity and poverty which I have enjoyed so long (and may still perhaps enjoy). I thought with what more than princely, with what poetical, leisure I had spent my years hitherto, without care or engagement, fancy-free. I have given myself up to nature; I have lived so many springs and summers and autumns and winters as if I had nothing else to do but **live** them, and imbibe whatever nutriment they had for me; I have spent a couple of years, for instance, with the flowers chiefly, having none other so binding engagement as to observe when they opened; I could have afforded to spend a whole fall observing the changing tints of the foliage. Ah, how I have thriven on solitude and poverty! I cannot overstate this advantage. I do not see how I could have enjoyed it, if the public had been expecting as much of me as there is danger now that they will. If I go abroad lecturing, how shall I ever recover the lost winter? (JOURNAL, 7:46)

Between Thoreau's questioning, in his letter to Marston, of the precedent for a second Plymouth lecture and this same day's journal questioning of the unprecedented trade-offs demanded by a more ambitious career as lecturer, there is perhaps less distance than one would first assume. Despite these expressed doubts, however, one should not overlook in this journal lament for the impending loss of a personal Golden Age the suggested reasons for this loss. First, Thoreau presumed that the post-[WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) public would want to hear him speak; and, second, he apparently proposed to do so.

Indeed, on 21 September, two days after his message to [Watson](#) and his journal elegy for innocence, Thoreau elaborated on his predicament in a letter to [H.G.O. Blake](#) in [Worcester](#). Here he made explicit his intention to pursue lecturing as never before.

I have just read your letter, but I do not mean now to answer it, solely for want of time to say what I wish. . . . As for the excursion you speak of [apparently to Mt. Wachusett]: I should like it right well, - indeed I thought of proposing the same thing to you and [Theo] Brown, some months ago. Perhaps it would have been better if I had done so then; for in that case I should have been able to enter into it with that infinite margin to my views, -spotless of all engagements, -which I think so necessary. As it is, I have agreed to go a-lecturing to Plymouth, Sunday after next (October 1) and to Philadelphia in November, and thereafter to the West, if they shall want me; and, as I have prepared nothing in that shape, I feel as if my hours were spoken for. (THE CORRESPONDENCE OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU, page 339)

While still reflecting his doubts, this letter clearly acknowledges his plan to go on the road as a lecturer, traveling a great deal elsewhere than in [Concord](#).

Pressed for time as he was, Thoreau must have been relieved by [Watson](#)'s letter of 24 September, postponing



1854

1854

the lecture and, incidentally, commissioning a survey of his extensive garden.

There is to be a meeting here on Oct 1st that we think will interfere with yours, and so if the Lord is willing and you have no objections we will expect you on the next Sunday 8th October.

I think Mr. A. [Alcott] will stay till that time.

I have been lately adding to my garden, and now have all that joins me — so I am ready to have it surveyed by you; a pleasure I have long promised myself. So, if you are at leisure and inclined to the field I hope I may be so fortunate as to engage your services.

Watson added in a postscript, “The survey might be before the Sunday or after as you please, and I will meet you at the Depot any time you say — ” (THE CORRESPONDENCE OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU, pages 339-40).

Watson’s next letter to [Henry Thoreau](#), written on 30 September (but misdated 30 October), acknowledges Thoreau’s acceptance through an intermediary of the new lecture date and the request for a survey:

I am glad to learn from Mr Spooner that you are really coming down, with the tripod too, which is so good news that I hardly dared to expect it.

It seems a little uncertain whether you intend to read in the morning as well as evening, and so I write to enquire, that there may be no mistake in the announcement. Please let me know by return mail which will be in time. (THE CORRESPONDENCE OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU, page 340)

The intermediary mentioned here was [James Walter Spooner](#), who had met Thoreau and heard him lecture in Plymouth on at least one previous occasion, recording their May 1852 contact in his diary (see lecture 40 in the “Before WALDEN” calendar). Spooner, who became an ardent admirer, was one of the sponsors of Thoreau’s upcoming lecture. Spooner visited Thoreau in Concord MA ten days before the lecture, joining him in a lengthy walk on 29 September. Thoreau noted the walk in his journal but did not mention his companion, while Spooner’s own account, in a letter to his parents written that evening from [Concord’s Middlesex House](#),

1854

1854

is richly detailed.¹⁷⁴



The next day he returned to Plymouth and made his report to [Watson](#).¹⁷⁵

In a letter mis-dated Wednesday, October 3d, 1854 (Wednesday was the 4th), [Bronson Alcott](#) confirmed Watson's 24 September impression that he would stay in Plymouth to hear Thoreau lecture. Writing to his wife from Watson's home, "Hillside,"¹⁷⁶ Alcott confessed his delinquency but gave several reasons for protracting his visit, among them that

as . . . Henry Thoreau is to be here surveying and to read something to a circle of Watson's neighbors on Sunday next, and so into the week, they have persuaded me somewhat against my sense of duty to you and the Girls, to remain and see him back to Boston sometime in the week, by Wednesday say, or Thursday at farthest, I should think; and you may then expect me, if you have or can get to send the \$1.50 . . . for road ticket, and 37 1/2 for hack to bring me and my copied reams to your board again.

On 4 October, Thoreau wrote again to [Watson](#), clearing up once and for all the question of how many lectures he intended to give in Plymouth. His two-sentence letter declares, "*I meant to read to you but once; — in the evening, if it is convenient for all parties. That is as large a taste of my present self as I dare offer you in one visit.*"¹⁷⁷

Two letters to [H.G.O. Blake](#), both involving the Plymouth trip and its impact on their planned excursion to

174. Anne Root McGrath, "As Long as It Is in Concord," [Concord Saunterer](#), 12, no. 2 (Summer 1977), pages 9-11.

175. Francis B. Dedmond, "James Walter Spooner: Thoreau's Second (Though Unacknowledged) Disciple," [Concord Saunterer](#), 18, no. 2 (December 1985), page 38; see also Dedmond, "Thoreau as Seen by an Admiring Friend: A New View," [American Literature](#), 56 (October 1984): 334-43

176. THE LETTERS OF A. BRONSON ALCOTT, ed. Richard L. Herrnstadt (Ames: Iowa State UP, 1969), pages 185-86.

177. Although the Thoreau Textual Center, CU-SB, has a photocopy and a typescript of this letter, the location of the original letter is unknown. We quote here from the typescript.

Mt. Wachusett, complete the extant correspondence relating to this lecture. On 5 October, Thoreau wrote:

After I wrote to you Mr. Watson postponed my going to Plymouth one week i.e. till next Sunday, and now he wishes me to carry my instruments & survey his grounds, to which he has been adding. Since I want a little money, though I contemplate but a short excursion, I do not feel at liberty to decline this work. I do not know exactly how long it will detain me -but there is plenty of time yet- & I will write to you again -perhaps from Plymouth -

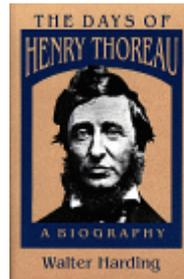
[Henry Thoreau](#) then mentioned his new friend [Thomas Cholmondeley](#) and told [Blake](#), “He is a well-behaved person, and **possibly** I may propose his taking that run to Wachusett with us — if it will be agreeable to you” (THE CORRESPONDENCE OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU, pages 342-43). In a letter from [Concord, Massachusetts](#) dated Saturday PM, October 14, Thoreau wrote again to Blake, saying in part:

I have just returned from Plymouth, where I have been detained surveying much longer than I expected.

What do you say to visiting Wachusett next Thursday? (THE CORRESPONDENCE OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU, page 344)

[Blake](#) must have said yes as Thoreau’s journal entry for Thursday, 19 October, records his trip to the mountain, where the next day they “saw the sun rise from the mountain-top” (JOURNAL, 7:65).

Thoreau gave his lecture to a small audience of friends, among them [Alcott](#), [James Walter Spooner](#), [Watson](#) and his wife, [Mary](#), in whom Thoreau had had a romantic interest in the early 1840s and for whom he wrote the poem “To the Maiden in the East”¹⁷⁸ ([Walter Roy Harding](#)’s THE DAYS OF HENRY THOREAU: A



BIOGRAPHY, page 107).

In view of the duration of his Plymouth lecture trip and the correspondence it generated, [Thoreau](#)’s journal record is a disappointment. His entry dated 7 October begins, “Went to Plymouth to lecture and survey Watson’s grounds. Returned the 15th.” His brief account mentions a few botanical encounters on or near Watson’s property and calls “Spooner’s garden a wilderness of fruit trees” (JOURNAL, 7:63-64), but says nothing of the lecture or anything else. While the apparent misdating of his return from Plymouth (see 14 October letter to Blake) perhaps suggests a belated journal entry, the sparseness of information here is indicative of the time shortage he faced that fall.

View [Henry Thoreau](#)’s personal working drafts of his surveys courtesy of AT&T and the Concord Free Public Library:

http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_Surveys/Thoreau_Surveys.htm



[Alcott](#)’s diary entries¹⁷⁹ add more information but do not include the entire time of Thoreau’s stay.

178. Quoted in [Harding](#), THE DAYS OF HENRY THOREAU (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965), page 143.

179. [Alcott](#), “Diary for 1854,” entries of 7-11 October, MH (*59M-308).



1854

1854

Wrote [Alcott](#):

Saturday 7 [October 1854].... Evening, Thoreau arrives to supper and we discuss the Genesis till bed time, Thoreau sleeping with me in my chamber.

Sunday 8. We walk about Hillside, and ride around Billington Sea after dinner.

Evening, Thoreau reads an admirable paper on "Moonlight" to a small circle at Leyden Hall.

Monday 9. I help Thoreau survey Hillside, also discuss matters generally.

Tuesday 10. Again survey with Thoreau and Watson.

Evening, Company at Hillside and a conversation on Health, Thoreau and some of the ladies, Mrs Watson, the Misses Kendall's, taking part.

Wednesday 11. Carry Chain in surveying "the Orchard" with Thoreau: also, about Hillside Walks. Orchard contains 6 1/3 acres.

ADVERTISEMENTS, REVIEWS, AND RESPONSES: The growing importance of lyceum-style lectures in America, and of Henry Thoreau as a lecturer, is indicated by a notice in the 20 September 1854 New-York Daily Tribune, which reads in part:

THE LECTURE SEASON.

Our advices by letter and otherwise justify the inference that the Lecture Season of 1854-5 will be more brilliant than any of its predecessors – that there will be more Popular Lectures delivered, and to larger audiences, than during any preceding autumn and winter. Nearly every City in the Free States, with many of the Southern, will have its regular Course or Courses; some of them as many as three; while at least half the considerable villages throughout the North and West will have at least one Course. The most acceptable lecturers are overrun with invitations, and are proffered compensation at much higher rates than were current a few years ago. The largely increased attendance last winter over that of any former season justified this advance; and, even at the highest rate, two or three of those most in request will be unable to answer all the demands upon their time.

We proceed to give, as last year, the names and post office address of those hitherto widely invited as Lecturers, for the convenience of those who are now making out their lists and addressing invitations. . . .

We believe the popular taste for this sort of exercise has sensibly increased of late, and that buffoonery and clap-trap are at considerable discount from the early quotations, while solid information and grave, practical suggestion are more generally sought and appreciated. We believe this tendency will be more and more evinced, until the Winter Course of Lectures of each city and village shall come to be truly regarded as an important and beneficent instrumentality for dispelling intellectual stagnation and training the American Mind to habits of healthful activity, fearless investigation, and generous, manly thought.



1854

1854

Included in this notice was a list of thirty-one lecturers available for the coming season, one of whom was “HENRY D. THOREAU, Concord, Mass.” While [Henry Thoreau](#)’s friendships with New-York [Daily Tribune](#) editor [Horace Greeley](#) and the influential [Waldo Emerson](#) may have influenced his inclusion here, his own past lecturing experience coupled with the recent publication of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#), his second book, presumably would have warranted his initial listing in any case. Updated and expanded annually, this list thereafter included Thoreau’s name till 1861, the year he became too ill for lecturing.

Other than [Alcott](#)’s above-mentioned comment that Thoreau’s lecture was “admirable,” the only recovered response to this October 8, 1854 lecture is the implied praise in this undated letter from [Orestes Augustus Brownson](#), presumably from later that same month. Miss Emerson, who apparently had heard some favorable report of Thoreau’s talk, wryly addressed her envelope to “*Mr H. D. Thoreau[,] Professor of lectures.*” She wrote:¹⁸⁰

If Mr. Thoreau took the least dislike at the close of his last visit to me – why it is not the home of genius to notice trifles. Why not have visited my deeper solitude? Why not bring me the Plymouth lecture? And a budget of literary news? Are you under no obligation to benefit or gratify your neighbours? Age loves the old fashion of catechising the young. Love to your parents & Aunts & forget not

MME

DESCRIPTION OF TOPIC: Anticipating that he would be able to capitalize on the success of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) by lecturing around New England and in the Midwest, Thoreau began a wholesale revision of his earlier “[WALKING, OR THE WILD](#)” lecture manuscript, a portion of which involved moonlit walks (see lectures 31-32 and 40-41 in the “Before [WALDEN](#)” calendar). He extracted this portion of the lecture manuscript, tentatively titled the selection “The Moon,” and began searching through his journal of 1850-54 for passages about his nighttime excursions. When he located such passages, he wrote brief, descriptive citations of them on sheets of paper and used these “indexes” to arrange the passages before transcribing the passages from his journal to form a preliminary draft of the lecture, the title of which he decided would be “Moonlight (Introductory to an Intended Course of Lectures).” William L. Howarth has asserted that Thoreau originally transcribed passages from his journal in a mensal order but, encountering difficulties with such an unorthodox structure, soon changed to a more orthodox topical structure.¹⁸¹ In any case, based on the now widely scattered manuscript leaves surviving from this project and from other projects Thoreau was working on during the fall and winter of 1854, the lectures Thoreau had in mind for his “Intended Course” were not all related to walks at night; instead, he appears to have wanted to assemble a course of lectures relating to the various topics in his earlier 163-page draft of “Walking, or the Wild.” His published essay “[WALKING](#)” retains 2 such topics: the joys and other benefits to be derived from sauntering, and the bracing effect that the tonic of wildness has upon human beings. Another lecture that grew out of and that [Henry Thoreau](#) apparently intended to include in his “Intended Course of Lectures,” the lecture that would eventually be published as “[LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE](#)” (see lecture 46 below), elaborated the consequences of our failure to enjoy the benefits of periodically sauntering into the wild.¹⁸² In “[MOONLIGHT](#)” Thoreau explored the realm that the English poet [John Milton](#) in his epic [PARADISE LOST](#) referred to as “Chaos and Old Night.” The lecture describes the salutary effects on the saunterer of nocturnal excursions into familiar territory that had become de-familiarized by the perspective-altering light of the moon on the landscape, a light that compels the saunterer to experience what [Waldo Emerson](#) in [NATURE](#) called “an original relation to the universe.”

180. THE SELECTED LETTERS OF MARY MOODY EMERSON, ed. Nancy Craig Simmons (Athens: U of Georgia P, 1993), page 551. Based on Thoreau’s lecture at Plymouth on 22 February 1852 (see lectures 35-36 in the “Before [WALDEN](#)” calendar) and on Thoreau’s visits to Miss Emerson on 13 November 1851 and 8 January 1852, Simmons conjectures that this letter was written in 1852 rather than in 1854.

181. Howarth, “Successor to [WALDEN?](#),” 94, 98.

182. [Bradley P. Dean](#) found that Thoreau drew 19 of the paragraphs used in his 1st lecture version of “[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT](#)” from his earlier “[WALKING, OR THE WILD](#)” lecture manuscript; see Dean, “Reconstructions of Thoreau’s Early ‘Life without Principle’ Lectures,” [STUDIES IN THE AMERICAN RENAISSANCE](#) 1987, PAGE 291.

1854

1854

 After October 8: On the basis of the following undated letter from [Mary Moody Emerson](#) to [Henry Thoreau](#), Thoreau may have given a private reading of his "[Moonlight](#)" piece which he had delivered in [Plymouth](#) on October 8th, for her benefit, at some point during this month, at the Emerson home "Bush" in Concord.

If Mr. Thoreau took the least dislike at the close of his last visit to me – why it is not the home of genius to notice trifles. Why not have visited my deeper solitude? Why not bring me the Plymouth lecture? And a budget of literary news? Are you under no obligation to benefit or gratify your neighbours? Age loves the old fashion of catechising the young. Love to your parents & Aunts & forget not

MME

 October 9, Monday: [Thomas Carlyle](#) shaved for the last time (from this point forward he would save himself half an hour each day by affecting the appearance of the sage). In an entirely unrelated piece of news, the siege of Sevastopol began.

Joshua Stoddard of Worcester, Massachusetts received a patent for the 1st calliope.

Anton Bruckner, improvising a double fugue, passed an organ examination in Vienna.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 9th]

1854

1854

 October 9, Monday: [Henry Thoreau](#) checked out, from [Harvard Library](#), [Charles Wilkins](#)'s translation of the [BHAGVAT-GEETA, OR DIALOGUES OF KREESHNA AND ARJOON](#) (London: Nourse, 1785).



BHAGVAT-GEETA



1854

1854



October 9, Monday-13, Friday: [Henry Thoreau](#) went to [Plymouth](#) to lecture, and to survey for Benjamin Marston Watson, with [Bronson Alcott](#) carrying the chain (refer to L.D. Geller's BETWEEN CONCORD AND PLYMOUTH regarding Thoreau's Plymouth friends). Although he continued to work on the "Moonlight" lecture for a few days after he first delivered it, his attention was primarily on the "Walking, or the Wild" lecture. Presumably, the new lectures he would generate from this earlier lecture would become the 2d and 3d in his "Intended Course of Lectures."



View [Thoreau](#)'s personal working drafts of his surveys courtesy of AT&T and the Concord Free Public Library:

http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_Surveys/Thoreau_Surveys.htm



October 10, Tuesday: In [New-York City](#), a US Assay Office opened.

Meanwhile, news of the horrific loss of the steamship *Yankee Blade* was arriving in [San Francisco](#), California. There had been the loss of so much treasure! Presumably a lot of lives, as well!

FAST TRAVELLING. — A.S. Beatty, Esq., proprietor of the Mansion House, despatched a messenger from San Jose, with news of the loss of the steamer *Yankee Blade* to Adams & Co., San Francisco. The express, rode by Capt. Joseph Tuera, of Ravenswood, left San Jose at 12 h. 40 m., A.M., and arrived at San Francisco at 4 h. 30 m., A.M. Two horses; time 3 hours 50 minutes.

... These are some of our dark days, but it is no time for us to sit down and wring our hands, and wail and moan. Action is demanded of us, and we that have been so many times destroyed by fire, and our city, which has risen Phœnix like so often, will with the help of our energies and determination soon recover from the temporary difficulties in which our late disasters have thrown us....

SEARCH FOR THE LOST TREASURE. — The *Carolina*, steam-tug, leaves this morning for the wreck of the *Yankee Blade*. She goes prepared with submarine armor and practised men, expecting to secure the treasure. The amount was \$153,000, all shipped by Page, Bacon & Co., and fully insured in London offices.

Messrs. Smith Brothers & Co. have requested us to state that the wife of one of their firm was not lost on the *Yankee Blade*, as she was not on board the ill-fated vessel.

RELIEF FOR THE WRECKED PASSENGERS. — Mr. Garrison ordered the Nicaragua steamer *Brother Jonathan* to be got in readiness, and dispatched her yesterday evening to the relief of the passengers that were left at San Diego. She will return with them to this city.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 10th]



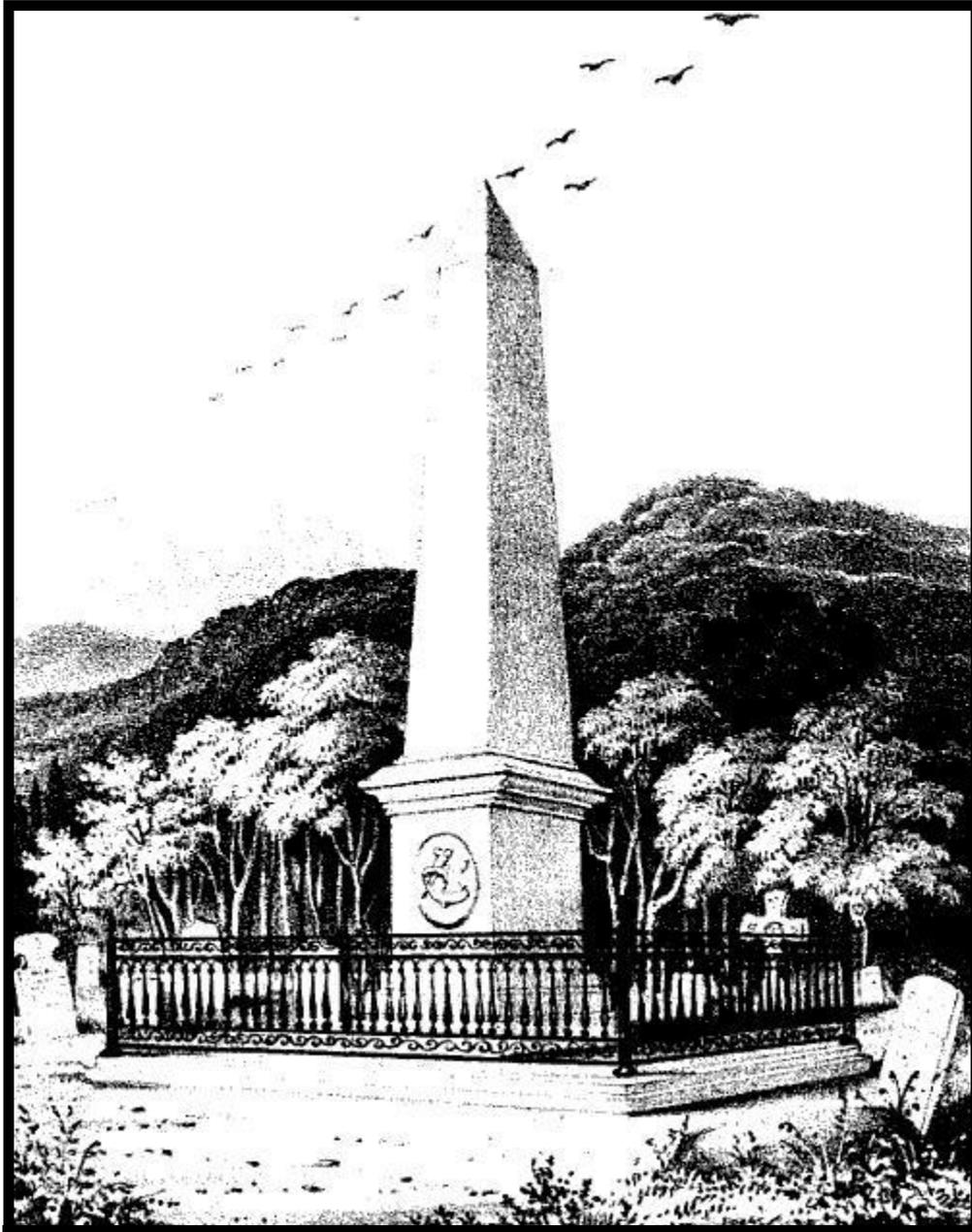
1854

1854

1854

1854

 October 11, Wednesday: In [Walpole, New Hampshire](#), the [Unitarian](#) Reverend [Henry Whitney Bellows](#) dedicated a monument in honor of founding father Colonel [Benjamin Bellows](#).



COL. BENJ. BELLOWS

1854

1854

The medallion on the west side:



The medallion on the east side:



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 11th]

1854

1854

October 12, Thursday: "Napoleon-Marsch op.156" by [Johann Baptist Strauss II](#) was performed for the initial time, in Schwender's Colosseum, Vienna.

In Pennsylvania, an "Ashmun Institute" was founded (this would become Lincoln University).

[Henry Thoreau](#) was again being written by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in New Bedford.



Wrote an invitation to H.D. Thoreau of Concord, author of Walden, and sent a letter which I had on hand some time.



*Brooklawn, near New Bedford
Oct. 12th. 1854
Dear Mr Walden,*

1854

1854

Your long delayed, but very acceptable acknowledgement of the 1st Inst. came duly to hand. It requires no answer ~~I am aware~~ and I trust you will not esteem this as such. I simply wish to say, that it will afford me pleasure to show you the Middle boro ponds as well as the other Indian water spoken of by you, which I conclude to be what is called "Wakeby Pond" at Marshpee near Sandwich. Since I first wrote you my rough board shanty which I then inhabited & from which I now ~~as then~~ write,

Page 2

has been partially forsaken, the house of which I spoke to you ~~I think~~ as being built, having been completed & my family moved into it — so the shanty is somewhat shorn of its beams to the public or vulgar eye at least but none the less prized by me — here I spent a considerable part of my time in study & meditation, and here I also entertain my best & most welcome friends. Now friend Walen, if ~~you~~ it should be agreeable to you to leave home at this pleasant season, I shall be happy to receive you as my guest. Making my farm which lies about three miles north of New Bedford head quarters we can sally forth into the adjoining country — to the fine ponds in question and

Page 3

visit other objects of interest hitherround. I am just now quite busily engaged in the improvements of my grounds near my house but expect to conclude them by the end of next week, when should it meet your pleasure I shall be very happy to see you here. I am quite a tramper as well as yourself, but have ~~also~~ horseflesh & carriages at hand if preferable, which,

*certainly for long distances, with
all my ante-diluvian taste, I deem
to be.*

*Perhaps your young English friend &
author Mr Cholmondeley would
like to accompany you ~~if~~ should
you conclude to come, if so please
extend the invitation to him should
you deem it proper. I do not wish*

Page 4

*to push matters at all, but am
of the opinion, if you are not
too learned we shall affiliate
nicely in our rustic feelings
at any rate it will do no harm
to try.*

*Your short & hastily written note
embarrasses me & I hardly know
whether it best or no to send what
I have now written & so conclude
whether this shall reach you
or not*

*Your friend & fellow worshipper
at Nature's great shrine
Daniel Ricketson*



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 12th]



October 13, Friday: A chunk of gold was exhibited in [Sacramento, California](#), that had been taken from a lead tunneled into a hill. It had been found after 160 feet of tunneling. It weighed 56 ounces (by way of contrast, the regular daily total washings from a single sluice, when water was available, would tend to be between 30 and 50 ounces).

After the disaster that had happened to the *Yankee Blade*, which was seen to have been entirely preventible, the local newspaper was opinioning that the steamship’s owner “Cornelius Vanderbilt is morally and mentally insane, and ought to be incarcerated in an insane hospital.... Some of these steamboat millionaires treat passengers as if they were so many cattle — so many brutes — and C. Vanderbilt is one of the number whenever, in his opinion, his interest can be promoted by so doing.” A correspondent to the newspaper wrote in to add, that if such Captains “were huug [sic], as a penalty, there would soon be an end put to running fine steamers ashore in the day time.”



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 13th]



October 14, Saturday: [Japan](#) concluded a treaty with Great Britain.



Captain E.O.C. Ord got married with Mary Mercer Thompson in [San Francisco](#).

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [H.G.O. Blake](#).

*Concord Sat. Pm. Oct 14th '54
Blake,*

*I have just returned
from Plymouth, where I have
been detained surveying much
longer than I expected.
What do you say to visiting
Wachusett next Thursday?
I will start at 7. 1/4 A.m. unless
there is a prospect of a stormy day,
go by cars to Westminster, & thence
on foot 5 or 6 miles to the
Mt top, where I may engage to*

*Page 2
meet you at (or before) 12.M.
If the weather is unfavorable,
I will try again—on Friday,—&
again on Monday.
If a storm comes on after starting,
I will seek you at the tavern
in Princeton Center, as soon
as circumstances will permit.*

1854

1854

*I shall expect an answer [at once]
to clinch the bargain.*

Yrs

Henry D. Thoreau. <not HDT>

Thoreau, who had at this point arrived back in Concord, was being written to by an abolitionist and businessman and abolitionism coordinator, [Asa Fairbanks](#), in [Rhode Island](#), representing the [Providence](#) Lyceum:



Providence Oct 14[.] [1854]

Henry D Thoreau

Dear Sir

*Our Course of Independent[,] or
reform Lectures (ten in number) we propose
to commence [N]ext [M]onth. Will you give me
the liberty to put your name in program, and
say when it will suit your [convenience] to come.
every Lecturer will choose his own subject,
but we expect all[,] whether [Anti[S]lavery] or
what else, will be of a reformatory [Character]*

who

*We have engaged Theodore Parker[,] ^will give
the Introductory Nov. 1st[.] (Garrison, W. Phillips
[Thomas] W. Higginson Lucy Stone (Mrs Rose of New York[]
Antoinett L[]Brown and hope to [have] Cassius [M.]
Clay, & Henry Ward Beecher, (we had a course
of these lectures last year and the receipts from*

[] tickets at a low price paid expenses and [#] fifteen to twenty dollars to the Lecturers — we think we shall do as well this year as last, and perhaps better[,] the Anthony [Burns affair] and the of [S]lavery Nebraska bill, and other outrages has done much to awaken the feeling of a class of [M]inds heretofore [quiet,] on all questions of reform

Page 2

In getting up these popular Lectures [we] thought [at] first, it would not do us well to have [them] too radical, or it would be best to have a part of the speakers of the conservative class, but experience has shown us [St] in Providence surely, that the [M]asses who attend such Lectures are better suited with reform lectures than with the old school conservatives[.] I will thank you for an early reply

Yours Respectfully for [true freedom]

A. Fairbanks

<miscellaneous nature notes on remainder of page, reading from opposite direction>

THOMAS WENTWORTH HIGGINSON
THEODORE PARKER



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 14th]



October 15, Saturday: The Lawrence, [Kansas Territory](#) Kansas Tribune appeared (it would be generally antigovernment and [anti-slavery](#)).

[Judge Phisic Rush Elmore](#) would serve on the [Kansas Territory](#) supreme court from this day until September 13th, 1855, when he would be removed by [President Franklin Pierce](#), along with Judge Saunders W. Johnston and Governor Andrew H. Reed, due to allegations of unlawful purchases of Kansas Indian lands (the charges were later demonstrated to be unfounded, and he would be reappointed by President James Buchanan as an associate judge on August 13th, 1858, a position in which he would serve until February 9th, 1861).

[Florence Nightingale](#) was solicited to organize nurses for service in the [Crimea](#).



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 15th]

YOU HAVE TO ACCEPT EITHER THE REALITY OF TIME OVER THAT OF CHANGE, OR CHANGE OVER TIME — IT’S PARMENIDES, OR HERACLITUS. I HAVE GONE WITH HERACLITUS.



October 16, Sunday: [Oscar Fingal O’Flahertie Wills Wilde](#) was born in Dublin.

The Sheriff of [San Francisco](#), William R. Gorham, auctioned off the College House at the Mission Dolores to satisfy its debts (John Nobile was the high bidder).

CALIFORNIA



Oct. 16. In the streets the ash and most of the elm trees are bare of leaves; the red maples also for the most part, apparently, at a distance. The pines, too, have fallen. [Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



October 17, Monday: British and French troops began a 2-day bombardment of Sevastopol in the [Crimea](#), and a siege.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 17th]

1854

1854



October 18, Wednesday: [Henry Thoreau](#)'s plan for his "Course of Lectures" changed when he received the letter from [Asa Fairbanks](#) asking him to permit his name to appear in a program of reform lectures scheduled to commence in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) on November 1st. Fairbanks advised Thoreau that:

every Lecturer will choose his own Subject, but we expect all, whether Antislavery or what else, will be of a reformatory Character



After a week of meetings in Belgium, the American ambassadors to Great Britain, France and Spain issued the Ostend Manifesto urging their government to annex [Cuba](#) if Spain was unwilling to cede it.

[Hector Berlioz](#) wrote Chapter 59 of his Mémoires, which included a description of Harriet Smithson's death and funeral.

La nonne sanglante, an opéra by Charles Gounod to words of Scribe and Delavigne after Lewis, was performed for the initial time, at the Paris Opéra. This would ultimately fail.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 18th]

1854

1854



October 19, Wednesday: [Hector Berlioz](#) got married with Marie-Geneviève Recio in a civil ceremony by a notary in the Mairie of the 2me arrondissement of Paris, and then followed this up with a religious ceremony in L'Eglise de la Trinité. Among the guests was [Giacomo Meyerbeer](#).

The *Revue et gazette musicale* published a letter from Olympe Pélissier denying persistent rumors that her husband Gioachino Rossini had become insane.

Review of [Henry Thoreau](#)'s new [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#), on the 1st page of the Boston [Evening Transcript](#):

WALDEN Print H

A very remarkable book; one which appeals to the loftiest instincts of man, and which, we are sure, is already making a deep impression on some souls.... The influence of Mr. Thoreau exerts will not at once spread over a large surface, but it will reach far out into the tide of time, and it will make up in depth for what it wants in extent.

[Thoreau](#) left home in Concord at 7:15 AM to catch the train to Westminster. "Thence on foot to Wachusett Mountain, four miles to Foster's, and two miles thence to mountaintop by road." [Thoreau, Thomas Cholmondeley](#), and [H.G.O. Blake](#) spent the night at [Daniel Foster](#)'s farm in Princeton, Massachusetts (the former Congregationalist minister of Concord, unfortunately, wasn't at home to chat with them) but were at the summit of Wachusett for dawn of the following day.



October 19: 7.15 A.M. — To Westminster by cars; thence on foot to Wachusett Mountain, four miles to Foster's, and two miles thence to mountain-top by road.

[Transcript]

The country above Littleton (plowed ground) more or less sugared with snow, the first I have seen. We find a little on the mountain/top. The prevailing tree on this mountain, top and all, is apparently the red oak, which toward and on the top is very low and spreading. Other trees and shrubs which I remember on the top are beech, *Populus tremuliformis*, mountain/ash (looking somewhat like sumach), witch-hazel, white and yellow birch, white pine, black spruce, etc., etc. Most of the deciduous woods *look as if* dead. On the sides, beside red oak, are rock maple, yellow birch, lever/wood, beech, chestnut, shagbark, hemlock, striped maple, witch/hazel, etc., etc.

With a glass you can see vessels in Boston Harbor from the summit, just north of the Waltham hills.

Two white asters, the common ones, not yet quite out of bloom,— *A. acuminatus* and perhaps *cordifolius* (hearted, with long sharp teeth). The *Geranium Robertianum* in bloom below the woods on the east side.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



October 20, Thursday: [Jean Nicolas Arthur Rimbaud](#) was born.



