

COMMODORE MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY



MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY



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1794

 April 10, Thursday, [1794](#): [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) was born in [South Kingstown, Rhode Island](#).¹

1. Edward Perry of [Sandwich, Massachusetts](#), a great-great-great-grandfather of Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#), named as son in the will of Edmund Freeman, was probably the son by a previous husband named Perry of his mother, who was Edmund Freeman's 2nd wife. He was probably descended from Abraham PREBLE who was of [Scituate, Massachusetts](#) in 1637 and married Judith Tilden, daughter of Nathaniel Tilden. His wife Mary Freeman (who may have been daughter of that Edmund Freeman or of Edward Freeman) gave birth to Samuel Perry in about 1664, and probably there were other children as well. Samuel Perry was of [Newport, Rhode Island](#), and got married on December 12, 1678 with Mary Miller. Their daughter Mehitable was born on April 30, 1680, their son (?) Jaciel was born on May 6, 1682. He remarried on May 9, 1690 with Mary Tucker, daughter of Henry Tucker of [Sandwich](#) (the family generally considered her to have been from [Dartmouth, Massachusetts](#)) and they had James Perry, Edward Perry, Samuel Perry (born 1695), Simon Perry, and Benjamin Perry. He died at Kingston in 1716.



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1797

 December 25, Monday, 1797: William Speiden was born in Washington DC to Robert Speiden and Ann Williams Speiden. One of the [San Juan Islands](#) between the state of Washington and Canada would be named "Speiden Island" by [Lieutenant Charles Wilkes](#) on the US exploring expedition of 1838-1842, the expedition commonly known as the "Wilkes Expedition" for the purpose of exploring and surveying the Southern Ocean,... as well to determine the existence of all doubtful islands and shoals, as to discover, and accurately fix, the position of those which lie in or near the track of our vessels in that quarter, and may have escaped the observation of scientific navigators," so named because allegedly he had proved himself "one of the most valuable officers of the expedition." (Speiden Island would for awhile be stocked with the sort of big-game animals that American hunters are eager to pay good money in order to gun down, but it now lies abandoned.)



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1828



October 7, Tuesday, 1828: William Speiden got married with Marian Coote, daughter of Clement Tubbs and Mary Cole Coote of Cambridgeshire, England. Their children would be Marian Eliza Speiden, William Clement Speiden, Clement Coote Speiden, William Speiden, Jr., Edgar Speiden, Mariana Speiden, Theodore Speiden, and Ada Rosana Speiden.



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1809



1809: At the age of 15, [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) became a Midshipman under his older brother, Lieutenant [Oliver Hazard Perry](#).



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1813

 1813: At about the age of 19, [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) was promoted from Midshipman to Lieutenant.

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1819

October 2, Saturday, 1819: [Percy Bysshe Shelley](#) and [Mary Godwin Wollstonecraft Shelley](#) moved to [Firenze](#).

[Alfred Hawkins](#) got married with a Martha Peterson or Patterson at the Anglican Cathedral of [Québec](#). The gazette for October 13th would report: "Married, at [Québec](#) on Saturday evening 2nd instant, by the Rev. G.J. Mountain, Mr. [Alfred Hawkins](#), wine merchant, to Miss Patterson, daughter of Mr. James Patterson, of the same place."

The nation was learning that Commodore Oliver Hazard "We Have Met The Enemy And They Are Ours" Perry, hero of the [War of 1812](#), had in Venezuela succumbed to the [yellow fever](#):



land whale.

BOSTON,
SATURDAY MORNING, OCT. 2, 1819.

Postscript to the last National Intelligencer.

Death of Commodore Perry.
NORFOLK, SEPT. 25.

HIGHLY IMPORTANT!
The Hero of Lake Erie, the gallant OLIVER H. PERRY, is no more!

THE United States' Corvette *John Adams* arrived in Hampton Roads yesterday afternoon, about two o'clock, from Port Spain, (Trinidad) from which place she sailed the last of August. From Lieut. Commandant CLAYTON, who at present commands that ship, we have received the following communication respecting the death of this distinguished officer.

[COMMUNICATED]

Died, on the 23d August, on board the U. S. schooner *Nonsuch*, at the moment of her arrival at Port Spain, in the island of Trinidad, Commodore OLIVER H. PERRY. He was taken with the yellow fever on his passage from the town of *Augustura*, and although he was attended by two able physicians, he was reduced to the greatest extremity on the fourth day of his illness. Sensible of his approaching dissolution, he called his officers together, and communicated his last wishes.

He retained his faculties to the last; was perfectly collected and resigned, and submitted to his fate with great resolution and fortitude.

His remains were interred at Port Spain, on the 24th August, with naval and military

OLIVER HAZARD PERRY

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



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7th day 2nd of 10 M 1819 / This Afternoon Attended the funeral of My Cousin Ruth Marsh, she departed this life last evening about a quarter past 8 O'clock. I returned to the House & took tea with the family she being the last of her generation, & to take my leave of a house where I took much pleasure & derived much benefit in my youth from the proffitable conversation of her Sister Mary & Brother Jonathon. The estate will be divided into so many divisions that it is Probable it will now soon go out of the name & the house so old that it must be Pulled down. - from the best information I can obtain the Marsh House on the east side of Thames Street was built by Walter Clarke & given to one of his daughters who married a Gould & their daughter Mary Married Jonathon Marsh the father of Ruth aforementioned & has been regularly inhabited by Friends to the present day & she is the last of our society that will probably have any claim to it. -- The fashon & all things in this World change. - while sitting in the Room at the funeral my mind was lead into a very serious train of reflection, on the many changes I had seen in that House & now it seemed as if the final change had come to it. - May I proffit by the feelings which I experienced while commemorating the past hours spent with the past inhabitants of that house, & I am Sure I felt much more that I have here conveyed.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS



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1821

 May 11, Friday, 1821: According to an article in the Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser of Dublin, Ireland for May 17th, an announcement of military promotions had been issued by the "WAR-OFFICE" on May 11th, according to which Captain John Thoreau, who had been on half-salary paid by the 40th Regiment of Foot, had arranged with Archibald Taylor to take up that officer's full-pay position as Captain in the 37th Regiment of Foot.² (That may well mean that John had passed along some coin of the realm.)

Lieutenant David Heard received his captain's commission.

The 1st ship under the command of Matthew Calbraith Perry was the schooner *Shark*, that would be sailing African waters as part of the US Navy's (alleged) efforts to interdict the international slave trade.

2. 37th (North Hampshire) Regiment of Foot. On the 1st of August of each year, known as "Minden Day," he would be wearing a rose in his headdress to commemorate this regiment's participation in the Battle of Minden.

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1823

 December 25, Thursday, [1823](#): Narciso de Heredia y Begines, Conde de Ofalia replaced Carlos Martinez de Irujo y Tacon, marques de Casa-Irujo, duque de Sotomayor as 1st Secretary of State of Spain.

Two works for chorus and organ by Samuel Wesley were performed for the initial time, in St. Paul's Cathedral, London: "Magnificat" and "Nunc dimittis."

In [Newport, Rhode Island](#), Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

5th day 25 of 12 M / Rode to [Portsmouth](#) in the Stage to attend Moy [Monthly] Meeting - The first was a favoured Meeting & Hannah Dennis was engaged in a lively testimony. - In the last there was not much life, but the buisness was pretty well conducted. - Wnet to Uncle Stantons, dined lodged & next Morning Walked home. -

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

This Christmas marked William Speiden's 18th birthday (this was the age of adulthood, at which he would begin his life's work as a purser, in the US Navy Yard's purser's office in the city of Washington DC).



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1825

 [1825](#): At about this point [London](#) became larger than [Beijing](#) and thus became the largest city in the world.

The nationalist professor [Aizawa Seishisai](#) produced *SHINRON* “NEW THESES” analyzing the manner in which Western power made use of Western religion as the “thin edge of a wedge,” by which their imperialism best proceeded — and how important it was that [Japan](#) be relentlessly resistant to such hegemonic colonialism.

 October 26, Wednesday, [1825](#): Governor DeWitt Clinton officially opened the [Erie Canal](#) and departed from Buffalo, [New York](#) aboard the *Seneca Chief*, eastward past Lockport, Rochester, and Rome to the canal’s junction with the Hudson River at Albany.³ Then the canal boat was towed down the river behind one of Clinton’s new [steamboats](#) (truncating several days’ journey into one account, as in fact the fastest of the canal boats traveled at but 3mph) into the harbor, where the US fleet, guns roaring, fell in line behind this barge. A series of 32-pounder cannon captured at [Oliver Hazard Perry](#)’s victory on Lake Erie had been distantly spaced along the entire [canal](#), and as each one heard the detonation of the cannon to its north, it fired in relay. That signal required an hour and twenty minutes to pass from Buffalo to [New-York City](#) — and then the process was repeated in reverse.

The Great Lakes had been connected to the Atlantic Ocean.

3. 363 miles in length, 40 feet wide, 4 feet deep, maximum displacement 75 tons; 77 locks, 90 feet by 15 feet; total lockage 655 feet.



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1835

 September 26, Saturday, [1835](#): [The Liberator](#).

Elisha Reynolds Potter, Senior died in [South Kingstown, Rhode Island](#) (his grave is in the Potter family burial ground in Washington County).

(This datapoint helps us understand how [Cato Pearce](#)'s book A BRIEF MEMOIR OF THE LIFE AND RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE OF CATO PEARCE, A MAN OF COLOR: TAKEN VERBATIM FROM HIS LIPS AND PUBLISHED FOR HIS BENEFIT could be printed in [Pawtucket](#). By the point at which this small book describing the misconduct was put into circulation, 1842, the important citizen had been out of circulation for at least 6 years.)

In the Teatro San Carlo of [Naples](#), Lucia di Lammermoor, a dramma tragico by Gaetano Donizetti to words of Cammarano after Scott, was performed for the initial time. The composer reported that "It has pleased, and pleased very much."

William Speiden's son William Speiden, Jr. was born in Washington DC.



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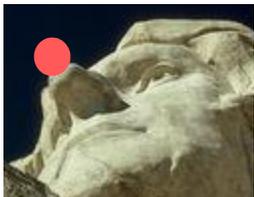
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1836

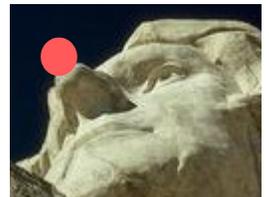


1836: In Norfolk, Virginia, William Speiden, Sr., became purser for the US Navy. During the Perry expedition to the Far East he would help out by conferring, through interpreters, with the locals in regard to the comparative value of Japanese and American currency.

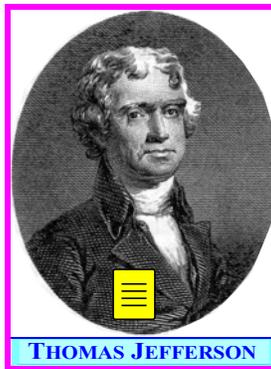
In Charlottesville, Virginia, [Sally Hemings](#), mother of most of [Thomas Jefferson](#)'s children, died in the guise of a free white woman (hey, the lady'd paid her dues, she was entitled to the union card) while the [Monticello](#) plantation house in which she had been a house slave was being processed through the real estate market.



"The United States of America had human slavery for almost one hundred years before that custom was recognized as a social disease and people began to fight it. Imagine that. Wasn't that a match for Auschwitz? What a beacon of liberty we were to the rest of the world when it was perfectly acceptable here to own other human beings and treat them as we treated cattle. Who told you we were a beacon of liberty from the very beginning? Why would they lie like that? [Thomas Jefferson](#) owned slaves, and not many people found that odd. It was as though he had an infected growth on the end of his nose the size of a walnut, and everybody thought that was perfectly OK."



- [Kurt Vonnegut](#), FATES WORSE THAN DEATH, page 84





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1837



1837: At the Brooklyn Navy Yard on [Paumanok Long Island](#), Lieutenant [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) supervised the construction of the 1st naval [steamboat](#), named the USS *Fulton*. He received his promotion to the rank of Captain.

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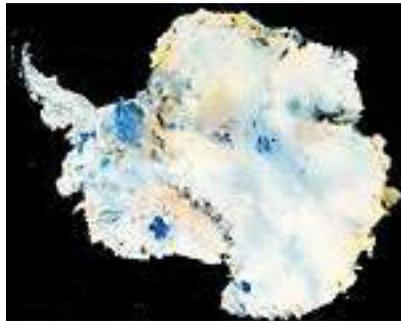
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1838

➡ August 18, Saturday, 1838: [Lieutenant Charles Wilkes](#) sailed from Hampton Roads, Norfolk, Virginia, in command of a squadron of 5 vessels and a store-ship, to explore the southern seas, the expedition commonly known as the “Wilkes Expedition” “for the purpose of exploring and surveying the Southern Ocean,... as well to determine the existence of all doubtful islands and shoals, as to discover, and accurately fix, the position of those which lie in or near the track of our vessels in that quarter, and may have escaped the observation of scientific navigators.” The main ship of this group, the *USS Vincennes*, a sloop of war of 780 tons, would be referred to as the “*Ex. Ex.*” because of the name of the exploring expedition. It would visit Madeira, the Cape Verd islands, Rio de Janeiro, Tierra del Fuego, Valparaíso, Callao, the Paumotu group, Tahiti, the Samoan group (which he would survey and explore), Wallis island, and Sydney in New South Wales.



During its circumnavigation of the globe, the United States South Seas Exploring Expedition would survey the Northwest coast of the North American continent. The expedition was our 1st funded and outfitted by the US federal government. Although Wilkes would be credited with discovering Antarctica in 1840, Nathaniel Palmer, a fur-seal hunter, had previously sailed far enough south, in 1820, to be entitled to some credit as well.



During the expedition the sloop of war *USS Vincennes*, the one referred to as the “*Ex. Ex.*” because of the name of the exploring expedition, would become the 1st American warship to circumnavigate the globe. After the



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expedition's completion the *USS Vincennes* would see deployment in the [China](#) Seas.

One of the [San Juan Islands](#) between the state of Washington and Canada would be named "Speiden Island," so named because allegedly he had proved himself "one of the most valuable officers of the expedition." (Actually Speiden Island was so named because it was a worthless throwaway but even worthless throwaways need to be given names on a map, and because this expedition had not taken with it the charts that would have informed them of what the island's Spanish discoverers had originally named it. The island would for awhile be stocked with the sort of big-game animals that American hunters are eager to pay good money in order to gun down — but it now lies abandoned.) This expedition was something which would be duly noted in WALDEN under the rubric "that South-Sea Exploring Expedition, with all its parade and expense":



WALDEN: 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

CLAUDIAN
CHARLES WILKES
DOWN UNDER



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INTELLIGENCE : **Exploring Expedition.** The United States Corvette *Vincennes*, Captain Charles Wilkes, the flag ship of the Exploring Expedition, arrived at New York on Friday, June 10th, from a cruise of nearly four years. The Brigs *Porpoise* and *Oregon* may shortly be expected. The Expedition has executed every part of the duties confided to it by the Government. A long list of ports, harbors, islands, reefs, and shoals, named in the list, have been visited and examined or surveyed. The positions assigned on the charts to several vigias, reefs, shoals, and islands, have been carefully looked for, run over, and found to have no existence in or near the places assigned them. Several of the principal groups and islands in the Pacific Ocean have been visited, examined, and surveyed; and friendly intercourse, and protective commercial regulations, established with the chiefs and natives. The discoveries in the Antarctic Ocean (Antarctic continent, – Observations for fixing the Southern Magnetic pole, &c.) **preceded** those of the French and English expeditions. The Expedition, during its absence, has also examined and surveyed a large portion of the Oregon Territory, a part of Upper California, including the Columbia and Sacramento Rivers, with their various tributaries. Several exploring parties from the Squadron have explored, examined, and fixed those portions of the Oregon Territory least known. A map of the Territory, embracing its Rivers, Sounds, Harbors, Coasts, Forts, &c., has been prepared, which will furnish the information relative to our possessions on the Northwest Coast, and the whole of Oregon. Experiments have been made with the pendulum, magnetic apparatus, and various other instruments, on all occasions, – the temperature of the ocean, at various depths ascertained in the different seas traversed, and full meteorological and other observations kept up during the cruise. Charts of all the surveys have been made, with views and sketches of headlands, towns or villages, &c., with descriptions of all that appertains to the localities, productions, language, customs, and manners. At some of the islands, this duty has been attended with much labor, exposure, and risk of life, – the treacherous character of the natives rendering it absolutely necessary that the officers and men should be armed, while on duty, and at all times prepared against their murderous attacks. On several occasions, boats have been absent from the different vessels of the Squadron on surveying duty, (the greater part of which has been performed in boats,) among islands, reefs, &c., for a period of ten, twenty, and thirty days at one time. On one of these occasions, two of the officers were killed at the Fiji group, while defending their boat's crew from an attack by the Natives.



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1839

 **1839:** [Professor Richard Harlan](#) visited Europe a 2d time. He would be abroad until 1843. The Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle de Paris would present to him, to convey to the American Philosophical Society at Philadelphia, a plaster cast of what may be one of the most famous fossils in the world, *Mosasaurus hoffmannii*, "Hoffman's mosasaur," as it had been described in 1829 by the English paleontologist Gideon Mantell. The fossil is both jaws, virtually complete, and the front portion of the skull and some vertebrae, all still arranged in matrix, found in a mine on Saint Peter's Mount near Maestricht in the Netherlands. It came from strata of Upper Cretaceous age and was a relic of a large carnivorous marine reptile had been abundant in the seas.

The keel of the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* was laid down at the Philadelphia Navy Yard and constructed under the supervision of [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) of the US Navy. Perry was a naval veteran of the War of 1812, a US Navy educator, commander of the *USS Fulton*, and founder of the Naval Engineer Corps.

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1840

➡ 1840s: [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) was appointed by the Secretary of the Navy as commandant of the US Navy Yard in [New-York](#).

By this point the port of [New-York](#) had taken the [China](#) trade away from the port of Boston, and ships out of Boston had been reduced to what business they could find on the Baltic Sea and at the ports of South America. It would be during this period that a letter would surface in a Dutch archive, dating to November 1626, that had been from Peter Jansen Schagen of the West India Company in Amsterdam to the States-General in The Hague conveying hearsay off a vessel had just arrived at the port of New Amsterdam that “our people ... have purchased the island Manhattes from the Indians for the value of 60 guilders; — tis 11,000 morgens in size.” Prior to this decade none of us had had any clue as to the validity of any of the white claims to title to [Manhattan Island](#). —It is lucky for us that possession counts as nine-tenths of our law, for the size stated in said hearsay attestation does not approximate the size of the island we today refer to as Manhattan.⁴



4. Not to mention that the “60 guilders” mentioned sounds less like a purchase price than like an undocumented claim for a Hostess Gift on one of today’s corporate expense accounts. Did these lads submit a receipt?



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1841

 December 22, Wednesday, 1841: At launch, the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* was 228 feet long and had a draft of 19 feet, with two paddle wheels 28 feet in diameter and masts that carried 19,000 square feet of canvas when fully rigged.

“Late in the evening of the 22d December,” Captain Mackenzie would write to Lieutenant Vincent Eyre, “Capt. James Skinner, who, after having been concealed in Cabul during the greater part of the siege, had latterly been the guest of Mahomed Akber, arrived in cantonments, accompanied by Mahomed Sudeeq Khan, a first cousin of Mahomed Akber, and by Sirwar Khan, the Arhanee merchant, who, in the beginning of the campaign, had furnished the army with camels, and who had been much in the confidence of Sir A. Burnes, being, in fact, one of our stanchest friends. The two latter remained in a different apartment, while Skinner dined with the Envoy. During dinner, Skinner jestingly remarked that he felt as if laden with combustibles, being charged with a message from Mahomed Akber to the Envoy of a most portentous nature. Even then I remarked that the Envoy’s eye glanced eagerly towards Skinner with an expression of hope. In fact, he was like a drowning man catching at straws. Skinner, however, referred him to his Affghan companions, and after dinner the four retired into a room by themselves. My knowledge of what there took place is gained from poor Skinner’s own relation, as given during my subsequent captivity with him in Akber’s house. Mahomed Sudeeq disclosed Mahomed Akber’s proposition to the Envoy, which was, that the following day Sir William should meet Mahomed Akber and a few of his immediate friends, viz. the chiefs of the Eastern Giljyes, outside the cantonments, when a final agreement should be made, so as to be fully understood by both parties; that Sir William should have a considerable body of troops in readiness, which, on a given signal, were to join with those of Mahomed Akber and the Giljyes, assault and take Mahmood Khan’s fort, and secure the person of Ameenoolah. At this stage of the proposition Mahomed Sudeeq signified that, for a certain sum of money, the head of Ameenoolah should be presented to the Envoy; but from this Sir William shrunk with abhorrence, declaring that it was neither his custom nor that of his country to give a price for blood. Mahomed Sudeeq then went on to say, that, after having subdued the rest of the khans, the English should be permitted to remain in the country eight months longer, so as to save their *pardah*, (veil, or credit) but that they were then to evacuate [Affghanistan](#), as if of their own accord; that Shah Shoojah was to continue king of the country, and that Mahomed Akber was to be his wuzeer. As a further reward for Mahomed Akber’s assistance, the British Government were to pay him thirty lacs of rupees, and four lacs of rupees per annum during his life! To this extraordinary and wild proposal, Sir William gave ear with an eagerness which nothing can account for but the supposition, confirmed by many other circumstances, that his strong mind had been harassed until it had in some degree lost its equipoise; and he not only assented fully to these terms, but actually gave a Persian paper to that effect, written in his own hand, declaring as his motives that it was not only an excellent opportunity to carry into effect the real wishes of Government—which were to evacuate the country with as much credit to ourselves as possible—but that it would give England time to enter into a treaty with Russia, defining the bounds beyond which neither were to pass in Central Asia. So ended this fatal conference, the nature and result of which, contrary to his usual custom, Sir William communicated to none of those who, on all former occasions, were fully in his confidence, viz. Trevor, Lawrence, and myself. It seemed as if he feared that we might insist on the impracticability of the plan, which he must have studiously concealed from himself. All the following morning his manner was distracted and hurried, in a way that none of us had ever before witnessed.”⁵

5.  Lieut. V. Eyre (Sir Vincent Eyre, 1811-1881). [THE MILITARY OPERATIONS AT CABUL: WHICH ENDED IN THE RETREAT AND DESTRUCTION OF THE BRITISH ARMY, JANUARY 1842, WITH A JOURNAL OF IMPRISONMENT IN AFGHANISTAN](#). Philadelphia PA: Carey and Hart, 1843; London: J. Murray, 1843 (three editions); Lieut. V. Eyre (Sir Vincent Eyre, 1811-1881). [PRISON SKETCHES: COMPRISING PORTRAITS OF THE CABUL PRISONERS AND OTHER SUBJECTS; ADAPTED FOR BINDING UP WITH THE JOURNALS OF LIEUT. V. EYRE, AND LADY SALE; LITHOGRAPHED BY LOWES DICKINSON](#). London: Dickinson and Son, [1843?]



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1842



1842: Captain [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) was promoted to the rank of Commodore. Until 1845 he would serve as commander of the US African Squadron, aboard the *USS Saratoga*.



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1843



1843: During this year and the following one, Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) would be in command of the African Squadron of the US Navy, which was allegedly engaged in suppressing the [international slave trade](#).



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1844

-  February 1844: US Commissioner to [China Caleb Cushing](#) (1800-1879) arrived at Macau to begin to negotiate the [Treaty of Wangxia, Treaty of Peace, Amity, and Commerce, with tariff of duties](#), that would open designated ports to American trade and grant certain protections to US ships and citizens.
-  July 3, Wednesday, 1844: Representatives of [China](#) and the United States of America signed the [Treaty of Wangxia, Treaty of Peace, Amity, and Commerce, with tariff of duties](#), in Wanghia near Macau.



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1846

 **1846:** Bernard J. Bettelheim (1811-1870), a Protestant missionary who would become an acquaintance of the [Speidens](#) during the US Naval Expedition to [Japan](#), began his mission work at Naha, Lew Chew, in the Ryukyu Kingdom (Okinawa).

 **1846:** The [Free Soil Party](#) was formed as moderate Whigs broke with conservative, status quo Whigs over the issue of [slavery](#). This disruption drew much of the political strength toward the Democrats as the USA declared war upon [Mexico](#). Secretary of the Navy [George Bancroft](#) of Massachusetts refused to support this act of aggression, and both the Whigs and the Democrats became divided on the merits of the action.

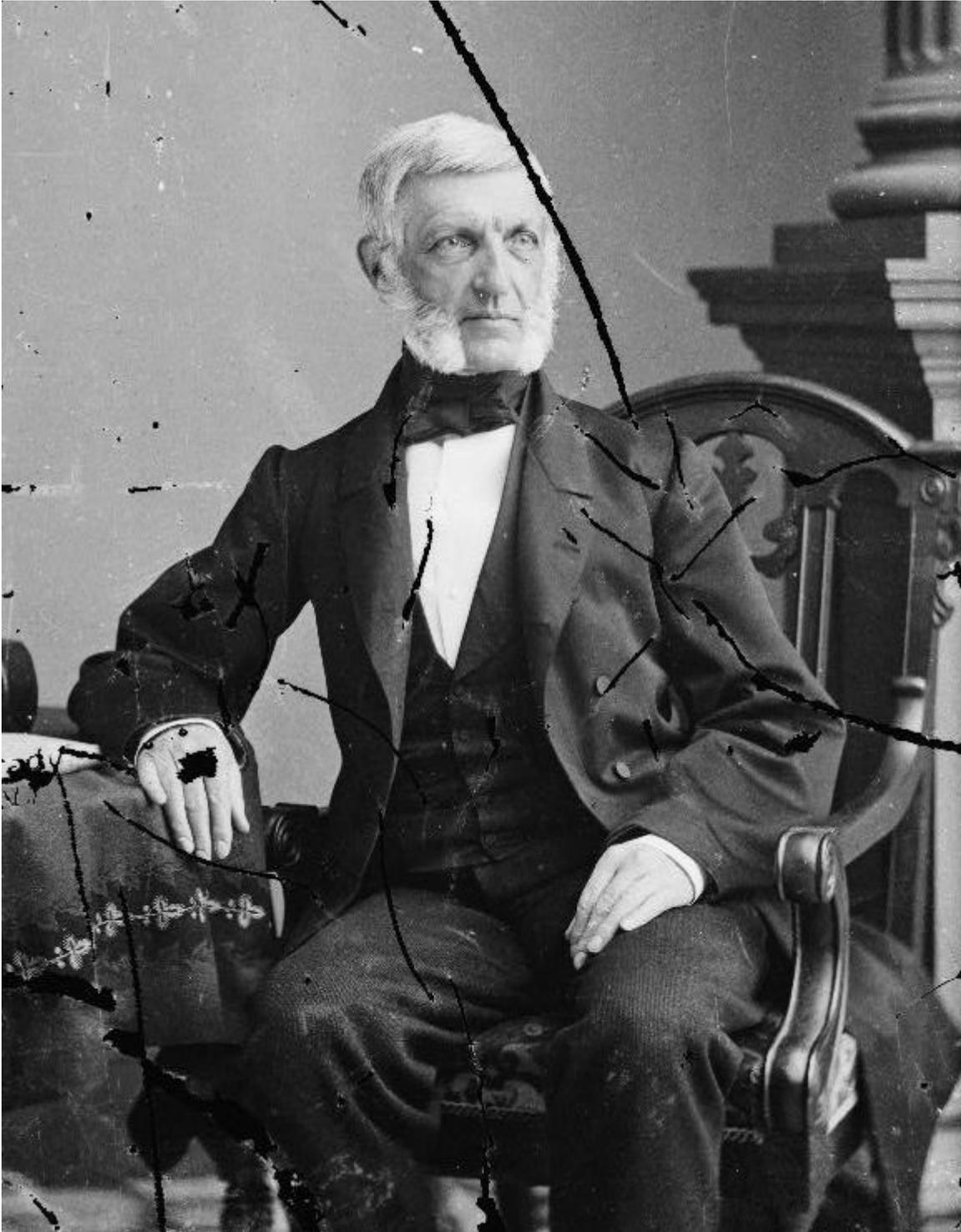
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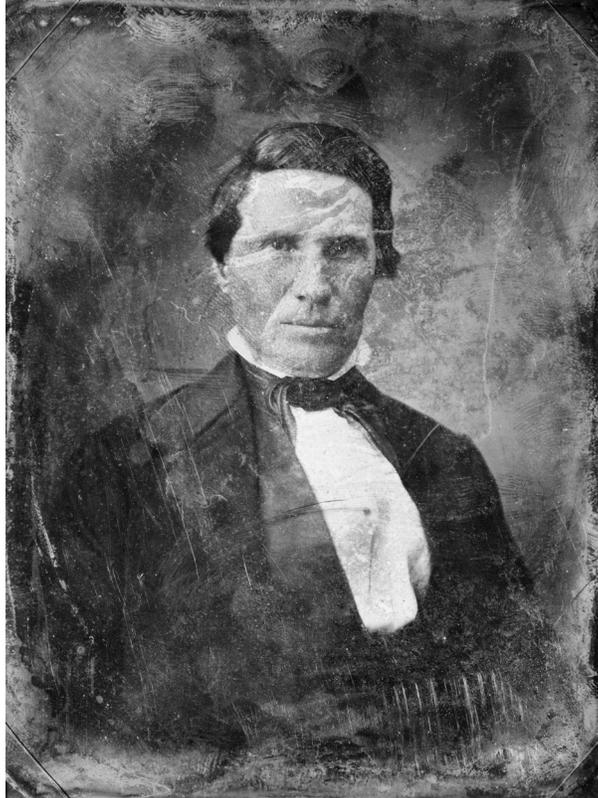


Secretary of the Navy George Bancroft of Massachusetts

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[Alexander William Doniphan](#) became colonel of the 1st Regiment of Missouri Mounted Volunteers, and would participate during the war on Mexico in several campaigns, including General Stephen W. Kearny's campaign for capture of the settlement at Santa Fe and then continuing into a northern region of Mexico (present day northern New Mexico).



During the War upon Mexico, as part of the US Home Squadron, the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* would see action under the command of [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#). Lieutenant [William Lewis Herndon](#) would be in command of the brig *Isis*.

WAR ON MEXICO

Governor [George Nixon Briggs](#) of Massachusetts refused to grant commissions to militia officers unless they pledged to not to take their units beyond the borders of the state. [Caleb Cushing](#) raised a regiment which would serve in the war as a unit of the Regular US Army. In Massachusetts, the [Liberty Party](#) received larger voter support than it had ever before received.

“HUCKLEBERRIES”: In this country a political speech, whether by Mr. Seward or Caleb Cushing, is a great thing, a ray of light a little thing. It would be felt to be a greater national calamity if you should take six inches from the corporeal bulk of one or two gentlemen in Congress, than if you should take a yard from their wisdom and manhood.

WILLIAM HENRY SEWARD
CALEB CUSHING
HIGHER LAW
SLAVERY

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MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

During this year, in his journal of his trip to [Maine](#), and later in his published account of the trip, Thoreau would mention this [Liberty Party](#):



Fall 1846: One after another we filed into the rude lumberers' camp at this place built of logs like those I have described. Here was only the cook to receive us. A phlegmatic well fed personage who set about preparing a cup of tea and hot cakes for his visitors. His fire had been entirely put out and his fire place filled several inches deep by the rain but now it was kindled again –and we sat down on the log benches around it to dry us. The chinks were not filled against the winter –and light & air came in on every side

[EMANCIPATION](#)

Here was an odd leaf of the bible –some genealogical chapter to prove their Christianity– And the next things that turned up was Emerson Address on W I Emancipation –which had made two converts to the liberty party here, an odd number of the Westminster Rev. for 1834 –& a pamphlet entitled Hist. of the Erection of the Monument on the grave of Myron Holley –& these were well thumbed and soiled

[LIBERTY PARTY](#)

[MYRON HOLLEY](#)

The men employed in such works as this are Jacks at all trade, who are handy at various things and accustomed to make shifts –skilful with the axe and ruder implements of good judgement and well skilled in wood and water-craft. I observed by their poles that they sometimes indulged in fishing. Their hands not restricted to the processes of one trade only –but free and as it were intelligent to practise many.

[WALDO EMERSON](#)

tea was served out to us in tin cups from a huge coffe pot with molasses but no milk of course and hot cakes for solid food

We did ample justice to this fare and when we had done filled our pockets with the never failing sweet cakes which remained –foreseeing that we were not soon to meet such fare again. And so informing John Morrison that we had pocketed all his sweet cakes and exchanging our batteau for a better we made haste to improve the little daylight that remained. The dam had smoothed over many a rapid for us where formerly there was a rough current to be resisted –

Beyond there was no trail –and the river and lakes was the only practicable rout. We were from 25 to 30 miles from the summit of the Mt –(though not more than 20 perhaps –in a straight line⁶

[WEST INDIES EMANCIPATION](#)

6.The Twin Lakes, like Quakish Lake, are enlargements of the Penobscot River. It is easy for a canoeist, unfamiliar with the area, to spend long hours seeking the river inlet to the lakes. Thoreau's party was fortunate to have an experienced guide, in attempting a crossing at night.

[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)

COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

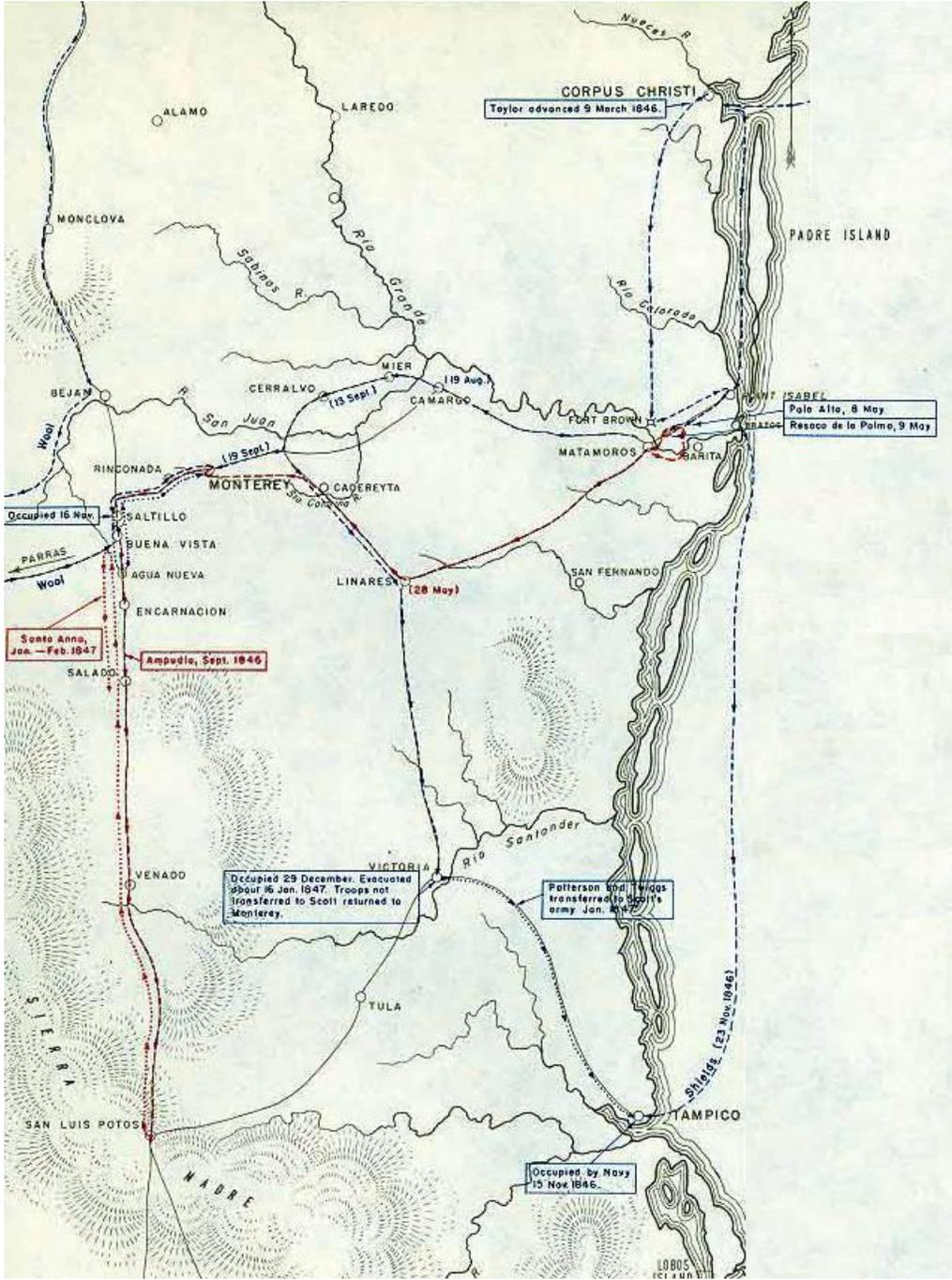


THE MAINE WOODS: We filed into the rude logger's camp at this place, such as I have described, without ceremony, and the cook, at that moment the sole occupant, at once set about preparing tea for his visitors. His fireplace, which the rain had converted into a mud-puddle, was soon blazing again, and we sat down on the log benches around it to dry us. On the well-flattened and somewhat faded beds of arbor-vitae leaves, which stretched on either hand under the eaves behind us, lay an odd leaf of the Bible, some genealogical chapter out of the Old Testament; and, half buried by the leaves, we found Emerson's Address on West India Emancipation, which had been left here formerly by one of our company, and **had made two converts to the Liberty party here**, as I was told; also, an odd number of the Westminster Review, for 1834, and a pamphlet entitled History of the Erection of the Monument on the grave of Myron Holly. This was the readable, or reading matter, in a lumberer's camp in the Maine woods, thirty miles from a road, which would be given up to the bears in a fortnight. These things were well thumbed and soiled. This gang was headed by one John Morrison, a good specimen of a Yankee; and was necessarily composed of men not bred to the business of dam-building, but who were Jacks-at-all-trades, handy with the axe, and other simple implements, and well skilled in wood and water craft. We had hot cakes for our supper even here, white as snow-balls, but without butter, and the never-failing sweet cakes, with which we filled our pockets, foreseeing that we should not soon meet with the like again. Such delicate puff-balls seemed a singular diet for back-woodsmen. There was also tea without milk, sweetened with molasses. And so, exchanging a word with John Morrison and his gang when we had returned to the shore, and also exchanging our batteau for a better still, we made haste to improve the little daylight that remained. This camp, exactly twenty-nine miles from Mattawamkeag Point, by the way we had come, and about one hundred from Bangor by the river, was the last human habitation of any kind in this direction. Beyond, there was no trail; and the river and lakes, by batteaux and canoes, was considered the only practicable route. We were about thirty miles by the river from the summit of Ktaadn, which was in sight, though not more than twenty, perhaps, in a straight line.

[EMERSON](#)[HOLLEY](#)

COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY





COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY



May 1846: There was a threat of war between Great Britain and the USA over the Oregon territory. In New-York, Lewis Tappan secured 400 signatures to a petition to the effect that it would be better for Oregon to sink to the bottom of the ocean rather than for it to become the occasion for war “to the disgrace of civilization, Christianity, and rational freedom.”

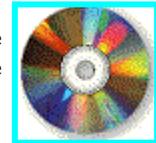
George Bancroft, serving as acting Secretary of War, ordered General Zachary Taylor to invade Mexico. On the basis of a standing order that had been issued by Secretary of the Navy Bancroft in 1845, Captain John D. Sloat, commander of the Pacific squadron, immediately seized all California ports.

During the Mexican War (sometimes also referred to as “our war against Mexico”), Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry would successfully command the largest American naval force.



“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



President Polk told the US federal Congress that he wanted to make war upon Mexico because that neighbor nation “had invaded our territory and shed American blood upon the American soil.” –Which of course was a fraud. Why, really, did we declare war on Mexico? Consider what Glenn W. Price had to offer on page 18 of his ORIGINS OF THE WAR WITH MEXICO: THE POLK-STOCKTON INTRIGUE (Austin TX: U of Texas P, 1967):

In 1829 slavery was abolished in Mexico, but the remonstrance in Texas was so vigorous that the province was excepted from the decree. The threat of the loss of their “chattel property” thenceforth hung over the heads of the Americans in Texas. Historians, intent upon disentangling themselves from the thesis of a conspiracy of the slaveocracy in the Texas affair, have muted this note as a factor in the Texas Revolution; but there is no question whatsoever but that it played a part.

The Concord Freeman reported that the battles fought by Zachary Taylor on the Rio Grande in Mexico were “among the most gallant” that have “anywhere ever” been fought. That’s not hard to believe, if you think about it, but the local paper also opined that the American Army was covered with gore — oops, that’s a typo, they said glory.



July 1846: When Commodore James Biddle brought the *USS Columbus* and the *USS Vincennes* to anchor in Edo Bay, in keeping with several centuries of Japanese foreign policy the foreign vessels were asked politely by the local authorities to depart.

In an act which had nothing whatever to do with St. Francis of Assisi’s Canticle of the Sun, Captain James Montgomery pulled down the flag of the United States of Mexico and raised that of the United States of America at El Pueblo de San Francisco, the town of the founder of the Franciscan Order overlooking La Bahia de San Francisco, the bay of St. Francis of Assisi. By fair means or foul the US had attained its all-important port on the Pacific Ocean.

WAR ON MEXICO



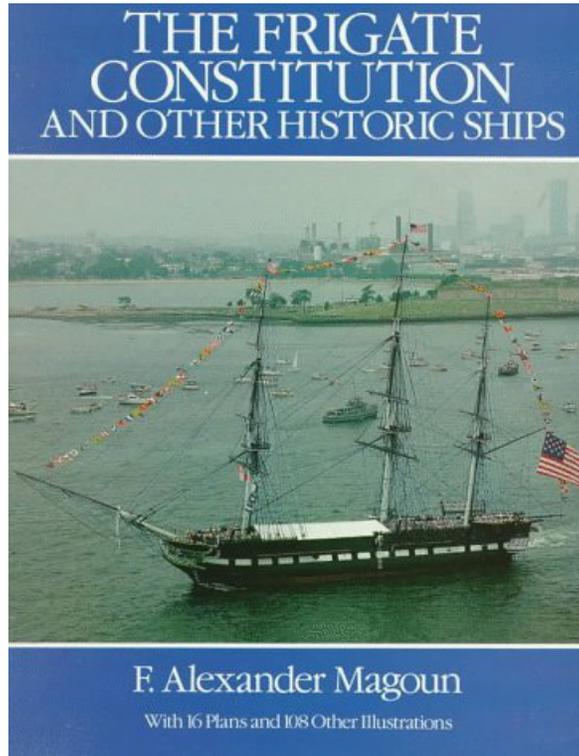
August 17, Sunday: ... Mexico was won with less exertion & less true valor than are required to do one season’s haying in New England– The former work was done by those who played truant and ran away from the latter. Those Mexican’s were mown down more easily than the summer’s crop of grass in many a farmer’s fields...

COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

1848

➡ 1848: The *USS Constitution* was serving as the flagship of US squadrons in the Mediterranean and in the vicinity of Africa, until 1851. Pope Pius IX dropped by to say hello.



The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* would also be used for a time in the US Mediterranean Squadron.



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

1850



1850: Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) proposed a plan for diplomatic missions to [Japan](#).



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

1852



March 9, Tuesday, 1852: 16-year-old [William Speiden, Jr.](#) was appointed purser's clerk of the *USS Mississippi*. The younger Speiden was living at the time in the home of his father [William Speiden, Sr.](#) in the city of Washington DC. He would travel to the Philadelphia Navy Yard to join his father the purser, to help keep the ship's financial accounts and supervise provisions. He would discover the *USS Mississippi*, that had not long since returned from a cruise in the Mediterranean, to be "very dirty."

[Ellery Channing](#) had lectured in Providence, Rhode Island, Worcester, Massachusetts, Fall River, and possibly in Greenfield. He delivered a total of 3 sermons including one in Plymouth, Massachusetts on this day that put the congregation to sleep — which was of course the end of a very short career as a public speaker.



March 9, Tuesday: A warm spring rain in the night.

3 Pm down the RR.: Cloudy but spring-like. When the frost comes out of the ground there is a corresponding thawing of the man. The earth is now half bare. These march winds which make the woods roar-& fill the world with life & bustle-appear to wake up the trees out of their winter sleep & excite the sap to flow. I have no doubt they serve some such use as well as to hasten the evaporation of the snow & water.

The RR men have now their hands full- I hear & see blue-birds [[Eastern Bluebird](#) [Sialia sialis](#)] come with the warm wind. The sand is flowing in the deep cut- I am affected by the sight of the moist red sand or subsoil under the edge of the sandy bank-under the pitch pines. The r-road is perhaps our pleasantest & wildest roads. It only makes deep cuts into & through the hills-on it are no houses nor foot travellers. The travel on it does not disturb me. The woods are left to hang over it- Though straight is wild in its accompaniments-all is raw edges. Even the laborers on it are not like other laborers- Its houses if any are shanties-& its ruins the ruins of shanties shells where the race that built the RR dwelt-& the bones they gnawed lie about. I am cheered by the sound of running water now down the wooden troughs on each side the cut. Then it is the driest walking in wet weather & the easiest in snowy. This road breaks the surface of the earth. Even the sight-of smoke from the shanty excites me today. Already these puddles on the RR reflecting the pine woods remind me of summer lakes

When I hear the [telegraph](#) harp I think I must read the Greek poets. This sound is like a brighter color red or blue or green where all was dull white or black. It prophesies finer senses-a finer life-a golden age. It is the poetry of the RR. The heroic & poetic thoughts which the Irish laborers had at their toil now got expression. That which has made the world mad so long. Or is it the gods expressing their delight at this invention?

The flowing sand bursts out through the snow & over flows it where no sand was to be seen- I see where the banks have deposited great heaps many cart loads of clayey sand — as if they had relieved themselves of their winters indigestions — & it is not easy to see where they came from.

Again it rains & I turn about.

The sound of water falling on rocks and of air falling on trees are very much alike.

Though cloudy the air excites me. Yesterday all was tight as a stricture on my breast-today all is loosened. It is a different element from what it was. The sides of bushy hills where the snow is melted look through this air as if I were under the influence of some intoxicating liquor- The earth is not quite steady nor palpable to my sense-a little idealized. I see that the new chestnut sleepers that have been put down this winter are turned a very dark blue or blue black & smell like dyestuff. The pond is covered with puddles.

I see one farmer trimming his trees.

AEOLIAN HARP



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY



March 21, Sunday, 1852: Montenegro was made a secular, hereditary principality under Danilo I.

The *USS Mississippi*, having been “set a little to rights” in the Philadelphia Navy Yard after its tour in the Mediterranean, arrived in New-York harbor for further repairs.

Großfürsten-Marsch op.107 by [Johann Baptist Strauss II](#) was performed for the initial time, in the Esterhazy Palace.

[Henry Thoreau](#) checked out, from the Harvard Library, the 4 volumes of Sir John Richardson’s FAUNA BOREALI-AMERICANA; OR THE ZOOLOGY OF THE NORTHERN PARTS OF BRITISH AMERICA.... that had been published in London by the firm of J. Murray between 1829 and 1837. Here is some of the material that he copied into his fact book #1:

Dogs baying the Moon

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

DOG



READ RICHARDSON I

READ RICHARDSON II

READ RICHARDSON III



READ RICHARDSON IV



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

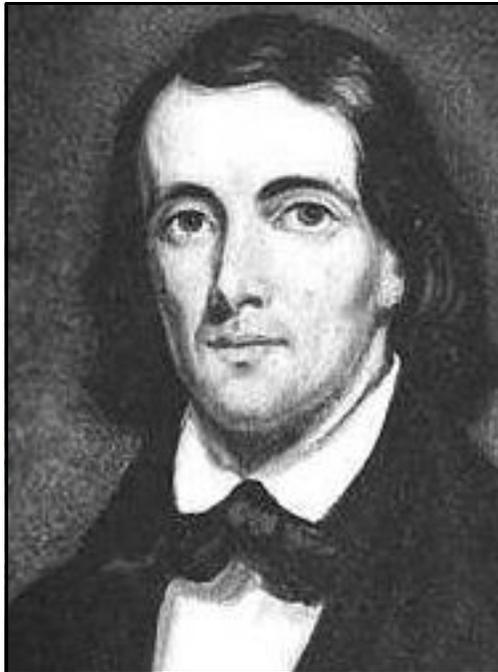
COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

 May 11, Tuesday, 1852: At the annual meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society the Garrisonians and Frederick Douglass began to engage in an intense public confrontation over whether the federal Constitution was irredeemably proslavery and whether to seek to dissolve the American Union. By the point at which this meeting wound to its conclusion on Thursday the 13th, the split between the two groups would have become irreconcilable.

