

## PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN

### ALMOST MENTIONED IN WALDEN:

### ÉVARISTE RÉGIS HUC OF THE VINCENTIAN (LAZARIST) ORDER



**“NARRATIVE HISTORY” AMOUNTS TO FABULATION,  
THE REAL STUFF BEING MERE CHRONOLOGY**

WALDEN: The next year I sometimes caught a mess of fish for my dinner, and once I went so far as to slaughter a woodchuck which ravaged my bean-field, -effect his transmigration, as a Tartar would say,- and devour him, partly for experiment's sake; but though it afforded me a momentary enjoyment, notwithstanding a musky flavor, I saw that the longest use would not make that a good practice, however it might seem to have your woodchucks ready dressed by the village butcher.

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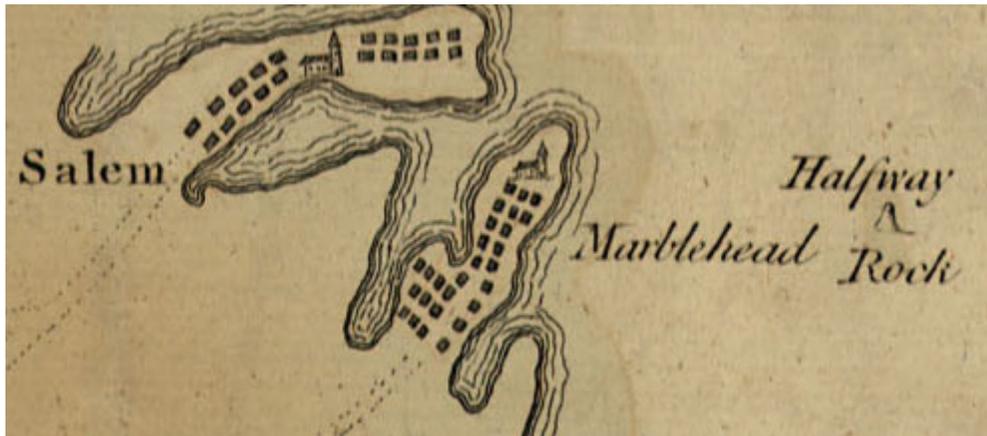
1813

 June 1, Tuesday: [Évariste Régis Huc](#) was born in Caylus, France.

French troops occupied Breslau (Wroclaw) and Katzbach.

Austrian Emperor Franz and Count von Metternich, on their way from Vienna to Gitschin, ran into the Russian Count Nesselrode looking for them. The Russians wanted Austria to commit to their cause. Franz told him that he would side with Russia in the absence of a favorable peace agreement with the Emperor [Napoléon I](#).

Off the port of Marblehead MA there was an engagement between the HMS *Shannon* and Captain James Lawrence's USS *Chesapeake*. Although the *Chesapeake* was being defeated by the *Shannon*, the seriously wounded Captain bravely advised his crew "Don't give up the ship." (This has been painted as really a nice story, but it wasn't but fifteen minutes later that the crew struck the ship's colors — and he would die of his wounds.)



Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

*3rd day 1 of 6 M / I have today been more engaged than is pleasant at the election of town Officers - Father Rodman was candidate for town Treasurer which naturally occasioned considerable anxiety & consequently exertion to Stimulate his friends to give him a vote & my labor was not wholly without effect, for he succeeded by a majority of more than 70 votes. -which insures him a comfortable living for the coming Year. -  
The spirit of party is a bane to all true Religion but a becoming care to have our Councils to consist of men that will be likely to do justice to their constituents as far as their knowledge extends, is in my opinion the duty of every good citizen, for truly when the "Wicked rules the Land does Mourn." for I truly have seen it, & experienced it, to my full conviction. -*

*5th day 2 of 6 M / Our Meeting was rather Small, but I believe a season of favor to many Minds Sarah Tucker late Fish appeared*



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*in a lively testimony I have no doubt to the comfort of some  
afflicted minds present. –*

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

**NOBODY COULD GUESS WHAT WOULD HAPPEN NEXT**





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1839

Father [Évariste Régis Huc](#), sent by his order, the Vincentians or Lazarists, landed in [Macau](#). He would pass through South [China](#), Peking, Hei-shui some 300 miles north of that capital, and Lhasa, [Tibet](#) before returning to Canton in Kwantung province in September 1846 and writing a book about his travels that would be consulted by [Waldo Emerson](#).



**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.**



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**1844**

In To-lun about 150 miles to the north of Beijing, Father [Évariste Régis Huc](#) and another Vincentian, Joseph Gabet, were setting out for [Tibet](#) under the guidance of a Tibetan convert to Christianity.



**THE FUTURE IS MOST READILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT**



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1846

January: [Évariste Régis Huc](#) and Joseph Gabet and their Tibetan convert to [Christianity](#) reached Lhasa, [Tibet](#). They were well received by the Tibetans themselves, but —does this remind you of any news story of more recent vintage?— nevertheless [Chinese](#) Imperial commissioners obtained their expulsion.

September: After expulsion from [Tibet](#) by the Chinese Imperial commissioners there, [Évariste Régis Huc](#) arrived at the port of Canton in the Kwantung province of South [China](#).



CHANGE IS ETERNITY, STASIS A FIGMENT



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1850

Father [Évariste Régis Huc](#)'s *SOUVENIRS D'UN VOYAGE DANS LA TARTARIE, LE THIBET ET LA CHINE PENDANT LES ANNÉES 1844, 1845, ET 1846*, a book that would be read by [Waldo Emerson](#).

CHINA



DO I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION? GOOD.



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1851

William Hazlett's translation of Father [Évariste Régis Huc](#)'s 1850 work in French, SOUVENIRS D'UN VOYAGE DANS LA TARTARIE, LE THIBET ET LA CHINE PENDANT LES ANNÉES 1844, 1845, ET 1846, appeared in English as HUC AND GABET: TRAVELS IN TARTARY, THIBET AND CHINA, 1844-1846.

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THE FUTURE CAN BE EASILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT



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1852

Monsieur [Évariste Régis Huc](#)'s RECOLLECTIONS OF A JOURNEY THROUGH TARTARY, THIBET, AND CHINA, DURING THE YEARS 1844, 1845, AND 1846 ... A REPRINT OF THE TRANSLATION BY MRS. PERCY SINNETT (New York: D. Appleton & Company). Expelled from [Tibet](#), now the well-published author of a book about travel to and in an exotic place, he was returning to the Europe of his triumph.



“WALKING”: The eastern Tartars think that there is nothing west beyond Thibet. “The World ends there,” say they, “beyond there is nothing but a shoreless sea.” It is unmitigated East where they live.

“WALKING”: They who have been travelling long on the steppes of Tartary, say “On reentering cultivated lands, the agitation, perplexity and turmoil of civilization oppressed and suffocated us; the air seemed to fail us, and we felt every moment as if about to die of asphyxia.”



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April 28, Wednesday: [Henry Thoreau](#) commented in his journal about his reading either in [Évariste Régis Huc](#)'s 1850 work in French, *SOUVENIRS D'UN VOYAGE DANS LA TARTARIE, LE THIBET ET LA CHINE PENDANT LES ANNÉES 1844, 1845, ET 1846*, or in William Hazlett's translation HUC AND GABET: TRAVELS IN TARTARY, THIBET AND CHINA, DURING THE YEARS 1844-5-6 which had appeared in 1851: "I scarcely know why I am excited when in M. Huc's Book I read of the country of the Mongol Tartars as the "Land of Grass," but I am as much as if I were a cow."

[CHINA](#)



In [Ellery Channing](#)'s journal we find that on this date Thoreau caught a hyla, that is, a tree frog, but it was able to effect an escape.

At 12 o'clock noon a telegraphic fire alarm system, constructed on the basis of plans prepared by Dr. [William Francis Channing](#) and a self-effacing telegraphic engineer, Moses Gerrish Farmer, went into operation in [Boston](#), with the fire alarm office being situated in the City Building at Court Square and Williams Court. Staff included a superintendent, fire alarm operators, and repairmen. The system consisted of a closed electrically supervised assembly of circuits, street fire alarm boxes with code wheels and key breaks determining the number of current interruptions which produced coded signals on local instruments at a central office, where an operator transmitted signals received over separate fire alarm circuits to the appropriate fire house. The system featured telegraphic communication by key and sounder between individual street boxes and the

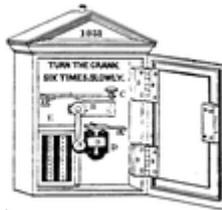


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central office. The system consisted of 40 street boxes connected into 3 box circuits, 3 bell circuits, 16 additional alarm bells for a total of 19, and a crude central office apparatus. The street fire alarm boxes were painted black and had an outside door that was kept locked. Each such box contained a manual crank (the sort of alarm device on which one merely pulled an arm downward would not be introduced, experimentally, until 1864).



Soon after his older brother Peyton's death, [Moncure Daniel Conway](#) appeared at the big brick [Quaker](#) meetinghouse in Sandy Spring, [Maryland](#). He was due to resume his duties as a Methodist circuit-rider but was troubled whether he was "living in full faith up to the Inward Voice." One of the Quakers, [Friend](#) Roger Brooke,<sup>1</sup> took him home to dinner and conversation after silent worship:



My uncle Dr. John Henry Daniel said to me, when I was leaving home, "So you are going to be a journeyman soul-saver." I did not begin life with that burden on me, and, when it came, was too young to question whether it was part of me – my hunch – or a pack of outside things like that strapped on Bunyan's pilgrim. My pack was symbolized in my saddle-bags, where the Bible, Emerson's "Essays," Watson's "Theology," Carlyle's "Latter Day Pamphlets," Jeremy Taylor's "Holy Living and Dying," the Methodist Discipline, and Coleridge's "Aids to Reflection" got

1. A relative of the Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court, the Honorable Roger Brooke Taney, as our Southern correspondent does not hesitate to make clear.