Oct. 20: Saw the sun rise from the mountain-top. This is the time to look westward. All the villages, steeples, and houses on that side were revealed; but on the east all the landscape was a misty and gilded obscurity. It was worth the while to see westward the countless hills and fields all apparently flat, now white with frost. A little white fog marked the site of many a lake and the course of the Nashua, and in the east horizon the great pond had its own fog mark in a long, low bank of cloud.

[Transcript]

Soon after sunrise I saw the pyramidal shadow of the mountain reaching quite across the State, its apex resting on the Green or Hoosac Mountains, appearing as a deep/blue section of a cone there. It rapidly contracted, and its apex approached the mountain itself, and when about three miles distant the whole conical shadow was very distinct. The shadow of the mountain makes some minutes' difference in the time of sunrise to the inhabitants

of Hubbardston, within a few miles west.

F. hyemalis, how long?

Saw some very tall and large dead chestnuts in the wood between Foster's and the mountain. Wachusett Pond appeared the best place from which to view the mountain (from a boat). Our host had picked thirty-four bushels of shagbarks last year. *For the most part* they do not rattle out yet, but it is time to gather them. On account of squirrels now is the time.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



October 21, Friday: The severest earthquake since 1851 struck [San Francisco](#) at 7:30 PM.

CALIFORNIA

The Lawrence, [Kansas Territory Herald of Freedom](#) appeared (it would be generally antigovernment and [anti-slavery](#)).

[Florence Nightingale](#) was posted to the Crimea with a staff of 38 nurses.

Review of [Henry Thoreau's WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#), by "D'A" on the 1st page of the Boston [Atlas](#):

It is a sorrowful surprise that a constant communion with so much beauty and beneficence was not able to kindle one spark of genial warmth in this would-be savage. Pithy sarcasm, stern judgement, cold condemnation - all abound in the pages of this volume.... There is not a page, a paragraph giving one sign of liberality, charitableness, kind feeling, generosity, in a word - heart.

TIMELINE OF WALDEN



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 21st]



October 22, Sunday: Mary Katherine Monroe was born to [Professor and Mrs. James Wilbur Monroe and Elisabeth Maxwell Monroe](#) in [Oberlin, Ohio](#).



Oct. 22. This and the last two days Indian-summer weather, following hard on that sprinkling of west of Concord. [Transcript]
Pretty hard frosts these nights. Many leaves fell last night, and the Assabet is covered with their fleets. Now they rustle as you walk through them in the woods. Bass trees are bare. The redness of huckleberry bushes is past its prime. I see a snapping turtle, not yet in winter quarters. The chickadees are picking the seeds out of pitch pine cones.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



October 23, Monday: [William Wells Brown](#) spoke with great sarcasm at West Chester, Pennsylvania: “You welcomed the fugitive from European oppression, and, after shaking hands with him and congratulating him on his escape, you turn to catch the fugitive from American oppression and return him to his chains. And when you could find no better man to welcome, you welcomed [John Mitchel](#), who is ready to join in the chase with you.”

The 2d and 3d movements of the Piano Sonata no.3 op.5 of [Johannes Brahms](#) were performed for the initial time, in Leipzig.

In an intriguing aspect of the Crimean War, the English newspaper “The Times of London” began to offer to the general public precise information as to British military positions in Crimea (oh, weren’t those the good old days).

The brass star of the [Boston](#) police was exchanged for a silver octagon oval plate badge. The men were issued a 14-inch club in replacement of the watchhook which had been in use for 154 years.

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Thaddeus William Harris](#).



Concord Oct 23^d '54
Sir,
I return herewith the “Bhagvat Geeta”. Will you please send me the “Vishnoo Purana” a single volume — translated by Wilson.
Yrs respec^{ly}
Henry D. Thoreau.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 23d]



October 24, Tuesday: Traveling from London to his post in Madrid, US ambassador to Spain Pierre Soulé was refused entry into France at Calais and turned around and went back to London (France may have been irritated by the Ostend Manifesto of October 18th).



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 24th]

1854

1854

 October 25, Wednesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) checked out, again, from [Harvard Library](#), the [Horace Hayman Wilson](#) translation from Sanskrit into English of THE LAWS OF *MENU*, OR THE *VISHNU PURÁNA* (London, 1840). Then, back in Concord, he went sailing on the [Assabet River](#).

Prince Menshikov of Crimea occupied the British base at Balaclava.

The 7th Earl of Cardigan, Major General James Thomas Brudenell, leading a charge across the face of batteries of cannons near Balaklava just south of Sevastopol in the [Crimea](#), left 2 out of 3 of the soldiers in his Light Cavalry Brigade lying on the ground (400 of 607), and became a popular hero in Britain. The result was the cardigan sweater and “Charge of the Light Brigade” by [Alfred, Lord Tennyson](#).



Oct. 25. On Assabet.

The maples being bare, the great hornet nests are exposed. A beautiful, calm Indian-summer afternoon, the withered reeds on the brink reflected in the water.

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

 October 26, Thursday: In San Francisco, there was a public auction by Selover & Sinton at 11 AM, to sell the interest of the state of [California](#) in water lot property, by order of the California Land Commission. Another earthquake shock was felt. This was followed, around midnight, by a swell in San Francisco Bay.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Conantum.

C.B. Bernard of Akron, Ohio wrote to [Thoreau](#) as a lecturer — potentially, if and when he got that far west.



*Akron Oct 26, 1854
Henry D. Thoreau Esq
Concord Mass— Dear Sir
Seeing your name announced as a Lecturer, I write you a line to see if your services could be secured to give a Lecture before the Library Association of this place.*

We can give #50-
Thinking you might have other calls this way, we thought we would add our so-
licitation with the rest
Yours Respectfully
C B Bernard
Cor Sec



Oct. 26. P.M. — To Conantum.

[Transcript]

As warm as summer. Cannot wear a thick coat. Sit with windows open. I see considerable gossamer on the causeway and elsewhere. Is it the tree sparrows whose jingles I hear? As the weather grows cooler and the woods more silent, I attend to the cheerful notes of chickadees on their sunny sides. Apple trees are generally bare, as well as bass, ash, elm, maple.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



October 27, Friday: [Robert Schumann](#)'s Piano Concerto in A Minor was performed in Weimar, with Clara Schumann at the piano and Franz Liszt conducting.

[Phineas Taylor Barnum](#) signed a contract with the [New-York](#) publishing house of J.S. Redfield, calling for delivery of a manuscript on the following day.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 27th]



October 28, Saturday: A 2d edition of [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#)'s [MOSSSES FROM AN OLD MANSE](#) was published by Ticknor and Fields of Boston.

Review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) on page 3 of William Mathews's [Yankee Blade](#):

WALDEN; or Life in the Woods. By Henry D. Thoreau. Boston: Ticknor & Fields. — This is a charming volume by a writer who reminds us of Emerson by his philosophy — of the Elizabethan writers by his quaintness and originality — and by his minuteness and acuteness of observation, of Gilbert White, the author of the Natural History of Selborne. Mr. Thoreau lived alone in the woods for two years, a mile from any neighbor, in a house which he had built himself in Concord, Mass., on the shore of Walden Pond. In the present volume he relates in a lively and sparkling, yet pithy style, his experiences during that period — describing the various natural phenomena, the sights and sounds, as well as the different phases of humanity, that fell under his observation, and favoring us with exact statistics of the cost of supporting his hermit life. It is rarely that one finds so much originality and freshness in a modern book —such an entire absence of conventionality and cant—



1854

1854

or so much suggestive observation on the philosophy of life. Almost every page abounds in brilliant and piquant things, which, in spite of the intellectual pride of the author -the intense and occasionally unpleasant egotism with which every line is steeped- lure the reader on with bewitched attention from title-page to finis. Mr. Thoreau has an odd twist in his brains, but, as Hazlitt says of Sir Thomas Browne, they are "all the better for the twist." The best parts of the book, to our mind, are those which treat of Sounds, Solitude, Brute Neighbors, Winter Animals, The Pond in Winter, and Reading; the poorest, the Conclusion, in which he tries to Emersonize, and often ["]attains" triumphantly to the obscurity which he seems to court.



Oct. 28. Saturday. The woods begin to look bare, reflected in the water, and I look far in between the stems of the trees under the bank. Birches, which began to change and fall so early, are still in many places yellow.

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

1854

1854

 October 29, Sunday: [Moncure Daniel Conway](#) was elected to be the minister of the [Unitarian](#) church in [Washington DC](#).¹⁸³

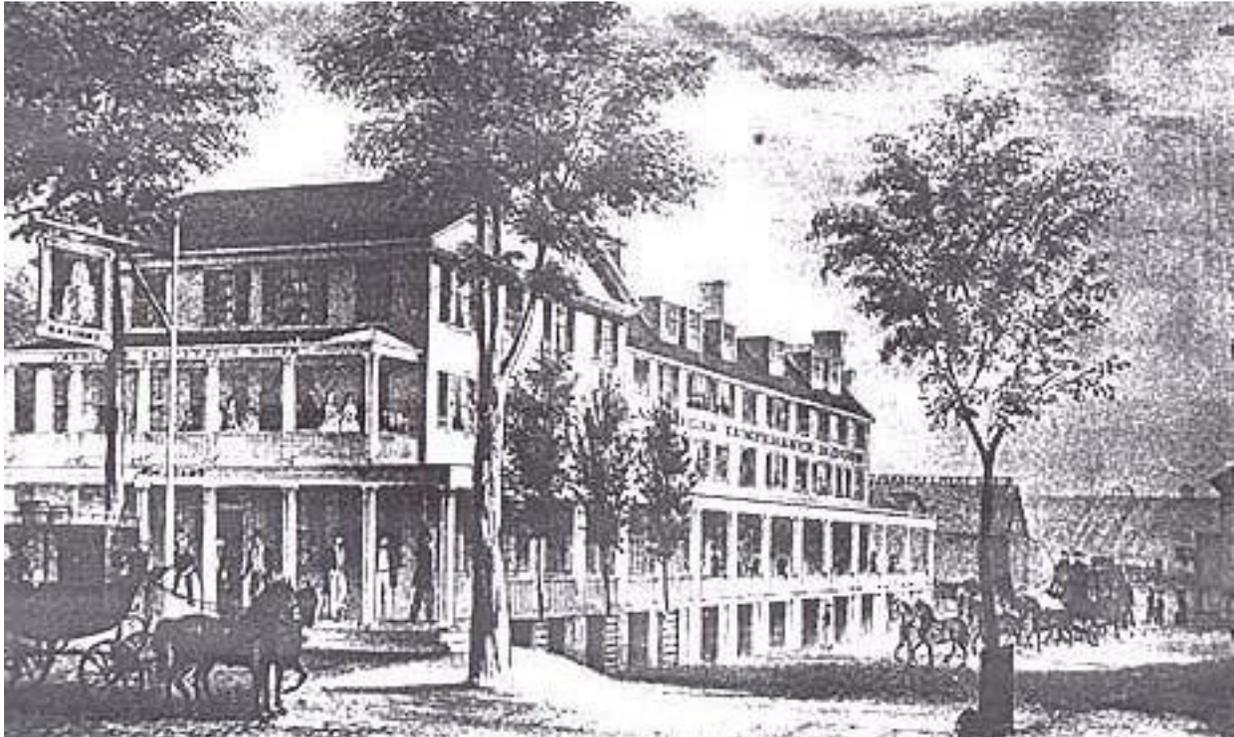
AUTOBIOGRAPHY

VOLUME II

[Henry Thoreau](#) seems to have decided, by this point in late October, that he was going to write a lecture of the “reformatory Character” on “Art of Life” that had been requested by [Asa Fairbanks](#) in the letter he received on October 18th. (This would begin as “[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT](#)” and continued through “[LIFE MISSPENT](#)” to become what we know as “[LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE](#)”.)

**BRAD DEAN'S
COMMENTARY**

Also, in late October, in [Worcester](#), a heavy-set man registered at the American Temperance House Hotel at the intersection of Main Street and Foster Street.¹⁸⁴



He was a lawman, he was the [US Marshall Asa O. Butman](#) who had arrested the young presser [Anthony Burns](#) in Boston in May, and he was back from escorting Burns to the custody of his owner in Virginia. What was such a man up to in Worcester, and what was to be done about it? As a nonresistant, [Stephen](#)

183. While a minister in [Washington DC](#), Conway would become special friends with [Helen Fiske](#), who after two husbands, as [Helen Hunt Jackson](#), would relocate to Southern [California](#) and plead in a novel titled RAMONA for the rights of Native Americans.

184. President Martin Van Buren had stayed a night at this hotel in 1845 and another night in 1848. At various times General Sam Houston of Texas and John Greenleaf Whittier were also guests of this famous hotel.

[Symonds Foster](#) had of course not become a member of the Reverend [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#)'s



“Worcester Vigilance Committee,” so, while that vigilance committee was going around passing out its LOOK OUT FOR KIDNAPPERS handbills and trying to drum up a mob so they could throw a “tar and feathers party” in Butman’s honor, Foster and some fifty of his nonresistant friends, white and black, took direct action. They assembled in front of the American House and kept ringing the doorbell and arguing with the landlord, long into the night, until finally Butman appeared in the doorway with pistol in hand and threatened them. They promptly swore out a complaint and had the marshal arrested. The next morning, at Butman’s arraignment, the courtroom and surrounding streets were jammed with spectators. At a brief adjournment in the proceedings, about six black men got into the room with Butman, and commenced beating on him. Although the city marshal did manage to arrest one of the assailants, there were too many common citizens present and clearly the forces of law and order –which flourish best in the dark– were not in charge of that day and that place. There was a conference between community leaders and city officials, and, as a result of this negotiation, Butman, Higginson, Foster, and some others left the courthouse in a tight group. The promise that had been made was that Butman could have safe passage out of [Worcester](#) if he would agree never to return there. The tight group managed to get Butman to the downtown train station more or less intact, at the expense of his having received in transit from the members of the crowd one blow of the fist, one thrown egg, and miscellaneous kicks, but the train had just left. So Butman was unceremoniously locked in the depot privy for an hour while the members of the escort committee made speeches to the crowd and waited nervously for the arrival of a hack that could get the man safely back to Boston.

When the entire affair was over and Butman was safe, Foster, his friend Joseph Howland, and some other nonresistants and some black men who had allegedly beat on Butman were placed under arrest on the charge of inciting to riot. Foster refused to post bail and demanded that his wife [Abby Kelley Foster](#) be permitted to act as his lawyer. Which was unheard of, no female had ever appeared in court as a lawyer in the history of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts! At the end of it the grand jury indicted the black defendants for assaulting Butman, but acquitted the nonresistants.

[Thoreau](#) received a written request from [Mary Moody Emerson](#), asking that he repeat his [Plymouth](#) lectures of February 22, 1852 and October 8, 1854 for the benefit of his neighbors.

Father [Isaac Hecker](#), CSSR wrote to [Orestes Augustus Brownson](#), noting how easy it was for him to see right through the pretensions of his friend the author, [Henry Thoreau](#):

Under his seeming trustfulness and frankness ... he conceals an immense amount of pride, pretension and infidelity.





1854

1854

About [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#), he commented that he had not read “all his book through” but doubted that “anyone else will except as a feat.” All in all [Henry Thoreau](#)’s literary accomplishment he depicted as inferior to his own as-yet-unfinished, as-yet-untitled production. Although he here suggested that [Brownson](#) take a shot at this new book by Thoreau in [Brownson’s Quarterly Review](#), Brownson would not in fact ever venture so to do:

Do give in yr next Review a notice of “Thoreau’s Life in the woods”. He places himself fairly before the public and is a fair object of criticism. I have not read all his book through, and I don’t think any one will except as a feat. I read enough in it to see that under his seeming truthfulness & frankness he conceals an immense amount of pride, pretention & infidelity. This tendency to solitude & asceticism means something, and there is a certain degree of truthfulness & even bravery in his attempts to find out what this something is; but his results are increased pride, pretention & infidelity, instead of humility, simplicity, & piety. He makes a great ado about the cheapness of his house, and gives us a list of his articles of diet as something to be looked at & admired; but why a house at all? Why this long list of luxuries? The Hermit Fathers did without all these. They dwelt in holes & caves & lived on roots & water. Thoreau lives a couple of years in the midst of [Walden Woods] – with the help of his friends, and lo he sets to crowing to wake up his neighbors. The Hermit Fathers lived 60 100 years & upwards in perfect solitude & silence & when discovered plunge deeper into the desert, and die as they lived in solitude & silence. The poor man Thoreau does not know what cheap stuff his heroism is made of. He wants waking up. He brags of not having committed himself in not having purchased a farm, he forgets that he takes a deed for his book in the shape of a copy right. His recontre with the Catholic Canadian shows according to his own account to every other mind except his own, that of the two, the Canadian was the truer, braver, & greater man. You can give him a good notice, for he was a young friend of yours. What has all his efforts & struggling done for him? What would these efforts not do inside & under the divine influence of the H Church. The time is coming when our young, earnest, and enterprising American youth will find that it is the Church of God they seek – and they will find in her bosom the sphere for their activities & the true objects of their search & aspirations.... I put into the hands of Appleton to-day or to-morrow the first 12 chapters of my book. Including “The Model Man” & “The Model Life” two chapters which I have written since I saw you. I think I have been successful in doing what I intended these two chapters which I considered the most difficult task from the beginning.



Oct. 29. Sunday. Detected a large English cherry in Smith's woods beyond Saw Mill Brook by the peculiar fresh orange-scarlet color of its leaves, now that almost all leaves are quite dull or withered. The same in gardens. The gooseberry leaves in our garden and in fields are equally and peculiarly fresh scarlet.

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

NEVER READ AHEAD! TO APPRECIATE OCTOBER 29TH, 1854 AT ALL ONE MUST APPRECIATE IT AS A TODAY (THE FOLLOWING DAY, TOMORROW, IS BUT A PORTION OF THE UNREALIZED FUTURE AND IFfy AT BEST).

October 30, Monday: Henry Thoreau wrote to Charles Sumner.



Concord Oct. 30th '54
Charles Sumner Esq.
Dear Sir,
At this late
date I would acknowledge
the receipt long ago of three
speeches by yourself, and the
Coast Survey Report for '52,—
and lately of the 2d Report
on the Amazon. I heartily
thank you for them all, and
assure you that they have
not in any sense been mis-
sent. I am quite greedy
for the information which
they contain. [These] faithful
reports[,] with their admirable
maps and plates, are some
atonement for the misdeeds
of our Government.
Yrs truly
Henry D. Thoreau.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 30th]



October 31, Tuesday: [Jefferson Davis](#) visited the United States Military Academy at West Point.

[Henry Thoreau](#) was being written a bread-and-butter note by [Charles Sumner](#) in Boston, in appreciation of the author having provided him a gift copy of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#).



Boston 31st Oct[.] '54
My dear Sir,
I am glad to send books where they are so well appreciated as in your chamber. Permit me to say that the courtesy of[y'] letter admonishes me of my short-coming in not sooner acknowledging the gift of[y'] book. [Believe] me I had not forgotten it; but I proposed to write you,
Henry D. Thoreau [esq.]

Page 2
when I had fully read & enjoyed it. At present I have been able to [peruse] only the early chapte[rs], & [some] detached parts, — enough, however, to satisfy me that you have made a [contribution] to the [permanent] [literature] of our mother tongue, [&] to make me happy in your success.
[Believe me], dear Sir,
Sincerely Yours,
Charles Sumner



Oct. 31. Rain; still warm.

Ever since October 27th we have had remarkably warm and pleasant Indian summer, with frequent frosts in the morning. Sat with open window for a week.

[Transcript]



1854

1854

NOVEMBER 1854

 November: This month's issue of [Harper's New Monthly Magazine](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE

[Aaron Dwight Stevens](#), an Army bugler, son of a Connecticut church choirmaster, wrote a breathless letter home to his sister Lydia Stevens about riding out West with the horse soldiers of the [1st US Regiment of Dragoons](#) in New Mexico Territory. Their activities had prevented him from writing since April when the patrols began. Company F, his unit, had already experienced “two fights with the Patches [Apaches], this year and had 9 men killed & 10 wounded ... and as luck would have it, I have got off safe so far, but they may get me yet.” Within a few months he and more than a dozen of his comrades would riot against their severe [Major George Alexander Hamilton Blake](#) in the dusty Taos Plaza. This bugler and 3 other soldiers would escape execution only because President [Franklin Pierce](#) and Secretary of War [Jefferson Davis](#), would commute their sentences by citing mitigating circumstances. In a unique turn of events, the US Army would cashier its company commander for chronic intoxication, order the demotion and transfer of his company's noncommissioned officers, and transfer all its enlisted men to other New Mexico units, subjecting the company's 1st lieutenant and the squadron's commanding officer to courtmartial and, for good measure, exiling [Major Blake](#) from New Mexico Territory.

 November: Letter from [David Lee Child](#) and [Lydia Maria Child](#) to [Ellis Gray Loring](#): Crichtlow as rogue; Buddhist tracts.

LETTERS FROM NEW YORK

 November: [Bronson Alcott](#) visited [George Washington Briggs](#) “concerning [Louisa](#)'s book of ‘Flower Fables’ which he is printing as a child's Christmas gift.”

THE ALCOTT FAMILY

The type of [photograph](#) which became known as the *carte-de-visite* –because the same size as and often used in a similar manner to a visiting card (2½" x 4", on which the image is sized 2¼" x 3½")– was introduced in Paris by André-Adolphe-Eugène Disdéri (1819-1890). In this albumen-prints-from-wet-collodion-negatives process, because of the lens that was used, eight to ten images could be made on one standard-size glass plate, so that the positive prints made from this plate could then be cut apart with scissors and presented on eight to ten different occasions to eight to ten different people. The exposures could be made either simultaneously, for identity and convenience, or consecutively, to obtain different poses, at the customer's choice.

How to Tell Them Apart:

Daguerreotype	direct positive, reversed image	mirrorlike surface shifts from positive to negative as you tilt it	August 19, 1839- <i>circa</i> 1860
Ambrotype	direct positive, reversed image	pry the sheets apart and shine a light through from the back to verify that the image is negative	1855- <i>circa</i> 1865
<i>Carte de Visite</i>	non-reversed image	wedding band is on the proper hand, you can read the titles of books, and clothing is buttoned properly for each gender	1854- <i>circa</i> 1925
“Tintype” (Ferrotype)	direct positive, reversed image	The metal is attracted to a magnet and there is no mirror appearance	1856- <i>circa</i> 1945

 November: This month’s issue of [Harper’s New Monthly Magazine](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE



[Aaron Dwight Stevens](#), an Army bugler, son of a Connecticut church choirmaster, wrote a breathless letter home to his sister Lydia Stevens about riding out West with the horse soldiers of the [1st US Regiment of Dragoons](#) in New Mexico Territory. Their activities had prevented him from writing since April when the patrols began. Company F, his unit, had already experienced “two fights with the Patches [Apaches], this year and had 9 men killed & 10 wounded ... and as luck would have it, I have got off safe so far, but they may get me yet.” Within a few months he and more than a dozen of his comrades would riot against their severe [Major George Alexander Hamilton Blake](#) in the dusty Taos Plaza. This bugler and 3 other soldiers would escape execution only because President [Franklin Pierce](#) and Secretary of War [Jefferson Davis](#), would commute their sentences by citing mitigating circumstances. In a unique turn of events, the US Army would cashier its company commander for chronic intoxication, order the demotion and transfer of his company’s noncommissioned officers, and transfer all its enlisted men to other New Mexico units, subjecting the company’s 1st lieutenant and the squadron’s commanding officer to courtmartial and, for good measure, exiling [Major Blake](#) from New Mexico Territory.

 November: During this month and the following one, the [Reverend Theodore Parker](#) was writing and rewriting and rewriting a 125,000-word sermon in his own defense, which he intended to deliver in court. (This effort would eventually be published as THE TRIAL OF THEODORE PARKER FOR THE “MISDEMEANOR” OF A SPEECH IN FANEUIL HALL AGAINST KIDNAPPING, BEFORE THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE UNITED STATES, AT BOSTON, WITH THE DEFENCE.)

Read  [Henry Thoreau’s Journal for November 1854 \(æf. 37\) in th 1907 version](#)

 November 1, Wednesday: [Sojourner Truth](#)’s \$300 mortgage on her home at 31 Park Street in [Northampton](#) was marked paid in full.



Nov. 1. It is a little cooler.

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

1854

1854



November 1, Wednesday: The personal library of [Francis Sales](#) was sold at auction (Harvard Library has an inventory of the volumes).



[Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Abbé Adrien-Emmanuel Rouquette](#) of [New Orleans](#), appreciating [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) and asking for a copy of [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#).



Mandeville, St. Tammany, La. 1.^e Nov 1854
 Mr Henry D. Thoreau.
 Monsieur—,
 En lisant le numero dans
 Novembre de la Revue de Putnam, je fut
 frappé par la courte notice sur [n]otre
 ouvrage intitulé: Walden; or, Life in the Woods.
 J'ai eu le bonheur de le trouver chez in libraire
 de la Nouvelle Orléans, et je l'ai lu presque
 en entier. Avant meme de l'avoir fini,
 j'éprouve le besoin de vous exprimer ma
 sincéré et cordiale admiration. Votre livre
 m'a immensément intéressé; il m'a rappelé
 le "Voyage autour de ma chambre" du fam[eux]
 Xavier de Maistre; mais il est plus séri[eux]
 et plus philosophique. J'ose, Monsieur, vous



1854

prier de m'envoyer, si vous le pouvez (par la poste) un exemplaire de "A Week on the Concord and Merrimack rivers": vous me feriez le plus grand plaisir. Je vous pria d'accepter trois de mes ouvrages: Wild-Flowers—La Thébaéde en Amérique—et Un Discours—qui je vous envoie en memé temps que cette lettre.

1854

Page 2

Mon adresse est: Rev^d. Adrian Rouquette,
Mandeville, St. Tammany, Louisiana.
Croyez, Monsieur, é tous les sentiments
du respect et du sympathie avec lesquels
je suis votre
tout déviné Serviteur
A Rouquette
P.S. C'est par l'intermédiaire de Ticknor
& Fields que je vous envoie cette lettre et les
livres qui l'accompagnent.

1854

1854



November 2, Thursday: [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) was presented by [Waldo Emerson](#) with a copy of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#)¹⁸⁵ and these quite elevated gentlemen (6 foot 5; 6 foot 0) walked to [Walden Pond](#). On their walk they encountered a 3d quite elevated gentleman, [Thomas Cholmondeley](#).¹⁸⁶



185. [Emerson](#) was encouraging [Sanborn](#) to start a school in [Concord](#).

186. We may be forgiven for presuming in the absence of any record, that the Thomas Cholmondeley of the 19th Century was in all likelihood approximately of the altitude of the 21st Century's Thomas Cholmondeley, Lord Delamere, which is to say, the bloke was very approximately six foot six.

One may wonder how the wandering conversations might have turned, had this Brit colonialist [Thomas Cholmondeley](#) tried out on Emerson and Sanborn an idea such as this one on race from his *ULTIMA THULE*; OR, THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY A RESIDENCE IN NEW ZEALAND published in this year:

 Race is one of the chiefest elements of national greatness which can be conceived, for we all know that there is no making a silk purse out of a sow's ear. Educate the Negro, the Esquimaux, or even the Calmuc, to the highest degree, you never can make him the equal of the Englishman. In this respect the British colonies have been highly favoured. They have been peopled from some of the best races which the world contains.

Would [Emerson](#) and [Sanborn](#) have been horrified at this sort of race attitude, or would they have thrilled at the altitude of such an attitude?

RACISM

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) was paddling up the [Sudbury River](#) to [Clamshell Bank or Hill \(Gleason 23/G5\)](#).



Nov. 2. Thursday. P.M. — By boat to Clamshell.

[Transcript]

I suspect the clams are partly gone down. May not this movement contribute to compel the muskrats to erect their cabins nearer the brink or channel, in order still to be near their food? Other things being equal, they would have to swim further than before to get the clams in the middle, but now, in addition, the water is beginning to rise and widen the river.

I see larks hovering over the meadow and hear a faint note or two, and a pleasant note from tree sparrows (?). Sailing past the bank above the railroad, just before a clear sundown, close to the shore on the east side I see a second fainter shadow of the boat, sail, myself, and paddle, etc., directly above and upon the first on the bank. What makes the second? At length I discovered that it was the reflected sun which cast a higher shadow like the true one. As I moved to the west side, the upper shadow rose, grew larger and less perceptible: and at last when I was so near the west shore that I could melt see the reflected sun, it disappeared; but then there appeared one upside down in its place!

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

During the last decade of his life, Thoreau visited his rivers more than twice as often as the upland woods and lakes that he is far better known for writing about.
— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 3

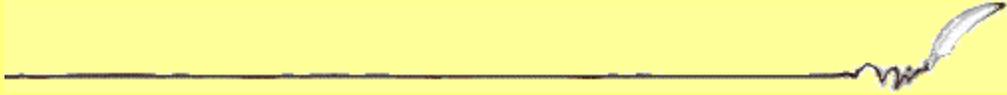


Table of Altitudes

☰	Yoda	2' 0 "
	Lavinia Warren	2' 8 "
	Tom Thumb, Jr.	3' 4 "
	Lucy (Australopithecus Afarensis)	3' 8 "
	Hervé Villechaize ("Fantasy Island")	3' 11"
	Charles Proteus Steinmetz	4' 0 "
	Mary Moody Emerson per FBS (1)	4' 3 "
	Alexander Pope	4' 6 "
	Benjamin Lay	4' 7 "
	Dr. Ruth Westheimer	4' 7 "
☰	Gary Coleman ("Arnold Jackson")	4' 8 "
	Edith Piaf	4' 8 "
	Queen Victoria with osteoporosis	4' 8 "
	Linda Hunt	4' 9 "
	Queen Victoria as adult	4' 10 "
	Mother Teresa	4' 10 "
	Margaret Mitchell	4' 10 "
	length of newer military musket	4' 10"
	Charlotte Brontë	4' 10-11"
	Tammy Faye Bakker	4' 11"
	Soviet gymnast Olga Korbut	4' 11"
	jockey Willie Shoemaker	4' 11"
	Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec	4' 11"
	Joan of Arc	4' 11"
	Bonnie Parker of "Bonnie & Clyde"	4' 11"
	Harriet Beecher Stowe	4' 11"
	Laura Ingalls Wilder	4' 11"
☰	a rather tall adult Pygmy male	4' 11"
	Gloria Swanson	4' 11"1/2
	Clara Barton	5' 0 "
	Isambard Kingdom Brunel	5' 0 "
	Andrew Carnegie	5' 0 "
	Thomas de Quincey	5' 0 "
	Dorothy Wordsworth	5' 0 "
	Stephen A. Douglas	5' 0 "
	Danny DeVito	5' 0 "
	Immanuel Kant	5' 0 "
	William Wilberforce	5' 0 "

Dollie Parton	5' 0 "
Mae West	5' 0 "
Pia Zadora	5' 0 "
Deng Xiaoping	5' 0 "
Dred Scott	5' 0 " (±)
Captain William Bligh of HMS <i>Bounty</i>	5' 0 " (±)
Harriet Tubman	5' 0 " (±)
Mary Moody Emerson per FBS (2)	5' 0 " (±)
John Brown of Providence, Rhode Island	5' 0 " (+)
John Keats	5' 3/4 "
Debbie Reynolds (Carrie Fisher's mother)	5' 1 "
Princess Leia (Carrie Fisher)	5' 1 "
Her Royal Highness The Princess Margaret	5' 1 "
Bette Midler	5' 1 "
Dudley Moore	5' 2 "
Paul Simon (of Simon & Garfunkel)	5' 2 "
Honoré de Balzac	5' 2 "
Sally Field	5' 2 "
Jemmy Button	5' 2 "
Margaret Mead	5' 2 "
R. Buckminster "Bucky" Fuller	5' 2 "
Yuri Gagarin the astronaut	5' 2 "
William Walker	5' 2 "
Horatio Alger, Jr.	5' 2 "
length of older military musket	5' 2 "
the artist formerly known as Prince	5' 2 1/2 "
typical female of Thoreau's period	5' 2 1/2 "
Francis of Assisi	5' 3 "
Voltaire	5' 3 "
Mohandas Gandhi	5' 3 "
Kahlil Gibran	5' 3 "
Friend Daniel Ricketson	5' 3 "
The Reverend Gilbert White	5' 3 "
Soviet First Secretary Nikita Khrushchev	5' 3 "
Sammy Davis, Jr.	5' 3 "
William Laws Calley, Jr.	5' 3 "
Truman Capote	5' 3 "
Kim Jong Il (North Korea)	5' 3 "
Stephen A. "Little Giant" Douglas	5' 4 "
Francisco Franco	5' 4 "
President James Madison	5' 4 "



Iosef Vissarionovich Dzugashvili "Stalin"	5' 4 "
Alan Ladd	5' 4 "
Pablo Picasso	5' 4 "
Truman Capote	5' 4 "
Queen Elizabeth	5' 4 "
Ludwig van Beethoven	5' 4 "
Typical Homo Erectus	5' 4 "
typical Neanderthal adult male	5' 4 ¹ / ₂ "
Alan Ladd	5' 4 ¹ / ₂ "
comte de Buffon	5' 5 " (-)
Captain Nathaniel Gordon	5' 5 "
Charles Manson	5' 5 "
Audie Murphy	5' 5 "
Harry Houdini	5' 5 "
Hung Hsiu-ch'üan 洪秀全	5' 5 "
Marilyn Monroe	5' 5 ¹ / ₂ "
T.E. Lawrence "of Arabia"	5' 5 ¹ / ₂ "
average runaway male American slave	5' 5-6 "
Charles Dickens	5' 6? "
President Benjamin Harrison	5' 6 "
President Martin Van Buren	5' 6 "
James Smithson	5' 6 "
Louisa May Alcott	5' 6 "
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe	5' 6 ¹ / ₂ "
Napoleon Bonaparte	5' 6 ¹ / ₂ "
Emily Brontë	5' 6-7 "
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow	5' ? "
average height, seaman of 1812	5' 6.85 "
Oliver Reed Smoot, Jr.	5' 7 "
minimum height, British soldier	5' 7 "
President John Adams	5' 7 "
President John Quincy Adams	5' 7 "
President William McKinley	5' 7 "
"Charley" Parkhurst (a female)	5' 7 "
President, General Ulysses S. Grant	5' 7 "
Dr. Sigmund Freud	5' 7 "
Henry Thoreau	5' 7 "
the average male of Thoreau's period	5' 7 ¹ / ₂ "
Edgar Allan Poe	5' 8 "
President Ulysses S. Grant	5' 8 "
President William H. Harrison	5' 8 "





1854

1854

President James Polk	5' 8"
President Zachary Taylor	5' 8"
average height, soldier of 1812	5' 8.35"
President Rutherford B. Hayes	5' 8 ¹ / ₂ "
President Millard Fillmore	5' 9"
President Harry S Truman	5' 9"
President Jimmy Carter	5' 9 ¹ / ₂ "
Herman Melville	5' 9 ³ / ₄ "
Calvin Coolidge	5' 10"
Andrew Johnson	5' 10"
Theodore Roosevelt	5' 10"
Thomas Paine	5' 10"
Franklin Pierce	5' 10"
Abby May Alcott	5' 10"
Reverend Henry C. Wright	5' 10"
Nathaniel Hawthorne	5' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
Louis "Deerfoot" Bennett	5' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
Friend John Greenleaf Whittier	5' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
President Dwight David "Ike" Eisenhower	5' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots	5' 11"
Sojourner Truth	5' 11"
President Stephen Grover Cleveland	5' 11"
President Herbert Hoover	5' 11"
President Woodrow Wilson	5' 11"
President Jefferson Davis	5' 11"
President Richard Milhous Nixon	5' 11 ¹ / ₂ "
Robert Voorhis the hermit of Rhode Island	< 6'
Frederick Douglass	6' (-)
Anthony Burns	6' 0"
Waldo Emerson	6' 0"
Joseph Smith, Jr.	6' 0"
David Walker	6' 0"
Sarah F. Wakefield	6' 0"
Thomas Wentworth Higginson	6' 0"
President James Buchanan	6' 0"
President Gerald R. Ford	6' 0"
President James Garfield	6' 0"
President Warren Harding	6' 0"
President John F. Kennedy	6' 0"
President James Monroe	6' 0"
President William H. Taft	6' 0"



President John Tyler	6' 0 "
Captain John Brown	6' 0 (+)"
President Andrew Jackson	6' 1"
Alfred Russel Wallace	6' 1"
President Ronald Reagan	6' 1"
Venture Smith	6' 1 ¹ / ₂ "
John Camel Heenan	6' 2 "
Crispus Attucks	6' 2 "
Franz Liszt	6' 2 "
President Chester A. Arthur	6' 2 "
President George Bush, Senior	6' 2 "
President Franklin D. Roosevelt	6' 2 "
President George Washington	6' 2 "
Gabriel Prosser	6' 2 "
Dangerfield Newby	6' 2 "
Charles Augustus Lindbergh	6' 2 "
President Bill Clinton	6' 2 ¹ / ₂ "
President Thomas Jefferson	6' 2 ¹ / ₂ "
President Lyndon B. Johnson	6' 3 "
Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.	6' 3 "
Richard "King Dick" Seaver	6' 3 ¹ / ₄ "
President Abraham Lincoln	6' 4 "
Marion Morrison (AKA John Wayne)	6' 4 "
Elisha Reynolds Potter, Senior	6' 4 "
Thomas Cholmondeley	6' 4 " (?)
William Buckley	6' 4-7"
Franklin Benjamin Sanborn	6' 5 "
Peter the Great of Russia	6' 7 "
William "Dwarf Billy" Burley	6' 7 "
Giovanni Battista Belzoni	6' 7 "
Thomas Jefferson (the statue)	7' 6"
Jefferson Davis (the statue)	7' 7"
Martin Van Buren Bates	7' 11 ¹ / ₂ "
M. Bihin, a Belgian exhibited in Boston in 1840	8'
Anna Haining Swan	8' 1"



1854

1854

November 2, Thursday: The city of San Francisco began to pave Washington Street, between Dupont Street and Kearny Street, with cobblestones.