Preliminary to its voyage to Japan, the frigate *USS Mississippi* was put into commission under the command of Captain William J. McCluney (circa 1796-1864). McCluney would prove a popular leader among the men, and in 1858 would lead the US Atlantic Squadron, as commodore. With a full crew the frigate headed “to Boston for the purpose of towing the Steamer *Princeton* from that place to Baltimore” (the newly fitted screw-steamer *Princeton* was already in need of mechanical repairs).

While Ellery Channing was returning from Provincetown to Boston on a sailing vessel, he conversed with a Portuguese sailor who claimed to be knowledgeable as to the customs of the Western Islands.



In Illinois, Welborn Beeson confided to his diary that “About three I saw a black covered wagon coming to our house and I did not know who it was. They staid a little while and then went away. After they was gone Father came to me in the field and told me that it was two young men from below Grand Ville. They had brought a runaway Negro on his road to Canada. His name is William Casey. Father wants me to take him to Ottawa tomorrow.”

UNDERGROUND RAILROAD



May 11. Sunrise, — merely a segment of a circle of rich amber in the east, growing brighter and brighter at one point. There is no rosy color at this moment and not a speck in the sky, and now comes the sun without pomp, a bright liquid gold. Dews come with the grass. There is, I find on examining, a small, clear drop at the end of each blade, quite at the top on one side.

The *Salix alba* has a spicier fragrance than the earliest willows. We have so much causeway planted with willows, — set with them on each side to prevent its washing away,— that they make a great show, and are obvious now before other trees are so advanced. The birches at a distance appear as in a thin green veil, in their expanding leaves.

P.M. — Kossuth here.



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

The hand-organ, when I am far enough off not to hear the friction of the machinery, not to see or be reminded of the performer, serves the grandest use for me, deepens my existence. Heard best through walls and obstructions. These performers, too, have come with the pleasant weather and the birds. I think I saw a female yellowbird [**Yellow Warbler**  *Dendroica petechia* (~~Yellow-bird or Summer Yellow-bird~~)] yesterday; its note different from the male's, somewhat like the night warbler's. They come a little later than the males. The larches are leafing out.

 May 15, Saturday, 1852: On this day and on the 18th, [Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed, for Silas Hosmer,ouselots on Bedford Street next to Mary Rice and bounded on the east by land of C.B. Davis. In his journal, Thoreau noted that in 1668 the Town had a herd of 50 cattle pastured there.

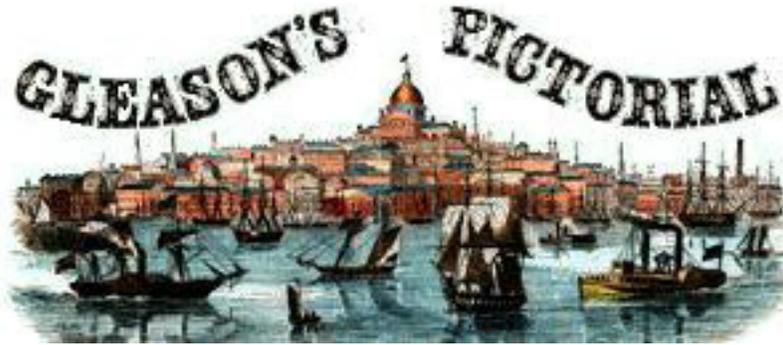


[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR MAY 15TH]

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COMMODORE PERRY

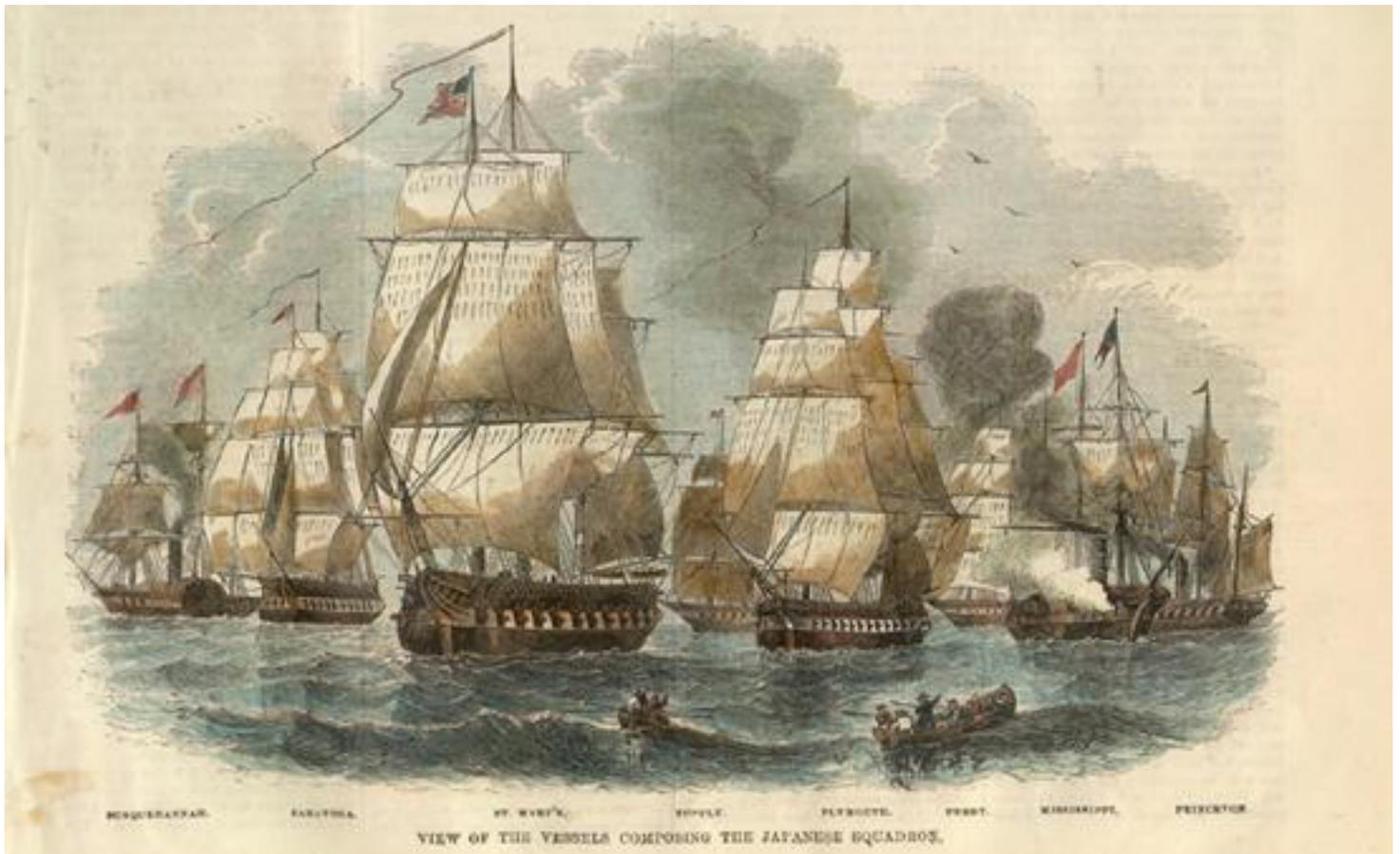
MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY



The front page of [Gleason's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion](#), Volume II, No. 20, page 305, issued in Boston, carried an illustration of the squadron of the Perry expedition titled "View of the Vessels Composing the [Japanese](#) Squadron," depicting the ships as if somehow assembled close to one another under full sail, very similar to one that would be made in the following year in New-York by J.W. Orr from a drawing by Wade.

[CONSULT THE WIKIPEDIA](#)

Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) is somewhat implausibly standing in a long boat headed toward his flagship. The engraving lists the USS *Mississippi* (Perry's flagship), the USS *Saratoga*, the USS *St. Marys*, the USS *Susquehanna*, the USS *Plymouth*, the USS *Princeton*, and the USS *Supply*. The handcoloring was presumably done subsequent to publication and sale. A similar illustration would appear in the February 12, 1853 issue of the magazine.





COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

Since on this day [Thoreau](#) made no entry in his journal, it is a candidate for the day of this month on which he spent the afternoon and evening in the [Emerson](#) home during the visit of Andover Academy student [John Albee](#) (of course, that would require that the Concord surveying he had been doing during the morning had been but a half-day task).



May 17, Monday, [1852](#): At anchor in Boston harbor, the crew of the frigate *USS Mississippi* cheered the *Cumberland*, flagship of the Mediterranean Squadron, as she passed under full sail on her outbound passage. The band played not only "Hail Columbia" but also the "Star-Spangled Banner." William Speiden, Jr. noted that the "beauty of a scene of this kind cannot half be imagined."



May 17. My seringo-bird [[Savannah Sparrow](#) [Passerculus sandwichensis](#) (*passerina* or *seringo* or *seringo-bird*)] is reddish-brown with a spot on the breast and other marks, two whitish lines on back, and some white in tail; runs in the grass, so that you see nothing of it where the grass is very low; and sings standing on a tuft of grass and holding its head up the while.

P.M. — To Loring's pond.

Decidedly fair weather at last; a bright, breezy, flowing, *washing* day. I see that dull-red grass whose blades, having risen above the surface of the water, lie flat on it in close and conspicuous flakes, making a right angle with the part in the water. Perhaps a slightly rosaceous tint to it.

The different color of the water at different times would be worth observing. To-day it is full of light and life, the breeze presenting many surfaces to the, sun. There is a sparkling shimmer on it. It is a deep, dark blue, as the sky is clear. The air everywhere is, as it were, full of the rippling of waves. Thus pond is the more interesting for the islands in it. The water is seen miming behind them, and it is pleasant to know that it penetrates quite behind and isolates the land you see, or to see it apparently flowing out from behind an island with shining ripples.

To-day the cinquefoils (the earliest one) on the hillsides shine in the sun. Their brightness becomes the day. That is a beautiful footpath through the pitch pines on the hillside north of this pond, over a carpet of tawny pine leaves, so slippery under your feet. Why do not men sprinkle these over their floors instead of sand? The sun on the young foliage of birches, alders, etc., on the opposite side of the pond has an enchanting effect. The sunshine has a double effect. The new leaves abet it, so fresh and tender, not apprehending their insect foes. Now the sun has come out after the May storm, how bright, how full of freshness and tender promise and fragrance is the new world! The woods putting forth new leaves; it is a memorable season. So hopeful! These young leaves have the beauty of flowers. The shrub oaks are just beginning to blossom. The forward leaves and shoots of the meadow-sweet, beneath the persistent dead flowers, make a very rich and conspicuous green now along the fences and walls. The conspicuous white flowers of the two kinds of shad-blossom spot the hillsides at a distance. This is the only bush or tree whose flowers are sufficiently common and large at this time (to-day), except the *Salix alba* and the peach (the choke-cherry is rare), to make a show now, as the apples will soon. I see dark pines in the distance in the sunshine, contrasting with the light fresh green of the deciduous trees. There is life in these fresh and varied colors, life in the motion of the wind and the waves; all make it a flowing, washing day. It is a good day to saunter. The female crimson flowers of the sweet-gale are still conspicuous. Is that the shepherd's-purse and the speedwell⁷ that I found in blossom? Those commonest cockle(?) - shells are holding on to the rocks under water by their feet in Fort Pond Brook. Wood tortoises are numerous in the fields to-day. Saw a young one two and a half inches diameter. Do I smell the young birch leaves at a distance? Most trees are beautiful when leafing out, but especially the birch. After a storm at this season, the sun comes out and lights up the tender expanding leaves, and all nature is full of light and fragrance, and the birds sing without ceasing, and the earth is a fairland. The birch leaves are so small that you see the landscape through the tree, and they are like silvery and green spangles in the sun, fluttering about the tree. I bridged the brook with help of an alder loop and a rider. Are they not grandidentatas on Annursnack which show so white at this distance like shad-blossoms? Does not summer begin after the May storm? What is that huckleberry with sticky leaf-buds and just expanding leaves covered with a yellow waxy matter? The first *veery* note.

Methinks they were turtle doves [[Mourning Dove](#) [Zenaida macroura](#) (~~Turtle Dove~~)] which

7. It is either the smooth or the procumbent, probably the first.



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

I saw this afternoon baited to a pigeon-place [**American Passenger Pigeons**  *Ectopistes migratorius*]. They fly like a pigeon, — a slender, darting bird. I do not surely know them apart. To-night I hear a new dreamer, a frog, — that sprayey note which perhaps I have referred to the midsummer frog. That praying or snoring sound also I hear.



May 18, Tuesday, 1852: The state of Massachusetts demanded that all school-age children actually attend school.

The frigate *USS Mississippi* being at the Boston Navy Yard, William Speiden, Jr. went ashore to visit a friend in Jamaica Plains. He admired “a grand structure of Architecture” which was looming on the horizon, the Bunker Hill monument, but regretted not having enough time to view also the pastoral Mount Auburn Cemetery.

Henry Thoreau again noticed the Northern Oriole *Icterus Galbula*, which he termed the “golden robin”:



May 18: These days the golden robin [**Northern Oriole**  *Icterus galbula* (~~Fiery-Hangbird~~)]

COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

or Hangbird or Gold Robin or Golden Robin)) is the important bird in the streets, on the elms.



May 18: This afternoon the brown thrashers [**Brown Thrasher** █ *Toxostoma rufum* **Red mavis**] are very numerous and musical. They plunge downward when they leave their perch, in a peculiar way. It is a bird that appears to make a business of singing for its own amusement. There is great variety in its strains. It is not easy to detect any repetition.



May 18: The rhodora in blossom, a delicate-colored flower

P.M. — To Cliffs.



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

Frog or toad spawn in a pool in long worm-like or bowel-like strings, sometimes coiled up spirally. It is fine clear atmosphere, only the mountains blue. A slight seething but no haze. Shall we have much of *this* weather after this? There is scarcely a flock of cloud in the sky. The heaven is now broad and open to the earth in these longest days. The world can never be more beautiful than now, for, combined with the tender fresh green, you have this remarkable clearness of the air. I doubt if the landscape will be any greener.

The landscape is most beautiful looking towards the sun (in the orchard on Fair Haven) at four. First, there is this green slope on which I sit, looking down between the rows of apple trees just being clothed with tender green, — sometimes underneath them to the sparkling water, or over through them, or seeing them against the sky. Secondly, the outline of this bank or hill is drawn against the water far below; the river still high, a beautifully bright sheen on the water there, though it is elsewhere a dull slaty/blue color, a sober rippled surface. A fine sparkling shimmer in front, owing to the remarkable clearness of the atmosphere (clarified by the May storm?). Thirdly, on either side of the wood beyond the river are patches of bright, tender, yellowish, velvety green grass in meadows and on hillsides. It is like a short furred mantle now and bright as if it had the sun on it. Those great fields of green affect me as did those early green blades by the Corner Spring, — like a fire flaming up from the earth. The earth proves itself well alive even in the skin. No scurf on it, only a browner color on the barren tops of hills. Fourthly, the forest, the dark/green pines, wonderfully distinct, near and erect, with their distinct dark stems, spiring tops, regularly disposed branches, and silvery light on their needles. They seem to wear an aspect as much fresher and livelier as the other trees, — though their growth can hardly be perceptible yet, — as if they had been washed by the rains and the air. They are now being invested with the light, sunny, yellowish/green of the deciduous trees. This tender foliage, putting so much light and life into the landscape, is the remarkable feature at this date. The week when the deciduous trees are generally and conspicuously expanding their leaves. The various tints of gray oaks and yellowish-green birches and aspens and hickories, and the red or scarlet tops where maple keys are formed (the blossoms are now over), — these last the high color (rosaceous?) in the bouquet. And fifthly, I detect a great stretch of high/backed, mostly bare, grassy pasture country between this and the Nashua, spotted with pines and forests, which I had formerly taken for forest uninterrupted. And finally, sixthly, Wachusett rising in the background, slightly veiled in bluish mist,—toward which all these seem to slope gradually upward, — and those grassy hillsides in the foreground, seen but as patches of bare grassy ground on a spur of that distant mountain.

Thus afternoon the brown thrashers [**Brown Thrasher**  *Toxostroma rufum*] are very numerous and musical. They plunge downward when they leave their perch, in a peculiar way. It is a bird that appears to make a business of singing for its own amusement. There is great variety in its strains. It is not easy to detect any repetition. The wood thrush [**Wood Thrush**  *Catharus mustelina*], too, is pretty sure to be heard in a walk. Some shrub oaks are beginning to blossom. I hear my second cricket on the face of the Cliffs, clear and distinct, — only one. The shrub oaks on the plain show a little red with their buds and young leaves. The crowfoot shines on the rocks.

At evening the water is quite white, reflecting the white evening sky, and oily smooth. I see the willows reflected in it, when I cannot see their tops in the twilight against the dark hillside. The first bat by the riverside.⁸ The praying or snoring frog, the peepers (not so common as lately), the toads (not many), and sometimes my midsummer frog, — all together. The spearers are out to-night. These days the golden robin [x] is the important bird in the streets, on the elms.

8. According to Ellen Tucker Emerson and according to Thoreau's journal, on August 10, 1860 at the Emersons, in the evening while Thoreau was entertaining the family with stories about Mount Monadnock, the Emerson cat, "Milcah," with some help from Waldo, outed a bat that had hidden behind a picture in the dining room and in the declining light had begun to flutter and draw attention to itself. The bat flew about the room until Thoreau caught it, held it briefly under a glass dish while identifying it from a reference work, and then set it free outside. It was an innocent age, and the mother of the Emerson family offered the bat her little finger to bite, drawing a small amount of blood. Thoreau would indicate in his journal that it was a hoary bat: "Its rear parts covered with a fine hoary down."

COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

 May 19, Wednesday, 1852: The [Chinese Christian Army](#) abandoned its siege of Guilin in Guangxi province and marched into Hunan province.



On its return southward, the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* passed Point Judith, [Rhode Island](#).

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote in his journal about an illness that had intercepted temporarily his nature observations:



May 19. Up to about the 14th of May I watched the progress of the season very closely, — though not so carefully the earliest birds, — but since that date, both from poor health and multiplicity of objects, I have noted little but what fell under my observation. The pear trees are in bloom before the apples. The cherries appear to have been blasted by the winter. The lilac has begun to blossom. There was the first lightning we have noticed this year, last Sunday evening, and a thunder-storm in Walpole, N.H. Lightning here this evening and an aurora in form of a segment of a circle.



May 21/22, 1852: When the shell room and spirit room of the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* flooded due to the malfunction of one of the cocks used to admit water into the ship in case of fire, nearly all its artillery shells were “rendered unfit for service” (of course, they weren’t about to reveal this to anyone). The sugar supplies were so spoiled by water damage that they needed to be pitched overboard (this it was OK to talk about).



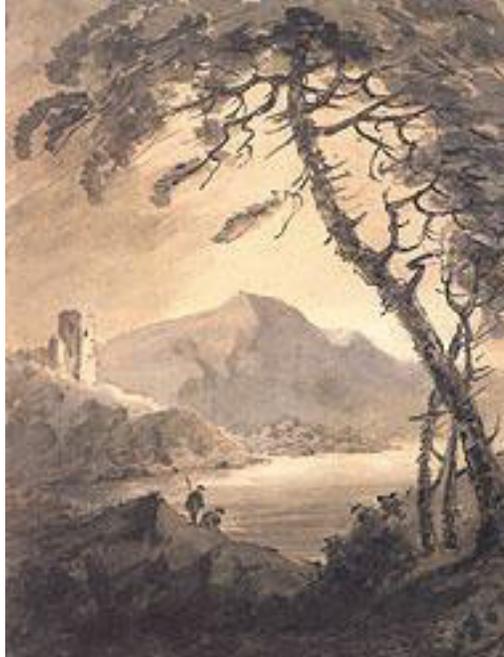
May 21: [Billington Sea, not Concord, but the song is roughly similar wherever it is heard.] The red-eyed vireo [*Vireo* [olivaceus](#)] is a steady singer, sitting near the top of a tree a long time alone, — the robin [*American Robin* [Turdus migratorius](#)] of the woods, — as the robin [*Northern Oriole* [Icterus galbula](#) (~~Fiery Hangbird or Hangbird or Gold Robin or Golden Robin~~)] sings at morning and evening on an elm in the village.

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 May 24, Monday, 1852: Having stood up the Chesapeake Bay the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* came to anchor a few miles below Baltimore, Maryland.

[Henry Thoreau](#) checked out, from [Harvard Library](#), OBSERVATIONS ON THE RIVER WYE, AND SEVERAL PARTS OF SOUTH WALES, &C. RELATIVE CHIEFLY TO PICTURESQUE BEAUTY: MADE IN THE SUMMER OF THE YEAR 1770. BY [WILLIAM GILPIN](#), ... (London: printed by A. Strahan, for T. Cadell junior and W. Davies, 1800), which had initially appeared in 1782 although subsequently it had gone through numerous editions.



He would copy from this into his Fact Book. He also checked out [Gilpin](#)'s OBSERVATIONS ON SEVERAL PARTS OF THE COUNTIES OF CAMBRIDGE, NORFOLK, SUFFOLK & ESSEX AND ON SEVERAL PARTS OF NORTH WALES (London, 1809).



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He also checked out the 2d of the ten volumes of [Carolus Linnaeus](#) (1707-1778)'s *AMOENITATES ACADEMICAE* (1749-1769).



He also checked out, from the Society of Natural History Library in Boston, Part 1 "Mammalia" of [James Ellsworth De Kay](#)'s *ZOOLOGY OF NEW-YORK, OR THE NEW-YORK FAUNA; COMPRISING DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF ALL THE ANIMALS HITHERTO OBSERVED WITHIN THE STATE OF NEW-YORK, WITH BRIEF NOTICES OF THOSE OCCASIONALLY FOUND NEAR ITS BORDERS, AND ACCOMPANIED BY APPROPRIATE ILLUSTRATIONS* (White & Visscher, 1842).

MAMMALIA, VOLUME I

ZOOLOGY

He mentioned having visited Pilgrim Hall in [Plymouth](#), and having viewed there a calabash that had been fashioned into a jar nearly two feet high.



May 24. The cooing of a dove [[Mourning Dove](#) [Zenaida macroura](#) (~~Turtle Dove~~)] reminded me of an owl [this morning](#). Counted just fifty violets (*pedata*) in a little bunch, three and a half by five inches, and as many buds, there being six plants close together; on the hill where [Billington](#) climbed a tree.

A calabash at Pilgrim Hall nearly two feet high, in the form of a jar, showed what these fruits were made for. Nature's jars and vases.

[Holbrook](#) says the *Bufo Americanus* is the most common in America and is our representative of the *Bufo communis* of Europe; speaks of its trill; deposits its spawn in pools.

N. A. HERPETOLOGY

Found in College Yard *Trifolium procumbens*, or Yellow clover.
Concord. Celandine in blossom, and horse-chestnut.



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(While at the Society of Natural History in Boston, [Thoreau](#) had consulted Volume IV of the 2d edition of [Dr. John Edwards Holbrook](#)'s NORTH AMERICAN HERPETOLOGY: OR A DESCRIPTION OF THE REPTILES INHABITING THE UNITED STATES.)



May 27, Thursday, [1852](#): Hundreds of citizens of Washington DC toured the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* and were suitably impressed.

William Speiden, Jr. went on shore leave to visit his family (the Speidens lived in the First Ward of Washington DC, in a home located in what is now referred to as the Federal Triangle area).

[Frederick Douglass' Paper](#) posted two editorials by Frederick Douglass, "The Convention [& Delany & Mrs. Stowe's Money]," and "Testimonial to Mrs. Stowe [& How to Spend It]":

The Convention.

Since it is decided to hold a National Convention of the colored people of the United States in Rochester, we hope that no time will be lost among our friends in different parts of the country in choosing delegates. It will also be well for each meeting that appoints a delegate, or more, to forward its proceedings (postpaid) to the office of this paper for publication.

* * * *

BRO. M.R. DELANY will see, by the previous appearance of the Call for a Convention, the reason we do not publish his letter on the subject. That letter reached us several days after the publication of the Call. The names of the gentlemen he mentions can be appended to the Call, if deemed proper by Bro. Delany, if he takes the responsibility of so ordering.

* * * *

WE are authorized to state that the contributions, now being made in various parts of the British realm, as a testimonial to Mrs. H.B. Stowe, will be accounted for hereafter through the columns



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of Frederick Douglass' Paper – Mrs. Stowe having signified to the contributors that they should look to our columns to know what disposition is made of their donations – ED.

The Testimonial to Mrs. Stowe, and What shall be done with it?

This magnificent expression of public gratitude to Mrs. Stowe, and of humane sympathy for the American bondman, is likely to exceed, in amount, the highest expectations which had been excited on this side the Atlantic concerning it. The British public do nothing on an insignificant or narrow scale. In works of benevolence, if in nothing else, Great Britain must be regarded as truly great. Touch the heart of this great nation, and its purse strings are at once loosed and the contents at your service. Englishmen give pounds to carry out reforms, where Americans give dollars. The purse of an Englishman is reached through his heart – the heart of an American is reached through his purse. Of course there are exceptions on both sides; but we speak of national, not individual characteristics, and this without stopping now to ascertain the cause of the difference.

The cause of the American slave, with its multitudinous and overpowering appeals to the sympathy of the whole human family, has been carried on the wings of genius to the hearts and homes of British men and women of all classes. Hence the millions rise up in marked and grateful admiration of its living embodiment, and with unquestioning confidence cast their gold at her feet! This testimonial is of itself an era in the history of philanthropy; for when was the like ever known? Kossuth obtained considerable sums of money in this country, to aid the cause of political freedom in Europe; but it came not like the testimonial to Mrs. Stowe; it wore the stamp of trade – a business transaction; the money was for value received, and a bond is held by the donors. Another difference is that the money was asked for in the one case, and it comes unsolicited in the other.

But it was not on the nature of the testimonial that we proposed here to remark – that speaks for itself. Our attention is called to another aspect of the matter by an article which appears in the May number of a paper recently established in London, called the Anti-Slavery Advocate. The article in question is introduced to the favorable notice of the readers of that paper, as coming from an American Abolitionist. The upshot of its matter is, **WHAT SHALL BE DONE WITH THE MONEY NOW BEING DONATED TO THE AUTHORESS OF UNCLE TOM'S CABIN?** And the writer goes on to tell what he thinks should be done with it.

Now, it strikes us, that the zeal of the Advocate has, in this instance, transported him beyond the bounds of good taste. It does seem that the contributors to this testimonial had, from some cause or other, arrived at the conclusion, that the writer of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" either possessed, or could command the wisdom needful to a discriminating and judicious appropriation of the money she receives without the aid of volunteer advisers from any quarter. The very spirit and expression of this testimonial will be marred, if it is to be cut up and divided among conflicting societies. But let us hear the Advocate; and since the question has been raised, and is pressed with much zeal, we shall only be in the way of our duty to give our views



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upon it, and let them go for what they are worth.

"What, then, ought to be done with funds given for anti-slavery purposes? Just what the abolitionists have been doing for many years. Scatter arguments, appeals, entreaties; thunder at the doors of schools and colleges and churches; let there be no rest till slavery is abolished. All schemes of instruction, amelioration, &c., are delusive and cruel while slavery lasts. As well talk of painting and making water-tight the house while it is on fire, as combine instruction and slavery. It is a childish amusement for childish philanthropy, of which the world is full, even looking aside from the main trying question. Of course, schools will be more popular than emancipation with nine-tenths of the people one meets; because nine-tenths have not the habit of investigation, nor the natural sagacity that hits the nail on the head, and seizes things by the right handles. Emancipation will necessarily be instruction; but instruction is not necessarily emancipation.

"Prussia is a well-instructed kingdom. - This application of anti-slavery funds to the founding of colored schools would be like the mistake of British abolitionists in rejecting the counsel of Granville Sharpe, when he walked the committee room begging Clarkson and the rest to strike at slavery and not the trade. I do not mean that the mistake can be so fatal, because in this case the main battle will still go on uninfluenced. But the awakening minds will get a dose of quietism, and the colored people a dose of humiliation when they need self-esteem.

"Let pro-slavery found schools. It will not fail to do that and the abundance of such works. The harder we press them as abolitionists, the more of these works they will do. If these schools were harmless, not bad, I should object to them as not the highest good. It is good to distribute coals to the poor, but it is better to abolish the despotism that makes them poor. Let suffering be ameliorated, but above all let wrong, the cause of suffering, be righted. Nothing could be more beneficial to the cause of humanity than the discussion in all the English and American journals on the subject. It is great legislative question, one of the most important that ever arises in the policy of nations."

Now, the foregoing may be from the pen and brain of "An American Abolitionist;" but, we venture to affirm that he is "an American Abolitionist," with a white skin; for no colored man, who sets any value upon education - who is at all concerned for the welfare of his children, or that of his race generally - can think of postponing all [illegible] for their welfare until slavery is abolished; yet this is precisely the counsel of this "American Abolitionist." He would have all monies appropriated to "scatter arguments, appeals, entreaties," or (to quote further) "to thunder at the doors of schools and colleges."

Now, we do not under estimate the value of this sort of effort. Credit is given us for having thundered somewhat



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during the past dozen years; and yet the fact remains that more than three millions of our countrymen are still in their chains – slavery having withered our thunder, and the thunder of all the abolitionists combined.

Thunder is a great thing, but we need sunshine as well as “thunder.” We need education, as well as agitation. But what arrant nonsense, what mock philanthropy! sham Christianity, and empty-headed philosophy is that which exclaims, “All schemes of instruction, amelioration, and so forth, are delusive and cruel while slavery exists.” Heaven help the Free Colored people of the U.S. if the outpouring of this “Abolitionist” be any representation of the feelings of abolitionists generally towards us; for we understand this writer to be speaking of what should be done in regard to “the Free Colored People.” If the proposition of Mrs. Stowe were the establishment of schools for the education of the slaves, the notions of our “American Abolitionist” might have a show of reason; for a scheme of that sort would be wholly unpracticable. But that is not the question. Stripped of all disguise, it means that nothing should be done to better the condition of “the Free Colored People,” or of the fugitive slaves escaping here while slavery exists; and that all monies should be expended in “thunder and so forth.” BAH! Is this Abolitionist a father? Does he practice for himself what he preachesto others? If free blacks must not be improved while slavery lasts, must free whites? Why must every thing be done for the one, and nothing for the other? We venture to say that this preacher against instruction and amelioration likes in the utmost case himself, and does all he can to educate his children.

We have no patience with such miserable cant! It is like the Church opposing abolition societies, on the plea that the triumph of Christianity will make them unnecessary: opposing the temperance societies, and refusing to strike down any one evil under the plea of “laying the axe at the root of the tree.” We have seen enough of such subterfuges; and we are sorry to see them revived at such a distance from our shores, by “an American Abolitionist.” Had they come up on this side, instead of diving under the Atlantic, three thousand miles away, they would have felt the weight of our club before this. The colored people can have no confidence in that sort of abolitionism which leaves the Free Colored man and his children to the tender mercies of pro-slavery, while it professes the deepest concern for the emancipation and elevation of the slaves.

What has given GERRIT SMITH such a hold on the affections of the colored people? Why is it that his words have in them a power to shake the nation? Why is it that prayers of thousands ascend for his preservation, night and morning? It is that his life has never libelled his lips: it is, that while launching against slavery the heaviest bolts, he can descend from the platform to sit by the side of, and to comfort and



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cheer a trembling fugitive. He that can truly thunder, can stop to soothe, when a wounded and fettered brother is before him. The Free Colored People of the United States can go right up to Gerrit Smith and lay their heavy, horny hands upon his knee. Why is this? — It is because his anti-slavery has not all gone off in appeals and remonstrances, in noise and in thunder. He has educated a LO[??]EN, a WARD, a GARNETT; he has supported the papers established by them, and for them, and has shown that he has a heart for practical benevolence, whether presented in detail or in the aggregate. GERRIT SMITH is not the writer of the letter in "The Anti-Slavery Advocate," published in London.

If any one is surprised at our indignation, they should remember that, even among abolitionists, it is almost impossible for a Free Colored man to get his child into any respectable employment; that the doors of the workshop, as well as the gates of the college, are closed against him; and now, when, for the first time, a grand effort is about to be made, by which colored persons, fugitive slaves, and others, may master certain lucrative and mechanical trades, "an American Abolitionist," through a British anti-slavery journal, attempts to divert attention from this laudable object, and to discourage it altogether, as one needless to be carried out, until slavery shall be abolished! Shame on this vile suggestion!

There is fresh in our memory a case of this kind. A highly-respected and educated widow lady of color, herself a member of the Eastern Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society, applied to one of its Executive Committees for a clerkship for one of her sons. She was told by her noble brother abolitionist, that there was no vacancy in his establishment for her son; and he, moreover, frankly assured her further, that even were there a vacancy in his establishment, the color of her son would prevent him from being selected to fill it. This distinguished member of the Executive Committee, doubtless, is of the same mind as the "American Abolitionist" who writes for "The Advocate," thinks that nothing ought to be done for education and amelioration of the colored people of this country, while slavery exists.

But we lay aside our "cat-o'-nine-tails," and lash these would-be reformers no further. We have whipped them more as a warning for others, than for any good we hope to do them.

The testimonial is in good hands — in the hands to which, of right, it belongs. Mrs. Stowe will not be turned from her purpose of leaving some permanent monument of her labors, for the benefit of our afflicted people. She sees (as every reflecting person must see) that the more intelligent, moral, industrious, enterprising, and thrifty the Free Colored man in the United States becomes, the more powerfully will his example tell against the enslavement of men like him.

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On the other hand, it is equally clear that, so long as slaveholders can maintain for their slaves any sort of comparison with the Free Colored people, just so long will the mass of men who look only at outward condition, and are too much absorbed with the world, to see a principle, or to appreciate its claims when seen, abstain from all efforts at emancipation. Elevate and improve the condition of the Free Colored people, and you at once level the strongest props of slavery.

"Let pro-slavery found schools." Indeed, and why not let pro-slavery abolish slavery? There is as much sense in the one proposition, as in the other. "Let pro-slavery found schools;" let pro-slavery instruct the colored people, and ameliorate their condition. Let pro-slavery men elevate the Free Colored man, instruct him in the use of tools, make him a mechanic, help him in his business, extend to him the hand of social equality, and the world will readily understand how little depends upon mere names. They will see that the "thunder" of practice is far more potent than the thunder of profession.



May 27. At Corner Spring.

A wet day. The veeery sings nevertheless. The road is white with the apple blossoms fallen off, as with snowflakes. The dogwood is coming out. Ladies'-slippers out. They perfume the air. *Ranunculus recurvatus*, hooked crowfoot, by the spring. *Prunus maritima*, beach plum, by Hubbard's. Dwarf cornel. *Smilacina racemosa*, clustered Solomon's-seal. The nodding trillium has a faint, rich scent; the *Convallaria bifolia* a strong but not very pleasant scent. *Ranunculus acris*, or tall crowfoot, before the first buttercup shows much. *Viola lanceolata*, white. (I did not distinguish it before.) My early willow is either the swamp willow or the bog willow of Bigelow. The *Salix nigra*, or black willow, of Gray, in bloom. *Myosotis laxa*, water mouse-ear, by Depot Field Brook. The fruit of the sweet flag is now just fit to eat, and reminds me of childhood, — the critchicrotches. They would helix sustain a famished traveller. The inmost tender leaf, also, near the base, is quite palatable, as children know. I love it as well as muskrats (?). The smooth speedwell, the minute pale-blue striated flower by the roadsides and in the short sod of fields, common now. I hear but few toads and peepers [spring peeper  *Pseudacris crucifer*] now. The sweetness which appears to be wafted from the meadow (I am on the Corner causeway) is indescribably captivating, Sabeian odors, such as voyageurs tell of when approaching a coast. Can it be the grape so early? I think not. May it be the mint in the meadow, just left bare by the receding waters? It appears to come from the ditch by the roadside. Methinks the tree-toad croaks more this wet weather. The tall crowfoot out. The fringed polygala near the Corner Spring is a delicate flower, with very fresh tender green leaves and red-purple blossoms; beautiful from the contrast of its clear red-purple flowers with its clear green leaves. The cuckoo. Caught a wood frog (*Rana sylvatica*), the color of a dead leaf. He croaked as I held him, perfectly frog-like. A bumblebee is on my bunch of flowers laid down.



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 End of May(??) 1852: The Hawthornes moved into the former home of the Bronson Alcotts on Lexington Road in Concord, renaming it from Hillside to "The Wayside." At some date this year he would tell George William Curtis "I know nothing of the history of the house, except Thoreau's telling me that it was inhabited a generation or two ago by a man who believed he should never die."⁹

OLD HOUSES

William Speiden, Jr. returned to the *USS Mississippi*.

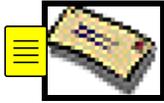
When the author would have difficulties with a manuscript he was working on –“The Ancestral Footprint” which morphed into “Etherege” and then into “Grimshawe”– he would recall this story that had been related to him by Thoreau years before, take up the theme of a magic elixir which he had previously used in “Dr. Heidegger’s Experiment,” shift the scene of the action to Concord, take as his protagonist a halfbreed Indian seminary student who was undergoing a crisis of faith, and name this student Septimius Norton. His protagonist kills a British soldier and upon searching his corpse, discovers a formula for eternal life. (He wouldn’t be able to get anywhere with this, and eventually the Indian character would morph into a white man named Septimius Felton, and then the manuscript would lie around until recent years, unpublished.)

SEPTIMIUS FELTON; OR, THE ELIXIR OF LIFE

9. We may well wonder: had Thoreau made up this stuff about a previous resident of Wayside who believed he should never die, or had there been some such actual person, with a name and a date?

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June 2, Wednesday, 1852: Father [Isaac Hecker](#), CSSR wrote to [Orestes Augustus Brownson](#), Esq.

The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* arrived at Brooklyn, New York.

It was reported in [San Francisco](#) that a total of 10,641 immigrants had arrived by boat during the month of May. That night the city experienced an earthquake.

The [Boston Medical Surgical Journal](#) (46:359-360) announced, in regard to the controversy over the discovery of Anæsthesia, that the members of the French Academy had, on the representation of [Charles Thomas Jackson](#)'s friend Elie de Beaumont, awarded to him one of the Mouthyon prizes, involving a Gold Medal of Merit (it seems they had made no inquiry whatever into the validity of his claims and were unaware of the existence of a dispute). Here is Jackson proudly sporting this odor-free French award:



*Respectfully
Yours Oth Servt.
Charles T. Jackson*



June 2. Wednesday. Measured C. Davis's elm at the top of his fence, just built, five feet from the ground. It is fifteen and two twelfths feet in circumference and much larger many feet higher. Buttercups now spot the churchyard. The elms now hold a good deal of shade and look rich and



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heavy with foliage. You see darkness in them. Golden alexanders — looks like a parsnip — near or beyond the East Quarter schoolhouse. The barberry blossoms are now abundant. They fill the air with a disagreeable, buttery fragrance. Low blackberry in bloom. Hazy days now. Milkweed, elecampane, butter-and-eggs, etc., etc., are getting up. The dried brown petals of apple blossoms spot the sod in pastures. Measured a chestnut stump on Asa White's land, twenty-three and nine twelfths feet in circumference, eight and one half feet one way, seven feet the other, at one foot from ground. Nest of Wilson's thrush [Veery  *Catharus fuscescens*] with bluish-green eggs. Female sassafras in bloom. I think I may say the umbelled thesium has begun to bloom. The pincushion galls appear on the oaks.

I found a plant whose name I know not; somewhat fern-like; leaves in a whorl of five, two double, one single; the whole nine inches high; no flower.



July 3, Saturday, 1852: [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) came aboard the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi*, being greeted there with fanfare, and hoisted the pennant of the East India Squadron, making the frigate his flagship for the beginning of his expedition. He would move the pennant from time to time to different vessels during the voyage, significantly to the steamship *Susquehanna*. On this day he ordered the ship flags set at half-mast in honor of the recently deceased secretary of state, and long-time leader in the US Congress and Whig Party, Henry Clay.

[Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed, for [Cyrus Stow](#), a Fair Haven Hill woodlot near the deep cut on the railroad line.



July 3: The yellow lily –*Lilium Canadense* is out rising above the meadow grass sometimes one sometimes 2. (From Deep Cut over Fair Haven back by Potters path 5 Pm.–) Young woodchucks sitting in their holes allow me to come quite near– Clover is mostly dried up. The chimaphila umbellata winter-green –must have been in blossom some time. The back side of its petals “cream colored tinged with purple” which is turned toward the beholder while the face is toward the earth – is the handsomest It is a very pretty little chandelier of a flower fit to adorn the forest floor. Its buds are nearly as handsome. (They appear long in unfolding) *Polygonum persicaria* just beginning. The pickers have quite thinned the crop of early blue berries where Stow cut off winter before last. When the woods on some hill side are cut off the *vaccinium Pennsylvanicum* springs up –or grows more luxuriantly being exposed to light & air –& by the 2nd year its stems are weighed to the ground with clusters of blue berries covered with bloom & much larger than they commonly grow –also with a livelier taste than usual as if remembering some primitive Mt side given up to them anciently. Such places supply the villagers with the earliest berries for two or three years or until the rising wood overgrows them and they withdraw into the bosom of nature again. They flourish during the few years between one forest's fall and another's rise. Before you had prepared your mind or made up your mouth for berries –thinking only of crude green ones –earlier by 10 days than you had expected some child of the woods is at your door with ripe blue berries –for didnt you know that Mr. Stow cut off his woodlot winter before last? It is an ill wind that blows nobody any good –& thus it happens that when the owner lays bare & deforms a hill side and alone appears to reap any advantage from it by a crop of wood –all the villagers and the inhabitants of distant cities obtain some compensation in the crop of berries that it yields– They glean after the wood chopper –not faggots but full baskets of blue-berries– I am surprised to see how suddenly when the sun & air & rain are let in these bushes which in the shade of the forest scarcely yielded the walker a berry –will suddenly be weighed down with fruit. Let alone your garden –cease your cultivation –& in how short a time will blue berries & huckleberries grow there! I have not noticed a violet for some time

Bathed beneath Fair Haven. How much food the muskrats have at hand– They may well be numerous. At this place the bottom in shallow water at a little distance from the shore is thickly covered with clams –half buried and on their ends –generally a little aslant –sometimes there are a dozen or more side by side within a square foot –and that over a space 20 rods long and 1 wide– (I know not how much farther they reach into the river) they would average 3 to a square foot. which would give 16,335 clams to 20 rods of shore– (on one side of the river) and I suspect that there are



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many more. No wonder that muskrats multiply –& that the shores are covered with their shells left by the muskrats– In bathing here I can hardly step without treading on them –some times half a dozen at once –and often I cut my feet pretty severely on their shells– They are partly covered with mud & the short weeds at the bottom –& they are of the same color themselves –but stooping down over them when the roil has subsided I can see them now (at 5 1/2 Pm) with their mouths? open –an inch long & a quarter of an inch wide –with a waving fringe about it –& another smaller opening close to it without any fringe –through both of which I see distinctly into the white interior of the fish. When I touch one he instantly closes his shell & if taken out quickly spurts water like a saltwater clam. Evidently taking in their food & straining it with that waving motion of the ciliae– There they lie both under the pads and in the sun. *Ceanothus Americanus* New Jersey tea The last month has been very breezy & on the whole a cold one– I remember rippling leaves –showing their light undersides. *Rubus strigosus* Wild red Raspberry– I can hardly find a geranium now –The common carrot by the roadside *Daucus carota* –is in some respects an interesting plant –for its umbel as Big. says is shaped like a birds nest –& its large pinnatifid involucre –interlacing by its fine segments resembles a fanciful ladies-work-basket. *Asclepias purpurascens*. I find a *Potamogeton* to day over the clams which appears to correspond to the *P. pulcher*– I am not sure that it is what I **have called the natans** –but **this** cannot be the **natans** fore the leaves are not all long petioled –but the lower ones waved & quite pellucid.



YELLOW LILY

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.



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July 31, Saturday, 1852: The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* headed north up the coast of the United States of America, with orders to proceed to the fishing banks of the north Atlantic Ocean and the Bay of Fundy, Canada, in order to investigate supposed restrictions by the British on American fishermen (naval cannon, that speak with an unavoidable loud voice, are sometimes a great assistance in such inquiries).



July 31, Saturday: Pm To Assabet over Nawshawtuct There is more shadow under the edges of woods & copses now— The foliage appears to have increased so that the shadows are heavier & perhaps it is this that makes it cooler especially morning and evening though it may be as warm as ever at noon. Saw but one *Lysimachia stricta* left in the meadows—the mead. sweet meadows. The green cranberries are half formed— The absence of flowers —the shadows —the wind, the green cranberries &c are autumnal. The river has risen a foot or so since its lowest early in the month. The water is quite cool— Methinks it cannot be so warm again this year. After that torrid season the river rises in the first rains & is much cooled. The springs are mostly buried on its shore. The high blue berry has a singularly cool flavor. The alder locust again reminds me of autumn. Can that low blackberry which has I think a rather wrinkled leaf & bears dense masses of lively berries now — commonly in cool moist ground be the same with the common. *Eupatorium purpureum* has just begun —& probably the *ovate* &c but I suspect no entire corymb is out.

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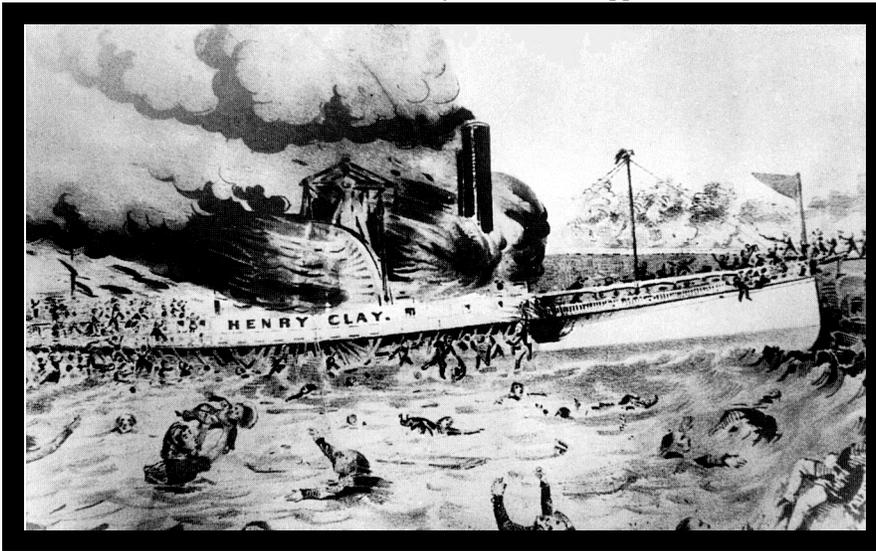


August 3, Tuesday, 1852: The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* reached Eastport, Maine on its freighted mission to save American seafish from British fishermen.

Meanwhile [Louisa Hawthorne](#)'s corpse, which had been recovered by divers, was being buried. [Waldo Emerson](#)'s comment was:

Who knows which is the shortest & most excellent way out of the calamities of the present world?

That's quite a comment to make over the corpse of a person who had needed to choose between the impossible alternatives of leaping into deep, swift-flowing waters, or being scorched to death! –Was Waldo venturing an opinion that Louisa, in her panic, leaping from the *Henry Clay* into those dark waters, had in effect been selecting the shorter and more excellent way, drowning, and deselecting the longer and less excellent way, burning? – I do not understand this. **What the holy hell** are we supposed to make of such a comment?



Aug. 3. The *Hypericum Sarothra* appears to be out.