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on harmoniously, – for a time. Dr. Daniel's label, "a journeyman soul-saver," told true in a sense: it was really my own enmeshed soul I had to save. I was struggling at the centre of an invisible web of outer influences and hereditary forces. I was without wisdom. How many blunders I made in my sermons, with which I took so much pains, I know not, but I remember a friendly hint from the wife of the Hon. Bowie Davis that a sermon was too "agrarian." In another case the recoil was more serious; it came through my presiding elder, who said, "From what I hear, a sermon of yours on the new birth was too profound." This troubled me deeply. I had supposed that Jesus meant to be profound, and put much study into the sermon, the only favourable response to which was from an aged negro woman who, long after I had left Methodism, laid her hand on my head, and said, "I never knew what the Lord meant by our being born again until I heard you preach about it, and bless the Lord, it's been plain ever since!" My early training in law courts determined my method of preaching. In preparing a sermon I fixed on some main point which I considered of vital importance, and dealt with it as if I were pleading before judge and jury. This method was not Methodism. I was in continual danger of being "too profound," and though congregations were interested in my sermons, they brought me more reputation for eccentricity than for eloquence. This, however, was not a matter of concern to me. Ambition for fame and popularity was not among my faults. My real mission was personal, – to individuals. In each neighbourhood on my circuit there were some whom I came to know with a certain intimacy, aspiring souls whose confidences were given me. However far away I might be, they rose before me when I was preparing for that appointment; they inspired passages in the sermon. No general applause could give me the happiness felt when these guests of my heart met me with smiles of recognition, or clasped my hand with gratitude.

It was an agricultural region, in which crime and even vices were rare. Slavery existed only in its mildest form, and there was no pauper population to excite my reformatory zeal. Nor was there even any sectarian prejudice to combat; the county was divided up between denominations friendly to each other and hospitable to me. My personal influence was thus necessarily humanized. I could not carry on any *propaganda* of Methodism in the homes of non-Methodist gentlemen and ladies who entertained me, – even had I felt so inclined, ? without showing my church inferior to theirs.

My belief is that I gradually preached myself out of the creeds by trying to prove them by my lawyer-like method. Moreover, I had the habit of cross-examining the sermons of leading preachers, finding statements that in a law court would have told against their case. At a camp-meeting in 1851 I learned that our presiding elder was about to preach on the resurrection of the body. I slipped into his hand the following query: ?

A soldier fallen in the field remains unburied; his body mingles with the sod, springs up in the grass; cattle graze there and



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atoms of the soldier's body become beef; the beef is eaten by a man who suddenly dies while in him are particles of the soldier's body conveyed to him by the grass-fed beef. Thus two men die with the same material substance in them. How can there be an exact resurrection of both of those bodies as they were at the moment of death?

The preacher read out the query, and said, "All things are possible with God." Nothing more. It made a profound impression on me that a divine should take refuge in a phrase. The doctrine in question involved the verbal inspiration of Scripture and the "Apostles' Creed."

I made a note of another thing at this camp-meeting. The Rev. Lyttleton Morgan, an accomplished preacher, declared that in his Passion and Crucifixion Christ suffered all that the whole human race must have suffered in hell to all eternity but for that sacrifice. At dinner some ministers demurred at this doctrine; I maintained that it appeared to be a logical deduction from our theory of the Atonement. But I soon recognized that it was a *reductio ad absurdum*.

Rockville Circuit being near Washington, I was able at times to pass a few days in the capital, where I had relatives and acquaintances. I attended the debates in Congress, and in the Supreme Court, — where I heard Daniel Webster's speech in the famous Gaines case. It was a powerful speech, impressively delivered, but I had sufficient experience in courts to recognize several passages meant for the fashionable audience with which the room was crowded. He was against the appellant, Mrs. Gaines, who was pleading for her legitimacy as well as property, and described his client persistently besieged by litigation as a rock beaten by ocean waves. He drew all eyes on pleasant Myra Gaines, and I remember thinking the metaphor infelicitous. My sympathies were with the lady, and the "rock" might symbolize the stony heart of the man holding on to her property. But I was so interested in Webster's look and manner that, in my ignorance of the evidence, my attention to what he said was fitful, and the speech was obliterated by the thrilling romance rehearsed by the judges in their decisions. For it was in favor of the man holding on to her property. But I was so interested in Webster's look and manner that, in my ignorance of the evidence, my attention to what he said was fitful, and the speech was obliterated by the thrilling romance rehearsed by the judges in their decisions, for it was in two volumes, the minority opinion of Justice Wayne and Justice Daniel (my grand-uncle) in favour of Mrs. Gaines being especially thrilling. No American novelist would venture on such a tale of intrigue, adultery, bigamy, disguises, betrayal, as those justices searched through unshrinkingly, ignoring the company present.

On one of my visits to Washington I heard a sermon from the famous Asbury Roszel which lifted the vast audience to exultation and joy. His subject was the kingdom of God and triumphs of the Cross, and he began by declaring that it was universally agreed that ideal government was the rule of one



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supreme and competent individual head. This Carlylean sentiment uttered in the capital of the so-called Republic gave me some food for thought at the time; and I remembered it when I awakened to the anomaly of disowning as a republican the paraphernalia of royalty, while as a preacher I was using texts and hymns about thrones and Crowns and sceptres, and worshipping a king.

My interest in party politics had declined; I began to study large human issues. One matter that I entered into in 1851 was International Copyright. On this subject I wrote an article which appeared in the "National Intelligencer." I took the manuscript to the office, and there saw the venerable Joseph Gales, who founded the paper, and W.W. Seaton, the editor. Mr. Seaton remarked that I was "a very young man to be in holy orders," and after glancing at the article said he was entirely in sympathy with it. In that article I appealed to Senator Sumner to take up the matter, and thenceforth he sent me his speeches.

I little imagined how much personal interest I was to have some years later in Gales and Seaton, who were among the founders of the Unitarian church in Washington. I used sometimes to saunter into the bookshop of Frank Taylor, or that of his brother Hudson Taylor, afterwards intimate Unitarian friends, before I knew that there was a Unitarian church in Washington. From one of them I bought a book that deeply moved me: "The Soul: her Sorrows and her Aspirations. By Francis William Newman." I took this book to heart before I was conscious of my unorthodoxy, nothing in it then suggesting to me that the author was an unbeliever in supernaturalism.

The setting given by Newman's book to Charles Wesley's hymn – "Come, O thou Traveller unknown" – made that hymn my inspiration, and it has been my song in many a night wherein I have wrestled with phantoms.

But my phantoms were not phantasms, and brought no horrors into those beautiful woods and roads of Montgomery County. These were my study. I was wont to start off to my appointments early, in order that I might have no need to ride fast, and when clear of a village, take from my saddlebags my Emerson, my Coleridge, or Newman, and throwing the reins on my horse's neck, read and read, or pause to think on some point.

I remember that in reading Emerson repeatedly I seemed never to read the same essay as before: whether it was the new morning, or that I had mentally travelled to a new point of view, there was always something I had not previously entered into. His thoughts were mother-thoughts, to use Balzac's word. Over the ideas were shining ideals that made the world beautiful to me; the woods and flowers and birds amid which I passed made a continuous chorus for all this poetry and wit and wisdom. And science also; from Emerson I derived facts about nature that filled me with wonder. On one of my visits to Professor Baird, at the Smithsonian Institution, I talked of these statements; he was startled that I should be reading Emerson, with whose writings he was acquainted. At the end of our talk Baird said, "Whatever may be thought of Emerson's particular views of



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nature, there can be no question about the nature in him and in his writings: that is true and beautiful."

A college-mate, Newman Hank, was the preacher on Stafford Circuit, Virginia, and it was arranged that for one round of appointments he and I should exchange circuits. I thus preached for a month among those who had known me from childhood. Though few of them were Methodists, they all came to hear me, and I suppose many were disappointed. I had formerly spoken in their debating societies with the facility of inexperience, but was no longer so fluent.

At Fredericksburg, June 19, I preached to a very large congregation, and was invited to the houses of my old friends (none of them Methodists); but the culminating event was my sermon in our own town, Falmouth, three days later. How often had I sat in that building listening to sermons – Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian – occasionally falling under the spell of some orator who made me think its pulpit the summit of the world! How large that church in my childhood, and how grand its assemblage of all the beauty and wealth of the neighbourhood! When I stood in the pulpit and realized how small the room was, and could recognize every face, and observe every changing expression, – and when I saw before me my parents, my sister and brothers, with almost painful anxiety in their loving eyes, – strange emotions came to me; the first of my phantoms drew near and whispered, "Are you sure, perfectly sure, that the seeds you are about to sow in these hearts that cherish you are the simple truth of your own heart and thought?" My text was, "Thou wilt show me the path of life;" my theme, that every human being is on earth for a purpose. The ideal life was that whose first words were, "I must be about my Father's business," and the last, "It is finished."