CALIFORNIA

Felix Mendelssohn's incomplete oratorio Christus to words of von Bunsen after the Bible was performed for the initial time, in Leipzig 2 days before the 7th anniversary of the composer's death.

November 3, Friday: In Dublin, University College was founded on the Feast of Saint Malachy, as the "Catholic University of Ireland," with John Henry Newman as its first rector.

On this day and the following day, Henry Thoreau surveyed on the 130-acre "Homestead" farm of General James Colburn (1757-1803).



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR NOVEMBER 3d]

November 4, Saturday: A lighthouse went into operation on Alcatraz Island (which is to say, "Pelican Island") in the middle of San Francisco Bay.

Florence Nightingale and 38 nurses arrived at the Barrack Hospital at Scutari in the Crimea near Constantinople and proceeded to upgrade sanitation.



Nov. 4. Saw a shrike in an apple tree, with apparently a worm in its mouth. The shad-bush buds have expanded into small leaflets already. This while surveying on the old Colburn farm.

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

HISTORY'S NOT MADE OF WOULD. WHEN SOMEONE REVEALS, FOR INSTANCE, THAT A PARTICULAR INFANT WOULD INVENT THE SEWING MACHINE, S/HE DISCLOSES THAT WHAT IS BEING CRAFTED IS NOT REALITY BUT PREDESTINARIANISM. THE HISTORIAN IS SETTING CHRONOLOGY TO "SHUFFLE," WHICH IS NOT A PERMISSIBLE OPTION BECAUSE IN THE REAL WORLD SUCH SHUFFLE IS IMPOSSIBLE. THE RULE OF REALITY IS THAT THE FUTURE HASN'T EVER HAPPENED, YET. THERE IS NO SUCH "BIRD'S EYE VIEW" AS THIS IN THE REAL WORLD, FOR IN THE REAL WORLD NO REAL BIRD HAS EVER GLIMPSED AN ACTUAL HISTORICAL SEQUENCE.



November 5, Monday: [Eugene Victor Debs](#) was born in Terre Haute, Indiana, to Jean Daniel and Marguerite Mari Bettrich Debs, immigrants from Colmar in Alsace, France.

Per [James and John Haun's diary](#) of working their claims in and around Quincy, Nelson Point, and Rabbit Creek (La Porte), [California](#): "Monday 5 – Not so cold of nights and warm days again. The boys did some sawing and splitting and I was at work on the hose. Thompson sent us up a lot of provisions.



Nov. 5th

I hate the present modes of living & getting a living — Farming & shopkeeping and working at a trade or profession are all so [^odious] to me — I should relish getting my living in a simple primitive fashion The life which society proposes to me to live — is so artificial and complex bolstered up on many weak supports and sure to topple down at last — that no man surely can ever be inspired to live it — & only "old fogies" ever praise it. At best some think it their duty to live it — I believe in the infinite joy & satisfaction of helping myself — and others to the extent of my ability — But what is the use in trying to live simply raising what you eat — making what you wear — building what you inhabit — burning what you

[Transcript]

cut or dig — when those to whom you
insanely
are allied[[^]]want & will have a thou-
sand other things which neither you
nor they can raise & nobody else
perchance will pay for — The fellow-man
to whom you are yoked is a steer that
is ever bolting right the other way.
I was suggesting once to a man
who was wincing under some of the
consequences — of our loose & expensive way of
living — but you might raise all
your own potatoes — &c &c — At which he
We had often done it at our house
& had some to sell — ~~At which he~~
demurring — I said setting it high
you could raise 20 bushels even.
But said he I use 35. How large
is you family — a wife & 3 infant
children — This was the real family
I need not enumerate those who were
hired to help eat the potatoes & waste
them. So he had to hire a man
to raise his potatoes.
Thus men invite the devil in at
every angle and then prate about the
garden of Eden & the fall of man.
I know many children to whom I would
fain make a present on some one of
their birth days — but they are so far gone
in the luxury of presents — have such
perfect museums of costly ones — that
it would absorb my entire earnings
for a year to buy them some thing which
would not be beneath their notice.
Pm to foot of F. H. Hill —
via Hubbard's Grove — I see the shepherds purse
hedge-mustard & red clover — November
flowers — Crossing the Depot Field Brook
I observe the downy fuzzy globular tops
of the aster puniceus — they are slightly tinged
with yellow — compared with the hoary grey
of the gray golden rod — The distant willow
tops are yellowish like them in the right
light. — At Hubbards Crossing I see
a large mail hen harrier [**Northern Harrier**  *Circus cyaneus*] skimming
over the meadow — its deep slate some-
what sprinkled or mixed with black — per-
haps young — It flaps a little. & then sails
straight forward. So low it must rise
at every fence — But I perceive that
it follows the windings of the meadow
over many fences — I pass a great
white pine stump — half a cord in it &
more turned up out of a meadow —
I look upon it with interest — and wish I
had it at my door — for there are many
warm fires in that.
You could have many thoughts & tell
many stories while that was burning.
Walked through Potters swamp — That
white birch fungus — always presents its

face to the ground — parallel with it —
 For here are some in an upright dead
 birch whose faces or planes are at
 right angles with the axes [[^]axis] of the tree
 as usual — looking down — but others
 attached to the top of the tree which
 lies prostrate on the ground have their
 planes parallel with the axis of the
 Where the epidermis is cracked ap. as they grew they are watered
 tree — as if looking round the birch, handsomely
 with white streams 1/8 an inch wide above.
 They have remarkably thick necks.
 They protrude through a rent in the bark carrying it along with
 their necks a little way.
 The brightness of the foliage [[^]generally] ceased
 pretty exactly with october — The still
 bright leaves which I see as I walk
 along the river edge of this swamp
 are — birches clear yellow at top —
 high blueberry — some very bright scarlet red
 still — Some sallows — Vib. nudum fresh
 dark red — Alder sprouts large green
 leaves Swamp pink buds
 now beg. to show — The late growth
 of the pyrus is now checked by the frost. —
 The bark of many frostweeds is now cracked
 or burst off & curled backward in 5 or 6
 strips for about an inch leaving
 the woody part bare at or an inch above
 the ground sometimes 5 or 6 inches above
 I suspect the frost is the dying breath of the weed — congealed
 the ground.
 I am pleased to see that the lower & larger
 4 or 5 leaves of the water andromeda on the edge
 of the meadow next the swamp — are pretty commonly
 turned a dark [[^]& dotted] scarlet now [[^]just as they fall] — confirming my old
 impression. I have not observed for some years.
 A nest made very thick of grass & stubble & lined
 with finer grass & horse hair as big as a kingbirds on
 an alder within 18 inches of ground close to the water at
 cardinal shore The alder had been broken down at

 that height by the ice. [[^]& the nest rested on the stub ends] I took a few dead leaves
 out & to my surprise found an egg. — very pale
 greenish-blue — Probably the Wood thrush [in pencil: ^no] if not the Olivaceous
 one — whose eggs I have not seen described. Not quite so big as a blue
 birds. This egg popped & burst suddenly with a noise
 about as loud as popping corn [[^]or like a pop gun] — while I held it in
 my hand in my chamber — [[^]it had been addled when new] I had another pop
 in the chamber some months ago — So you must
 blow them before you bring them into a warm room —
 [[^]V. Nov 13]
 I am puzzled with the lecheas
 are there not 4 kinds. 1st there is the L. Major
 with broad leaves — & then [[^]2nd] the least with fine spreading
 branches — & with branched shoots at base. 3d there is
 the very common one intermediate in size — with large fruit and
 linear lanceolate leaves now commonly fallen — But I see [[^]4th (?)] this
 p.m. one 15 inches high (half a dozen rods from Cardinal shore)
 & stout with leaves like the 3d but fruit but fruit very small
 & abundant. There is ap. a little recent growth opening of
 leaves at the extremities of it — [[^]some rad. shoots on stem 6 inches from ground!!] & 5th close by a slender one

a foot high with leaves elliptic pointed 1/2 inch x 1/6 & larger fruit than last, at top [^& generally] (May be a var. of L. Major?) (it has some leaves like it) It is perhaps the 3d kind which when only 3 or 4 inches high now has much dense linear leaves 1/2 inch plus long — pine tree like & spreading branches just above rad. shoots. [in pencil: ^V July 30 56] I find that one of my old oak logs which was lying on the damp bank of the river half rotted through below — contained many great black ants gone into winter quarters in those great eaten cells of the rotten wood. [^Yet this would have been covered with water in the winter.] Those with wings were 3/4 inch or more long. They move but slowly when exposed. In one I stump on splitting in the yard I find a clam shell carried in by a muskrat

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



November 6, Monday: John Philip Sousa was born in Washington DC, 3d of 10 children (only 6 would survive infancy) of John Antonio Sousa, a Portuguese immigrant and trombonist in the U.S. Marine Band, with Marie Elisabeth Trinkaus, an immigrant from Bavaria where her father was a small town mayor.

Henry Thoreau completed surveying the “Homestead” farm of General James Colburn (1757-1803. This farm of approximately 130 acres was near the Lee or Elwell Farm (Gleason E5) bordering on the Assabet River. Thoreau mentioned that there was a “haunted house” in this area.



Nov. 6. Surveying on Colburn place. It is suddenly cold. Pools frozen so as to bear, and ground frozen so that it is difficult, if not impossible, to force down a stake in plowed ground. Was that a fish hawk I saw flying over the Assabet, or a goshawk? White beneath, with slender wings.

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

Thoreau was being written to again by this Asa Fairbanks of Providence, Rhode Island in regard to the proposed lecture of a “reformatory Character”:



BRAD DEAN'S COMMENTARY

Providence Nov. 6. 1854 Mr Henry D Thore[a]u

Dear Sir

I am in receipt of yours of the 4th inst. Your stating explicitly that the 6th December would suit you better than any other time, I altered other arrangements on purpose to accommodate you, and notified you as soon as I was able to accomplish them. had you named the last Wedn[e]sday in Nov. or the second Wednesday in December, I could have replied to you at once—or any time in Janu[a]ry or Feb[ruary] it would have been the same[.] I shall regret the disappointment very Much but must submit to it if you have Made such overtures as you can not avoid— I hope however you will be able to come at the time appointed[.]

Truly

A. Fairbanks



The Reverend [Daniel Foster](#) was writing [Thoreau](#) from his farm in East [Princeton MA](#) that he and friends had been reading [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) aloud “with pauses for conversation.”

East Princeton Nov. 6. 1854.

Friend Thoreau,

On my return from a lecturing tour in the Mystic Valley Dom informed me of your call with your English [c]ompanion on your way to a meeting on the summit of Mt. Wachusett. I am glad you called but sorry that I was not at home. I hope you will come & see us while we are here & get acquainted with our pond “old crow hill,” “redemption rock” “Uncle William” now nearly 90 [years] old, bonnie Charlie & other notables of the place justly considered worthy the notice of a philosopher. I shall not tell you that you will be welcome as long as you can stay with us for if you don't know that fact the usual polite phrase of invitation will not assure you. I have read your “Walden” slowly, aloud with constant

Page 2

pauses for conversation thereon, & with very much satisfaction & profit. I like to read aloud of evenings a book which like this one provokes discussion in the circle of [hearers]

& reader. I was the more interested in your book from the personal & strong interest felt for you & for your own sake in my soul. My intercourse with you when I lived in Concord & since at times when I have been in Concord has been uncommonly useful in aiding & strengthening my own best purpose. Most thoroughly do I respect & reverence a manly self-poised mind. My own great aim in life has ever been to act in accordance with my own convictions. To be destitute of bank stock & rail road shares & the influence which wealth & position bestow through the folly of the unthinking multitude is no evil to that one who seeks truth & immortal living as the greatest & the best inheritance. In the scramble for money in which most men engage

Page 3

one may fail but whoever travels the road of patient study & self control reaches the goal & is crowned with the immortal wealth. I would not be understood in this to depreciate the value of wealth. I am working in the hope of being rich in this world's [gear] sometime through the ownership of a piece of land on which shall stand my own illuminated & happy home. But if I do not reach the accomplishment of this hope I will nevertheless bate no jot of my cheerfulness joy & energy till the end. I will deserve success & thus of course I shall succeed in all my hopes some time or other. I have enjoyed the ponds the hills & the woods of this vicinity very greatly this year. We have nothing quite equal to your Walden or Concord, but aside from these our natural attractions exceed yours. I have been farming & preaching this summer, have reared

Page 3

*to maturity & harvested 90 bushels
of corn one bushel beans, 8 bushels
potatoes, 20 bushels squashes &
20 bushels of apples. I cannot tell
with the same precision how
many thoughts I have called into
exercise by my moral husbandry
tho I hope my labor herein has not been
in vain.*

*Dom wishes to be remembered with
sisterly greetings to Sophia & yourself &
with filial affection to your father
& mother. We enjoyed the visit your
mother & sister repaid us very much indeed
& only regretted that Mr. Thoreau & yourself
were not with us at the same time[.]
I hope your "Walden" will get a wide
circulation, as it deserves, & replenish
your bank, as it ought to do. I thank
you for the book & will hold myself
your debtor till opportunity offers for
securing a receipt in full
Yours truly
Daniel Foster*

By way of radical contrast, when [Moncure Daniel Conway](#) read [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#), he didn't think much of the book as a guide to life. On this day he was listing his objections for [Waldo Emerson](#)'s benefit:

1. That it hasn't optimism enough ...
2. That one couldn't pursue **his** Art of Living and get married.
3. That one hasn't time to spend or strength to spare from what is his work to take care of such universal rebellion.

It is clear that Conway had not been reading [WALDEN](#) "with pauses for thought." To this minister, whose ideal of Nature was frankly that it should be like a garden where everything is in its place and under control and serving a purpose, [Thoreau](#) seemed like the kind of guy who couldn't live "unless snakes are coiling around his leg or lizzards perching on his shoulders." (Conway all his life had a morbid fear of and a morbid fascination with snakes: during his childhood he even had a slave walking in front of him to beat the ground with a stick and scare away these snakes. Obviously, if Thoreau wasn't afraid of snakes, there must be a whole lot of other things that were wrong with him as well!)¹⁸⁷

November 7, Tuesday: Henry Thoreau again surveyed, for Waldo Emerson, the sawmill woodlot in Lincoln near Sandy Pond Road leading to Flint's, or Sandy, Pond (Gleason J10) that he had surveyed on May 23, 1849 and March 15, 1850 and had enticed Emerson to purchase by taking him to a water-fall and rare flowers.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR NOVEMBER 7th]

November 8, Wednesday: Henry Thoreau raked clams.

The Constituent Cortes opened in Spain.



Nov. 8. I can still rake clams near the shore, but they are chiefly in the weeds, I think. I see a snipe-like bird by riverside this windy afternoon, which goes off with a sound like creaking tackle. [Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

November 9, Thursday: Franz Liszt conducted his symphonic poem Festklänge in its 1st performance, with Schiller's play Huldigung der Künste.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR NOVEMBER 9th]

November 10, Friday: In the afternoon Henry Thoreau and Ellery Channing sailed to Ball's Hill (Gleason D9).



Nov. 10. P.M. — Sail to Ball's Hill with W.E.C. See where the muskrats have eaten much pontederia root. Got some donacia grubs for Harris, but find no chrysalids. The sight of the masses of yellow hastate leaves and flower-buds of the yellow lily, already four or six inches long, at the bottom of the river, reminds me that nature is prepared for an infinity of springs yet. [Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

187. Conway's criticism of Thoreau to Emerson, that Thoreau hadn't optimism enough, sounds very strange if you bear in mind that later on in life Conway would repudiate Emerson on the grounds that Emerson was so optimistic that he was entirely unable to deal with the dark things in life!

During the last decade of his life, Thoreau visited his rivers more than twice as often as the upland woods and lakes that he is far better known for writing about.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 3



 November 11, Saturday: The Siberian Hunters, a romantic opera by Anton Rubinstein to words of Zherebtsov, was performed for the initial time, in the Weimar Hoftheater, directed by Franz Liszt.

A story by [Louisa May Alcott](#) appeared in Boston's [Saturday Evening Gazette](#), "The Rival Prima Donnas" by "Flora Fairfield."



[Henry Thoreau](#) had conversations with [George Minott](#) and with [Alek Therien](#). He received the package of 3 books, and letter in French, that had been posted by the [Abbé Adrien-Emmanuel Rouquette](#) in [New Orleans](#) on the 1st of the month. Total travel time from the [Louisiana](#) port to the Massachusetts port, plus pickup and delivery in Boston to the publishing firm of Ticknor, and forwarding to Concord, had been a remarkably short 10 days! The books in the package were, presumably:

- Father Rouquette's *LA THÉBLADE DE L'AMÉRIQUE*
- Father Rouquette's WILD FLOWERS
- Father Rouquette's LES SAVANES, POESIES AMERICAINES



Nov. 11. [Minott](#) heard geese go over night before last, about 8 P.M. [Therien](#), too, heard them "yelling like anything" over Walden, where he is cutting, the same evening. He cut down a tree with a flying squirrel on it; often sees them. Receive this evening a letter in French and three "ouvrages" from the [Abbe Rouquette](#) in Louisiana.

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

1854

1854

 November 12, Sunday: [Henry Thoreau](#)'s "["SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS"](#)" appeared in [The National Anti-Slavery Standard](#).

[TIMELINE OF ESSAYS](#)



In [San Francisco](#), William H. Mantz & Company began publication of [Town Talk](#).



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR NOVEMBER 12th]

 November 13, Monday: George Whitefield Chadwick was born in Lowell, Massachusetts, the youngest of 2 children born to Alonzo Calvin Chadwick, a carpenter in the Massachusetts Mills, with Hannah Godfrey Fitts who came from a family of musicians (the mother would die within a week, of puerperal fever).

[Edward Dickinson](#) was defeated in his bid to retain his seat representing Hampshire County in the US House of Representatives.

In England, [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#) was confiding to Monckton Milnes, asking that he not be quoted, that although [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) and [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#) were by "a very remarkable man," he hardly hoped that Milnes would read the books, "unless for the observation of nature in them which is wonderfully accurate." Hawthorne's evaluation was that these, like other American books, did not carry the reader away, requiring some effort –and not by a man of weak resolution– to read through to the end.

[TIMELINE OF WALDEN](#)
[TIMELINE OF A WEEK](#)



Nov. 13. It has rained hard the 11th, 12th, and 13th, and the river is *at last* decidedly rising. On Friday, 10th, it was still at summer level. [Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

This is frequently controverted — but some allege that [Mr. Henry D. Thoreau](#) was a guest on a mid-19th-Century television talk show. Here is the surviving transcript evidence:

[AB=Ainsworth Brown; HT=Henry Thoreau]

AB: Good afternoon. This is "The Ainsworth Brown Show" and I am Ainsworth Brown. We are privileged to have as our guest this



1854

1854

afternoon Henry David Thoreau who has written a book, WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS. Henry, come on out [Applause from studio audience as Thoreau enters] Welcome, welcome. Glad you could come.... Have a seat....

HT: Thank you.

AB: Henry, I have not had a chance to read your book yet but I do know that it is, in the popular parlance, "hot, hot, hot." Graham's Magazine has called it "always racy and stimulating," the product of a "powerful and accomplished mind".... So what's this WALDEN about?

HT: It's the story of the two years, two months, and two days I spent living alone in a cabin by Walden Pond, near Concord, Massachusetts.

AB: What happened?

HT: I built the cabin. That first summer I grew some beans as a cash crop. In the book I talk about the food I ate, the plants and animals I saw, and the changing of the seasons.

AB: So what did you eat?

HT: I ate wild berries and grapes. I occasionally caught some fish or a wild animal -I once trapped and butchered a woodchuck who was bothering my bean plants- but mostly I ate rice, bread made from rye and cornmeal with molasses as sweetening, potatoes, and peas.

AB: Frankly, Henry, except for the woodchuck, it sounds pretty boring.

HT: I can see why you might think so, Mr. Brown. But, as I contend in the book, the external circumstances in which one finds one's self are far less important than one's inner life. I wanted to simplify my material needs to a point where I could spend just a few hours each day satisfying them and have all the rest of my time free for contemplation and self-improvement. Most men are slaves to their possessions and to the jobs they are forced to perform in order to pay for them.

AB: I get it - a Marxist/capitalist kind of thing....

HT: I'm not sure I know what you mean....

AB: What were the results of your contemplations?

HT: I have recorded many of my thoughts in the book, but I don't really think of contemplation as a means for book-creation, or as a means to anything at all, but rather as an end in itself.

AB: I see ... so it's like meditation, TM, that kind of thing....

HT: Yes, it is meditation.

AB: But you would meditate for like -what -ten hours a day?

HT: Yes, it might frequently have been that long.

AB: Wow! ... Did you spend all your time at the pond or did you go other places too?

HT: I have always walked wherever I've wanted to. Individual men may think they own particular pieces of property but, in a truer

1854

1854

sense, trees, mountains and animals can not be owned; they belong to Nature and to the men who would love and protect them.

AB: [Turning to the camera] So, there you have it. Henry David Thoreau, Marxist eco-warrior. He has regularly spent ten hours a day in meditation and once killed, butchered with his own hands, and ate a woodchuck who was devouring his bean plants. His book [holding a copy up to the camera] is WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS. Thank you, Henry. Please tune in tomorrow when my guest will be...



November 13, Monday: [Henry Thoreau](#) replied, with the requested copy of [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#), to the [Abbé Adrien-Emmanuel Rouquette](#).



TIMELINE OF A WEEK

Rev^d Adrian Rouquette

Concord Mass. Nov. 13th 1854.

Dear Sir

I have just received your letter and the 3 works which accompanied it — and I make haste to send you a copy of “A Week — on the Concord & Merrimack Rivers” — by the same mail with this— I thank you heartily for the interest which you express in my ~~book~~ “Walden” — and also for the gift of your works — Though I have not had time to preuse ~~the~~ your books I have looked far enough to last attentively—~~and I am glad~~ not all ~~those in our~~ to be convinced that ~~there are more than~~ ~~knew~~ ~~I supposed~~ in your section of ~~our~~ union any ~~more than~~ in my own are ~~broad country~~ devoted to ~~something~~ alone The very locality assigned to some of your ~~better—than~~ trade poems—~~suggest~~ poetry appeals to the muse in me especially I am ~~particularly~~ pleased to receive so cordial ~~heartly~~ a greeting ~~from~~ in French— which was the language of my paternal Grandfather— I assure you — it is ~~Altogether~~ not a little affecting to be thus reminded of the breadth & the destiny of our common country—

I am sir yrs sincerely

Henr D Thoreau



November 14, Tuesday: A great [hurricane](#) struck the region of the Black Sea. The Allied supply fleet had been forced to anchor outside the harbor of Sevastopol because the Russians has strewn the harbor with mines. These mines they had decided to contract for with a Swedish inventor name of [Alfred B. Nobel](#) who detonated such mines chemically rather than with an American inventor name of Samuel Colt assisted by another inventor name of [Samuel F.B. Morse](#) who detonated such mines electrically. The hurricane devastated this vulnerably anchored supply fleet, sinking the pride of the French navy, the *Henri IV*, and destroying the winter supplies of the army ashore (30 ships full of food, medical supplies, and armaments — in reaction to this the Emperor Napoleon III would call for the initiation of a national weather forecasting service).

The [Concord River](#) rose slightly over the meadows (it would not subside until December 5th). [Henry Thoreau](#) wrote the 1st draft of his "[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT](#)" lecture as proposed by [Asa Fairbanks](#). Presumably it was at this time that he added material of this nature:

BRAD DEAN'S
COMMENTARY

[Paragraph 4] My text this evening is "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

[MARK 8:36](#)

So now I would say something similar to you, my readers. Since **you** are my readers, and I have not been much of a traveller, I will not talk about people a thousand miles off, but come as near home as I can. As the time is short, I will leave out all the flattery, and retain all the criticism.

[Paragraph 10] But when I come a little nearer to the facts, I find commonly that that relation to Nature which had so attracted me in the farmer's life, exists only in my imagination, and that she is insignificant to him;—that his boasted independence is merely a certain slight independence on the market, and not a moral independence,—that he is a speculator,—not in the old sense of an observer, or contemplator, but in the modern sense which is yet, for the most part, ashamed to show itself in the dictionary, and his speculum or mirror, is a shining dollar. In short, considering his motives and his methods, his life is coarse and repulsive, and liable to most of the objections which have been urged against trade and commerce. What odds does it make whether you measure tape or measure milk? He thinks that he must live near a market. Just as the publisher, when I complain that his magazine is too worldly, tells me that it must have a large circulation. But I think that the must in the case is that

[Paragraph 15] One might sometimes wonder that this class of men do not send up a petition to have five minutes added to the length of human life.
 [Paragraph 16] This may be enterprising, as we call it, but it is not wise—neither the saints nor the heroes live in such a desperate hurry.
 [Paragraph 17] It is no better with the old fashioned farmer. I fear that his contentment is commonly stagnation.

[Paragraph 26] What are the mechanics about—whose hammers we hear on all sides—building some lofty rhyme?—or only houses, barns, and woodsheds?



Nov. 14. The river is slightly over the meadows. The willow twigs on the right of the Red Bridge causeway are bright greenish-yellow and reddish as in the spring. Also on the right railroad sand-bank at Heywood's meadow. Is it because they are preparing their catkins now against another spring? The first wreck line — of pontederia, sparganium, etc. — is observable.

[Transcript]

[Paragraph 46] But why go to California for a text? She is the child of New England, bred at her own school and church.

[Paragraph 47] America is said to be the arena on which the battle of freedom is to be fought. But surely it cannot be freedom in a merely political sense that is meant. Even if we grant that the American has freed himself from a political tyrant, he is still the slave of an economical and moral tyrant. Now that the republic—the *res-publica*—has been settled, it is time to look after the *res-privata*,—the private state,—to see, as the Roman senate charged its consuls, “*ne quid res-PRIVATA detrimenti caperet*,” that the **private** state receive no detriment. [The quotation is from Marcus Tullius Cicero, *ORATIONES* (Boston, 1831), “*Oratio pro Milone*,” 26:70. Thoreau altered Cicero’s “*respublica*” to ‘*res-PRIVATA*’. Dean has emended what is apparently an error in the essay copy-text by hyphenating ‘*res-PRIVATA*’.]

[Paragraph 57] Somebody has said that he who makes two blades of grass grow where only one grew before, is a benefactor to mankind.¹ But how much greater a benefactor is he who makes a man grow where no man grew before!

[Paragraph 58] Of the West I commonly hear only that the corn grows so much higher than the men. When our explorers discover a country where carrots will grow quite through to the other side of the globe, as some report,² we think it becomes the chief duty of man to go and tax Nature’s carrot-producing power there to the utmost, and never her man-producing power—to draw out the great resources of that country in the shape of monstrous golden carrots, though we mannikins that raise them should tumble into the holes they come out of, and be lost.

[Paragraph 59] Where is the government whose policy it is to satisfy, or even recognize, nay, avoid outraging, the higher wants of our nature? It is the ruling policy of our own government, as every-body knows, to convert man directly into a brute, or a piece of property. We are compelled to say that anything that works that way is a mere pretension.³ Perhaps the government is such. The Secretary of State or of the Treasury is a real person enough, but what a shadow is the Chaplain of the House? Under the present circumstances he is the best chaplain who makes the shortest prayers—because any prayer is out of place there. It is only a wooden gun to scare the devil away. But if the truth were known, he was the inventor of it—he himself suggested it to keep up appearances.

1. [Jonathan Swift](#), GULLIVER’S TRAVELS, 1726, “Voyage to Brobdingnag,” Chapter 7.

2. This “report” has not been located.

3. This and the following sentence are interlined on the copy-text manuscript in very faint, hastily-written pencil and are therefore difficult to recover. The readings “anything” and “works” in this sentence, and “is such” in the next sentence must remain conjectural.

[Paragraph 68] In some lyceums they tell me that they have voted to exclude the subject of religion! But how do I know what their religion is—and when I am near to or far from it?

[Paragraph 100] “What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”¹

1. [MARK 8:36](#) Dean has emended the manuscript copy-text by supplying the last 8 words and the question mark, which were apparently trimmed from the manuscript, and by supplying the quotation marks.



November 15, Wednesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) wrote letters of introduction for [Thomas Cholmondeley](#), to [Bronson Alcott](#) and to [Thaddeus William Harris](#).



Concord Nov. 15th 1854

Dr Harris

Dear Sir,

Will you allow me to introduce to you the bearer — Thomas Cholmondeley, who has been spending some months with us in Concord. He is an English country gentleman, and the author of a political work on New Zealand called “Ultima Thule”. He wishes to look round the Library.

If you can give him a few moments of your time, you will confer a favor on both him & me.

I have taken much pains, but in vain, to find another of those locusts for you —

I have some of the grubs from the nuphar buds in spirits.

Yrs truly

Henry D. Thoreau.

Concord Nov. 15 1854

Mr. Alcott,

I wish to introduce

to you Thomas Cholmondeley, an

English man, of [whom] and his

work in new Zealand I have

already told you. He proposes

to spend a part of the winter in

Boston, pursuing his literary

studies, at the same time that
he is observing our institutions.

He is an English country

gentleman of simple habits and
truly liberal mind, who may

one day take a part in the

government of his country.

I think that you [will] find

you[r] account in comparing

notes with him.



Nov. 15. The first snow, a mere sugaring which went off the next morning.

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



November 16, Thursday: In the afternoon Henry Thoreau sailed to Hubbard's Bridge (Gleason H6) across the Sudbury River.



Nov. 16. P.M. — Sailed to Hubbard's Bridge.

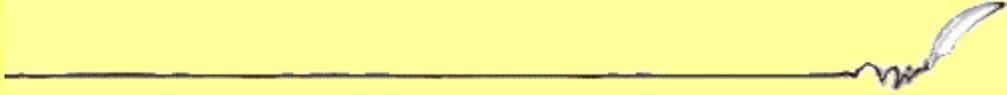
[Transcript]

Almost every muskrat's house is covered by the flood, though they were unusually high, as well as numerous, and the river is not nearly so high as last year. I see where they have begun to raise them another story. A few cranberries begin to wash up, and rails, boards, etc., may now be collected by wreckers.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

During the last decade of his life, Thoreau visited his rivers more than twice as often as the upland woods and lakes that he is far better known for writing about. — Professor Robert M. Thorson, THE BOATMAN, page 3



November 17, Friday: Henry Thoreau wrote to a lyceum representative, William Evarts Sheldon.¹⁸⁸



188. William Evarts Sheldon had been born on October 22, 1832 to Julius Sheldon and Harriet Newell Sheldon in Dorset, Vermont and had matriculated at Middlebury College in 1853, becoming during this year a teacher and principal of the high school in East Abington, Massachusetts. In this year, also, he got married with Mary Ames Soule (1831-1928), daughter of Josiah Soule and Sophronia Jenkins Soule. He would in 1858 relocate to the Boston area, to teach at a grammar school in West Newton until 1865, and then at Hancock School until 1870. He would succeed as an administrator and advocate of improvements in education, in 1887 becoming president of the National Education Association. On April 16, 1900 in West Newton he would be "suddenly summoned while signing a business letter," survived by Mary Ames Soule Sheldon, one surviving daughter, and a deceased daughter's two daughters.