12 M. At the east window. — A temperate noon. I hear a cricket creak in the shade; also the sound of a distant piano. The music reminds me of imagined heroic ages; it suggests such ideas of human life and the field which the earth affords as the few noblest passages of poetry. These few interrupted strains which reach me through the trees suggest the same thoughts and aspirations that all melody, by whatever sense appreciated, has ever done. I am affected. What coloring variously fair and intense our life admits of! How a thought will mould and paint it! Impressed by some vague vision, as it were, elevated into a more glorious sphere of life, we no longer know this, we can deny its existence. We say we are enchanted, perhaps. But what I am impressed by is the fact that this enchantment is no delusion. So far as truth is concerned, it is a fact such as what we *call* our actual existence, but it is a far higher and more glorious fact. It is evidence of such a sphere, of such possibilities. It is its truth and reality that affect me. A thrumming of piano-strings beyond the gardens and through the elms. At length the melody steals into my being. I know not when it began to occupy me. By some fortunate coincidence of thought or circumstance I am attuned to the universe, I am fitted to hear, my being moves in a sphere of melody, my fancy and imagination are excited to an inconceivable degree. This is no longer the dull earth on which I stood. It is possible to live a grander life here; already the steed is stamping, the knights are prancing; already our thoughts



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bid a proud farewell to the so-called actual life and its humble glories. Now this is the verdict of a soul in health. But the soul diseased says that its own vision and life alone is true and sane. What a different aspect will courage put upon the face of things! This suggests what a perpetual flow of spirit would produce.

Of course, no man was ever made so truly generous, was so expanded by any vile draught, but that he might be equally and more expanded by imbibing a saner and wholesomer draught than ever he has swallowed. There is a wine that does not intoxicate; there is a pure juice of the grape, and unfermented. What kind of draught is that which the aspirant soul imbibes?

In every part of Great Britain are discovered the traces of the Romans, — their funereal urns, their lamps, their roads, their dwellings. But New England, at least, is not based on any Roman ruins. We have not to lay the foundation of our houses in the ashes of a former civilization.

P.M. — To Boulder Field.

Vernonia noveboracensis, iron-weed, by Flint's Bridge, began to open by July 31st; a tall plant with a broad fastigate corymb of rich dark-purple thistle-like flowers, the middle ones opening first. Saw two hay-carts and teams cross the shallow part of the river in front of N. Barrett's, empty, to the Great Meadows. An interesting sight. The Great Meadows alive with farmers getting their hay. I could count four or five great loads already loaded in different parts. Clematis virginiana just begun. Observed a low prostrate veronica with roundish, regularly opposite leaves, somewhat crenulate, and white flowers veined with purple, in damp, cool grass. Think I have not seen it before. A Houstonia still. The huckleberries in the low ground by the river beyond Flint's are large and fresh. The black shine as with a gloss, and the blue are equally large.

Looking down into the singular bare hollows from the back of a hill near here, the paths made by the cows in the sides of the hills, going round the hollows, made gracefully curving lines in the landscape, ribbing it. The curves, both the rising and falling of the path and its winding; to right and left. an., agreeable.

What remarkable customs still prevail at funerals! The chief mourner, though it may be a maiden who has lost her lover, consents to be made a sort of puppet and is by them put forward to walk behind the corpse in the street, before the eyes of all, at a time which should be sacred to grief; is, beside, compelled, as it were, to attend to the coarse and unfeeling, almost inevitably to her impertinent, words of consolation or admonition, so called, of whatever clerical gentleman may be in the neighborhood. Friends and neighbors of the family should bury their dead. It is fitting that they should walk in procession with parade and even assumed solemnity. It is for them to pay this kind of respect to the dead, that it be not left to hirelings alone. It is soothing to the feelings of the absent mourners. They may fitly listen to the words of the preacher, but the feelings of the mourners should be respected.

Spergularia rubra, spurry sandwort, a pretty, minute red flower spreading flat by roadside, nearly out of blossom. Apparently *Urtica dioica*, but not very stinging, may have been out some time. Hypericum mutilum, probably last part of July.

Took that interesting view from one of the boulder rocks toward Lincoln Hills, between Hubbard's Hill and Grove and Barrett's, whose back or north and wooded side is in front, a few oaks and elms in front and on the right, and some fine boulders slumbering in the foreground. It is a peculiar part of the town, — the old bridle-road plains further east. A great tract here of unimproved and unfrequented country, the boulders sometimes crowned with barberry hushes. I hear crows, the robin, huckleberry-birds, young bluebirds, etc.

The sun coming out of a cloud and shining brightly on patches of cudweed reminds me of frost on the grass in the morning. A splendid entire rainbow after a slight shower, with two reflections of it, outermost broad red, passing through yellow to green, then narrow red, then blue or indigo (not plain what), then faint red again. It is too remarkable to be remarked on.



August 7, Saturday-12, Thursday, [1852](#): At St. Johns in New Brunswick, Canada, William Speiden, Jr. attended church services while [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) was visiting the Governor of New Brunswick in Fredericton. Then the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* spent a number of days laying in supplies of coal and lumber.

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Aug. 7. When I think of the thorough drilling to which young men are subjected in the English universities, acquiring a minute knowledge of Latin prosody and of Greek particles and accents, so that they can not only turn a passage of Homer into English prose or verse, but readily a passage of Shakespeare into Latin hexameters or elegiacs, — that this and the like of this is to be liberally educated, — I am reminded how different was the education of the actual Homer and Shakespeare. The worthies of the world and liberally educated have always, in this sense, got along with little Latin and less Greek.

At this season we have gentle rain-storms, making the aftermath green. The rich and moist English grass land looks very green after the rain, as if it were a second spring.

If I were to choose a time for a friend to make a passing visit to this world for the first time, in the full possession of all his faculties, perchance it would be at a moment when the sun was setting with splendor in the west, his light reflected far and wide through the clarified air after a rain, and a brilliant rainbow, o'erarching the eastern sky. Would he be likely to think this a vulgar place to live [*sic*], where one would weary of existence, and be compelled to devote his life to frivolity and dissipation? If a man travelling from world to world were to pass through this world at such a moment, would he not be tempted to take up his abode here?

We see the rainbow apparently when we are on the edge of the rain, just as the sun is setting. If we are too deep in the rain, then it will appear dim. Sometimes it is so near that I see a portion of its arch this side of the woods in the horizon, tingeing them. Sometimes we are completely within it, enveloped by it, and experience the realization of the child's wish. The obvious colors are red and green. Why green? It is astonishing how brilliant the red may be. What is the difference between that red and the ordinary red of the evening sky? Who does not feel that here is a phenomenon which natural philosophy alone is inadequate to explain? The use of the rainbow, who has described it?



August 15, Sunday, 1852: The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* arrived at Halifax, Nova Scotia, home port of Great Britain's North American Squadron. Archbishop William Walsh of Nova Scotia joined Archbishop John J. Hughes of New York and a party of bishops to visit the frigate, as did the commander of forces at Halifax. One can only imagine that these foreigners were greatly impressed by our determination and our righteousness. We were prepared to use naval cannon to further our worthy cause, which worthy cause was merely to defend our American fish from being captured by British fishermen! William Speiden, Jr. attended a ball given for the officers of the ship.

Meanwhile the [Chinese Christian Army](#) was taking Kwei-yang.



August 15: I see a dense, compact flock of bobolinks [[Bobolink](#) *Dolichonyx oryzivorus* ~~Rice-bird~~] going off in the air over a field. They cover the rails and alders, and go rustling off with a brassy, tinkling note like a ripe crop as I approach, revealing their yellow breasts and bellies. This is an autumnal sight, that small flock of grown birds in the afternoon sky.



August 21, Saturday, 1852: The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* was near the Magdalen Islands, attempting to further our worthy cause, which was to protect our American fish from being captured by British fishermen.



Aug. 21. Weeds in potato-fields are now very rank. What should we come to if the season were longer, and the reins were given to vegetation? Those savages that do not wither before the glance of civilization, that are waiting; their turn to be cultivated, preparing a granary for the birds.



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The air within a day or two is quite cool, almost too cool for a thin coat, yet the alternate days are by some reckoning among the warmest in the Year, *scalding* hot. That will apply very well to the greatest half of August. Young [turkeys](#) are straying in the grass, which is alive with grasshoppers.

3 P.M. — To Bear Hill *via* railroad and Flint's.

The bees, wasps, etc., are on the goldenrods, impatient to be interrupted, improving their time before the sun of the year sets. A man killed by lightning would have a good answer ready in the next world to the question "How came *you* here?" which he need not hesitate to give. Can that be *Mulgedium leucophærum*, with the aspect of a lettuce but bluish flowers, seven feet high with a panicle two feet by ten inches? Cat-tails ripe. The common epilobium holds not a neat flower but rich-colored.

Moralists say of men, By their fruits ye shall know them, but botanists say of plants, By their flowers ye shall know them. This is very well generally, but they must make exceptions sometimes when the fruit is fairer than the flower. They are to be compared at that stage in which they are most significant to man. I say that sometimes by their fruits ye shall know them. The bright red or scarlet fruit of the scarlet thorn (*Cratægus coccinea*) in the woods of Bear Hill road, Winn's woods. How handsomely they contrast with the green leaves! Are edible also. Fruits now take the place of flowers to some extent. These brilliant-colored fruits, flower-like. There are few flowers have such brilliant and remarkable colors as the fruit of the arum, trillium, convallarias, dracæna, cornels, viburnums, actæa, etc., etc. I must notice this kind of flowers now.

The leaves of the dogbane are turning yellow. There are as few or fewer birds heard than flowers seen. The red-eye still occasionally. Agrimony still. "The dry, pearly, and almost incorruptible heads of the Life Everlasting." Ah! this is a truly elysian flower now, beyond change and decay, not lusty but immortal, — pure ascetics, suggesting a widowed virginity. *Bidens frondosa* in corn-fields under Bear Hill, west side. The large kind. *Polygonum arifolium*, a very large scratch-weed, in the ditch in Baker's Swamp, reminding me of a boa-constrictor creeping over the plants' stems, a third of an inch in diameter. Some time earlier in this month. The sound of the crickets gradually prevails more and more. I hear the year falling asleep. When dry seeds come, then I hear these dry locust and cricket sounds. Berries are still abundant on Bear Hill, but how late when huckleberries begin to be wormy and pickers are deserting the fields? The high blackberries by the roadside are sweet though covered with dust. At this season, too, the farmers burn brush, and the smoke is added to the haziness of the atmosphere. From this hill I count five or six smokes, far and near, and am advertised of one species of industry over a wide extent of country. The mountains are just visible. The grass-poly by the Lincoln road, with its "fine purple" flowers. *Decodon verticillatus*, swamp loosestrife. Those in the water do not generally bloom. What stout, woody, perennial rootstocks! It is a handsome purple flower, falling over wreath-like on every side, with an epilobium look, a lively purple. The *Cardamine hirsuta* still. The bittersweet berries now bright red, still handsomer than the flowers. The barberries are turning. Many leaves of the pyrus, both kinds, are red, and some sweet-ferns. See the great umbels, lead-blue, of the *Aralia hispida*.

This coloring and reddening of the leaves toward fall is interesting; as if the sun had so prevailed that even the leaves, better late than never, were turning to flowers, — so filled with mature juices, the whole plant turns at length to one flower, and all its leaves are petals around its fruit or dry seed. A second flowering to celebrate the maturity of the fruit. The first to celebrate the age of puberty, the marriageable age; the second, the maturity of the parent, the age of wisdom, the fullness of years.



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 August 22, Sunday, 1852: The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* was near the Bird Islands, attempting to further our worthy cause, which was to protect our American fish from being captured by British fishermen.

At an antislavery meeting in the meetinghouse of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) in Salem, [Ohio](#), [Sojourner Truth](#) confronted [Frederick Douglass](#) with a demand to know, “Is God gone?” This is the event to which [Harriet Beecher Stowe](#) would be alluding, when she published an article on Truth more than a decade later in [The Atlantic Monthly](#), recounting again the fabrication (she had initiated this three years before, in the pages of the New-York [Independent](#)) she alleged that she had heard straight from the mouth of [Wendell Phillips](#) (who had not claimed to have been himself present), ascribing the confrontation to a meeting of undesignated date in Boston’s Faneuil Hall and positioning Truth in the front row of seats.¹⁰ Mrs. Stowe was in the process of making “Frederick, is God dead?” such a famous repolished phrase that “Is God dead?” would eventually be inscribed on Truth’s tombstone in Battle Creek, Michigan. In Douglass’s own very much later version of what he had said at that meeting at the Friends’ meetinghouse in Salem, we note that he is not struck speechless. He reconstructed the incident, instead, as one in which it had been **him** who had had the last word: “‘No,’ I

10. [Harriet Beecher Stowe](#)’s article would also create other false factual details, such as that [Sojourner Truth](#) was out of Africa, that she was dead, that her initial white help had come from the Quakers, etc.

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answered, ‘and because God is not dead slavery can only end in blood.’” Douglass would then go on, in his memoirs, to prove himself right by pointing out that 1.) in fact slavery had then ended in blood, in the US Civil War of 1862-1865, and that 2.) Truth herself eventually had learned to agree with is “sanguinary doctrine,” and had become, as he had been earlier, “an advocate of the sword.” He had taken his “quaint old sister” to have been speaking in opposition to this at the time because this woman “was of the Garrison school of non-resistants, and was shocked at my sanguinary doctrine.”¹¹



Debating Holding One’s God in One’s Fist

Douglass would not controvert (of course) that an incident something like what had been reported had indeed occurred, but would also (of course) refrain from confessing this incidental detail — that in fact her deliberate harassment of him while he was orating had occurred in a low-rent Quaker venue in Ohio rather than, as fabricated by Stowe or Phillips, in downtown Boston’s toney [Faneuil Hall](#).



NON-RESISTANCE



Aug. 22. Sunday. The ways by which men express themselves are infinite, — the literary through their writings, and often they do not mind with what air they walk the streets, being sufficiently reported otherwise. But some express themselves chiefly by their gait and carriage, with swelling breasts or elephantine roll and elevated brows, making themselves moving and adequate signs of themselves, having no other outlet. If their greatness had signalized itself sufficiently in



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some other way, though it were only in picking locks, they could afford to dispense with the swagger.

P.M. — To Marlborough road and White Pond.

Dodder by railroad bridge. I am attracted by the deep purple (?) of some polygalas standing amid dark-green grass. Some of the leaves of the choke-cherry are the brightest scarlet that I have seen, or, at least, the clearest. *Eupatorium purpureum* fully out everywhere. Potamogetons still in flower (small ones) in brooks. Heart-leaves in Walden and water-target leaves in the overflowed meadow. The elder bushes are weighed down with fruit partially turned, and are still in bloom at the extremities of their twigs. The low downy Guaphalium leaves are already prepared for winter and spring again on dry hills and sprout-lands. I am struck by the handsome and abundant clusters of yet green shrub oak acorns. Some are whitish. How much food for some creatures! The sprouts, apparently of the *Populus grandidentata*, run up very fast the first year where the wood has been cut, and make great leaves nearly a foot long and nine or ten inches wide, — unlike those of the parent tree, downy. Just smelled an apple which carried me forward to those days when they will be heaped in the orchards and about the cider mills. The fragrance of some fruits is not to be forgotten, along with that of flowers. Is not the high blackberry our finest berry? I gather very sweet ones which weigh down the vines in sprout-lands. The arum berries are mostly devoured, apparently by birds. The two-leaved Solomon's-seal berries begin to be red. *Rumex Hydrolapathum* (?) by Jenny's Brook. *Hieracium Canadense*, apparently — Bigelow's *Kalmiana*, which Gray says is not Linnæus's. Marlborough road. The oval maple-leaved viburnum berries have got to be yellowish. The panicked cornel berries now white. The bushy gerardia is abundant on the White Pond road, beyond pond. What is that thistle in Brown's and Tarbell's meadows with no stem, only radical

11. Although it was not [Friedrich Nietzsche](#) but [Waldo Emerson](#) who 1st spoke of the death of God (he did so, as a counterfactual hypothetical, in his [Divinity School Address](#) address in 1838), his point then had been that to consider that the age of direct inspiration was over was to consider impiously that God had died. This was the same thought as expressed here by Truth when she inquired of the belligerent Douglass in effect whether he supposed that human individuals would need to take the issues of cosmic injustice into their own self-righteous and deluded hands. —All this was quite different from the twist which Nietzsche would give to the thought in the 1881-1885 period, for he would in that later marketplace of ideas begin to raise not the question of whether anyone was supposing impiously that God was dead but, rather, what was going to follow from the fact that God had, indeed, become totally unavailable to us — and, what was going to follow from the fact that this had happened at our own responsibility. These meditations on the question “Is God dead?” in these antebellum years would not include any reflection on the possibility of God having absented himself, or having died, such ideas being unthinkable absurdities within all then-pertinent frames of reference. The Nietzsche stuff about how God died of shame, and the consequent “God is dead” school of theology, would come within an unrecognizably altered frame of consciousness. So, we need to block it entirely out of our minds for our purposes here.

According to [Wendell Phillips](#), [Frederick Douglass](#) had been so influenced by [John Brown](#) that he had advocated that the slaves of the South had

no possible hope except in their own right arms.

Douglass was thus standing to commit the Biblical error “trying to hold Eloah in one's fist.” But Phillips had situated [Sojourner Truth](#) in the front row listening to this. As Phillips had Douglass finish, he had Truth calling out

FREDERICK! IS GOD DEAD?

Was [Phillips](#)'s Truth seconding a puerile [Hawthorne](#) sentiment, that when it be God's will, then will human slavery “vanish like a dream” without anybody needing to lift their little finger? Nope, Sojourner knew that slavery was not a dream that would vanish like a dream!

The interesting fact about these two apparently identical attitudes, that of Hawthorne and that of Truth, is that they are as diametrically opposed as are black and white. Although the two might be made to appear similar in outline in poor light, on the basis of their shared vocabulary of God-talk, in fact were we to ask the powerful beneficiaries of injustice to trust in God to correct wrongs being done by them, this would be the **opposite** of our asking the powerless victims of injustice to trust in God to correct wrongs being done to them. The difference, which makes these two situations opposite, is that a powerful beneficiary of injustice has no basis for relying on his or her own judgment, since such a judgment is and must be inherently merely self-serving.

Note that Hawthorne's position was compatible with the vengeance of the strong against the weak, merely enabling this vengeance to continue, whereas [Sojourner Truth](#)'s position was incompatible with the vengeance of the weak against the strong, preventing it from beginning. In the case of the powerful, what trusting in God to correct wrongs leads to is violence and more violence and the perpetuation of violence, whereas in the case of the powerless, this leads only to: **decency and more decency**.



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leaves, very prickly and not pinnatifid? *Desmodium acuminatum* still in bloom, near the poplars on White Pond road. The *Smilacina racemosa* has a compound raceme of red-speckled berries now. *Polygonatum pubescens* berries are now green with a bluish bloom, and the leaves eaten up. Was not that which E. Hoar brought from the White Mountains *polygonatum canaliculatum* with auxiliary large red berries, though Gray says of this genus, its berries are black or blue?¹² Perhaps fruits are colored like the trillium berry and the scarlet thorn to attract birds to them. Is that rather large lilac-purple aster by Jenny's Brook *A. puniceus*?¹³



August 23, Monday-25, Wednesday, [1852](#): The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* encountered various fishing vessels at sea, almost all of them, guess what, manned by innocent American fishermen questing for innocent American fish.



Aug. 23. 3 P.M. — To Assabet.

The river is eight and one twelfth feet below top of truss.¹⁴ Add eight and a half inches for its greatest height this year, and you have eight feet nine and a half inches for the difference. It is apparently as low now as the first week in July.¹⁵ That is, those are the limits of our river's expansibility; so much it may swell. Of course, the water now in it is but a small fraction of that which it contains in the highest freshets, for this additional eight and nine twelfths feet is much more than its present average depth, half as much again perhaps, beside averaging eight or ten times its present width.

The ferns in low shady woods are faded. *Hydrocotyle Americana*, marsh pennywort, by the Lee place path. It probably opened in June or July. Saw a new form of arrowhead leaf with linear lobes, but the flowers apparently the same, a crystalline white. The bank at the bathing-place has now a new kind of beauty. It is spotted with bright-scarlet cardinal-flowers and bright-purple vernonias. The profuse clusters of grapes, partially concealed under their leaves, are turning; have got a purple tinge. Dense clusters of elder-berries, some black, some turning, are hanging drooping by their weight over the water. The glassy or bead (amethystine?) blue berries of the red osier [Silky] cornel, mixed with whitish, are as abundant as any berries here; and the dull slaty-blue and smaller berries of the *Viburnum dentatum* fill the remaining crevices. These things I see as I swim beneath it.

12. Probably the large convallaria.

13. *Longifolius*?

14. Horizontal part (probably).

15. This I calculate to be two inches below my summer level for 1859.



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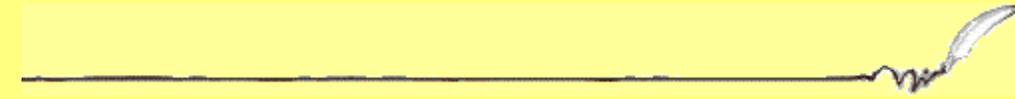


August 31, Tuesday, 1852: Back in New-York, William Speiden, Jr. noted that on the entire trip north he had glimpsed only a single English fishing vessel, and it had “contained but one Man” and was in a condition that he characterized as dilapidated. Did he conclude that our weighty warship gesture had been pointless? No, that would have been insufficiently self-righteous — he concluded instead that “This now fully convinces me what a small interest the English take in the Fisheries on the North Eastern coast of America.”

The US passed a Postal Act of 1852 that would require private express companies to use envelopes created by the Post Office. Prior to the mid-1800s postage was usually based not only on the distance traveled but also on the number of sheets of paper; few letters had been sent in envelopes because an envelope would have counted as another sheet. After 1845 the use of envelopes had increased somewhat because postage had come to be based on distance and weight rather than distance and number of sheets. Also, private express companies were cutting into the Post Office monopoly and its revenue. This act allowed that letters could be “sent, conveyed and delivered otherwise than by post or mail,” but only so long as the postage was paid by the use of non-reusable stamped envelopes “duly sealed, or otherwise firmly and securely closed, so that such letter cannot be taken therefrom without tearing or destroying such envelope.” Private mail companies such as Wells Fargo & Co. would oblige, and would purchase envelopes on watermarked paper with their own frank printed on them, to re-sell these to their customers. The 1st envelopes produced for this purpose would not be issued, however, until July 1st, 1853. The stamp embossed upon such envelopes would be based on the British Victoria envelope, with a bust in an oval and the denomination below it.

“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



August 31. *Tuesday*. 9 A.M. — Up river in boat to the bend above the Pantry.

It is pleasant to embark on a voyage, if only for a short river excursion, the boat to be your home for the day, especially if it is neat and dry. A sort of moving studio it becomes, you can carry so many things with you. It is almost as if you put oars out at your windows and moved your house along. A sailor, I see, easily becomes attached to his vessel. How continually we [are] thankful to the boat if it does not leak! We move now with a certain pomp and circumstance, with planetary dignity. The pleasure of sailing is akin to that which a planet feels. It seems a more complete adventure than a walk. We make believe embark our all, — our house and furniture. We are further from the earth than the rider; we receive no jar from it. We can carry many things with us.

This high water will retard the blossoming of the *Bidens Beckii*, perhaps. The pads are covered for the most part; only those which have very long stems are on the surface, the white lilies oftenest. Here and there is seen a blue spike of a pontederia still, but I do not see a single white lily. I should think this would put an end to them. It is a bright and breezy day. I hear the note of goldfinches. The shore is whitened in some places with dense fields of the *Polygonum hydropiperoides*, now in its prime, but the smaller rose-colored polygonatum, also in blossom, is covered. The mikania still covers the banks, and imparts its fragrance to the whole shore, but it is past its prime, as also is the trumpet-weed. The purple gerardias are very fresh and handsome nest the water, behind Hubbard’s or Dennis’s. I see crows feeding in the meadow, large and black.

I rigged my mast by putting a post across the boat, and putting the mast through it and into a piece of a post at the bottom, and lashing and bracing it, and so sailed most of the way. The water,



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methinks, has a little of the fall sparkle on it after the rain. It has run over the meadows considerably and drowned the flowers. I feel as if it was a month later than it was a week ago.

A few days ago some saw a circular rainbow about the sun at midday. Singular phenomenon. Is not this the season when conventions are held? Or do they not appoint conventions, temperance or political, at such times as the farmers are most at leisure? There is a silvery light on the washed willows this morning, and the shadows under the wood-sides appear deeper, perchance by contrast, in the brilliant air. Is not the air a little more bracing than it was? Looking up the sparkling river, whose waves are flashing in the sun, it appears to be giving off its pure silver from the amalgam. The sky is more beautiful, a clearer blue, methinks, than for some time past, with light and downy clouds sailing all round a quarter of the way up it. The fields of bulrushes are now conspicuous, being left alone above the water. The balls of the button-bush have lost their bloom. From the shore I hear only the creak of crickets. The winds of autumn begin to blow. Now I can sail. The cardinal-flowers, almost drowned in a foot or two of water, are still very brilliant. The wind is Septemberish. That rush, reed, or sedge with the handsome head rises above the water. I pass boats now far from the shore and full of water. I see and hear the kingfisher with his disproportionate black [*sic*] head or crest. The pigeon woodpecker darts across the valley; a catbird mews in the alders; a great bittern flies sluggishly away from his pine tree perch on Tupelo Cliff, digging his way through the air. These and crows at long intervals are all the birds seen or heard.

How much he knows of the wind, its strength and direction, whose steed it is, — the sailor. With a good gale he advances rapidly; when it dies away he is at a standstill. The very sounds made by moving the furniture of my boat are agreeable, echoing so distinctly and sweetly over the water; they give the sense of being abroad. I find myself *at home* in new scenery. I carry more of myself with me; I am more entirely abroad, as when a man takes his children into the fields with him. I carry so many me's with [me]. This large basket of melons, umbrella, flowers, hammer, etc., etc., all go with me to the end of the voyage without being the least incumbrance, and preserve their relative distances. Our capacity to carry our furniture with us is so much increased. There is little danger of overloading the steed. We can go completely equipped to fields a dozen miles off. The tent and the chest can be taken as easily as not. We embark; we go aboard a boat; we sit or we stand. If we sail, there is no exertion necessary. If we move in the opposite direction, we nevertheless progress. And if we row, we sit to an agreeable exercise, akin to flying. A student, of course, if it were perfectly convenient, would always move with his *escritoire* and his library about him. If you have a cabin and can descend into that, the charm is double.

Landed near the bee tree. A bumblebee on a cow-wheat blossom sounded like the engine's whistle far over the woods; then like an æolian harp. Then walked through the damp, cellar-like, fungus woods, with bare, damp, dead leaves and no bushes for their floor, where the corallorhiza grows, now out of bloom. The fall dandelion yellows the meadows. What is that bird like a large peewee that flew away with a kind of whistle from a grass spit in the Sudbury meadows? A larger sandpiper? Probably a yellow-legs. [x]

Lunched on Rice's Hill. I see some yellow pumpkins from afar in the field next his house. This sight belongs to the season. It has all clouded up again, so that I scarcely see the sun during the day. I find, on bathing, that the water has been made very cold by the rain-storm, so that I soon come out. It must affect the fishes very much.

All the fields and meadows are shorn. I would like to go into perfectly new and wild country where the meadows are rich in decaying and rustling vegetation, present a wilder luxuriance. I wish to lose myself amid reeds and sedges and wild grasses that have not been touched. If haying were omitted for a season or two, a voyage up this river in the fall, methinks, would make a much wilder impression. I sail and paddle to find a place where the bank has a more neglected look. I wish to bury myself amid reeds. I pine for the luxuriant vegetation of the river-banks.

I ramble over the wooded hill on the right beyond the Pantry. The bushy gerardia is now very conspicuous with its great yellow trumpets, on hillsides on sprout-lands. Sometimes you come upon a large field of them. The buds or closed tubes are as handsome, at least, as the flowers. The various kinds of lespedezas are now in bloom. The panicked desmodium is going to seed and adheres to the clothes, with only a few flowers left. The strong contrast of the bright-pink (hard) and blue (soft and ripe) berries of the *Viburnum nudum*. Here are some irregularly globular or apple-shaped and larger than the common, which are more elliptical. The rustling of aspen leaves (*grandidentata*) this cloudy day startled me as if it were rain-drops on the leaves. Here are great pyrus berries in dense clusters falling over in wreaths and actually blackening the ground. I have rarely seen any kind of berries so thick. As big as small cherries. The great *Bidens chrysaldhemoides*, now in blossom, like a



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sunflower, two inches in diameter, is for the most part far under water, blossoms and all. I see its drowned flowers far beneath the surface. Gunners out with their pants tucked into their boots. Pigeons fly over, and ducks. Poke berries ripe for some time. The various beauties of this plant now appear. Its stem is ripe, too, as if full of purple wine. It is so florid that the whole plant blossoms. In the fall, after so much sun, all leaves turn to petals and blossoms. The evening of the year is colored like the sunset. *Utricularia inflata*, or whorled bladderwort, numerous in Fair Haven Pond. I found it the same clay of the month last year. I plucked a white lily pad above Lees Bridge, nine inches in diameter.

Landed at Lee's Cliff, in Fair Haven Pond, and sat on the Cliff. Late in the afternoon. The wind is gone down; the water is smooth; a serene evening is approaching; the clouds are dispersing; the sun has shone once or twice, but is now in a cloud. The pond, so smooth and full of reflections after a dark and breezy day, is unexpectedly beautiful. There is a little boat on it, schooner-rigged, with three sails, a perfect little vessel and perfectly reflected now in the water. It is sufficient life for the pond. Being in the reflection of the opposite woods, the water on which it rests (for there is hardly a puff of air, and the boatman is only airing his sails after the storm) is absolutely invisible; only the junction of the reflections shows where it must be, and it makes an agreeable impression of buoyancy and lightness as of a feather. The broad, dense, and now lower and flatter border of button-bushes, having water on both sides, is very rich and moss-like, seen from this height, with an irregular outline, being flooded while verdurous. The sky is reflected on both sides, and no finer edging can be imagined. A sail is, perhaps, the largest white object that can be admitted into the landscape. It contrasts well with the water, and is the most agreeable of regular forms. If they were shaped like houses, they would be disagreeable. The very mists which rise from the water are also white.

It is worth the while to have had a cloudy, even a stormy, day for an excursion, if only that you are out at the clearing up. The beauty of the landscape is the greater, not only by reason of the contrast with its recent lowering aspect, but because of the greater freshness and purity of the air and of vegetation, and of the repressed and so recruited spirits of the beholder. Sunshine is nothing to be observed or described, but when it is seen in patches on the hillsides, or suddenly bursts forth with splendor at the end of a storm. I derive pleasure now from the shadows of the clouds diversifying the sunshine on the hills, where lately all was shadow. The spirits of the cows at pasture on this very hillside appear excited. They are restless from a kind of joy, and are not content with feeding. The weedy shore is suddenly blotted out by this rise of waters.

I saw a small hawk [x] fly along under the hillside and alight on the ground, its breast and belly pure downy white. It was a very handsome bird. Though they are not fitted to walk much on the ground, but to soar, yet its feet, which are but claws to seize its prey and hold to its perch, are handsome appendages, and it is a very interesting sight on the ground. Yet there is a certain unfitness in so fair a breast, so pure white, made to breast nothing less pure than the sky or clouds, coming so nearly in contact with the earth. Never bespattered with the mud of earth. That was the impression made on me, — of a very pure breast, accustomed to float on the sky, in contact with the earth. It stood quite still, watching me, as if it was not easy for it to walk.

I forgot to say that I saw nighthawks [x] sailing about in the middle of the day. The barberries are red in some places. Methinks I am in better spirits and physical health now that melons are ripe, *i.e.* for three weeks past. I hear the sound of a flail. The clouds do not entirely disperse, but, since it is decidedly fair and serene, I am contented.

I float slowly down from Fair Haven till I have passed the bridge. The sun, half an hour high, has come out again just before setting, with a brilliant, warm light, and there is the slightest undulation discernible on the water, from the boat or other cause, as it were its imitation in glass. The reflections are perfect. A bright, fresh green on fields and trees now after the rain, spring like with the sense of summer past. The reflections are tire more perfect for the blackness of the water. I see the down of a thistle, probably, in the air, descending to the water two or three rods off, which I mistake for a man in his shirt sleeves descending a distant hill, by an ocular delusion. How fair the smooth green swells of those low grassy hills on which the sunlight falls! Indian hills.

This is the most glorious part of this day, the serenest, warmest, brightest part, and the most suggestive. Evening is fairer than morning. It is chaste eve, for it has sustained the trials of the day, but to the morning such praise was inapplicable. It is incense-breathing. Morning is full of promise and vigor. Evening is pensive. The serenity is far more remarkable to those who are on the water. That part of the sky just above the horizon seen reflected, apparently, some rods off from the boat is as light a blue as the actual, but it goes on deepening as your eye draws nearer to the boat, until, when you look directly down at the reflection of the zenith, it is lost in the blackness of the water. It passes

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through all degrees of dark blue, and the threatening aspect of a cloud is very much enhanced in the reflection. As I wish to be on the water at sunset, I let the boat float. I enjoy now the warmth of summer with some of the water prospect of spring. Looking westward, the surface of the water on the meadows in the sun has a slight dusty appearance, with clear black lines, as if some water nymph had written "slut" with her finger there.

A flock of half a dozen or more blue-winged teal, scared up down-stream behind me, as I was roving, have circled round to reconnoitre and cross up-stream before me, quite close. I had seen another flock of ducks high in the air in the course of the day. Have ducks then begun to return?

I observe, on the willows on the east shore, the shadow of my boat and self and oars, upside down, and, I believe, it is joined to the same right side up, but the branches are so thin there that that shadow is not perfect. There goes a great bittern *plodding* home over the meadows at evening, to his perch on some tree by the shore. The rain has washed the leaves clean where he perches. There stands another in the meadow just like a stake, or the point of a stump or root. Its security was consulted both in its form and color. The latter is a sober brown, pale on the breast, as the less exposed side of a root might be; and its attitude is accidental, too, bent forward and *perfectly* motionless. Therefore there is no change in appearance but such as can be referred to the motion of the sailor.



Eupatorium sessilifolium, not yet fully open, — a week or ten days ago must have been the earliest, — Lee's Cliff. *Solidago cæsia*, blue-stemmed, not long. Waxwork berries orange now, not open. What mean the different forms of apocynum leaves? Have we more than one species? The fruit of the triosteum is orange-colored now at Tupelo Cliff. *Polygonum tenue*, slender (I should say upright) knot-grass, there, too (July?). *Polygonum dumetorum*, climbing false-buckwheat. Apparently *Bidens cernua* (?), but is it nodding, and are not its leaves ever trifid? Its achenia are not obovate. Were the pods of my corallorhiza long enough to be the *multiflora*? *Vide* that small lespedeza-like plant at Tupelo Cliff.

 September 3, Friday, 1852: Captain McCluney informed a court-martialed seaman and attempted deserter, Otis Austin, accused of having struck an officer, of his sentence: He was disgraced to "Landsman" and, that not being punishment enough, he would be transferred to the *North Carolina* (no, not the state, the vessel), and he would be held aboard there in solitary confinement for a year, during the 1st month of which he would receive only bread and water.

Weimars Volkslied by Franz Liszt to words of Cornelius was performed for the initial time, in Weimar for the dedication of the [Goethe](#) and Schiller Memorial.

The 14th 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."



Sept. 3. 1 A.M., moon waning, to Conantum.

A warm night. A thin coat sufficient. I hear an apple fall, as I go along the road. Meet a man going to market thus early. There are no mists to diversify the night. Its features are very simple. I hear no whippoorwill [[Whip-poor-will](#)  [Caprimulgus vociferus](#)] or other bird. See no fireflies. Saw a whip-poor-will (?) flutter across the road. Hear the dumping sound of frogs on the river meadow, and occasionally a kind of croak as from a bittern [[Least Bittern](#)  [Ixobrychus exilis](#)?] there. It is very dewy, and I bring home much mud on my shoes. This is a peculiarity of night, — its dews, water resuming its reign. Return before dawn. Morning and evening are more attractive than midnight.



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I will endeavor to separate the tide in my thoughts, or what is due to the influence of the moon, from the current distractions and fluctuations. The winds which the sun has aroused go down at evening, and the lunar influence may then perchance be detected.

Of late I have not heard the wood thrush [[Wood Thrush](#)  *Catharus mustelina*].



October 17, Sunday, [1852](#): William Speiden, Jr. recorded that Episcopal clergyman the Reverend George Jones (1800-1870) officiated at his 1st religious service held on board the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* (this Reverend would serve as astronomer and geologist during the vessel's expedition to [Japan](#)).



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 17TH]



October 26, Tuesday, [1852](#): After laying in stores and coal in New-York, the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* anchored off Annapolis, Maryland as the fortress at the US Naval Academy awarded her a fulsome 13-gun salute: Bang! Somebody for sure must have been counting because they got the number **exactly** right.

[Henry Thoreau](#) was making repeated use of a source he obtained from the Society of Natural History Library in Boston, and then on October 3d had purchased a copy of, FAUNA AMERICANA; BEING A DESCRIPTION OF THE MAMMIFEROUS ANIMALS INHABITING NORTH AMERICA, by [Richard Harlan, M.D.](#) (published in 1825 in Philadelphia by the firm of A. Finley). Notes from this source would be placed in the Fact Book and in the Indian Notebook #6.

FAUNA AMERICANA



Oct. 26. P.M. — Walden and Cliffs.

There are no skaters on the pond now. It is cool today and windier. The water is rippled considerably. As I stand in the boat, the farther off the water, the bluer it is. Looking straight down, it is a dark green. Hence, apparently, the celestial blueness of those distant river-reaches, when the water is agitated, so that their surfaces reflect. the sky at the right angle. It is a darker blue than that of the sky itself. When I look down on the pond from the Peak, it is far less blue.

The blue-stemmed and white goldenrod apparently survive till winter, — push up and blossom anew. And a few oak leaves in sheltered nooks do not wither. *Aster undulatus*. Very few crickets for a long time. At this season we seek warm sunny lees and hillsides, as that under the pitch pines by Walden shore, where we cuddle and warm ourselves in the sun as by a fire, where we may get some of its reflected as well as direct heat.

Coming by Hayden's, I see that, the sun setting, its rays, which yet find some vapor to lodge on in the clear cold air, impart a purple tinge to the mountains in the northwest. Methinks it is only in cold weather I see this.

Richard Harlan M.D. in his "Fauna Americana" (1825) says of man that those parts are "most hairy, which in animals are most bare, viz. the axilæ and pubes."

Harlan says the vesperetilio catch insects during the crepusculum.

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

DOG

ABOUT THIS SOURCE



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November 20, Saturday, 1852: A forceful advocate for steam-powered ships, and for naval policies to secure our commercial interests and our military advantage, [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) was named commander-in-chief of the US Naval Forces, East India, [China](#) and [Japan](#) Seas (which is to say, of our nation's East India Squadron). He was tasked under the authority of President [Millard Fillmore](#) with commanding an overseas expedition to negotiate a trade treaty between the United States and [Japan](#).

Father [Isaac Hecker](#), C.S.S.R. wrote to [Orestes Augustus Brownson](#), Esq.

[Waldo Emerson](#) gave a literary dinner for [Arthur Hugh Clough](#) in Boston.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRIES IN HIS JOURNAL FOR NOVEMBER 19TH-20TH]



November 24, Wednesday, 1852: The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* set to sea from Norfolk, Virginia and began the crossing of the Atlantic Ocean, the 1st leg of its voyage to the [China](#) Seas and [Japan](#), and were expected to arrive in the Far East sometime in April.

[Waldo Emerson](#) departed on a major lecture tour of the midwest, scheduled to arrive in Cincinnati, Ohio on or about December 9th.

Mayor C.J. Brenham addressed the Common Council of [San Francisco](#).



Nov. 24. At this time last year the andromeda in the Ministerial Swamp was red. Now it has not turned from brown.



November 29, Monday, 1852: The sappers of the [Chinese Christian Army](#) detonated a final petard beneath the wall of Changsha, but hand-to-hand combat by footsoldiers of the true God once again failed to enter the breach in the wall and capture this [Chinese](#) city. Changsha's residents would not receive the incalculable benefits of salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. Their names would never be registered in the Book of Life.

At some point after the 27th of November, in Norfolk, Captain William J. McCluney after having been detached from the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi*, received a fond farewell as he was assigned command of the sidewheel steam frigate *USS Powhatan*. Mexican War veteran Sydney S. Lee (1802-1869) commanded the *Mississippi* under [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#). Henry A. Adams (1800-1869) served as Commander and Captain of the Fleet. As Chief of Staff to Commodore Perry, Adams would be involved in negotiations in [Japan](#) and then shepherd the signed Kanagawa treaty to the United States.



Nov. 29, 30, and Dec. 1. The snow which fell the 23d whitened the ground but a day or two. These have been the mildest and pleasantest days since November came in. November 29th, walked in P.M. to old stone bridge and down bank of river by Sam Barrett's house. When I stood on the caving swallow [[Bank Swallow](#) [Riparia riparia](#)] banks by the bridge about 4 o'clock, the sun sank below some clouds, or they rose above it, and it shone out with that bright, calm, memorable light which I have elsewhere described, lighting up the pitch pines and everything. The patches of winter rye, at this season so green by contrast, are an interesting feature in the landscape. When I got out of the wood, going toward Barrett's, the softness of the sunlight on the



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russet landscape, the smooth russet grassy fields and meadows, was very soothing, the sun now getting low in a November day. The stems and twigs of the maples, etc., looking down the river, were beautifully distinct. You see distinctly the form of the various clumps of maples and birches. Geese [[Canada Goose](#)  *Branta canadensis* (~~Wild Goose~~)] in river swam as fast as I walked. Many broken but apparently rather recent turtles' eggs on the bank.

 December 12, Sunday, [1852](#): With [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) heading the East India Squadron, the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* reached the 1st port of call on her expedition voyage. After crossing the Atlantic Ocean she dropped anchor off the town of Funchal on the Island of Madeira. The crossing had required 18 days after departure from Norfolk, Virginia.



Dec. 12. Cold at last. Saw a violet on the C. Miles road where the bank had been burned in the fall. *Bæomyces rosens* also. Tansy still fresh yellow by the Corner Bridge. From Cliffs I see snow on the mountains. Last night's rain was snow there, then. They now have a parti-colored look, like the skin of a pard, as if they were spread with a saddle-cloth for Boreas to ride. I hear of a cultivated rose blossoming in a garden in Cambridge within a day or two. The buds of the aspen are large and show wool in the fall.

 December 14, Tuesday, [1852](#): [Dr. Elisha Kent Kane](#) publicly announced his plan to lead a 2d Grinnell Expedition. He explained to the American Geographical Society of New York that on the other side of Smith Sound beyond the Arctic ice barrier he was going to sail into an open sea with milder skies and warmer air than the icy barrier margin, a sea just teeming with birds and fishes.

William Speiden, Jr. went ashore from the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* with a party of officers, to view the Madeira countryside by horseback.



Dec. 14. Tuesday. P.M. — To Assabet Stone Bridge. We have now the scenery of winter, though the snow is but an inch or two deep. The dried chalice of the *Rhexia Virginica* stand above the snow, and the cups of the blue-curls and the long sharp red capsules of the small (?) hypericum, etc., etc., johnswort; and a new era commences with the dried herbs. Ah, who can tell the serenity and clarity of a New England winter sunset? This could not be till the cold and the snow came. Ah, what isles those western clouds! in what a sea! Just after sunset there is a broad pillar of light for many minutes in the west.

 December 15, Wednesday, [1852](#): By this point [Richard Wagner](#) has finished the entire text of *Der Ring des Nibelungen*.

[Robert Schumann](#) received a vote of confidence by 22 members of the *Düsseldorf Allgemeiner Musikverein*, who object to Wilhelm Wortmann's letter appearing in the previous issue. Nevertheless, Schumann agreed to hand over the choral rehearsals to Julius Tausch.

The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* departed Madeira for the Cape of Good Hope.

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Dec. 15. Saw a small flock of geese [~~Canada Goose~~ **Branta canadensis** (~~Wild Goose~~)] go over.

One's *life*, the enterprise he is here upon, should certainly be a grand fact to consider, not a mean or insignificant one. A man should not live without a purpose, and that purpose must surely be a grand one. But is this fact of "our life" commonly but a puff of air, a flash in the pan, a smoke, a nothing? It does not afford arena for a tragedy.



December 17, Friday, 1852: The 1st Hawaiian cavalry was organized. Kawabungaaa!!

Sailing in sight of the Canary Islands, and with the northeast trade winds in her favor, the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* logged on this day as much distance by sail as by steam.

Henry Thoreau surveyed for Daniel Weston (5 acres shows Elisha Hagar nearby).



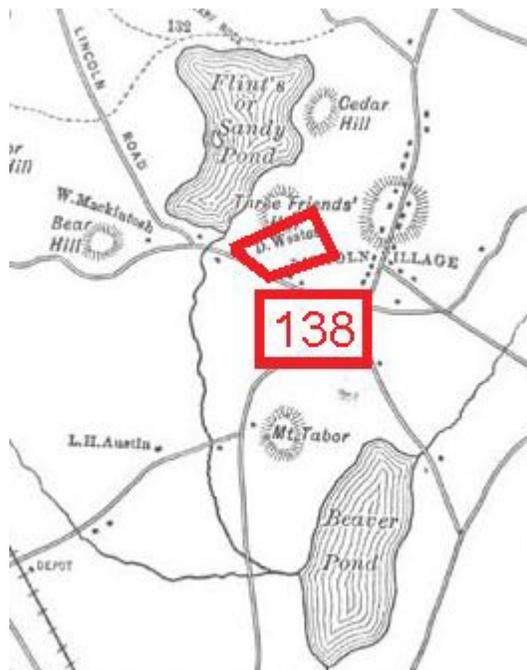
View Henry Thoreau's personal working drafts of his surveys courtesy of AT&T and the Concord Free Public Library:

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/138.htm



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR DECEMBER 17th]



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December 18, Saturday, 1852: [Horatio Greenough](#) died in asylum of some sort of brain problem.

On this day and the following one [Richard Wagner](#) was providing the initial reading of the complete poem *Der Ring des Nibelungen* at the home of François and Eliza Wille in Mariafeld, near Zürich.

William Speiden, Jr. reported a school of finback whales playing around the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* in the evening. One whale kept with boat for several hours while “making a very great show.” Flying fish and dolphins were also witnessed in abundance. The ocean was so teeming with life that it was hard to overcome the impulse to just go seek out and kill something.

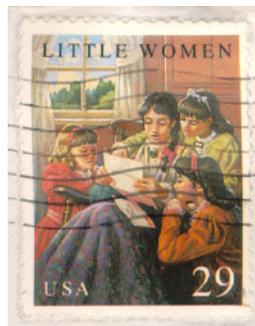
[Louisa May Alcott](#)'s 3d publication of which we presently have any knowledge, titled “The Masked Marriage,” appeared in [Dodge's Literary Museum](#), Volume VI, #2. View, below, how it would be represented as part of the March girls' publication “The Pickwick Portfolio” that would be enfolded into Chapter 10 of Volume I of [LITTLE WOMEN, OR, MEG, JO, BETH AND AMY](#) in 1869:

THE MASKED MARRIAGE

(A Tale Of Venice)

Gondola after gondola swept up to the marble steps, and left its lovely load to swell the brilliant throng that filled the stately halls of Count Adelon. Knights and ladies, elves and pages, monks and flower girls, all mingled gaily in the dance. Sweet voices and rich melody filled the air, and so with mirth and music the masquerade went on. “Has your Highness seen the Lady Viola to-night?” asked a gallant troubadour of the fairy queen who floated down the hall upon his arm.

“Yes, is she not lovely, though so sad! Her dress is well chosen, too, for in a week she weds Count Antonio, whom she passionately hates.”



Dec. 18. P.M. — To Annursnack.

Sedum Telephium, garden orpine or live-for-ever; I think this is the plant with a sort of pineapple-leaved and sheathed bulbs, on a rock between Cox's and Heywood's. [No. *Sempervivum tectorum*] Saw where a red squirrel (tinged gray) had been eating the hips of a sweet-briar, which had apparently grown recently, leaves still fresh and green. Very cold, windy day. The crust of the slight snow covered in some woods with the scales (bird-shaped) of the birch, and their seeds.



Loring's Pond beautifully frozen. So polished a surface, I mistook many parts of it for water. It was



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waved or watered with a slight dust nevertheless. Cracked into large squares like the faces of a reflector, it was so exquisitely polished that the sky and scudding dun-colored clouds, with mother-o'-pearl tints, were reflected in it as in the calmest water. I slid over it with a little misgiving, mistaking the ice before me for water. This is the first skating. Still the little ruby-crowned birds [Ruby-crowned Kinglet  *Regulus calendula* (~~Ruby-crested Wren~~)] about.