When we reached home my uncle Dr. John Henry Daniel said, "There was a vein of Calvinism running all through that sermon." "I hate Calvinism," cried I. "No matter: the idea of individual predestination was in your sermon. And it may be true." My father was, I believe, gratified by the sermon, but he said, with a laugh, "One thing is certain, Monc: should the devil ever aim at a Methodist preacher, you'll be safe!"

In this sermon, which ignored hell and heaven, and dealt with religion as the guide and consecration of life on earth, I had unconsciously taken the first steps in my "Earthward Pilgrimage." When I returned to my own circuit, a burden was on me that could not roll off before the cross.

Our most cultured congregation was at Brookville, a village named after the race of which Roger Brooke was at this time the chief. Our pretty Methodist church there was attended by some Episcopalian families – Halls, Magruders, Donalds, Coulters – who adopted me personally. The finest mansion was that of John Hall, who insisted on my staying at his house when I was in the neighbourhood. He was an admirable gentleman and so friendly with the Methodists that they were pleased at the hospitality shown their minister. Mrs. Hall, a grand woman intellectually



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and physically, was a daughter of Roger Brooke. She had been "disowned" by the Quakers for marrying "out of meeting," but it was a mere formality; they all loved her just as much. Her liberalism had leavened the families around her. She was not interested in theology, and never went to any church, but encouraged her lovely little daughters (of ten and twelve years) to enjoy Sunday like any other day. After some months she discovered that some of my views resembled those of her father, and desired me to visit him.

There was a flourishing settlement of Hicksite Quakers at Sandy Spring, near Brookville, but I never met one of them, nor knew anything about them. "Hicksite" was a meaningless word to me. "Uncle Roger," their preacher, was spoken of throughout Montgomery County as the best and wisest of men, and I desired to meet him. When I afterwards learned that "Hicksite" was equivalent to "unorthodox," it was easy to understand why none of them should seek the acquaintance of a Methodist minister. The Quakers assembled twice a week, and happening one Wednesday to pass their meeting-house, I entered, – impelled by curiosity. Most of those present were in Quaker dress, which I did not find unbecoming for the ladies, perhaps because the wearers were refined and some of them pretty. After a half-hour's silence a venerable man of very striking appearance, over six feet in height and his long head full of force, arose, laid aside his hat, and in a low voice, in strange contrast with his great figure, uttered these words: "Walk in the light while ye are children of the light, lest darkness come upon you." Not a word more. He resumed his seat and hat, and after a few minutes' silence shook hands with the person next him; then all shook hands and the meeting ended.

I rode briskly to my appointment, and went on with my usual duties. But this my first Quaker experience had to be digested. The old gentleman, with his Solomonic face (it was Roger Brooke), who had broken the silence with but one text, had given that text, by its very insulation and modification, a mystical suggestiveness.

After I had attended the Quaker meeting several times, it was heard of by my Methodist friends. One of these, a worthy mechanic, told me that Samuel Janney had preached in the Quaker meeting, and once said that "the blood of Jesus could no more save man than the blood of a bullock." This brother's eyes were searching though kindly. Roger Brooke belonged to the same family as that of Roger Brooke Taney, then chief justice of the United States. His advice, opinion, arbitration, were sought for in all that region. Despite antislavery and rationalistic convictions, he leavened all Montgomery County with tolerance.<sup>2</sup> One morning as I was riding off from the Quaker meeting, a youth overtook me and said uncle Roger wished to speak to me. I turned and approached the old gentleman's carriole. He said, "I have seen thee at one or two of our meetings. If thee can find it

2. Helen Clark, daughter of the Right Hon. John Bright, showed me a diary written by Mr. Bright's grandmother, Rachel Wilson, while travelling in America in 1768-69. She was a much esteemed Quaker preacher, and gives a pleasant account of her visit to the Friends at Sandy Spring, where she was received in the home of Roger Brooke. This was the grandfather of "uncle Roger."



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convenient to go home with us to dinner, we shall be glad to have thee." The faces of his wife and daughter-in-law beamed their welcome, and I accepted the invitation. The old mansion, "Brooke Grove," contained antique furniture, and the neatness bespoke good housekeeping. So also did the dinner, for these Maryland Quakers knew the importance of good living to high thinking.

There was nothing sanctimonious about this home of the leading Quaker. Uncle Roger had a delicate humour, and the ladies beauty and wit. The bonnet and shawl laid aside, there appeared the perfectly fitting "mouse-colour" gown, of rich material, with unfigured lace folded over the neck: at a fancy ball it might be thought somewhat coquettish.

They were fairly acquainted with current literature, and though not yet introduced to Emerson, were already readers of Carlyle. I gained more information about the country, about the interesting characters, about people in my own congregations, than I had picked up in my circuit-riding. After dinner uncle Roger and I were sitting alone on the veranda, taking our smoke, — he with his old-fashioned pipe, — and he mentioned that one of his granddaughters had rallied him on having altered a Scripture text in the meeting. "In the simplicity of my heart I said what came to me, and answered her that if it was not what is written in the Bible I hope it is none the less true." I afterwards learned that he had added in his reply, "Perhaps it was the New Testament writer who did not get the words quite right." I asked him what was the difference between "Hicksite" and "Orthodox" Quakers; but he turned it off with an anecdote of one of his neighbours who, when asked the same question, had replied, "Well, you see, the orthodox Quakers will insist that the Devil has horns, while we say the Devil is an ass." I spoke of the Methodist ministers being like the Quakers "called by the Spirit" to preach, and he said, with a smile, "But when you go to an appointment what if the Spirit does n't move you to say anything?"

Uncle Roger had something else on his mind to talk to me about. He inquired my impression of the Quaker neighbourhood generally. I said he was the first Quaker I had met, but the assembly I had seen in their meeting had made an impression on me of intelligence and refinement. For the rest their houses were pretty and their farms bore witness to better culture than those in other parts of the county. "That I believe is generally conceded to us," he answered; "and how does thee explain this superiority of our farms?" I suggested that it was probably due to their means, and to the length of time their farms had been under culture. The venerable man was silent for a minute, then fixed on me his shrewd eyes and said, "Has it ever occurred to thee that it may be because of our paying wages to all who work for us?"

For the first time I found myself face to face with an avowed abolitionist! My interest in politics had lessened, but I remained a Southerner, and this economic arraignment of slavery



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came with some shock. He saw this and turned from the subject to talk of their educational work, advising me to visit Fairhill, the Friends' school for young ladies.

The principal of the school was [William Henry Farquhar](#), and on my first visit there I heard from him an admirable lecture in his course on History. He had adopted the novel method of beginning his course with the present day and travelling backward. He had begun with the World's Fair and got as far as Napoleon I, – subject of the lecture I heard. It was masterly. And the whole school – the lovely girls in their tidy Quaker dresses, their sweet voices add manners, the elegance and order everywhere – filled me with wonder. By this garden of beauty and culture I had been passing for six months, never imagining the scene within.

The lecture closed the morning exercises, and I had an opportunity for addressing the pupils. I was not an intruder, but taken there by Mrs. Charles Farquhar, daughter of Roger Brooke and sister-in-law of the principal, so I did not have the excuse that it would not be "in season" to try and save some of these sweet sinners from the flames of hell. It was the obvious duty of the Methodist preacher on Rockville Circuit to cry, – "O ye fair maids of Fair Hill, this whited sepulchre of unbelief, – not one of you aware of your depravity, nor regenerate through the blessed bloodshed – your brilliant teacher is luring you to hell!" Those soft eyes of yours will be lifted in torment, those rosebud mouths call for a drop of water to cool your parched tongues; all your affection, gentleness, and virtues are but filthy rags, unless you believe in the Trinity, the blood atonement, and in the innate corruption of every heart in this room!"

But when the junior preacher is made, the susceptible youth is not unmade. According to Lucian, Cupid was reproached by his mother Venus for permitting the Muses to remain single, and invisibly went to their abode with his arrows; but when he discovered the beautiful arts with which the Muses were occupied, he had not the heart to disturb them, and softly crept away. This "pagan" parable of a little god's momentary godlessness may partly suggest why no gospel arrows were shot that day in Fairhill school; but had I to rewrite Lucian's tale I should add that Cupid went off himself stuck all over with arrows from the Muses' eyes.

However, Cupid had nothing to do with the softly feathered and imperceptible arrows that were going into my Methodism from the Quakers, in their homes even more than in this school. I found myself introduced to a circle of refined and cultivated ladies whose homes were cheerful, whose charities were constant, whose manners were attractive, whose virtues were recognized by their most orthodox neighbours; *yet what I was preaching as the essentials of Christianity were unknown among them*. These beautiful homes were formed without terror of hell, without any cries of what shall we do to be saved? How had these lovely maidens and young men been trained to every virtue, to domestic affections and happiness? I never



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discussed theology with them; but their lives, their beautiful spirit, their homes, did away with my moral fears, and as the dogmas paled, creedless freedom began to flush with warm life. These good and sweet women, who said no word against my dogmas, unconsciously to themselves or me charmed me away from the dogmatic habitat.