Concord Nov 17th 1854.

W^m E. Sheldon Esqr

Dear Sir—

Thinking it possible that [your] might be expecting me [to] lecture befor [^without further correspondence] your Society on the 5th of December as I offered—I write to ask if it is so.

I am still at liberty for that evening—and will read you a lecture either on The Wild or on Moosehunting as you may prefer.

Yrs respectfully HD

XV—348

In a man walk in the woods for love of them & see his fellows with impartial eye afar—for half his days, he is esteemed a loafer—but if he spends his whole day as a speculatoer shearing off those woods & making earth [hard] before her time—he esteemed an industrious & enterprising citizen.

XVII—249

The other day I saw some gentlemen [] & ladies sitting at anchor in boats on a lake in middle of a calm afternoon under parasols—making use of nature—but plainly not accumulating money—

On that raw, cloudy afternoon [Thoreau](#) paddled up the [Sudbury River](#) to [Clamshell Bank](#) or Hill (Gleason 23/G5), and sailed home.

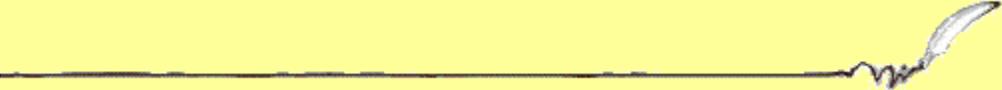


Nov. 17. Paddled up river to Clamshell and sailed back.

I think it must have been a fish hawk [[Osprey](#) [Pandion haliaetus](#)] which I saw hovering over the meadow and my boat (a raw cloudy afternoon), now and then sustaining itself in one place a hundred feet or more above the water, intent on a fish, with a hovering or fluttering motion of the wings somewhat like a kingfisher. Its wings were very long, slender, and curved in outline of front edge. I think there was some white on rump. It alighted near the top of an oak within rifle-shot of me and my boat, afterward on the tip-top of a maple by waterside, looking very large.

[Transcript]

During the last decade of his life, Thoreau visited his rivers more than twice as often as the upland woods and lakes that he is far better known for writing about.
— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 3



 November 18, Saturday: Geese began flying south for the winter.

In England, [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#) confided again in [Richard Monckton Milnes](#), suggesting that he do something to make [Henry Thoreau](#) known to the English public. He described Thoreau as “a true man and full of true thought” but added that his judgment was that in spite of these good traits Thoreau “despises the world, and all that it has to offer, and, like other humorists, is an intolerable bore.” Hawthorne communicated to his noble friend the 1st Baron Houghton that Thoreau was not of their sort, “not an agreeable person, and in his presence one feels ashamed of having any money, or a house to live in, or so much as two coats to wear, or of having written a book that the public will read – his own mode of life being so unsparing a criticism on all other modes, such as the world approves.”¹⁸⁹



Milnes should not think that they were particular friends, as “I do not speak with quite this freedom of my friends. We have never been intimate, though my house is near his residence.”

He [Thoreau] despises the world, and all that it has to offer, and, like other humorists, is an intolerable bore. I shall cause it to be known to him that you sat up till two o'clock reading his book; and he will pretend that it is of no consequence, but will never forget it.... He is not an agreeable person, and in his presence one feels ashamed of having any money, or a house to live in, or so much as two coats to wear, or having written a book that the public will read – his own mode of life being so unsparing a criticism on all other modes, such as the world approves.

— [Hawthorne](#)'s letter to

189. In reading through Hawthorne's materials, I have been awestruck with the extent to which he was deploying the categories “agreeable,” “not agreeable,” and “disagreeable.” Circumstances are repeatedly categorized as in one of precisely these three diagnostic categories. The persons whom he encountered are repeatedly categorized as in one of precisely these three diagnostic categories. This seems to have been for him the utterly fundamental categorization of all reality. As a flaming sexist, everything female was of course beyond the pale. As a flaming racist, everything black and everything connected in any way with blackness (such as Republicanism or abolitionism) was also “disagreeable.” However, I have been forced to the conclusion upon close reading that the distinction being made between the first two of these categories (“agreeable” versus “not agreeable”) was more of a class thing, and that that distinction had been different in kind from the disjunction he had been attempting between the outside two of these categories (“agreeable” versus “disagreeable”). It is almost as if he had been attempting a triage, a triage between the grand souls of Heaven with the more dicey souls floating somehow in Purgatory, versus demonic evils forever consigned to an Outer Darkness. It seems significant, therefore, that in the case of this communication with a British noble, Thoreau is merely allowed to float in limbo as “not agreeable,” one of the souls held in a Purgatory, rather than being utterly condemned.

Richard Monckton Milnes,
1st Baron Houghton (1809–1885),
page 334 in Edward Mather's
NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE: A MODEST MAN
(NY: Crowell, 1940)



Nov. 18. Saw sixty geese go over the Great Fields, in one waving line, broken from time to time by their crowding on each other and vainly endeavoring to form into a harrow, honking all the while. [Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



November 19, Sunday: [Sam Houston](#) was baptized into the [Baptist Church](#) in Independence, [Texas](#).



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR NOVEMBER 19th]



November 20, Monday: In [Boston](#), [Unitarian Reverend Orville Dewey](#) delivered a lecture “The Civilization of the Future” in which he called for an end to [human slavery](#). As part of this lecture, however, he took occasion to deny persistent slanders circulated by the proslavery people, that he would be willing to sacrifice his own mother if that would bring an end to the peculiar institution. — Of course he wasn’t as extreme as all that, of course he loved his own white mommy above these black Americans who weren’t even relatives of his!

The initial meeting of the Neu-Weimar-Verein took place at the Russischer Hof. Charter members included Franz Liszt and Peter Cornelius, plus some out-of-town members [Hector Berlioz](#), Hans von Bülow, Joseph Joachim, and [Richard Wagner](#). The purpose of the association was to further the music of the more radical Romantics: Berlioz, Wagner, Liszt, and others.



November 20, Monday: At 7 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) boarded the train to [Boston](#) on his way to [Philadelphia](#), via [New-York](#) and Newark, to deliver “Moose Hunting” and “The Wild.”¹⁹⁰

TIMELINE OF THE MAINE WOODS

The trip would consume 15 hours and he evidently composed some letters while traveling.



Nov. 20th. To Philadelphia. 7 Am — to Boston — 9 Am Boston to New York, by express train, land route— [Transcript]

See the reddish soil (red sandstone?) all through Connecticut. Beyond Hartford a range of rocky hills crossing the State on each side the RR, the E one very precipitous, and apparently terminating at E rock at N. Haven. Pleasantest part of the whole route between Springfield and Hartford, along the river; perhaps include the hilly region this side of Springfield. Reached Canal Street at 5 Pm, or candle-light. Started for Philadelphia from foot of Liberty Street at 6 Pm, via Newark, etc., etc., Bordentown, etc., etc.,

190. This version of his early “Walking” lecture he produced in the preceding weeks by splitting “Walking” in half and supplementing one of the halves with new material and material from his journal. He used the same process on the other half of his earlier reading draft in December to create a separate lecture for which he retained the title “Walking.”





1854

1854

Camden Ferry, to Philadelphia, all in the dark. Saw only the glossy panelling of the cars reflected out into the dark, like the magnificent lit facade of a row of edifices reaching all the way to Philadelphia, except when we stopped and a lanthorn or two showed us a ragged boy and the dark buildings of some New Jersey town. Arrive at 10 Pm; time, 4 hours from NY, 13 from Boston, 15 from Concord. Put up at Jones's Exchange Hotel, 77 Dock Street; lodgings 37½ per night, meals separate; not to be named with French's in New York; next door to the fair of the Franklin Institute, then open, and over against the Exchange, in the neighborhood of the printing offices.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

He replied to a letter from a lyceum representative, G.B. Bernard, and he wrote to J.D. Milner:

Concord Mass Nov. 20th

1854

John D. Milner Esq.

Dear Sir

I shall probably lecture the coming winter as near to Hamilton as Akron Ohio – & I shall be happy to read one or two lectures before your institute. My subjects are “The Wild” & “Moosehunting”. I will read one lecture for fifty dollars – or 2 within one week for seventy-five dollars— The neare together the better—

If my terms are agreeable to you, shall you be at liberty to hear me during the first week of January?— if not then will you please {MS torn} what evenings nearest to that date {MS torn} unengaged—

An immediate answer will oblige

Yours respectfully Henry D Thoreau

Upon his arrival he would put up at Jones's Exchange Hotel at 77 Dock Street, lodging which he would jot down cost him \$0.³⁷ 1/2 with meals extra.

THE MAINE WOODS: There may be some truth in what he said about the moose growing larger formerly; for the quaint John Josselyn, a physician who spent many years in this very district of Maine in the seventeenth century, says, that the tips of their horns "are sometimes found to be two fathoms asunder," —and he is particular to tell us that a fathom is six feet,— "and [they are] in height, from the toe of the fore foot to the pitch of the shoulder, twelve foot, both which hath been taken by some of my sceptique readers to be monstrous lies"; and he adds, "There are certain *transcendentia* in every creature, which are the indelible character of God, and which discover God." This is a greater dilemma to be caught in than is presented by the cranium of the young Bechuana ox, apparently another of the *transcendentia*, in the collection of Thomas Steel, Upper Brook Street, London, whose "entire length of horn, from tip to tip, along the curve, is 13 ft. 5 in.; distance (straight) between the tips of the horns, 8 ft. 8 1/2 in." However, the size both of the moose and the cougar, as I have found, is generally rather underrated than overrated, and I should be inclined to add to the popular estimate a part of what I subtracted from Josselyn's.

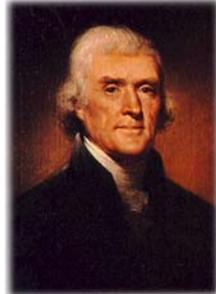
JOHN JOSSELYN

Thoreau had been reading [John Josselyn](#) that spring. We note that the quotation Thoreau makes of AN ACCOUNT OF TWO VOYAGES TO NEW-ENGLAND ... BY JOHN JOSSELYN, GENT... is not all that precise. Josselyn had written that there are certain *transcendentia* "which are the indelible Characters of God" (rather than "are the indelible character of God"), and he had concluded with the enigmatic "there's a prudential for you, as John Rhodes the fisherman used to say to his mate, Kitt Lux." —Which is not to suggest that Thoreau's alterations in any way changed the sense of Josselyn's antique observation.

1854

1854

 November 21, Tuesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) climbed to the cupola of the State-House building in which the [Declaration of Independence](#) had been (to employ the precise term chosen by Thoreau) “declared,” to see the view out over the rooftops of Philadelphia. He was able to obtain a “Fine view from Fairmount water-works.”



(So — while Henry was up there, did he do his usual trick to get perspective, of looking through his legs?



According to a Miss Caroline Haven, who briefed the Reverend [William Henry Furness](#) on Thoreau’s [Philadelphia](#) lecture which the Unitarian clergyman had been unable to attend, that audience had not seemed to appreciate what was being offered to them.



Nov. 21. Looked from the cupola of the State-House, where the Declaration of Independence was declared. The best view of the city I got. Was interested in the squirrels, gray and black, in Independence and Washington Squares. Heard that they have, or have had, deer in Logan Square. The squirrels are fed, and live in boxes in the trees in the winter. Fine view from Fairmount water-works. The line of the hypothense of the gable end of Girard College was apparently deflected in the middle six inches or more, reminding me of the anecdote of the church of the Madeleine in Paris.

[Transcript]

Was admitted into the building of the Academy of Natural Sciences by a Mr. Durand of the botanical department, Mr. Furness applying to him. The carpenters were still at work adding four stories (!) of galleries to the top. These four (Furness thought all of them, I am not sure but Durand referred to one side only) to be devoted to the birds. It is said to be the largest collection of birds in the world. They belonged to the son of Masséna (Prince of Essling?), and were sold at auction, and bought by a Yankee for \$22,000, over all the crowned heads of Europe, and presented to the Academy. Other collections, also, are added to this. The Academy has received great donations. There is Morton’s collection of crania, with (I suppose a *cast* from) an Indian skull found in an Ohio mound; a polar bear killed by Dr. Katie; a male moose not so high as the female which we shot; a European elk (a skeleton) about seven feet high, with Horns each about five feet long and *tremendously* heavy; grinders, etc., of the *Mastodon giganteum* from Barton County, Missouri; etc., etc. named as of the geological department. In Philadelphia and also New York an ornamental tree with bunches of seed-vessels supplying the place of leaves now. I suppose it the ailanthus, or Tree of Heaven. What were those trees with long, black sickle-shaped pods? I did not see Steinhauser’s Burd family [A marble group entitled “The Angel of the Resurrection,” erected to the memory of the children of Edward Shippen Burd.] at St. Stephen’s Church. The American Philosophical Society is described as a company of old women.

In the narrow market-houses in the middle of the streets, was struck by the neat-looking women marketers with full cheeks. Furness described a lotus identical with an Egyptian one as found somewhere down the river below Philadelphia; also spoke of a spotted chrysalis which he had also seen in Massachusetts. There was a mosquito about my head at night. Lodged at the United States Hotel, opposite the Girard (formerly United States) Bank.



THE ACTUAL JOURNAL
THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



1854

1854



1854

1854

"THE WILD"¹⁹¹

DATE	PLACE	TOPIC
October 8, 1854, Sunday; 7:00 PM	Leyden Hall, <u>Plymouth</u> MA	"Moonlight"
November 21, 1854, Tuesday; 7:30 PM	Spring Garden Institute, <u>Philadelphia</u>	<u>"THE WILD"</u>
December 6, 1854	<u>Providence</u> , <u>Rhode Island</u>	<u>"WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT"</u>

191. From Bradley P. Dean and Ronald Wesley Hoag's "THOREAU'S LECTURES AFTER WALDEN: AN ANNOTATED CALENDAR."



NARRATIVE OF EVENT: In a September 21st, 1854 letter to [H.G.O. Blake](#), [Henry Thoreau](#) noted his plan to lecture in [Philadelphia](#) and elsewhere during the approaching lecture season. He also indicated his unpreparedness to do so, “As it is, I have agreed to go a-lecturing to [Plymouth](#), Sunday after next (October 1) and to [Philadelphia](#) in November, and thereafter to the West, **if they shall want me**; and, as I have prepared nothing in that shape, I feel as if my hours were spoken for” (THE CORRESPONDENCE OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU, page 339). [Philadelphia](#), then, was to be his first **extra-vagant** post-[WALDEN](#) jump over the cowed fence of his familiar New England lecturing territory. As it turned out, however, he would not lecture outside New England again until late in 1856, when he gave three lectures in New Jersey during his [Eagleswood](#) surveying venture.

View [Thoreau](#)'s personal working drafts of his surveys courtesy of AT&T and the Concord Free Public Library:

http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_Surveys/Thoreau_Surveys.htm

Thoreau's uncertainty about his lecture material is reflected in an October 6th, 1854 letter from William B. Thomas, chairman of the committee in charge of the lecture series at [Philadelphia](#)'s Spring Garden Institute. Wrote Thomas:¹⁹²

You will please accept our thanks for your prompt response to our invitation. We have entered you for the 21st Nov.

Please inform us as early as possible upon what subject you will speak.

The Spring Garden Institute, located at the junction of Broad and Spring Garden Streets, was founded in 1850 to give technical training to young men. One of the earliest nineteenth-century mechanics' institutes, it helped fill a need created by the breakdown of the apprentice system in this country.¹⁹³

On November 19th, [Waldo Emerson](#) wrote from [Concord, Massachusetts](#) to his [Philadelphia](#) friend, the [Reverend William Henry Furness](#), announcing Thoreau's impending visit and asking Furness to show Thoreau the Academy of Natural Sciences. He added that Thoreau would particularly like to see the Academy's collection of birds. Furness, who had attended school with [Emerson](#) in Boston, was at this time and for the rest of his life the minister of the Unitarian Church in [Philadelphia](#).¹⁹⁴ The following day [Bronson Alcott](#) noted in his journal, “*Evening, with Emerson at the American House till 10 o'clock. E. tells me that Thoreau left today for Philadelphia to lecture there.*”¹⁹⁵

Thoreau's journal entry for November 20 begins, “To Philadelphia. 7 A. M., to Boston; 9 A. M., Boston to New York, by express train, land route.” Ever the observer, he noted, “Pleasantest part of the whole route between [Springfield, Massachusetts](#) and Hartford, Connecticut, along the river; perhaps include the hilly region this side of Springfield. Reached Canal Street at 5 P. M., or candle-light.” Quickly, he was on another

192. Thomas's letter is in the Sewall Collection at MCo; we quote from a typescript at the Thoreau Textual Center, CU-SB.

193. [Charles Boewe](#), “Thoreau's 1854 Lecture in [Philadelphia](#),” ENGLISH LANGUAGE NOTES, 2 (December 1964): 118.

194. [Emerson](#)'s letter to the [Reverend William Henry Furness](#) is summarized and its provenance discussed in Boewe, “Thoreau's 1854 Lecture,” 120-21.

195. [Alcott](#), “Diary for 1854,” entry of 20 November, MH (*59M-308).



1854

1854

train, where, despite the invisibility of the nighttime landscape, he yet saw something worth recording:

Started for Philadelphia from foot of Liberty Street at 6 P. M., via Newark, etc., etc., Bordentown, etc., etc., Camden Ferry, to Philadelphia, all in the dark. Saw only the glossy panelling of the cars reflected out into the dark, like the magnificent lit facade of a row of edifices reaching all the way to Philadelphia, except when we stopped and a lanthorn or two showed us a ragged boy and the dark buildings of some New Jersey town. Arrive at 10 P. M.; time, four hours from New York, thirteen from Boston, fifteen from Concord. Put up at Jones's Exchange Hotel, 77 Dock Street; lodgings thirty-seven and a half cents per night, meals separate; not to be named with French's in New York; next door to the fair of the Franklin Institute, then open, and over against the Exchange, in the neighborhood of the printing-offices. (JOURNAL, 7:72-73)

On the day of his lecture, the 21st, the journal notes [Thoreau](#) observing [Philadelphia](#) "from the cupola of the State-House, where the [Declaration of Independence](#) was declared. The best view of the city I got." He also remarked the "Fine view from Fairmount water-works." [Emerson](#)'s request to the [Reverend William Henry Furness](#) did not go ignored, for the journal reports, "Was admitted into the building of the Academy of Natural Sciences by a Mr. Durand of the [botanical](#) department, Mr. Furness applying to him."¹⁹⁶ And, apropos of Emerson's mentioning the Academy's bird collection, Thoreau remarked in the journal, "It is said to be the largest collection of birds in the world." Other Academy holdings also are mentioned, including "a male moose not so high as the female which we shot" in Maine. Tucked between an attempt to identify an ornamental tree that he supposed "the alianthus, or Tree of Heaven" and a description of "the neat-looking women marketers with full cheeks" is the intriguing comment, "The American Philosophical Society is described as a company of old women." The day's entry continues with this unintentionally humorous juxtaposition of natural phenomena, "Furness described a lotus identical with an Egyptian one as found somewhere down the river below [Philadelphia](#); also spoke of a spotted chrysalis which he had also seen in Massachusetts. There was a mosquito about my head at night." The entry concludes, "Lodged at the United States Hotel, opposite the Girard (formerly United States) Bank." For whatever reason, possibly the undistinguished accommodations at Jones's Exchange Hotel, Thoreau had changed addresses for his second night in Philadelphia (JOURNAL, 7:73-75).

The next morning, according to the journal, [Thoreau](#) "Left at 7:30 A. M. for New York, by boat to Tacony and rail *via* Bristol, Trenton, Princeton (near by), New Brunswick, Rahway, Newark, etc." He noted a few of the natural features he saw in passing but found the trip "Uninteresting, except the boat." In [New-York](#) he played the tourist, going to the [Crystal Palace](#), where he saw a specimen of coal "fifty feet thick as it was cut from the mine, in the form of a square column." He also saw "sculptures and paintings innumerable, and armor from the [Tower of London](#), some of the Eighth Century."

At [Phineas Taylor Barnum](#)'s Museum he examined the camelopard, which he found not so tall as claimed, and a diorama of the houses of the world, which he found looked much alike. He spent part of the day with his friend [Horace Greeley](#), who "appeared to know and be known by everybody." Greeley took him to the opera,

196. According to [Charles Boewe](#), Elias Durand was a [Philadelphia](#) pharmacist and noted botanist ("Thoreau's 1854 Lecture," 119).



1854

1854

where, Thoreau notes in his journal, Greeley “was admitted free” (JOURNAL, 7:75-76). Whether Thoreau too got in for nothing is not mentioned. The journal also does not mention his trip home from New York. By far the most important of Thoreau’s journal omissions, however, is his lecture itself. Despite the career significance of his [Philadelphia](#) engagement, he said nothing at all of the event that had brought him so far from [Concord](#).

Some three weeks after the lecture, [Alcott](#) noted in his diary entry for 11 December 1854, “*I pass the morning and dine with Thoreau, who read me parts of his new Lecture lately read at Philadelphia and Providence.*”¹⁹⁷ Alcott, however, was referring to Thoreau’s “[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT](#)” lecture, which Thoreau had read only in [Providence](#) (*Moshasuck*), [Rhode Island](#) before December 11, the date of Alcott’s entry (see lecture 46 below).

197. [Alcott](#), “Diary for 1854,” entry of 11 December, MH (*59M-308).



1854

1854

SPRING GARDEN INSTITUTE; PHILADELPHIA PA

Courtesy of [Bradley P. Dean](#)

ADVERTISEMENTS, REVIEWS, AND RESPONSES: The following advertisement appeared in the [Philadelphia PHILADELPHIA](#) PUBLIC LEDGER AND DAILY TRANSCRIPT on November 21, 1854: “Spring Garden Institute Lectures — The Second Lecture will be delivered on Tuesday Evening, 21st instant, at 7 1/2 o’clock, at the Institute Building, Broad and Spring Garden Sts., by Henry D. Thoreau, Esq. of Concord, Mass. Subject ‘The Wild.’” The same advertisement, minus the location, appeared in the [Philadelphia PHILADELPHIA](#) DAILY PENNSYLVANIAN on both 20 and 21 November.

The only known response to [Thoreau’s](#) lecture is that of Miss Caroline Haven, reported by the [Reverend William Henry Furness WILLIAM HENRY FURNESS](#) in a 26 November 1854 letter to [Emerson](#). Caroline was the daughter of Charles E. Haven, one of Furness’s parishioners.¹⁹⁸ Furness wrote:¹⁹⁹

I was glad to see Mr. Thoreau. He was full of interesting talk for the little while that we saw him, & it was amusing to hear his intonations. And then he looked so differently from my idea of him He had a glimpse of the Academy [of Natural Sciences] as he will tell you — I could not hear him lecture for which I was sorry. Miss Caroline Haven heard him, & from her report I judge the audience was stupid & did not appreciate him.

This letter is especially noteworthy because it contains a small pencil sketch of Thoreau made by Furness. Interestingly, the aforementioned 19 November 1854 letter from [Emerson](#) to Furness contains, drawn on the last of its four pages, two pencil sketches of Thoreau’s head in profile that are very similar to this Furness drawing. [Charles Boewe](#), who located the Emerson letter at the Academy of Natural Sciences, suggests that these impressions of Thoreau are also Furness’s work, the prototype from which he drew the image on his 26 November reply to Emerson.²⁰⁰

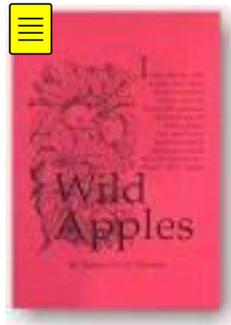
DESCRIPTION OF TOPIC: Aside from having extracted the passages about moonlit walks (see lecture 44 above), Thoreau seems not to have done much more with the second part of his two-part, 163-page version of [“WALKING, OR THE WILD”](#) — the part on [“THE WILD”](#) which he had last delivered on the afternoon of May

198. [Charles Boewe](#), “Thoreau’s 1854 Lecture,” 121.

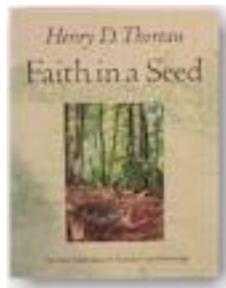
199. [William Henry Furness](#), RECORDS OF A LIFELONG FRIENDSHIP, ed. Horace Howard Furness, (Boston: [Houghton, Mifflin](#), 1910), pages 101-103.

200. [Charles Boewe](#), “Thoreau’s 1854 Lecture,” 120-21n14.

23d, 1852 in [Plymouth, Massachusetts](#) (see lectures 40-41 in the “Before WALDEN” calendar). Very likely, then, the text he read before the Spring Garden Institute was some 70 pages long, which would have taken him somewhat more than an hour to read. Interestingly, the title page of this draft of the lecture, acquired a few years ago by the library at the University of California, Santa Barbara, bears the following sentence, written in pencil, in Thoreau’s hand, in the upper-right corner: “I regard this as a sort of introduction to all I may write hereafter.” [Bradley P. Dean](#) has speculated that Thoreau wrote this highly provocative sentence sometime in late 1854 or early 1855, when Thoreau apparently began to contemplate more earnest, purposeful work on the natural history projects he would spend so much of his time on throughout the remainder of the 1850s and which resulted in such works as [“AUTUMNAL TINTS”](#), [“SUCCESSION OF FOREST TREES”](#), [“WILD APPLES”](#), [“HUCKLEBERRIES”](#), [“THE DISPERSION OF SEEDS”](#), and WILD FRUITS.²⁰¹



201. For [Bradley P. Dean](#)’s speculations about the sentence Thoreau wrote in the upper-right corner of this lecture draft’s title-page, see his ““A Sort of Introduction,”” THOREAU RESEARCH NEWSLETTER, 1 (January 1990): 1-2. Dean published the first portion of Thoreau’s WILD FRUITS manuscript, which is housed in the Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection, NN, in his edition of Thoreau’s FAITH IN A SEED: THE DISPERSION OF SEEDS AND OTHER LATE NATURAL HISTORY WRITINGS (Washington: Shearwater Books, Island Press, 1993), pages 178-203. Dean had edited the remainder of the WILD FRUITS manuscript.



HDT

WHAT?

INDEX

1854

1854

Thoreau's Rediscovered Last Manuscript



HENRY DAVID
THOREAU

Wild Fruits



1854

1854



November 22, Wednesday: When [Henry Thoreau](#) had returned from lecturing in [Philadelphia](#), by boat to Tacony and by train through Bristol, Trenton, the vicinity of Princeton, New Brunswick, Rahway, and Newark, New Jersey to [New-York](#), he went to see the [Crystal Palace](#) of Industry on Reservoir Square and then “[Greeley](#) carried me to the new opera-house, where I heard Grisi and her troupe” (the performance of [Vincenzo Bellini](#)’s final opera [Lpuritani](#) featured dramatic soprano [Madame the Marquise Giulia Grisi](#) as the Puritan roundhead revolutionary daughter Elvira and her husband or consort the tenor [Sir Giovanni Matteo de Candia](#) as Lord Arthur Talbot, one of [King Charles I](#)’s cavalier loyalists; this is the only operatic performance Thoreau is known to have attended and he did not comment on the experience).



CHARLES I



Nov. 22. Left at 7.30 Am for New York, by boat to Tacony and rail via Bristol, Trenton, Princeton (near by), New Brunswick, Rahway, Newark, etc. Uninteresting, except the boat. The country very level, — red sandstone (?) sand, — apparently all New Jersey except the northern part. Saw wheat stubble and winter wheat come up like rye. Was that Jamestown-weed with a prickly bur? Seen also in Connecticut. Many Dutch barns.

[Transcript]



1854

1854

Just after leaving Newark, an extensive marsh, between the railroad and the Kill, full of the *Arundo Phragmites*, I should say, which had been burnt over.

Went to Crystal Palace; admired the houses on Fifth Avenue, the specimens of coal at the Palace, one 50 feet thick as it was cut from the mine, in the form of a square column, iron and copper ore, etc. Saw sculptures and paintings innumerable, and armor from the Tower of London, some of the Eighth Century. Saw Greeley; Snow, the commercial editor of the Tribune; Solon Robinson; Fry, the musical critic, etc.; and others. Greeley carried me to the new opera-house, where I heard Grisi and her troupe. First, at Barnum's Museum, I saw the camelopards, said to be one 18 the other 16 feet high. I should say the highest stood about 15 feet high at most (12 or 13 ordinarily). The body was only about 5 feet long. Why has it horns, but for ornament? Looked through his diorama, and found the houses all over the world much alike. Greeley appeared to know and be known by everybody; was admitted free to the opera, and we were led by a page to various parts of the house at different times. Saw at Museum some large flakes of cutting arrowhead stone made into a sort of wide cleavers, also a hollow stone tube, probably from mounds.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

In [San Francisco](#), at a mass meeting of saloon keepers, a decision was reached to preserve their tradition of offering a free lunch despite the high expenses involved in this sort of business promotion.

There's no such thing as a free lunch ('cept in ['Frisco](#)).



November 23, Thursday: In [San Francisco](#), the Daily Alta California was notifying citizens that there was to be an indignation meeting that afternoon in the Plaza over the plan of the bar-room proprietors to abolish their time-honored tradition of free lunches:

INDIGNATION MEETING. — We understand that a meeting will be held on the Plaza, this afternoon, for the purpose of giving expression to the feelings of indignation aroused in the breasts and stomachs of the citizens generally at the proposed intention of the bar-room proprietors to abolish the free lunches. The people feel that an outrage is about being committed, that a time honored usage is to be annulled, and that bread is to be literally taken from the mouths of at least, three thousand persons; — that at such a time, party prejudices and personal feelings should be forgotten, and that with one united voice they should demand that their rights should not thus be infringed upon with impunity. Speeches may be expected from many prominent citizens, who will endeavor to show the intimate connection that exists between free lunches and a free people, and that one cannot long exist without the other. None will be permitted to take part in the meeting who have "regular board," as they are supposed to be in league with the bar-room proprietors, with a view of obtaining their money's worth by an abolition of the free lunches. Every citizen who attends the demonstration is expected to come provided with a supply of cheap refreshments, such as codfish and hard bread done up in a newspaper, which is intended to be emblematical of the fact that the citizens can live at a pinch without the aid of the lunches. The proprietors



1854

1854

of the "lager-bier" cellars, have it is said generously offered to fill the cistern in the Plaza with that refreshing beverage, to be freely drank of by the citizens at the meeting. A spirited time may be expected.

THE STABBING AFFAIR AT THE OAK HOUSE. — An old negro named Patrick Holland, who stabbed a white man named Nevin, at the Oak House, on the Mission road, on Saturday last, yesterday underwent an examination before Recorder Waller. The evidence went to show that the old man had been teased and worried into a state bordering on frenzy, by a set of rowdies, until his passions were beyond control, and he had drawn a pocket knife and cut the man in the abdomen. Several witnesses testified to the general harmlessness and inoffensive disposition of the old man. The Recorder, however, said he would rather for the case to go before the Grand Jury. He was accordingly held to bail in the sum of \$1000.

YORK THE MURDERER. — From a reliable source we learn that York, who murdered McMickle at the Eureka Saloon, was seen walking about the streets in Honolulu, perfectly free and unrestrained. He arrived there in the schooner *Lady Jane*. Those who aided him to escape were as morally culpable as the murderer himself, whatever may be their ideas to the contrary.

THE COWHIDING AFFAIR. — A lady was arrested yesterday on a complaint made by a man named C.A. James, who states that she had cowhided him. If the lady's version of the story is correct, the fellow deserved all he got, and more besides. The case will undergo an examination before the Recorder tomorrow morning.

FIRE ARMS. — Peter Wilde, for discharging fire arms in the street, was yesterday tried before the Recorder, and fined \$5.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR NOVEMBER 23d]

1854

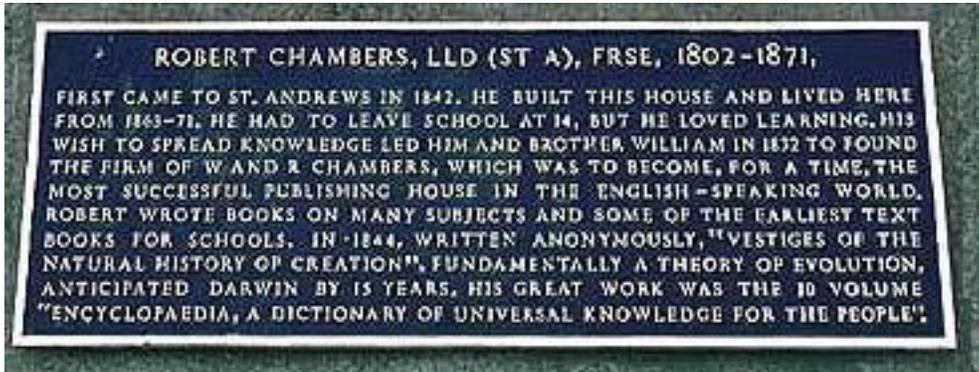
1854



November 24, Friday: Mustafa Resid Pasha replaced Kibrisli Mehmed Pasha as Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire.

Governor Andrew Horatio Reeder moved his [Kansas Territory](#) office to the brick [Shawnee Methodist Mission](#) in Fairway.

A report by David Page (a disgruntled former employee of the Chambers publishing firm), appeared in the media and would appear again on December 2d, 1854. It was not clear that he should be credited in his assertion that [Robert Chambers](#) was the secret author of [VESTIGES OF THE NATURAL HISTORY OF CREATION](#).



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR NOVEMBER 24th]

1854

1854

 November 25, Saturday: Abram Quary, considered to be the last of the Nantucket native Americans, died. He had been born at Miacomet in 1769. He was, however, being considered to be the last only because of male-centric attitudes — for in fact Dorcas Esop, a female Nantucket native American, yet survived.



[John Gibson Lockhart](#) died in Abbotsford.



SCOTLAND



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR NOVEMBER 25th]

 November 26, Sunday: The [Reverend William Henry Furness](#) wrote to [Waldo Emerson](#) about meeting in Philadelphia with [Henry Thoreau](#) and about the audience reaction to his lecture of Tuesday, November 21st, and incidentally sketched Thoreau's profile:



I was glad to see Mr. Thoreau. He was full of interesting talk for the little while that we saw him, & it was amusing to hear your intonations. And then he looked so differently from my idea of him.... He had a glimpse of the Academy [of Natural Sciences] as he will tell you — I could not hear him lecture for which I was sorry. Miss Caroline Haven heard him, & from her report

I judge the audience was stupid & did not appreciate him.