December 22, Wednesday, 1852: At the American Theatre, the Reverend T. Dwight Hunt addressed the New England Society of [San Francisco](#).

Captain William Holmes sailed the 430-ton 3-masted barque *Sacramento* out of Deptford, England with 220 government immigrants to Australia.

Late in the evening the crew of the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* warship viewed “the whole heavens to the southward & westward” lit up “beautifully, by the Zodiacal lights.” — And, that entire gorgeous display lay well beyond the reach of their greatest gun!



December 22. Wednesday. Surveying the Hunt Farm this and the 20th.

C. says that Flint's Pond was frozen *over* yesterday. A rambling, rocky, wild, moorish pasture, this of Hunt's, with two or three great white oaks to shade the cattle, which the farmer would not take fifty dollars apiece for, though the ship-builder wanted them. The snow balled so badly to-day while I was working in the swamp, that I was set up full four inches. It is pleasant, cutting a path through the bushes in a swamp, to see the color of the different woods, — the yellowish dogwood, the green prinus (?), and, on the upland, the splendid yellow barberry. The squirrel, rabbit, fox tracks, etc., attract the attention in the new-fallen snow; and the squirrel nests, bunches of grass and leave high in the trees, more conspicuous if not larger now, or the glimpse of a meadow (?) mouse, give occasion for a remark. You cannot go out so early but you will find the track of some wild creature. Returning home just after the sun had sunk below the horizon, I saw from N. Barrett's a fire made: by boys on the ice near the Red Bridge, which looked like a bright reflection of a setting sun from the water under the bridge, so clear, so little lurid, in this winter evening air.



December 25, Saturday, 1852: The Placer, [California Herald](#) instanced that Mr. Wallis and 2 others had dug out of Baltimore Ravine a piece of gold weighing \$107 and had sold it for \$112. At Spanish Flats a specimen 20 ounces and 5 dollars which equalled to \$350.00 had been found. On the down side, however, “The failure through the fall had been miserable and severe.” Mining on the Middle Fork was entirely suspended for the winter. In the Sunday flood on the South Fork the costly and Haren Bridge at Salmon Falls had been swept away. “The bars on all the rivers are flooded and mining operation suspended entirely.”

William Speiden, Jr.'s 1st [Christmas](#) spent at sea and away from home was observed on board as a holiday. [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) offered a toast to the officers.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR DECEMBER 25th]



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December 29, Wednesday, 1852: [Henry Thoreau](#) accessed, by way of the library of the Society of Natural History in Boston, [Thaddeus A. Culbertson](#)'s "Journal of an Expedition to the Mauvais Terres and the Upper Missouri, 1850," on page 84-145 of the SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION. 5TH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1851).



THADDEUS A. CULBERTSON

(Thoreau would make notes on this reading in his Indian Notebook #6 and in his Fact Book.)

Losing the advantage of the winds, the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* switched to steam power.

A Spiritualist convention began in New-York's Masonic Temple. [Jonathan Buffum](#) of Lynn, Massachusetts would serve as this convention's chairman, Mr. Haywood of Milford, Alfred Bingham of New-York, and the Reverend Mr. Loveland of [Charlestown, Massachusetts](#) would be their Vice Presidents, and Messrs. C.H. White and S.C. Hewitt would serve as their Secretaries. A newspaper reporter was present and taking notes, and would soon file a report full of mockery and diatribe.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR DECEMBER 29th]

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[Marietta Alboni](#) would be appearing on this evening and the following one, in *Cenerentola* at the Broadway Theater. Soon she would be appearing in Donizetti's *Daughter of the Regiment* and then in Bellini's *Sonnambula* and *Norma* (all this would be witnessed by [Walt Whitman](#)).





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1853

➡ 1853: Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) was sent by President [Millard Fillmore](#) to establish trade with the [Japanese](#) islands, which had since the 17th Century been entirely isolated from the outside world. On the islands of Ryukyu and Bonin, the Commodore was making three preliminary visits before being able to go directly to the main islands of the archipelago. While waiting for a reply from Japan he would make a naval demonstration by landing marines twice, and would secure a coaling concession from the ruler of Naha on Okinawa; he would also demonstrate in the Bonin Islands with the purpose of securing facilities for commerce there. Finally Commodore Perry's four ships were allowed by the Japanese authorities to drop anchor in Edo Bay.

US MILITARY INTERVENTIONS

From a remote island, Commodore Perry's expedition retrieved a castaway Japanese sailor named Sentaro, whom they proceeded to christen "[Sam Patch](#)," presumably because as a castaway he was in rags. This is what he looked like after he had a chance to get cleaned up (and this happens to be the very 1st photograph ever made of a Japanese person):



Read [Henry Thoreau's Journal for January 1853 \(æf. 35\)](#)

➡ January 1, Saturday, [1853](#): Prohibition went into effect in New Brunswick but would soon be repealed.

Aboard the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi*, sailing at this point from Madeira to the [China Seas](#) and [Japan](#), the peaceful start of the New Year was broken in the wee hours when a sick crew member fainted and fell overboard. He was rescued. With the morning light, another accident on board endangered the life of a fireman who was cleaning machinery. He, too, was saved. Everything being A-OK, and rank having its rewards, the officers of the ship were treated to a special meal of mince pies and boned turkeys. William Speiden, Jr.'s father, William Speiden, Sr., the ship's purser, took this opportunity to raise a toast to [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#): "may the Expedition which he has undertaken be successful."

Abel Shawk, a locksmith, Alexander Bonner Latta, a locomotive builder, and Miles Greenwood, the head of the Eagle Ironworks on the banks of the Miami and Erie Canal near [Cincinnati, Ohio](#), presented a new fire engine to the city of Cincinnati. This was the 1st practical horse-drawn steam fire engine in the United States of America.



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[Gregory Blaxland](#) committed [suicide](#) in New South Wales, [Australia](#) at the age of 74.

Gold exports for [California](#) for the year 1852 had amounted to \$45,587,803. According to the Placer [Herald](#), there was a ferry in operation at Tamaroo Bar on the North Fork of the American River, and 3 miles below it another ferry at Oregon Bar, and 6 miles below that another ferry at Manhattan Bar, one capable of withstanding the severest freshets, was in process of being established.



[The Lancet Journal](#) published John Manley's "[Animalculæ In Black Vomit.](#)"



[Henry Thoreau](#) recorded in his journal that [Professor Louis Agassiz](#) considered [Dr. Thaddeus William Harris](#) to be the greatest [entomologist](#):



January 1, Saturday, 1853: This morning we have something between ice & frost on the trees, &c. The whole earth as last night but much more is encased in ice, which on the plowed fields makes a singular icy coat a quarter of an inch or more in thickness. About 9 o'clock Am I go to Lees via Hubbard's wood & Holden's Swamp & the river side – for the middle is open. The stones & cow dung & the walls too are all cased in ice on the north side– The latter look like alum rocks. This – not frozen mist or frost but frozen drizzle collected around the slightest cores gives prominence to the least withered herbs & grasses– Where yesterday was a plain smooth field appears now a teeming crop of fat icy herbage. The stems of the herbs on their north sides are enlarge from 10 to 100 times. The addition is so universally on the north side that a traveller could not lose the points of compass today though it should never so dark – for every blade of grass would serve to guide him – telling from which side the storm came yesterday. Mere straight stems of grasses stand up like white batons or scepters and make conspicuous foreground to the landscape, – from 6 inches to 3 feet high. C. thought that these fat icy branches on the withered grass & herbs had no nucleus but looking closer I showed him the fine black wiry threads on which they impinged – which made him laugh with surprise.– The very cowdung is incrusted & the clover & sorrel send up a dull green gleam through their icy coat like strange plants– The pebbles in the ploughed land are seen as through a transparent coating of gum. Some weeds bear the ice in masses – some like the trumpet weed & tansy in balls for each dried flower. What a crash of jewells as you walk. The most careless walker who never deigned to look at these humble weeds before cannot help observing them now. This is why the the herbage is left to stand dry in the fields all winter. Upon a solid foundation of ice stand out pointing in all directions between NW & NE or within the limits of 90 degrees little spicula or crystalized points half an inch or more in length.

Upon the dark glazed plowed ground where a mere wiry stem rises its north side is thickly clad with these snow white spears like some Indian's head dress as if it had attracted all the frost. I saw a Prinos bush full of large berries by the wall in [Hubbard's](#) field– Standing on the west side the contrast of the red berries with their white incrustation or prolongation on the north – was admirable. I thought I had never seen the berries so dazzlingly bright. The whole north side of the bush berries & stock was beautifully incrusted. And when I went round to the N side the redness of the berries came softend through & tinging the allied snow white bush – like an evening sky beyond. These adjoined snow or ice berries being beset within the limits of 90 degrees on the N with those icy prickles or spicula between which the red glow & some times the clear red itself appeared gave it the appearance of a raspberry bush full of over ripe fruit.

Standing on the north side of a bush – or tree looking against the sky – you see only a white ghost of a tree without a mote of earthiness, but as you go round it the dark core comes into view. It makes all the odds imaginable whether you are travelling N or S.– The drooping birches along the edges of woods are the most feathery fairy-like ostrich plumes of the trees, and the color of their trunks increases the delusion. The weight of the ice gives to the pines the forms which northern trees like the firs constantly wear. Bending & twisting the branches – for the twigs & plumes of the pines being frozen remain as the wind held them–& new portions of the trunk are exposed. Seen from the N. there is no greenness in the pines–& the character of the tree is changed. The willows along the edge of the river look like sedge in meadows.

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The sky is overcast and a fine snowy hail & rain is falling—& these ghostlike trees make a scenery which reminds you of Spitzbergen. I see now the beauty of the causeway by the bridge – alders below swelling into the road overtopped by willows & maples. The fine grasses & shrubs in the meadow rise to meet & mingle with the drooping willows & the whole make an indistinct impression like a mist & between this the road runs toward those white ice-clad ghostly or fairy trees in the distance – toward spirit-land. The pines are as white as a counterpane with raised embroidery & white tassels & fringes. Each fascicle of leaves or needles is held apart by an icy club surrounded by a little snowy or icy ball. Finer than the saxon arch is this path running under the pines roofed not with crossing boughs but drooping ice-covered twigs in irregular confusion. See in the midst of this stately pine towering like the solemn ghost of a tree – the white ice-clad boughs of other trees appearing, of a dif. character Sometimes oaks with leaves –incrusted– or fine sprayed maples or walnuts. But finer than all this red oak – its leaves incrusted like shields 1/4 of an inch thick—& a thousand fine spicula like long serrations at right angles with their planes upon their edges. It has an indescribably rich effect – with color of the leaf coming softened through the ice a delicate fawn color.—of many shades. Where the plumes of the pitch pines are short & spreading close upon the trunk – sometimes perfect cups or rays are formed. Pitch pines present rough massy grenadier plumes – with each a darker spot or cavity in the end where you look in to the buds. I listen to the booming of the pond as if it were a reasonable creature. I return at last in a rain and am coated with a glaze like the fields.

Being at Cambridge day before yesterday – Sibley told me that [Agassiz](#) told him that [Harris](#) was the greatest [entomologist](#) in the world, and gave him permission to repeat his remark. As I stood on the top of a ladder he came along with his hand full of papers—& inquired do you value autographs? – No, I do not, I answered slowly & gravely.— Oh – I didn't know but you did– I had some of Governor Dunlap.—said he retreating

After talking with uncle Charles the other night about the worthies of this country Webster & the rest as usual considering who were geniuses & who not – I showed him up to bed & when I had got into bed myself I heard his chamber door opened – after 11 'oclock – and he called out in an earnest stenterian voice loud enough to wake the whole house– “Henry! Was John Quincy Adams a genius”? – No, I think not” was my reply– Well I did n't think he was answered he.





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January 3, Monday, 1853: On the basis of a document that had been signed by [Governor Washington Hunt](#) while he had still been a Whig official of the state of [New York](#), [Solomon Northup](#) was freed. –That he had been a black slave was something that some white man had just made up about him.

The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* crossed this planet's Equator, which is of course an entirely imaginary lion running freely around and around our circumference. The ship encountered not even a bump although, it goes without saying, there were of course the usual celebrations.

The [Daily Alta California](#) printed a proposal to end flooding in the city of [Sacramento](#):

MESSRS. EDITORS: – It is not for the Sacramentans to get entirely disheartened, or for people to prophesy the annihilation or removal of Sacramento City; for so long as the mines are workable and are worked in the North, so long will Sacramento be a station or stopping-place for the miners; and being a stopping-place, it must be a place calculated to contain the necessaries of life; and an annual flood will not tend to remove the city.

Propositions have been suggested, one after the other, to keep the water out. One proposes to erect suitable levees; another to put the city on stilts; another one proposes to form a course for the American River, commencing just beyond Sutter's Fort, at the sudden bend of the river there, and ending about five miles below the city, and another proposition is to fill the city up entirely. The first and third together are plausible, but could be accomplished only at an immense expense, and the levee would be liable to leak. Although the proposed new course of the American would convey away a good deal back water, the second proposition is entirely out of the way. But the last one meets my ideas the best, and might be done at a very little expense in the following way.

Now that the Sacramento and Nevada Railway is building, let a company be established for the purpose of conveying the quartz rock to the city from the neighborhood of Nevada. That which is not sufficiently rich for the mining companies to work, as also that which has been worked, to be employed in filling in the city. The expense of conveyance would be but trifling; if, as I suppose, there is a considerable descent in the road from Nevada to the city, it would require but a small amount of power, if any, to bring a requisite amount to the city. Quartz rock might be obtained at a nearer point to Sacramento City than Nevada, and I believe it would be an excellent and remunerative undertaking for any company. It would test the quartz which has never had a blast before, with the chance of coming across some good leads which would pay well for working; and last, though not least, would secure Sacramento from all danger of the floods, render the spot healthy at the same time, besides giving it excellent roads. The citizens would then feel secure, because, at an expense very inconsiderable, they could have their lots filled in. The practicability of the suggestion I leave to the judgment of your readers. A.H.S.

[Ellery Channing](#) wrote in his journal “No ice on Walden, little on the river.”



January 3d: Down RR to Lincoln Bridge.

The evergreen appear to relieve themselves soonest of the ice, perhaps because of the reflection from their leaves. Those trees like the maples & hickories which have most spray and branches make the

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finest show of ice. This afternoon it snows—the snow lodging on the ice which still adheres to the trees. The more completely the trees are changed to ice trees—to spirits of trees the finer— Instead of the minute frost work on a window—you have whole forests of silver boughs. I refer to the last 2 days. The brattling of the ice is not that the word. Along some causeway or fence in the meadow the trees are changed into silvery wisps. Nothing dark met the eye—but a silvery sheen—precisely as if the whole tree trunk boughs & twigs were converted into burnished silver— You exclaimed at every hedge- row. Some times a clump of birches fell over every way in graceful ostrich plumes



all raying from one centre. Then the beautifully checkered ice in the ruts where the water had been soaked up—surpassing the richest tracery of watchcases! Suddenly all is converted to crystal. The world is a [crystal palace](#). The trees stiff & drooping and encased in ice looked as if they were sculptured in marble. especially the evergreens. I love nature partly **because** she is not man, but a retreat from him. None of his institutions control or pervade her. There a different kind of right prevails. In her midst I can be glad with an entire gladness. If this world was all man I could not stretch myself— I should lose all hope. He is constraint; she is freedom to me. He makes me wish for another world— She makes me content with this. None of the joys she supplies is subject to his rules & definitions. What he touches he taints— In thought he moralizes— One would think that no free joyful labor was possible to him. How infinite & pure the least pleasure of which nature is basis compared with the congratulation of mankind. The joy which nature yields is like afforded by the frank words of one we love.

Man, man is the devil,
The source of all evil.

Methinks that these prozers with their saws & their laws do not know how glad a man can be. What wisdom—what warning can prevail against gladness? There is no law so strong which a little gladness may not transgress.—I have a room all to my self; it is Nature It is a place beyond the jurisdiction of human governments. Pile up your books the records of sadness—your saws & your laws—Nature is glad outside—& her merry worms within will ere long topple them down. There is a prairie beyond your laws.— Nature is a prairie for outlaws. There are two worlds—the post office & Nature— I know them both. I continually forget mankind & their institutions as I do a bank—

—Well now this afternoon the snow is lodging on all this ice— Is this the winter gnat I find in the snow with 6 legs a long narrow cylindrical body about 1/6 of an inch & the 2 narrow wings 1/3 longer.? 2 feelers. Walden not yet frozen. The red-crowns [**Common Redpoll**  *Carduelis flammea*] here still. They appear to frequent one clump of birches a long time. for here the snow beneath is covered with the seeds they have loosened while elsewhere there are none. They hang by the twigs while they peck the catkins—and others are busy on the snow beneath picking up what drops—they are continually in motion with a jingling twitter & occasional mew—& suddenly when disturbed go off with a loud jingle like the motion of a whole bag of nuts.

The air is thick & darkened with falling snow, and the woods are being draped with it in white wreaths. This is winter. They are putting on their white great coats. The woodland road is spotless white. The color of the pond depends on the light. It is now dark—in the storm. True to its nature between earth & air, it is both green & blue— Let clear serene weather come & illustrate its depth & it is green—let the air descend on it & toss up its surface in waves & it is blue like the sky.



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January 10, Monday, 1853: Jules Massenet was examined once again for entrance to the Paris Conservatoire. His performance of a Beethoven sonata got him admitted to a piano class.

Charles Reade's "Gold" premiered in London.

Louis Moreau Gottschalk arrived in New-York from France, on his 1st visit to the United States of America since 1842.

The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* reached anchor off Jamestown Island, St. Helena, where the American Consul came aboard.

One wonders who were the other 3 Concord ladies, whom Henry Thoreau carried on this afternoon for a chestnut expedition (the "aunt M." mentioned would of course have been Maria Thoreau).



January 10th 53: Went a chestnutting this afternoon to Smiths(?) Woodlot near the turnpike. Carried 4 ladies– I raked. We got 6 1/2 quarts – the ground being bare & the leaves not frozen– The 4th remarkably mild day. I found 35 chestnuts in a little pile under the end of a stick under the leaves near within a foot of what I should call a gallery of a meadow mouse– These galleries were quite common as I raked. There was no nest nor apparent cavity about this store. aunt M. found another with 16 in it Many chestnuts are still in the burrs on the ground. Aunt found a twig – which had apparently fallen prematurely with 8 small burrs all within the compass of 5 or 6 inches & all but one full of nuts. The galleries above named were evidently permanent & not made by one trip.



January 11, Tuesday, 1853: In West Newton, Mrs. Elizabeth "Eliza" Palmer Peabody, mother of the Peabody sisters Miss Elizabeth Palmer Peabody (May 16, 1804-January 3, 1894), Mrs. Mary Tyler Peabody Mann (November 16, 1807-February 11, 1887), and Mrs. Sophia Amelia Peabody Hawthorne (September 21, 1809-February 26, 1871), as well as of Nathaniel Cranch Peabody (1811-1882), George Francis Peabody (1813-1839), Wellington Peabody (1815-1837), and Catharine Putnam Peabody (1819-1819), died at the age of 74 (the body would be interred in the Howard Street Burial Ground of Salem, Massachusetts).

William Speiden, Jr. joined a party that went ashore on the island of St. Helena to visit the gravesite of Emperor Napoléon I and other landmarks related to this Corsican opportunist's time in exile (the actual body parts, or most of them, had of course been relocated to Paris in 1840). When the ship would continue on her way toward the Cape of Good Hope, Speiden would make notes about his tourist day and tell us about some of the details he supposed he had picked up from the locals in regard to the history of this island.

On this day and the following one, Henry Thoreau would be surveying an Acton woodlot, on Westford Road, then called the Road to Groton, that Elijah Davis was selling to John LeGrosse. Three plots were made of the 2 farms and woodlot near the Acton line. D.H. Wetherbee lived nearby:¹⁶



January 11th & 12: Surveying for John Le Grosse. He says that he saw blackbirds about a week ago. He says that the most snow we have had this winter–(it has not been more than 1 inch deep) has been only a "robin snow" as it is called. *i.e.* a snow which does not drive off the robins [American Robin  Turdus migratorius]. By a bound of his woodlot in Carlisle observed a peculiar oak–very smooth & light colored bark — which his brother who knows them in Wayland calls a chestnut oak– I am not quite sure I did not see a chest. oak leaf at any rate– V. again. Says they will split like chestnut & are easy to cut. J. says they have both red & white huckleberries near his house. Described an "Old Fort" about the size & shape of a 16. I wonder who this "Captain Hutchinson" was, who could be dunned for a drink. Would he have been the Peter Hutchinson whom Thoreau would mention on February 2d and on July 7th, 1859 in his journal, or would Peter have been the Captain's son?

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cellar which he saw in 1816 perhaps across the river near Heywood's sawmill. This man is continually drinking cider –thinks it corrects some mistake in him –wishes he had a barrel of it in the woods – if he had known he was to be out so long would have brought a jug-full – will dun Capt. Hutchinson for a drink on his way home. This or rum runs in his head if not in his throat all the time. Is interested in Juniper berries –gooseberries currants &c– whether they will make wine — has recipes for this — eats the juniper berries raw as he walks. Tobacco is another staff of life with him. Thinks with others that he has metals on his farm which the divining rod might find but is convertible on this point.

 January 24, Monday, 1853: [Abraham Lincoln](#) having attended, in Springfield, Illinois, a Sunday temperance lecture by the [Reverend James Smith, D.D.](#), pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, he and 38 others signified that “The undersigned having listened with great satisfaction to the discourse, on the subject of temperance, delivered by you on last evening, and believing, that, if published and circulated among the people, it would be productive of good; would respectfully request a copy thereof for publication.”

[THE TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT](#)

The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* arrived at Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope, Table Bay, Africa (whereupon they would be able to “take a left”).



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR JANUARY 24TH]

 January 27, Thursday, 1853: [Marietta Alboni](#) appeared in the title role of Bellini's *Norma* at Metropolitan Hall on Manhattan.



Edward Neufville Tailer, Jr. complained in his diary at the age of 20 that someone had just attempted to correct his attitude by charging that he “lacked energy, and wanted that bustling, and go ahead spirit.”

“[The Pioneer](#), a monthly [West Coast](#) magazine, was begun by the firm of Lecount & Strong.

For a number of days William Speiden, Jr. would be making visits to the southern tip of Africa, while the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* was being coaled, repaired, and repainted, and 6,000 gallons of water were being brought aboard.



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January 27th: Trench says a wild man—is a **willed** man. Well then a man of will who does what he wills—or wishes—a man of hope and of the future tense—for not only the obstinate is willed but far more the constant & persevering— The obstinate man properly speaking is one who will not. The perseverance of the saints is positive willedness—not a mere passive willingness— The fates are wild for they **will**—& the Almighty is wild above all. What are our fields but felds or felled woods—they bear a more recent name than the woods suggesting that previously the earth was covered with woods. Always in the new country A field is a clearing.

RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH



January 30, Sunday, 1853: The Emperor Napoléon III got married again with Countess Eugenia de Montijo, this time at the Tuileries. (What the emperor tells you twice is true.)

William Speiden, Jr. attended worship services at Christ Church in Cape Town, South Africa.

In the evening there was near-riot in Phillipsville, New York as word spread that a local white daughter, a Miss Mary E. King, an abolitionist minister's daughter, was planning to wed an instructor at the integrated New-York Central College who was a mulatto, being one-quarter black, a William Gustavus Allen, Professor of Rhetoric and Greek (DISAMBIGUATION: this is not the William Allen of Concord):



<http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/1/7/8/7/17875/17875-h/17875-h.htm>



January 30th: The most common & conspicuous green leaf on the ground when the snow is off at this season—as at present is that of the butter-cup—sorrel is also very common & johnswort—& the purplish gnaphaliums— There is also the early crowfoot in some places—strawberry—mullein & thistle leaves—& hawkweeds—&c &c.

On Cliffs. The westering sun yet high above the horizon, but concealed by clouds, shoots down to earth on every side vast misty rays like the frame of a tent—to which clouds perchance are the canvass—under which a whole country rests— The northern & southern rays appear very much slanted & long—those between us & the west steeper & shorter.

What I have called the shruboak Plain contains comparatively few shrub-oaks—rather young red—& white & it may be some scarlet (?) The shruboak leaf is the firmest & best preserved The white oak is the most sere & curled & brittle—frequently with discolored mouldlike spots.

Read  **Henry Thoreau's Journal for February 1853 (æf. 35)**

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 February 1, Tuesday, 1853: Paulina Wright Davis's The Una began publication out of Providence, Rhode Island and Washington DC:



The masthead proclaimed it “A Paper Devoted to the Elevation of Women.” This was among the 1st such periodicals (Amelia Bloomer had begun her temperance newspaper The Lily in 1849) and was definitely the



1st to be owned, edited, and published by a woman. The periodical would be printed for a couple of years before collapsing in 1855 due to lack of funds.

FEMINISM

William Speiden, Jr. recorded the personal observations of Seyolo (Siyolo) (*circa* 1813-1878), a chief of the Ndlambe Xhosa, and his young wife Nomise (Naomi), who were in confinement at Rochester Castle (Siyolo had been sentenced to life imprisonment following capture in battle and would be transferred to Robben Island in 1855). His father the purser, meanwhile, visited Constantia, a suburb of Cape Town, South Africa, where he would be impressed by the beauty of the scenery and the abundance of the crops.



Feb. 1. Surveying the Hunt farm.

Saw a duck  in the river; different kind from the last. Dr. Bartlett tells me that it was Adam Winthrop, a *grandson* of the *Governor*, who sold this farm to Hunt in 1701. I saw the old window, some eighteen inches square, of diamond squares, four or five inches across, set in lead, on the back side [of] the house.

 February 2, Wednesday, 1853: At Cape Town, 7 seamen deserted the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi*, prize gunboat of the American fleet — my goodness, why ever would they have done a thing like that?

Franz Liszt completed his Piano Sonata in b in Weimar.

The following literary notices appeared in Frederick Douglass' Paper:

GRAHAM, for March, has been in our possession many days. It was issued before its wonted time, and will, we hope, be duly noticed by all the liberal journals of the country. Mr. Graham sends with it the following:

“CARD TO THE PRESS.

In order to make *our* position particularly clear, we have printed at page 365 a reply to the personalities and threats of a portion of our exchanges, and send this slip — to direct attention to it — to every one of the



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nineteen hundred editors with whom we exchange. We meet the question fairly, and with determination to know how many of Graham's readers go for the gag law. If it is to be a cold shower bath, let us have it at once, lady and gentlemen agitators! We shall take it like a philosopher, but have no fear of much of a 'shower,' from people whose vocation it is to make [']a very great cry over a very little wool,' when grief does not cost a sixpence.

We request the worshipers of English opinion and 'liberty' to read at page 351 'The *British* slave system,' and to answer it!

For the rest, 'Graham' the Magazine, may speak for Graham the Editor."

And "the Editor" does speak; yet neither wisely—nor well—nor to the purpose. We are not surprised that the ungenerous and ungentlemanly attack ("mis-called a Review") upon "*Uncle Tom's Cabin*," in GRAHAM for February, called forth indignant bursts of censure from that portion of Editors who dare to speak out. Had we space, we would quote largely from that article, that those among our readers who do not see GRAHAM might read and judge for themselves. We would, moreover, observe that towards the close of this graceful and grammatical composition, Graham says, "*For the present we are done with this subject. We hope we are done with it forever.*"

We have not "done with the subject" on which the article treats; but (to speak candidly) while we deeply regretted to see the pages of GRAHAM disgraced by "*Black Letters; or, Uncle Tom's Foolery in Literature*," we thought there was a mistake about it—that the March number would correct it, and we never dreamt that Graham, the Editor, would endorse the miserable review in question. Yet so it is. We admire real "*independence*;" but is it not possible that some confusion exists in Mr. Graham's brain between the terms "*independence*" and *servility*?

We cannot resist the inclination we feel to give our readers a little of "*the feast of reason and flow of soul*" we enjoyed while perusing the aforesaid article; and we, therefore, shall glean, for their especial benefit, a few scattered ears from the rich harvest outspread before us.

"In the sudden hurrah which bursts from the throats of the many over the 'Cabin literature,' we feel no certainty that Milton, Shakspeare, Byron, Wordsworth, Scott, and Cooper, are in immediate danger of being burned by the hands of the common hangman, to the tantaralara of an African dance."

* * * * *

"Our female agitators have abandoned Bloomers in despair, and are just now bestride a new hobby—an intense love of black folks, in fashionable novels! Flannel ceases to be cut into garments for the children of Africa, but they are most intolerably drenched with



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ink—on the principle, we suppose, of 'like to like.'"

* * * * *

"Sambo is a pretty good gold-digger, just now—work him who will; and those who

Would not have a slave to till the ground,

use him pretty severely in the press-room. — We have a regular incursion of the blacks. The shelves of booksellers groan under the weight of Sambo's woes, done up in covers! What a dose we have had and are having!—The population of readers has gone a wool-gathering! Our 'Helots of the West' are apparently at a premium with the publishers just now; and we have Northern folks as anxious to make money of them, as the Southrons can be for their lives. A plague of all black faces! We hate this niggerism, and hope it may be done away with. We cannot tolerate negro-slavery of this sort — we are abolitionists on this question."

* * * * *

"The first of these works is *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. It has a certain feminine vivacity of style which takes the reader, in spite of its faults — and we, therefore, giving the lady the *pas*, call her up first for examination. — Regarding the success of the 'Cabin' — the exaggerated success, we believe — we have been trying to account for it, independently of the merits, which are not sufficient cause for such an effect."

* * * * *

"The Reception of the 'Cabin' in England was very genial — it was so pleasant to pray for that reprobate, Jonathan! The *Times*, to be sure, and a few other shrewd organs, saw the thing in all its bearings, and gave a very blunt opinion of it. But, in a sentimental way, Lord Carlisle —our sometime visitor, Lord Morpeth— and the moralists, had the advantage of these cosmopolitan critics, as far as the curious public were concerned. Indeed, the fact of word coming out in favor of anything of the kind was enough to give it instant vogue among the English, and his lordship's recommendation, was certainly the strongest foreign puff of the 'Cabin.' The *N.Y. Post*, and kindred presses, certainly helped to sell their thousands; but the Earl of Carlisle sold his ten thousands. When once any sort of book is talked of, for anyone reason or other, people must have it, in self-defence, and so *vires acquirit cundo* — it gathers as it goes, like a rolling snowball in the Oberland. Half the machinery of the whole business would have procured nearly as great a notoriety for any book thoroughly spiced with horrors."

* * * * *

"The book is vastly overrated, and will soon find its level." ... "It is clumsily constructed, and



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inartificial." ... "The plot is feeble; it is strung and tacked together in a very unworkmanlike way." ... "But after doing justice to the spirit and earnestness of the work, we are still happy to think it has not power enough to cause as much mischief as some have supposed."

* * * * *

"Indeed, were Mrs. Stowe's book ten times more meritorious and forcible than it is, the existing sense of this community, and its growing tendencies — political or otherwise — would neutralize it. It is hopeless to look for any more exasperations on account of slavery, or to think it can ever be done away with by vituperation or the high hand. The Times was right in saying that, as a means of abolition, Uncle Tom was a mistake and would be a failure."

* * * * *

"We have taken up the 'Cabin literature' for the purpose of saying frankly what we think of the whole business — for it is a *business*, and nothing more. We have spoken temperately and critically of the books, indignantly and perhaps warmly of the spirit which pervades them, and we say by the way of emphasis, that we despise the whole concern — the spirit which dictated them is false. They are altogether speculations in patriotism — a question of dollar and cents, not of slavery or liberty. The whole literary atmosphere has become tainted with them — they are corrupt altogether and abominable. Many of the persons who are urging on this negro crusade into the domain of letters, have palms with an infernal itch for gold. — They would fire the whole republic if they could but rake the gems and precious stones from the ashes. They care nothing for principle, honor or right, and though anxious to be regarded as martyrs, the chief concern is about the stakes. He would be an explorer worthy of all honor who could stumble upon a truth which they would not sacrifice for shillings. For the present we are done with this subject. We hope we are done with it forever."

In his criticism on "UNCLE TOM," Graham seems to be left "alone in his glory;" for all the most distinguished Reviewers in Great Britain, France, and Germany, have pronounced the book one of the most wonderful on record: the most celebrated American critics unite in doing it honor; at the present time. Several of the *Southern States* are sending extensive orders to Messrs. Jewett, for "*Uncle Tom's Cabin*;" and we doubt whether Graham's *coup de main* will succeed with his Southern patrons; for we do believe that there is more nobleness of character, more generosity, and more straightforwardness among Southern slaveholders, than among Northern cringers to the slave power.

Of the article in the March number of Graham, to which he invites his readers' attention, we have not much to say.

Recrimination is the favorite artillery of the defenders and abettors of the slave system. This article is a sort of second edition of Mrs. Julia Tyler's letter to the ladies of England.



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Though there may be, perhaps, rather more vinegar in the mixture. The beggars of London, the *Irish* paupers, the miners, the factory workers, are all brought forward, as illustrations of the extremes of wretchedness—nor are the millions of India forgotten! To read Graham, and *Graham only*, any one would believe the British Empire to be the greatest of despotisms, and every other spot of earth a paradise.

In parading his hatred to Britain, and British institutions, before the American people, Graham doubtless diplomatically designs to cater to the public taste, and to win applause and subscribers. How far he will succeed remains to be seen.

We shall close our brief and imperfect remarks with a few appropriate paragraphs from the world-renowned pen of DOUGLAS JERROLD—J.G.

“There can be no doubt that there is much truth in what MRS. AMERICA is made to speak. But the moral destitution, the moral blackness of a thousand English outcasts do not make five hundred free negroes of so many slaves. Very true it is that we have wretched, wo-begone children in alleys; that we have “illicit” costermongers; that our needlewomen have starved or, at times, anticipated death by a plunge from Waterloo bridge; true that there has been grinding misery in factories; misery unceasing, remorseless as the machinery once set at work. But all this evil—all this degrading, crushing woe, mocking—as with the mockery of a devil—our professions as a Christian people, all this is as nothing to the all-blighting curse and all-encompassing horror of slavery!—There is something still left—some drop of comfort, some ray of light in this misery—this bitterness—this darkness where slavery is set. We may not snatch one of these alley children from the dirt, and sell it like a hog: we may not separate frail costermonger JOE from his frail companion SAL. POOR SAL may have a child at her breast and one or two at what they call a home: yet JOE and SAL are safe from the slave-buyer, and may love on and quarrel on, and their young barbarians may still dispute with the pigs on the dust-heap—no human flesh-dealer daring to cast his blood-bargaining eyes upon them. This is something. And this something—no small thing, surely, in this human life of ours, whether passed on Stafford velvet pile, or stiflingly breathed in Slush-lane—this something is till the ray of God’s own light and justice, however foul and dark and wo-begone the place it penetrates.”



Feb. 2. The *Stellaria media* is full of frost-bitten blossoms, containing stamens, etc., still and half-grown buds. Apparently it never rests.



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February 3, Thursday, 1853: [Harriet Martineau](#) derogated [Charlotte Brontë's](#) [VILLETTE](#), an astonishing piece of writing, her finest novel, in the [Daily News](#):

All the female characters, in all their thoughts and lives, are full of one thing, or are regarded by the reader in the light of that one thought – love. It begins with the child of six years old, at the opening –a charming picture– and it closes with it at the last page; and, so dominant is this idea – so incessant is the writer's tendency to describe the need of being loved, that the heroine who tells her own story, leaves the reader at last under the uncomfortable impression of her having either entertained a double love, or allowed one to supersede another without notification of the transition. It is not thus in real life. There are substantial, heartfelt interests for women of all ages, and under ordinary circumstances, quite apart from love.

(The author would be deeply wounded and, with an angry exchange of letters, their friendship would end.)

The American side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* went back to sea to complete its voyage into Far Eastern waters.



Feb. 3. Saw three ducks  in the river. They resort to those parts necessarily which are open, which are near the houses. I always see them in the fall as long as the river and ponds are open, and, that being the case all this winter (almost), they have not all gone further south. The shallow and curving part of the river behind Cheney's being open all this winter, they are confined for the most part to this, in this neighborhood.
The thickest ice I have seen this winter is full nine inches.



February 18, Friday, 1853: [Ernest Francisco Fenolosa](#) –the [Harvard College](#) scholar who would convey a misunderstanding of [Chinese](#) characters 1st to [Waldo Emerson](#) and then, as of 1913, to [Ezra Pound](#)– was born.

While walking on one of the city walls in Vienna, Emperor Franz Joseph of Austria was stabbed twice in the neck by János Libényi, a Hungarian nationalist. The assailant was subdued by others nearby (both of whom would be raised to the nobility), and would eventually be executed (Franz Joseph would survive).

The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* came to anchor at the island of Mauritius. The steamer *HBM Styx* and the screw steamer *Mauritius* arrived following a rough passage. William Speiden, Jr. would be able to visit the countryside, the Old Church, and the botanical gardens there, and socialize on shore, until the 23d.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR FEBRUARY 18TH]



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February 25, Friday, 1853: Moncure Daniel Conway arrived in Boston by train, presumably penniless or nearly so since his Southern slavemaster daddy, the judge, had cut him off without a cent, and immediately participated in a train collision at 40 miles per hour in which a number of people were injured. Dusting off his trousers and retrieving his luggage, he was able to walk away cracking jokes in regard to the “fast” state of Massachusetts. Get the jokes out of your system, boy, you’re going to be a Reverend again right soon.¹⁷

The American Colonization Society is making preparations to start a vessel from Norfolk, Virginia, the first of May, with emigrants for Liberia. One hundred and seventy-eight persons have already applied for a passage; of whom one hundred and fourteen are from Virginia, fifty-two from North Carolina, six from Kentucky, three from Massachusetts, one from Ohio, one from Pennsylvania, and one from New-York. A fine large vessel will be chartered, affording the most ample accommodations for two hundred and fifty passengers. The price of passage and six months’ support in Liberia is sixty dollars each one, for all who are able to pay. A free passage and six months’ support will be given to all worthy persons who are unable to pay, and who can come well recommended.

A pamphlet containing all necessary “information about going to Liberia ” will be forwarded to all who desire it.

W. McLAIN,

Secretary American Colonization Society.

The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* left the island of Mauritius and was voyaging again into Far Eastern waters.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR FEBRUARY 25TH]



March 11, Friday, 1853: On this day and the following 2 days additional US forces were landing in Nicaragua, to protect American lives and interests during political disturbances there.

US MILITARY INTERVENTIONS

The town marshal of San Juan del Norte, Nicaragua arrived at the site of the illegally built facilities of Cornelius Vanderbilt’s Accessory Transit Company, to evict them. The town had in fact not only provided an alternate site but also offered to pay moving costs. The recently arrived U.S. Marines prevented this town marshal from performing his duties.

The magnificently be-cannoned American side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* reached Point de Galle of the Island of Ceylon (Sri Lanka), and locals brought aboard “precious stones, jewelry, work boxes, shells and may other things for sale and trade,” including objects crafted from ebony and ivory.

An unsigned paragraph appeared in Frederick Douglass’ Paper:

MRS. PARTINGTON is said to have anxiously asked if Uncle Tom is a better man than Enoch, of Biblical memory. She grounds her reasons for making this inquiry, upon the fact that she has heard that Uncle Tom has been

17. Conway’s journal for the critical years 1851, 1852, and 1853, never published, is now present on the internet in holograph image at <http://deila.dickinson.edu/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/ownwords&CISOPTR=23390>



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translated seven times, while Enoch was translated but once.



Henry Thoreau wrote to George William Curtis about the whereabouts of the manuscript he had submitted to Putnam's Monthly Magazine of American Literature, Science and Art:

TIMELINE OF CANADA

To: Geo. Curtis
From: HDT
Date: 3/11/53

*Concord Mar. 11 '53
Mr Curtis,
Together with the MS
of my Cape Cod adventures Mr Put-
nam sends me only 70 or 80 pages of
the "Canada", all which having been
printed is of course of no use to me.
He states that "the remainder of the
MSS seems to have been lost at the
printers'." You will not be surprised
if I wish to know if it actually is lost,
and if reasonable pains have been
taken to recover it. Supposing that
Mr P. may not have had an
opportunity to consult you respecting
its whereabouts –or have thought
it of importance enough to inquire
after particularly– I write again
to you to whom I entrusted it to as-
sure you that it is of more value to me than may appear.
With your leave I will improve
this opportunity to acknowledge the
receipt of another cheque from Mr-
Putnam.
I trust that if we ever have
any intercourse hereafter it may be some-*

Page 2
*thing more cheering than this
curt business kind.
Yrs
Henry D. Thoreau*



Thoreau was being written to by Horace Greeley in New-York.

To: HDT
From: Horace Greeley
Date: 3/11/53



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MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

*New York,
March, 11, 1853.
Dear Sir:
I have yours of the
9th, enclosing Putnam's
check for \$59, making
\$79 in all you have paid
me. I am paid in full, and
this letter is your receipt in
full. I don't want any [pay]
for my 'services,' [whatever]
they may have been consider
me your friend who wished
to serve you, however unsuc-
cessfully. Don't break with
Curtis or Putnam.
Yours
H.D. Thoreau. Horace Greeley.*



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR MARCH 11TH]



March 13, Sunday, 1853: Moncure Daniel Conway met Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.¹⁸

William Speiden, Jr. visited a Buddhist temple on the Island of Ceylon (Sri Lanka), which would later be pictured in the official report of the expedition. He noted "Having never seen one before I was quite anxious to see this, although I expect to see several more on our travel to China."

The 1,021-ton 180x36-foot clipper ship *Northern Light* with Captain Freeman Hatch of Eastham, Massachusetts at the helm, had agreed to a speed contest with the clipper *Contest* bound for New-York. The *Contest* had departed San Francisco Bay on the previous day, and on this day the *Northern Light* left San Francisco for Boston (however, to its advantage, it would be traveling entirely without cargo).

18. You must realize, we're dealing here with a natural aristocrat, and with a person possessing name recognition. Moncure, plus Daniel, plus Conway, equaled **somebody**. The boy might be virtually penniless and without apparent connections, but he was white and from Virginia, and the dispossessed son of a rich and highly regarded slaveholder. During this period he was also able to meet the Reverend William Henry Furness, the Reverend Ephraim Peabody, the Reverend John G. Palfrey, Bronson Alcott, James Russell Lowell, and the Reverend Jared Sparks.



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[Henry 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 in January 1851 to form the following:

[Paragraph 38] Perhaps I am more than usually jealous with respect to my freedom. I feel that my connection with and obligation to society are still very slight and transient. Those slight labors which afford me a livelihood, and by which it is allowed that I am to some extent serviceable to my contemporaries, are as yet commonly a pleasure to me, and I am not often reminded that they are a necessity. So far I am successful; and he only is successful in his business who makes that pursuit which affords him the purest and highest pleasure, also afford his body a maintenance. But I foresee that if my wants should be much increased, the labor required to supply them would become a drudgery. If I should sell both my forenoons and afternoons to society, as most appear to do, I am sure that for me there would be nothing left worth living for. I trust that I shall never thus sell my birth-right for a mess of pottage.¹ “What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”² The great art of life is how to turn the surplus life of the soul into life for the body. The poet, for instance, must sustain his body by his poetry. All enterprises must be self-supporting in this sense—must pay for themselves. You must get your living by loving. But as it is said of the merchants that ninety-seven in a hundred fail³—so the life of men generally, tried by this standard, is a failure—and bankruptcy may be surely prophesied. To inherit property is not to be born but to be still-born rather. To be supported by the charity of friends or a government pension—provided you continue to breathe—is to go into the almshouse. On Sundays the poor debtor goes to church to take an account of stock and finds, of course, that his outgoes have been greater than his income. In the Catholic church, especially, they go into chancery—make a clean confession—give up all—and think to start again. Thus men will lie on their backs talking about the fall of man and never make an effort to get up.

**Brad Dean's
Commentary**

1. [GENESIS 25:32-34](#)

2. [MARK 8:36](#) Bradley P. Dean has emended the manuscript copy-text from ‘What shall it profit &c’ by completing the sentence and adding the quotation marks.

3. Here Thoreau refers to his own book, [WALDEN](#), pages 32-33. He uses the figure “ninety-nine in a hundred” in the journal source of this passage. J. Lyndon Shanley notes the same change in the WALDEN manuscripts (THE MAKING OF *WALDEN* [Chicago: U. of Chicago P., 1957], page 35).

Bradley P. Dean has emended the above manuscript copy-text by capitalizing ‘Sunday’ in this sentence and by adding the words ‘account of stock and finds, of course, that his outgoes have been greater’, which were apparently trimmed from the manuscript before it was mounted and bound into set 167 of the Manuscript Edition. Authority for these emendations is derived from an intermediate lecture-draft manuscript at Harvard University (bMS Am 278.5 [20D]; see Dean, “Sound of a Flail,” pages 318-20, for a transcription) and “Life without Principle”¹³. As this article was going to press, he discovered the manuscript which serves as copy-text for most of “What Shall It Profit” 38 and all of “What Shall It Profit” 39 at NBiSU. The information from the NBiSU manuscript has been incorporated into the text and notes of this article with only one exception:



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'point-blank shots' in the first sentence of "What Shall It Profit" 39 is an emendation of 'point blank-shots' in the manuscript copy-text. Authority for this emendation is derived from an intermediate lecture-draft manuscript at Harvard University (bMS Am 278.5 [20D]; see Dean, "Sound of a Flail," pages 432-35, for a transcription) and "Life without Principle" 14.



March 13. 6 A.M. — To Cliffs.

There begins to be a greater depth of saffron in the morning sky. The morning and evening horizon fires are warmer to the eye. I go to the Cliffs to hear if any new spring birds have arrived, for not, only they are more sure to sing in the morning, but it is stiller and you can hear them better then. I hear only crows and blue jays and chickadees [**Chicadee, Black-capped** **Parus atricapillus** ~~Titmouse, Titmice~~] lispings. Excepting a few **bluebirds** and larks [**Eastern Meadowlark** **Sturnella magna** (~~Lark~~)], no spring birds have come, apparently. The woods are still. But what was that familiar spring sound from the pine wood across the river, a sharp *vetter vetter vetter*, like some woodpecker **or possibly nuthatch?** Yet I thought it the voice of the bird and not a tapping. It reminds me of the pine warbler (?), if that is it. I see the nuphar pushing up faintly, and I see some of my little gnats of yesterday in the morning sun, somewhat mosquito-like.

P.M. — No sap flows yet from my hole in the white maple by the bridge. Found on the Great Fields a fragment of Indian soapstone ware, which, judging from its curve and thinness, for a vestige of the rim remains, was a dish of the form and size of a saucer, only three times as thick. Listening for early birds, I hear a faint tinkling sound in the leafless woods, as if a piece of glass rattled against a stone. All enterprises must be self-supporting, must pay for themselves. The great art of life is how to turn the surplus life of the soul into life for the body, — that so the life be not a failure. For instance, a poet must sustain his body with his poetry. As is said of the merchants, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the life of men is a failure, and bankruptcy may be surely prophesied. You must get your living by loving. To be supported by the charity of friends or a government pension is to go into the almshouse. To inherit property is not to be born, — is to be still-born rather. And the other, as I said, provided you continue to breathe, is to go into the almshouse. On Sundays the poor debtor goes to church to take an account of stock, and finds his outgoes greater than his income. In the Catholic Church especially they go into chancery. As is the sun to the vegetable, so is virtue to the bodily health.



March 15, Tuesday, 1853: The San Joaquin, California Republican printed a letter from Little York:

Little York is not a capital, Mr. Editor, although every way worthy of such a distinction. It is situate in the centre of a very large township of that name, which said township (for having examined carefully the records of the county of Nevada I am able to give accurate information) is bounded on the north by Tukey Ridge, on the south by the waters of Green Horn, following the same until it empties into Bear River, thence up the main branch of Bear River, as far as the Devil's Elbow, thence due east until it strikes the eastern boundary of the State of California etc. to the place of beginning. It includes within this fine domain (of unaccountable hills and rocky canyons) the rich diggings of Gold Springs, Little York, Hell's Delight, Red Dog, Guadalupe, Green Horn, and Missouri Hill. As to the number of square acres contained within the area of this notable township, history is most treasonably silent.

The diggings about here are quite deep. Occasionally the miner must either dig half the mountain down or burrow into its bowels by means of a tunnel. At Red Dog where there is something of a rush just now, they sink a shaft about thirty feet and then



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commence their coyoting. This of course is quite expressive, but when the boys do find the dirt, they make a pile in a few days. I am led to believe that the country is not more than half prospected hereabouts. New diggings are being discovered every day, and the portion of country now worked in comparison to the immense waste now idle.