When I left the Baltimore Conference, the Quakers were given by many Methodists the discredit of having undermined my faith, but their only contribution to my new faith was in enabling me to judge the unorthodox tree by its fruits of culture and character. If theology were ever discussed by them, it was I who introduced the subject. They had no proselyting spirit. I thought of joining the Quaker Society, but Roger Brooke advised me not to do so. "Thee will find among us," he said, "a good many prejudices, for instance, against music, of which thou art fond, and while thou art mentally growing would it be well to commit thyself to any organized society?"<sup>3</sup>

How often have I had to ponder those words of Jesus, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Men do not forsake their God, he forsakes them. It is the God of the creeds that first forsakes us. More and more the dogmas come into collision with plain truth: every child's clear eyes contradict the guilty phantasy of inherited depravity, every compassionate sentiment abhors the notions of hell and salvation by human sacrifice. Yet our tender associations, our affections, are intertwined with these falsities, and we cling to them till they forsake us. For more than a year I was like one flung from a foundered ship holding on to a raft till it went to pieces, then to a floating log till buffeted off, — to every stick, every straw. One after another the gods forsake us, — forsake our common sense, our reason, our justice, our humanity.

In the autumn of my first ministerial year I had to take stock of what was left me that could honestly be preached in Methodist pulpits. About the Trinity I was not much concerned; the morally repulsive dogmas, and atrocities ascribed to the deity in the Bible became impossible. What, then, was "salvation"? I heard from Roger Brooke this sermon, "He shall save the people from their sins, — not *in* them." It is the briefest sermon I ever heard, but it gave me a Christianity for one year, for it was sustained by my affections. They were keen, and the thought of turning my old home in Falmouth into a house of mourning, and grieving the hearts of my friends in Carlisle, and congregations that so trusted me, appeared worse than death. My affections were at times rack and thumbscrew.

I had no friend who could help me on the intellectual, moral, and philosophical points involved. Roger Brooke and William Henry Farquhar were rationalists by birthright; they had never had any dogmas to unlearn, nor had they to suffer the pain of being sundered from relatives and friends. In my loneliness I stretched appealing hands to Emerson. After his death my friend

3. When Benjamin Hallowell, the eminent teacher in Alexandria, Va., came to reside at Sandy Spring, I had many interesting talks with him, but found that even his philosophical mind could not free itself from the prejudice against musical culture. The musical faculty, he admitted, had some uses — e.g., that mothers might sing lullabies.



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Edward Emerson sent me my letters to his father, and the first is dated at Rockville, November 4, 1851. Without any conventional opening (how could I call my prophet "Dear Sir"!) my poor trembling letter begins with a request to know where the "[Dial](#)" can be purchased, and proceeds: -

I will here take the liberty of saying what nothing but a concern as deep as Eternity should make me say. I am a minister of the Christian Religion, - the only way for the world to reënter Paradise, in my earnest belief. I have just commenced that office at the call of the Holy Ghost, now in my twentieth year. About a year ago I commenced reading your writings. I have read them all and studied them sentence by sentence. I have shed many burning tears over them; because you gain my assent to Laws which, when I see how they would act on the affairs of life, I have not courage to practise. By the Law sin revives and I die. I sometimes feel as if you made for me a second Fall from which there is no redemption by any atonement.

To this there came a gracious response: -

Concord, Mass., 13th November, 1851.

Dear Sir, - I fear you will not be able, except at some chance auction, to obtain any set of the "[Dial](#)." In fact, smaller editions were printed of the later and latest numbers, which increases the difficulty.

I am interested by your kind interest in my writings, but you have not let me sufficiently into your own habit of thought, to enable me to speak to it with much precision. But I believe what interests both you and me most of all things, and whether we know it or not, is the morals of intellect; in other words, that no man is worth his room in the world who is not commanded by a legitimate object of thought. The earth is full of frivolous people, who are bending their whole force and the force of nations on trifles, and these are baptized with every grand and holy name, remaining, of course, totally inadequate to occupy any mind; and so sceptics are made. A true soul will disdain to be moved except by what natively commands it, though it should go sad and solitary in search of its master a thousand years. The few superior persons in each community are so by their steadiness to reality and their neglect of appearances. This is the euphrasy and rue that purge the intellect and ensure insight. Its full rewards are slow but sure; and yet I think it has its reward in the instant, inasmuch as simplicity and grandeur are always better than dapperness. But I will not spin out these saws farther, but hasten to thank you for your frank and friendly letter, and to wish you the best deliverance in that contest to which every soul must go alone.

Yours, in all good hope,



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R.W. EMERSON.

This letter I acknowledged with a longer one (December 12, 1851), in which I say: "I have very many correspondents, but I might almost say yours is the only Letter that was ever written to me."

Early in 1852 Kossuth visited Washington, and enthusiasm for him and his cause carried me there. The Washington pulpits had not yet said anything about slaves at our own doors, but it was easy to be enthusiastic for liberty as far away as Hungary, and so the preachers all paid homage to Kossuth. I stopped at the house of Rev. Lyttleton Morgan, whose wife was an authoress, and her sister, Carrie Dallam, the most attractive friend I had in Washington. With her I went to the New Year "levee" at the White House, and also to call on the widow of President John Quincy Adams, a handsome and entertaining old lady. I also think it was then and by her that I was taken to see the widow of Alexander Hamilton. Mayor Seaton entered, and in courtly style took her hand in both of his and kissed it, bending low. She was still (her ninety-fifth year) a cheerful and handsome lady, gracious and dignified. Her narratives of society in that city, as she remembered it, sounded like ancient legends. I remember particularly her account of a president's drawing-room in the time of President Jackson. Mrs. Hamilton was, I believe, the first to introduce ices into the country. At any rate, she told me that President Jackson, having tasted ices at her house, resolved to have some at his next reception, — for in those days so simple and small were the receptions that refreshments were provided. Mrs. Hamilton related that at the next reception the guests were seen melting each spoonful of ice-cream with their breath preparatory to swallowing it! The reception itself was, she said, more like a large tea-party than anything else.

Kossuth was a rather small man with a pale face, a soft eye, a poetic and pathetic expression, and a winning voice. He spoke English well, and his accent added to his eloquence by reminding us of his country, for which he was pleading. I followed him about Washington, to the Capitol, the White House, the State Department, etc., listening with rapt heart to his speeches, and weeping for Hungary. I find this note (undated): "Kossuth received to-day a large number of gentlemen and ladies, to whom he discoursed eloquently of the wrongs of Hungary. Many were moved to tears, and some ladies presented their rings and other trinkets for the cause of the oppressed. A large slave-auction took place at Alexandria just across the river on the same day."<sup>4</sup> But, alas, I presently had a tragedy of my own to weep for, the death of my elder brother, Peyton. He had long suffered from the *sequelæ* of scarlatina, but, nevertheless, had studied law and begun practice. During the summer of 1851 he visited me on my circuit (Rockville) and accompanied me to St. James Camp-

4. When this entry was written no word had reached me of the vain efforts of abolitionists to get from Kossuth an expression of sympathy with their cause. The "independence" pleaded for by Kossuth had no more to do with personal freedom than this had to do with the "independence" fought for in 1776 by American slaveholders, who forced Jefferson to strike out of the Declaration its antislavery section.



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meeting. He was deeply affected on hearing me preach, and approached the "mourner's bench." No "conversion" occurred, and he returned home (Falmouth) in a sad mood. Then there arose in him the abhorrence of dogmas and the ideal of a church of pure reason, absolutely creedless and uneclesiastical, uniting all mankind. Alas, little did he know that his brother, even myself, was at that moment in mortal inward struggle with a creed! But this I learned only after his death. For at that critical moment he died of typhoid fever, – March 18, 1852, fourteen days after his twenty-second birthday. There was bequeathed to my later years the miserable reflection that possibly he might have survived the attack but for the lowering of his strength by agitation under my preaching at the camp-meeting.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

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April 28, Wednesday: I scarcely know why I am excited when in M. [Huc](#)'s Book I read of the country of the Mongol Tartars on the "Land of Grass", but I am as much as if I were a cow.

2 1/2 Pm to Cliffs & Heywood's Brook.

Are not the flowers which appear earliest in the spring the most primitive & simplest? They have been in this town thus far, as I have observed them this spring, putting them down in the order in which I think they should be named.

#### Using Grays names–

Symplocarpus Foetidus

Alnus Incana Ap. 11

“ Serrulata 8th

Acer Rubrum 9th one by Red Bridge

Willow earliest 12

Ulmus Americana 15 one – Cheney's (others 10 days or 14 later)

Populus Tremuloides 15

Corylus Americana 16 perhaps before the last

Carex Pennsylvanica 22

Caltha Palustris 25 many

Stellaria Media 26 Cheney's garden

Capsella Bursa Pastoris 26 “

Taraxacum Dens-leonis 25 one in water (seen by another the 20th)

Equisetum Arvense 25 in water

Gnaphalium Purpureum 27

Saxifraga Virginiensis 27

Antennaria Plantaginifolia 27

Ranunculus Fascicularis 28 only 2

All but the 3d 8th 11th 12th observed in the **very best** season. & these within a day (?) of their flowering. I observe that the first six are decidedly water or water-loving plants & the 10, 13th, & 14th were found in the water – & are equally if not more confined to that element. – – – –The 7th & 8th belong to the cooler zones of the earth – the 7th ac. to Emerson as far N as 64° – & comes up (is it this?) on burnt lands first & will grow in

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dry cool dreary places.---- The 9th on a dry warm rocky hill-side the earliest(?) grass to blossom also the 18th--the 11th & 12 in cold damp gardens -- like the earth first made dry land. -- --the 15th & 17 on dry (scantly clad with grass) fields & hills -- hardy-- --the 16th sunny bare rocks -- in seams on moss where also in a day or two the columbine will bloom. The 18th is also indebted to the warmth of the rocks-- This may perhaps be nearly the order of the world's creation-- Thus we have in the spring of the year the spring of the world represented-- Such were the first localities afforded for plants --Water-bottoms -- bare rocks -- & scantily clad lands -- & land recently bared of water.