Nov. 26th 54. What that little long-sharp-nosed mouse I found in the Walden road to-day? Brown above, gray beneath, black incisors, 5 toes with claws on each foot, long snout with small blunt black extremity, many mustachios, eyes far forward, feet light or dirty white, tail 1½ inches long, whole length 3¾ inches; on causeway.

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



November 27, Monday: Henry Thoreau was written to by lyceum representative Andrew Whitney in Nantucket, Massachusetts.



Nantucket Nov 27, 1854

Dear Sir

Your favor of 25.th is at hand this evening.

We cannot have you between the 4 & 15.th of Dec. without bringing two lecturers in one week — which we wish to avoid if possible.

If you cannot come the 28.th of Dec. will the 2.^d week in January either the 9.th 10.th 11.th or 12.th of the month suit you? — if not, perhaps you can select a day in the 4.th week in Jan.^y, avoiding Monday and Saturday—

Write me as soon as possible and make the day as early as you can—

Yours truly,

Andrew Whitney.

H D. Thoreau Esq

Concord

Schnellpost-Polka op.159 by Johann Baptist Strauss II was performed for the initial time, in Schwender's Collosseum, Vienna.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR NOVEMBER 27th]

1854

1854

November 28, Tuesday: Henry Thoreau paddled up the Sudbury River to Clamshell Bank or Hill (Gleason 23/G5).



Nov. 28. Paddled to Clamshell.

[Transcript]

"Upriver," "To Fairhaven," and "To Clamshell" were other common opening phrases. This signified a southward trip up the lakelike Sudbury River, which zigzagged between rocky cliffs and lush meadows. Its current could be detected only at narrows and shallows. Parallel lines of sweet-scented lily pads, aquatic flowers rooted in shoreline mud, and buttonbush swamps flanked the river for much of its length. With a breeze from the north or east, he would usually sail. Otherwise he would row.
- Professor Robert M. Thorson, THE BOATMAN, page 11

Still very clear and bright as well as comfortable weather. River not so high as on the 16th. Were those plover which just after sunset flew low over the bank above the railroad and alighted in the opposite meadow, with some white in tails like larks, gray birds, rather heavier than robins?

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

November 29, Wednesday: John Wilkins Whitfield, a pro-government (which is to say, pro-slavery) candidate, was elected as the Kansas Territory delegate to the federal Congress.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR NOVEMBER 29th]

November 30, Thursday: First concession granted by Said Pasha, son of Mohammed Ali, to Ferdinand de Lesseps for the digging (and use for a period of 99 years) of a "Suez Canal" through the sands of Sinai.

EGYPT

In the afternoon Henry Thoreau sailed down the Concord River.



Nov. 30. P.M. — Sail down river.

[Transcript]

"Downriver," "To Great Meadow," and "To Hill" signified a northward trip down the Concord River below the triple point of the confluence. After passing through a straight reach aligned by the local bedrock strike, arched by two bridges, and flanked by gravel bars of historic sediment that were repeatedly dredged, he entered the north side of Great Meadow. Bounded by the site of the Old North Bridge to the southwest and Ball's Hill to the northeast, it was two miles long and half a mile across. When in flood, the meadow was his favorite inland sea to sail upon because the wind was least impeded and the waves were highest.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 11



No ice, but strong cold wind; river slightly over meadows. Was that large diver which was on the edge of the shore and scooted away down-stream as usual, throwing the water about for a quarter of a mile, then diving, some time afterward flying up-stream over our head, the goosander [**Common Merganser** **Mergus merganser**] or red-breasted merganser? It was large, with, I should say, a white breast, long reddish bill, bright-red or pink on sides or beneath, reddish-brown crest, white speculum, upper part of throat dark, lower white with breast.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

**“NARRATIVE HISTORY” AMOUNTS TO FABULATION,
THE REAL STUFF BEING MERE CHRONOLOGY**



1854

1854

WINTER 1854/1855

 Winter: [Brownson's Quarterly Review](#), No. 4

KNOW-NOTHINGS

CATHOLICISM

- I. *Uncle Jack and His Nephew*
- II. *The Know-Nothings*
- III. *Sumner on Fugitive Slaves*
- IV. *Works of Fisher Ames*
- V. *Church and State*
- VI. *Literary Notices and Criticisms*
- VII. *End of the Eleventh Volume*

MAGAZINES

ORESTES AUGUSTUS BROWNSON

 Winter: [Eli Thayer](#) again served in the Massachusetts Legislature, as a representative from [Worcester](#).

It was during his last term as a legislator that those events were born in our national history, which require just such a man to unravel and master them. The famous Kansas/Nebraska Bill having passed Congress, by the consequent repeal of the long-standing Missouri Compromise the young territories were forthwith thrown open for a hand-to-hand struggle between the forces of Free and Slave Labor. Whichever should win in that fight, was to possess those lands for all time. The Free State men were at a distance; their opponents were already, as it were, on the ground. The former were placed at a still greater disadvantage, that they either had to pass directly through a slave State to reach Kansas, or to make a circuitous and wearisome journey further to the north, through a free State. It was expensive to remove all the way to Kansas; little was known of the country at the East; men were extremely loth to take their families, one by one, so far beyond the frontier; and, with such a variety and force of opposition, the spirit of the friends of Free Labor began sensibly to flag, even while they saw and lamented that the prize might, with proper effort, be won. How to make that effort most effective was the problem. Eli Thayer sat in the State Capitol and thought the whole thing out. He caught the spirit of the hour, and conceived the magic plan that was to bring order out of chaos, dissipate the fears of the lovers of freedom, and rescue a young State from the curse, whose dark shadow was then passing over its plains. On the instant, he made known his plan. By many it was lightly thought of, because it was so simple. Others would rather wait to see how it was likely to work. The doubters were as plenty as they always are at such times. But Mr. Thayer possessed a wonderful power of *work*; and, as an Englishman would say, work



1854

1854

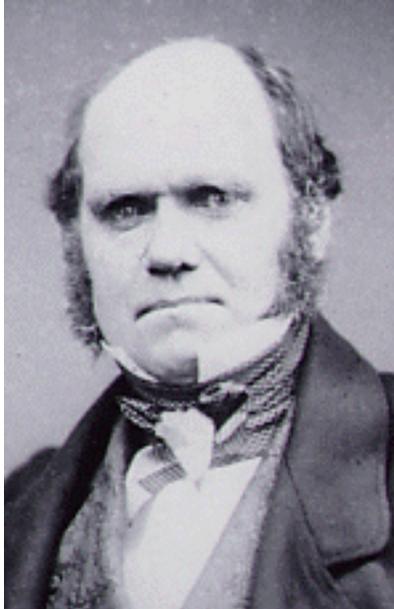
generally accomplishes the end sought for. The first step he took was to procure the charter of an "Emigrant Aid Society" from the Legislature, having already enlisted the sympathy and co-operation of many of the leading men of the State. To show that this movement was, in no sense, a political, but rather a social and economic one, from the start, it is sufficient to state, that among the original corporators to whom this grant was made by the Legislature, appear the names of Col. Isaac Davis, of Worcester; and Gen. J.S. Whitney, of Springfield. Hon. A.A. Lawrence, of Boston, likewise lent it his aid in a large and effective amount of ready money, as is well remembered by all. ... The secret of the free-labor success was, that by the rapidity and compactness of its emigration, under the scheme of Eli Thayer, the work was done before the other side had time to think of it. They invited a free contest, and they were beaten. ... So incensed were they, even before the deed was known to be done, they offered a reward for the head of Eli Thayer, the author and inventor of the scheme by which their game was thus blocked, and kept the reward standing for some time at the head of their newspapers! ... **Their** plan was based on force, absolute and brutal; Thayer sent forward the saw-mill and grist-mill as **his** pioneer, and men followed close after steam.

1854

1854



Winter: [Charles Darwin](#) would later comment, in THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES, “I estimate that the winter of 1854-55 destroyed four-fifths of the birds in my own grounds.” It was not this terrible winter, however, that destroyed his hair — even at the tender age of 45, it was already long gone:



This winter was a terrible one for the soldiers of [Russia](#), Turkey, England, and France, fighting in the [Crimea](#) north of the Black Sea. During this emergency all opposition was overcome and [Florence Nightingale](#) was able for the first time to staff military hospitals with female nurses. In fact, her Reports of the sufferings of the British army in the Crimea, deprived of its supplies in that winter by the Nobel mines in the harbor of Sevastopol in conjunction with the great [hurricane](#) of [November 14, 1854](#),  would lead not only to a new form of organization under the name of the Red Cross but also to the fall of a British government.



In the absence of Professor of Chemistry John Torrey, [Professor Isaac-Farwell Holton](#) was lecturing on the properties of mercury before the medical students of the College of Physicians and Surgeons when he suddenly came to a realization that the name of the white substance “calomel” derived from the Greek $\kappa\alpha\tau\omicron\sigma$, meaning “beautiful,” and *mel* meaning “black” (this etymology came to his mind as he touched a piece of mercurial chloride with potassa and noticed that it produced a black spot).

1854

1854

Lecture Season of '54/55, at the [Odeon Hall](#) in [Boston](#):

16th Season of [The Lowell Institute](#)

Professor C.C. Felton. <i>On the Downfall and Resurrection of Greece</i>	12 lectures
Honorable John G. Palfrey . <i>New England History</i>	12 lectures
James Russell Lowell . <i>English Poetry</i>	24 lectures
Reverend Frederic Henry Hedge . <i>Mediæval History</i>	6 lectures



In the [Thoreau Research Newsletter](#) for January and April 1990, [Dr. Bradley P. Dean](#) would offer speculations about the health of [Henry Thoreau](#):

Sometime during the late winter or early spring of 1855, Thoreau began suffering from a mysterious illness. When, exactly, did



he start suffering from this illness? And might the illness have been psychosomatic? I will treat the first of these two questions here and deal with the second question in the next number of TRN.

In a letter to Blake on 27 June 1855, Thoreau wrote, "I have been sick and good for nothing but to lie on my back and wait for something to turn up, for two or three months." On 14 July 1855, in another letter to Blake, he wrote, "I trust you will excuse my infrequent and curt writing until I am able to resume my old habits, which for three months I have been compelled to abandon." In a journal entry dated 11 June 1855, but actually written 16 September 1855, Thoreau wrote, "Now ... after four or five months of invalidity and worthlessness, I begin to feel some stirrings of life in me."

These three remarks indicate that Thoreau became incapacitated by his illness sometime between 27 March and 16 May 1855, with mid-April, because it is common to all three remarks, being the likeliest period. But when did he first become ill?

Thoreau took day-long skating trips on 31 January and 1 February 1855, and he suggests in his journal that he skated each day from 30 January to 4 February. Severely cold weather set in on the latter day and continued almost unabated until a thaw set in on 12 February. Nine days later, on 21 February, Thoreau wrote in his journal about "invalids who have weak lungs, who think they may weather it till summer now," which strongly suggests he had been ill for some time, probably with a cold.

Thoreau probably contracted his illness of 1855 during the cold spell of early February. Apparently the illness lingered and somehow came to affect his legs. Probably not until his legs were affected, perhaps in mid April, did he regard himself as truly "sick and good for nothing but to lie on [his] back," for prior to that time he would have been able to carry on his "old habits" in spite of being ill.

In "Part 1" I presented a few facts which suggest that Thoreau contracted his illness of 1855 during a cold spell in early February and that his illness lingered until about mid April, when it apparently became more serious and began to affect his legs. On 16 September 1855 (see his journal entry dated 11 June 1855) he wrote that he began to feel some stirrings of life, which apparently presaged a recovery sufficient enough to enable him to resume the "old habits" his illness had compelled him to abandon in April. Nonetheless, he seems to have experienced some weakness in his legs for many months after the fall of 1855.

Two of the "old habits" affected by Thoreau's illness were his journalizing and, of course, his afternoon walks. By 15 May 1855 he seems to have fallen a few days behind in his journal writing, and shortly thereafter he apparently began saving the field notes that he usually transcribed into or amplified upon in his journal each day. His entries for August and most of September 1855 are brief and sporadic. Beginning with the entry of 24 September, he seems to have gotten back to normal so far as his journalizing is concerned. But since he was writing his entry for 11 June on 16 September, he probably didn't get caught up on his journal until sometime in early October. One other circumstance, which I will mention below, also suggests that this was the case.



During the summers of 1851-54 and 1856-60, Thoreau took long walks almost every afternoon and usually wrote a great deal in his journal about the various botanical observations he had made on his walks. During the summer of 1855, however, he paid considerably less attention than usual to Concord's flora and relatively more attention to birds, perhaps because birds could come to him instead of him going to them. A particularly suggestive remark appears in his entry of 12 June: "A crow blackbird's nest high in an elm by riverside just below the Island. C[hanning] climbed to it and got it. I have it." Were he not ill, Thoreau would almost certainly have climbed the tree himself to retrieve the nest.

Might Thoreau's illness of 1855 have been psychosomatic? I think not. But although his illness was probably genuine or physiological, I suspect that a wide array of psychological factors may have been at least partially responsible for its length and severity, and perhaps for the strange turn it took by affecting his legs. (See Lebeaux's Thoreau's Seasons, pp.229-45, for a detailed discussion of this subject from a more complex and psychologically informed approach than I take below. Lebeaux remarks, "Whatever the organic component, it is highly likely that this strange, undiagnosed malady had a significant psychosomatic component" [p. 233]. The following observations may be regarded as an additional factor of the malady's "psychosomatic component" discussed by Lebeaux.)

Given that discussion of Thoreau's (or anyone else's) psychological state is inherently speculative, I suggest that Thoreau's illness may have been exacerbated by the high hopes he had for Walden's success and what turned out to be the book's modest sales. The case of "sympathetic lockjaw" that Thoreau suffered after his brother John's death indicates that he was susceptible to or capable of psychosomatic reactions to traumatic events, and he certainly had an enormous investment of time and emotion in Walden. Just prior to the book's publication, Emerson reported that Thoreau was walking around Concord "in a tremble of great expectation" and looking like "the undoubted King of all American lions." Since Walden did not sell nearly as well as Thoreau had expected it would, I believe its "failure" qualifies as a traumatic event for Thoreau.

Reports of Walden's sales conflict, as I point out in a separate note above (p. 5), but whether the first year's sales were less than 800 or more than 1,700, Thoreau clearly expected many more copies to have been sold. In his journal entry of 14 September 1855, he wrote, "It costs so much to publish, would it not be better for the author to put his manuscripts in a safe?" For Thoreau, a substantial portion of the cost to publish his Walden manuscript was no doubt emotional, and that cost almost certainly had not been redeemed by the book's sales at the time he wrote the sentence in his journal.

But when did he write the sentence in his journal? As I mentioned, he was three months behind on his journal entries in mid September, and he probably could not have gotten caught up till early October. I think it likely, therefore, that he wrote the sentence about the cost of publishing within a few days after receiving Ticknor and Fields's letter of 29 September 1855. That letter contained the firm's royalty payment of \$51.60 for the

1854

1854

sale of 344 copies of *Walden*. It also contained the firm's assessment about the overall sale of the book: "We regret for your sake as well as ours that a larger number of *Walden* has not been sold." Surely Ticknor and Fields's regret was nowhere near as profound as Thoreau's own.

➡ Winter: Thomas D. Bonner, a guest at the hotel created by [James Pierson Beckwourth](#) in Sierra Valley, [California](#), hearing in this hotel keeper's log cabin (it still exists, radically renovated) on the premises the story



of his active life, wrote it up and in the following year would offer it to Harper & Brothers in New York as a potential crowd-pleaser. A contract was created, in accordance with which Beckwourth was to receive half the royalties, and *THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF JAMES P. BECKWOURTH, MOUNTAINEER, SCOUT, AND PIONEER, AND CHIEF OF THE CROW NATION OF INDIANS. WITH ILLUSTRATIONS. WRITTEN FROM HIS OWN DICTATION, BY T.D. BONNER* would appear in 1856. Beckwourth would never receive a cent.



LIFE AND ADVENTURES



1854

1854

DECEMBER 1854

 December: This month's issue of [Harper's New Monthly Magazine](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE

(Review of [Henry Thoreau's WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#)): "New Books," [Harvard Magazine](#): 45.

Although this is a book some three months old, we cannot forbear to mention it in our list of new publications, so much are we pleased with it. The author is a Concord man, a friend of Mr. Emerson's, whom some people accuse him of copying. But Mr. Thoreau is evidently a man of much originality, as this book, and his former one,—"A Week on the Concord and Merrimac[k],"—amply show. We shall notice the books and their author at greater length in a future number. We hope soon to announce the publication of a book by Mr. Emerson, — his long-expected work on England. Perhaps we may be able to speak of that also in our next.

 December: Documentation of the [international slave trade](#), per [W.E. Burghardt Du Bois](#): "Reports of the Secretary of the Navy."—HOUSE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 33 Cong. 2 sess. I. pt. 2, No. 1, pt. 2, pp. 386-7; 34 Cong. 1 sess. I. pt. 3, No. 1, pt. 3, p. 5.²⁰²

[W.E. Burghardt Du Bois](#): A somewhat more sincere and determined effort to enforce the slave-trade laws now followed; and yet it is a significant fact that not until Lincoln's administration did a slave-trader suffer death for violating the laws of the United States. The participation of Americans in the trade continued, declining somewhat between 1825 and 1830, and then reviving, until it reached its highest activity between 1840 and 1860. The development of a vast internal slave-trade, and the consequent rise in the South of vested interests strongly opposed to slave smuggling, led to a falling off in the illicit introduction of Negroes after 1825, until the fifties; nevertheless, smuggling never entirely ceased, and large numbers were thus added to the plantations of the Gulf States. Monroe had various constitutional scruples as to the execution of the Act of 1819;²⁰³ but, as Congress took no action, he at last put a fair interpretation on his powers, and appointed Samuel Bacon as an agent in Africa to form a settlement for recaptured Africans. Gradually the agency thus formed became

202. THE REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY are found among the documents accompanying the annual messages of the President.

203. Attorney-General Wirt advised him, October, 1819, that no part of the appropriation could be used to purchase land in Africa or tools for the Negroes, or as salary for the agent: OPINIONS OF ATTORNEYS-GENERAL, I. 314-7. Monroe laid the case before Congress in a special message Dec. 20, 1819 (HOUSE JOURNAL, 16th Congress 1st session, page 57); but no action was taken there.



merged with that of the Colonization Society on Cape Mesurado; and from this union [Liberia](#) was finally evolved.²⁰⁴ Meantime, during the years 1818 to 1820, the activity of the slave-traders was prodigious. General James Tallmadge declared in the House, February 15, 1819: "Our laws are already highly penal against their introduction, and yet, it is a well known fact, that about fourteen thousand slaves have been brought into our country this last year."²⁰⁵ In the same year Middleton of South Carolina and Wright of Virginia estimated illicit introduction at 13,000 and 15,000 respectively.²⁰⁶ Judge Story, in charging a jury, took occasion to say: "We have but too many proofs from unquestionable sources, that it [the slave-trade] is still carried on with all the implacable rapacity of former times. Avarice has grown more subtle in its evasions, and watches and seizes its prey with an appetite quickened rather than suppressed by its guilty vigils. American citizens are steeped to their very mouths (I can hardly use too bold a figure) in this stream of iniquity."²⁰⁷ The following year, 1820, brought some significant statements from various members of Congress. Said Smith of South Carolina: "Pharaoh was, for his temerity, drowned in the Red Sea, in pursuing them [the Israelites] contrary to God's express will; but our Northern friends have not been afraid even of that, in their zeal to furnish the Southern States with Africans. They are better seamen than Pharaoh, and calculate by that means to elude the vigilance of Heaven; which they seem to disregard, if they can but elude the violated laws of their country."²⁰⁸ As late as May he saw little hope of suppressing the traffic.²⁰⁹ Sergeant of Pennsylvania declared: "It is notorious that, in spite of the utmost vigilance that can be employed, African negroes are clandestinely brought in and sold as slaves."²¹⁰ Plumer of New Hampshire stated that "of the unhappy beings, thus in violation of all laws transported to our shores, and thrown by force into the mass of our black population, scarcely one in a hundred is ever detected by the officers of the General Government, in a part of the country, where, if we are to believe the statement of Governor Rabun, 'an officer who would perform his duty, by attempting to enforce the law [against the slave trade] is, by many, considered as an officious meddler, and treated with derision and contempt;' ... I have been told by a gentleman, who has attended particularly to this subject, that ten thousand slaves were in one year smuggled into the United States; and that, even for the last year, we must count the number not by hundreds, but by thousands."²¹¹ In 1821 a committee of Congress characterized prevailing methods as those "of the grossest fraud that could be practised to deceive the officers of government."²¹² Another committee, in 1822, after a careful

204. Cf. Kendall's Report, August, 1830: SENATE DOCUMENT, 21st Congress 2d session, I. No. 1, pages 211-8; also see below, Chapter X.

205. Speech in the House of Representatives, Feb. 15, 1819, page 18; published in Boston, 1849.

206. Jay, INQUIRY INTO AMERICAN COLONIZATION (1838), page 59, note.

207. Quoted in Friends' FACTS AND OBSERVATIONS ON THE SLAVE TRADE (ed. 1841), pages 7-8.

208. ANNALS OF CONGRESS, 16th Congress 1st session, pages 270-1.

209. ANNALS OF CONGRESS, 16th Congress 1st session, page 698.

210. ANNALS OF CONGRESS, 16th Congress 1st session, page 1207.

211. ANNALS OF CONGRESS, 16th Congress 1st session, page 1433.



examination of the subject, declare that they "find it impossible to measure with precision the effect produced upon the American branch of the slave trade by the laws above mentioned, and the seizures under them. They are unable to state, whether those American merchants, the American capital and seamen which heretofore aided in this traffic, have abandoned it altogether, or have sought shelter under the flags of other nations." They then state the suspicious circumstance that, with the disappearance of the American flag from the traffic, "the trade, notwithstanding, increases annually, under the flags of other nations." They complain of the spasmodic efforts of the executive. They say that the first United States cruiser arrived on the African coast in March, 1820, and remained a "few weeks;" that since then four others had in two years made five visits in all; but "since the middle of last November, the commencement of the healthy season on that coast, no vessel has been, nor, as your committee is informed, is, under orders for that service."²¹³ The United States African agent, Ayres, reported in 1823: "I was informed by an American officer who had been on the coast in 1820, that he had boarded 20 American vessels in one morning, lying in the port of Gallinas, and fitted for the reception of slaves. It is a lamentable fact, that most of the harbours, between the Senegal and the line, were visited by an equal number of American vessels, and for the sole purpose of carrying away slaves. Although for some years the coast had been occasionally visited by our cruisers, their short stay and seldom appearance had made but slight impression on those traders, rendered hardy by repetition of crime, and avaricious by excessive gain. They were enabled by a regular system to gain intelligence of any cruiser being on the coast."²¹⁴

Even such spasmodic efforts bore abundant fruit, and indicated what vigorous measures might have accomplished. Between May, 1818, and November, 1821, nearly six hundred Africans were recaptured and eleven American slavers taken.²¹⁵ Such measures gradually changed the character of the trade, and opened the international phase of the question. American slavers cleared for foreign ports, there took a foreign flag and papers, and then sailed boldly past American cruisers, although their real character was often well known. More stringent clearance laws and consular instructions might have greatly reduced this practice; but nothing was ever done, and gradually the laws became in large measure powerless to deal with the bulk of the illicit trade. In 1820, September 16, a British officer, in his official report, declares that, in spite of United States laws,

212. Referring particularly to the case of the slaver "Plattsburg." Cf. HOUSE REPORTS, 17th Congress 1st session, II. No. 92, page 10.

213. HOUSE REPORTS, 17th Congress 1st session, II. No. 92, page 2. The President had in his message spoken in exhilarating tones of the success of the government in suppressing the trade. The House Committee appointed in pursuance of this passage made the above report. Their conclusions are confirmed by British reports: PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS, 1822, Vol. XXII., SLAVE TRADE, Further Papers, III. page 44. So, too, in 1823, Ashmun, the African agent, reports that thousands of slaves are being abducted.

214. Ayres to the Secretary of the Navy, Feb. 24, 1823; reprinted in FRIENDS' VIEW OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE-TRADE (1824), page 31.

215. HOUSE REPORTS, 17th Congress 1st session, II. No. 92, pages 5-6. The slavers were the "Ramirez," "Endymion," "Esperanza," "Plattsburg," "Science," "Alexander," "Eugene," "Mathilde," "Daphne," "Eliza," and "La Pensée." In these 573 Africans were taken. The naval officers were greatly handicapped by the size of the ships, etc. (cf. FRIENDS' VIEW OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE-TRADE (1824), pages 33-41). They nevertheless acted with great zeal.



"American vessels, American subjects, and American capital, are unquestionably engaged in the trade, though under other colours and in disguise."²¹⁶ The United States ship "Cyane" at one time reported ten captures within a few days, adding: "Although they are evidently owned by Americans, they are so completely covered by Spanish papers that it is impossible to condemn them."²¹⁷ The governor of Sierra Leone reported the rivers Nunez and Pongas full of renegade European and American slave-traders;²¹⁸ the trade was said to be carried on "to an extent that almost staggers belief."²¹⁹ Down to 1824 or 1825, reports from all quarters prove this activity in slave-trading. The execution of the laws within the country exhibits grave defects and even criminal negligence. Attorney-General Wirt finds it necessary to assure collectors, in 1819, that "it is against public policy to dispense with prosecutions for violation of the law to prohibit the Slave trade."²²⁰ One district attorney writes: "It appears to be almost impossible to enforce the laws of the United States against offenders after the negroes have been landed in the state."²²¹ Again, it is asserted that "when vessels engaged in the slave trade have been detained by the American cruisers, and sent into the slave-holding states, there appears at once a difficulty in securing the freedom to these captives which the laws of the United States have decreed for them."²²² In some cases, one man would smuggle in the Africans and hide them in the woods; then his partner would "rob" him, and so all trace be lost.²²³ Perhaps 350 Africans were officially reported as brought in contrary to law from 1818 to 1820: the absurdity of this figure is apparent.²²⁴ A circular letter to the marshals, in 1821, brought reports of only a few well-known cases, like that of the "General Ramirez;" the marshal of Louisiana had "no information."²²⁵ There appears to be little positive evidence of a large illicit importation into the country for a decade after 1825. It is hardly possible, however, considering the activity in the trade, that slaves were not largely imported. Indeed, when we note how the laws were continually broken in other respects, absence of evidence of petty smuggling becomes presumptive evidence that collusive or tacit understanding of officers and citizens allowed the trade to some extent.²²⁶ Finally, it must be noted that during all this time scarcely a man suffered for participating in the trade, beyond the loss of the Africans and, more rarely, of his ship. Red-handed slavers, caught in the act

216. PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS, 1821, Vol. XXIII., SLAVE TRADE, Further Papers, A, page 76. The names and description of a dozen or more American slavers are given: PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS, 1821, Vol. XXIII., SLAVE TRADE, Further Papers, A, pages 18-21.

217. HOUSE REPORTS, 17th Congress 1st session, II. No. 92, pages 15-20.

218. HOUSE DOCUMENT, 18th Congress 1st session, VI. No. 119, page 13.

219. PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS, 1823, Vol. XVIII., SLAVE TRADE, Further Papers, A, pages 10-11.

220. OPINIONS OF ATTORNEYS-GENERAL, V. 717.

221. R.W. Habersham to the Secretary of the Navy, August, 1821; reprinted in FRIENDS' VIEW OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE-TRADE (1824), page 47.

222. FRIENDS' VIEW OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE-TRADE (1824), page 42.

223. FRIENDS' VIEW OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE-TRADE (1824), page 43.

224. Cf. above, pages 126-7.

225. FRIENDS' VIEW OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE-TRADE (1824), page 42.

226. A few accounts of captures here and there would make the matter less suspicious; these, however, do not occur. How large this suspected illicit traffic was, it is of course impossible to say; there is no reason why it may not have reached many hundreds per year.



and convicted, were too often, like *La Coste* of South Carolina, the subjects of executive clemency.²²⁷ In certain cases there were those who even had the effrontery to ask Congress to cancel their own laws. For instance, in 1819 a Venezuelan privateer, secretly fitted out and manned by Americans in Baltimore, succeeded in capturing several American, Portuguese, and Spanish slavers, and appropriating the slaves; being finally wrecked herself, she transferred her crew and slaves to one of her prizes, the "Antelope," which was eventually captured by a United States cruiser and the 280 Africans sent to Georgia. After much litigation, the United States Supreme Court ordered those captured from Spaniards to be surrendered, and the others to be returned to Africa. By some mysterious process, only 139 Africans now remained, 100 of whom were sent to Africa. The Spanish claimants of the remaining thirty-nine sold them to a certain Mr. Wilde, who gave bond to transport them out of the country. Finally, in December, 1827, there came an innocent petition to Congress to *cancel this bond*.²²⁸ A bill to that effect passed and was approved, May 2, 1828,²²⁹ and in consequence these Africans remained as slaves in Georgia. On the whole, it is plain that, although in the period from 1807 to 1820 Congress laid down broad lines of legislation sufficient, save in some details, to suppress the African slave trade to America, yet the execution of these laws was criminally lax. Moreover, by the facility with which slavers could disguise their identity, it was possible for them to escape even a vigorous enforcement of our laws. This situation could properly be met only by energetic and sincere international co-operation....²³⁰

227. Cf. editorial in *Niles's Register*, XXII. 114. Cf. also the following instances of pardons: —
PRESIDENT JEFFERSON: March 1, 1808, Phillip M. Topham, convicted for "carrying on an illegal slave-trade" (pardoned twice). PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, I. 146, 148-9.
PRESIDENT MADISON: July 29, 1809, 15 vessels arrived at New Orleans from Cuba, with 666 white persons and 683 negroes. Every penalty incurred under the Act of 1807 was remitted. (Note: "Several other pardons of this nature were granted.") PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, I. 179.
Nov. 8, 1809, John Hopkins and Lewis Le Roy, convicted for importing a slave. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, I. 184-5.
Feb. 12, 1810, William Sewall, convicted for importing slaves. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, I. 194, 235, 240.
May 5, 1812, William Babbit, convicted for importing slaves. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, I. 248.
PRESIDENT MONROE: June 11, 1822, Thomas Shields, convicted for bringing slaves into New Orleans. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 15.
Aug. 24, 1822, J.F. Smith, sentenced to five years' imprisonment and \$3000 fine; served twenty-five months and was then pardoned. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 22.
July 23, 1823, certain parties liable to penalties for introducing slaves into Alabama. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 63.
Aug. 15, 1823, owners of schooner "Mary," convicted of importing slaves. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 66.
PRESIDENT J.Q. ADAMS: March 4, 1826, Robert Perry; his ship was forfeited for slave-trading. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 140.
Jan. 17, 1827, Jesse Perry; forfeited ship, and was convicted for introducing slaves. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 158.
Feb. 13, 1827, Zenas Winston; incurred penalties for slave-trading. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 161. The four following cases are similar to that of Winston: —
Feb. 24, 1827, John Tucker and William Morbon. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 162.
March 25, 1828, Joseph Badger. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 192.
Feb. 19, 1829, L.R. Wallace. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 215.
PRESIDENT JACKSON: Five cases. PARDONS AND REMISSIONS, IV. 225, 270, 301, 393, 440.
The above cases were taken from manuscript copies of the Washington records, made by Mr. W.C. Endicott, Jr., and kindly loaned me.
228. See SENATE JOURNAL, 20th Congress 1st session, pages 60, 66, 340, 341, 343, 348, 352, 355; HOUSE JOURNAL, 20th Congress 1st session, pages 59, 76, 123, 134, 156, 169, 173, 279, 634, 641, 646, 647, 688, 692.
229. STATUTES AT LARGE, VI. 376.

 December: [Bronson Alcott](#)'s English friend [Charles Lane](#) was almost jailed for refusal to pay poll tax.

Four members of the [Matthew Flourney Ward](#) jury had been indicted by a grand jury on charges of perjury and one, T.M. Yates, had gone to trial, upon his acquittal, charges against the other 3 jurors were dismissed. Matthew Flourney Ward had been secreted away to Louisiana and would remain on the Ward family's plantation in that state.

Read  [Henry Thoreau's Journal for December 1854 \(æf. 37\) in the 1906 version](#)

 December 1, Friday-6, Wednesday: [Henry Thoreau](#)'s new lecture "[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT](#)" was advertised in [The Liberator](#) and in all 4 of [Providence](#), [Rhode Island](#)'s major newspapers—the [Daily Post](#), [Daily Journal](#), [Bulletin](#), and [Daily Tribune](#).²³¹

The [Post](#) and the [Tribune](#) ran brief articles in which Thoreau was described as

a young man of high ability, who built his house in the woods, and there lived five years [*sic*] for about \$30 a year, during which time he stored his mind with a vast amount of useful knowledge—setting an example for poor young men who thirst for learning, showing those who are determined to get a good education how they can have it by pursuing the right course.

[Providence [Daily Post](#), December 6, page 2, column 4. A slightly altered version of this sentence appeared in the Providence [Daily Tribune](#), December

A lengthy article by Franz Liszt in praise of Clara Schumann appeared in the [Neue Zeitschrift für Musik](#).



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR DECEMBER 1st]

230. Among interesting minor proceedings in this period were two Senate bills to register slaves so as to prevent illegal importation. They were both dropped in the House; a House proposition to the same effect also came to nothing: SENATE JOURNAL, 15th Congress 1st session, pages 147, 152, 157, 165, 170, 188, 201, 203, 232, 237; 15th Congress 2d session, pages 63, 74, 77, 202, 207, 285, 291, 297; HOUSE JOURNAL, 15th Congress 1st session, page 332; 15th Congress 2d session, pages 303, 305, 316; 16th Congress 1st session, page 150. Another proposition was contained in the Meigs resolution presented to the House, Feb. 5, 1820, which proposed to devote the public lands to the suppression of the slave-trade. This was ruled out of order. It was presented again and laid on the table in 1821: HOUSE JOURNAL, 16th Congress 1st session, pages 196, 200, 227; 16th Congress 2d session, page 238.