The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* reached Singapore, where William Speiden, Jr. noted that “There are some ten or twelve Chinese Junks in Port, the first I have ever seen.”

In his journal, [Henry Thoreau](#) quoted from [Captain John Smith's 1632 THE GENERALL HISTORIE OF VIRGINIA, NEW-ENGLAND, AND THE SUMMER ISLES: WITH THE NAMES OF THE ADVENTURERS, PLANTERS, AND GOVERNOURS FROM THEIR FIRST BEGINNING ANO: 1584. TO THIS PRESENT 1624. WITH THE PROCEEDINGS OF THOSE SEVERALL COLONIES AND THE ACCIDENTS THAT BEFELL THEM IN ALL THEIR JOURNYES AND DISCOVERIES. ALSO THE MAPS AND DESCRIPTIONS OF ALL THOSE COUNTRYES, THEIR COMMODITIES, PEOPLE, GOVERNMENT, CUSTOMES, AND RELIGION YET KNOWNE. DIVIDED INTO SIXE BOOKES. BY CAPTAINE JOHN SMITH, SOMETYMES GOVERNOUR IN THOSE COUNTRYES & ADMIRALL OF NEW ENGLAND:](#)



March 15. There were few colder nights last winter than the last. The water in the flower-stand containing my pet tortoise froze solid, — completely enveloping him, though I had a fire in my chamber all the evening, — also that in my pail pretty thick. But the tortoise, having been thawed out on the stove, leaving the impression of his bade shell in the ice, was even more lively than ever. His efforts at first had been to get under his chip, as if to go into the mud. To-day the weather is severely and remarkably cold. It is not easy to keep warm in my chamber. I have not taken a more blustering walk the past winter than this afternoon. (says he has heard a striped squirrel and seen a water-bug, (*Gyrinus*), — it must have been on Saturday (12th). Ice froze just hard enough to hear last night, - about an inch thick. In the woods beyond Peter's we heard our dog, a large Newfoundland dog — barking at something — & going forward were amused to see him barking while he retreated with fear at that black oak with remarkable excrescence — which had been cut off just above it — leaving it like some misshapen idol about the height of a man. Though we set him onto it — he did not venture within 3 or four rods. I would not have believed that he would notice any such strange thing.

Organization, —how it prevails! After a little discipline, we study with love and reverence the forms of disease as healthy organisms. The fungi have a department in the science of botany. Who can doubt but that they too are fungi lower in the scale which he sees on the wick of his lamp!

Notwithstanding this day is so cold that I keep my ears covered, the sidewalks melt in the sun, such is its altitude. The coldness of the air blown from the icy northwest prevails over the heat of the sun. The Bermudas are said to have been first discovered by a Spanish ship of that name, which was wrecked on them — “which till then for six thousand years had been nameless,” says John Smith — “no place known hath better walls, nor a broader ditch.” The English did not stumble upon them in their voyages to Virginia & the first English man who was yet ever in them was wrecked on them in 1593— yet at the very first planting of them in 1612 with some 60 persons the first Governor the same year “built & laid the foundation of 8 or 9 forts”—(!) to be ready one would say to entertain the first ship company that should next be shipwrecked on to them— It would have been more

DOG

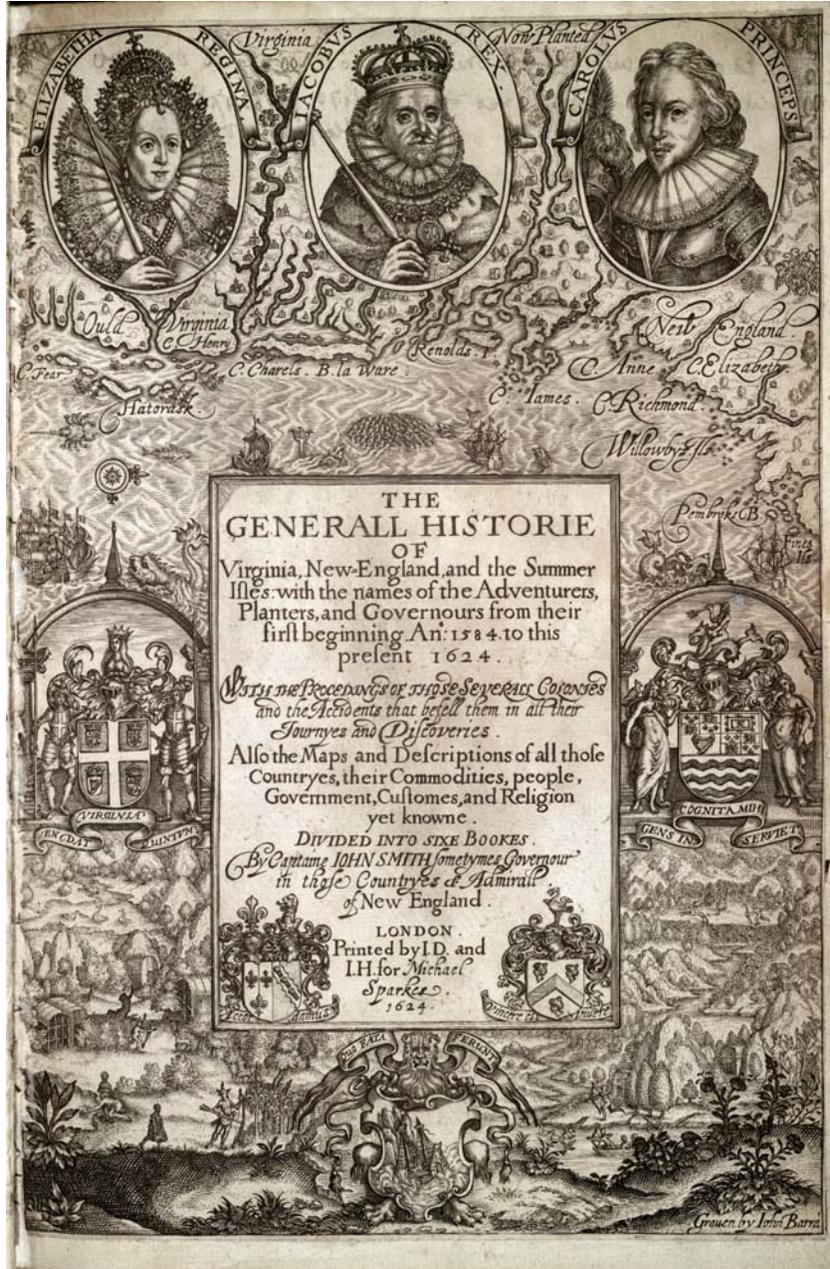
HDT

WHAT?

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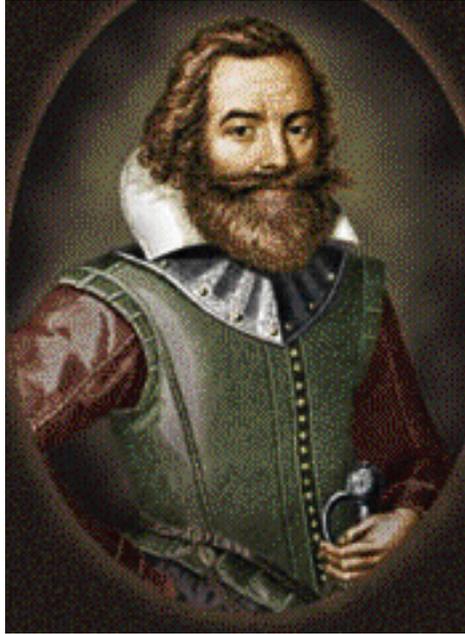


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sensible to have built as many charity houses. These are the vex'd Bermoothes.

BERMUDA



 March 20, Sunday, 1853: Kibitzers along the rail of the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* had an opportunity to sight the islands of Nicobar and Sumatra.

On the other side of the earth—in Richmond, Virginia to be specific—[Anthony Burns](#) was sighted at work as usual at his place of obligation, by a white man named William Brent who was responsible to Anthony's owner Mr. Charles Francis Suttle for among other duties leasing out this slave's work to various purchasers.

Meanwhile, in Europe, [Henri-Frédéric Amiel](#), who would be referred to as the “Swiss [Thoreau](#),” was writing in his *JOURNAL INTIME*: “I sat up alone; two or three times I paid a visit to the children's room. It seemed to me, young mothers, that I understood you! sleep is the mystery of life; there is a profound charm in this darkness broken by the tranquil light of the night-lamp, and in this silence measured by the rhythmic breathings of two young sleeping creatures. It was brought home to me that I was looking on at a marvelous operation of nature, and I watched it in no profane spirit. I sat silently listening, a moved and hushed spectator of this poetry of the cradle, this ancient and ever new benediction of the family, this symbol of creation, sleeping under the wing of God, of our consciousness withdrawing into the shade that it may rest from the burden of thought, and of the tomb, that divine bed, where the soul in its turn rests from life. To sleep is to strain and purify our emotions, to deposit the mud of life, to calm the fever of the soul, to return into the bosom of maternal nature, thence to re-issue, healed and strong. Sleep is a sort of innocence and purification. Blessed be He who gave it to the poor sons of men as the sure and faithful companion of life, our daily healer and consoler.”

[Ellery Channing](#) walked with [Henry Thoreau](#) to the other side of the granite stone house that had been built in Lincoln by Cyrus Pierce in 1852 for [Loring Henry Austin and Mary Jane Goodwin Austin](#) of Cambridge.



March 20. Sunday: 8 A.M. — *Via* Walden, Goose, Flint's, and Beaver Ponds and the valley of Stony Brook to the south end of Lincoln.

A rather cool and breezy morning, which was followed by milder day. We go listening for early



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birds, with bread and cheese for our dinner.

(Yesterday I forgot to say I painted my boat. Spanish brown and raw oil were the ingredients. I found the painter had sold me the brown in bard lumps as big as peas, which I could not reduce with a stick; so I passed the whole when mixed through an old coffee-mill, which made a very good paint-mill, catching it in an old coffeepot, whose holes I puttied up, there being a lack of vessels; and then I broke up the coffee-mill and nailed a part over the bows to protect them, the boat is made so flat. I had first filled the seams with some grafting-wax I had, melted.)

It was a question whether we should not go to Fair Haven to see the gulls, etc. I notice the downy, swaddled plants now and in the fall, the fragrant life-everlasting and the ribwort, innocents born in a cloud. Those algæ I saw the other day in John Hosmer's ditch were the most like seaweed of anything I have seen in the county. They made me look at the whole earth as a seashore; reminded me of Nereids, sea nymphs, Triton, Proteus, etc., etc.; made the ditches fabulate in an older than the arrow-headed character. Better learn this strange character which nature speaks to-day than the Sanscrit. Books in the brooks. Saw a large dead water-bug on Walden. I suspect he came out alive. Walden is melting apace. It has a canal two rods wide along the northerly side and the west end, wider at the east end, yet, after running round from west to east, it does not keep the south shore, but crosses in front of the deep cove in a broad crack to where it started, by the ice ground. It is glorious to behold the life and joy of this ribbon of water sparkling in the sun. The wind blows eastward over the opaque ice, unusually hard, owing to the recent severe though transient cold, all watered or waved like a tessellated floor, a figured carpet; yet dead, yet in vain, till it slides on to the living water surface, where it raises a myriad brilliant sparkles on the bare face of the pond, an expression of glee, of youth, of spring, as if it spoke the joy of the: fishes within it and of the sands on its shore, a silvery sheen like the scales of a leuciscus, as if it were all one active fish in the spring. It is the contrast between life and death. There is the difference between winter and spring. The bared face of the pond sparkles with joy. How handsome the curves which the edge of the ice makes, answering somewhat to those of the shore, but more regular, sweeping entirely round the pond, as if defined by a vast, bold sweep!

It is evident that the English do not enjoy that contrast between winter and summer that we do, — that there is too much greenness and spring in the winter. There is no such wonderful resurrection of the year. Birds kindred with our first spring ones remain with them all winter, and flowers answering to our earliest spring ones put forth there in January. In one sense they have no winter but such as our spring. Our April is their March; our -larch, their February; our February, January, and December are not theirs at all under any name or sign.

Those alder catkins on the west side of Walden tremble and undulate in the wind, they are so relaxed and ready to bloom, — the most forward blossom-buds. Here and there, around the pond, within a rod of the water, is the fisherman's stone fireplace, with its charred brands, where he cheered and warmed himself and ate his lunch.

The peculiarity of to-day is that now first you perceive that dry, warm, summer-presaging scent from dry oak and other leaves, on the sides of hills and ledges. You smell the summer from afar. The warm [*sic*] makes a man young again. There is also some dryness, almost dustiness, in the roads. The mountains are white with snow, and sure as the wind is northwest it is wintry; but now it is more westerly. The edges of the mountains now melt into the sky. It is affecting to be put into communication with such distant objects by the power of vision, — actually to look into rich lands of promise. In this spring breeze, how full of life the silvery pines, probably the under sides of their leaves. Goose Pond is wholly open. Unexpectedly dry and crispy the grass is getting in warm places. At Flint's Pond, gathered a handful or two of chestnuts on a sloping bank under the leaves, *every one* sound and sweet, but mostly sprouting. There were none black as at C. Smith's, proving that in such places as this, somewhat warm and dry, they are all preserved the winter through. Now, then, new groves of chestnuts (and of oaks?) are being born. Under these wet leaves I find myriads of the snow-fleas, like powder. Some brooks are full of little wiggling creatures *somewhat* like caddis-worms, stemming the stream, — food for the early fishes. The canoe birch sprouts are red or salmon-colored lilac those of the common, but soon they cast off their salmon-colored jackets and come forth with a white but naked look, all dangling with ragged reddish curls. What is that little bird that makes so much use of these curls in its nest, lined with coarse grass? The snow still covers the ground on the north side of hills, which are hard and slippery with frost.

I am surprised to find Flint's Pond not more than half broken up. Probably it was detained by the late short but severe cold, while Walden, being deeper, was not. Standing on the icy side, the pond appears nearly all frozen; the breadth of open water is far removed and diminished to a streak; I say



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it is beginning to break up. Standing on the water side (which in Flint's is the middle portion), it appears to be but bordered with ice, and I say there is ice still left in the pond.

Saw a bluish-winged beetle or two. In a stubble-field east of Mt. Tabor, started up a pack (though for number, about twenty, it may have been a bevy) of quail [**Northern Bobwhite**  **Colinus virginianus**], which went off to some young pitch pines, with a whirl like a shot, the plump, round birds. The redpolls are still numerous. On the warm, dry cliff, looking south over Beaver Pond, I was surprised to see a large butterfly, black with buff-edged wings, so tender a creature to be out so early, and, when alighted, opening and shutting its wings. What does it do these frosty nights? Its chrysalis must have hung in some sunny nook of the rocks. Born to be food for some early bird.

Cutting a maple for a bridge over Lily Brook, I was rejoiced to see a sap falling in large, clear drops from the wound.



March 23, Wednesday, 1853: [Marietta Alboni](#) opened in *Don Pasquale* at Nible's Theater on Manhattan.

The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* came to anchor in the Straits of Malacca, Malaysia.

[Henry Thoreau](#) made an interesting comment in his journal about the purpose for the study of the products of normal science: "One studies books of science merely to learn the language of naturalists — to be able to communicate with them—"



March 23: 5 A.M. — I hear the robin [**American Robin**  **Turdus migratorius**] sing before I rise.

6 A.M. — Up the North River.

A fresh, cool spring morning.

The white maple may perhaps be said to begin to blossom to-day, — the male, — for the stamens, both anthers and *filaments*, are conspicuous on some buds. It has opened unexpectedly, and a rich sight it is, looking; up through the expanded buds to the sky. This and the aspen are the first trees that *ever grow large*, I believe, which show the influence of the season thus conspicuously. From Nawshawtuct I see the snow is off the *mts*. A large aspen by the Island is unexpectedly forward. I already see the red anthers appearing. It will bloom in a day or two.

My boat is very good to float and go before the wind, but it has not *run* enough to it, — if that is the phrase, — but lugs too much dead water astern. However, it is all the steadier for it. Methinks it will not be a bad sailer. I have seen for a week past fresh holes in the sand made by some early burrowing animal, prob the skunk.

One studies books of science merely to learn the language of naturalists, — to be able to communicate with them. The frost in swamps and meadows makes it good walking there still. Away, away to the swamps, where the silver catkins of the swamp willow shine a quarter of a mile off — those southward-penetrating vales of Rupert's Land.

The birds which are merely migrating or tarrying here for a season are especially gregarious now, — the redpoll [*Fringilla* (or *F.*) or *linaria* (**Common Redpoll**  **Carduelis flammea**) (or **Lesser Redpoll** or **Red-crown**), *Fringilla hyemalis* [**Dark-eyed Junco**  **Junco hyemalis**], fox-colored sparrow [**Fox Sparrow**  **Passerella iliaca** (**Fox-colored Sparrow** or **cinnamon sparrow**)], etc. The white maples appear to be confined to the bank of the river.

I judge by the dead bodies of frogs, partially devoured, in brooks and ditches that many are killed in their hybernacula.

Evelyn and others wrote when the language was in a tender, nascent state and could be moulded to express the shades of meaning; when sesquipedalian words, long since cut and apparently dried and drawn to mill, — not yet to the dictionary lumber-yard, — put forth a fringe of green sprouts here and there along in the angles of their rugged bark, their very bulk insuring some sap remaining; some florid suckers they sustain at least. Which cords, split into shingles and laths, will supply poets for ages to come. A man can't ask properly for a piece of bread and butter without some animal spirits.



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A child can't cry without them.

P.M. — To Howard's meadow.

The telegraph harp sounds more commonly, now that westerly, winds prevail. The winds of winter are too boisterous, too violent or rude, and do not strike it at the right angle when I walk, so that it becomes one of the spring sounds.

NB The ice went out of Walden this forenoon; of Flint's Pond day before yesterday, I have no doubt. Methinks I see a more reddish chestnut sparrow, with distinct whiter lines and two white feathers in tail, or is this the song sparrow [**Song Sparrow** ■ *Melospiza melodia (melodia)*]? With a faint, tinkling cheep. Grass or bay-winged finch [**Vesper Sparrow** ■ *Pooecetes gramineus (Bay-wing or White-in-tail or Grass-Finch or Grass-bird)*]? or could it have been field sparrow [**Field Sparrow** ■ *Spizella pusilla (Rush Sparrow or *juncorum* or Huckleberry-bird)*] but not my seringo [**Savannah Sparrow** ■ *Passerculus sandwichensis (seringo or seringo-bird or *passerina*)*]. The pads at Howard's meadow are very forward, more than a foot high, their tips above the water. The cat-tail down puffs and swells in your hand like a mist, or the conjurer's trick of filling a hat with feathers. for when you have rubbed off but a thimbleful, and can close and conceal the wound completely, the expanded down fills your hand to overflowing. Apparently there is a spring to the fine elastic threads which compose the down, which, after lowing been so long closely packed, on being the least relieved at the base, spring open apace into the form of parachutes to convey the seed afar. Where birds or the winds or ice have assaulted them, this has spread like an eruption. Again, when I rub off the down of its spike with my thumb, I am surprised at the sensation of warmth it imparts to my hand, as it flushes over it magically, at the same time revealing a faint purplish-crimson tinge at the base of the down, as it rolls off and expands. It is a very pleasing experiment to try.

The buds of the shad-blossom look green. The crimson-starred flowers of the hazel begin to peep out, though the catkins have not opened. The alders are almost generally in full bloom, and a very handsome and interesting show they make with their graceful tawny Pendants, inclining to yellow. They shake like ear-drops in the wind, perhaps the first completed ornaments with which the new year decks herself. Their Yellow pollen is shaken down and colors my coat like sulphur as I go through them.

I go to look for mud turtles in Heywood's meadow. The alder catkins, just burst open, are prettily marked spirally by streaks of yellow, contrasting with alternate rows of rich reddish-brown scales, which make one revolution in the length of the catkin. I see trout glance (*Vide* amount of seed in Tribune, Mar. 16, 1860.) alone; the brook, as indeed a month ago. I hear in Heywood's north meadow the most unmusical low croak from one or two frogs, though it is half ice there yet, — a remarkable note with which to greet the new year, as if one's teeth slid off with a grating sound in cracking a nut, — but not a frog nor a dimple is to be seen. Man cannot afford to be a naturalist, to look at Nature directly, but only with the side of his eye. He must look through and beyond her. To look at her is fatal as to look at the head of Medusa. It turns the man of science to stone.¹⁹ I feel that I am dissipated by so many observations. I should be the magnet in the midst of all this dust and filings. I knock the back of my hand against a rock, and as I smooth back the skin, I find myself prepared to study lichens there. I look upon man but as a fungus. I have almost a slight, dry headache as the result of all this observing. How to observe is how to be have. O for a little Lethe! To crown all, lichens, which are so thin, are described in the *dry* state, as they are most commonly, not most truly, seen. Truly, they are *dryly* described.

Without being the owner of any land, I find that I have a civil right in the river, — that, if I am not a landowner I am a water-owner. It is fitting, therefore, that I should have a boat, a cart, for this my farm. Since it is almost wholly given up to a few of us, Awhile the other highways are much travelled, no wonder that I improve it. Such a one as I will choose to dwell in a township where there

19. The poet [W.H. Auden](#) has in 1962 brought forward this day's entry:

THE VIKING BOOK OF APHORISMS, A PERSONAL SELECTION BY W.H. AUDEN...

Pg	Topic	Aphorism Selected by Auden out of Thoreau
262	Science	Man cannot afford to be a naturalist, to look at nature directly, but only with the side of his eye. He must look through her and beyond her. To look at her is as fatal as to look at the head of Medusa. It turns the man of science to stone.

MEDUSA



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are most ponds and rivers and our range is widest. In relation to the river, I find my natural rights least infringed (if it is an extensive common' still left. Certain savage liberties still prevail in the oldest and most civilized countries. I am pleased to find that, in Gilbert White's day, at least, the laborers in that part of England enjoyed certain rights of communion in the royal forest, — so called, though no large wood, — where they cut their turf and other fuel, etc., etc., and obtained materials for broom-making, etc., where other labor failed. It is no longer so, according to his editor. Nobody legislates for me, for the way would be not to legislate at all.

I am surprised as well as delighted when any one wishes to know what I think. It is such a rare use they would make of me, as if then 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, or, at most, what trivial news I have burdened myself with. They never will go to law for my meat. They prefer the shell.

I saw probably a milkweed down in the air, the 20th.

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





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He also made an entry that he was later to copy into his early lecture "[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT](#)". It would be combined with an entry made on January 27, 1854 and an entry made on April 8, 1854 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

Brad Dean's
Commentary

1. Thoreau drew this and the following three sentences from his journal entry of 8 April 1854. Three days earlier [Waldo Emerson](#) lectured at the Concord Lyceum on the "foreign" subject of "France."
2. On authority of the [Nantucket Island 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'.
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Also, on this day, [Thoreau](#) noted that [Walden Pond](#) had become clear of ice:

[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.





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[Professor Robert M. Thorson](#) has written on page 236 of THE BOATMAN: [HENRY DAVID THOREAU](#)'S RIVER YEARS (Cambridge: Harvard UP) that:

From the point of view of Thoreau as a boatman, his three-river Anthropocene landscape was an improvement over its early Puritan condition. He never said this explicitly, but it's pretty easy to connect the dots between the changes that he knew were taking place and how he liked to spend his time. When he wrote that "all nature begins to work with new impetuosity on Monday," he



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was not being critical. The holding back of water on Sundays and its releases on Monday morning was similar in concept to the scheduled releases of stored water from modern dams to improve whitewater kayaking and to restore the natural habitat of rivers, most notably on the Colorado River. This catch-and-release of stream water enlivened Thoreau's daily boating experiences by providing pulses of flow.

It did bother him that these scheduled releases forced his fellow river creatures to observe the "christian sabbath" even as he was trying to avoid it. When he wrote that the Assabet River was being "emasculated & demoralized" by hydropower development, his main lament was that Christianity had penetrated so deeply into nature that "the very fishes find the influence (or want of influence) of man's religion." The Sunday river showed gravel bars that the weekday river did not.

The more denuded Concord's upland landscape became, the more the riparian forests bordering his three rivers became unfenced sanctuaries for wildlife. These corridors became wooded commons being enhanced by sawdust mulch, extra mineral sediment, and higher levees consisting of uplifted meadow tufts. The higher the water got from dams and bars, the less the gallery riparian landscape was used for agriculture, and the more Thoreau had it to himself. Nine years before his death, he wrote, "in relation to the river, I find my natural rights least infringed on. It is an extensive 'commons' still left." From the boatman's view, such riparian woods are visually magnified by a factor of four: two banks and two reflections.



March 26, Saturday, 1853: The Placer, [California Herald](#) reported from Downieville, that in taking a stroll a short distance up the South Fork, "we could but notice a great number of miners at work on that stream, for a spur of several miles. The banks appear literally lined by the hardy toilers, after the 'filthy lucre' and upon examining the prospects of a number of companies, and the general appearance of the diggings, we doubt not, the summer of 53 will exceed 51."

William Speiden, Jr. of the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* visited on shore in Malacca in company of some of the other officers. They were guests at the home of a wealthy Chinese merchant known as Mr. Whampoa (Ho Ah Kay) (1816-1880), who was serving as admiralty contractor for stores in Singapore and would be appointed as the 1st Chinese Consul at Singapore.

Here is how the city of New-York was depicted, in the pages of [Gleason's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion](#), as viewed looking west from the Brooklyn shore and as viewed looking east from the New Jersey

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shore (the lines in the sky are mere artifacts of the modern copying process):



MAGAZINE



CONSULT THE WIKIPEDIA

The slave Miriam Dobbins had reached [Oberlin, Ohio](#) after fleeing [Kentucky](#) with her children and grandchildren, including a small foster child, but this 4-year-old had become too wasted with [consumption](#) to continue on with the group to safety in Canada. The child was left in the care of a local couple who sheltered the group, and died on this day. In 1st Church, there was a funeral for him. The tombstone, to protect it, is now being stored in the archives of [Oberlin College](#):

HDT

WHAT?

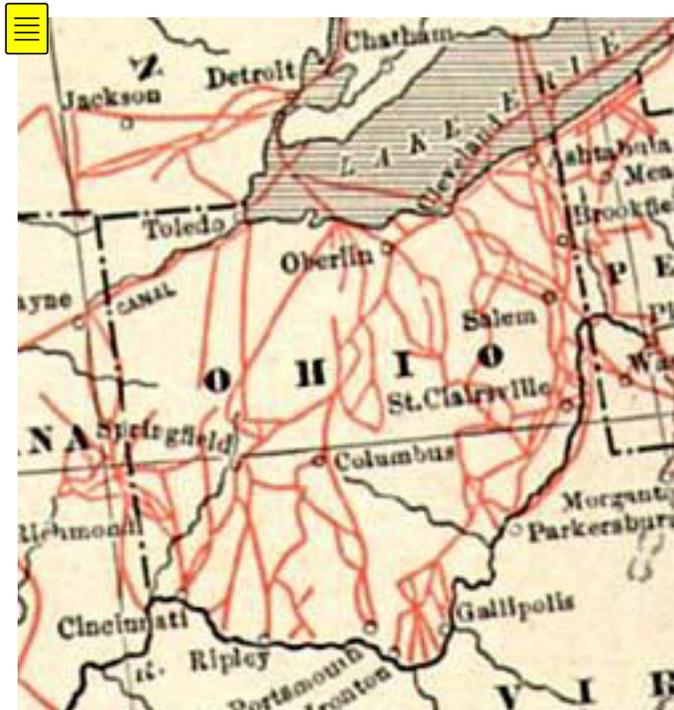
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LET SLAVERY PERISH
LEE HOWARD DOBBINS
A FUGITIVE SLAVE ORPHAN
BROUGHT HERE BY AN
ADOPTED MOTHER IN HER
FLIGHT TO LIBERTY
MARCH 17, 1853
LEFT HERE WASTED WITH
CONSUMPTION
FOUND A REFUGE IN DEATH
MARCH 26, 1853
AGED 4 YRS.

UNDERGROUND RAILROAD



[Henry Thoreau](#) began to use the word “honk,” not before of record in English.
(All any duck had ever been able to say in English was “quack.”) Thoreau may have borrowed this from the

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Narragansett or Wampanoag term for “Canada goose,” which is *Honck*, or he may merely have been being his usual inventive self. (The origin of the term “honkey” is also still in doubt.)



March 26. There is a large specimen of what I take to be the common alder by the poplar at [Egg Rock](#), five inches in diameter. It may be considered as beginning to bloom to-day. Some white maples appear still as backward as the red.

Saw about 10 A.M. a gaggle of geese [[Canada Goose](#) [Branta canadensis](#)], forty-three in number, in a very perfect harrow flying northeasterly. one side [of] the harrow was a little longer than the other. They appeared to be four or five feet apart. At first I heard faintly, as I stood by Minott’s gate, borne to me from the southwest through the confused sounds of the village, the indistinct honking of geese. I was somewhat surprised to find that Mr. Loring at his house should have heard and seen the same flock. I should think that the same flock was commonly seen and heard from the distance of a mile east and west. It is remarkable that we commonly see geese go over in the spring about 10 o’clock in the morning, as if they were accustomed to stop for the night at some place southward whence they reached us at that time. Goodwin saw six geese in Walden about the same time. The scales of the alder run to leaves sometimes.

GEORGE MINOTT

P.M. — Up Assabet to stone-heaps, in 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

A warm, moist, April-like afternoon, with wet-looking sky, and misty. For the first time I take off my coat. Everywhere are hovering over the river and floating, wrecked and struggling, on its surface, a miller-like insect, without mealy wings, very long and narrow, six-legged with two long feelers and, I believe, two long slender grayish wings, from my harbor to the heaps, or a couple of miles at least, food for fishes. This was the degree and kind of warmth to bring there forth. The tortoises, undoubtedly painted, drop now in several instances from the limbs and floating rails on which they had come out to sun. I notice by the Island a yellow scum era the water close to the shore, which must be the pollen of the alders just above. This, too, is perhaps food for fishes.

Up the Assabet, scared from his perch as stout hawk, — the red-tailed undoubtedly, for I saw very plainly the cow-red when he spread his wings from off his tail (and rump?). I rowed the boat three times within gunshot before he flew, twice within four rods, while he sat on an oak over the water, — I think because I had two ladies with me, which was as good as bushing the boat. Each time, or twice at least, he made a motion to fly before he started. The ends of his primaries looked very ragged against the sky. This is the hen-hawk of the farmer, the same, probably, which I have scared off from the Cliff so often. It was an interesting eagle-like object, as he sat upright on his perch with his back to us, now and then looking over his shoulder, the broad-backed, flat-headed, curve-beaked bird.

Heard a pewee [[Eastern Wood-Pewee](#) [Contopus virens](#)]. This, it seems to me, is the first true pewee day, though they have been here some time. What is that cress-like weed in and on the edge of the river opposite Prescott Barrett’s? A fresher and more luxuriant growth of green leaf than I have seen yet; as if it had grown in winter.

I do not perceive any fresh additions to the stone-heaps, though perhaps I did not examine carefully enough.

Went forth just after sunset. A storm gathering, an April-like storm. I hear now in the dusk only the song sparrow along the fences and a few hylas at a distance. And now the rattling drops compel me to return.



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April 6, Wednesday, 1853: [Catholic](#) rioters attacked a Protestant church in [Cincinnati, Ohio](#) that was hosting a [nativist](#) rally.

After passing through “an innumerable fleet of Chinese fishing craft” the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* dropped anchor in the Ladrone Passage, [China](#) Sea.

Published in the [San Joaquin, California](#) [Republican](#):

[Chinese](#) Letters—No. 8.

Tse-Chong-Chee to Tsi-Chow-Choo.

CELESTIAL COUSIN: — The barbarians here are the most arrant gossippers in the world. The common people learn it from their betters, and it is made a matter of science, so far as these savages can reduce anything to science. The chief Mandarin gathers around him once a year, a certain proportion of his blood relations, who practise talking for months together. This Mandarin commands that these talkers be selected on a given day throughout the State, by a curious and mysterious mode which they style an election. At this, a great deal of pains is taken by a multitude of spies and directors, of various grades and complicated duties, to prevent any but the blooded kindred of the Mandarin, most glib and incessant talkers among it, from being elected.

You would be astonished as much at the turmoil and excitement this matter creates, as you will be at so ridiculous a custom. And from the accusation and recrimination publicly made against all the candidates, I am sure that among savages, as among civilized men, the best talkers are commonly the worst men and the poorest thinkers. The persons thus selected from the kindred of the chief, at a set season in the year, all assemble at his domicile, and organize very formally, (for savages,) and in due form go to talking. All manner of topics, from the most ridiculous to the most serious, are discussed in this way. Every subject matter of intrigue and faction, which split and divided them in the intermission, is debated with great rancor and violence. All the old sores are laid open afresh, and mercilessly do they lampoon one another. This is their mode of consultation; it is after this fashion that they legislate. It is something curious that they never interchange opinions, or advise with each other. Each man gets up and makes a studied harangue, or set speech; and then another gets up and does the same thing. In this way they go on for several moons. Their speeches, I am told by those who pretend to understand them, are remarkable for their discussion of almost everything past, present and to come, save the exact subject which they fix upon as the matter to be talked about. For instance, if they say they will talk about navigable streams — they make navigation be by talk, not by propelling ships on water — they will talk essays on moral philosophy, political ethics and economy; and with great labor and thorough minuteness review the character of their factions and party strifes, of which they have more than you can think; and also the worth and discredit of the individuals composing them. I do not know whether this irrelevant trash, which is re-casted with much vociferation and



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bombast, is made the theme of their speeches because they have no knowledge of any specific measure or policy, or whether it is because their talk would soon give out if they were confined to the merits of the subjects proposed. But I think it is for want of capacity and knowledge to comprehend any given thing; for surely the multitude of their topics is innumerable. So great is the rage of this people for gossip, that they not only have these assemblages for State scandal, but they have a great number of inferior societies devoted to the same object. And these not sufficing, they have an order of men who devote their entire life-time and energies to picking up from the common clamor of this clamorous people every idle tale that is told, and printing it, and sending abroad for every one to read who can either pay for the paper or beg it from some one who does pay for it. You would be surprised at the number of these tell-tale sheets; for there are not only hundreds but thousands of these papers all over the land, filled with every imaginable sort of story and discussion, and no little smut and defamation. The eagerness of this order of men to pick up tales and marvellous stories, is only matched by the greediness with which the people read the idle and silly contents of their publications. One of these men who I think is a first cousin of the Mandarin, and a sort of special caterer for him and his kin whom he gets around him to talk annually, has picked up the rough drafts of my letters in the streets, into which I had swept them, not supposing any of this savage race could make them out, and has given to the gaping public translations of them; and all this without knowing or caring a copper about who I was! But such translations! I wish it were in my power to send a translation of the translations. Every sublime idea, magnificent thought, apt metaphor and splendid sentiment -- all, all, instead of commingling, sparkling, vivifying and instructing, as in the original, are naked, and coarse, and unsuggestive as the vacant stare of a denuded barbarian. Holy Confucius, what a mess! And yet, doubtless, if I met the fellow, and were to get gracious with him, (that is, take a drink at his expense,) he would confidentially insinuate to me that I was a very famous individual; but notice that I owed it all to his remarkable and singular sagacity and good taste in publishing to the world my letters to you.

Your illustrious kinsman, Tsi-Chow-Choo.



April 6: 6 A.M. – To Cliffs.

The robin [**American Robin**  *Turdus migratorius*] is the singer at present, such is its power and universality, being found both in garden and wood. Morning and evening it does not fail, perched on some elm or the like, and in rainy days it is one long morning or evening. The song sparrow [**Song Sparrow**  *Melospiza melodia*] is still more universal but not so powerful. The lark [**Eastern Meadowlark**  *Sturnella magna* (Lark)], too, is equally constant, morning and evening, but confined to certain localities, as is the blackbird  to some extent. The **bluebird** [**Bluebird**, **Eastern**  *Sialia sialis*], with feebler but not less sweet warbling, helps fill the air, and the phoebe [**Bridge Pewee** (**Eastern Phoebe**  *Sayornis phoebe*)] does her part. The tree sparrow, *F. hyemalis* [**Tree Sparrow**, **American**  *Spizella arborea*], and fox-colored sparrows [**Fox Sparrow**  *Passerella iliaca* (**Fox-colored Sparrow**)] make the meadow-sides or gardens where they are flitting vocal, the first with its canary-like twittering, the second with its lively ringing trills or jingle. The third is a very sweet and more powerful singer, which would be memorable if we heard him long enough. The woodpecker's  tapping, though not musical, suggests pleasant associations in the cool morning, — is inspiring, enlivening.

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I hear no hylas nor croakers in the morning. Is it too cool for them? The gray branches of the oaks, which have lost still more of their leaves, seen against the pines when the sun is rising and falling on them, how rich and interesting!

From Cliffs see on the still water under the hill, at the outlet of the pond, two ducks  sailing, partly white. Hear the faint, swelling, far-off beat of a partridge [**Ruffed Grouse**  *Bonasa umbellus* (Partridge)].

CURRENT YOUTUBE VIDEO

Saw probably female red-wings [**Red-wing (Red-winged Blackbird**  *Agelaius phoeniceus*)] (?), grayish or dark ashy-brown, on an oak in the wood., with a male (?) whose red shoulder did not appear.

How many walks along the brooks I take in the string! What shall I call them? Lesser riparial excursions? Prairial? rivular?

When I came out there was not a speck of mist in the sky, but the morning without a cloud is not the fairest. Now, 8.30 A.M., it rains. Such is April.

A male willow, apparently same with that at H.'s Bridge, or No. 2, near end of second tract on west. Another male by ring-post on east side, long cylindrical catkins, now dark with scales, which are generally more rounded than usual and reddish at base and not lanceolate, turning backwards in blossom and exposing their sides or breasts to the sun, from which side burst forth fifty or seventy-five long white stamens like rays, tipped with yellow anthers which at first were reddish above, — spears to be embraced by invisible Arnold Winkelrieds; — reddish twigs and clear gray beneath. These last colors, especially, distinguish it from Nos. 1 and 2. Also a female, four or five rods north of last, just coming into bloom, with very narrow tapering catkins, lengthening already, some to an inch and a half, ovaries conspicuously stalked; very downy twigs, more reddish and rough than last below. If we consider the eagle  as a large hawk , how he falls in our estimation!

Our new citizen Sam Wheeler has a brave new weathercock all gilt on his new barn. This morning at sunrise it reflected the sun so brightly that I thought it was a house on fire in Acton, though I saw no smoke, but that might well be omitted. The flower-buds of the red maple have very red inner scales, now being more and more exposed, which color the tree-tops a great distance off.

P.M. — To Second Division Brook.

Near Clamshell Hill, I scare up in succession four pairs of good-sized brown or grayish-brown ducks . They go off with a loud squeaking quack. Each pair is by itself. One pair on shore some rods from the water. Is not the object of the quacking to give notice of danger to the rest who cannot see it?

All along under the south side of this hill on the edge of the meadow, the air resounds with the hum of honey-bees, attracted by the flower of the skunk-cabbage. I first heard the fine, peculiarly sharp hum of the honey-bee before I thought of them. Some hummed hollowly within the spathes, perchance to give notice to their fellows that plant was occupied, for they repeatedly looked in, and backed out on finding another. It was surprising to see them, directed by their instincts to these localities, while the earth has still but a wintry aspect so far as vegetation is concerned, buzz around some obscure spathe close to the ground, well knowing what they were about, then alight and enter. As the cabbages were very numerous for thirty or forty rods, there must have been some hundreds of bees there at once, at least. I watched many when they entered and came out, and they all had little yellow pellets of pollen at their thighs. As the skunk-cabbage comes out before the willow, it is probable that the former is the first flower they visit. It is the more surprising, as the flower is for the most part invisible within the spathe. Some of these spathes are now quite large and twisted up like cows' horns, not curved over as usual. Commonly they make a pretty little crypt or shrine for the flower, like the overlapping door of a tent. It must be bee-bread (?), then, they are after. Lucky that this flower does not flavor their honey. I have noticed for a month or more the bare ground sprinkled here and there with several kinds of fungi, now conspicuous, — the starred kind, puffballs, etc. Now it is fair, and the sun shines, though it shines and rains with short intervals to-day. I do not see so much greenness in the grass as I expected, though a considerable change. No doubt the rain exaggerates a little by showing all the greenness there is! The thistle is now ready to wear the rain-drops.

I see, in **J.P. Brown's** field, by Nut Meadow Brook, where a hen has been devoured by a hawk  probably. The feathers whiten the ground. They cannot carry a large fowl very far from the farmyard,





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and when driven off are frequently baited and caught in a trap by the remainder of their quarry. The gooseberry has not yet started. I cannot describe the lark's song. I used these syllables in the morning to remember it by — *heetar-su-e-oo*. The willow in Miles's Swamp which resembles No. 2 not fairly in blossom yet. Heard unusual notes from, I think, a chickadee [**Chicadee, Black-capped**  **Parus atricapillus** ~~Titmouse, Titmice~~] in the swamp, elicited, probably, by the love season, - *che che vet*, accent on last syllable, and *vissa viss a viss*, the last sharp and fine. Yet the bird looked more slender than the common titmouse [~~Titmouse, Titmice~~ (**Black-capped Chicadee**  **Parus atricapillus**)], with a longer tail, which jerked a little, but it seemed to be the same bird that sang *phebe* and *he-phebe* so sweetly. The woods rang with this. [Nuttall](#) says it is the young that *phebe* in winter. I noticed some aspens (*tremuliformis*) of good size there, which have no flowers!

The first lightning I remember this year was in the rain last evening, quite bright; and the thunder following very low, after. A thunder-shower in Boston yesterday.

One cowslip, though it shows the yellow, is not *fairly* out, but will be by to-morrow. How they improve their time! Not a moment of sunshine lost. One thing I may depend on: there has been no idling with the flowers. They advance as steadily as a clock. Nature loses not a moment. tubes no vacation. These plants, now protected by the water, just peeping forth. I should not be surprised to find that they drew in their head in a frosty night. Returning by Harrington's, saw a pigeon woodpecker [**Yellow-shafted Flicker**  **Colaptes auratus** (~~Golden-winged Woodpecker or Pigeon Woodpecker~~)] flash away, showing the rich golden under side of its glancing wings and the large whitish spot on its back, and presently I heard its familiar long-repeated loud note, almost familiar as that of a barn-door fowl, which it somewhat resembles. The robins  , too, now toward sunset, perched on the old apple trees in Tarbell's orchard, twirl forth their evening lays unweariedly. Is that a willow, the low bush from the fireplace ravine which from the lichen oak, fifty or sixty rods distant, shows so red in the westering sunlight? More red, I find, by far than close at hand. To-night for the first time I hear the hylas in full blast.

Is that pretty little reddish-leaved star-shaped plant by the edge of water a different species of hypericum from the *perforatum*?

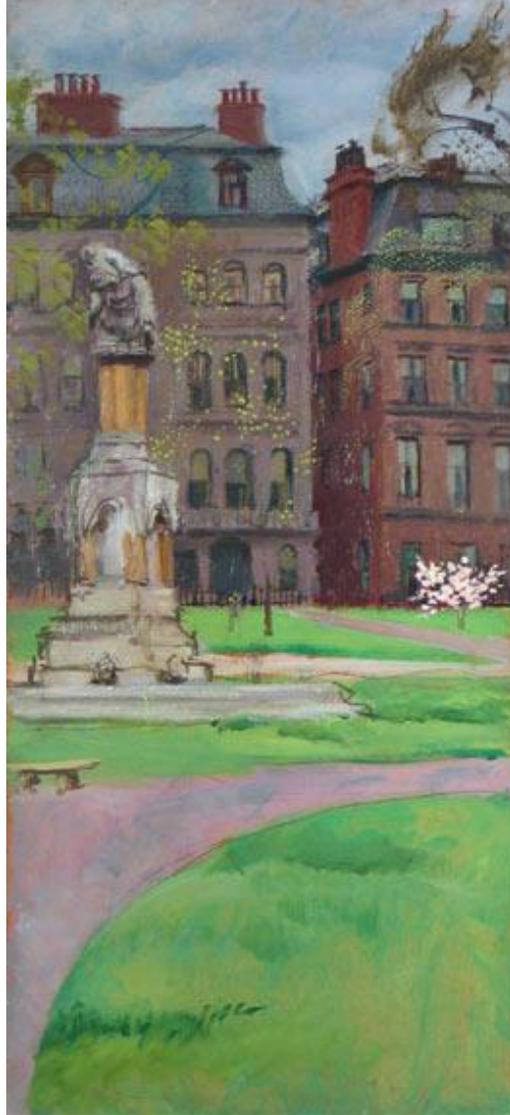
THOREAU AS
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 April 7, Thursday, 1853: Dr. John Snow used [chloroform](#) on [Queen Victoria](#) for the birth of Prince Leopold. This event would effectively remove much of the stigma then associated with pain relief in childbirth in Great Britain.

[ANESTHESIA](#)

The cornerstone for a US Marine Hospital was set in place at Rincon Point in [San Francisco](#).

The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* came to anchor somewhere in the vicinity of [Macao](#) and Victoria Island, [Hong Kong](#).

[Henry Thoreau](#) and [Ellery Channing](#) went down the Concord River by boat to Bedford, Massachusetts.



April 7: 6 A.M. — I did not notice any bees on the willows I looked at yesterday, though so many on the cabbage.

The white-bellied swallows [[Tree Swallow](#)  *Tachycineta bicolor* (White-bellied Swallow)] advertise themselves this morning, dashing up the street, and two have already come to disturb the bluebirds [[Eastern Bluebird](#)  *Sialia sialis*] at our box. Saw and heard this morning, on a small elm and the wall by Badger's, a sparrow (?), seemingly somewhat slaty-brown and lighter beneath,

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whose note began loud and clear, *twee-tooai*, etc., etc., ending much like the field sparrow [Field Sparrow  *Spizella pusilla* (~~Rush Sparrow~~)]. Was it a female *F. hyemalis* [Dark-eyed Junco  *Junco hyemalis* (~~Slate-colored Sparrow~~ or ~~Snow-bird~~)]? Or a field [Field Sparrow  *Spizella pusilla* (~~Rush Sparrow~~ or *junco* or ~~Huckleberry-bird~~)], or a swamp [Swamp Sparrow  *Melospiza georgiana*], sparrow? Saw no white in tail. Also saw a small, plain, warbler-like bird for a moment, which I did not recognize.

10 A.M. — Down river in boat to Bedford, 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

A windy, but clear, sunny day; cold wind from northwest. Notice a white maple with almost all the staminate flowers above or on the top, most of the stamens now withered, before the red maple has blossomed. Another maple, all or nearly all female. The stamiferous flowers look light yellowish, the female dark crimson. These white maples' lower branches droop quite low, striking the head of the rower, and curve gracefully upward at the ends. Another sucker, the counterpart of the one I saw the other day, tail gone, but not purpled snout, being fresher. Is it the work of a gull or of the spearer? Do not the suckers chiefly attract the gulls at this season?

River has risen from last rains, and we cross the Great Meadows, scaring up many ducks  at a great distance, some partly white, some apparently black, some brownish(?). It is Fast-Day, and many gunners are about the shore, which makes them shy. I never cross the meadow at this season without seeing ducks. That is probably a marsh hawk [Northern Harrier  *Circus cyaneus*], flying low over the water and then skirting the meadow's copsy edge, when abreast, from its apparently triangular wings, reminding me of a smaller gull [Common Tern  *Sterna hirundo* (~~Mackerel Gull~~ or ~~Sea-Swallow~~)]. Saw more afterward. A hawk  above Ball's Hill which, though with a distinct white rump, I think was not the harrier but sharp-shinned [Sharp-shinned Hawk  *Accipiter striatus*], from its broadish, mothlike form, light and slightly spotted beneath, with head bent downward, watching for prey. A great gull, though it is so fair and the wind northwest, fishing over the flooded meadow. He slowly circles round and hovers with flapping wings in the air over particular spots, repeatedly returning there and sailing quite low over the water, with long, narrow, pointed wings, trembling throughout their length. Hawks  much about water at this season.

If you make the least correct observation of nature this year, you will have occasion to repeat it with illustrations the next, and the season and life itself is prolonged.

I am surprised to see how much in warm places the high blueberry buds are started, some reddish, some greenish, earlier now than any gooseberries I have noticed. Several painted tortoises; no doubt have been out a long time.