The spotted tortoise is spotted on shell head --tail --& legs. Fresh leaves of a *Neottia* pale & not distinctly veined. Red solomon seal berries on their short stems prostrate on the dead leaves, some of them plump still. One man has turned his cows out to pasture. Have not seen the Slate col. snowbird [**Dark-eyed Junco** ■ *Junco hyemalis*] for a few days. I am getting my greatcoat off, but it is a cold & wintry day -- with snow clouds appearing to draw water, but cold water surely or out of the north side of the well. a few flakes in the air -- drawing snow as well as water. From fair Haven the landscape all in shadow apparently to the base of the mts -- but the Peterboro hills are in sun shine and unexpectedly are white with snow (no snow here unless in some hollows in the woods) reflecting the sun -- more obvious for the sun shine-- I never saw them appear so near. It is startling thus to look into winter.

How suddenly the flowers bloom -- 2 or 3 days ago I could not or did not find the leaves of the crowfoot. Today not knowing it well I looked in vain. --till at length in the very warmest nook in the grass above the rocks of the Cliff -- I found 2 bright yellow blossoms which betrayed the inconspicuous leaves & all. The spring flowers wait not to perfect their leaves before they expand their blossoms. The blossom in so many cases precedes the leaf so with poetry? --they flash out. In the most favorable locality you will find flowers earlier than the May goers will believe. This year at least one flower (of several) hardly precedes another -- but as soon as the storms were over & pleasant weather came -- all bloomed at once. having been retarded so long.-- This **appears** to be particularly true of the herbaceous flowers. How much does this happen every year?

There is no important change in the color of the **woods** yet-- There are fewer dry leaves -- buds color the maples -- and perhaps the bark on some last year's shoots as the willows are brighter & some **willows** covered with catkins--& even alders maples elms & poplars show at a distance. The earth has now a greenish tinge-- & the ice of course has universally given place to water for a long time past. These are general aspects-- The *Veratrum Viride* at Well meadow is 15 or 16 inches high -- the most of a growth this year. The angelica? at the Corner Spring is pretty near it.

I suppose the geese [**Canada Goose** ■ *Branta canadensis*] are all gone. And the ducks? Did the Snow birds [**Dark-eyed Junco** ■ *Junco hyemalis*] go off with the pleasant weather. Standing above the 1st little pond E of Fair Haven-- This bright reflecting water surface is seen plainly at a higher level than the distant pond --It has a singular but pleasant effect on the beholder to see considerable sheets of water standing at different levels.-- Pleasant to see lakes like platters full of water. Found a large cockle (?) shell by the shore of this little pond-- It reminds me that all the earth is sea-shore-- The sight of these little shells inland It is a beach I stand on. Is the male willow on the E End of this pondlet -- catkins about 3/4 inch long & just bursting commonly on the side & all before any leaves, the Brittle Gray W. S. grisea.

That small flat downy gnaphalium in sandy paths -- is it the fragrant life-everlasting.

The *Andromeda* requires the sun-- It is now merely a dull reddish brown -- with light (greyish?) from the upper surface of the leaves.

Frogspawn a mass of transparent jelly bigger than the two fists composed of contiguous globules or eyes with each a little squirming pollywog? in the centre 1/3 inch long Walden is yellowish (apparently) next the shore where you see the sand -- then green in still shallow water -- then or generally deep blue. This as well under the R.R. and now that the trees have not leaved out -- as under pines.

That last long storm brought down a coarse elephantine sand foliage in the Cut. Slumbrous ornaments for a cave or subterranean temple, such as at Elephantium? I see no willow leaves yet-- A maple by Heywood's meadow has opened its sterile blossoms -- why is this (and maples generally) so much later than the Red Bridge one?

A week or more ago I made this list of **early** willows in Mass according to Gray putting Emerson in brackets--  
*Salix tristis*. Sage Willow

- S. humilis (Low Bush Willow) S. Muhlenbergiensis. S Conifera.
- S. discolor (Glaucus Willow) [2 Colored Willow.--Bog Willow] S. Sensitiva.
- S. eriocephala (Silky Headed Willow) S. Prinooides?  
S crassa. "closely resembles the last" i.e. S. discolor [Wolly Headed Swamp]
- S. sericea (Silky-leaved Willow) S. Grisea. [Brittle-Gray]



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April 30, Friday: [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#) considered that he had completed his manuscript of THE BLITHEDALE ROMANCE (then titled “Hollingsworth”) although at this point Chapter XXVIII about the events at Zenobia’s grave in Blithedale pasture was the manuscript’s conclusion and there as yet existed no Chapter XXIX with a reference to a confession by Miles Coverdale.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) walked with [Ellery Channing](#) out Boston or Lexington Road and the Cambridge Turnpike, taking in Saw Mill Brook and venturing onto C. Smith’s highlands. At some point along the way Channing had occasion to discover that Thoreau considered it inappropriate to attempt to frighten away territorial dogs by throwing rocks, preferring instead to attempt to learn to negotiate the hostilities on the dog’s own terms.



April 30th: 2 Pm Down the Boston Road & across to Turnpike &c &c. The elms are now generally in blossom & Cheney’s elm still also. The last has leaf buds which show the white. Now before any leaves have appeared their blossoms clothe the trees with a rich warm brown color – which serves partially for foliage to the street walker. & makes the tree more obvious. Held in the hand the blossoms of some of the elms is quite rich & variegated – now purple & yellowish-specked with the dark anthers &c & light stigmas (?) I know not why some should be so much earlier than others. It is a beautiful day – a mild air – & all farmers & gardeners out & at work– Now is the time to set trees & consider what things you will plant in your garden– Yesterday I observed many fields newly plowed – the yellow soil looking very warm & dry in the sun.–& one boy had fixed his hand-kerchief on a stick & elevated it on the yoke where it flapped or streamed & rippled gaily in the wind as he drove his oxen dragging a harrow over the ploughed field. I see now what I should call a small sized bull-frog in the brook in front of Alcotts house that was. The sweet gale is in blossom. Its rich reddish brown buds have expanded into yellowish & brown blossoms – all male blossoms that I see. Those handsome buds that I have observed are the male blossom buds then This has undoubtedly been in bloom a day or two in some places. I saw yesterday a large sized water-bug – today many in the brook– Yesterday a trout to-day shiners I think. The huckleberry bird sings. When I look hence to the hills on the Boston Road under which the inhabitants are beginning to plant in their gardens – the air is so fine & peculiar – that I seem to see the hills & woods through a mirage.– I am doubtful about their distance & exact form & elevation. The sound of a spade too sounds musical on the spring air. (To night for the first time I sit without a fire) One plougher in a red flannel shirt who looks picturesquely under the hill, suggests that our dress is not commonly of such colors as to adorn the landscape. (To night & last night the spearer’s light is seen on the meadows he has been delayed by the height of the water) I like very well to walk here on the low ground in the meadow – to see the churches & houses in the horizon against the sky & the now very blue mt wachusett seeming to rise from amid them. When you get still further off still on the lowest ground you see distant barns & houses against the horizon & the mt appears to preside over this vale alone, which the adjacent hills on rt & left fence in. The season advances by fits & starts you would not believe that there could be so many degrees to it– If you have had foul & cold weather still some advance has been made as you find when the fair weather comes – new deliveries of warmth & summeriness – which make yesterday seem far off–& the dog days or mid-summer incredibly nearer. Yesterday I would not have believed that there could have been such an improvement on that day as this is – short of mid summer or June. My pocket being full of the flowers of the maple – elm &c my hand-kerchief by its fragrance reminded me of some – fruitful or flowery bank I know not where. A pleasant little green knoll N of the turnpike near the Lincoln line I thought that the greenness of the sward there on the highest ground was occasioned by the decay of the roots of 2 oaks whos old stumps still remained– The greenness covered a circle about 2 rods in diameter. It was too late to feel the influence of the drip of the trees. We have had no such summer heat – this year (unless when I was burned in the deep cut)– Yet there is an agreeable balmy wind. I see here while looking for the first violet those little heaps made by the mole cricket (?) or by worms (?)– I observe to-day the bright crimson? perfect flowers of the maple – crimson styles – sepals & petals (crimson or scarlet?) whose leaves are not yet – very handsome in the sun as you look to the sky – & the hum of small bees from them. So much color have they. Crossing the Turnpike we entered Smiths highlands. Dodging behind a swell of land to avoid the men who were ploughing – I saw unexpectedly (when I looked to see if we were concealed by the field) the blue mts line in the west (the whole intermediate earth & towns being concealed–) this greenish field for a fore ground sloping upward a few rods–& then those grand mts seen over it in the back ground so blue – sea shore – earth shore – & warm as it is covered with snow which reflected the sun. Then when I turned I saw in the east just over the woods the modest pale cloud like moon 2/3 full – looking

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spirit like on these day-light scenes.<sup>5</sup> Such a sight excites me the earth is worthy to inhabit. The far river reach from this hill– It is not so placid a blue – as if with a film of azure over it today however. The more remote the water the lighter the blue perchance. It is like a lake in Tartary – there our camels will find water. Here is a rock made to sit on. Large & inviting, which you do not fear to crush. I hear the flicker & the huckleberry bird– Yet no leaves apparent. This in some measure corresponds to the fine autumn weather after the leaves have fallen– Though there is a different kind of promise now than then. We are now going out into the field to work – then we were going into the house to think. I love to see alders & dog wood instead of peachtrees. May we not see the melted snow lapsing over the rocks on the **mts** in the sun as well as snow? The white surfaces appear declivitous. While we sit here I hear for the first time the flies **buzz** so dronishly in the air. I see travellers like mere dark objects on the Yellow road afar – (the turnpike) Hosmers house & cottage under its elms & on the Summit of green smooth slopes looks like a terrestrial paradise the abode of peace & domestic happiness. Far over the woods westward a shining vane – glimmering in the sun. At Saw Mill run the Samp(?) Goose berry is it – is partly leaved out– This being in the shade of the woods (and not like the thimble berry in a warm & sunny place methinks is the earliest shrub or tree that shows **leaves**.