231. [Liberator](#), December 1, page 3, column 2; Providence [Daily Post](#), December 5, page 3, column 1; Providence [Bulletin](#), December 5, page 3, column 1; Providence [Daily Journal](#), December 5, page 3, column 1, and December 6, page 3, column 1; Providence [Daily Tribune](#), December 6, page 3, column 5.

1854

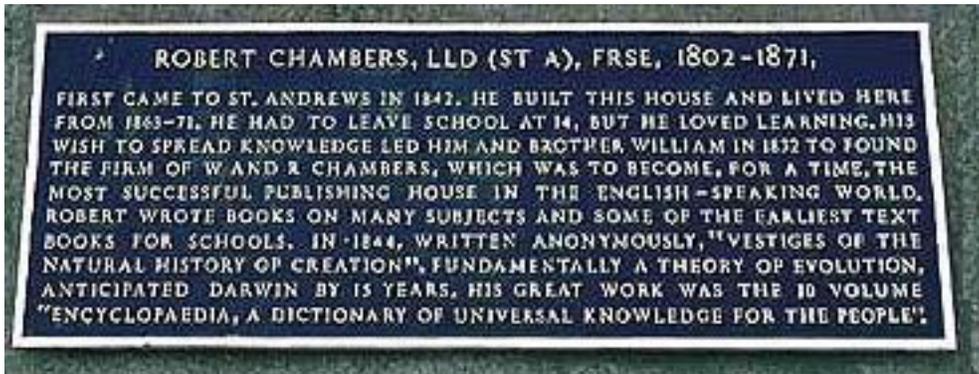
1854



December 2, Saturday: Father [Isaac Hecker](#), CSSR, wrote to [Orestes Augustus Brownson](#).

An alliance was concluded between Austria, France, and Great Britain.

The previously published report by David Page, a disgruntled ex-employee, again appeared in the newspapers. It was not clear that he could be credited, that [Robert Chambers](#) was the secret author of [VESTIGES OF THE NATURAL HISTORY OF CREATION](#).



Ice had formed about the boat of [Henry Thoreau](#), so he needed to take it out of the water and store it for the season:



Dec. 2. Got up my boat and housed it, ice having formed about it.

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



December 3, Sunday: When the richest gold field the world had ever known had been discovered in 1851 just outside of Melbourne, [Australia](#) immigrants had poured in from all over the world to seek their fortune; in 3 years the population of the colony of Victoria had risen from 80,000 to 300,000. At dawn on this Sunday morning the 40th Military Regiment launched an assault upon a relatively undistinguished tax protest by disgruntled gold miners at a place known as "[Eureka Stockade](#)" — that subcontinent's sole armed insurrection against colonial tyranny — and [Mark Twain](#), visiting Australia in 1895, searching desperately for cultural material which he might exploit for purposes of humor, would describe this stockade grandiloquently as: "The finest thing in Australia's history. It was a revolution small in size, but great politically; it was a strike for liberty, a struggle for principle, a stand against injustice and oppression ... it is another instance of a victory won by a lost battle." What these tax rebels had done was erect their stockade, unfurl a nice-looking flag, and swear an oath: "We swear by the Southern Cross to stand truly by each other and to defend our rights and liberties." The soldiers, however, killed 22 of the miners at a loss of but 6 soldiers. The rebellion's spectacular failure might have ended there had the British been willing to rest on their laurels. However, 13 surviving rebel leaders would be put on trial for high treason, only to have the jury decide that this stockade protest had been a riot rather than a revolt. One by one the defendants would be found not guilty of high treason, until the Governor would be obliged to grant amnesty to any rebels still in hiding.



Dec. 3. Sunday. The first snow of consequence fell in the evening, very damp (wind northeast); 5 or 6 inches deep in morning, after very high wind in the night.

[Transcript]



Snowbirds in garden in the midst of the snow in the P.M.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



December 4, Monday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked along the Fitchburg Railroad tracks to [Walden Pond](#).

The Berg Collection of the New York Public Library has a file “Letters to John and [Henry Thoreau](#) and [William D. Brown](#).” This includes a letter bearing this date from [Francis Monroe](#) in [Concord](#) to [William D. Brown](#), both of whom who were qualified to vote there in the election of 1856. This letter contains the information that a source for the Thoreau family’s ground graphite was Francis Monroe, and that this graphite was being ground by [Brown](#):

Concord Dec 4th 1854

Mr W^m D. Brown

I have sold to Mr Thoreau the Black Lead belonging to me that you have ground, for 27 cents pr pound, provided he takes it within ten days from the above date [sic]. You will please weigh it, receive the cash for it on delivery, and remit me the amount by Mail, directed to Manchester V.T. When I am next in town I will settle with you for grinding &c.

Respectfully yours

Francis Monroe



Dec. 4. P.M. — Down railroad to Walden.

Walden went down quite rapidly about the middle of November, leaving the isthmus to Emerson’s meadow bare. Flint’s has been very low all summer. The northeast sides of the trees are thickly incrusting with snowy shields, visible afar, the snow was so damp (at Boston it turned to rain). This had none of the dry delicate powdery beauties of a common first snow.

Already the bird-like birch scales dot the snow.

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



December 5, Tuesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Charles Sumner](#), thanking him for some government pamphlets.

*Concord Mass Dec 5th
1854*

Mr Sumner,

Dear Sir,

Allow me to thank you once more for the Report of Sittgreaves, the Patent Office 2nd Part, and on Emigrant Ships.

At this rate there will be one department in my library, and that not the smallest one, which I may call the Sumnerian—

*Yours sincerely
Henry D. Thoreau.*



That evening he lectured, probably on “Moose Hunting,” at the [Concord Lyceum](#).

TIMELINE OF THE MAINE WOODS



Dec. 5. Very cold last night. Probably river skimmed over in some places. The damp snow with water beneath (in all 5 or 6 inches deep and not drifted, notwithstanding the wind) is frozen solid, making a crust which bears well, This, I think, is unusual at this stage of the winter.

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

1854

1854

 December 6, Wednesday: French land and naval forces attacked [Shanghai](#), which had been held for over a year by members of the Small Sword Society.



All week, [Henry Thoreau](#)'s new lecture "[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT](#)" had been being advertised in [The Liberator](#) and in all 4 of [Providence, Rhode Island](#)'s major newspapers — the [Daily Post](#), [Daily Journal](#), [Bulletin](#), and [Daily Tribune](#).²³²

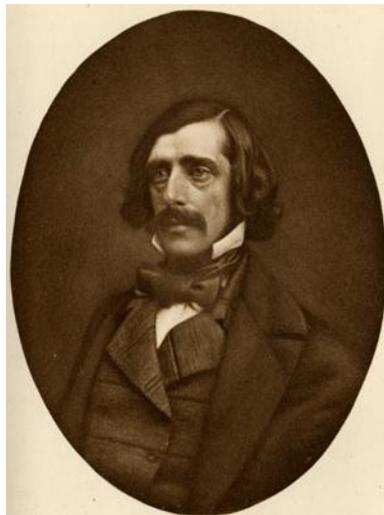


The [Daily Post](#) and the [Daily Tribune](#) had also run brief articles in which the visiting lecturer had been being described as

a young man of high ability, who built his house in the woods, and there lived five years [*sic*] for about \$30 a year, during which time he stored his mind with a vast amount of useful knowledge—setting an example for poor young men who thirst for learning, showing those who are determined to get a good education how they can have it by pursuing the right course.

[Providence [Daily Post](#), December 6, page 2, column 4. A slightly altered version of this sentence appeared in the Providence [Daily Tribune](#), December

On this day the lecturer arrived by train and, accompanied by [Charles King Newcomb](#), visited the Reverend [Roger Williams](#)'s slate rock in the Blackstone estuary, and visited an old hilltop fort in Seekonk on the east side of the bay.



Beginning at 7:30 PM, at Railroad Hall, Thoreau delivered his lecture, or sermon, for the first time. Admission

232. [The Liberator](#), December 1, page 3, column 2; Providence [Daily Post](#), December 5, page 3, column 1; Providence [Bulletin](#), December 5, page 3, column 1; Providence [Daily Journal](#), December 5, page 3, column 1, and December 6, page 3, column 1; Providence [Daily Tribune](#), December 6, page 3, column 5.

was 25 cents. Thoreau was impressed by the railroad depot in which he was lecturing, “its towers and great length of brick.” The only indication of how the audience responded is Thoreau’s journal entry of that evening:

After lecturing twice this winter I feel that I am in danger of cheapening myself by trying to become a successful lecturer, i.e., to interest my audiences. I am disappointed to find that most that I am and value myself for is lost, or worse than lost, on my audience. I fail to get even the attention of the mass. I should suit them better if I suited myself less. I feel that the public demand an average man,—average thoughts and manners,—not originality, nor even absolute excellence. You cannot interest them except as you are like them and sympathize with them. I would rather that my audience come to me than that I should go to them, and so they be sifted; i.e., I would rather write books than lectures. That is fine, this coarse. To read to a promiscuous audience who are at your mercy the fine thoughts you solaced yourself with

THOREAU’S SERMON

[Various versions of [“LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE”](#), variously titled, would be delivered:

- [“WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT”](#) on December 6th, 1854 at Railroad Hall in [Providence](#)
- [“WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT”](#) on December 26th, 1854 in the [New Bedford](#) Lyceum
- [“WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT”](#) on December 28th, 1854 at the Athenaeum on [Nantucket Island](#)
- On January 4th, 1855 in the [Worcester](#) Lyceum, as “The Connection between Man’s Employment and His Higher Life”
- [“WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT”](#) on February 14th, 1855 in the [Concord Lyceum](#)
- [“WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT”](#) on November 16th, 1856 for the [Eagleswood](#) community
- “Getting a Living” on December 18th, 1856 in the vestry of the [Congregational Church](#) of Amherst, [New Hampshire](#)
- [“LIFE MISSPENT”](#) on Sunday morning, October 9th, 1859 to the Reverend [Theodore Parker](#)’s 28th Congregational Society in [Boston Music Hall](#)
- [“LIFE MISSPENT”](#) on Sunday, September 9th, 1860 at Welles Hall in [Lowell](#).]



Dec. 6. To Providence to lecture.

[Transcript]

I see [[^]thick] ice and boys skating all the way to Providence, but know not when it froze, I have been so busy writing my lecture; probably the night of the 4th.

In order to go to Blue Hill by Providence Railroad, stop at Readville Station (Dedham Low Plain once), 8 miles; the hill apparently 2 miles east. Was struck with the Providence depot, its towers and great length of brick. Lectured in it.

Went to R. Williams’s Rock on the Blackstone with Newcomb and thence to hill with an old fort atop in Seekonk, Mass., on the east side of the Bay, whence a fine view down it. At lecture spoke with a Mr. Clark and Vaughn and Eaton.

After lecturing twice this winter I feel that I am in danger of cheapening myself by trying to become a successful lecturer, i.e., to interest my audiences. I am disappointed to find that most that I am and value myself for is lost, or worse than lost, on my audience. I fail to get even the attention of the mass. I should suit them better if I suited myself less. I feel that the public demand an average man, — average thoughts and manners, — not originality, nor even absolute excellence. You cannot interest them except as you are like them and sympathize with them. I would rather that my audience come to me than that I should go to them, and so they be sifted; i.e., I would rather write books than lectures. That is fine, this coarse. To read to a [[^]promiscuous] audience who are at your mercy the fine thoughts you solaced yourself with far away is as violent as to fatten geese by cramming, & in



1854

1854

this case they do not get fatter.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

THE LIST OF LECTURES



1854

1854

“WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT”²³³

DATE	PLACE	TOPIC
November 21, 1854, Tuesday; 7:30PM	Spring Garden Institute, Philadelphia PA	“The Wild”
December 6, 1854, Wednesday; 7:30PM	<u>Providence</u> ; Railroad Hall	<u>“WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT”</u>
December 26, 1854, Tuesday; 7:30PM	<u>New Bedford</u> ; Lyceum	<u>“WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT”</u>

233. From Bradley P. Dean and Ronald Wesley Hoag’s THOREAU’S LECTURES AFTER WALDEN: AN ANNOTATED CALENDAR.



NARRATIVE OF EVENT: On or about October 18th, [Henry Thoreau](#) received a letter from [Asa Fairbanks](#) asking if he would allow his name to appear in a program of reform lectures scheduled to commence in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) on November 1st. Fairbanks informed Thoreau that “*every Lecturer will choose his own Subject, but we expect all ... will be of a reformatory Character*” (THE CORRESPONDENCE OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU, page 345). After indicating that remuneration to the course lecturers would be an expected “expenses and fifteen to twenty dollars” or “perhaps better,” Fairbanks pressed the issue of reform as a required topic:

The Anthony Burns affair and the Nebraska bill, and other outrages of Slavery has done much to awaken the feeling of a class of Minds heretofore quiet, on all questions of reform[.] In getting up these popular Lectures we thought at first, it would not do as well to have them too radical, or it would be best to have a part of the Speakers of the conservative class, but experience has shown us in Providence surely, that the Masses who attend such Lectures are better suited with reform lectures than with the old school conservatives.
(THE CORRESPONDENCE OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU, page 346)

The independent Thoreau may have bristled at the reform stipulation, as the editors of his correspondence suggest, but he responded within a short time and accepted the offer.

[Asa Fairbanks](#)’s letter of November 6th suggests that letters had passed between him and Thoreau in which efforts to establish a date were being made:

I am in receipt of yours of the 4th inst, You stating explicitly that the 6th December would suit you better than any other time.... Had you named the last Wednesday in Nov. or the second Wedn[e]sday in December, I could have replied to you at once or any time in Janu[a]ry or Feb[ruary] it would have been the same[.] I shall regret the disappointment very much but must submit to it if you have such overtures as you cannot avoid. (THE CORRESPONDENCE OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU, pages 348-49)

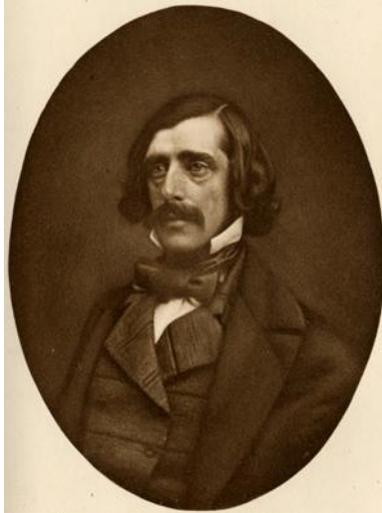
[Asa Fairbanks](#)’s cryptic reference to “such overtures as you cannot avoid” is no doubt an indication that Thoreau’s schedule for the next four months was so full that he could not be as flexible as Fairbanks wished. He was scheduled to deliver one of his 2 “[WALKING, OR THE WILD](#)” lectures in Philadelphia on 21 November; and he was planning to make a western lecture tour in late December, January, and –if the demand he encountered warranted an extension– February. Very likely, then, December 6th was the only Wednesday between mid-November 1854 and February 1855 that he expected to be available. Interestingly enough, on November 17th Thoreau wrote to a William E. Sheldon announcing that he was “still at liberty” to read “a lecture either on the Wild or on Moosehunting as you may prefer” before an unspecified “Society” on the evening of December 5th, the day before his Providence engagement (THE CORRESPONDENCE OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU, page 351). There is no record of this proposed lecture taking place (see Appendix A below). Moreover, on November 27th, Andrew Whitney wrote from [Nantucket Island](#) in response to a letter Thoreau had sent two days earlier: “We cannot have you between the 4 & 15th of Dec. without bringing two lecturers in one week — which we wish to avoid if possible” (THE CORRESPONDENCE OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU, page 352). This suggests that as late as November 25th Thoreau did not regard the December 6th Providence engagement as firmly established.

On December 6th, [Henry Thoreau](#) took the train to Providence, where, his journal reports, he was “struck with the Providence depot, its towers and great length of brick” (JOURNAL, 7:79). The depot’s hall was also the site of his evening talk. A month earlier, on 2 November, the [Providence DAILY JOURNAL](#) had cautioned that the new building’s steep entry with no handrail was a peril, especially to ladies during the impending winter. It is not known if the problem had been corrected by the date of the lecture. Advertisements in [The Liberator](#) and

1854

1854

in all four of Providence's major newspapers indicate that Thoreau's lecture was the fourth of a scheduled ten, commencing with the [Reverend Theodore Parker](#) and including talks by the [Reverend Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#), [Cassius M. Clay](#), [William Lloyd Garrison](#), [Wendell Phillips](#), and others. Tickets for the entire course cost one dollar, while single-lecture admission cost twenty-five cents. The doors to Railroad Hall opened Wednesday evening at 6:30 for the lecture, which was scheduled to begin an hour later. Thoreau made the most of his two-day Providence visit by inspecting "[Roger Williams's Rock](#)" on the [Blackstone River](#) and an old fort overlooking [Narragansett Bay](#), both in the company of [Waldo Emerson's](#) friend [Charles King Newcomb](#), and by walking through the countryside west of Providence (JOURNAL, 7:79-80).



The only indications of how the audience responded to the lecture come, rather obliquely, from Thoreau himself. In a journal entry of that evening, he wrote:

After lecturing twice this winter I feel that I am in danger of cheapening myself by trying to become a successful lecturer, *i.e.*, to interest my audiences. I am disappointed to find that most that I am and value myself for is lost, or worse than lost, on my audience. I fail to get even the attention of the mass. I should suit them better if I suited myself less. I feel that the public demand an average man, -average thoughts and manners, -not originality, nor even absolute excellence. You cannot interest them except as you are like them and sympathize with them. I would rather that my audience come to me than that I should go to them, and so they be sifted; *i.e.*, I would rather write books than lectures. That is fine, this coarse. To read to a promiscuous audience who are at your mercy the fine thoughts you solaced yourself with far away is as violent as to fatten geese by cramming, and in this case they do not get fatter. (JOURNAL, 7:79-80)

This appraisal of what his audiences demanded of him and what he was willing to give suggests that "[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT?](#)" may not have been well received in [Providence](#). Moreover, Thoreau was out of sorts from having been forced to abandon his plans for a lecture tour and from having spent most of the preceding four months at his desk writing lectures for "promiscuous" audiences. Indeed, his unusually rigorous schedule had prevented him even from seeing the winter come in. "I see thick ice and boys skating all the way to



1854

1854

Providence,” he wrote in his journal on December 6th, “but [I] know not when it froze, I have been so busy writing my lecture” (JOURNAL, 7:79). And two days later he complained:

Winter has come unnoticed by me, I have been so busy writing. This is the life most lead in respect to Nature. How different from my habitual one! It is hasty, coarse, and trivial, as if you were a spindle in a factory. The other is leisurely, fine, and glorious, like a flower. In the first case you are merely getting your living; in the second you live as you go along. (JOURNAL, 7:80)

[Thoreau](#)’s reference to writing lectures as “merely getting your living” is a fine touch of self-directed irony, for in almost the entire 1st half of [“WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT”](#)—the very lecture he had just finished writing and delivering— he argues that “A man had better starve at once than lose his innocence in the process of getting his bread.”²³⁴ Subsequently, in a 19 December 1854 letter to [H.G.O. Blake](#), Thoreau punningly testified to his “truly providential meeting with Mr T Brown; providential because it saved me from the suspicion that my words had fallen altogether on stony ground, when it turned out that there was some Worcester soil there” (THE CORRESPONDENCE OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU, page 354). Since Thoreau had yet to give his [Worcester](#) lecture, he here clearly refers to [Theophilus Brown](#)’s fortuitous presence in his [Providence](#) audience.

234. Quoted from the reconstructed text of [“WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT”](#) in [Bradley P. Dean](#), “Reconstructions of Thoreau’s Early ‘Life without Principle’ Lectures,” p. 323.



1854

1854

RAILROAD HALL; PROVIDENCE RI

Courtesy of [Bradley P. Dean](#)

ADVERTISEMENTS, REVIEWS, AND RESPONSES: The lecture was advertised in [The Liberator](#) on 1 December and, the day before and the day of the lecture, in all four of [Providence](#)'s major newspapers — the DAILY POST, DAILY JOURNAL, BULLETIN, and DAILY TRIBUNE. [The Liberator](#) remarked that “The people are anticipating the remaining lectures with a great deal of interest, and the names of the lecturers are a sufficient guarantee that their anticipations will not be disappointed.” On the day [Henry Thoreau](#) lectured the POST and the TRIBUNE also ran brief articles in which Thoreau was described as “a young man of high ability, who built his house in the woods, and there lived five years for about \$30 a year, during which time he stored his mind with a **vast amount of useful knowledge** — setting an example for poor young men who thirst for learning, showing those who are determined to get a good education how they can have it by pursuing the right course.”

In a diary entry of December 11th, 1854, [Bronson Alcott](#) wrote, “Monday 11. I pass the morning and dine with Thoreau, who read me parts of his new Lecture lately read at Philadelphia and Providence[.]”²³⁵ Alcott was mistaken about Thoreau having read “[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT](#)” in Philadelphia: [Bradley P. Dean](#)'s detailed study of Thoreau's composition process for the lecture,²³⁶ and Thoreau's own journal remark about being extremely busy writing his lecture, indicate that he was just able to finish writing the lecture before delivering it in [Providence, Rhode Island](#). It is also unlikely that Thoreau would have changed the lecture topic that had been advertised in the Philadelphia newspapers (see lecture 45 above).

DESCRIPTION OF TOPIC: Using textual and physical evidence from the extant lecture manuscripts, as well as newspaper summaries of Thoreau's several deliveries of “[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT](#)” and its later (1859-60, see lectures 64 and 72 below) manifestation, “[LIFE MISSPENT](#)”, [Bradley P. Dean](#) was able to trace in remarkable detail Thoreau's composition process from the time Thoreau first conceived of the lecture to the time he mailed the final draft of “[LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE](#)” to [James Thomas Fields](#), editor of [The Atlantic Monthly magazine](#). “[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT](#)” contained precisely one hundred paragraphs, fifty-four of which remained in the text and were eventually published in “Life without Principle.”²³⁷

235. [Bronson Alcott](#), “Diary for 1854,” entry of 11 December, MH (*59M-308).

236. [Bradley P. Dean](#)'s study is summarized in his “Reconstructions of Thoreau's Early ‘Life without Principle’ Lectures,” pp. 286-91; for its more detailed counterpart, see the first volume of his two-volume MA thesis, “The Sound of a Flail: Reconstructions of Thoreau's Early ‘Life without Principle’ Lectures,” Eastern Washington University, 1984. Copies of Dean's thesis are available at WaChenE; CtU; the Thoreau Textual Center, CU-SB; and the Thoreau Society Archives, MCo.

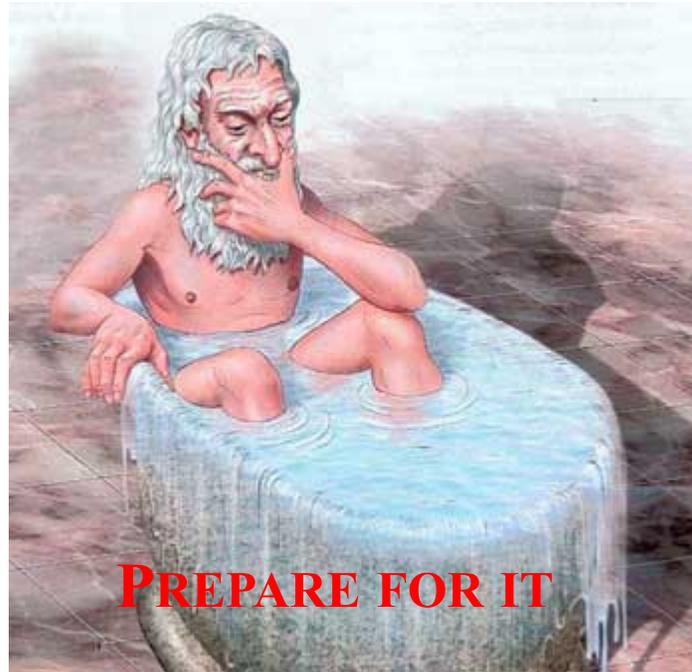
237. Seven of these fifty-four lecture paragraphs [Thoreau](#) conflated to three paragraphs in the essay. Dean's “Reconstructions of Thoreau's Early ‘Life without Principle’ Lectures,” p. 337, contains a graph showing the structural changes between the lectures and the essay.

1854

1854



December 7, Thursday: [Louis Pasteur](#) was appointed as Dean of the new Faculty of Sciences in Lille. The advice he offered in his inaugural address has been variously translated into the English as “In the fields of observation chance favors only the prepared mind” and “Chance favors the prepared mind” and “Fortune favors the prepared mind” and “In the field of observation, chance favors the prepared mind” and as “Where observation is concerned, chance favors only the prepared mind” and as “Prepare your mind so when your one big break come along, you will be ready to seize it” and as “Prepare yourself for opportunity.” I prefer a bumper-sticker-style: “Prepare for it.”



“Dans les champs de l’observation le hasard ne favorise que les esprits préparés.”

– [Louis Pasteur](#), at the University of Lisle on December 7, 1854



[Henry Thoreau](#) walked through Olneyville in Johnston, [Rhode Island](#), 2½ or 3 miles west of [Providence](#). On the way back from Providence to Concord he stopped at [Harvard Library](#) and checked out:

— [John Dunn Hunter](#)'s MEMOIRS OF A CAPTIVITY AMONG THE INDIANS OF NORTH AMERICA, FROM CHILDHOOD TO THE AGE OF NINETEEN (Philadelphia, 1823)²³⁸

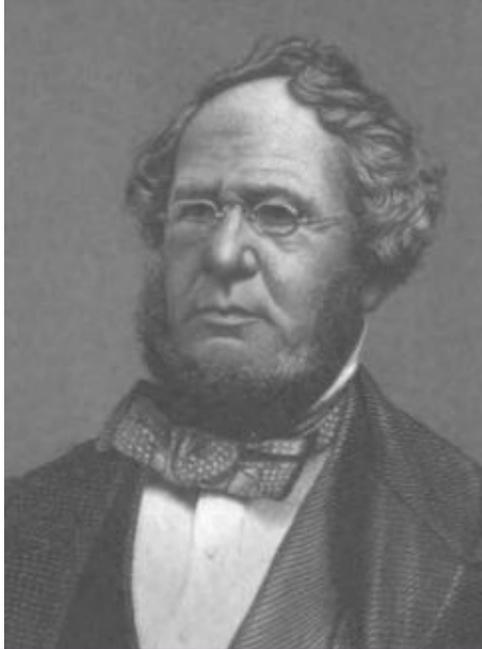


MEMOIRS OF A CAPTIVITY

<http://www.merrycoz.org/adults.htm>

238. Thoreau would register his notes on this reading in his Indian Notebook #8 and in his Fact Book.

— the 4th volume of [Henry Rowe Schoolcraft](#)'s and Captain [Seth Eastman](#)'s HISTORICAL AND STATISTICAL INFORMATION RESPECTING ... THE INDIAN TRIBES OF THE UNITED STATES



THE INDIAN TRIBES, IV, 1854

— JESUIT RELATIONS FOR 1639²³⁹

<http://www.canadiana.org>

239. Thoreau presumably read each and every volume of the JESUIT RELATIONS that was available in the stacks at the [Harvard Library](#). We know due to extensive extracts in his Indian Notebooks #7 and #8 that between 1852 and 1857 he did withdraw or consult all the volumes for the years between 1633 and 1672. Thoreau took notes in particular in regard to the reports by [Father Jean de Brébeuf](#), [Father Jacques Buteux](#), [Father Claude Dablon](#), [Father Jérôme Lalemant](#), [Father Paul Le Jeune](#), [Father François Le Mercier](#), [Father Julien Perrault](#), [Father Jean de Quens](#), [Father Paul Ragueneau](#), and [Father Barthélemy Vimont](#).

■ Cramoisy, Sebastian (ed.). *RELATION DE CE QUI S'EST PASSÉ EN LA NOUVELLE FRANCE IN L'ANNÉE 1636: ENVOYÉE AU R. PERE PROVINCIAL DE LA COMPAGNIE DE JESUS EN LA PROVINCE DE FRANCE, PAR LE P. PAUL LE JEUNE DE LA MESME COMPAGNIE, SUPERIEUR DE LA RESIDENCE DE KÉBEC. A Paris: Chez Sebastian Cramoisy...*, 1637

He had already perused the volumes for 1633-1638 and 1640-1642. [Harvard Library](#) had just obtained this 1639 volume from Québec.

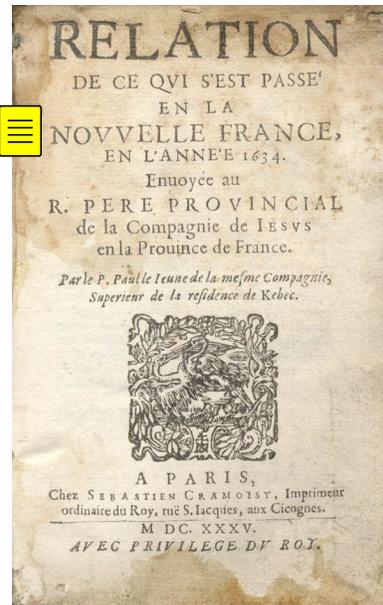
1854

1854

WALDEN: The Jesuits were quite balked by those Indians who, being burned at the stake, suggested new modes of torture to their tormentors. Being superior to physical suffering, it sometimes chanced that they were superior to any consolation which the missionaries could offer; and the law to do as you would be done by fell with less persuasiveness on the ears of those, who, for their part, did not care how they were done by, who loved their enemies after a new fashion, and came very near freely forgiving them all they did.

PEOPLE OF WALDEN

THE JESUITS



Dec. 7. Walked [through] Olneyville in Johnston, 2½ or 3 miles west of Providence. Harris tells me that since he exchanged a duplicate Jesuit Relation for one he had not with the Montreal men, all theirs have been burnt. He has two early ones which I have not seen.

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL
THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

“MAGISTERIAL HISTORY” IS FANTASIZING, HISTORY IS CHRONOLOGY



December 8, Friday: The dogma of the [Immaculate Conception](#) of Christ's mother Mary was made an article of faith by [Pope Pius IX](#).

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went up the river and meadow on the ice to Hubbard's Bridge (Gleason H6) across the Sudbury and from there to [Walden Pond](#). [Ellery Channing](#), walking at Fair Haven Bay, noted that it had already frozen over.



Dec. 8. P.M. — Up river and meadow on ice to Hubbard Bridge and thence to Walden.

[Transcript]

Winter has come unnoticed by me, I have been so busy writing. This is the life most lead in respect to Nature. How different from my habitual one! It is hasty, coarse, and trivial, as if you were a spindle in a factory. The other is leisurely, fine, and glorious, like a flower. In the first case you are merely getting your living; in the second you live as you go along. You travel only on roads of the proper grade without jar or running off the track, and sweep round the hills by beautiful curves.

Here is the river frozen over in many places, I am not sure whether the fourth night or later, but the skating is hobbly or all hobbled like a coat of mail or thickly bossed shield, apparently sleet frozen in water. Very little smooth ice. How black the water where the river is open when I look from the light, by contrast with the surrounding white, the ice and snow! A black artery here and there concealed under a pellicle of ice.

Went over the fields on the crust to Walden, over side of Bear Garden. Already foxes have left their tracks. How the crust shines afar, the sun now setting! There is a glorious clear sunset sky, soft and delicate and warm even like a pigeon's neck. Why do the mountains never look so fair as from my native fields?

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

1854

1854

 December 9, Saturday: [Alfred, Lord Tennyson](#)'s "[Charge of the Light Brigade.](#)" to become incomparably more famous as a poem than his "Charge of the Heavy Brigade" which of course you've not so much as heard of, was published in [The Examiner](#).



ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

When a photographer would visit the scene of the charge he would, to avoid giving offense, carefully avoid photographing any of the bleaching skulls of British soldiers. This poem would be considered a disgrace animated by the author's supposed political bias against the current government, and as such would be banned in Britain for some 8½ years (the poet would think of this banning, and the conceit that his poem had been animated by anti-government political bias, as "a bit of a joke").

Also, on December 9th, [Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed a 7 1/2 acre woodlot, belonging to Tilly Holden, that was part of the property near the north part of Nut Meadow Brook (Gleason H4) on Sudbury Road (Gleason H5) and Old Marlborough Road (Gleason H3) which he had surveyed for Amos and Noah Wheeler in November of 1853.



Dec. 9. Surveying for T. Holden.

A cold morning. What is that green pipes on the *side-hill* at Nut Meadow on his land, looking at first like green-briar cut off? [*Equisetum hyemale* (scouring-rush, shave-grass)] It forms a dense bed [^about a dozen rods] along the side of the bank in the woods, a rod in width, rising to 10 or 12 feet above the swamp. White Pond mostly skimmed over. The scouring rush is as large round as a bulrush — forming dense green beds conspicuous and interesting above the snow, an evergreen rush.

C. says he saw 3 larks on the 5th.

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



Also, [Louisa May Alcott](#) published the stories she had originally created while caring for [Ellen Emerson](#), as FLOWER FABLES, in time for the Christmas Book gift season, and took her essay “How I Went Out to Service” to [James Thomas Fields](#), the Boston publisher — but was informed she could not write.²⁴⁰

“Pondering shadows, colors, clouds
Grass-buds, and caterpillar shrouds
Boughs on which the wild bees settle,
Tints that spot the violet’s petal.”
— Emerson’s WOOD-NOTES.

To
Ellen Emerson,
For whom they were fancied,
These flower fables
Are inscribed,
By her friend,
— The Author.

Boston, Dec. 9, 1854.

- Chapter I: The Frost King: or, The Power of Love
- Chapter II: Eva’s Visit to Fairy-Land
- Chapter III: The Flower’s Lesson
- Chapter IV: Lily-Bell and Thistledown
- Chapter V: Little Bud
- Chapter VI: Clover-Blossom
- Chapter VII: Little Annie’s Dream: or, The Fairy Flower
- Chapter VIII: Ripple, the Water-Spirit
- Chapter IX: Fairy Song

THE ALCOTT FAMILY

 December 10, Sunday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went back to Nut Meadow (Gleason H4).

L’enfance du Christ, a trilogie sacrée for vocal soloists, chorus and orchestra by [Hector Berlioz](#) to his own words, was performed for the initial time, in the Salle Herz of Paris, directed by the composer on the eve of his 51st birthday. This was a great success.



Dec. 10. P.M. — To Nut Meadow.

[Transcript]

Weather warmer; snow softened. Saw a large flock of snow buntings (quite white against woods, at any rate), though it is quite warm. Snow-fleas in paths; first I have seen.
Hear the small woodpecker’s whistle; not much else — only crows and partridges else— & chickadees. How quickly the snow feels the warmer wind— The crust which was so firm & rigid is now suddenly softened. There

240. That’s “could not” as in “should not,” you understand. Good thing Thoreau had been born a Henry and not a Henrietta! Good thing our [Louisa](#) was not one to be so easily turned aside!