Walk in and about Tarbell's Swamp. Heard in two distinct places a slight, more prolonged croak, somewhat like the toad. This? Or a frog? It is a warmer sound than I have heard yet, as if dreaming outdoors were possible.

Many spotted tortoises are basking amid the dry leaves in the sun, along the side of a still, warm ditch cut through the swamp. They make a great rustling a rod ahead, as they make haste through the leaves to tumble into the water. The flower-buds of the andromeda here are ready to open, almost. Yet three or four rods off from all this, on the edge of the swamp, under a north hillside, is a long



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strip of ice five inches thick for ten or twelve rods. The first striped snake crawling off through leaves in the sun.

Crossed to Bedford side to see where [they] had been digging out (probably) a woodchuck. How handsome the river from those hills! The river southwest over the Great Meadows a sheet of sparkling molten silver, with broad lagoons parted from it by curving lines of low bushes; to the right or northward now, at 2 or 3 P.M., a dark blue, with small smooth, light edgings, firm plating, under the lee of the shore. Fly-like bees buzzing about, close to the dry, barren hillside.

The only large catkins I notice along the riverside are on the recent yellow-green shoots from the stump of what looks like the ordinary early swamp willow, which is common, — near by almost wholly grayish and stunted and scarcely opening yet. Small bee-like wasps (?) and flies are numerous on them, not flying when you stand never so close. A large leech in the water, serpentine this wise, as the snake is not.



Approach near to Simon Brown's ducks , on river. They are continually bobbing their heads under water in a shallow part of the meadow — more under water than above. I infer that the wild employ themselves likewise. You are most struck with the apparent ease with which they glide away, — not seeing the motion of their feet, — as by their wills.

As we stand on Nawshawtuct at 5 P.M., looking over the meadows, I doubt if there is a town more adorned by its river than ours. Now the sun is low in the west, the northeasterly water is of a peculiarly ethereal light blue, more beautiful than the sky, and thus broad water — with innumerable bays and inlets running up into the land on either side and often divided by bridges and causeways, as if it were the very essence and richness of the havens distilled and poured over the earth, contrasting; with the clear russet land and the paler day from which it has been subtracted, — nothing can be more elysian. Is not the blue more ethereal when the sun is at this angle? The river is but a long chain of flooded meadows. I think our most distant extensive low horizon must be that northeast from this hill over Ball's hill, — to what town is it? It is down the river valley, partly at least toward the Merrimack, as it should be.

What is that plant with a whorl of four, five, or six reddish cornel-like leaves, seven or eight inches from the ground, with the minute relics of small dried flowers left, and a large pink bud now springing, just beneath its leaves? [Large cornel (*Canadensis*).] It is a true evergreen, for it dries soon in the house, as if kept fresh by the root.



April 11, Monday, [1853](#): In [California](#) waters, the steamer *Jenny Lind* exploded with heavy loss of life.

Aboard the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* in oriental waters, William Speiden, Jr. received his 1st letters from home since leaving the United States shore — and was pleased to be informed that everything was “all well and good news.”

The [Daily Dispatch](#) of Richmond, Virginia reported that it had noticed a connection between the d—d unscriptural “rappings” of spiritualism and the d—d antislavery crusade (that connection being, of course, the d—d family Beecher):

There is a very remarkable family scattered about the Northern and Middle States which has contrived to make a greater noise in the world than any other family we know of in modern times, except the Bonapartes: and in making the comparison, we beg pardon of the shade of the great Napoleon, and the person of the little one. Of one of the members of this family we have already had more to say in the Dispatch than has been at all agreeable to us, and we sincerely hoped to have done with them forever. But every now and then someone of them says or does something to excite our ire, and it is impossible for us to hold our peace.



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They are the sons and daughters of old Lyman Beecher, half a dozen or so of the boys being preachers, and the smartest of the girls being Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, whose very name has grown to us distasteful in the extreme.

Of Henry Ward Beecher, our readers know a good deal. He is the Boanerges of Abolition Divines, and is a D.D. – a dignity which, in his individual case, we should prefer to write with little d's and a dash – thus d-d. A man of decided talent, he some time ago narrowly escaped prosecution for forgery, in having unwarrantably used the name of a brother clergyman, the Rev. Joel Parker, and the fine abilities which now adorn the pulpit of his church in Brooklyn, might, if justice had got its due, have been quenched in the gloom of Sing Sing. Since that achievement, Henry has remained comparatively quiet, but the rest of them have followed the family instinct of acquiring notoriety, by fuss, with more than their usual adroitness.

Week before last Harriet sailed for Europe, accompanied by her brother, the Rev. Charles Beecher of Newark, N.J. We duly chronicled the fact, and congratulated ourselves that the country was happily rid, for sometime at least, of two of the breed. But the Rev. Charles left something behind him to kick up a row, and it has come to light before he has yet reached the shores of England.

This something is a long report, now in the press of Putnam, on Spiritual Rappings, which was vicariously delivered by another brother, the Rev. Thomas K. Beecher of Williamsburg, New York, before the Brooklyn Association of Congregational Ministers, on Wednesday last. The grounds taken by this report are reduced by the Tribune to the following heads:

1. That the rappings are veritable.
2. That electricity has nothing to do with them.
3. That they are produced by no living agency.
4. That disembodied spirits can communicate with living beings.
5. That these Spiritual Rappings are real communications from the dead, but from the damned.
6. That the proof of the evil nature of these spirits is found in their irreligious and diabolic messages.

If we had not seen this report thus gravely summed up, and commented upon by the Tribune, we should hesitate to believe in its accuracy. We did not suppose a "message" so "diabolic" could emanate even from a Beecher. We would not, of course, set up any acquaintance we may have with the Bible, (though we do sometimes read and ponder that holy volume,) against the biblical erudition of the Beecher family, but we conceive the doctrine of communication, on the part of earthly beings, with the world of spirits, utterly unsustainable by any portion of God's word that has fallen under our notice. Certainly the idea that the spirits of the damned can harrow up the souls of their living relatives with a revelation of their lost state, is utterly at war with the gospel of a merciful Being who does not lightly torment his creatures. Indeed, there are passages in the sacred text which directly contradict the position assumed in this report, for we know when Dives, lifting up his eyes in torment, desired that his five brothers might be informed of his damnation, and thus be led to repent of their sins, he was neither permitted to go himself, nor to send Lazarus to apprise them. But we forbear further comment upon this point.

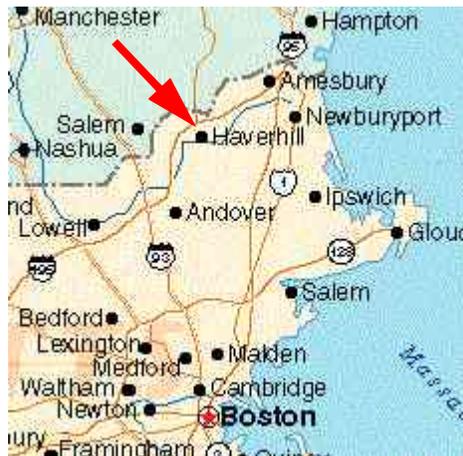
We are chiefly outraged by this report on spiritual

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manifestations, because we fear its consequences upon the weak minds of very many excellent people who have begun to regard the rappings seriously. Already the Lunatic Asylums throughout the land are being filled with the unhappy victims of this miserable delusion. What the state of things will be when mothers are made to believe that their lost children are crying to them from the realms of despair, when wives are taught to think their departed husbands are warning them from the flames of eternal perdition — the imagination refuses, with horror, to consider.

[Henry Thoreau](#) went to [Haverhill](#) to do extended surveying for James H. Duncan.



[Thoreau](#) began to access materials relating to spiders prepared by [Nicholas Marcellus Hentz](#) for the [Boston Journal of Natural History](#):



April 11: I hear the clear, loud whistle — of a purple finch [**Purple Finch** [Carpodacus purpureus](#) (~~American linnet~~)] — somewhat like & nearly as loud as the robin [**American Robin** [Turdus migratorius](#)] from the elm by Whittings. The maple, which I think is a red one, just this side of Wheildons is just out this morning.
9 Am to Haverhill via Cambridge & Boston.

[Dr Harris](#) says that that early blackwinged-buffedged butterfly is the Vanessa Antiopa — & is introduced from Europe — & is sometimes found in this state alive in winter.

The orange brown one with scolloped wings & smaller somewhat is vanessa-progne.

The early pestle shaped bug or beetle is a cicindela — of which there are 3 species one of them named from a semicolon-like mark on it. V. [Hassley](#) on spiders in Bost Journal of Nat Hist.

At Nat Hist Rooms — saw the Female Red-wing [**Red-winged Blackbird** [Agelaius phoeniceus](#)] striped white & ash Female Cow-bird [**Brown-headed Cowbird** [Molothrus ater](#)] ashy brown.

1st The Swamp-sparrow [**Swamp Sparrow** [Melospiza georgiana](#)] is ferruginous brown (spotted with black) & ash above about neck; brownish-white beneath; undivided chestnut crown.

2nd The Grass-bird [**Vesper Sparrow** [Pooecetes gramineus](#)] — grayish brown-mingled with ashy whitish above; light pencilled with dark brown beneath — no marked crown outer tail-feathers whitish, — perhaps a faint bar on wing.

3rd Field sparrow [**Field Sparrow** [Spizella pusilla](#) (~~Rush Sparrow or juncorum or Huckleberry-bird~~)], smaller than either — marked like first, with less black, & less distinct ash on neck, & less ferruginous & no distinct crown.

4th Savannah Sparrow [**Savannah Sparrow** [Passerculus sandwichensis](#) (~~seringo or seringo-bird or passerina~~)] much like second; with more black, but not noticeable white in tail, and a little more brown — no crown marked.

Emberiza Rniliaria (What is it in Nuttal?) Gmel. appears to be my young of purple Finch [**Purple Finch** [Carpodacus purpureus](#) (~~American linnet~~)].

One Maryland Yellow Throat [**Common Yellowthroat** [Geothlypis trichas](#) (~~Maryland Yellow-~~)]



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throat) — probably female, has no black on side head, & is like a summer yellow bird — except that the last has ends of the wings & tail black.

The yellow swamp warbler [**Yellow Warbler**  *Dendroica petechia*] (what is it in Nuttall?) is bluish gray with 2 white bars on wings — a bright yellow crown — side breasts & rump— Female less distinct.

Black burnian [**Blackburnian Warbler**  *Dendroica fusca*] — is orange-throated.

American red-start, [**American Redstart**  *Setophaga ruticilla*] male, is black — forward — coppery orange beneath & stripe on wings & near base of tail. Female dark ashy fainter marks.

J.E. Cabot thought my small hawk  might be Cooper's Says that Gould an Englishman is the best authority on birds.



April 12, Tuesday, 1853: The Emperor Napoléon III named Gioachino Antonio Rossini as a commander of the Legion of Honor.

New York State required the Board Of Regents to establish general rules for the incorporation of educational institutions.

John Russell, father of the Reverend John Lewis Russell, died in Salem, Massachusetts. He was survived by his wife and children. The body would be placed in the family tomb at Mt. Auburn in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

A Thespian Corps performance was given on board the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* in oriental waters by members of its crew.

Henry Thoreau surveyed, for James H. Duncan in Haverhill, what was called the "Little River" lot. On the 12th, the 14th, the 18th, the 22nd, the 25th, the 26th, and the 28th of the month, boarding in Haverhill (that's pronounced HAY-verll), and on May 3rd and 5th, he would evidently be too busy and too preoccupied to make any journal entries. He was simply trying to make some money to pay off debts, doing seventeen full days of surveying for Elizabeth Howe and in addition surveying the "Kimball Lot" for Charles White. According to a manuscript letter from Henrietta M. Daniels to Alfred W. Hosmer which is now in the Alfred Hosmer Collection at the Concord Free Public Library, during this period Thoreau boarded at a Mrs. Webster's and went for walks with another boarder there, Samuel A. Chase — whom we notice that he suitably impressed. Here is what has been retained of that, secondhand and as of March 11, 1899:



Thoreau was surveying; he was embarrassed through the publication of his book, and trying to earn money. They [Thoreau and Samuel A. Chase] used to walk together often.

...if a bird appeared he showed how Thoreau's hand would go out to stop him from another step.... He said he did not believe he (Thoreau) ever in all his life did one wrong thing. He was "all purity and goodness personified." He said the moisture would come to his eyes whenever he spoke of his mother; he was a loving man. And I think what I was most glad to hear was that Thoreau said— "Fifty years from now the majority of people will believe as I do now." Aren't you glad that he knew it? It would take the keen edge from his loneliness....

He said the lady with whom they boarded was a stiff old fashioned Methodist who tried her best to "convert" Thoreau; but he said "he was too hard a nut for her to crack."

In St. Louis, the Daily Morning Herald was on the qui vive for daring ladies, not only in home port but also abroad, and conveyed the news that:

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A Bloomer was seen in Cleveland the other day.
Her skirts were unusually short.

Hmmm. Was this daring lady “just asking for it”?



“Everything in life is unusual until you get accustomed to it.”

— The Scarecrow, in THE MARVELOUS LAND OF OZ (L. Frank Baum, 1904)



April 18, Monday, 1853: Vice President William Rufus King of North Carolina and Alabama, Democrat, died at the age of 67 shortly after taking his oath of office (he had not carried out any of the supposed duties of his office as Vice President of the United States of America, since for almost all of this 6-week period of time actually he had been in Cuba attempting to recover from tuberculosis).

The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* came to anchor in Whampoa Reach, new Whampoa (Huangpu), southeast of Canton.

The 1st railroad in Asia began operation for the entire distance between Bombay and Tanna.

INDIA



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR APRIL 18TH]

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 April 19, Tuesday, [1853](#): In Constantinople, Russian emissary Prince A.S. Menshikov iterated his country's demand that the Ottoman Empire agree to a treaty giving Russia the right to protect Christians in Ottoman territory.

Hoping to attract the attention of influential musicians, and a little money, [Johannes Brahms](#) and his violinist friend Eduard Hoffmann (Reményi) set out from Hamburg on a concert tour of nearby cities.

Floris Adriaan van Hall and Dirk Donker Curtius replaced Johann Rudolf Thorbecke as chief ministers of the Netherlands.

The *USS Saratoga* came to anchor farther down the Pearl River from [Canton](#).

[William Lloyd Garrison](#), not that much of a detail person, claimed in one of his abolitionist speeches that [Thomas Jefferson](#) had authored [The Constitution](#) of the United States of America.



April 19: Haverhill. — Willow and bass strip freely. Surveying [Charles White](#)'s long piece. Hear again that same nighthawk-like sound [[Common Nighthawk](#)  [Chordeiles minor](#) (Booming Nighthawk)] over a meadow at evening.



 April 21, Thursday, [1853](#): William Speiden, Jr. and 4 of his messmates from the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* visited [Canton](#).

Anders Sandøe Orsted replaced Christian Albrecht Bluhme as prime minister of Denmark.

[Emily Dickinson](#) wrote to her younger brother [Austin Dickinson](#):

Dear Austin.

We could hardly eat any supper last night, we felt so badly to think you had'nt got the valise, and we talked all the time about it while we sat at the table, and called Mr Cutler names — Father says he "would like to reach him just long enough to cuff his ears." We do feel so badly about it, we dont know what to do.

There were all your clothes in such beautiful order, and a cake of new maple sugar, and mother had with her own hand selected and polished the apples, she thought it would please you so. It is too bad — too bad. We do feel vexed about it. Mother thinks it is lost — she says you will never see it. Father thinks he would'nt dare to lose it, but is too selfish to trouble himself by sending you any word. Mother is so afraid that you will need the clothes, and wont know what to do without them, and Vinnie and I keep hoping, and trying to persuade her that you've got them before now.

We have all been thinking how much you'd enjoy the sugar, and



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how nice the apples would taste after studying all day long, and "living very sparingly," but this [is] a vexing world, and things "aft gang agray." I wont talk any more of this, for I know you are disappointed as much as any of us, and want to hear something sunnier – and there is something sunnier. I was with dear Susie last evening, and she told me how on Monday she walked out in the fields, carrying your letter with her, and read it over and over, "sitting on the stile," and pausing as she read, to look at the hills and the trees and the blue, blue home beyond.

Susie talked much of you, and of her lonely life when you were gone away, and we said you would soon be here, and then we talked of how soon, and of many and many a sunlight and many and many a shade which might steal upon us ere then. How I wish you were here, dear Austin, how I do wish for you so many times every day, and I miss the long talks most, upon the *kitchen stone hearth*, when the just are fast asleep. I ask myself many times if they will come back again, and whether they will stay, but we dont know.

Father wont go to Boston this week, as he had intended to, for he finds a great deal to do in starting the Newman family. I think now he will go *next week*, tho' I dont know what day. The Newmans all board at Mrs Merrill's until they get into their house, which will be by Saturday, certainly. Their Irish girl stays here, for Mrs Merrill was afraid she would not agree with *her* girl. The Newmans seem very pleasant, but they are not *like us*. What makes a few of us so different from others? It's a question I often ask myself. The Germanians gave a concert here, the evening of Exhibition day. Vinnie and I went with John. I never heard [such] *sounds* before. They seemed like *brazen Robins*, all wearing broadcloth wings, and I think they were, for they all flew away as soon as the concert was over. I tried so hard to make Susie go with us, but she would'nt consent to it. I could not bear to have her lose it.

Write me as soon as this comes, and say if you've got the valise. Emilie.

Anna Warner died Tuesday night, and will be buried tomorrow, I suppose. They seem to feel very badly. She has been sick a great while now. You will not be surprised at hearing it. Mother wants me to tell you *from her* to get all the clothes you need at some good place in Boston, should you not find the valise. I hope you have got it before now. I should'nt think he *would lose it*, after all you have done for him. Mother says she can never look upon him again.



April 21: Haverhill. — A peach tree in bloom.



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April 28, Thursday, 1853: In San Francisco the Golden Hills News, a Chinese-language gazette, was established by Howard & Hudson.

Bussol Strait, named after the frigate *Boussole*, is a wide passage between islands of the Kuril Island chain. It is not visible from anybody's kitchen window on the Alaskan mainland. During the 1840s it had been a popular route to the Sea of Okhotsk, for American whalships going after right whales. It fell into disuse when whalers switched over to the slaughtering of bowhead whales and began to find the 4th Kuril Strait to be more convenient. Among the few to use the strait during this period was the 349-ton whaler *Susan* of Nantucket — but during the previous night it was stove by ice and sank with one crewman drowning and another perishing on the ice (the remaining 25 whaling men would reach Urup in their whaleboats on the afternoon of the 29th to after 8 anxious days be rescued by the barque *Black Warrior* of New London).

By this point the *USS Plymouth*, *USS Saratoga*, and *USS Supply* were all at anchor in the vicinity of the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* at Macao. What a magnificent display of American power!



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR APRIL 28th]



May 2, Monday, 1853: The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* came to anchor within sight of the Chusan (Zhoushan) Islands in the East China Sea.

The Duchies of Anhalt-Dessau and Anhalt-Köthen merged to form the Duchy of Anhalt-Dessau-Köthen.

At a performance in the Wierss'schen Room, Celle, Johannes Brahms, finding the piano a halfstep low, transposed the entire program up a half-step rather than ask Reményi to tune down.

Henri Franconi's Hippodrome, a 4,000 seat facility with a canvas roof, opened in New-York at 23rd Street and Fifth Avenue.

A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra, her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

Not very pleasant this morning. Very cool and damp. The prairies are dotted over with camps, some lying still waiting for grass and others starting out. We started at seven o'clock, stopped at 11:30 to let our cattle graze, started again at 1:30 and camped at 5 o'clock. Our cattle are very unruly, not having been used in some time previous to our starting. Drove 18 miles to-day.



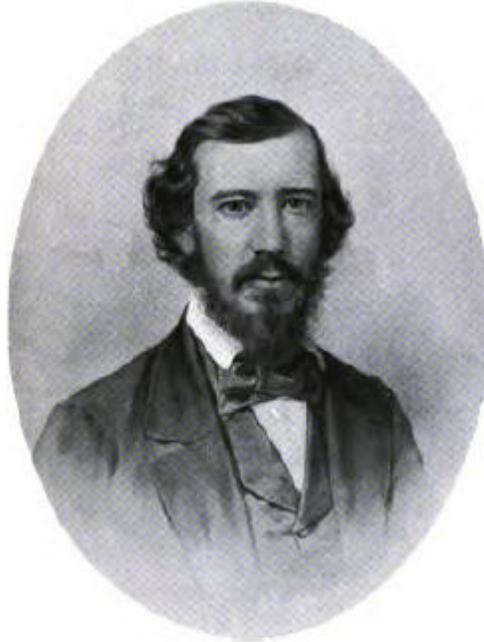
May 2. Summer yellowbird [Yellow Warbler Dendroica petechia (~~Yellow-bird or Summer Yellow-bird~~)] on the opening *Salix alba*. Chimney swallows [Chimney Swift Chaetura pelagica] and the bank [Bank Swallow Riparia riparia] or else cliff ditto. Small pewee [Eastern Wood-Pewee Contopus virens]?

Our earliest gooseberry in garden has bloomed. What is that pondweed-like plant floating in a pool near Breed's with a slender stem and linear leaves and a small whorl of minute leaves on the surface, and nutlets in the axils of the leaves, along the stem, as if now out of bloom? [*Callitriche verna*.] Missouri currant.

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 May 3, Tuesday, 1853: [Moncure Daniel Conway](#) had kept a letter of introduction to [Waldo Emerson](#) from the Reverend [John G. Palfrey](#) tucked away in a drawer for several weeks, for he was fearful that the person would not be so impressive as the essays. On this morning, very early, he took the Fitchburg train out past Walden Pond to Concord.



While working up his courage he had breakfast at an inn, and walked over to the Old Manse and meditated for a while the Old North Bridge. Then, having exhausted his possibilities, he walked out the Lexington road to the Emerson home and presented his credentials. “Eloquent, wonderful, grand and simple, his speech flowed constantly, bearing the wealth of ages on it.” Emerson gave his visitor a copy of [Margaret Fuller’s WOMAN IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY](#) bearing her autograph. Then the two of them walked over to visit with [Henry Thoreau](#), who asked him what he was studying at the [Harvard Divinity School](#). When Conway indicated that he was studying “The Scriptures,” Thoreau affected naiveté and inquired “The Hindu, Arabic or Jewish?”²⁰

May 3, 1853. is a date under which I wrote a couplet from Emerson’s “Woodnotes,”—

’Twas one of the charmèd days
When the genius of God doth flow.

—for on that day I first met Emerson. Dr. Palfrey, on finding in our conversations that it was Emerson who had touched me in my sleep in Virginia, advised me to visit him. I felt shy about invading the “spot that is sacred to thought and God.” but he urged me to go and gave me a letter to Emerson. I knew too well the importance of a morning to go straight to Emerson’s house, and inquired the way to the Old Manse. It was a fortunate excursion. The man I most wished to meet was Emerson; the man I most wished to see was Hawthorne. He no longer resided at the Old Manse, but as I was gazing from the road down the archway

20. How different [Thoreau](#)’s little jest was from what is known as “the Belfast joke”:

A guy walking through a dark alley in Belfast feels something against his back. “Protestant or Catholic?” he hears. “Actually I’m a Quaker,” the guy blurts out. Pause — then “Protestant Quaker or Catholic Quaker?”



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of ash-trees at the house whose "mosses" his genius had made spiritual moss-roses, out stepped the magician himself. It has been a conceit of mine that I had never seen a portrait of Hawthorne, but recognized him as one I had seen in dreams he had evoked. At any rate, I knew it was my Prospero. Who else could have those soft-flashing unsearchable eyes, that *beauté du diable* at middle age? He did not observe me, and as I slowly followed him towards the village, doubts were awakened by the elegance and even smartness of his dress. But I did not reflect that Prospero had left his isle, temporarily buried his book, and was passing from his masque to his masquerade as consul at Liverpool and man of the world. Hawthorne was making calls before his departure for Europe. I felt so timid about calling on Emerson -it appeared such a one-sided affair- that I once turned my steps toward the railway station. But soon after twelve I knocked at Emerson's door, and sent in Dr. Palfrey's letter, with a request that I might call on him during the afternoon. The children came to say that their father was out, but would return to dinner at one, and their mother wished me to remain. The three children entertained me pleasantly, mainly in the bower that Alcott had built in the front garden. I was presently sent for. Emerson met me at the front door, welcome beaming in his eyes, and took me into his library. He remembered receiving a letter from me two or three years before. On learning that I was at the Divinity School and had come to Concord simply to see him, he called from his library door, "Queeny!" Mrs. Emerson came, and I was invited to remain some days. I had, however, to return to college that evening, and though I begged that his day should not be long interfered with, he insisted on my passing the afternoon with him. When we were alone, Emerson inquired about the experiences that had led me away from my Methodism, and about my friendships. "The gods," he said, "generally provide the young thinker with friends." When I told him how deeply words of his, met by chance in an English magazine, had moved me while I was a law student in Virginia, he said, "When the mind has reached a certain stage it may be sometimes crystallized by a slight touch." I had so little realized their import, I told him that they only resulted in leading me to leave the law for the Methodist ministry. It had been among the Hicksite Quakers that I found sympathetic friends, after entering on the path of inquiry. He then began to talk about the Quakers and their inner light. He had formed a near friendship with Mary Rotch of New Bedford. "Mary Rotch told us that her little girl one day asked if she might do something. She replied, 'What does the voice in thee say?' The child went off, and after a time returned to say 'Mother, the little voice says, no.' That," said Emerson, "starts the tears to one's eyes." He especially respected the Quaker faith that every "scripture" must be held subject to the reader's inner light. "I am accustomed to find errors in writings of the great men, and it is an impertinence to demand that I shall recognize none in some particular volume." The children presently came in, - Ellen, Edward, and Edith. They were all pretty, and came up to their father with their several reports on the incidents of the morning. Edith had some story to tell of a trouble among one or two rough families in Concord. A man had hinted that a woman next door had stolen something, and she had struck him in the leg with a corkscrew. Emerson summed this up by saying, "He



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insinuated that she was a rogue, and she insinuated the corkscrew in his leg." Ellen perceived the joke. and I many times remarked the quickness with which, while not yet out of girlhood, she appreciated every word of her father. The dinner was early; the children were with us, and the talk was the most homelike and merry that I had known for a long time. When the children were gone Mrs. Emerson told me that they had been christened. "Husband was not willing the children should be christened in the formal way, but said he would offer no objection when I could find a minister as pure and good as the children. That was reasonable, and we waited some time; but when William Henry Channing came on a visit to us, we agreed that he was good enough to christen our children." While Emerson was preparing for the walk, I looked about the library. Over the mantle hung a large copy of Michael Angelo's "Parcæ;" there were two statuettes of Goethe, of whom also there was an engraved portrait on the wall. Afterwards Emerson showed me a collection of portraits - Shakespeare, Dante, Montaigne, Goethe, and Swedenborg. The furniture of the room was rather antique and simple. There were four long shelves completely occupied, he said, by his MSS., of which there must have been enough to furnish a score of printed volumes. Our walk was around Walden Pond, on both sides of which Emerson owned land. Our conversation related to the religious ferment of the time. He said that the Unitarian churches were stated to be no longer producing ministers equal to their forerunners, but were more and more finding their best men in those coming from orthodox churches. That was a symptom. Those from other churches, having gone through experiences and reached personal convictions strong enough to break with their past. would of course have some enthusiasm for their new faith. But the Unitarians might take note of that intimation that individual growth and experience are essential for the religious teacher. I mentioned Theodore Parker. and he said, "It is a comfort to remember that there is one sane voice amid the religious and political affairs of the country." I said that I could not understand how I could have tolerated those dogmas of inherited depravity, blood atonement. eternal damnation for Adam's sin, and the rest. He said, "I cannot feel interested in Christianity; it seems deplorable that there should be a tendency to creeds that would take men back to the chimpanzee." He smiled at the importance ascribed to academic terms. "I have very good grounds for being Unitarian and Trinitarian too: I need not nibble at one loaf forever, but eat it and go on to earn another." He said that while he could not personally attend any church, he held a pew in the Unitarian church for his wife and children who desired it, and indeed would in any case support the minister, because it is well "to have a conscientious man to sit on school committees, to help at town meetings, to attend the sick and the dead." As we were walking through the woods he remarked that the voices of some fishermen out on the water, talking about their affairs, were intoned by the distance and the water into music; and that the curves which their oars made, marked under the sunlight in silver, made a succession of beautiful bows. This may have started a train of thought related to the abhorrence I had expressed of the old dogmas, to which I had added something about the Methodist repugnance with which I had witnessed in Maryland some Catholic ceremonies. "Yet," he said, "they possess beauty in the



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distance. When one sees them on the stage, -processions of priests in their vestments chanting their hymns at the opera, -they are in their place, and offend no sentiment." I mentioned a task set me at the Divinity School, to write an essay on Eschatology, and Emerson said, "An actually existent fly is more important than a possibly existent angel." Again presently: "The old artist said, *Pingo in eternitatem*; this *eternitatem* for which I paint is not in past or future, but is the height of every living hour." When we were in a byway among the bushes, Emerson suddenly stopped and exclaimed, "Ah! there is one of the gods of the wood!" I looked and saw nothing; then turned to him and followed his glance. but still beheld nothing unusual. He was looking along the path before us through a thicket. "Where?" I asked. "Did you see it?" he said, now moving on. "No, I saw nothing - what was it? "No matter," said he gently. I repeated my question, but he still said smilingly, "Never mind, if you did not see it." I was a little piqued, but said no more, and very soon was listening to talk that made my Eschatology seem ridiculous. Perhaps the sylvan god I had missed was a pretty snake, a squirrel or other little note in the symphony of nature. My instruction in the supremacy of the present hour began not so much in Emerson's words as in himself. Standing beside the ruin of the shanty Thoreau built with his own hands. and lived in for a year at a cost of twenty-eight dollars, twelve and a half cents, Emerson appeared an incarnation of the wondrous day he was giving me. My enthusiasm for Margaret Fuller Ossoli, excited by her "Memoirs," led Emerson in parting to give me a copy of her WOMAN IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, - an English edition she had sent him from London, with her initials in it. At my request he added his own name and the date. That evening I sat in my room in Divinity Hall (No. 34) as one enriched, and wrote: "May 3. The most memorable day of my life: spent with Ralph Waldo Emerson!" Two days later I attended a great dinner given in Boston to Senator Hale of New Hampshire. I went over with Dr. Palfrey, who was chairman. Emerson was there, but when Palfrey called for a speech from him he had departed. What was my chagrin, on my return to the Divinity School, to find that Emerson had been there to call upon me!

Being homeless in the North, my summer vacation (1853) was passed at Concord. The Emersons found for me a very pleasant abode at "Hillside," on Ponkatasset [Ponkawtasset] Hill, about a mile out of the village, where Ellery Channing once lived, and where he wrote his poem on New England. Two sisters, the Misses Hunt, educated ladies, received me into this pleasant cottage, where I was the only boarder. These ladies were cousins of Miss Martha Hunt, whose suicide in Concord River and the recovery of her body are described in Hawthorne's BLITHEDEALE ROMANCE. They were troubled because G. W. Curtis, in his HOMES OF AMERICAN AUTHORS, had suggested that Martha's suicide was due to the contrast between her transcendental ideals and the coarseness of her home. They described the family of their cousin as educated people. One of these sisters walked with me to the river and pointed out all the places connected with the tragedy, and some years later another cousin drowned herself there. Emerson introduced me to his friends. First of all he took me to Henry Thoreau, who lived in the village with his parents and his sister. The kindly and silent pencil-maker, his father, John Thoreau, was French in appearance, and Henry resembled him



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physically; but neither parent impressed me as possessing mental qualities that could account for such a rare spirit as Henry. He was thirty-six when I met him. He received me pleasantly, and asked what we were studying at Cambridge. I answered, "The Scriptures." "Which?" he asked. Emerson said, "You will find our Thoreau a sad pagan." Thoreau had long been a reverent reader of Oriental scriptures, and showed me his bibles, translated from various languages into French and English.

He invited me to come next day for a walk, but in the morning I found the Thoreaus agitated by the arrival of a coloured fugitive from Virginia, who had come to their door at daybreak. Thoreau took me to a room where his excellent sister, Sophia, was ministering to the fugitive, who recognized me as one he had seen. He was alarmed, but his fears passed into delight when after talking with him about our county I certified his genuineness. I observed the tender and lowly devotion of Thoreau to the African. He now and then drew near to the trembling man, and with a cheerful voice bade him feel at home, and have no fear that any power should again wrong him. That whole day he mounted guard over the fugitive, for it was a slave-hunting time. But the guard had no weapon, and probably there was no such thing in the house.

The next day the fugitive was got off to Canada, and I enjoyed my first walk with Thoreau. He was a unique man every way. He was short of stature, well built; every movement was full of courage and repose; his eyes were very large, and bright, as if caught from the sky. "His nose is like the prow of a ship," said Emerson one day. He had the look of the huntsman of Emerson's quatrain: -

He took the colour of his vest
From rabbit's coat and grouse's breast;
For as the wild kinds lurk and hide,
So walks the huntsman unespied.

The cruellest weapons, however, which this huntsman took with him were lenses and an old book in which to press plants. He was not talkative, but his occasional monologues were extraordinary. I remember being surprised at every step with revelations of laws and significant attributes in common things - as a relation between different kinds of grass and the geological characters beneath them, the variety and grouping of pine-needles and the effect of these differences on the sounds they yield when struck by the wind, and the varieties of taste represented by grasses and common herbs when applied to the tongue. He offered me a peculiar grass to chew for an instant, laying, "It is a little sharp, but an experience." Deep in the woods his face shone with a new light. He had a mental calendar of the flora of the neighbourhood, and would go some distance around to visit some floral friend. We were too early for the *hibiscus*, a rare flower in New England, which I desired to see. He pointed out the spot near the river where alone it could be found, and said it would open about the following Monday and not stay long. I went on Tuesday or Wednesday, but was too late - the petals were scattered on the ground.

Thoreau ate no meat; he told me his only reason was a feeling of the filthiness of flesh-eating. A bear huntsman he thought was entitled to his steak. He had never attempted to make any



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general principle on the subject, and later in life ate meat in order not to cause inconvenience to the family.

On our first walk I told him the delight with which I read his book, "A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers." He said that the whole edition remained on the shelf of his publisher, who wished to get rid of them. If he could not succeed in giving them away they would probably be sold as old paper. I got from him valuable hints about reading. He had studied carefully the old English Chronicles, and Chaucer, [Froissart](#), Spenser, and Beaumont and Fletcher. He recognized kindred spirits in George Herbert, Cowley, and Quarles, considering the latter a poet but not an artist. He explored the old books of voyages -Drake, Purchas, and others, who assisted him in his circumnavigation of Concord. The Oriental books were his daily bread; the Greeks (especially Æschylus, whose "Prometheus" and "The Seven against Thebes" he translated finely) were his luxuries. He was an exact Greek scholar. Of modems he praised Wordsworth, Coleridge, and, to a less extent, Carlyle and Goethe. He admired Ruskin's "Modern Painters," though he thought the author bigoted, but in the "Seven Lamps of Architecture" he found with the good stuff "too much about art for me and the Hottentots. Our house is yet a hut." He enjoyed William Gilpin's "Hints on Landscape Gardening: Tour of the River Wye." He had read with care the works of Franklin. He had as a touchstone for authors their degree of ability to deal with supersensual facts and feelings with scientific precision. What he admired in Emerson was that he discerned the phenomena of thought and functions of every idea as if they were *antennæ* or *stamina*.

It was a quiet joke in Concord that Thoreau resembled Emerson in expression, and in tones of voice. He had grown up from boyhood under Emerson's influence, had listened to his lectures and his conversations, and little by little had grown this resemblance. It was the more interesting because so superficial and unconscious. Thoreau was an imitator of no mortal; but Emerson had long been a part of the very atmosphere of Concord, and it was as if this element had deposited on Thoreau a mystical moss.

During that halcyon summer I read the Oriental books in Emerson's library, for he not only advised me in my studies but insisted on lending me books. To my hesitation about taking even to Ponkatasset the precious volumes, he said, "What are they for?" In my dainty little room whose window opened on a beautiful landscape with the Musketaquit wandering through it to the Merrimack, or perhaps seated in the vine-covered veranda, I read Wilkins's "Bhagavat Geeta," which thenceforth became part of my canon. Close indeed to my heart came the narrative of the charioteer (the god Krishna in disguise) driving Arjoona to the field, where the youth sees that his struggle is to be with his parents, teachers, early companions.

Emerson also introduced me to the Persian "Desatir." In lending me this he said that he regarded the ancient Persian scriptures as more intellectual than the sacred writings of other races. I found delight in these litanies uttered in the beginning of our era, amid whose exaltations there was always the happy beam of reason. "Thy knowledge is a ray of he knowledge of God." "O my Prophet ever near me, I have given thee an exalted angel named Intelligence." "How can we know a prophet? By his giving you information regarding your own heart."



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Emerson also in that summer introduced me to Saadi of Schiraz, who has been to me as an intimate friend through life's pilgrimage. For the "Rose Garden" (Gulistan) I had been prepared by my garden in Frederick Circuit, my "Seclusaval:" Saadi was its interpreter, and restored it to me. For I could not enter deeply into wild nature, but dearly loved a garden. One day when I was walking with Emerson in his garden, he stopped near a favourite plum and said, "This is when ripe a fruit of paradise." He then discovered one that was ripe and managed to pluck it for me. How simply was this man fulfilling all my youthful dreams I He personally loved Saadi, and later edited the "Gulistan." One day he told me he had found somewhere a story about him. Saadi was travelling on foot towards Damascus, alone and weary. Presently he overtook a boy travelling the same way, and asked him to point out the road. The boy offered to guide him some distance, and in the course of conversation Saadi spoke of having come from Persia and from Schiraz. "Schiraz!" exclaimed the boy, "then perhaps you can tell me something of Sheik Saadi of Schiraz." The traveller said, "I am Saadi." Instantly the boy knelt and with tears kissed the hem of his skirt, and after that could not be parted from Saadi, but guided and served him during his stay in Damascus.

(And lo, here I am with my grey hairs seeing my own Saadi as he told me the little tale that filled my eyes, all unconscious that my soul was that of the Damascus boy and was kissing the hem of his garment!)

I made the acquaintance of several elderly persons in Concord who told me incidents related by their grandparents concerning the Concord fight of April 19, 1775, but I was too much interested in the heroes of 1858 to care much for those of the old Revolution. One day Emerson pointed out to me across the street the venerable Bon. Samuel Hoar and his daughter Elizabeth, and told me the story of their visit to Charleston, S.C. (1844), the eminent lawyer being commissioned by his State to plead for the release of Massachusetts seamen seized from ships and imprisoned there because of their colour. Amid threats of violence the lawyer and his daughter were driven out of Charleston unheard. I had not known this, and thenceforth bowed low whenever I passed the old lawyer. Without any historic halo the Hon. Samuel Hoar would have arrested the attention of a stranger, not only by his very tall thin form and the small face - blond and beardless - that looked as if come out of Bellini's canvas, but also by his dreamy look and movement. He was seventy-five, but no indications of age explained that absorbed look. Probably it was this as well as the face that suggested to Emerson a resemblance to Dante. U He is a saint," said Emerson as the old gentleman passed one day; "he no longer dwells with us down on earth.n There could hardly be a greater contrast than that between the old man and his Bon Judge Rockwood: Hoar, - and I should think also Senator Hoar, so far as appearance went, for the latter I knew only by seeing him occasionally. The "Judge," as Lowell calls him in "The Biglow Papers," made an admirable attorney-general of the United States, but his force was almost formidable in little Concord. One felt in meeting him that the glasses on those bright eyes were microscopic, and that he was under impending cross-examination. He was rationalistic and a "free-soiler," though his antislavery record did not satisfy abolitionists.²¹ The judge was unconscious of the

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satirical accent in his humour. He was personally devoted to Emerson, who, however, rather dreaded him, as he told me half-bumourous, on account of his tendencies to argumentative and remorselessly logical talk. The judge, however, was very amiable in his family and especially with his sister Elizabeth. This lady, who resembled the father more than her brothers did, was most lovely and intellectual. The death of Emerson's brilliant brother Charles, to whom Miss Elizabeth was betrothed, was the pathetic legend of Concord, and the reverential affection of Emerson for her represented a sentiment of the community. But the lady, in a sense widowed, was interested and active in all the culture and affairs of Concord; her sorrows had turned to sunshine for those around her.

[Mrs. Ripley](#), the widow of the Rev. Samuel Ripley, a kinsman of Emerson, occupied the famous "Old Manse." An admirable sketch of her life was written by Elizabeth Hoar. She had a wide reputation for learning. I had heard at Cambridge that when students were rusticated they used to board at Concord in order to be coached by her. She was a fine botanist. A legend ran that Professor Gray called on her and found her instructing a student in differential calculus, correcting the Greek translation of another, and at the same time shelling peas, and rocking her grandchild's cradle with her foot. But never was lady more simple and unostentatious. In her sixty-third year she was handsome, and her intelligent interest extended from her fruit-trees and poultry to the profoundest problems of her time. Thus the Old Manse had for me precious "mosses" which Hawthorne had not gathered. Her daughters Phœbe and Sophia (afterwards wife of Professor Thayer of Cambridge) always met me with a friendliness gratefully remembered. No doubt they and other ladies in Concord bore in mind that I was far away from my relatives. I found in [Mrs. Ripley](#) an intelligent sympathizer with my advancing religious ideas. She was a Theist through recognition of a supreme Reason intimated in the facts of individual reason. She said, "I cannot believe in miracles, because I believe in God." The subject of spirit manifestations was considered by her worthy of study only as a contemporary illustration of the fallaciousness of human testimony wherever emotions or passions are involved. "People believe what they've a mind to," she said.

The well-informed rationalism of [Mrs. Ripley](#), and of her nearest friend Elizabeth Hoar, led me to suppose that the ideas of Emerson were universal in Concord. In this, however, I presently discovered my mistake. One day when I was with Emerson and his wife he referred to Goethe, and I perceived that the great German was a sort of bogey to her. She quoted verbatim two sentences from a letter written to her by her husband before their marriage in which he expressed misgivings about Goethe, beneath whose fine utterances he had found "no faith." Emerson was silent, and his wife went on in a way almost pathetic to describe her need of faith.

When after the talk at dinner I was walking with Emerson, he said that Goethe had written some things - "Elective Affinities," for instance - which could be really read only by minds which had undergone individual training. He was the only great writer who had tamed upon the moral conventions and

21. A severe criticism on Judge Hoar by [Wendell Phillips](#) was resented even by [Emerson](#). The judge was asked by Sanborn, I believe, whether he was going to the funeral of Wendell Phillips, and replied, "No, but I approve of it."



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demanded by what right they claimed to control his life. But people with eyes could not omit Goethe.

Mr. William Emerson, an eminent lawyer of New York, occasionally visited his younger brother in Concord. I remember him as an interesting gentleman, and was surprised to find any lawyer with his unworldly and even poetic look. In a letter from Germany of William Emerson shown me by his son, Dr. Emerson of New York, he speaks of his acquaintance with Goethe. William was studying divinity, but found that he had not even Socinian faith enough to preach, and was in distress about the disappointment to his parents. Goethe advised him not to disappoint them, but go on with his ministry.

I think the Goethean cult at Cambridge and Concord had cooled. And by the way there was a droll relic of it in the Emerson household; one of the children – Edith I think – had the fancy to name her handsome cat "Goethe." Emerson affected to take it seriously, and once when the cat was in the library and scratched itself, he opened the door and politely said, "Goethe, you must retire; I don't like your manners."

I managed to make friends with the Concord children. Never had a small town a more charming circle of lovely children. The children of Emerson, of Judge Rockwood Hoar, of the Loring and Barrett families, mostly girls between ten and twelve years, were all pretty and intelligent, and as it was vacation time they were prepared for walks, picnics, boating, etc. Other of their elders beside myself found delight in the society of these young people, especially Thoreau. He used to take us out on the river in his boat, and by his scientific talk guide us into the water-lilies' fairyland. He showed us his miracle of putting his hand into the water and bringing up a fish.²²

I remember Ellen Emerson asking her father, "Whom shall we invite to the picnic?" – his answer being, "All children from six years to sixty." Then there were huckleberrying parties. These were under the guidance of Thoreau, because he alone knew the precise locality of every variety of the berry. I recall an occasion when little Edward Emerson, carrying a basket of fine huckleberries, had a fall and spilt them all. Great was his distress, and our offers of berries could not console him for the loss of those gathered by himself. But Thoreau came, put his arm around the troubled child, and explained to him that if the crop of huckleberries was to continue it was necessary that some should be scattered. Nature had provided that little boys should now and then stumble and sow the berries. We shall have a grand lot of bushes and berries in this spot, and we shall owe them to you. Edward began to smile.

Not far from "Hillside" resided a lonely old man, with whom I exchanged greetings. Bereft of wife and children, he found consolation in "spiritualism." The Hunt ladies thought that he was suffering his cottage and garden to fan gradually into ruin because of his absorption in another world, and giving his money to a medium for bringing him communications from his wife and children. He was eager to convince me, and said that if I would visit Mrs. Freeman in Boston, and did not find something worth examining in this matter, he would not go there again. Whereupon I went off to Boston and Mrs. Freeman.

Ushered into the mysterious presence, I found a substantial

22. The bream. This fish has the peculiarity of defending its spawn. Thoreau would find some spot where he could see the spawn, then place his hand beneath it. The bream placed itself over its spawn, and his fingers closed around it.

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dark-eyed sibyl seated on a little throne. I was placed in a chair opposite by her husband, who, having made passes between us, left the room. Her eyes were closed, and she drew long breaths. Presently she cried, "Where shall I go with you: to the spirit world or to some place on earth?" I said, "Tell me about my home," for I knew that no one in Boston could know anything of my home in Falmouth or my personal affairs. This woman then went on to describe in a vague way my father's house, a description that would apply to many brick houses, She then mentioned several persons in the house and incidents I was sure were not true. I was 80 disgusted at the whole affair that I cut short the interview, and went back triumphantly to my old friend at Concord. The old man went to see the medium, and she said that she found me so sceptical that the *rapport* was imperfect. The old man, however, fulfilled his contract.

Mrs. Freeman had said, "I see a lady who is a good deal worried about somebody named John." The selection of a name so common rather amused me; but I afterwards had to show my neighbour a letter from my mother saying that she was troubled by the betrothal of a relative named John.²³

From [Agassiz](#) I derived great benefit. When he rose before us in his class, a rosy flush on his face indicated his delight in communicating his knowledge. His shapely form, eager movements ("his body thought"), large soft eyes, easy unconscious gestures, and sonorous English, with just enough foreign accent to add piquancy, together made Agassiz the perfect lecturer. He was skillful too as a draughtsman, and often while speaking made a few marks on the blackboard which conveyed a complete impression of the thing elucidated.

In the warmer months Agassiz used to take his class out into the country, there being no difficulty of finding in the neighbourhood places of scientific interest. Several times we visited Nahant, and I can never forget the charm of our sitting there OD the rocks while Agassiz pointed out on them the autographs of the glaciers recording their ancient itinerary. Or, standing on the top of some boulder, he would trace with his finger in the rocks far out in the sea the ancient outlines of the land; or with some small fossil in his hand, or peculiar shell, he would track the progress of organic development.

On one ramble at Nahant Agassiz devoted himself to the sea-serpent, which had twice been reported as seen off that coast. One of our class had unintentionally suggested the subject by mentioning the recent apparition, and smiling at it as a sailor's yarn. But Agassiz in his always good-natured way said that although there were no doubt exaggerations, it was not quite safe to ridicule the story. He then proceeded to give a summary of all the narratives about the alleged monster, with references to time and place that amazed us, as the subject was of casual suggestion. He described huge snakelike saurians of which some may have been amphibious or aquatic, and whose extinction might not be complete.

One day in his lecture-room Agassiz displayed some new fossils, mainly of saurians, which had just been added to his collection. They gave him a text for a general review of the morphological

23. In later life Madame Renan, after the decease of her husband, told me that some intelligent ladies of their acquaintance once came to him with marvellous narratives of some incidents in séances in Paris. When he intimated incredulity one of the ladies said, "But your friend Madame B. told me that she saw it herself." "Ah," said Renan, "so few people know how to see!" Nearly these same words were said to me by [Mrs. Ripley](#) of the Old Manse in Concord. Emerson had little patience with "spiritualism," which he called "the rat-hole revelation."