The Missouri currant in gardens is equally forward. the cultivated gooseberry nearly so – the Lilack not so. The neatly & closely folded plaited leaves of the hellebore are rather handsome objects now– As you pull them apart they emit a slight marshy scent some what like the skunk cabbage– They are tender–& dewy within – folded fan-like. I hear a wood-thrush [**Hermit Thrush *Catharus guttatus***<sup>6</sup>] here with a fine metallic ring to his note. This sound most adequately expresses the immortal beauty & wildness of the woods. I go in search of him. He sounds no nearer. On a low bough of a small maple near the brook in the swamp he sits with ruffled feathers singing more low or with less power – as it were ventriloquising for though I am scarcely more than a rod off – he seems further off than ever. Caught 3 little peeping frogs – when I approached & my shadow fell on the water I heard a peculiarly trilled & more rapidly vibrated note (somewhat in kind like that which a hen makes to warn her chickens when a hawk goes over) & most stopped peeping & another trill & all stopped. It seemed to be a note of alarm. I caught one– It proved to be two coupled. They remained together in my hand. This sound has connexion with their loves probably. (I hear a trilled sound from a frog this evening. It is my dreaming mid summer frog, & he seems to be toward the depot). I find them generally sitting on the dead leaves near the waters edge from which they leap into the water. On the hill behind Hosmers 1/2 hour before sunset The hill on the Boston road is very handsome with its regular promontories.–& the smokes now seen against it rising from the chimneys – what time the laborer takes his tea. The robins [**American Robin *Turdus migratorius***] sing powerfully on the elms – the little frogs peep – the wood-pecker’s harsh & long continued cry is heard from the woods – the huckleberry birds – simple sonorous trill. The ploughed land shines where a drag has passed over it. It is a pleasant place for a house because you overlook the road and the near land seems to run into the meadow. Saw male willow catkins in Tuttle’s lane now just out of bloom about 2 inches long.– The flower of some of the earliest elms is by no means to be despised at this season– It is conspicuous & rich in any nosegay that can now be made.– The female plants of the sweet gale are rare? here. The scales of the male catkins are “set with amber colored resinous dots” Emerson–

[HUC](#)

5. The moon would be full on May 2nd.

6. Helen Gere Cruickshank reports: “Though Thoreau recognized the hermit thrush, he used the inclusive term ‘wood thrush’ for all the beautiful thrush songs he heard. This is not surprising, for his two most important references, Wilson and Audubon, both wrote that the hermit thrush was destitute of song. Some of the selections included under wood thrush may refer to the hermit thrush, but since there is not enough information to be sure, all are left under the preceding heading except April selections and that of May 3, 1852. The hermit thrush arrives in Concord in late March or early April, but the wood thrush is not expected before May 5.”

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May 3, Monday: [Henry Thoreau](#) commented again on [Évariste Régis Huc](#)'s SOUVENIRS D'UN VOYAGE DANS LA TARTARIE, LE THIBET ET LA CHINE PENDANT LES ANNÉES 1844, 1845, ET 1846 or in William Hazlett's HUC AND GABET: TRAVELS IN TARTARY, THIBET AND CHINA, 1844-1846: "The salutations & commonplaces of all nations which sound to us formal often — are always adapted to their circumstances — & grow out of their necessities. The Tartar inquires 'Has the rain been abundant? Are your flocks in prosperity? Have your mares been fruitful?' & the answer is 'All is at peace in our pastures.' Serene and biblical — & no man's invention M. Huc met with a family in [China](#) remarkable for hospitality."



**WALDEN:** The next year I sometimes caught a mess of fish for my dinner, and once I went so far as to slaughter a woodchuck which ravaged my bean-field, —effect his transmigration, as a Tartar would say,— and devour him, partly for experiment's sake; but though it afforded me a momentary enjoyment, notwithstanding a musky flavor, I saw that the longest use would not make that a good practice, however it might seem to have your woodchucks ready dressed by the village butcher.

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May 3: 5 A.M. —To Cliffs.

A great brassy moon going down in the west. A flock of neat sparrows, small, striped-throated, whitish over eye, on an apple tree by J. Potter's. At Hayden's orchard, quite a concert from sonic small sparrows, forked-tailed, many jingling together like canaries. Their note still somewhat like the chip-sparrow's. Can it be this? Fair Haven. How cheering and glorious any landscape viewed from an eminence! For every one has its horizon and sky. It is so easy to take wide views. Snow on the mountains. The wood thrush [**Hermit Thrush *Catharus guttatus***] reminds me of cool mountain springs and morning walks.

That oven-birdish note which I heard here on May 1st I now find to have been uttered by the black and white warbler or creeper. He has a habit of looking under the branches. The towhee finch is the loudest singer here now.

Does that long-drawn, interesting note, something like *ha, ha, tull-a-lull tull-a-lull*, proceed from the chickadee?

Looking from the Cliff, now, about 6 A.M., the landscape is as if seen in a mirage, the Cliff being in shadow, and that in the fresh and dewy sunshine (not much dew yet). Cool sunlight. The landscape lies in a fresh morning light; the earth and water smell fresh and new; the water is marked by a few smooth streaks. The atmosphere suits the grayish-brown landscape,— the still ashy maple swamps and now nearly bar(, shrub oaks. The white pine, left here and there over the sprout-land, is never more beautiful than with the morning light — the early sunlight and the dew on it. (Dew comes with grass? and for it?) Before the water is rippled and the morning song of the birds is quenched.

Hear the first brown thrasher, — two of them. Minott says he heard one yesterday, but does he know it from a

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catbird? They drown all the rest. He says *cherruwit, cherruwit; go ahead, go ahead; give it to him, give it to him*; etc., etc., etc. Plenty of birds in the woods this morning. The huckleberry birds and the chickadees are as numerous, if not as loud, as any. The flicker taps a dead tree as some what [sic] uses a knocker on a door in the village street. In his note he begins low, rising higher and higher. Is it a wood pewee or a vireo that I hear, something like pewit pewit chowy chow. It requires so much closer attention to the habits of the birds, that, if for that reason only, I am willing to omit the gun.

P. M. — Cinquefoil or five-finger (*Potentilla Canadensis*). Also the golden saxifrage (what a name!) (*Chrysosplenium Americanum*), in the meadow at Brister's Hill, in the water, in moss-like beds. It may have been in bloom some time; an obscure flower.

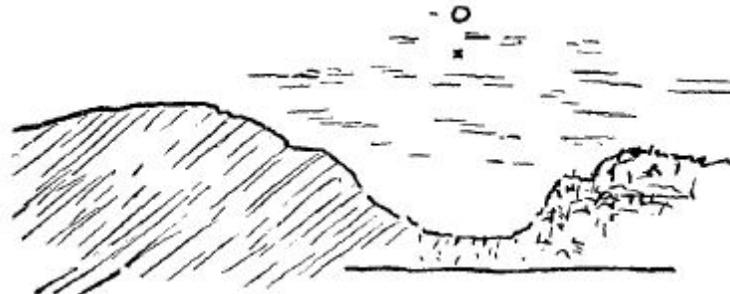
A cold wind from the northwest. How much are our summers retarded by the snow on the mountains? Annursnack looks green three miles off. This is an important epoch, when the distant bare hills begin to show green or verdurous to the eye. The earth wears a new aspect. Not tawny or russet now, but green, are such hills. Some of the notes, the trills, of the lark sitting amid the tussocks and stubble are like my seringo-bird. May these birds that live: so low in the grass be called the cricket birds? and does their song resemble the cricket's, an earth-song?

Was that a flying squirrel which the Emerson children found in his nest on the 1st of May? Heard some kind of dor-bug approaching with a hum, as I sat in a meadow this afternoon, and it struck the ground near me with as much noise as a bullet, as if some one had fired at me with an air-gun.

Evening. — The moon is full. The air is filled with a certain luminous, liquid, white light. You can see the moonlight, as it were reflected from the atmosphere, which some might mistake for a haze, — a glow of mellow light, somewhat like the light I saw in the afternoon sky some weeks ago; as if the air were a very thin but transparent liquid, not dry, as in winter, nor gross, as in summer. It has depth, and not merely distance (the sky). Going through the Depot Field, I hear the dream frog at a distance. The little peeping frogs make a background of sound in the horizon, which you do not hear unless you attend. The former is a trembling note, some higher, some lower, along the edge of the earth, an all-pervading sound. Nearer, it is a blubbering or rather bubbling sound, such as children, — who stand nearer to nature, can and do often make, — this and many others, remembering the frog state. There is no dew (I have observed none yet). The dream of the frog sounds best at a distance, — most dreamy. The little peeper prefers a pool on the edge of a wood, which mostly dries up at midsummer, whose shore is covered with leaves and [where] twigs lie in the water, as where choppers have worked. Theirs is a clear, sharp, ear-piercing peep, not shrill, — sometimes a squeak from one whose pipe is out of order, frequently a quavering, curving (?) trill, as if of alarm (?). The sound of the dreamer frog does not fail, for one no sooner ceases than another in a different part of the landscape takes up the strain.