As long as THE SPREAD EAGLE paid her a dollar a column for her ‘rubbish,’ as she called it, Jo felt herself a woman of means, and spun her little romances diligently. But great plans fermented in her busy brain and ambitious mind, and the old tin kitchen in the garret held a slowly increasing pile of blotted manuscript, which was one day to place the name of March upon the roll of fame.

is much water in the road.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

December 11, Monday: In the morning, Henry Thoreau read "parts of his new Lecture" to Bronson Alcott. In the afternoon he went to Bare or Pine Hill in Lincoln (Gleason J9), and noted that Flint's, or Sandy Pond (Gleason J10) was already frozen over.



Dec. 11. P.M. — To Bare Hill.

[Transcript]

C. says he found Fair Haven frozen over last Friday, i.e. the 8th. [How much before?] I find Flint's frozen to-day, and how long?

We have now those early, still, clear winter sunsets over the snow. It is but mid-afternoon when I see the sun setting far through the woods, and there is that peculiar clear vitreous greenish sky in the west, as it were a molten gem. The day is short; it seems to be composed of two twilights merely; the morning and the evening twilight make the whole day. You must make haste to do the work of the day before it is dark. I hear rarely a bird except the chickadee, or perchance a jay or crow. A gray rabbit scuds away over the crust in the swamp on the edge of the Great Meadows beyond Peter's. A partridge goes off — & coming up, I see where she struck the snow first with her wing, making 5 or 6 as it were finger-marks.

W/He

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

December 12, Tuesday: There were 3 sharp raps on the door of Franklin Benjamin Sanborn's college room, and in walked Bronson Alcott, smiling. He wanted Sanborn to sup with him that night at the place of Edwin Morton of Plymouth, on Massachusetts Avenue. He said the Englishman Thomas Cholmondeley would be there. Morton was just then working up his article "Thoreau and His Books." Bronson Alcott said that when he'd encountered Henry Thoreau at Waldo Emerson's house, early on after Thoreau's graduating from Harvard College, he'd been quite startled by a transformation that had taken place. He said Thoreau had become a beast, and that he now lived life, both by day and by night, under fate's control, just as the beasts do, living so close to nature that the brutes ought to choose him their king. Sanborn took special note that Alcott referred to Henry Thoreau as a "fine beast."

Peter Georg Bang replaced Anders Sandøe Orsted as prime minister of Denmark.

On a voyage from Liverpool to Melbourne, the clipper ship Champion of the Seas traveled 465 nautical miles in a 24-hour period.

241. Entry for December 11th in Alcott's "Diary for 1854" at the Houghton Library of Harvard University (*59M-308 [24:357]). Alcott assumed incorrectly that Thoreau had read this "new Lecture" in Philadelphia.

1854

1854

**[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR DECEMBER 12th]**

December 13, Wednesday: Sometime prior to this date [Henry Thoreau](#) had accepted Andrew Whitney's invitation to deliver his "[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT](#)" lecture at the Nantucket Atheneum on December 28th (below), because on this date an advertisement in the [Nantucket Island Inquirer](#) (page 3, column 7) announced such an appearance.

[Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) met with [Thomas Cholmondeley](#) at Mrs. Manning's on Linden Street, near Harvard College. Later that day the two met again, warmed by a blazing fire in [Edwin Morton](#)'s room. In the course of a disquisition on life and men in England and America, [Sanborn](#) found, [Cholmondeley](#) presented himself with much sense and modesty. His consideration was that England's day of empire had expired and that what was now necessary was that she transform her empire into a commonwealth of states. He promised Sanborn a copy of his *ULTIMA THULE; OR, THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY A RESIDENCE IN NEW ZEALAND*.

**[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR DECEMBER 13th]**

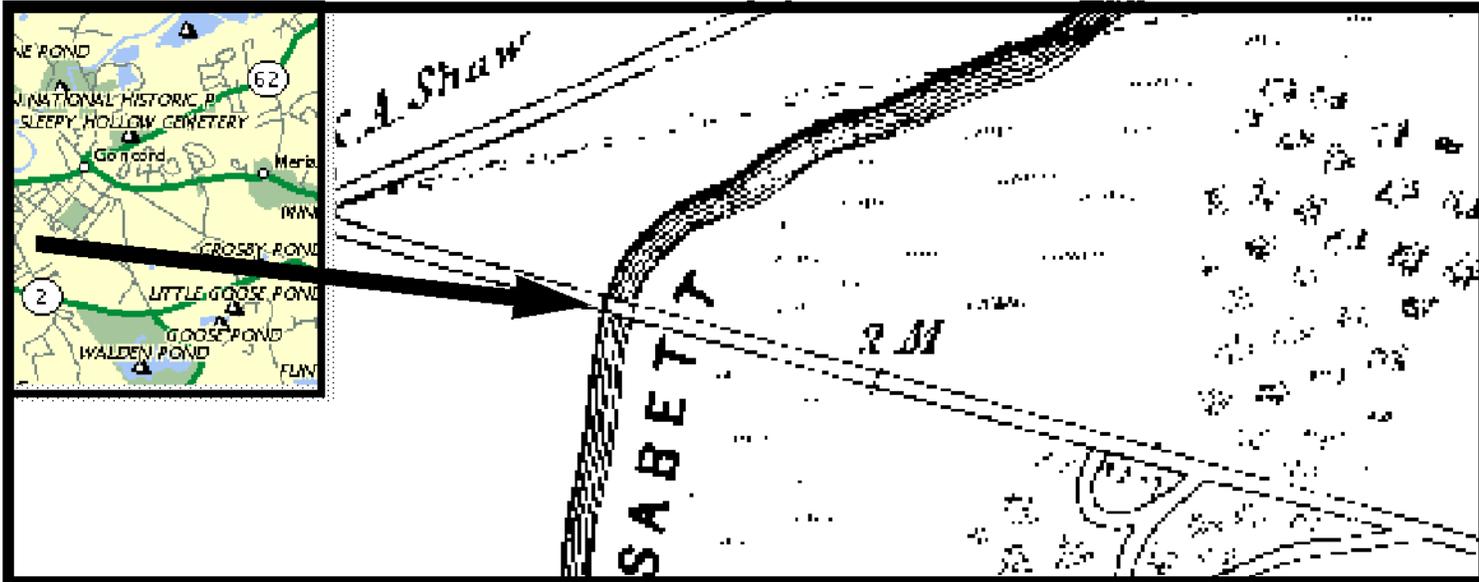
December 14, Thursday: [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) again came across [Thomas Cholmondeley](#), in [Edwin Morton](#)'s room. The trio walked into Boston at sunset to listen to a speech by [Wendell Phillips](#). — The view was beautiful as they crossed the bridge, [Sanborn](#) would recall, with in the west the sunset glowing above the Brookline hills and a few long slender clouds lying just above the hilltops. In the east they could view the magnificent city of Boston, topped by the golden dome of the State House. They parted at the Athenaeum, [Sanborn](#) setting out for the Reverend [Theodore Parker](#)'s in hopes of getting a free pass so Cholmondeley could join them at the lecture by Phillips that night. However, according to the [Reverend Parker](#), [Phillips](#) had already given away the remaining tickets. When [Morton](#) came in [Sanborn](#) hit on an idea: [Cholmondeley](#) could attend with Miss [Ednah Dow Littlehale](#) and Miss Helen Morton. He was certain Helen would have a spare ticket. [Phillips](#) was advocating disunion (secession) as the only remedy for New England's present predicament, of disastrous submission to the slave power. After the lecture, [Sanborn](#) departed with [Morton](#) and [Cholmondeley](#) for the [Reverend Parker](#)'s, where he and [Cholmondeley](#) spoke together while [Morton](#) sang. — [Sanborn](#) would write that they came away with the echoes of "Lauriger Horatius" still in their ears. — It was hard upon 11PM when they got to the Albion where [Cholmondeley](#) invited them to join him for supper. They sat and chatted till midnight and when that hour had passed, [Morton](#) proposed a toast "To The Pilgrim Fathers!"

1854

1854

[Cholmondeley](#) took this up, declaiming, “Yes! And may the spirit which brought them here, return again to England, and may we have a Commonwealth, if not as great as yours, at least as happy and as well ordered!” We drank the toast with applause. It was 2AM before he finally got to bed.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) and [Ellery Channing](#) walked up the north bank of the [Assabet River](#) to the 1-arch stone bridge:



From [New Bedford](#), [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) wrote to [Thoreau](#):



Wrote an invitation to H.D. Thoreau of Concord, author of Walden, and sent a letter which I had on hand some time.

All slaves belonging to the Portuguese state became free.

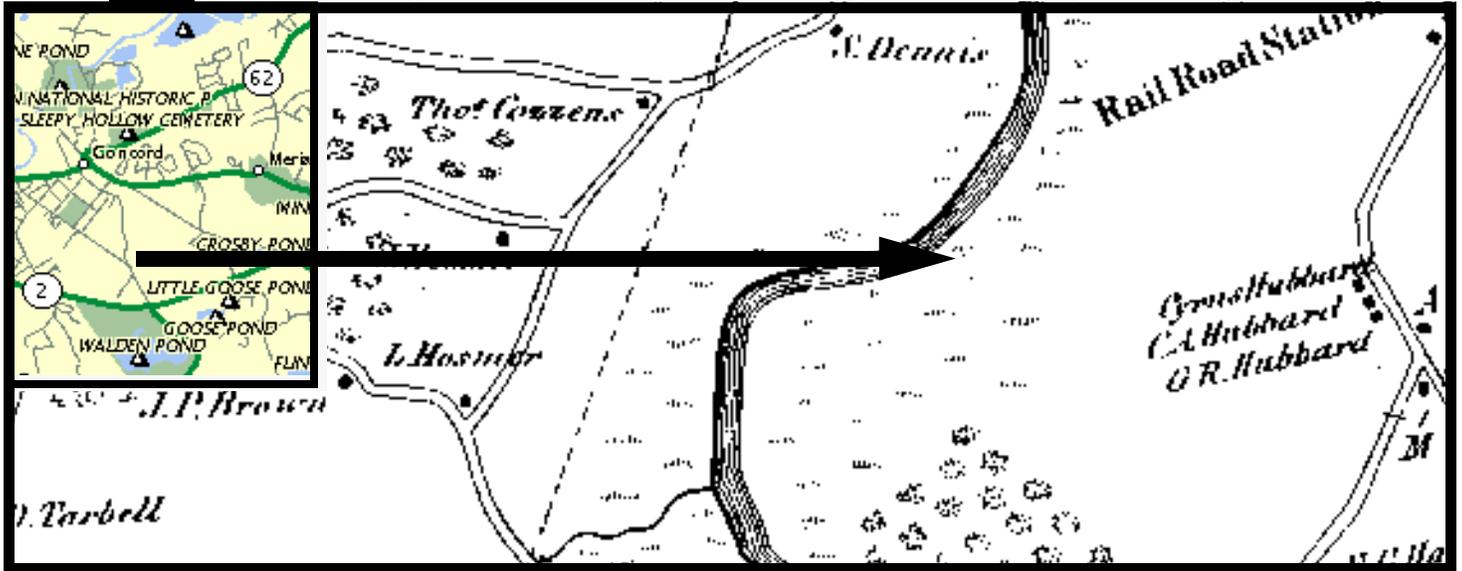
Anton Rubinstein gave a solo concert at the Leipzig Gewandhaus. The press was largely positive.

1854

1854



December 15, Friday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went up the riverside by way of Hubbard Bath.



[Waldo Emerson](#) told [George Partridge Bradford](#) in London that [Thomas Cholmondeley](#) was talking about taking [Henry](#) with him to England.



December 15, Friday: When King Kamehameha III of [Hawaii](#) died in Honolulu he was succeeded by a nephew, as Kamehameha IV.

Colonel Sir Thomas Gore Browne, who had initiated the 1st village at Rupert's Bay, stepped down as governor of [St. Helena](#).

 December 16, Saturday: In a letter to Franz Liszt, [Richard Wagner](#) came up with the idea behind the opera *Tristan und Isolde*.

LISTEN TO IT NOW

At what would come to be known as the initial meeting of the [Saturday Club](#), [Richard Henry Dana, Jr.](#) recorded in his journal, he dined at the Albion Hotel “in a select company,” which is to say [Waldo Emerson](#), [James Russell Lowell](#), [Amos Bronson Alcott](#), a visiting lecturer [Charles H. Goddard](#) from Cincinnati, [Thomas Cholmondeley](#), [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#), and the Boston attorney [Horatio Woodman](#).²⁴² “Emerson is an excellent dinner table man, always a gentleman, never bores or preaches, or dictates, but drops & takes up topics very agreeably, & has even skill & tact in managing his conversation. So, indeed, has Alcott, & it is quite surprising to see these [transcendentalists](#) appearing well as men of the world.”

The [National Anti-Slavery Standard](#) suggested that neither [Henry Thoreau](#)’s [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#) nor [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) had “received ... adequate notice in our Literary Journals.”

[TIMELINE OF WALDEN](#)
[TIMELINE OF A WEEK](#)



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR DECEMBER 16th]

 December 17, Sunday: An exhibition opened on William Street in Melbourne, Australia, and would run for a month for around 40,000 citizens would view a modest 428 exhibits, mainly of local industrial and agricultural products. Some of these exhibits would be sent to Paris for the 1855 Exhibition. The exhibition building, which had 200 ornamental windows and was lit by 306 gaslights, was based on the design of the 1851 Crystal Palace in London and would be repurposed as the Royal Mint.

William George Scandlin had been born in 1828 near Portsmouth in England as the youngest of 15 children, and from an early age had followed the sea. After 14 years he had fled the British navy, arriving in Boston during May 1850 and there falling under the influence of the Methodist Reverend Edward Thompson Taylor — Father Taylor of the Bethel Church. Sponsored by the Seamen’s Mission, he attended Unitarian Theological School in Meadville, Pennsylvania, graduating on June 29, 1854 and returning to Boston to preach for Father Taylor during summer vacation. However, his Meadville studies had so undermined the Methodist theology that on this day he became a minister-at-large for the Unitarian Benevolent Fraternity of Churches of Boston

242. Woodman would be one of the small number purchasing [Thoreau](#)’s [WALDEN](#). Whether he would read it, we wish we knew.



1854

1854

(he would be ordained under Unitarian auspices in the Hollis Street Church on January 14th, 1855).

With the Russians forces secure inside their fortress-port of Sebastopol in the Crimea, Allied forces were confined to entrenched positions on a bleak plateau facing the Russian perimeter in the misery of a Crimean winter, awaiting the eventual launching of a Spring military offensive. Irish-born soldiers made up some 30%-35% of the British army. On this day the 89th (Princess Victoria's) Regiment of Foot disembarked at overcrowded Balaclava to reinforce Major General Sir Richard England's 3rd Division. These 25 officers and 688 soldiers had embarked on the *S.S. Niagara* at Gibraltar on December 2d, and so harsh were the conditions that within the first couple of weeks 45 would die, with another 36 succumbing during January. A constable of the Royal Irish Constabulary would describe the conditions in the trenches:

The weather, as yet, is not colder than in Ireland, but when a man gets wet to the skin, he has no place to go to but a cold tent; and when he gets up in the morning he must go about collecting wood to boil his breakfast; which consists of green coffee, which must be roasted on the stable shovel, pounded and thrown into the water; that, with some biscuit, is our breakfast; biscuit and salt beef for dinner; and supper same as breakfast. We get two glasses of rum every day, which is chiefly the thing that keeps life in us, but we hope it won't be always as bad as it is now. If Sevastapol was once taken our condition would be better. Why, if it is not taken, and that the troops have to winter here, history will record another 1812.



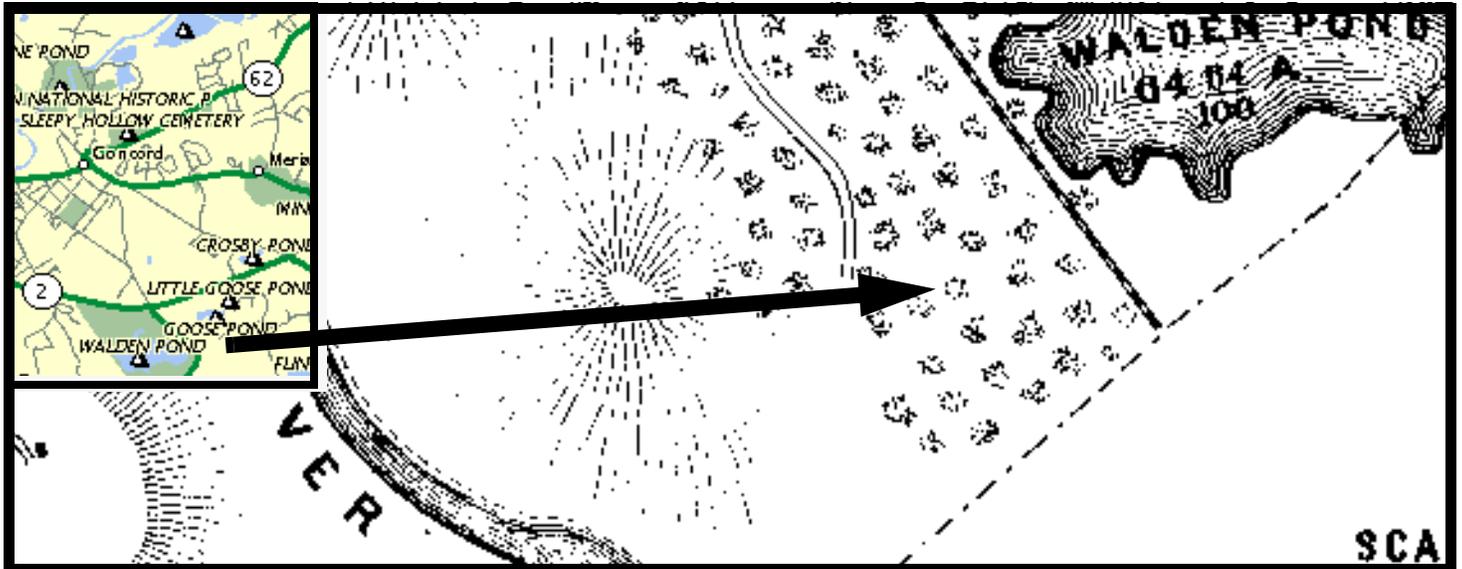
[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR DECEMBER 17th]

1854

1854



December 18, Monday: In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked down the Fitchburg Railroad tracks and reached the [Sudbury River](#) by way of Andromeda or Cassandra Ponds:

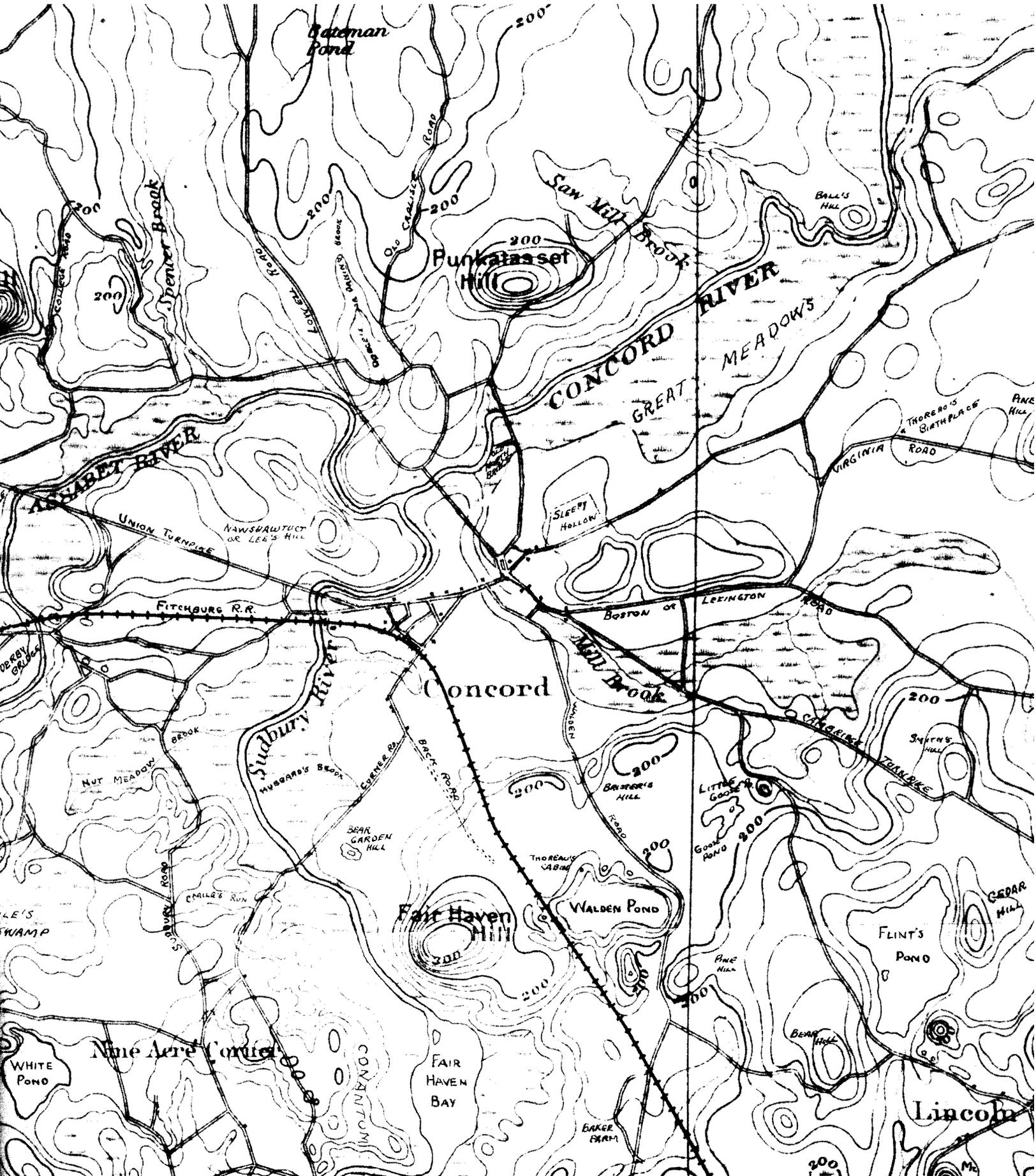


[Walden Pond](#) froze.

Just at this point in time for the holidays [Phineas Taylor Barnum](#)'s autobiography THE LIFE OF P.T. BARNUM, WRITTEN BY HIMSELF was being brought onto the market, despite the fact that it had gone through the press bearing the date 1855. Incidentally, this author neither wrote, not to anyone's memory ever spoke, any expression such as the infamous

One a minute.

In this book, having a pretty close estimate of what would make a book sell, Barnum supplied a rather detailed woodcut of the famed "Feejee Mermaid" which he had used to carry around with him on his temperance lectures:



HDT

WHAT?

INDEX

1854

1854



MERMAID SIGHTINGS

WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS was reviewed on page 3 of the [National Anti-slavery Standard](#), presumably by [Lydia Maria Child](#), who described [Thoreau](#) as “one man whose aim manifestly is to live”:

1854

1854

Reprinted in *CRITICAL ESSAYS ON HENRY DAVID THOREAU'S WALDEN*, ed. Joel Myerson (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1988), pages 37-9.



 December 19, Tuesday: [George Washington Briggs](#) stocked [Louisa May Alcott](#)'s FLOWER FABLES on the shelves of his bookstore on Washington Street in Boston in time for the [Christmas](#) season, as a potential child's [Christmas](#) gift item. He placed an advertisement for it in the Boston [Evening Transcript](#):²⁴³

Flower Fables. this day published by Geo. W. Briggs & Co. the *most beautiful* Fairy book that has appeared for a long time, written *when in her sixteenth year*, by Louisa May Alcott, a young lady of Boston. It will be the most popular juvenile issued this season.

[THE ALCOTT FAMILY](#)

243. The young author would be rather disappointed with the cash proceeds of authorship: "I only got a very small sum for them owing to Mr Briggs' dishonesty." There seems to be no reason to suspect dishonesty, as the gross for the 550 copies that the book sold would have been approximately \$340 and [Louisa](#)'s cut would have been 10% or \$34, approximately what she did in fact receive from [George Washington Briggs](#).

In approximately this year of 1854 the Children’s Aid Society was being founded and a Newsboy’s Lodging House was being created so that the abandoned boys who were forced to hawk newspapers on the streets, referred to at the time as “newsies,” would not have to find their night shelter on the street during the winters. This evidently began a tradition of treating newsboys with great kindness and consideration, as useful citizens of the commonwealth — as witness the following corporate communication from the pages of the Editor & Publisher:

Treat them well, that is, entertain them, give them help when they need it, and invite them to [Thanksgiving](#) and [Christmas](#) dinners and they will show their gratitude by selling your papers in preference of all others.



[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to his new correspondent, [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) to accept the hospitality of his home “Brooklawn” in [New Bedford](#) while lecturing there, and to ask his host to “warn Mr Mitchell that I accepted at once his invitation to lecture on the 26th of this month.”

Concord Mass. Dec 19th 1854.

Dear Sir,

I wish to thank you again for your sympathy. I had counted on seeing you when I came to New Bedford, though I did not know exactly how near to it you permanently dwelt; therefore I gladly accept your invitation to stop at your house.

I am going to lecture at Nantucket the 28th, and as I suppose I must improve the earliest opportunity to get there from New Bedford, I will endeavor to come on Monday that I may see yourself and New Bedford before my lecture.

NANTUCKET ISLAND

I should like right well to see your ponds, but that is hardly to be thought of at present. I fear that it is impossible for me to combine such things with the business of lecturing. You cannot serve God and Mammon. However perhaps I shall have time to see something of your country. I am aware that you have not so much snow as we.

There has been excellent sleighing here ever since the 5th ult.

Mr Cholmondeley has left us; so that I shall come alone.

Will you be so kind as to warn Mr Mitchell that I accepted at once his invitation to lecture on the 26th of this month, for I do not know that he has got my letter.

Excuse this short note from Yours truly

Henry D. Thoreau.

[Thoreau](#) also wrote a nice long letter to [H.G.O. Blake](#), in which he mentioned the [Crimean War](#):

Concord Mass. Dec. 19th 1854.

Mr. Blake,

I suppose you have heard of my truly providential meeting with Mr Brown —providential because it saved me from the suspicion that my words had fallen

altogether on stoney ground, when it turned out that there was some Worcester soil there. You will allow me to consider that I correspond with him thro you. I confess that I am a very bad correspondent, so far as promptness of reply is concerned, but then I am sure to answer sooner or later. The longer I have forgotten you, the more I remember you. For the most part I have not been idle since I saw you. How does the world go with you? or rather, how do you get along without it? I have not yet learned to live, that I can see, and I fear that I shall not very soon. I find however, that in the long run things correspond to my original idea—that they correspond to nothing else so much,—and thus a man may really be a true prophet

Page 2

without any great exertion. [The day] is never so dark, nor the night even, but that the laws, at least, of light still prevail, and so may make it light in our minds if they are open to the truth. There is considerable danger that a man will be crazy between dinner and supper—but it will not directly answer any good purpose that I know of, & it is just as easy to be sane. We have got to know what both life and death are before we can begin to live after our own fashion. Let us be learning our a b c s as soon as possible. I never yet knew the sun to be knocked down and rolled thro' a [mud puddle]; he comes out honor bright from behind every storm. Let us then take sides with the sun—seeing we have so much leisure[] [1]et us not put all we prize into a foot-ball to be kicked, when a bladder will do as well. When an Indian is burned, his body [may be] broiled, it may be no more than a beef-



steak. What of that? They may broil his heart, but they do not therefore broil his courage,—his principles. Be of good courage! That is the main thing.

Page 3

If a man were to place himself in an attitude to bear manfully the greatest evil that can be inflicted on him, he would find suddenly that there was no such evil to bear; his brave back would go a-begging. When Atlas got his back made up, that was all that was required. (In this case a priv., not pleon., and τλήμι.) The world rests on principles. The wise gods will never make underpinning of a man. But as long as he crouches, and skulks, and shirks his work, every creature that has weight will be treading on his toes, and crushing him; he will himself tread with one foot on the other foot.

The monster is never just there where we think he is. What is truly monstrous is our cowardice and sloth.

Have no idle disciplines like the Catholic Church and others; have only positive and fruitful ones. Do what you know you ought to do. Why should we ever go abroad, even across the way, to ask a neighbor's advice? There is a nearer neighbor within us incessantly telling us how we should behave. But we wait for the neighbor without to tell us of some false, easier way.

They have a census-table in which they put down the number of the insane. Do you believe that they put them all down there? Why, in every one of these houses there is at least one man fighting or squabbling a good part of his time with a dozen pet demons of his own breeding and cherishing, which are relentlessly gnawing at his vitals; and if perchance he resolve at length that he will courageously combat them, he says, "Ay! ay! I will attend to you after dinner!" And, when that time comes, he concludes that he is good for another stage, and reads a column or two about the Eastern War! Pray, to be in earnest, where is Sevastopol? Who is Menchikoff? and Nicholas behind there? who the Allies? Did not we fight a little (little enough to be sure, but just enough to make it interesting) at Alma, at Balaclava, at Inkermann? We love to fight far from home. Ah! the Minié musket is the king of weapons. Well, let us get one then.

I just put another stick into my stove,—a pretty large mass of white oak. How many men will do enough this cold winter to pay for the fuel that will be required to warm them? I suppose I have burned up a pretty good sized tree to-night—& for

*what? I settled with Mr Tarbell
for it the other day—but that
was'nt the final settlement.
I got off cheaply from him. At last,
One will say— “Let us see, how
much wood did you burn, Sir? And
I shall shudder to think that the
next question will be, “What did you
do while you were warm?”— Do
we think the ashes will pay for it?—
that God is an ash-man? It is a
fact that we have got to render [an]
an account for the deeds done in the
body.*

*Who knows but we shall be
better the next year than we have been
the past? At any rate, I
wish you a really new year—com-
mencing from the instant you read
this,—and happy or u[n]happy ac-
cording to your deserts.*

Henry D. Thoreau

Dec. 19, 1854.

In the afternoon he enjoyed his “first tolerable skating” of the winter, going half a mile up the [Assabet River](#) past [Clamshell Bank](#) or Hill (Gleason 23/G5) and there walking to the foot of Fair Haven Hill (Gleason H7).



Dec, 19th pm Skated ½ mile up Assabet & then to foot of Fair Haven Hill.

[Transcript]

This is the first tolerable skating. Last night was so cold that the river closed up almost everywhere — and made good skating where there had been no ice to catch the snow of the night before. First there is the snow ice [on the sides] ~~the~~ somewhat rough & brown or yellowish spotted where the water overflowed the ice on each side yesterday — & next over the middle the new dark smooth ice — and, where the river is wider than usual, a [^thick] fine gray ice — marbled, where there was [^prob.] a thin ice yesterday — probably the top froze as the snow fell. I am surprised to find how rapidly & easily I get along, how soon I am at this brook or that bend in the river, which it takes me so long to reach on the bank or by water. I can go more than double the usual distance before dark. It takes a little while to learn to trust the new black ice. I look for cracks to see how thick it is. Near the island I saw a muskrat close by swimming in an open reach. He was always headed up-stream, a great proportion of the head out of water, and his whole length visible [^though the root of the tail is about level with the water.] Now & then it [stopped] swimming & floated down-stream still keeping it head pointed up with his



tail. It is surprising how dry he looks, as if that back was never immersed in the water. It is apt to be melted at the bridges about the piers & there is a flow of water over the ice there. There is a fine, smooth gray marbled ice on the bays — which apparently began to freeze when it was snowing night before last — there is a marbling of dark where there was clear water amid the snow. Now and then a crack crosses it, & the water, oozing out has frozen on each side of it 2 or 3 inches thick, and sometimes as many feet wide. These give you a slight jolt. Off Clamshell I heard and saw a large flock of *Fringilla linaria* [Common Redpoll]  *Carduelis flammea* over the meadow no doubt it as these I saw on the 15th. (But I saw then, & on the tenth a larger & whiter bird also; may have been the bunting.) Suddenly they turn aside in their flight and dash across the river to a large white birch 15 rods off, which plainly they had distinguished so far. I afterward saw many more in the Potter swamp up the river. They were commonly brown or dusky above, streaked with yellowish white or ash and more or less white or ash beneath. Most had a crimson crown or frontlet and a few crimson neck and breast.



1854

1854

very handsome. Some with a bright-crimson crown and clear-white breasts. I suspect that these were young males. They keep up an incessant twittering, varied from time to time with some mewing notes and occasionally for some unknown reason, they will all suddenly dash away with that universal loud note (twitter) like a bag of nuts They are busily clustered in the tops of the birches picking the seeds out of the catkins! and sustain themselves in all kinds of attitudes, sometimes head downwards while about this. Common as they are now — and were winter before last — I saw none last winter.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



December 20, Wednesday: At 7 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) skated to Nawshawtuct or Lee's Hill (Gleason F6). In the afternoon he and [Ellery Channing](#) skated to Fair Haven Pond or Bay (Gleason J7), and Thoreau noted that it was “killing work” for Channing not only because of his skates but also because he wasn't using an “easy” skating technique.

The Boston [Evening Transcript](#) carried on its 1st page a notice:

Messrs. George W. Briggs & Co. have published an illustrated work entitled *FLOWER FABLES*, by [Louisa May Alcott](#). It contains several agreeable sketches, in prose and verse, adapted to the capacity of intelligent young persons.²⁴⁴

[Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) in New Bedford.

*H. D. Thoreau
Dear Sir,
Yours of the 19th came
to hand this evening.
I shall therefore look for
you on Monday next.
My farm is 3 mi. north
of New Bedford. Say to
the conductor to leave you
at the Tarkiln Hill station,
where I or some of my folks
will be in readiness for you*

*Page 2
on the arrival of the evening
train. Should you intend
coming earlier in the day
please inform me in time.
I will get word to the Com^e*

244. [Louisa May Alcott](#). *FLOWER FABLES*. Boston MA: George W. Briggs & Co., 1855

*of the N B Lyceum as
you desire.
If I do not hear from
you again, I shall pre-
pare for your arrival
as before.*

Page 3
*In the meantime I remain
Yours very truly
Danl Ricketson
Brooklawn
near New Bedford
Wednesday eveg. Dec 20. '54*



Dec. 20. 7 A.M. — To Hill.