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chain of reptilian life. As he proceeded, darting off at times to his blackboard, and comparing the extinct form with contemporary fauna, he became more and more animated, his face reddening with excitement, until at last he said: "Gentlemen, I ask you to forgive me if to-day I end my lecture at this point, although the hour is not out. I assure you that while I have been describing these extinct creatures they have taken on a sort of life; they have been crawling and darting about me, I have heard their screaming and hissing, and am really exhausted. I regret it, gentlemen, but I trust that you will excuse me." Our admiration for the great teacher was such as to break through all rules, and we gave him a hearty cheer. He bowed low to us and quickly disappeared.

The determined repudiation by Agassiz of the discovery of Darwin caused something like dismay in scientific circles throughout Europe as well as in America. Concerning this I have some memories that may interest men of science. When I belonged to the class of Agassiz (1853-54), he repeatedly referred to the hypothesis of continuous development of species in a way which has suggested to me a possibility that he may have had some private information of what was to come from [Charles Darwin](#). In his Introduction (1869) Darwin speaks of having submitted a sketch of his work to Sir Charles Lyell and Sir Joseph Hooker, - "the latter having seen my sketch of 1844." Either of these, or Darwin himself, might have consulted Agassiz. Most of us knew about such a theory only through the popular "Vestiges of Creation," to which he paid little attention. He seemed to have been excited by some German, - perhaps Schopenhauer, in whose works the idea of self-evolution in organic nature is potential, - of whom he spoke with a flush of anger when adding, "He says himself that he is an atheist." At any rate, during 1854 especially his mind was much occupied with the subject. I also remember well that during this time he often dwelt upon what he called the "ideal connection" between the different forms of life, describing with drawings the embryonic changes; in that progress no unbridged chasm after the dawn of organic life.

At the end of every week a portion of the afternoon was given for our putting questions to Agassiz, the occasion often giving rise to earnest discussion. These repeatedly raised the theory of development in "The Vestiges of Creation." Agassiz frequently referred to the spiritual evolution with which Emerson was particularly associated. But just after Darwin's discovery had appeared, I happened to be dining at the Saturday Club in Boston, when something like an encounter between these two friends occurred. Agassiz was seated at the head of the table, Emerson being on his right. It was near the end of the dinner, and around the long table those present were paired off in conversation; but being next to Emerson I could enjoy the conversation he held with Agassiz. After a time the professor made some little fling at the new theory. Emerson said smilingly that on reading it he had at once expressed satisfaction at confirmation of what he (Agassiz) had long been telling us. All of those beautiful harmonies of form with form throughout nature which he had so finely divined were now proved to be genuine relationship. "Yes," said Agassiz eagerly, "ideal relationship, connected thoughts of a Being acting with an intelligent purpose." Emerson, to whom the visible universe was all a manifestation of things ideal, said that the physical selection appeared to



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him a counterpart of the ideal development. Whereupon Agassiz exclaimed, "There I cannot agree with you," and changed the subject. There was at Concord a course of lectures every year, one of which was given by Agassiz. His coming was an important event. He was always a guest of the Emersons, where the literary people of the village were able to meet him. On one such occasion I remember listening to a curious conversation between Agassiz and A. [Bronson Alcott](#), - who lived and moved in a waking dream. After delighting Agassiz by repudiating the theory of the development of man from animals, he filled the professor with dismay by equally decrying the notion that God could ever have created ferocious and poisonous beasts. When Agassiz asked who could have created them, Alcott said they were the various forms of human sin. Man was the first being created. And the horrible creatures were originated by his lusts and animalisms. When Agassiz, bewildered, urged that geology proved that the animals existed before man, Alcott suggested that man might have originated them before his appearance in his present form. Agassiz having given a signal of distress, Emerson came to the rescue with some reconciling discourse on the development of life and thought, with which the professor had to be content, although there was a *souppçon* of Evolutionism in every word our host uttered.

There was a good deal of suspicion in America that the refusal of Agassiz to accept Darwin's discovery was due to the influence of religious leaders in Boston, and particularly to that of his father-in-law, Thomas Cary, who had so freely devoted his wealth to the professor's researches. Some long intimacy with those families convinced me that there was no such influence exerted by the excellent Mr. Cary, but that it was the old Swiss pastor, his father, surviving in him. He had, indeed, departed far from the paternal creed; he repudiated all miracles at a time when Mr. Cary and other Unitarians upheld them tenaciously. He threw a bomb into the missionary camp by his assertion of racial diversity of origin. His utterances against Darwinism were evidently deistic, and had nothing whatever to do with any personal interest, except that he had a horror of being called an atheist.

I say "deistic," for "theistic" denotes a more spiritual conception of deity than I can associate with Agassiz. He had adopted Humboldt's "Cosmos" idea, attached a dynamic deity to it, but did not appear to have any mystical or even reverential sentiment about nature, and pointed out humourously what he called nature's "jokes." I was sometimes invited to his house. He had by his first wife two beautiful daughters and the son (Alexander), now eminent. His wife (*née* Cary) and her sisters were ladies of finest culture and ability. Agassiz was a perfect character in his home life, and neighbourly also. Occasionally he would get together the young girls of Cambridge and guide them among the fossils, telling them the wonders of the primeval world. Longfellow told me that Agassiz was entreating him to write a poem on the primeval world.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

VOLUME II

A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:



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Tuesday the 3rd. Stared at the usual hour, crossed two very bad creeks, the last was the Walkarnsha, camped about 5'oclock. Commenced raining about 8 o'clock P. M. and rained all night, a very bad night to guard stock, which we are compelled to do rain or shine.

The [California Daily Union](#) reprinted a letter from the [Argus](#) of Diamond Springs:

Mr. Editor: — The storm which commenced yesterday continued with slight intermissions until sunset today, when it again fired up. The present system of sluicing seems to have opened a new era in the history of gold washing. It meets in every place and ravine with unprecedented success. The average yield, so far as I can learn from extensive inquiry, and personal observation, is, under this system, greater than it has ever been since the location of the place, while in numerous claims the product is astonishingly large. In a claim adjoining Wheelock's Ravine, D.C. Dickinson, have taken out over 35 pounds of gold in a little over three weeks. I saw them take out of their sluice last week \$1,532, the result of five days washing. The claim of Mr. La Mountaine is paying at the same rate also. The old Stoner Diggings, which were considered nearly exhausted in '50 are still paying by sluicing, as richly as ever. During the past week I learn that the Mr. Bryant, working four hands on their claim at these diggings have taken out amounts daily from 15 to 22½ ounces. The dirt in Dead Man's Hollow, and all other ravines, Matthew's and Weaver Creek, which were said to be completely worked out by cradle and toms, are now yielding on the improved method, nearly as well as ever. What is reality is years lost in the gross amount abstracted from the mines, seems to be counter balance to new-comers in the various improved means of gold washing. a an evidence that mining is now regarded as more productive generally than heretofore, I may mention the fact that there is more labor and less loafing and dissipation in and around Diamond Springs, than was ever before known. Men seem willing to work, because their labor evidently is well rewarded. May this state of things with us long continue.

The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* came to anchor in the Yan Tse Kiang (Yangtze) River of [China](#).



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR MAY 3D]



May 4, Wednesday, 1853: [Waldo Emerson](#) had been proposing that [Ellery Channing](#) might take it upon himself to prepare a number of Concord writings under some rubric such as COUNTRY WALKING.

Ellery reasoned, in response, that:

If we come out flat-footed, & call our book C.W. as you propose, & then put in characters like yours, and A's [Amos Bronson Alcott] & T's [Henry Thoreau] &c, everyone will know (victim & all) who it is.



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The frigate *USS Susquehanna* and the sloop of war *USS Plymouth* came to anchor off Shanghai, [China](#).

A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

Raining yet this morning. Started about 7 o'clock, very bad traveling, stopped raining at 3 o'clock, traveled late to find wood and water, found very good at last, about a quarter of a mile to the right of the road, camped.

The [Daily Alta California](#) of [San Francisco](#) reprinted a piece about new gold diggings out of the Marysville Express:

We understand from a gentleman residing near Mormon Island, this new diggings of great extent has just been discovered between that place and McDowell Hill, yielding an average from 3 to 5 cents to the basket. Some of the prospects have been as high as 50 to 60 cents.



May 4. Cattle are going up country. Hear the *tull-lull* of the chickadee (?).²⁴ The currant in bloom. The Canada plum just ready, probably to-day. [Not before the 7th.]

8 A.M. — To Walden and Cliffs.

The sound of the oven-bird [[Ovenbird](#) [Seiurus aurocapillus](#)]. Caterpillar nests two or three inches in diameter on wild cherries; caterpillars one third of an inch long.

The *Vaccinium Pennsylvanicum* appeared yesterday. The *vacillans resinsum* (?), and early high blueberry will bloom in a few days. *Vide Cerasus pmula* by shanty path, and wild red ditto, as early. The white birch leaves are beginning to expand and are shining with soiree sticky matter. I must attend to their fragrance. In a warm place on the Cliffs one of their catkins shows its anthers, the golden pendant.

The woods and paths next them [the Cliffs] now ring with the silver jingle of the field sparrow [[Field Sparrow](#) [Spizella pusilla](#)], the medley of the brown thrasher [[Brown Thrasher](#) [Toxostroma rufum](#)], the honest *qui vive* of the chewink [[Rufous-sided Towhee](#) [Pipilo erythrophthalmus](#)], or his jingle from the top of a low copse tree, while his mate scratches in the dry leaves beneath: the black and white creeper [[Black-and-white Warbler](#) [Mniotilta varia](#) (~~Black-and-white Creeper~~)] is hopping along the oak boughs, head downward, pausing from time to time to utter its note like a fine delicate saw-sharpening; and ever and anon rises clear over all the smooth, rich melody of the wood thrush. Could that have been a jay [[Blue Jay](#) [Cyanocitta cristata](#)]? I think it was some large, uncommon woodpecker that uttered that very loud, strange, cackling note.

The dry woods have the smell of fragrant everlasting. I am surprised by the cool drops which now, at 10 o'clock, drop from the flowers of the amelanchier, while other plants are dry, as if these had attracted more moisture. The white pines have started.

The indigo-bird and mate; dark throat and light beneath, and white spot oil wings, which is not described; a hoarse note, and rapid the first two or three syllables, — *twe twe twee*, dwelling on the last, or *twe twe twe-e*, or as if an *r* in it, *tre*, etc., not musical.²⁵ The myrtle-bird, which makes me think the more that I saw the black and yellow warbler on Sunday.

I find apparently two varieties of the amelanchier, — the first I noticed, with *smooth* reddish delicate leaves and somewhat linear petals and loose racemes, petals somewhat pinkish; the second to-day, perhaps a little later than the first, leaves light-colored and downy and petals broader and perhaps

24. [The word “chickadee” is crossed out and “myrtle-bird” substituted, which latter is in turn crossed out and replaced by “white-throat sparrow.” The final correction would seem to have been made some years after the original entry, for in January, 1858, we find Thoreau netting what appears to be his first intimation as to the real authorship of this song (see *Journal*, vol. x.). In the manuscript notes of the excursion to the Maine Woods in 1857, the song of the white-throat is still attributed to the “myrtle-bird.”]

25. Thoreau’s “indigo-bird” of this day has been identified as a [Black-throated Blue Warbler *Dendroica caerulescens*](#).





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not quite so long as the first, racemes more crowded. I am not sure that this is the variety *oblongifolium* of Gray.²⁶ It is stated in the Life of Humboldt²⁷ that he proved “that the expression, ‘the ocean reflects the sky,’ was a purely poetical, but not a scientifically correct one, as the sea is often blue when the sky is almost totally covered with light white clouds.” He used Saussure’s cyanometer even to measure the color of the sea. This might probably be used to measure the intensity of the color of blue flowers like lupines at a distance. Humboldt speaks of its having been proved that pine pollen falls from the atmosphere.

THOREAU AS ORNITHOLOGIST

 May 9, Monday, 1853: One of the children of Alexander William Doniphan, 14-year-old John Thornton Doniphan, was visiting his uncle James Baldwin, and in the middle of the night was bothered by a toothache. He took a dose of what he thought was Epsom salts. Instead of Epsom salts it was corrosive sublimate (mercury chloride) that he ingested. He died.

Although Henry Thoreau would suggest in WALDEN that this material pertinent to a visit from Bronson Alcott had occurred during the winter of 1846-1847 while he was in residence in his shanty on the pond, in fact part of it, word for word, describes a visit he received from Alcott on this day:

[following screen]

THE ALCOTT FAMILY

A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra, her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

Were across the river this morning by 11 o'clock, traveled till 3 o'clock and camped.

Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry transferred his command from vessel to vessel before his squadron departed from the vicinity of Shanghai. His goods were moved on board the *USS Susquehanna*, along with several of his staff, including Eliphalet M. Brown, Jr. (1816-1886), William B. Draper, and Wilhelm Heine (official Daguerreotypist, telegraphist, and artist for the expedition). They brought all their equipment with them. The entire ship’s band was transferred. Eliphalet M. Brown, Jr. had been a photographer in New-York, and would also be making some 400 Daguerreotype plates, stills of scenery, and studies of people, many of which would be converted to lithograph and included in the report of the expedition (some of these images would later be redrawn by William T. Peters and H. Patterson). William B. Draper would set up the 1st telegraph system in Japan. P.B. Wilhelm Heine (1827-1885), who had been born in Germany and had emigrated to New-York in 1849, would also make sketches as part of the visual account of the expedition.



May 9. Since I returned from Haverhill, not only I find the ducks  are gone, but I no longer hear the *chill-lill* of the blue snowbird [Snow Bunting  *Plectrophenax nivalis*] or the sweet strains of the fox-colored sparrow [Fox Sparrow  *Passerella iliaca*] and the tree sparrow

26. This appears to be the *Pyrus ovalis* or swamp pyrus of Bigelow and Willdemiing.

27. In this year Harper & Brothers of New-York had published Juliette Bauer’s translation and abridgement LIVES OF THE BROTHERS HUMBOLDT, ALEXANDER AND WILLIAM, BY HERMANN KLENCKE, GUSTAV SCHLESIER.

BROTHER ALEXANDER

BROTHER WILLIAM

COMMODORE PERRY

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[**American Tree Sparrow** ■ *Spizella arborea*]. The robin [**American Robin** ■ *Turdus migratorius*]'s strain is less remarkable.

I have devoted most of my day to [Mr. Alcott](#). He is broad and genial, but indefinite; some would say feeble; forever feeling about vainly in his speech and touching nothing. But this is a very negative account of him, for he thus suggests far more than the sharp and definite practical mind. The feelers of his thought diverge — such is the breadth of their grasp, — not converge; and in his society almost alone I can express at my leisure, with more or less success, my vaguest but most cherished fancy or thought. There are never any obstacles in the way of our meeting. He has no creed. He is not pledged to any institution. The sanest man I ever knew; the fewest crochets, after all, has he.

It has occurred to me, while I am thinking with pleasure of our days' intercourse, "Why should I not think aloud to you?" Having each some shingles of thought well dried, we walk and whittle them, trying our knives, and admiring the clear yellowish grain of the pumpkin pine. We wade so gently and reverently, or we pull together so smoothly, that the fishes of thought are not scared from the stream, but come and go grandly, like yonder clouds that float peacefully through the western sky. When we walk it seems as if the heavens — whose mother-o'-pearl and rainbow tints come and go, form and dissolve — and the earth had met together, and righteousness and peace had kissed each other. I have an ally against the arch-enemy. A blue-robed man dwells under the blue concave. The blue sky is a distant reflection of the azure serenity that looks out from under a human brow. We walk together like the most innocent children, going after wild pinks with case-knives. Most with whom I endeavor to talk soon fetch up against some institution or particular way of viewing things, theirs not being a universal view. They will continually bring their own roofs or — what is not much better — their own narrow skylights between us and the sky, when it is the unobstructed heavens I would view. Get out of the way with your old Jewish cobwebs. Wash your windows.

Saw on Mr. Emerson's firs several parti-colored warblers [**Northern Parula** ■ *Parula americana*], or finch creepers (*Sylvia Americana*), a small blue and yellow bird, *somewhat* like but smaller than the indigo-bird [**Indigo Bunting** ■ *Passerina cyanea* Indigo-bird]; quite tame, about the buds of the firs, now showing red; often head downward. Heard no note. He says it has been here a day or two.



At sundown paddled up the river.

The pump-like note of a stake-driver [**American Bittern** ■ *Botaurus lentiginosus*] from the fenny place across the Lee meadow.

The greenest and rankest grass as yet is that in the water along the sides of the river. The hylodes are peeping. I love to paddle now at evening, when the water is smooth and the air begins to be warm. The rich warble of blackbirds ■ about retiring is loud and incessant, not to mention the notes of numerous other birds. The black willow has started, but not yet the button-bush, Again I think I heard the night-warbler [**Ovenbird** ■ *eiurus aurocapillus*, or **Common Yellowthroat** ■ *Geothlypis trichas?*]. Now, at starlight, that same nighthawk [**Common Nighthawk** ■ *Chordeiles minor*] or snipe [**Common Snipe** ■ *Gallinago gallinago*] squeak is heard, but no hovering. The first bat goes suddenly zigzag overhead through the dusky air; comes out of the dusk and disappears into it. That slumbrous, snoring croak, far less ringing and musical than the toad's (which is occasionally heard), now comes up from the meadow's edge. I save a floating plank, which exhales and imparts to my hands the rank scent of the muskrats which have squatted on it. I often see their fresh green excrement on rocks and wood. Already men are fishing for pouts.

This has been almost the first warm day; none yet quite so warm. Walking to the Cliffs this afternoon,





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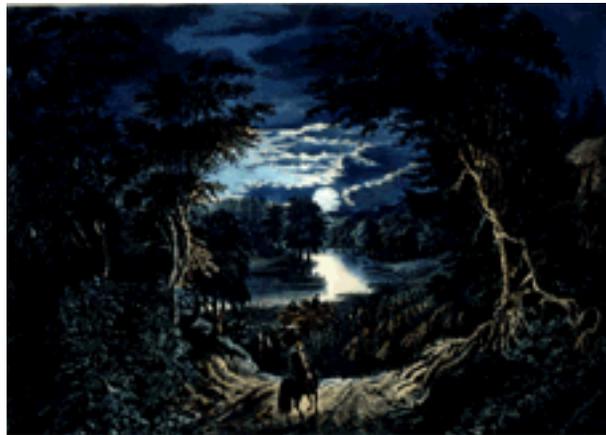
I noticed, on Fair Haven Hill, a season stillness, as I looked over the distant budding forest and heard the buzzing of a fly.

He made an entry in his journal that he was later to copy into his early lecture [“WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT”](#) as:

[Paragraph 67] I chance to know but two or three intellectual men who are yet so broad and truly liberal—unpledged to any institution or creed—that I can think aloud in their society.¹ Most with whom I endeavor to talk, soon come to a stand against some institution in which they appear to hold stock, that is some particular way of viewing things, theirs not being a universal way. They will continually bring their own low roofs, or at least their own narrow sky-lights, between you and the sky—when it is the unobstructed heavens you would view. Get out of the way with your old cobwebs—wash your windows.

1. In the journal source of this paragraph, it is [Bronson Alcott](#) who “has no creed” and “is not pledged to any institution.”

**Brad Dean's
Commentary**



In a sheaf of Thoreau’s notes titled “The Moon” extracts from which had been utilized by someone as the basis for the short article “Night and Moonlight” ascribed to Thoreau in [The Atlantic Monthly](#) in November 1863, and afterward republished in the EXCURSIONS volume (a sheaf that was delivered to Houghton, Mifflin & Co. along with the 39 ms volumes of Thoreau’s journal) we find some notes from this date, informing us that “At sundown on river, May 9th, ’53. I love to paddle now at evening when the water is smooth and the air begins to be warm. This has been almost the first warm day. The rich warble of blackbirds about retiring is loud and incessant, not to mention the notes of numerous other birds. I hear the pumplike note of a stake-driver from the fens across the river. (Heard the first the 7th ult.) Now at starlight the squeak of snipes is heard over the meadow, but not their hovering sound. The first bat of the season goes suddenly zigzag overhead through the dusky air, and is immediately lost to sight again. [A writer] says of this animal, ‘By day, hanging from the vault of sepulchral grottoes, it imitates the absolute stillness of the dead in his shroud.’ By night it is ‘the skeleton with the scythe sailing through the regions of darkness with silent flight.’ A slumberous snoring croak now comes up from the meadow’s edge, from some species of frog recently awakened. I save a floating plank which exhales and imparts to my hands the rank scent of muskrats which have squatted on it. Already men are fishing for pouts.”



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WALDEN: I should not forget that during my last winter at the pond there was another welcome visitor, who at one time came through the village, through snow and rain and darkness, till he saw my lamp through the trees, and shared with me some long winter evenings. One of the last of the philosophers, -Connecticut gave him to the world,- he peddled first her wares, afterwards, as he declares, his brains. These he peddles still, prompting God and disgracing man, bearing for fruit his brain only, like the nut its kernel. I think that he must be the man of the most faith of any alive. His words and attitude always suppose a better state of things than other men are acquainted with, and he will be the last man to be disappointed as the ages revolve. He has no venture in the present. But though comparatively disregarded now, when his day comes, laws unsuspected by most will take effect, and masters of families and rulers will come to him for advice.-

“How blind that cannot see serenity!”

A true friend of man; almost the only friend of human progress. An Old Mortality, say rather an Immortality, with unwearied patience and faith making plain the image engraven in men's bodies, the God of whom they are but defaced and leaning monuments. With his hospitable intellect he embraces children, beggars, insane, and scholars, and entertains the thought of all, adding to it commonly some breadth and elegance. I think that he should keep a caravansary on the world's highway, where philosophers of all nations might put up, and on his sign should be printed. "Entertainment for man, but not for his beast. Enter ye that have leisure and a quiet mind, who earnestly seek the right road." He is perhaps the sanest man and has the fewest crotchets of any I chance to know; the same yesterday and tomorrow. Of yore we had sauntered and talked, and effectually put the world behind us; for he was pledged to no institution in it, freeborn, *ingenuus*. Whichever way we turned, it seemed that the heavens and the earth had met together, since he enhanced the beauty of the landscape. A blue-robed man, whose fittest roof is the overarching sky which reflects his serenity. I do not see how he can ever die; Nature cannot spare him.

Having each some shingles of thought well dried, we sat and whittled them, trying our knives, and admiring the clear yellowish grain of the pumpkin pine. We waded so gently and reverently, or we pulled together so smoothly, that the fishes of thought were not scared from the stream, nor feared any angler on the bank, but came and went grandly, like the clouds which float through the western sky, and the mother-o'-pearl flocks which sometimes form and dissolve there. There we worked, revising mythology, rounding a fable here and there, and building castles in the air for which earth offered no worthy foundation. Great Looker! Great Expecter! to converse with whom was a New England Night's Entertainment. Ah! such discourse we had, hermit and philosopher, and the old settler I have spoken of, -we three,- it expanded and racked my little house; I should not dare to say how many pounds' weight there was above the atmospheric pressure on every circular inch; it opened its seams so that they had to be calked with much dulness thereafter to stop the consequent leak; -but I had enough of that kind of oakum already picked.



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May 10, Tuesday, 1853: According to a preserved letter from James Battersby in Cincinnati, Ohio to his brother Richard in Australia, “The City is divided into the following viz. Texas or Nigger Town where the Blacks live — German Town mostly Germans — Dublin, the Irish. All being densely populated and occupying 3/4 of the city.” The fact that the district of Concord, Massachusetts in which the Thoreaus had built their new house, hard by the new railroad station, was known locally as “Texas,” has been explained as its being merely toward the southwest of the town, and as being merely because it was flat like Texas, or possessed, like Texas, cows. In the light of this contemporary information from Cincinnati about naming conventions, ought we to re-evaluate why this district of Concord was being referred to as “Texas”? Could the new Thoreau home have been built in a poorer section of town commonly considered locally as an undesirable address because fringing upon Concord’s “niggertown”? Or is the model of language used for the wings of the United States Hotel in downtown Boston to be the model that we ought to follow?

Before departure of the *USS Susquehanna* from Shanghai, the American Consul hosted a large ball on shore.

A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra, her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

Started in company with Lithcoe and Woodard, traveled till noon and one of their wagons broke at the Catholic Mission. We came on to feed, crossed one or two very bad creeks, camped alone for the first time as our company did not come up. We are now in the Pawnee nation which is said to be the most troublesome tribe of indians on this end of the trip.



May 10: 5 A.M. — Up railroad.



The veery [Veery  *Catharus fuscescens*] note after having heard the yorrick for some days, in the primitive-looking pine swamp. Heard also that peculiarly wild evergreen-forest note which I heard May 6th, from a small, lispng warbler, — *er er ter re rer ree*, — from high in the pines, as if a chickadee (?); or was it the still smaller, slenderer white-bellied bird I saw? Female (?) yellowbird (?) [Yellow Warbler  *Dendroica petechia*] this morning. All at once a strain which sounded like old times and recalled a hundred associations. Not at once did I remember that a year had elapsed since I heard it, and then the idea of the bobolink [Bobolink  *Dolichonyx oryzivorus*] was formed in my mind, yet afterward doubted if it was not the imitation of a catbird. [It was the bobolink.] Saw a kingbird [Eastern Kingbird  *Tyrannus tyrannus*], looking like [a] large phoebe, on a willow by the river, and heard higher the clear whistle of the oriole [Northern Oriole  *Icterus galbula* (Fiery Hangbird or Hangbird or Gold Robin or Golden Robin)]. New days, then, have come, ushered in by the warbling vireo [Warbling Vireo  *Vireo gilvus*], yellowbird [Yellow Warbler  *Dendroica petechia*], Maryland yellow-throat [Common Yellowthroat  *Geothlypis trichas*], and small pewee [Eastern Wood-Pewee  *Contopus virens*], and now made perfect by the twittering of the kingbird [Eastern Kingbird  *Tyrannus tyrannus*] and the whistle of the oriole [Northern Oriole  *Icterus galbula* (Fiery Hangbird or Hangbird or Gold Robin or Golden Robin)] amid the elms (for I hear the last in various parts of the town within a few hours), which are but just beginning to leaf out, thinking of his nest there, — if not already the bobolink [Bobolink  *Dolichonyx oryzivorus*]. The warbling vireo [Warbling Vireo  *Vireo gilvus*] promised warmer days, but the oriole ushers in summer heats.

There is an old pasture behind E. Wood’s incrustated with the clay-like thallus of the bæomyces, which is unexpectedly thin. The fruit now large.

How far the woodpecker ’s tapping is heard! And no wonder, for he taps very, hard as well as fast, to make a hole, and the dead, dry wood is very resounding withal. Now he taps on one part of the tree, and it yields one note; then on that side, a few inches distant, and it yields another key; propped on its tail the while.

The pear has blossomed. The butternut buds are more advanced than any hickories I have noticed.

P.M. — To Saw Mill Brook and Smith’s Hill.

The *Nepeta Glechoma* is out under R. Brown’s poles, a pretty deep-blue, half-concealed, violet-like flower. It is the earliest flower of this character. Warm days when you begin to *think* of thin coats.

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I proceed down the Turnpike. The masses of the golden willow are seen in the distance on either side the way, twice as high as the road is wide, conspicuous against the distant, still half-russet hills and forests, for the green grass hardly yet prevails over the dead stubble, and the woods are but just beginning to gray. The female willow is a shade greener. At this season the traveller passes through a golden gate on causeways where these willows are planted, as if he were approaching the entrance to Fairyland; and there will surely be found the yellowbird [**Yellow Warbler**  ***Dendroica petechia***], and already from a distance is heard his note, a *tche tche tche tche tche tche*, — ah, willow, willow. Could not he truly arrange for us the difficult family of the willows better than Borrer, or Barrett of Middletown? And as he passes between the portals, a sweet fragrance is wafted to him, and he not only breathes but scents and tastes the air, and he hears the low humming or susurrus of a myriad insects which are feeding on its sweets. It is, apparently, these that attract the yellowbird [**Yellow Warbler**  ***Dendroica petechia***]. The golden gates of the year, the *May-gate*. The traveller cannot pass out of Concord by the highways in any direction without passing between such portals, — graceful, curving, drooping, wand-like twigs, on which leaves and blossoms appear together. It is remarkable that I saw this morning for the first time the bobolink [**Bobolink**  ***Dolichonyx oryzivorus***], gold robin [**Northern Oriole**  ***Icterus galbula*** (~~Fiery Hangbird or Hangbird or Gold Robin or Golden Robin~~)], and kingbird [**Eastern Kingbird**  ***Tyrannus tyrannus***], — and have since heard the first two in various parts of the town and am satisfied that they have just come, — and, in the woods, the veery [**Veery**  ***Catharus fuscescens***] note. I hear the ringing sound of the toads borne on the rippling wind as I keep down the causeway.



He is richest who has most use for nature as raw material of tropes and symbols with which to describe his life. If these gates of golden willows affect me, they correspond to the beauty and promise of some experience on which I am entering. If I am overflowing with life, am rich in experience for which I lack expression, then nature will be my language full of poetry, — all nature will *fable*, and every natural phenomenon be a myth. The man of science, who is not seeking for expression but for a fact to be expressed merely, studies nature as a dead language. I pray for such inward experience as will make nature significant.

That sedum (?) by Tuttle's is now a foot high; has no great cactus-like buds, and is quite distinct from the house-leek in Jesse Hosmer's field. What is it? A gooseberry which has been in blossom for some time, by the roadside on the left, between Wright's and Hosmer's old place. It is apparently *Ribes hirtellum*. Is that the swamp gooseberry of Gray, now just beginning to blossom at Saw Mill Brook? It has a divided style and stamens, etc., as yet not longer than the calyx, though my slip has no thorns nor prickles. The leaves are deeply divided and glossy. But what is the *stout, prickly* gooseberry in the garden, with *divided* style? It seems the *Cynosbati* of Bigelow, yet not of Gray. A cerastium, apparently *viscosum*, on right hand just beyond the Hosmer house. What kind? A wild red cherry (*Cerasus Pennsylvanica*) just out by the first-named gooseberry. I was surprised by the number of bees above this gooseberry's blossoms, small and inconspicuous as they are. Indeed there is scarcely a flower which is not immediately found out by insects, and their coming must be coincident with flowers and leaves. Some of the most forward plantain-leaved antennaria is already pinkish at top.

You hear the clear whistle and see the red or fiery orange of the oriole [**Northern Oriole**  ***Icterus galbula*** (~~Fiery Hangbird or Hangbird or Gold Robin or Golden Robin~~)] darting through Hosmer's orchard. But its note is not melodious and rich. It is at most a clear tone, the healthiest of your city beaux and belles.

When I heard the first bobolink [**Bobolink**  ***Dolichonyx oryzivorus***] strain this morning I could not at first collect myself enough to tell what it was I heard, — a reminiscence of last May in all its prime occurring in the midst of the experience of this in its unripe state. Suddenly the season being sufficiently advanced, the atmosphere in the right condition, these flashing, scintillating notes are struck out from it where that dark mote disappears through it, as sparks by a flint, with a tinkling sound. This flashing, tinkling meteor bursts through the expectant meadow air, leaving a train of tinkling notes behind. Successive regiments of birds arrive and are disbanded in our fields, like soldiers still wearing their regimentals. I doubted at first if it were not a strain brought on a few days in advance by an imitative catbird [**Gray Catbird**  ***Dumetella carolinensis***] or thrush (?) from where he had been staying. Within a day or more, a lower and decidedly downy and small racemed amelanchier has opened, and I think that the first and slightly downy and greenish-leaved ones are associated with the decidedly smooth and red-leaved *Botryapium*. Is not this now the most conspicuous native flower? The *Vaccinium vacillans* is out.

The three colored violets, as I observe them this afternoon, are thus distinguished: the *ovata*, a dark lilac, especially in sun; the *cucullata*, oftenest slaty-blue, sometimes lilac, deeper within, more or

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less pale and striped; the *pedata*, large, exposed, clear pale-blue with a white spot. None like the sky, but *pedata* most like it, lilac *ovata* least like it. Yet the last is the richest-colored. The *pedata* often pale to whiteness. It begins now to be quite obvious along the side of warm and sandy woodland paths.

Saw, quite near, a skunk, in a cloud of long, coarse black and white hair, within a rod and a half, sharply staring at me with head to the ground, with its black, shining, bead-like eyes. It was at the edge of its hole. Its head is so narrow, and snout long and pointed, that it can make those deep holes in the spring. By the way, what makes these innumerable little punctures just through the grass in woodland paths, as with a stick? Is this, too, by the skunk?

The chestnut leaves are now commonly as far unfolded as the larger maples and earlier oaks and more than the elm; yet perhaps it should come after the red and black oaks. The aspen *leaves* (*P. tremuliformis*), at least a few days since, were decidedly the most forward and conspicuous of any, tree, and are still, I think, being more than an inch in diameter, light-green, but open and trembling and not in dense masses. Only the rather rare paper birch and an occasional white birch in a favorable place (I see no black nor yellow ones this afternoon) can be compared with it, and such, indeed, make now, at last, a denser green; but in the case of the golden willow it is as much flowers as leaves that make the show. But the *P. grandidentata* which have flowered show no leaves yet; only very young ones, small downy leaves now. Of sizable wild trees which blossom, the most forward in respect to leafing, methinks, are the tremble, the willows, wild black cherry, the birches (the *papyracca* especially), balm-of-Gilead, *Ostrya*. The spring growth of the larch is the most conspicuous of evergreens [*sic*], though its buds have not pushed out so far as the white pines. As on the late willows, so on the oaks, catkins and leaves appearing together. Both leaf and flower buds of the oaks, especially shrub oaks and red and black, are reddish (the white and swamp white are not at present), and hence the *reddish* mistiness of the deciduous woods at present.

At Saw Mill Brook, I see the flower-buds of the nodding trillium. I sit on a rock in Saw Mill Brook. The Hornbeam (*Carpinus*) is just ready to bloom, its hop-like catkins, shorter than those of the *Ostrya*, do not shed pollen just yet. [Does next morning in pitcher.] I was in search of this, and, not observing it at first, and having forgotten it, I sat down on a rock, with the thought that if I sat there quietly a little while I might see some flower or other object about me; unexpectedly, as I cast my eyes upward, over my head stretched a spreading branch of the *carpinus* full of small catkins with anthers now reddish, spread like a canopy just over my head. As it is best to sit in a grove and let the birds come to you, so, as it were, even the flowers will come to you.

I sit here surrounded by hellebores eighteen inches high or more, with handsome, regular, plaited leaves, regularly arranged around the erect stems, and a multitude of ferns are unrolling themselves, altogether making the impression of a tropical vegetation.

I hear, and have for a week, in the woods, the note of one or more small birds somewhat like a yellow-bird's [Yellow Warbler █ *Dendroica petechia*]. What is it? Is it the red-start [American Redstart █ *Setophaga ruticilla*?] I now see one of these. The first I have distinguished. And now I feel pretty certain that my black and yellow warbler of May 1st was this. As I sit, it inquisitively hops nearer and nearer. It is one of the election-birds²⁸ of rare colors which I can remember, mingled dark and reddish. This reminds me that I supposed much more variety and fertility in nature before I had learned the numbers and the names of each order. I find that I had expected such fertility in our Concord woods alone as not even the completest museum of stuffed birds of all the forms and colors from all parts of the world comes up to. The neat and active creeper [Brown Creeper █ *Certhia americana*] hops about the trunks, its note like a squeaking twig.

I leave the woods and begin to ascend Smith's Hill along the course of the rill. The anemonies with reddish-pink buds stand thick amid the loose grass under protecting brush or fagots, about rocks and young trees.

ROSS/ADAMS COMMENTARY

28. Helen Gere Cruickshank explained this terminology: "Though the last of the Old Day Elections held on the last Wednesday of May occurred in 1831, the day was celebrated as a holiday for some years to come. Shooting matches were held on that day and birds of all kinds were shot. Thoreau referred to birds shot on Election Day as Election Day Birds. He recalled such birds when he observed the Redstart on May 10, 1853." Possibly the script from which this "election-day bird" was reading was "*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.*"



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From the hill, I look westward over the landscape. The deciduous woods are in their hoary youth, every expanding bud swaddled with downy webs. From this more eastern hill, with the whole breadth of the river valley on the west, the mountains appear higher still, the width of the blue border is greater, — not mere peaks, or a short and shallow sierra, but a high blue table/land with broad foundations, a deep and solid base or tablet, in proportion to the peaks that rest on it. As you ascend, the near and low hills sink and flatten into the earth; no sky is seen behind them; the distant mountains rise. The truly great are distinguished. Vergers, crests of the waves of earth, which in the highest break at the summit into granitic rocks over which the air beats. A part of their hitherto concealed base is seen blue. You see, not the domes only, but the body, the facade, of these terrene temples. You see that the foundation answers to the Superstructure. Moral structures. (The sweet-fern leaves among odors now.) The successive lines of haze which divide the western landscape, deeper and more misty over each intervening valley, are not yet very dense; yet there is a light atmospheric line along the base of the mountains for their whole length, formed by this denser and grosser atmosphere through which we look next the earth, which almost melts them into the atmosphere, like the contact of molten metal with that which is unfused; but their pure, sublimed tops and main body rise, palpable sky-land above it, like the waving signal of the departing who have already left these shores. It will be worth the while to observe carefully the direction and altitude of the mountains from the Cliffs. The value of the mountains in the horizon, — would not that be a good theme for a lecture? The text for a discourse on real values, and permanent; a sermon on the mount. They are steppingstones to heaven, — as the rider has a horse-block at his gate, — by which to mount when we would commence our pilgrimage to heaven; by which we gradually take our departure from earth, from the time when our youthful eyes first rested on them, — from this bare actual earth, which has so little of the hue of heaven. They make it easier to die and easier to live. They let us off. (With Alcott almost alone is it possible to put all institutions behind us. Every other man owns some stock in this or that one, and will not forget it.)

Whether any picture by a human master hung on our western wall could supply their place. Whether to shovel them away and level them would really smooth the way to the true west. Whether the skies would not weep over their scars. They are valuable to mankind as is the iris of the eye to a man. They are the path of the translated. The undisputed territory between earth and heaven. In our travels rising higher and higher, we at length got to where the earth was blue. Suggesting that this earth, unless our conduct curse it, is as celestial as that sky. They are the pastures to which we drive our thoughts on these 20ths of May. ([George Baker](#) told me the other day that he had driven cows to Winchendon, forty miles, in one day.) Men often spend a great deal on a border to their papered walls, of the costliest figure and colors, ultramarine (or what other?). This color bears a price like precious stones. We may measure our wealth, then, by the number of square rods of superficial *blue* earth in our earth border. Such proportion as it bears to the area of the visible earth, in such proportion are we heavenly/minded. Yet I doubt if I can find a man in this country who would not think it better if they were converted into solid gold, which could in no case be a blessing to all, but only a curse to a few, —and so they would be stepping/stones to hell.

Return by Mill Brook Ditch Path. There is now a multiplicity of sounds, in which the few faint spring ones are drowned. The birds are in full blast, singing, warbling, chirping, humming. Yet we do not receive more ideas through our ears than before. The storms and ducks  of spring have swept by and left us in the repose of summer, the farmers to the ignoble pursuits of planting and hoeing corn and potatoes. The summer is not bracing, as when you hear the note of the jay in the cool air of October from the rustling chestnut woods. Hear the night warbler [[Ovenbird](#)  [Seiurus aurocapillus](#), or [Common Yellowthroat](#)  [Geothlypis trichas?](#)] now distinctly. It does not repeat its note, and disappears with the sound. I mistook a distant farmer's horn calling the men to early tea for the low hum of a bee in the grass. Heard a tree-toad. The pond, Walden, has risen considerably





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since the melting.

The man of science, who is not seeking for expression but for a fact to be expressed merely, studies nature as a dead language. I pray for such inward experience as will make nature significant.

THOREAU AS ORNITHOLOGIST



May 23, Monday, 1853: Buenos Aires gained its independence from Argentina (it would reunite in 1859).

In far-eastern waters, the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* got up steam and set to sea in company with the *USS Susquehanna*. It was towing the *USS Supply*. Off Saddle Island (Nanyushan), Ninghaiu River, the flotilla sighted the sail of the stores barge *USS Caprice* as it was arriving from [Hong Kong](#).

In Concord, [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Ministerial Swamp.



May 23. P.M. — To Ministerial Swamp.

The poet must bring to Nature the smooth mirror in which she is to be reflected. He must be something superior to her, something more than natural. He must furnish equanimity. No genius will excuse him from importing the ivory which is to be his material.

That small veronica (*V. arvensis*) by Mrs. Hosmer's is the same with that on the Cliffs; there is also the smooth or *V. serpyllifolia* by her path at the brook. This is the fifth windy day. A May wind — a washing wind. Do we not always have after the early thunder-showers a May storm? The first windy weather which it is agreeable to walk or ride in — creating a lively din. That must be the *Arenaria serpyllifolia*, thyme-leaved sandwort, now for sonic days (weeks?) out on the Clamshell Hill. Put it with viscid myosotis. To-day I am surprised by the dark orange-yellow of the senecio. At first we had the lighter, paler spring yellows of willows (cowslips even, for do they not grow a little darker afterward?), dandelion, cinquefoil, then the darker (methinks it is a little darker than the cowslip) and deeper yellow of the buttercup; and then this broad distinction between the buttercup and the krigia and senecio, as the seasons revolve toward July. Every new flower that opens, no doubt, expresses a new mood of the human mind. Have I any dark or ripe orange-yellow thoughts to correspond? The *flavor* of my thoughts begins to correspond. Lupines now for some days, probably about the 10th. Whiteweed will open perhaps to-morrow or next day. For some time dandelions and mouse-ear have been seen gone to seed — autumnal sights. I have not yet seen a white oak (and put with it swamp white and chestnut) fairly in bloom.

The 20th, when at Flint's Pond I raked away the leaves for acorns, I found many dor-bugs either just ready to issue forth or which had taken refuge from the storm.

The geum is out, maybe one day.

As I rise the hill beyond Geum Meadow I perceive the sweet fragrance of the season from over the turf; as if the vales were vast saucers full of strawberries, as if our walks were on the rim of such a saucer. With this, couple the fact that directly the fresh shoots of the firs and spruces will have the fragrance of strawberries. White clover. I see the light purple of the rhodora enlivening the edges of swamps — another color the sun wears. It is a beautiful shrub seen afar, and makes a great show from the abundance of its bloom unconcealed by leaves, rising above the andromeda. Is it not the most showy *high-colored* flower or shrub? Flowers are the different colors of the sunlight.

Saw a great silvery-grayish cocoon, perchance of an emperor moth, on a scrub apple six inches from the ground, reminding me of a hornet's or wasp's nest — the great silk bag — two and one half inches long by nearly two inches, with a hole by which, apparently, the perfect insect had flown.

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What a rich stuff the shining silky, silvery bag!

At the Ministerial Swamp I find the spruce leaf-buds have not yet burst their envelopes except at the tops of the trees where they have pushed out and are perfect handsome cones containing a bundle of leaves. The large staminate blossoms are now dry and effete, and the young cones more than one half inch long. Perhaps they should come between the red cedar and the larch. Put the first the last of May; the spruce, both white and black, end of the first week of May, and larch directly after, till I know better. It is glorious to stand in the midst of the andromeda, which so level and thick fills the swamp, and look up at the blue spruce trees. The edges of the scales of the young cones, which are at the tops of the trees (where the branches make light and open crosses), seen against the sunlit sky or against the light merely, being transparent, are a splendid crimson color, as if the condensed fire of all sunsets were reflected from them, like the richest damask or ruby-throated hummingbird's breast. They glow with the crimson fires of the sunset sky, reflected over the swamp — unspeakably rare and precious rubies as you look up at them, but climb the tree and look down on them, and they are comparatively dull and opaque. These are the rubies of the swamp. Already the just bursting leaf-buds emit that rare strawberry fragrance. It is one of the most glowing, beautiful, brilliant effects in nature, exactly like the reflections from the breast of the ruby-throated [hummingbird](#) [**Ruby-throated Hummingbird** [Archilochus colubris](#)]; as if a hundred ruby-throated hummingbirds sat on the topmost crosses of the trees, their breasts turned to the sun. The dwarf andromeda is for the most part just prepared to leave out, though some twigs have grown an inch.

How different the ramrod jingle of the chewink [**Rufous-sided Towhee** [Pipilo erythrophthalmus](#)] or any bird's note sounds now at 5 P.M. in the cooler, stiller air, when also the humming of insects is more distinctly heard, and perchance some impurity has begun to sink to earth strained by the air. Or is it, perchance, to be referred to the cooler, more clarified and pensive state of the mind, when dews have begun to descend in it and clarify it? Chaste eve! A certain lateness in the sound, pleasing to hear, which releases me from the obligation to return in any particular season. I have passed the Rubicon of staying out. I have said to myself, that way is not homeward; I will wander further from what I have called my home — to the home which is forever inviting me. In such an hour the freedom of the woods is offered me, and the birds sing my dispensation. In dreams the links of life are united: we forget that our friends are dead we know them as of old.

An abundance of pure white fringed polygalas, very delicate, by the path at Harrington's mud-hole. Thus many flowers have their nun sisters, dressed in white. At Loring's Wood heard and saw a tanager [**Scarlet Tanager** [Piranga olivacea](#)]. That contrast of a red bird with the green pines and the blue sky! Even when I have heard his note and look for him and find the bloody fellow, sitting on a dead twig of a pine, I am always startled. (They seem to love the darkest and thickest pines.) That incredible red, with the green and blue, as if these were the trinity we wanted. Yet with his hoarse note he pays for his color. I am transported; these are not the woods I ordinarily walk in. He sunk Concord in his thought. How he enhances the wildness and wealth of the woods! This and the emperor moth make the tropical phenomena of our zone. There is warmth in the pewee's [**Eastern Wood-Pewee** [Contopus virens](#)] strain, but this bird's colors and his note tell of Brazil.

Even in remotest woods the trivial noon has its rule and its limit. When the chaste and pensive eve draws on, suddenly the walker begins to reflect.

When I listened this evening at the door, I heard no hylodes; I but methinks I did hear toads on the river, — unless they were frogs. [Heard a few next evening, also the 27th.]



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May 24, Tuesday, [1853](#): In oriental waters, General Orders No. 11 and 12 were read in the presence of all hands. General Order 11 warned the crew that the American Far East Squadron was approaching “parts of the ocean but rarely visited, & by consequence but little known,” thus all hands would need to adopt “every possible precaution to guard against accident” as well as keep a sharp eye out, and bear arms not only in port but also at sea. They were on an intelligence mission, as [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) had been instructed to make particular exploration of the coast of [Japan](#) and adjacent continent and islands, to make linear perspective views of remarkable places, to take soundings at the entrances of river harbors, and to obtain other information necessary for the construction of charts. General Order 12 warned that the nations which they were about to visit were inhabited by a singular people, whose policy it has been during more than two centuries to decline all intercourse with strangers. One of the duties that was enjoined upon them was to endeavor to overcome the local prejudices against foreigners “by a course of friendly & conciliatory measure & to strive to convince the [Japanese](#) that we go amongst them as friends, not enemies.” Every person needed to “exercise the greatest prudence, forbearance & discretion in their intercourse with all with whom they may come in contact.” They were not intending to “resort to extreme measure” until “every friendly demonstration shall have been exhausted.”

One wonders what [Waldo Emerson](#) made of [Henry Thoreau](#)'s record in his journal of a disappointing afternoon conversation they tried to have on this day, when in later life he obtained the volumes from [Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau](#) and browsed through them.

The following letter pertaining to [Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe](#)'s [UNCLE TOM'S CABIN](#) appeared in New-York's [Evening Post](#) of this date, having been mailed to this northern gazette by a slaveholding Christian family in Alabama, one that would need to remain of necessity anonymous:

Uncle Tom's Cabin in Alabama.

To the Editors of the Evening Post:

I have just finished a perusal of “Uncle Tom's Cabin.” I read every word to my wife. I will not attempt to describe to you her feelings. She is an Alabamian; I, a Virginian, by birth. We are slaveholders. The moment the steamer with George Harris and Eliza his wife touched the Canada shore, three shouts for liberty, to the tops of our voices, rent the air.

Every man, woman and child, white and black, in the southern states, can bear testimony to the truth of the portrait which Mrs. Stowe, God bless her! has drawn of slavery. One of not the least excellencies of the book is, that a Christian, of the highest style, standing side by side with Wilberforce and Mrs. Hannah More, leads the reader by the hand through the habitations of cruelty that lie before our eyes. He or she can then draw a contrast between the Christian and a mistress and mother, who was some years since a near neighbor of mine, who owned a little negro girl. She would heat the tongs, and pull the flesh off her body with them.