The sky is not so withdrawn, clear, tight, and cold as last moon. It is quite comfortable, more than during the day. No crickets are heard. The river in the west looks blue, exactly like the sky reflecting it. Is not the sky a lighter blue than in winter? The dogs bark. The rocks have not been enough warmed by day to feel decidedly warm at night.

At Hubbard's Bridge. The river still quite high. The water is calm. I hear a stertorous sound from some frog. This makes three frogs' notes that I hear. There is the moon in the south, with one bright star just beneath it, which, when the moon is in clouds, is its representative. Looking from bridge to hill, above is the moon, separated from attendant star by a bar of white clouds, below which the star shines brightly in a clearing; beneath this, bars of white clouds to the horizon. The hill and opposite woods are dark with fine effect. The little peepers have much the greatest apparatus for peeping of any frogs that I know. Frogs are the birds of the night.



I go along the side of Fair Haven Hill. The clock strikes distinctly, showing the wind is easterly. There is a grand,

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rich, musical echo trembling on the air long after the clock has ceased to strike, like a vast organ, filling the air with a trembling music like a flower of sound. Nature adopts it. Beautiful is sound. The water is so calm the woods and single trees are doubled by the reflection, and in this light you cannot divide them as you walk along the river. See the spearkers' lights, one northeast, one southwest, toward Sudbury, beyond Lee's Bridge, — scarlet-colored fires. From the hill the river is a broad blue stream exactly the color of [lie heavens which it reflects. Sit on the Cliff with comfort, in greatcoat. All the tawny and russet earth — for no green is seen on the *ground* at this hour sending only this faint multitudinous sound (of frogs) to heaven. The vast, wild earth. The first whip-or-will startles me. Hear three.

Summer is coming apace. Within three or four days the birds have come so fast I can hardly keep the run of them, — much faster than the flowers. I did not watch for the *very earliest*, however.

My little peepers — when they slept, the pulsation in their throats stopped. There was a wrinkled bag there. They begin to peep in earnest. at or before sundown, and they keep it up now at 10 P.M. But I rarely hear any numbers in the morning, when they probably sleep. Heard the dreaming frogs close at hand, in the pool in the road by Hubbard's, a loud, liquid *ringing*, burbling. One plainly answers another. Almost put my hand on one while bubbling. There is more ring to it close by, but on the whole it is not as poetic.

The salutations and commonplaces of all nations, which sound to us formal often, are always adapted to their circumstances, and grow out of their necessities. The Tartar inquires, "Has the rain been abundant? Are your flocks in prosperity? Have your mares been fruitful?" and the answer is, "All is at peace in our pastures." Serene and Biblical, and no man's invention.

M. [Huc](#) met with a family in China remarkable for hospitality.

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1853

Once safely home in France, [Évariste Régis Huc](#) quit the Vincentian (Lazarist) order that had sent him off to [China](#).



The Chinese Christian government of [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全 ordained that a church be organized among every 25 households of believers. The church was to be attended on the Sabbath day (Saturday, obviously) and the children were to be instructed in a Sabbath School. The basic economic arrangement of the rebels was to be, in an anachronistic concept that would in a later century come into great vogue, the commune:

There being fields, let all cultivate them; there being food, let all eat; there being clothes, let all be dressed; there being money, let all use it, so that nowhere does inequality exist, and no man is not well fed and clothed.

**WHAT I'M WRITING IS TRUE BUT NEVER MIND  
YOU CAN ALWAYS LIE TO YOURSELF**

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1855

Évariste Régis Huc's THE CHINESE EMPIRE: FORMING A SEQUEL TO THE WORK ENTITLED "RECOLLECTIONS OF A JOURNEY THROUGH TARTARY AND THIBET." (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans); A



JOURNEY THROUGH THE CHINESE EMPIRE (New York: Harper & Brothers).<sup>7</sup>

**THE CHINESE EMPIRE, I**

**THE CHINESE EMPIRE, II**

Wasn't this the year that Bayard Taylor's A VISIT TO INDIA, CHINA, AND JAPAN, IN THE YEAR 1853 was issued in New-York by G.P. Putnam?

7. When this would arrive in the Concord Public Library, Thoreau would make extracts in his Canadian Notebook and in his Fact Book.



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1860

March 26, Monday: [Évariste Régis Huc](#) died in Paris.

Representative Morse was allowed to read a series of resolutions to the US House of Representatives, and they were assigned to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union:

"*Resolved*, That for the more effectual suppression of the African slave trade the treaty of 1842 ..., requiring each country to keep *eighty* guns on the coast of Africa for that purpose, should be so changed as to require a specified and sufficient number of small steamers and fast sailing brigs or schooners to be kept on said coast....

"*Resolved*, That as the African slave trade appears to be rapidly increasing, some effective mode of identifying the nationality of a vessel on the coast of Africa suspected of being in the slave trade or of wearing false colors should be immediately adopted and carried into effect by the leading maritime nations of the earth; and that the government of the United States has thus far, by refusing to aid in establishing such a system, shown a strange neglect of one of the best means of suppressing said trade.

"*Resolved*, That the African slave trade is against the moral sentiment of mankind and a crime against human nature; and that as the most highly civilized nations have made it a criminal offence or piracy under their own municipal laws, it ought at once and without hesitation to be declared a crime by the code of international law; and that ... the President be requested to open negotiations on this subject with the leading powers of Europe." ... HOUSE JOURNAL, 36th Congress, 1st session, I. 588-9.

INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE

W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: This decade is especially noteworthy for the great increase of illegal importations into the South. These became bold, frequent, and notorious. Systematic introduction on a considerable scale probably commenced in the forties, although with great secrecy. "To have boldly ventured into New Orleans, with negroes freshly imported from Africa, would not only have brought down upon the head of the importer the vengeance of our very philanthropic Uncle Sam, but also the anathemas of the whole sect of philanthropists and negrophilists everywhere. To import them for years, however, into quiet places, evading with impunity the penalty of the law, and the ranting of the thin-skinned sympathizers with Africa, was gradually to popularize the traffic by creating a demand for laborers, and thus to pave the way for the *gradual revival of the slave trade*. To this end, a few men, bold and energetic, determined, ten or twelve years ago [1848 or 1850], to commence the business



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of importing negroes, slowly at first, but surely; and for this purpose they selected a few secluded places on the coast of Florida, Georgia and Texas, for the purpose of concealing their stock until it could be sold out. Without specifying other places, let me draw your attention to a deep and abrupt pocket or indentation in the coast of Texas, about thirty miles from Brazos Santiago. Into this pocket a slaver could run at any hour of the night, because there was no hindrance at the entrance, and here she could discharge her cargo of movables upon the projecting bluff, and again proceed to sea inside of three hours. The live stock thus landed could be marched a short distance across the main island, over a porous soil which refuses to retain the recent foot-prints, until they were again placed in boats, and were concealed upon some of the innumerable little islands which thicken on the waters of the Laguna in the rear. These islands, being covered with a thick growth of bushes and grass, offer an inscrutable hiding place for the 'black diamonds.'<sup>8</sup> These methods became, however, toward 1860, too slow for the radicals, and the trade grew more defiant and open. The yacht "Wanderer," arrested on suspicion in New York and released, landed in Georgia six months later four hundred and twenty slaves, who were never recovered.<sup>9</sup> The Augusta Despatch says: "Citizens of our city are probably interested in the enterprise. It is hinted that this is the third cargo landed by the same company, during the last six months."<sup>10</sup> Two parties of Africans were brought into Mobile with impunity. One bark, strongly suspected of having landed a cargo of slaves, was seized on the Florida coast; another vessel was reported to be landing slaves near Mobile; a letter from Jacksonville, Florida, stated that a bark had left there for Africa to ship a cargo for Florida and Georgia.<sup>11</sup> Stephen A. Douglas said "that there was not the shadow of doubt that the Slave-trade had been carried on quite extensively for a long time back, and that there had been more Slaves imported into the southern States, during the last year, than had ever been imported before in any one year, even when the Slave-trade was legal. It was his confident belief, that over fifteen thousand Slaves had been brought into this country during the past year [1859.] He had seen, with his own eyes, three hundred of those recently-imported, miserable beings, in a Slave-pen in Vicksburg, Miss., and also large numbers at Memphis, Tenn."<sup>12</sup> It was currently reported that depots for these slaves existed in over twenty large cities and towns in the South, and an interested person boasted to a senator, about 1860, that "twelve vessels would discharge their living freight upon our shores within ninety days from the 1st of June last," and that between sixty and seventy cargoes had

8. New York Herald, Aug. 5, 1860; quoted in Drake, REVELATIONS OF A SLAVE SMUGGLER, Introduction, pages vii.-viii.

9. HOUSE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 35th Congress, 2d session, IX. No. 89. Cf. 26TH REPORT OF THE AMERICAN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY, pages 45-9.

10. Quoted in 26TH REPORT OF THE AMERICAN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY, page 46.

11. For all the above cases, cf. 26TH REPORT OF THE AMERICAN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY, page 49.