Said to be coldest morning as yet. The river appears to be frozen everywhere. Where was water last night is a firm bridge of ice this morning. The snow which has blown on to the ice has taken the form of regular star-shaped crystals, an inch in diameter. Sometimes these are arranged in a spear 3 feet long quite straight. I see the mother-o'-pearl tints now, at sunrise, on the clouds high over the eastern horizon before the sun has risen above the low bank in the east. The sky in the eastern horizon has that same greenish-vitreous, gem-like appearance which it, has at sundown, as if it were of perfectly clear glass, — with the green tint of a large mass of glass. Here are some crows already seeking their breakfast in the orchard, and I hear a red squirrel's reproof. The woodchoppers are making haste to their work far off, walking fast to keep warm, before the sun has risen, their ears and hands well covered, the dry, cold snow, squeaking under their feet. They will be warmer after they have been at work an hour.

[Transcript]

P.M. — Skated to Fair Haven with C.

C.'s skates are not the best, and beside he is far from an easy skater, so that, as he said, it was killing work for him. Tine and again the perspiration actually dropped from his forehead on to the ice, and it froze in long icicles on his beard. Yet he kept up his spirits and his fun, said he [had] seen much more suffering than I, etc., etc.

It has been a glorious winter day, its elements so simple, — the sharp clear air, the white snow everywhere covering the earth, and the polished ice. Cold as it is, the sun seems warmer on my back even than in summer, as if its rays met with less obstruction. And then the air is so beautifully still; there is not an insect in the air, and hardly a leaf to rustle. If there is a grub out, [^you are sure to detect it] on the snow or ice. The shadows of the clam shell hills are beautifully blue as I look back half a mile at them, and, in some places, where the sun falls on it, the snow has a pinkish tinge. 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

It is very fine skating for the most part. All of the river that was not frozen [^before] & therefore not covered with snow on the 18th is now frozen quite smoothly; but in some places for a quarter of a mile it is uneven like frozen suds, in rounded pancakes, as when bread spews out in baking. At sundown or before, it begins to belch. It is so cold that only in one place did I see a drop of water flowing out on the ice.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

 December 21, Thursday: [Stephen Collins Foster](#) signed a new publishing contract with Firth, Pond, & Co. which denied them the exclusivity they had henceforth enjoyed.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked to [Walden Pond](#) and Fair Haven Bay or Pond (Gleason J7) and came back home by going down the [Sudbury River](#). Thoreau wrote in his journal:



Dec. 21st pm. To Walden and Fair H. Ponds & down river.

[Transcript]

It snowed slightly this morning, so as to cover the [ground] ½ inch deep. Walden is frozen over, apparently about 2 inches thick. It must have frozen, the whole of it, since the snow of the 18th probably the night of the 18th. It is very thickly [covered with] what C. calls ice-rosettes, *i.e.* [^]those small pinches of crystallized snow — as thickly as if it had snowed in that form. I think it is a sort of hoar frost on the ice. It was all done last night, for we see them thickly clustered about our skate-tracks on the river, where it was quite bare yesterday.

We are tempted to call these the finest days of the year. Take Fair Haven Pond, for instance, a perfectly level plain of white snow, untrdden as yet by any fisherman, surrounded by snow-clad hills, dark evergreen woods, and reddish oak leaves, so pure and still. The last rays of the sun falling on the Baker Farm reflect a clear pink color. I see the feathers of a partridge strewn along on the snow a long distance, the work of some hawk perhaps for there is no track.

What a grovelling appetite for profitless jest and amusement our countrymen have! Next to a good dinner, at least, they love a good joke, to have their sides tickled — to laugh sociably — as in the E they bathe and are shampooed. Curators of lyceums write to me:— DEAR SIR,— I hear that you have a lecture of some humor — will you do us the favor to read it before the Bungtown Institute?

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL
THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

 December 22, Friday: [Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by another surveyor, William Davis Tuttle.

{Page(s) missing}

made a very small plan of it (about 2 rods to an inch I should judge) & cast it up making 14 A 22 rods— The plan was so small (& so unskillfully drawn) that I told Mr W that very little reliance could be placed upon it in computing areas. Since then I have computed the area several times by the aid of traverse tables finding the Lat & Dep both in chains & decimals of a chain & in rods & dec of a rod & obtaining answers varying from 13^a106,1/2r to 13^a 11,9r. By calling the bearing of the 3^d course N 57 E & taking out the Lat & Dep in rods & decimals of a rod I made the area to be 13^a 109,57r. I find but little (.01 of a rod) diff between the Eastings & Westings & but .19 of a rod between the Northings & Southings— & in ballancing the survey I subtracted the Diff between the North & Southings from the Southing of the 7th course.

Will you have the kindness to inform me by what method you computed the Lat in question: if by plotting to what scale your plan was drawn, or if by the traverse table whether you took out the distances in chains or rods & to how many decimal places you found the Lat & Dep. of each course



1854

1854

What is your general method of computing areas?— & What is the present variation of the needle in Concord?

Yours very respectfully.

W^m D. Tuttle.

[Thoreau](#) wrote to [H.G.O. Blake](#).

Concord Dec. 22nd '54

Mr Blake

[I w]ill lecture for your

[Lyceum on the 4]th of January next;

and I hope that I shall have time for

that good day out of doors. Mr

Cholmondeley is in Boston, yet perhaps

I may invite him to accompany me.

I have engaged to lecture at New-

Bedford on the 26th inst[,] stopping

with Daniel Ricketson 3 miles out

of town; and at Nantucket on

the 28th; so that I shall be gone

all next week. They say there is some

danger of being weather-bound at

Nantucket, but I see that others

run the same risk.

You had better acknowledge the

receipt of this at any rate, though

you should write nothing else, other-

wise I shall not know whether you

get it; but perhaps you will not

wait till you have seen me

to answer my letter. I will tell you

what I think of lecturing when

I see you.

Did you see the notice of Walden

Page 2

in the last Anti-Slavery Standard?

You will not be surprised if I tell

you that it reminded me of you.

Yrs

[Henry D. Thoreau.]

Blake: Signature cut out July 9, 1886 for Mrs. Abby Hutchin-

son [Patton]. The beginning of the letter on the opposite side

of this sheet shd. read 'I will lecture for your Lyceum

on the 4th' &c.



1854

1854



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR DECEMBER 22d]

 December 23, Saturday, 1854: An earthquake in the harbor at Shimoda, [Japan](#) produced a tsunami that severely damaged that community's residences and public buildings and after 12 hours and 38 minutes would register on the tide gauge of [San Francisco](#).

Meanwhile, guess what: [underground](#), what was going around was coming around:

RUNAWAY SLAVES.

THE elopement of two favourite slaves belonging to Mr. Ball, of Covington, on one night last week, excited considerable talk over the river. The runaways were a man and his wife, valued at \$2,000, and heretofore considered to be so well satisfied with their situation that they have very frequently been allowed to come to Cincinnati on errands or for their own pleasure. Of course, this, according to Judge Nelson's decision, makes them free people, as it was held in the case which he decided that whenever a negro came within our boundaries, he became subject to our laws. Slaves sometimes run away because they are apprehensive of being sold down the river, but in this case there could have been no such fears, as they were well treated and their master would on no account have parted with them.

We are informed, on good authority, that from two to twenty runaway slaves pass through this city every week upon the underground railroad. They are aided by the directors of that enterprise, but are occasionally caught by an association to recapture fugitives.

This last, we are told, has an agent even among the ultra-Abolitionists. They obtain early information from all sections of the South, and, acting in concert with parties in Kentucky, are able occasionally to catch runaways who chance to pass through Cincinnati.

By this means and the occasional kidnapping of free negroes, these associated negro-catchers make money. They have differed among themselves on two occasions recently, relative to the division of the spoils, and it is likely that so much has leaked out that their operations will hereafter be much thwarted. The managers of the underground railroad are so deeply in earnest that several of them have offered to give sums of from fifty to one hundred dollars for the detection of spies among them. As they would pay any amount of money for this information and the



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR DECEMBER 23d]

1854

1854

 December 24, Sunday: Joseph Joachim visited [Robert Schumann](#) at the insane asylum near Bonn. He was heartened by what he found and rushed to Düsseldorf to tell the good news to Clara Schumann and [Johannes Brahms](#).

Jules Massenet was awarded a troisième accessit in piano at the Paris Conservatoire.

At the second performance of [Hector Berlioz](#)'s L'enfance du Christ in the Salle Herz, the audience included Giuseppe Verdi, [Heinrich Heine](#), and [Francesca Gaetana Cosima Liszt](#) and Blandine Liszt.



Dec. 24. Some 3 inches of snow fell last night and this morning, concluding with a fine rain, which produced a slight glaze, the first of the winter. This gives the woods a hoary aspect — & increases the stillness by making the leaves immovable even in considerable wind.

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

 December 25: Pueblo, Colorado Territory was besieged by Utes and Jicarilla Apaches, and 15 of the white settlers were killed. The warrior bands would continue raiding and looting over the next several weeks.

WHITE ON RED, RED ON WHITE

 December 25, Monday: In [San Francisco](#), Bishop Kip led Episcopal services at Grace Church.

Meanwhile, St. Mary's Church was being dedicated on California Street at Dupont Street.

The diary of Nathaniel Arbuckle, a farmer of Delhi, New York, indicates that [Christmas](#) day was just another workday:

25 On the 21th of this month James Came home from John Murray's Sick but he went to work this morning again this is Christmas and a mild Day it is Thomas an Margarete is going Over to uncles Walters on a Visit it is good Sleighing wind South Sold to Samuel S Smith this day 151 Bushells of Oats Price 5/ Per Bushell Need Payment

[Henry Thoreau](#) visited his literary admirer and correspondent [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) at his home "Brooklawn," stopping off at [Harvard Library](#) along the way to check out William Wood's NEW-ENGLAND'S PROSPECT; BEING A TRUE, LIVELY, AND EXPERIMENTAL DESCRIPTION OF THAT PART OF AMERICA, COMMONLY CALLED NEW ENGLAND (London: John Dawson, 1639).



1854

1854

He also checked out Gabriel Sagard-Théodat's *LE GRAND VOYAGE DU PAYS DES HURONS* (Paris: Denys Moreau, 1632).



[Friend Daniel](#)'s estate "Brooklawn," with his shanty²⁴⁵ to the left:



"There is no Frigate like a Book
To take us Lands away"
— [Emily Dickinson](#)

245. "D.R.'s Shanty is about half a dozen rods S.W. of his house ... is 12 x 14 feet, with 7 feet posts, with common pent roof. The roof is shingled, and the sides made of matched boards, and painted a light clay color, with chocolate colored blinds. Within it is not plastered and is open to the roof, showing the timbers and rafters. ... In front of the east window is a small box stove. ... Against the stove is a rude settle with a small cushion and pillow; and on the opposite side a large desk with some bookshelves above it. ... R. or one of his guests swept the Shanty each morning. The West and N.W. side is well-nigh covered with slips of paper on which are written some sentences or paragraphs from R.'s favorite books — many quotations celebrating retirement, country life, simplicity, humanity, sincerity etc. from Cowper and other English poets."

1854

1854



By prearrangement, [Thoreau](#) was to be met at the Tarkiln Hill station in New Bedford, but evidently it was not [Friend Daniel](#) who met him, for on the following page  is "By no means a bad likeness ... of the plain and upright Thoreau," a sketch by Ricketson of his first impressions of Thoreau coming up the walk at Brooklawn, while Ricketson was shoveling the snow off of it.



My first interview with him was so peculiar that I will venture to state it. The season was winter, a snow had lately fallen, and I was engaged in shovelling the accumulated mass from the entrance to my house, when I perceived a man walking toward me bearing an umbrella in one hand and a leather travelling-bag in the other. So unlike my ideal Thoreau, whom I had fancied, from the robust nature of his mind and habits of life, to be a man of unusual vigor and size, that I did not suspect, although I had expected him in the morning, that the slight, quaint-looking person before me was the Walden philosopher. There are few persons who had previously read his works that were not disappointed by his personal appearance. As he came near to me I gave him the usual salutation, and supposing him to be either a pedler or some way-traveller, he at once remarked, "You don't know me." The truth flashed on my mind, and concealing my own surprise I at once took him by the hand and led him to the room already prepared for him, feeling a kind of disappointment – a disappointment, however, which soon passed off, and never again obtruded itself to the philosopher's disadvantage. In fact, I soon began to see that Nature had dealt kindly by him, and that this apparently slender personage was physically capable of enduring far more than the ordinary class of men, although he had then begun to show signs of failure of strength in his knees.

According to [Friend Daniel](#)'s journal, from which he has abstracted above, they spent the evening chatting about various matters such as the climate, et cetera, of England and America, et cetera:

H.D. Thoreau arrived this P.M., spent evening conversing upon various matters, the climate, &c., of England and America, &c.



December 25: To New Bedford *via* Cambridge.

I think that I never saw a denser growth than the young white cedars in swamps on the Taunton and New Bedford Railroad. In most places it looked as if there was not room for a man to pass between the young trees. That part of the country is remarkably level and wooded. The evergreen prinus very commonly in the low ground. At New Bedford saw the casks of oil covered with seaweed to prevent fire; the weed holds moisture. Town not lively. Whalers abroad at this season. Ricketson has Bewick's "British Birds," two vols.;

[Transcript]

1854

1854





1854



- " "[AE]sop's Fables," one vol.;
- " "Select Fables," one vol.,
larger (partly the same);
- " "Quadrupeds," one vol.

Has taken some pains to obtain them. The tail-pieces were the attraction to him. He suggested to Howitt his "Abodes of the Poets."

1854

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

1854

1854

 December 26, Tuesday: Alliance-Marsch op.158 by [Johann Baptist Strauss II](#) was performed for the initial time, in the Volksgarten, Vienna.

It was a fine, mild day, and [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) and [Henry Thoreau](#) walked through the woods to Tarkiln



Hill and then through Acushnet to the Friends Meeting House.

A fine mild spring-like day. Walked through the woods to Tarkiln Hill and through Acushnet to Friends' Meeting House with Henry D. Thoreau, author of Walden. Rode this P.M. with H.D.T. round White's factory. Louisa [Mrs. Louisa Sampson Ricketson] and the children, except Walton [son], attended Lyceum this evening. Lecture by Mr. Thoreau. Subject, "Getting a Living." I remained at home, not feeling well enough to attend.





1854

1854

In the afternoon they rode around White's factory. In the evening Thoreau delivered "[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT](#)" at the [New Bedford](#) lyceum but [Friend Daniel](#) didn't feel well enough to attend.

THOREAU'S SERMON

[Various versions of "[LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE](#)", variously titled, would be delivered:

- "[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT](#)" on December 6th, 1854 at Railroad Hall in [Providence](#)
- "[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT](#)" on December 26th, 1854 in the [New Bedford](#) Lyceum
- "[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT](#)" on December 28th, 1854 at the Athenaeum on [Nantucket Island](#)
- On January 4th, 1855 in the [Worcester](#) Lyceum, as "The Connection between Man's Employment and His Higher Life"
- "[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT](#)" on February 14th, 1855 in the [Concord Lyceum](#)
- "[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT](#)" on November 16th, 1856 for the [Eagleswood](#) community
- "Getting a Living" on December 18th, 1856 in the vestry of the [Congregational Church](#) of Amherst, [New Hampshire](#)
- "[LIFE MISSPENT](#)" on Sunday morning, October 9th, 1859 to the Reverend [Theodore Parker](#)'s 28th Congregational Society in [Boston Music Hall](#)
- "[LIFE MISSPENT](#)" on Sunday, September 9th, 1860 at Welles Hall in [Lowell](#).]



December 26, 1854: "Read not the Times. Read the Eternities."

THE  TIMES

GOD IN CONCORD by Jane Langton © 1992

17

Read not the Times. Read the Eternities.
“Life Without Principle”

The battle was joined. The news was out.
DEVELOPER EYES

ISBN 0-670-84260-5 — PS3562.A515G58

Viking Penguin

Penguin Books USA Inc.



December 26th at Ricketson's [[New Bedford](#)].

[Transcript]

I do not remember to have ever seen such a day as this in Concord. There is no snow here (though there has been excellent sleighing at Concord since the 5th ult.), but it is very muddy, the frost coming out of the ground as in spring with us. I went to walk in the woods with R.; it was wonderfully warm and pleasant, and the cockerels crowed just as in a spring day at home. I felt the winter breaking up in me, and if I had been at home I should have tried to write poetry. They told me that this was not a rare day there. That they had little or no winter such as we have, and it was owing to the influence of the Gulf Stream, which was only 60 miles from Nantucket at the nearest or 120 miles from them. In mid-winter when the wind was S.E. or even S.W. they frequently had days as warm and debilitating as in summer. There is a difference of a degree in latitude, between Concord and New Bedford, but far more in climate.

The American holly is quite common there, with its red berries still holding on, and is now their [Christmas](#) evergreen. I heard the lark sing, strong and sweet, and saw robins. R. lives in that part of N.B. 3 miles out of the town, called the Head of the River, *i.e.* the Acushnet River. There is a [Quaker](#) meeting-house there. Such an ugly shed without a tree or bush about it, which they call their meeting-house (without steeple of course), is altogether repulsive to me, like a powder-house or grave. And even the quietness and perhaps unworldliness of an aged Quaker has something ghostly and saddening about it — as it were a mere preparation for the grave.

R. said that pheasants from England (~~which~~ where they are not indigenous) had been imported to [Naushon](#), & were killed there.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

1854

1854

December 27, Wednesday: [Thomas Wilson Dorr](#) died in [Providence, Rhode Island](#).



[Henry Thoreau](#) took a steamer out of Hyannis port for [Nantucket Island](#) (becoming seasick on the rough waters), and spent the night at the home of Captain Edward W. Gardiner. The [New Bedford Evening Standard](#) (page 2, column 2) observed that the previous night's lecture, which it had advertised as being on the subject of "Getting a Living,"

displayed much thought, but was in some respects decidedly peculiar.



[Friend Daniel Ricketson](#) would later write to [Thoreau](#) to advise that he had

heard several sensible people speak well of your lecture

but would conclude that the lecture

was not generally understood.

[Friend Daniel](#)'s attitude was shared by Charles W. Morgan, who had been present for the lecture and who afterward wrote in his journal:



evening to the Lyceum where we had a lecture from the eccentric Henry J. [sic] Thoreau— The Hermit author very caustic against the usual avocations & employments of the world and a definition of what is true labour & true wages—audience very large & quiet—but I think he puzzled them a little—



Dec. 27. To Nantucket via Hyannis in misty rain.

[Transcript]

On Cape Cod saw the hills through the mist covered with cladonias. A head wind and rather rough passage of 3 hours to Nantucket, the water being 30 miles over. Captain Edward W. Gardiner (where I spent the evening) thought there was a beach at Barnegat similar to that at Cape Cod. Mr. Barney, formerly a Quaker minister there, who was at Gardiner's, told of one Bunker of Nantucket in old times, "who had eight sons, and steered each in his turn to the killing of a whale." Gardiner said you must have been a-whaling there before you could be married, and must have struck a whale before you could dance. They do not think much of crossing from Hyannis in a small boat, — in pleasant weather, that is, — but they can safely do it. A boy was drifted across thus in a storm in a rowboat about 2 years ago. By luck he struck Nantucket. The outline of the island is continually changing. The whalers now go chiefly to Behring's Straits, and everywhere between 35 N. and S. latitude and catch several kinds of whales. It was Edmund Gardiner of N.B. (a relative of Edward's) who was carried down by a whale, and Hussey of Nantucket who, I believe, was one to draw lots to see who should be eaten. As for communication with the mainland being interrupted, Gardiner remembers when 31 mails were landed at once, which, taking out Sundays, made 5 weeks & one day. The snow 10 days ago fell about 2 inches deep, but melted instantly.

At the Ocean House I copied from William Coffin's map of the town 1834. — this: 30,590 acres, including 3 isles beside. 1050 ac fresh ponds; about 750 peat swamp. Clay in all parts. But only granite or gneiss boulders. Population of island over 80

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL
THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



December 28, Thursday: Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#), back from the Pacific, had expected to be greeted as a hero, and that hadn't happened, or at least hadn't happened to Perry's satisfaction. —So he had turned to [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#), the big-name ghostwriter of the era, asking for a book about the incredible intrepidity of his intimidation of the [Japanese](#), casting himself as the great white hope. On this day Hawthorne commented in his journal, "It would be a very desirable labor for a young literary man, or for that matter, an old one; for the world can scarcely have in reserve a less hackneyed theme than Japan." (Hawthorne, strangely reluctant to explore the mentality of the Great White Shark, would sic the stuffed-shirt wannabee on [Herman Melville](#), his transparent excuse being that Melville was great at writing that Pacific stuff, and then this commodious Commodore would attempt to himself author this book about himself — excreting what has been said to be a wooden monstrosity.)

US MILITARY INTERVENTIONS

On [Nantucket Island](#): Captain Gardiner carried [Henry Thoreau](#) in his carriage to Siasconset and they went up to the top of the lighthouse at Sancoty Head and then visited the Athenaeum's museum, seeing the "various South Sea implements, etc. etc., brought home by the whalers." In the evening Thoreau delivered "[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT](#)" before the Athenaeum.

THOREAU'S SERMON

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Dec. 28th A misty rain as yesterday — Capt. Gardiner carried me to Siasconset in his carriage. He has got from 40 to 45 or 50 bushels of corn to an acre from his land. Wished to know how to distinguish guinea cocks from guinea hens — He is extensively engaged in raising pines on the island. There is not a tree to be seen, except such as are set out about houses. The land is worth commonly from 1 dollar to a dollar and a half. He showed me several lots of his — of different ages, — one tract of 300 acres sown in rows with a planter, where the young trees [[^]2 years old] were just beginning to green the ground, —& I saw one of Norway pine and our pitch mixed, 8 years old, which looked quite like a forest at a distance. ~~Some~~ The Norway pines had grown the fastest [[^]with a longer shoot] & had a bluer look at a distance more like the white pine. The am. pitch pines have a reddish, crisped look at top. Some are sown in rows, some broad-cast. At first he was alarmed to find that the ground moles had gone along in the furrows directly under the plants and so injured the roots as to kill many of the trees ~~xxx enough xxxxx~~ — & he ~~planted~~ [[^]sowed] over again. He was also discouraged to find that a sort of spindle-worm had killed the leading shoot of a great part of his neighbors' older trees. These plantations must very soon change the aspect of the island. His common pitch pine seed, obtained from the Cape, cost him about 20 dollars a bushel [[^]at least, about a dollar a quart] with the wings, and they told him it took about 80 bushels of cones to make one such bushel of seeds. I was surprised to hear that the Norway pine seed [[^]without the wings] imported from France, had cost not quite \$200 a bushel delivered at New York or Philadelphia. He has ordered 8 hogsheads (!!!) of the last, clear wingless seeds, at this rate. I think he said it took about a gallon to sow an acre. He had tried to get white pine seed, but in vain. They [[^]cones] had not contained any of late (?).

[Transcript]

This looks as if he meant to sow a good part of the island, though he said he might sell some of the seed. It is an interesting enterprise.

Half-way to Siasconset I saw the old corn-hills where they had formerly cultivated, the authorities laying out a new tract for this purpose each year. This island must look exactly like a prairie, except that [[^]the view in clear weather] is bounded by the sea. Saw crows — saw and heard larks frequently — & saw robins — but most abundant, running along the ruts or circling about just over the ground in small flocks, what the inhabitants call snowbirds, a gray bunting-like bird about the size of the snow bunting. Can it be the seaside finch? or the Savannah sparrow? or the shore lark?

Gardiner said that they had pigeon — hen — and other haw[[^]k]s — but ~~when~~ there are no places for them to breed — also owls, which must breed, for he had seen their young. A few years ago some one imported a dozen partridges from the mainland, but ~~so that~~ though some were seen for a year or two, not one had been seen for some time, & they were thought to be extinct. He thought the raccoons, which had been very numerous, might have caught them. In Harrison days some coons were imported and turned loose, and they multiplied very fast and became quite a pest, killing hens, etc., and were killed in turn. Finally they turned out and hunted them with hounds and killed 75 at one time, since which he had not heard of any. There were foxes once, but none now, and no indigenous animal bigger than a "ground mole."

The nearest approach to woods that I saw was the swamps, where the blueberries, maples, etc., are higher than one's head. I saw, as I rode, high blueberry bushes [[^]& maple in the swamps] huckleberries, shrub oaks, uva-



1854

1854

ursi (which he called mealy plum), gaultheria, beach plum, clethra, mayflower (well budded). Also withered poverty-grass — goldenrods — asters — In the swamps are cranberries, & I saw one carting the vines home to set out, which also many are doing. G. described what he made out to be “star-grass” as common.

Saw at Siasconset perhaps fifty little houses, but almost every one empty. Saw some peculiar horse-carts for conveying fish up the bank, made like a wheelbarrow, with a whole iron-bound barrel for the wheel, a rude square box for the body, resting on the shafts, and the horse to draw it after him. The barrel makes a good wheel in the sand. They may get seaweed in them. A man asked 37 cents for a horsecart-load of seaweed carried a quarter of a mile from the shore. G. pointed out the house of a singular old hermit and genealogist [^{over 70} years old] who, for 30 years at least, has lived alone and devoted his thoughts to genealogy. He knows the genealogy of the whole island, & a relative supports him by making genealogical charts from his dictation for those who will pay for them. ~~So that~~ He at last lives in a very filthy manner, & G. helped clean his house when he was absent about two years ago. They took up 3 barrels of dirt in his room. [^{Ascended the lighthouse at Sancoty Head.}] The mist still prevented my seeing off and around the island. I saw the eggs (?) of some creature in dry masses as big as my fist, like the skins of so many beans — on the beach. G. told me of a boy who, a few years since, stole near to some wild geese which had alighted, and, rushing on them, seized 2 before they could rise — & though he was obliged to let one go — secured the other.

Visited the museum at the Athenæum. Various South Sea implements, etc., etc., brought home by whalers.

The last Indian, not of pure blood, died this very month, & I saw his picture with a basket of huckleberries in his hand.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



December 29, Friday: At 7:30 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) left [Nantucket Island](#) on the return boat, heading back toward Concord.

After the excitement he felt at being the steersman of a schooner in Cape Cod Bay in the summer of 1851, actual sea voyages seemed to impact him less. In contrast to his inland sailing adventures out of Port Concord, his recollections as a saltwater passenger are descriptive and matter-of-fact. On December 29, 1854 he visited Nantucket. Returning to Cape Cod, the vessel he was traveling on was dangerously enveloped in fog. On a day trip on June 27, 1856 he traveled with Ricketson "and his boys in the Steamer Eagle's Wing, with a crowd and band of music, to the northeast end of Naushon, 'Woods Hole,' some fifteen miles from New Bedford, about two hours going.... Returning, I caught sight of Gay Head and its lighthouse with my glass." On yet another trip, this on in January 1857, he "saw Boston Harbor frozen over (for some time). Reminded me of, I think, Parry's Winter Harbor, with vessels frozen in. Saw thousands on the ice, a stream of men reaching down to Fort Independence, where they were cutting a channel toward the city. Ice said to reach fourteen miles. Snow untracked on many decks.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 127



[Robert Schumann](#) was cogent enough to receive Joseph Joachim at the asylum of Dr. Franz Richarz (1812-1887) near Bonn.

Rebels defeated Imperial forces at Whampoia near Canton.

The previous night in St. Paul, [Minnesota](#), the sleep of its citizens had been interrupted by frequent discharge of guns and pistols into the air in the vicinity of its jailhouse. A Dakota tribesman, U-hazy, was to be [hanged](#) on the outskirts of town despite an appeal made to Territorial Governor Willis A. Gorman by 40 of the "most respectable ladies of St. Paul," including the wife of the previous governor. U-hazy had, in 1852 near Shakopee, according to the governor, murdered Mrs. Keener, a German woman, "without a shadow of excuse." This white woman had been, the governor added, been "murdered by the side of a poor, but no doubt fond and devoted husband." The governor explained that he was fearful that "others of his savage tribe might be tempted to hope for a like release, and commit a like offence; and the danger of such results would be far greater from Indians than from civilized man." Therefore at 9:00AM Ramsey County Sheriff Abram M. Fridley began to erect his portable scaffold in one of the municipality's most public places. "Crucify him!" the assembled Minnesota mob was shouting. Governor Gorman appeared, and declared that this execution was not going to take place within such a public venue. The sheriff disassembled the scaffold and, with the drunken crowd following after, relocated to an uninhabited prairie location in the vicinity of the town, St. Anthony Hill, where the scaffold was reassembled and at around 3:00PM the necessary business was concluded. The following day a local gazette, [The Daily Minnesotian](#) [*sic*], would fulsomely report on the scene:



Liquor was openly passed through the crowd, and the last moments of the poor Indian were disturbed by bacchanalian yells and cries. The crowd revealed the instincts of brutes and was composed of ruffians. A half

drunken father could be seen holding in his arms a child, eager to see all; giddy, senseless girls and women chattered gaily with their attendants, and old women were seen competing with drunken ruffians for a place near the gallows.



Dec. 29th. Nantucket to Concord at 7½ Am. Still in mist. The fog was so thick that we were lost on the water; stopped and sounded many times. The clerk said the depth varied from 3 to 8 fathoms between the island & Cape. Whistled & ~~xxx~~ listened for the locomotive's answer, but probably heard only the echo of our own whistle at first, but at last the locomotive's whistle & the life-boat bell.

[Transcript]

I forgot to say yesterday that there was at one place an almost imperceptible rise not far west of Siasconset, to a slight ridge or swell running from Tom Never's Head northward to (John) Gibbs's Swamp. This conceals the town of Nantucket. (John Gibbs was the name of the Indian Philip came after.) This, seen a mile off through the mist which concealed the relative distance of the base and summit, appeared like an abrupt hill, though an extremely gradual swell.

At the end of Obed Macy's History of Nantucket are some verses signed "Peter Folger, 1676." As for the sin which God would punish by the Indian war, —

"Sure 't is not chiefly for those sins
that magistrates do name,"

but for the sin of persecution and the like, the banishing and whipping of godly men.

"The cause of this their suffering
was not for any sin,
But for the witness that they bare
against babes sprinkling."

x
x
x

"The church may now go stay at home,
there's nothing for to do;
Their work is all cut out by law,
and almost made up too.

x
x

"'T is like that some may think and say,
our war would not remain,
If so be that a thousand more
of natives were but slain.

"Alas! these are but foolish thoughts;
God can make more arise,
And if that there were none at all,
He can make war with flies."

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL
THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



December 30, Saturday: The 1st US oil refinery, the Pennsylvania Rock Oil Company, was incorporated in [New-York](#).

The case of [Dred Scott v. Sandford](#) was placed on the docket of the US Supreme Court.

It was argued at December term, 1855, and ordered to be reargued at the present term.



The Nantucket [Weekly Mirror](#) reported, on its page 2, that a corrective lecture by [Henry Thoreau](#) had not been well received by its intended audience:

That profound thinker Henry D. Thoreau, delivered a lecture last Thursday evening, which in point of originality has rarely been equalled. His object was to show man how to live; or perhaps we should better express it, by saying how not to live.— He condemned in toto, that mode of life which leads a man to labor for the gratification of bodily wants, regardless of the necessities of the soul. He would have the mind feed upon the works of nature, and not trouble itself about “the news.” The manner in which men seek to accumulate wealth, was made the subject of some cutting sarcasms which excited much merriment among the audience; but probably no one will thereby be deterred from feasting his “greedy eye with gold” if an opportunity presents itself. We are inclined to the opinion that his views found few sympathizers among the audience; but his fearless independence cannot fail to secure him respect. Mr. T. never asks if a theory is popular, before identifying himself with it, but thinks and expresses his thoughts, leaving the croakers to annihilate him at their leisure.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR DECEMBER 30th]

December 31, Sunday: At his [Unitarian](#) church in [Washington DC](#), the Reverend [Moncure Daniel Conway](#) delivered his sermon “The Old and the New.”²⁴⁶

AUTOBIOGRAPHY VOLUME II

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went on the [Sudbury River](#) to Fair Haven Bay or Pond (Gleason J7).

There was a great storm in northern Europe, causing considerable damage.

246. [Moncure Daniel Conway](#). THE OLD AND THE NEW: A SERMON CONTAINING THE HISTORY OF THE FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH IN WASHINGTON CITY. Preached on Sunday, December 31, 1854, by Moncure D. Conway, Minister of the Church. Pamphlet. Buell & Blanchard, Printers, Washington, 1855.



READ THE FULL TEXT

1854



Dec. 31st 54 pm on river to F.H.P.

A beautiful, clear, not very cold day. The shadows on the snow are indigo-blue. The pines look very dark. The white oak leaves are a cinnamon-color, the black and red (?) oak leaves a reddish brown or leather-color. I see mice and rabbit and fox tracks on the meadow. Once a partridge rises from the alders and skims across the river at its widest part just before me; a fine sight. On the edge of A. Wheeler's cranberry meadow I see the track of an otter made since yesterday morning. How glorious the perfect stillness and peace of the winter landscape!

1854

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



Toward the end of December: [Walter Savage Landor](#)'s sister Elizabeth Savage Landor had died on February 24th at the age of 77 and the body had been interred on March 2d in St. Chad's Churchyard, Bishops Tachbrook, Warwick District, Warwickshire. Toward the end of this year he penned a memorial:



Sharp crocus wakes the froward year;
 In their old haunts birds reappear;
 From yonder elm, yet black with rain,
 The cushat looks deep down for grain
 Thrown on the gravel-walk; here comes
 The redbreast to the sill for crumbs.
 Fly off! fly off! I can not wait
 To welcome ye, as she of late.
 The earliest of my friends is gone.
 Alas! almost my only one!
 The few as dear, long wafted o'er,
 Await me on a sunnier shore.

Late in this year, ill and jobless, the [Reverend Charles Henry Appleton Dall](#) relocated with his wife [Caroline Wells Healey Dall](#), 9-year-old son William Healey Dall, and 5-year-old daughter Sarah Keene Healey Dall from Toronto, Canada to Newton, Massachusetts. While convalescing he would learn that Charles T. Brooks, just back from [India](#), had recommended to the American [Unitarian](#) Association the creation of a mission there.

General Events of 1854

SPRING	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH
SUMMER	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
FALL	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER
WINTER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER



1854

1854

Following the death of Jesus Christ there was a period of readjustment that lasted for approximately one million years.

-Kurt Vonnegut, THE SIRENS OF TITAN



GO ON TO EVENTS OF 1855