12. Quoted in 27TH REPORT OF THE AMERICAN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY, page 20. Cf. REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY, 1859; SENATE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 36th Congress, 1st session, III. No. 2.



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been successfully introduced in the last eighteen months.<sup>13</sup> The New York Tribune doubted the statement; but John C. Underwood, formerly of Virginia, wrote to the paper saying that he was satisfied that the correspondent was correct. "I have," he said, "had ample evidences of the fact, that reopening the African Slave-trade is a thing already accomplished, and the traffic is brisk, and rapidly increasing. In fact, the most vital question of the day is not the opening of this trade, but its suppression. The arrival of cargoes of negroes, fresh from Africa, in our southern ports, is an event of frequent occurrence."<sup>14</sup>

Negroes, newly landed, were openly advertised for sale in the public press, and bids for additional importations made. In reply to one of these, the Mobile Mercury facetiously remarks: "Some negroes who never learned to talk English, went up the railroad the other day."<sup>15</sup> Congressmen declared on the floor of the House: "The slave trade may therefore be regarded as practically re-established;"<sup>16</sup> and petitions like that from the American Missionary Society recited the fact that "this piratical and illegal trade – this inhuman invasion of the rights of men, – this outrage on civilization and Christianity – this violation of the laws of God and man – is openly countenanced and encouraged by a portion of the citizens of some of the States of this Union."<sup>17</sup>

From such evidence it seems clear that the slave-trade laws, in spite of the efforts of the government, in spite even of much opposition to these extra-legal methods in the South itself, were grossly violated, if not nearly nullified, in the latter part of the decade 1850-1860.



March 26. A pleasant day.

I think I heard the last lesser redpolls near the beginning of this month; say about 7th.

The top of a white maple swamp had a reddish tinge at a distance day before yesterday. Was it owing to any expansion of the buds?

2 P. M.— Thermometer 4 [sic]. To Second Division Brook.

Though there is very considerable greenness on the warmest southerly banks, there is no change perceptible in the aspect of the earth's surface generally, or at a little distance. It is as bare and dead a brown as ever. When the sun comes out of a cold slate-colored cloud, these windy days, the bleached and withered pastures reflect its light so brightly that they are almost white. They are a pale tawny, or say fawn-color, without any redness.

The brown season extends from about the 6th of March ordinarily into April. The first part of it, when the frost

13. 27TH REPORT OF THE AMERICAN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY, page 21.

14. Quoted in 27TH REPORT OF THE AMERICAN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY, page 21

15. Issue of July 22, 1860; quoted in Drake, REVELATIONS OF A SLAVE SMUGGLER, Introd., page vi. The advertisement referred to was addressed to the "Ship-owners and Masters of our Mercantile Marine," and appeared in the Enterprise (Miss.) Weekly News, April 14, 1859. William S. Price and seventeen others state that they will "pay three hundred dollars per head for one thousand native Africans, between the ages of fourteen and twenty years, (of sexes equal,) likely, sound, and healthy, to be delivered within twelve months from this date, at some point accessible by land, between Pensacola, Fla., and Galveston, Texas; the contractors giving thirty days' notice as to time and place of delivery": Quoted in 26TH REPORT OF THE AMERICAN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY, pages 41-2.

16. CONGRESSIONAL GLOBE, 35th Congress, 1st session, page 1362. Cf. the speech of a delegate from Georgia to the Democratic Convention at Charleston, 1860: "If any of you northern democrats will go home with me to my plantation, I will show you some darkies that I bought in Virginia, some in Delaware, some in Florida, and I will also show you the pure African, the noblest Roman of them all. I represent the African slave trade interest of my section:" Lator, CYCLOPÆDIA, III. 733.

17. SENATE MISCELLANEOUS DOCUMENT, 36th Congress, 1st session, No. 8.

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is rapidly coming out and transient snows are melting, the surface of the earth is saturated with moisture. The latter part is dry, the whitish-tawny pastures being paraded with brown and green mosses (that commonest one) and pale-brown lecheas, which mottle it very pleasingly. This dry whitish-tawny or drab color of the fields—withered grass lit by the sun—is the color of a teamster's coat. It is one of the most interesting effects of light now, when the sun, coming out of clouds, shines brightly on it. It is the fore-glow of the year. There is certainly a singular propriety in that color for the coat of a farmer or teamster or shepherd or hunter, who is required to be much abroad in our landscape at this season. It is in harmony with nature, and you are less conspicuous in the fields and can get nearer to wild animals for it. For this reason I am the better satisfied with the color of my hat, a drab, than with that of my companion, which is black, though his coat is of the exact tint and better than mine; but again my dusty boots harmonize better with the landscape than his black and glossy india-rubbers. I had a suit once in which, methinks, I could glide across the fields unperceived half a mile in front of a farmer's windows. It was such a skillful mixture of browns, dark and light properly proportioned, with even some threads of green in it by chance. It was of loose texture and about the color of a pasture with patches of withered sweet-fern and lechea. I trusted a good deal to my invisibility in it when going across lots, and many a time I was aware that to it I owed the near approach of wild animals.

No doubt my dusty and tawny cowhides surprise the street walkers who wear patent-leather or Congress shoes, but they do not consider how absurd such shoes would be in my vocation, to thread the woods and swamps in. Why should I wear Congress who walk alone, and not where there is any congress of my kind?

C. was saying, properly enough, the other day, as we were making our way through a dense patch of shrub oak: "I suppose that those villagers think that we wear these old and worn hats with holes all along the corners for oddity, but Coombs, the musquash hunter and partridge and rabbit snarer, knows better. He understands us. He knows that a new and square-cornered hat would be spoiled in one excursion through the shrub oaks."

The walker and naturalist does not wear a hat, or a shoe, or a coat, to be looked at, but for other uses. When a citizen comes to take a walk with me I commonly find that he is lame, — disabled by his shoeing. He is sure to wet his feet, tear his coat, and jam his hat, and the superior qualities of my boots, coat, and hat appear. I once went into the woods with a party for a fortnight. I wore my old and common clothes, which were of Vermont gray. They wore, no doubt, the best they had for such an occasion, — of a fashionable color and quality. I thought that they were a little ashamed of me while we were in the towns. They all tore their clothes badly but myself, and I, who, it chanced, was the only one provided with needles and thread, enabled them to mend them. When we came out of the woods I was the best dressed of any of them.

One of the most interesting sights this afternoon is the color of the yellow sand in the sun at the bottom of Nut Meadow and Second Division Brooks. The yellow sands of a lonely brook seen through the rippling water, with the shadows of the ripples like films passing over it.

By degrees you pass from heaven to earth up the trunk of the white pine. See the flash of its boughs reflecting the sun, each light or sunny above and shaded beneath, even like the clouds with their dark bases, a sort of mackerel sky of pine boughs.

The woodchoppers are still in the woods in some places, splitting and piling at least.

I hear that mayflowers brought from Fitchburg last Thursday (22d) have blossomed here. They are evidently much earlier than any of ours. Ours at Second Division (first lot) are under the icy snow.

The rare juncus there is five and six inches high and red (from the cold?) on the bare meadow, — much the most growth of anything of the kind hereabouts. Very little water; only at the cowslip. The equisetum has risen above water at first Nut Meadow crossing. The earliest willows are now in the gray, too advanced to be silvery, — mouse or maltese-cat color.

The Second Division Spring is all covered with a brown floating gelatinous substance of the consistency of frog-spawn, but with nothing like spawn visible in it. It is of irregular longish, or rather ropy, form, and is of the consistency of frog-spawn without the ova. I think it must be done with. It quite covers the surface.

I also find near by a green zigzag, wormy, spawn-like substance in strings under the water, in which I feel a sort of granule, spawn-like. Can this be the excrement of any creature? Can it turn and swell to that brown and floating jelly? Are these the productions of lizards or the *Rana fontinalis*?

Tried by various tests, this season fluctuates more or less. For example, we may have absolutely no sleighing during the year. There was none in the winter months of '58 (only from March 4 to 14). '52-'53 was an open winter. Or it may continue uninterrupted from the beginning of winter to the 3d of April, as in '56, and the dependent phenomena be equally late. The river may be either only transiently closed, as in '52-'53 and '57-'58, or it may not be open entirely (up to pond) till April 4th.

As for cold, some years we may have as cold days in March as in any winter month. March 4, 1858, it was — 14, and on the 29th, 1854, the pump froze so as to require thawing.

The river may be quite high in March or at summer level.

[CAT](#)



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Fair Haven Pond may be open by the 20th of March, as this year, or not till April 13 as in '56, or twenty-three days later.

Tried by the skunk-cabbage, this may flower March 2 ('60) or April 6 or 8 (as in '55 and '54), or some five weeks later, — say thirty-six days.

The bluebird may be seen February 24, as in '50, '57, and '60, or not till March 24, as in '56, — say twenty-eight days.

The yellow-spotted tortoise may be seen February 23, as in '57, or not till March 28, as in '55, — thirty-three days.

The wood frog may be heard March 15, as this year, or not till April 13, as in '56, — twenty-nine days.

That is, tried by the last four phenomena, there may be about a month's fluctuation, so that March may be said to have receded half-way into February or advanced half-way into April, i. e., it borrows half of February or half of April.

**“MAGISTERIAL HISTORY” IS FANTASIZING: HISTORY IS CHRONOLOGY**



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

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



Prepared: January 7, 2015



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ARRGH AUTOMATED RESearch REPORT

GENERATION HOTLINE



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



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

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