I durst affirm that if his Satanic majesty were put upon his *voir dire* he would confess that slavery is one of the works of the devil which Christ was manifested in the flesh to destroy.

In my opinion, “Uncle Tom's Cabin” is destined to have a greater influence for good than any one single book that has been published since the close of the canon of Scripture. Mrs. Stowe, if I may so speak, is an impersonation of our Savior, going about doing good. The reader at once penetrates the deep meaning of the



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parable of the servant that took his fellow-servant by the throat, who owed him a few pence; of the good Samaritan, and of Dives and Lazarus. Mrs. Stowe has ended her book just as she should have done. She has suggested no plan of emancipation further than the example of young George Shelby goes. She has left the duty and responsibility just where St. Paul, in his letter to Philemon, left it, on the slave owner. Our warmest thanks and best wishes to Mrs. Stowe, whom generations unborn will rise up and call "blessed."

Very respectfully, &c.,

_____.



May 24. The smooth speedwell is in its prime now, whitening the sides of the back road, above the Swamp Bridge and front of Hubbard's. Its sweet little pansylike face looks up on all sides. This and the *Myosotis laxa* are the two most beautiful *little* flowers yet, if I remember rightly.

P.M. — Talked, or tried to talk, with [R.W.E.](#) Lost my time — nay, almost my identity. He assuming a false opposition where there was no difference of opinion, talked to the wind — told me what I knew — and I lost my time trying to imagine myself somebody else to oppose him. The wild pink was out day before yesterday.

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May 26, Thursday, [1853](#): The Senate approved the appointment of [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#) as US consul at the port of Liverpool, England. When he became sure of this income, Hawthorne settled an income of \$200.⁰⁰ upon his surviving sister Elizabeth.²⁹

There was a fire on Merchant Street near Kearny Street in [San Francisco](#), in which the loss would amount to some \$8,000.

When the initial vessels of the American far-eastern fleet arrived at the harbor of Napa Riang (Naha), Loo Choo (Lew Chew, Ryukyu Islands, now Okinawa), [Japan](#), a boat came out from the shore bearing [Japanese](#) who attempted to signal for the Americans to depart. They ignored this. When the sloop of war *USS Saratoga* arrived from [Hong Kong](#) it came to anchor in the vicinity of these earlier American vessels.

A view was published, of the towns of [Amesbury, Massachusetts](#) and [Salisbury, New Hampshire](#):



May 26. P.M. — To Lee's Cliff.

No breaking away, but the clouds have ceased to drop rain awhile and the birds are very lively. The waters are dark, and our attention is confined to earth. Saw two striped snakes deliberately drop from the stone bank wall into the river at Hubbard's Bridge and remain under water while we looked. Do not perceive the meadow fragrance in this wet weather. A high blueberry bush by roadside beyond the bridge very full of blossoms. It has the more florid and blossoming effect because the leaves are few and quite distinct, or standing out from the flowers — the countless inverted white mugs (in rows and everywhere as on counters or shelves) with their peculiar green calyxes. If there are as many berries as blossoms we shall fare well.

29. Approximately the sum one could obtain in those years by working full time at woman's wages as a seamstress.



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Now is the time to walk in low, damp maple copses and see the tender, luxuriant foliage that has pushed up, mushroom-like, before the sun has come to harden it — the ferns of various species and in various stages, some now in their most perfect and beautiful condition, completely unfolded, tender and delicate, but perfect in all their details, far more than any lace work — the most elaborate leaf we have. So flat, just from the laundry, as if pressed by some invisible flat-iron in the air. Unfolding with such mathematical precision in the free air, — green, starched and pressed, — might they not be transferred, patterns for [Mechlin and Brussels](#)? Skunk-cabbage, nodding trillium with concealed flowers, sarsaparilla, and arums, uvularias in thick-sown regiments now past their prime — a rank growth of these, forming an almost uninterrupted counter of green leaves a foot or two above the damp ground. *Actæa alba* some time. Maidenhair — frames of basins spirally arranged. The pitch pines just out, with crowded bunches of staminate blossoms about the new shoots.

That barberry, bush near the bars on Conantum is methinks now the most beautiful, light, and graceful bush that I ever saw in bloom. It is shaped like a haycock, broad and dense, yet light as if some leaven had raised it. But how orientally beautiful now, seen through this dark mizzling air, its parallel or rather concentric wreaths composed of leaves and flowers keeping each other apart and lightening the whole mass, each wreath above composed of rich dark-green leaves, below of drooping racemes of lively yellow flowers! Its beauty consists in a great measure in this intimate mixture of flowers and leaves, the small rich-colored flowers not being too much massed. It suggests the yellow-robed priests perchance of Thibet (?). The lowest wreaths lie on the ground. But go not so near as to be disturbed by that sickening buttery odor, as of an underdone batter pudding, all eggs but no spice. Who would think this would bake into such a red acid fruit?

Woodchucks seen tumbling into their holes.

The *Galium aparine*, common cleavers, a new one and the earliest, several days out, perhaps, high up at the base of the rocks under Lee's Cliff. In the same place *Turritis stricta*, straight tower-mustard, a slender towering plant with a delicate whitish or purplish-white blossom; not in [Bigelow](#), nor located in New England by [Gray](#). Side-flowering sandwort is abundant, for some time, by wall of Lee's field near Garfield's. The *Cratægus Crus-Galli* is all ready to blossom close by the barberry bush on Conantum. It is distinguished by its leaves, which are wedge-obovate with a short petiole and shining on the upper side, as if varnished and the varnish had soaked in in spots. What is that soft-leaved rubus (?), three-leaved with the odd one wedge-based, now in bloom? I see no thorns on my slip.



May 27, Friday, [1853](#): [Henry C. Wright](#) acknowledged to the readers of [The Liberator](#) that, checking up on his brother Chester who had been claimed by a medium to be dead at a specific time and place of a specific thing, he had discovered that his brother was still quite alive and kicking. There had been “a mistake, somewhere.” However, Wright continued, he still believed in [spiritualism](#) despite your occasional extraneous mistake such as this one. Those who refused to believe in spiritualism, he suggested, were “hunkers,” people who automatically scoffed at any novel idea.



The 26-year-old Irish immigrant James McGuigan arrived in the port of [New Orleans](#) and went directly to its Charity Hospital, telling them that he had been ill for the past 4 days (it would turn out that the immigration vessel he had been aboard had been traveling up the Mississippi River alongside a vessel from the Caribbean, that had evidently been carrying the [yellow fever](#)). Within hours McGuigan became delirious and, early the following morning, brought up a [black vomit](#); by 6 AM he was dead. This would turn out to be the initial fatality in the worst epidemic any American city has ever experienced.



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The clipper ship *Northern Light* arrived in Boston, 76 days and 5 hours out of [San Francisco, California](#).

William Speiden, Jr. reported that the bay waters were so clear he could see “coral on the bottom some twenty five or thirty feet deep.” [Japanese](#) boats came alongside with live provisions, including a bullock, some pigs, sheep, and chickens, but trade was declined until [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) had been given an opportunity to communicate with local [Japanese](#) leadership.

[Frederick Douglass' Paper](#) carried a notice of the Wednesday morning session of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society (excerpted below):

On Wednesday morning, at eight o'clock, an adjourned meeting of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society was held in the lecture room of the Tabernacle. Rev. J. Warner, Williamsburg, presided....

UNCLE TOM'S CABIN.

Dr. McCune Smith then moved the following resolutions: Resolved, That the warm thanks of this meeting to be presented to Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, for writing the inimitably beautiful and truthful story called Uncle Tom's Cabin, and that we rejoice that the Almighty is awakening the finest literary talent of the country to lay their best offerings on the altar of human freedom; and

Resolved, That we earnestly call upon the women of the United States, earnestly and zealously to follow in the glorious path laid out for them by Harriet Beecher Stowe, Grace Greenwood and Lydia M.Child.

Dr. Smith eulogised "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and said its success—unexampled as it was—proved the depth and the breadth of the anti-slavery feeling in this country. The writer had touched a vein richer than California gold, and would be followed by a host of Grub street imitators. If there was romance in the country, it was in the relations between masters and slaves, and in the mixed relations growing out of them. He then proceeded, at some length, to criticise the critic of the Literary World, who had turned this beautiful story into ridicule, while he puffed a world of fiction, on the other side, without merit or invention.

Mr. Lewis Tappan said Mr. Jewett had sold a thousand copies of the work every day since it was published, or 50,000 copies in eight weeks — a sale that was unparalleled in the whole world. Look at the humble origin of this book. Dr. Baily, one day at my house said, I think I will get Mrs. Stowe to write a story for my paper (for Dr. Baily put stories in his paper, just as parents put pills into preserves for their children.) He wrote her a note, and enclosed a \$100 bill.—She sent him No. 1 of "Uncle Tom," for the National Era, and said she would finish it in three numbers. She was astonished herself at the way it looked in print. In a month or two he sent her \$200 more, and so went on the tale till she completed the work. Mrs. Stowe is now in Brooklyn, and was here yesterday. She told me that when the fugitive slave law came out, her pillow was wet every night, with her tears, and if any book was ever written from the



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effect of prayer, it was that book. I introduced her last night to Uncle Tom's grandson. She is going to write more, and others are going to rival her. A distinguished gentleman in Massachusetts is writing a tale on the Fugitive Slave Law.

Dr. McCune Smith. — It is suggested by a gentleman here, that it is Daniel Webster. — (Great laughter.)

Mr. Tappan.—Ladies can do much good by writing. For instance, the book of Mrs. Nicholson, on Ireland, was very valuable. The Irish were not blacks, but they had wrongs. I observe the lady is in the room, and congratulate her on this work. Then there is the work of Mrs. Child, in the very title of which there is genius — "An appeal in behalf of Americans called Africans." — President Day, of Yale College, a man of eighty years of age, boasted that he never read a novel, yet he was caught with "Uncle Tom." It is not a fiction, but a narrative of facts in the form of a fiction. A lawyer told me that the escape of Eliza, over the Ohio river, was too extravagant to be true.

Mr. Cook. — It is true; I know the man that helped her over the river.

Mr. Tappan — A lawyer, one of the most distinguished members of the Union Safety Committee, told me that he verily believed that book had broken down their cause.— (Great laughter.) Already an edition is being brought out in Canada, and I have no doubt that it will soon be in half a dozen of the languages of Europe. Now is the time to go out with your agencies, after the seed is sown by this book.

Dr. Thomas Ritter moved that the following be added to the resolution: — "That the publisher be requested to publish a cheap edition for the people, at 37 cents." If he does, I will expend \$25 for copies to this tribute. A gentleman told me that he would spend several hundred dollars in the purchase of copies of a cheap edition, to send to the students of a college.

Mr. Tappan — Send it to the members of Congress.

Mr. Ritter — Copies of it have been sent to the Southern Senators, except Mr. Dawson, who said he would not read it if it were sent to him.

Mr. Tappan — It is rather too much of a good thing to expect the publisher to do this when he is selling a thousand copies per day, at \$1.50. Three paper mills cannot supply the paper fast enough. I am sorry to say that the publisher derives the chief profit from it. He has already made \$25,000; and he will make \$50,000. He made a hard bargain with Mrs. Stowe. She receives fifteen cents upon each copy sold. It has enabled her to purchase a house and a garden for her husband and children. A letter from Dr. Ritter would have as much effect as a resolution by this body. I don't think we ought to interfere between the publisher and the author. Rev. Mr. Ray, (colored,) said the way Mr. Jewett got hold of this book was as follows: He took the Era, and his wife read the story. She asked her husband to read it, but he was too busy. When the second number came out she insisted on his writing to Mrs. Stowe for permission

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to publish the remainder of the story with what had already appeared, in the form of a book. Mr. Jewett did so in obedience to his wife, (laughter) not caring much about the matter himself.

Dr. Ritter withdrew his amendment, and the resolutions were then passed.



May 27. 5.30 A.M. — To Island.

The *Cornus florida* now fairly out, and the involucre are now not greenish-white but white tipped with reddish — like a small flock of white birds passing three and a half inches in diameter, the larger ones, as I find by measuring. It is something quite novel in the tree line. That needle-shaped variety of thorn is now almost *fully* out on Lee's Hill; *i.e.* half the flowers open. Amelanchier berries are as large as small peas. How beautiful the geranium flower-buds just opening! — little purple cylindrical tubes or hoods — cigaritos — with the petals lapped over and round each other. One opens visibly in a pitcher before me. Heard a stake-driver [**American Bittern** **Botaurus lentiginosus**] yesterday in the rain. It sounded exactly like a man pumping, while another man struck on the head of the pump with an axe, the last strokes sounding peculiarly dry and hard like a forcible echo from the wood-side. One would think all Concord would be built on piles by this time. Very deliberately they drive, and in the intervals are considering the progress of the pile into the soft mud. They are working by the day. He is early and late at his work, building his stake[?]-house, yet did anybody ever see the pile he had driven? He has come back from his Southern tour to finish that job of spike-driving which he undertook last year. It is heavy work — not to be hurried. Only green hands are overhasty.

A turtle walking is as if a man were to try to walk by sticking his legs and arms merely out the windows.

P.M. — To Saw Mill Brook.

Cleared up last night after two and a half days' rain. This, with the two days' rain the 18th and 19th, makes our May rain -and more rain either of the two than at any other time this spring. Coming out into the sun after this rain, with my thick clothes, I find it unexpectedly and oppressively warm. Yet the heat seems tempered by a certain moisture still lingering in the air. (Methinks I heard a cuckoo [**Black-billed Cuckoo** **Coccyzus erythrophthalmus**] yesterday and a quail [**Northern Bobwhite** **Colinus virginianus**] (?) to-day.) A new season has commenced — summer — leafy June. The elms begin to droop and are heavy with shade. The buttercups in the churchyard are now in perfection, and it is surprising what a fairyland they make on some hillsides, looking more glossy and bright than ever after the rain. The vireo, too, is heard more than ever on the elms; his note begins to prevail. The broad pads lying on the surface of the ditches on the Turnpike seem to reflect a fierce heat upon the traveller. Yellow clover is out — how long? Hellebore a day or two at Saw Mill Brook - its great spike of green flowers with yellow anthers. Its great plaited leaves look like a green shirt bosom; drawn out smooth they prove to be basins. Was that *Stellaria longifolia* in bloom in the low ground at Saw Mill Brook? The crickets, which I have heard for a week now more and more, as much as anything mark a new season. They are importers of thought into the world — the poor trivial world; wholesale dealers in that article. Blue-eyed grass has been out some time, as I judge by the size of its seed- Vessel. The river does not look blue from Smith's Hill, — nor has it from any point for some time past, — but indistinctly slaty and rippling, as through a mistiness. Is it not getting to be too warm? A gray down or lint comes off of the leaves and shoots, which have grown so rapidly during the warm wet weather, and whitens the clothes with clean dirt. This is the state of the woods — the beardless woods, with downy cheek as yet. Sit in shade nowadays. The bullfrogs lie spread out on the surface of Flint's Pond. Holding down my head, the young rustics begin to look thick and green in the shallow water advancing into the deep.

8 P.M. — Up Union Turnpike.

The reign of insects commences this warm evening after the rains. They could not come out before. I hear from the pitch pine woods beyond E. Wood's a vast faint hum, as of a factory far enough off to be musical. I can fancy it something ambrosial from starlit mansions, a faint murmuring harp music rising from all groves; and soon insects are felt on the hands and face, and dor-bugs are heard humming by, or entangled in the pines, like winged bullets. I suppose that those dor-bugs which I



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saw the other day just beginning to stir under the dead leaves have now first issued forth. They never mistake their time. Between the pines here, white and pitch, whose outlines are dimly seen, — the rising grass cool and damp beneath, — they are heard like a thousand bullets. The toads, too, completely fill the air with their dreamy snore; so that I wonder that everybody does not remark upon it and, the first time they hear it, do not rush to the riverside and the pools and capture 'a thousand; but hardly the naturalists know whence the sound proceeds, and nobody else seems to bear it at all. The whole air trembles with it, and hearing has no other pillow but this rippling one. Tree-toads, too, keep up an incessant din from elms (?)—when near, drowning the common toads. The toads gradually ceased after midnight and I heard not one in the morning. They want much muggy warmth.

 May 28, Saturday, 1853: [Michael Flannery](#) had boarded the *Meridian* headed out of Liverpool and Ireland toward the New World. On this day the *Meridian* arrived at the docks of Boston, Massachusetts and Michael disembarked. It is likely that Michael knew of Concord before he had left Ireland, because he would promptly find his way there to work as a day laborer, farm hand, and woodcutter. According to that ship's papers, "Michael Flannery" had reached the age of 36, but the current Flannery family believes that to be inaccurate because it would have made him 2 to 6 years younger than the recent bride he had left behind in Ireland, [Ann Kelly Flannery](#).

The king of Ryukyu, Sho Tai (1843-1901) was a child at the time. Therefore, it was acting Prince Regent Sho Taimu who made the necessary call on [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) aboard the *USS Susquehanna* as acting regent of Okinawa, as a member of the royal family, and as the hereditary lord of Mabuni Village south of Naha.

[Lysander Spooner](#) had been providing pro bono counsel and advice in escaped-slave cases. In this year, he informed [Gerrit Smith](#), he had sent to [Lewis Tappan](#) some arguments to use in the case of Jane Trainer (abolitionists in New York were hoping to save this minor from enslavement by arguing that since all God's children are born free, it is logically preposterous that she had inherited a status such as slavery from the social predicament of her mother).

TAPPAN FAMILY

Sheppard's Asylum, an early private mental hospital, was founded on this day by Moses Sheppard and others. Actual construction of a facility for this institution outside [Baltimore](#) would be delayed, however, by lack of funding and then by the outbreak of civil war although a groundbreaking would take place on May 25, 1862. In 1898 the name would be changed to recognize a major benefactor, to the Sheppard and [Enoch Pratt](#) Hospital.³⁰

PSYCHOLOGY

In [San Francisco](#), the members of Columbian Engine Co. No. 11 celebrated the arrival of their very new and very decorative fire engine.

The Placer, [California Herald](#) reported that an immense flat along the banks of the North Fork of the American River, at Rattlesnake Bar, had been completely "coyote" holed with gold diggings, with gold being discovered extensively from the surface to a depth of 40 feet. Meanwhile the [Daily Union](#) was theorizing about where all such surface lumps and grains of gold must have originated:

It is conceded that the gold found in the beds of rivers, ravines and placer diggings was once embedded in quartz, from which it was liberated by the action of the elements through countless ages, and deposited where it is now found. If this hypothesis be correct, what an incalculable quantity of gold must be still

30. Street, W.R. A CHRONOLOGY OF NOTEWORTHY EVENTS IN AMERICAN [PSYCHOLOGY](#). Washington DC: American Psychological Association, 1994



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locked up on the gold bearing quartz leads known to exist in this State. In all countries in which gold mining has been pursued, for a century, it has been from mines where the leads were followed deep into the earth, and the same vein worked time out of mind. Surface diggings, whatever they may prove in California and Australia, have heretofore been exhausted within the century in which they were discovered.

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drops out apparently some days, the old bridge landing at Nawshawtuct; also just out green-briar. Already the ringing croak of a toad begins to be heard here and there along the river, and the *troonk* of a bullfrog from time to time. What is peculiar now, beginning yesterday, after rains, is the sudden heat, and the more general sound of insects by day, and the loud ringing croak of common toads and tree-toads at evening and in the night. Our river has so little current that when the wind has gone down, as at present, it is dark and perfectly smooth, and at present dusty as a stagnant pool in every part of it; far from there being any murmur, there is no ripple nor eddy for the most part. Hubbard has plowed up the low-lying field at the bathing-place and planted it with potatoes; and now we find that the field we resort to was equally used by the Indians, for their arrowheads are now exposed by the plow. The sidesaddle-flower conspicuous, but no pollen yet. The bulbous arethusa out a day or two - probably yesterday. Thought in a measure prepared for it, still its beauty surprised me; it is by far the highest and richest color yet. Its intense color in the midst of the green meadow made it look twice as large as reality; it looks very foreign in the midst of our plants -its richly speckled, curled, and bearded lip. Devil's-needles begin to fly; saw one the 14th. Thesium just out. This hazy afternoon the sun is shorn of his beams now at six o'clock, and the lupines do not look so well for it; their lilac tints show best looking at them towards the sun, for they are transparent. Last night in the dark they were all a pale, whitish color like the moon by day — a mere dull luminousness, as if they reflected light absorbed by day. Seen from this point now, the pitch pines on Bear Garden Hill, the fresh green foliage of the deciduous trees now so prevails, the pitch pines, which lately looked green, are of a dark-brownish or mulberry color by contrast, and the white pines almost as dark, but bluer. In this haziness no doubt they are a *little* darker than usual. The grass on pretty high ground is wet with dew an hour before sunset. Whiteweed now, and cotton-grass. For three quarters of an hour the sun is a great round red ball in the west, reflected in the water; at first a scarlet, but as it descends growing more purple and crimson and larger, with a blue bar of a cloud across it; still reflected in the water, two suns, one above the other, below the hilly bank; as if it were a round hole in the cope of heaven, through which we looked into a crimson atmosphere. If such scenes were painted faithfully they would be pronounced unnatural. It is remarkable at how little distance a hillside covered with lupines looks blue, while a house or board painted blue is seen so great a distance. A sprig of wilted fir now grown an inch emits that rich fragrance somewhat like strawberries and pineapples, yet peculiar.

[Mayhew](#), in his "[London Labour and London Poor](#)," treating of the costermongers, or those who get their living in the streets of London, speaks of "the muscular irritability begotten by continued wandering," making one "unable to rest for any time in one place." Mentions the instance of a girl who had been accustomed to sell sprats in the streets, who having been taken into a gentleman's house out of charity, "the pressure of shoes was intolerable to her." "But no sooner did she hear from her friends, that sprats were again in the market, than as if there were some magical influence in the fish, she at once requested to be freed from the confinement, and permitted to return to her old calling." I am perhaps equally accustomed to a roaming field-life, experience a good deal of that muscular irritability, and have a good many friends who let me know when sprats arc in the market.



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May 30, Monday, 1853: Father [Isaac Hecker](#), CSSR wrote to [Orestes Augustus Brownson](#), Esq.

[Dr. Elisha Kent Kane](#) made a final call to assure his fiancée [Maggie Fox](#) that all would be well, in preparation for sailing for the Arctic on the following day. He asked Cornelius Grinnell to act as Maggie's guardian during his absence, keeping her supplied her with funds and information about the expedition. In a final letter written as he left Newfoundland, Kane would imagine his beloved under the shade of a drooping chestnut, startling the birds with her "tokens of the spirit-world." He advised her to study German and asked that she "write naughty letters" to him in that "noble language." He promised to be true to his promises and asked her only to "exercise often, laugh when you can, grow as fat as you please; and when I return-God granting me that distant blessing-... let me have at least the rewarding consciousness of having done my duty."

Le Repos de la Sainte Famille from La fuite en Egypte for chorus and orchestra by Hector Berlioz to his own words was performed for the initial time, in London.

American stores barque *USS Caprice* arrived in Japanese waters from [Hong Kong](#) and resupplied the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Susquehanna* with cargo, coal, and bread.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) sailed downriver with [Ellery Channing](#) to Carlyle Bridge and back upriver in a stiff breeze, making remarkably good time:



May 30. The morning wind forever blows; the poem of the world is uninterrupted, but few are the ears that hear it. Forever that strain of the harp which soothed the Cerberus and called me back to life is sounding. Olympus is the outside of the earth everywhere.

5 A.M. — To Cliffs.

High blackberry out. As I go by [Hayden](#)'s in the still cool morning, the farmer's door is open — probably his cattle have been attended to — and the odor of the bacon which is being fried for his breakfast fills the air. The dog lies with his paws hanging over the door-sill this agreeably cool morning. The cistus out, probably yesterday, — a simple and delicate flower, its stamens all swept to one side. It upholds a delicate saffron-golden (?) basin about nine inches from the ground.

As I look off from Fair Haven I perceive that that downy, silvery hoariness has mostly left the leaves (it now comes off on to the clothes), and they are of a uniform smooth light green, while the pines are a dirty dark brown, almost purple, and are mostly merged and lost in the deciduous trees. The *Erigeron bellidifolius* is a tender-looking, pale-purple, aster-like flower a foot high in little squads, nodding in the wind on the bare slopes of hill pastures. Young bush-like black cherries a day or two, on Cliffs and in such favorable places. The hylodes were about done peeping before those last few warm days, — when the toads began in earnest in the river, — but last night being somewhat cooler they were not so loud.

P.M. — To Carlisle Bridge by boat.

A strong but somewhat gusty southerly wind, before which [C.](#) and I sailed all the way from home to Carlisle Bridge in not far from an hour; the river unusually high for the season. Very pleasant to feel the strong, fresh southerly wind from over the water. There are no clouds in the sky, but a high haziness, as if the moisture drawn up by yesterday's heat was condensed by to-day's comparative coolness. The water a dull slate-color and waves running high, — a dirty yellow where they break, — and long streaks of white foam, six or eight feet apart, stretching north and south between Concord and Bedford, — without end. The common blue flag just out at Ball's Hill. The white maples, especially those shaped like large bushes, on the banks are now full of foliage, showing the white under sides of the leaves in the wind, and the swamp white oak, having similar silvery under sides to its leaves, and both growing abundantly and prevailing here along the river, make or impart a peculiar flashing light to the scenery in windy weather, all bright, flashing, and cheerful. On the meadows are large yellow-green patches of ferns beginning to prevail. Passed a large boat anchored off in the meadows not far from the boundary of Concord. It was quite a piece of ocean scenery, we saw it so long before reaching it and so long after; and it looked larger than reality, what with the roaring of the wind in our shrouds and the dashing of the waves. The incessant drifting about of a



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boat so anchored by a long cable, playing with its halter, now showing more, now less, of its side, is a pleasing sight. Landed at a high lupine bank by Carlisle Bridge. How many such lupine banks there are! — whose blue you detect many rods off. There I found, methinks, minute *Specularia perfoliata*, with small crenate clasping leaves alternate at some distance apart, on upright stems about three inches high, but apparently *fruiting in the bud*. Also the *Silene antirrhina* very abundant there. The *Viola palmata*, which is later, and therefore, methinks, fresher than most, is now quite prevalent, one of the most common, in fact, in low ground and a very handsome purple, with more red than usual in its violet. The pines now clotted with white shoots, the pitch pines a little reddish, are an interesting sight now. Whence came all those dead slackers, a dozen at least, which we saw floating to-day, some on their sides, transversely barred, some on their backs with their white bellies up and dark fins on each side? Why are they suckers only that we see? Can it be because the spearers have thrown them away? Or has some bird of prey dropped them? I rarely see other fish floating. 1\elvin gave George Brooks some pink azaleas yesterday, said to have grown in the north part of the town. The white maple keys falling and covering the river.



May 31, Tuesday, 1853: [Dr. Elisha Kent Kane](#) sailed aboard the *Advance* with the 2d Grinnell expedition from New-York harbor (they would winter in Rensselaer Bay).

The British vessel *Sea* was driven ashore and wrecked near Port Phillip, Victoria with the loss of 17 of the 26 on board, and in addition of a rescuer.

Some Americans went ashore and some [Japanese](#) visited the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Susquehanna*, bringing fish.

The [Daily Alta California](#) of [San Francisco](#) pontificated about the gold rush:

The desire of becoming suddenly rich has probably been the cause of more evil to California than to any other country in the world. People have not, at a general thing, come here to stay, but to get a certain amount of gold and then leave. They have not been willing to wait long enough to take things to advantage, but as soon as they set foot on our shores they have dashed to anything that offered itself, little regarding consequences. Hence we see so many, who have been here for a long time, and in many instances men of good sense, have succeeded but poorly from the fact that in the race for wealth they were in too much haste to make speed. Every one who has been here for a year or two can see how he might have made a fortune had he used more deliberation and waited for the auspicious moment. But people would not do that, and they have either in many instances spent their time in building air-castles and chasing *ignis fatuus*, till they find, after a long and laborious time, they have little to show for their toil. In the meanwhile, those who have been more deliberate, and, Mahomet-like, preferred to have the mountain come to them, rather than go themselves to the mountain, have, at a general thing, been far more successful. We may notice that when a man has settled down in some advantageous spot and begun in a small way, by raising vegetables, poultry and pigs, he has almost invariably become rich in the world. So it has been with the rancho. If he has used judgment and discrimination in his location, he has accumulated property in spite of himself. Since this is the case, it seems unaccountable that people will not learn to take things to greater advantage in California, and settle down more quiet and contented. There need not be this



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over-anxiety about wealth, and there ought not to be, for it defeats itself. The tortoise is more like to win the race here than the hare, and we look to a recognition of this idea at being calculated to be of great service to the State and give as a more contented and permanent population.

But the folly of this over eagerness for wealth is better illustrated in the mines than in any other part of the country. There it is the practice for them to get at much as possible to-day - to work when that evening's tale shall show the most dust, not heeding whether or no the work must all be done over again. Men do not work in the way they would elsewhere, and as they would here if they had a better title to the grounds, and everybody was not actuated by the desire to get what he can in a short time and leave. What stupid folly has been manifested in the kind of methods used for washing the gold. For a long time the cradle and pan were the only instruments employed. People could see then, at well as now, that this was a laborious method of washing dirt, but they had no time to stop for experiments: no time for improvements; and so they worked on with such means as were most convenient. If they stopped a day to make improved machine, it was lost time; for that night would show no addition to the bag. Hence the first digging consisted in coyoting and tracing out rich leads and the narrow beds of gulches, leaving the great burden of the dirt to be washed afterward. How often do the same miners wash the same dirt several times! They begin, and finding how much they can take by washing out the best part of a bar or gulch, they leave those parts that pay least until they work out the richest part, thinking to find smother as rich place elsewhere. But they are often disappointed, and go to work on the bar again, and wash over the old tailings to get them out of the way, and then they go deeper in the bars and banks. In fact, we do not believe the history of the world hardly shows a parallel to the useless labor that has been performed in the California mines. We have been led into these remarks by reading the following extract from the Sonora Herald:

We must not forget to mention here the Union Water Company, which supplies Murphy's, Douglass' Flat, Angel's, and other localities with water brought from the North Branch of the Stanislaus. The canal of this company is a successful operation; and we saw, both at Murphy's and Douglass', that the miners have as large a supply of the element as they need. The enterprise of this company is meeting with a fine reward, their daily receipt being, we are informed, about seven or eight hundred dollars. There are but twenty shareholders. One of their improvements and sources of revenue is worthy of note. It is a large sluice or flume, about half a mile long, which is laid at the foot of the hill which we have already spoken of, and which receives all the water and tailings which pass from the hundred sluices of the miners along its line. It was constructed at the solicitation of the miners on the Flat, whose claims were previously being flooded by the water used by those on the hill-side, and now not only prevents a recurrence of the injury, but is the source of a handsome revenue to the company. One man employed by the company is engaged at the end of this greatsluice, in re-washing



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the tailings which have passed through it, which sometimes yield several pounds of fine gold in a day. This in the first time that we have heard of tailings being tried on so extensive a scale, and the success of the enterprise in this instance renders it well worthy of imitation.

This extract goes to prove the truth of what we have before expressed, that there is an immense amount of gold existing in the ground in the form of an impalpable powder, and too fine to save by any process yet discovered. The sluice is doubtless a great improvement on anything which has preceded it, but even that does not save it all. The rocker and the tom have been in a great measure discarded, because of the waste of gold; but yet people have been extremely slow to find out what was for their interest. Men used the rocker and the tom for a long time when they might have used the sluice to far better advantage, but they had not time to look into the matter and learn that every day they were wasting money by the course they were pursuing. They could not think of going to the expense of such a thing as a long sluice, for they did not intend to stop in the country but a short time— only long enough to get a "pile," and then they would bid good-bye to California. So they worked on in the shiftless way they did, in many instances losing more gold than they saved.

We have seen all these acts of folly, and though there have been great improvements made in the method of washing gold, there is no doubt that there is great room for farther improvement. The sluice, if made long enough and of the right pitch, with plenty of clear water, will save all the gold but the finest, yet we have known a trough of quicksilver at the end of such a sluice to catch, day after day, from an ounce and a half to two ounces of gold daily. Yet for all this evidence so direct and indisputable, the most of the sluices around had no such appendage as a few pounds of quicksilver! Are we not right in saying the history of the world does not show a parallel for useless labor to be met with in the mines of California. These tailings will of course sooner or later all be worked over again, but a tithe of the labor and expense, if employed at first in doing the work thoroughly, would have rendered this labor unnecessary. The idea has been to get the most possible to-day, and so long as the present scrambling system obtains, men will not give the subject of economising the thought and attention which the subject is entitled to. Repeated instances have come to our knowledge when the amount of gold saved has been doubled by a little alteration or improvement made in the ripple-box or in the construction of the sluice, and we hope to see more attention given to this subject, and trust that whenever any advancement is made, the public may be informed of it. The attention of all practical miners is asked to the consideration of the matter, and any suggestions or observations on a question of so much importance, are earnestly solicited.

A CALIFORNIA POLITICIAN IN A SCRAPE. — We learn from the *Shasta Courier* of Saturday, that one Col. Harper, at one time a prominent politician in the northern part of the State, and a contestant for a seat in the Senate, robbed an old lady of \$1,800 on Wednesday. They were passengers together in a stage coach, and the honorable politician abstracted the money from her



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carpetbag. He was lodged in Hamilton jail.



May 31. Some incidents in my life have seemed far more allegorical than actual; they were so significant that they plainly served no other use. That is, I have been more impressed by their allegorical significance and fitness; they have been like myths or passages in a myth, rather than mere incidents or history which have to wait to become significant. Quite in harmony with my subjective philosophy. This, for instance: that, when I thought I knew the flowers so well, the beautiful purple azalea or pinxter-flower should be shown me by the hunter who found it. Such facts are lifted quite above the level of the actual. They are all just such events as my imagination prepares me for, no matter how incredible. Perfectly in keeping with my life and characteristic. Ever and anon something will occur which my philosophy has not dreamed of. The limits of the actual are set some thoughts further off. That which had seemed a rigid wall of vast thickness unexpectedly proves a thin and undulating drapery. The boundaries of the actual are no more fixed and rigid than the elasticity of our imaginations. The fact that a rare and beautiful flower which we never saw, perhaps never heard [of], for which therefore there was no place in our thoughts, may at length be found in our immediate neighborhood, is very suggestive.

P.M. — A change in the weather. It is comparatively cool since last night, and the air is very clear accordingly; none of that haze in it occasioned by the late heat. Yesterday was another very windy day, making the sixth, I believe, of this May, the 23d having been the last. The leaves are now fairly expanded — that has been the work of May — and are of a dark summer greenness. Some have even begun to cut the rankest grass in front yards. May has been, on the whole, a pleasant month, with a few days of gentle rain-storm, — fishermen's rains, — straight down and spattering on the earth, — and the last week quite warm, even somewhat sultry arid summer-like. The bulk of the planting has been done this month, and there have been half a dozen days of strong breezy and gusty, but not cold, winds, — northwest and then southwest and south. It is surprising to see how many leaves are already attacked by insects, — leafrollers, pincushion galls, one kind of oak-balls, etc., etc.; and many a shrub and tree, black cherry and shrub oak, is no sooner leaved out than it is completely stripped by its caterpillar foes.

I am going in search of the *Azalea nudiflora*. [Sophia](#) brought home a single flower without twig or leaf from [Mrs. Brooks's](#) last evening. Mrs. Brooks. I find, has a large twig in a vase of water, still pretty fresh, which she says [George Melvin](#) gave to her son [George](#). I called at his office. He says that Melvin came in to [Mr. Gourgas's](#) office, where he and others were sitting Saturday evening, with his arms full and gave each a sprig, but he does n't know where he got it. Somebody, I heard, had seen it at [Captain Jarvis's](#); so I went there. I found that they had some still pretty fresh in the house. Melvin gave it to them Saturday night, but they did not know where he got it. A young man working at [Stedman Buttrick's](#) said it was a. secret; there was only one bush in the town; Melvin knew of it and Stedman knew; when asked, Melvin said he got it in the swamp, or from a bush, etc. The young man thought it grew on the Island across the river on the [Wheeler](#) farm. I went on to Melvin's house, though I did not expect to find him at home at this hour, so early in the afternoon. (Saw the wood sorrel out, a day or two perhaps, by the way.) At length I saw his dog by the door, and knew he was at home. He was sitting in the shade, bareheaded, at his back door. He had a large pailful of the azalea recently plucked and in the shade behind his house, which he said he was going to carry to town at evening. He had also a sprig set out. He had been out all the forenoon and said he had got seven pickerel, — perhaps ten [?]. Apparently he had been drinking and was just getting over it. At first he was a little shy about telling me where the azalea grew, but I saw that I should get it out of him. He dilly-dallied a little; called to his neighbor [Farmer](#), whom he called "Razor," to know if he could tell me where that flower grew. He called it, by the way, the "red honeysuckle." This was to prolong the time and make the most of his secret. I felt pretty sure the plant was to be found on [Wheeler's](#) land beyond the river, as the young man had said, for I had remembered how, some weeks before this, when I went up the Assabet after the yellow rocket, I saw [Melvin](#), who had just crossed with his dog, and when I landed to pluck the rocket he appeared out of the woods, said he was after a fish-pole, and asked me the name of my flower. Did n't think it was very handsome, — "not so handsome as the honeysuckle, is it?" And now I knew it was his "red honeysuckle," and not the columbine, he meant. Well, I told him he had better tell me where it was; I was a botanist and ought to know. But he thought I couldn't possibly find it by his directions. I told him he'd better tell me and have the glory of it, for I should surely find it if he did n't; I'd got a clue to it, and should n't give it up. I should



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go over the river for it. I could smell it a good way, you know. He thought I could smell it half a mile, and he wondered that I had n't stumbled on it, or [Channing](#). Channing, he said, came close by it once, when it was in flower. He thought he'd surely find it then; but he did n't, and he said nothing to him. He told me he found it about ten years ago, and he went to it every year. It blossomed at the old election time, and he thought it "the handsomest flower that grows." Yarrow just out.

In the meanwhile, [Farmer](#), who was hoeing, came up to the wall, and we fell into a talk about Dodge's Brook, which runs through his farm. A man in Cambridge, he said, had recently written to [Mr. Monroe](#) about it, but he did n't know why. All he knew about the brook was that he had seen it dry and then again, after a week of dry weather in which no rain fell, it would be full again, and either the writer or [Monroe](#) said there were only two such brooks in all North America. One of its sources — he thought the principal one was in his land. We all went to it. It was in a meadow, — rather a dry one, once a swamp. He said it never ceased to flow at the head now, since he dug it out, and never froze there. He ran a pole down eight or nine feet into the mud to show me the depth. He had minnows there in a large deep pool, and cast an insect into the water, which they presently rose to and swallowed. Fifteen years ago he dug it out nine feet deep and found spruce logs as big as his leg, which the beavers had gnawed, with the marks of their teeth very distinct upon them; but they soon crumbled away on coming to the air. [Melvin](#), meanwhile, was telling me of a pair of geese [[Canada Goose](#) [■](#) *Branta canadensis*] he had seen which were breeding in the Bedford Swamp. He had seen them within a day. Last year he got a large brood (11?) of black ducks [■](#) there.

We went on down the brook, — [Melvin](#) and I and his dog, — and crossed the river in his boat, and he conducted me to where the *Azalea nudiflora* grew, — it was a little past its prime, perhaps, — and showed me how near [Channing](#) came. ("You won't tell him what I said; will You?" said he.) I offered to pay him for his trouble, but he wouldn't take anything. He had just as lief I'd know as not. He thought it first came out last Wednesday, on the 25th.

Azalea nudiflora, — purple azalea, pinxter-flower, — but [Gray](#) and [Bigelow](#) say nothing about its clamminess. It is a conspicuously beautiful flowering shrub, with the sweet fragrance of the common swamp-pink, but the flowers are larger and, in this case, a fine lively rosy pink, not so clammy as the other, and, being earlier, it is free from the insects which often infest and spoil the first, though I find a very few little flies on them. With a broader, somewhat downy pale-green leaf. Growing in the shade of large wood, like the laurel. The flowers, being in naked umbels, are so much the more conspicuous. (The *Viola debilis* by the brook, near the azalea.) It is a flower with the fragrance of the swamp[-pink], without its extreme *clamminess* and consequent insects, and with a high and beautiful color and larger segments to the corolla, with very much exerted stamens and pistil. Eaton says the *nudiflora* is "not viscous;" names half a dozen varieties and among them *A. partita* (flesh-colored flowers, 5-parted to the base), but then this is viscous. And it cannot be his species *A. nitida*, with glabrous and shining and small leaves. It must be an undescribed variety — a viscous one — of *A. nudiflora*.

[Melvin](#) says the gray squirrel nests are made of leaves, the red squirrel of pine stuff. Jarvis tells me that [Stedman Buttrick](#) once hired [Melvin](#) to work for him on condition that he should not take his gun into the field, but he had known him to do so when Buttrick was away and earn two or three dollars with his game beside his day's work, but of course the last was neglected.

There is a little danger of a frost to-night.

Read [■](#) [Henry Thoreau's Journal for June 1853 \(æt. 35\)](#)

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 June 1, Wednesday, 1853: [Normal College](#) in Randolph County, [North Carolina](#) awarded its first B.A. degrees.

[Marietta Alboni](#) sailed for France, where she would marry an Italian count. By 1863 she would have abandoned her singing career, except for special appearances at which she would apologize for both her growing obesity and her somewhat diminishing vocal talents by making the smiling comment “I am the shadow of my former self.”



In Pest, two works for piano and orchestra by Franz Liszt were performed for the initial time: *Fantasie über Motive aus Beethovens Ruinen von Athen* and *Fantasie über Ungarische Volksmelodien*.

William Speiden, Jr. went ashore on the Japanese island with officers to take a walk. They were trailed by locals who seemed intrigued by these outsiders. A separate American exploring party also went ashore.

Some Frenchmen in San Francisco, [California](#) organized Lafayette Hook & Ladder Co. No. 2 on Broadway Avenue between Dupont and Stockton, modeled after fire companies in Paris.

[Lola Montez](#) discarded the “manager” with whom she had arrived in San Francisco and got “married” with Patrick Purdy Hull, owner of the San Francisco [Whig](#), whom she had met aboard that ship, and moved to Grass Valley, [California](#) to perform around the Gold Country. During a stay of several years in Grass Valley she would accumulate a number of pets, including a bear cub which she kept tethered in her yard.

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When US Senator Gwin engaged in a [duel](#) in [San Francisco](#) with J.W. McCorkle, there were no injuries.

[Arthur Buckminster Fuller](#), pastor of the Unitarian Society in Manchester, New Hampshire, was installed to minister over the New North Church in [Boston](#).



[Jefferson Davis](#) began to serve, for a period of 15 days, as acting Secretary of the Navy.

[Henry Thoreau](#), in his journal, toyed with the idea that the fruit typical of the New England ministerial class might be the sort of bitter tree gall that never ripens, rather than the sort of tree fruit that will bring sweetness into the difficult lives of the parishioners:



June 1 [1853]. This gall [pincushion gall on young white oaks] is the tree's "[Ode to Dejection.](#)" How oft it chanceth that the apparent fruit of a shrub, its apple, is merely a gall or blight! How many men meet with some blast in the moist growing days of their youth, and what should have been a sweet and palatable fruit in them becomes a mere puff and excrescence, ripening no kernel, and they say that they have experienced religion! For the hardening of the seed is the crisis. Their fruit is a gall, a puff, an excrescence, for want of moderation and continence. So many plants never ripen their fruit.



HDT

WHAT?

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Nathan Fiske of the Cambridge, Massachusetts post office advertised in the Chronicle that there had gotten to be quite a few letters there, awaiting pickup by addressees (see following screen).

LIST OF LETTERS remaining in the Old Cambridge Post Office, June 1, 1853.		
Allen Wm A	Chis Charles	McCleary Wm
Allen J Adolison	Egin Thomas	McGowan Thomas
Allen Geo N	Eastman Oth S	McCarron James
Atwood B T	Flourgan Daniel	McDermot Thomas
Billings Mary E	Fowle John	Mills Samuel
Brennan John	Foster Geo W	Nicech E & others
Barber James S	Foster Louisa	Maplesdon Richard
Bellows Dr A J	Fitzgerald John	Mansfield T & T
Brown A A	Firfield Laura M	Mann John M
Bagley Lucy	Follen E L	Murphy Timothy
Baughy Geo W	Fettypace T J	Miller Daniel
Benjamin Jeram A	Fair John R	Mason J O
Broadford James G	Fumen Bridget	Mellen Sumner
Bruce Miss Louisa	French Sophia E	Melvahill Nicholas
Buckley Mrs	Fortaine Felix G	Merrill Hannah Mrs
Carpenter & Livingston	Gates Edwm	Manning N W Miss
Chick Sylvester	Gary Lovell	Mansfield H A
Church Maria B Miss	Green Joseph	Neiz Miss
Cilford Andrew	Gilbert Samuel A	Noyes F G
Cran Lucian B	Gould Seth	Nichols Susan F
Couley Matie C	Guilford S M	Nichols Curtis C
Callaghan Cathrine	Greenly Ann Louisa	Orlton Catherine G
Callaghan Bridget	Galagher Phebe	Osborn Sarah L Mrs
Courier David	Godrich S G	Patterson Wilham
Carlee Patrick	Gould George	Phelps A S Mrs
Carlton David C	Gregg Benjamin C	Peppard Caroline M
Coleman Michael	Gilbert Henry	Pye Mary A
Corran Richard	Hartney Mary	Prentiss Henry C
Clark Abra Miss	Haywood J L	Raid John B
Clark Mary Ann	Harney Mary	Randall G W
Connor Lucy	Helderdy Bridget	Ranson Albert
Crane Margaret A	Hongley Patrick	Richardson Royal
Coulam Martha	Horker Elizabeth	Roiley Patrick
Casey James	Hunting Henry E	Rosch Mary
Cox Sylvania Miss	Hanford Horace	Smith Parsons
Carswell James	Johuson N Jr	Shearer Lewis
Cushman Georgian	Kennedy John A	Short Robert
Coolidge Geo 2d	Kucolas Ellen	Story Mr
Cutter C A Miss	Kennedy Thomas	Templeton Charles
Cain Michael	Kate Mrs	Taylor Myron H
Cox Margaret A	Lynch A	Tennent Thomas
Doane Eliza	Lee George	Tuttle John
Daym William	Lerois J W	Thurston Mary
Dashwood Mary	Lewis Abella Mrs	Underwood F H
Dealy Mary	Lincoln John P	Warren Clarissa
Day Israel W	Lincoln Dennis	Winship Sophia
Delany Patrick	Leonard Mary	Wheeler G W
Doogan James	Lovering J F	Wright Samuel J
Dargin Geo W	Laken Francis	Williams W H
Dargin Warren L	Lecoupit W W	Walker Henry
Dawes Elizabeth	Lynch Ellen	Whitney Lizzie Miss
Delany Maria	McLellan Mary	Warner Hermann J
Dewolf Sophia	Mcorkle Jane	Walton J Q
Doherty Mary	Mcneath James	York Charles

N. B. Persons calling for letters on the above list will please say they are advertised.

NATHAN FISKE, Postmaster.



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

For the last ten days we have been traveling up the Platte Bottom, a distance of 125 miles. Have traveled slow and laid by two days. The grass has been quite good most of the way. Had considerable of rain, which is the most unpleasant part of it. The scenery along the river is much the same, quite pretty, though not enchanting. Nothing of striking interest has occurred, except we see plenty of wolves, antelope, buffalo, prairie dogs and dog towns etc. These prairie dogs are about the size of a squirrel and live in houses underground in towns and villages. They seem quite full of antics. One always stays out so he can see around until we get quite near him.



June 1. Quite a fog this morning. Does it not always follow the cooler nights after the first really warm weather about the end of May? Saw a water snake yesterday, with its tail twisted about some dead weed stubble and quite dry and stiff for an inch, as if it were preparing to shed its skin. A wilted sprig of creeping juniper has a little, a very little, of sweet fragrance, somewhat like that of the fir and spruce. It seems to be just coming into bloom. Bees are swarming now, and those who keep them often have to leave their work in haste to secure them.

P.M. — To Walden.

Summer begins now about a week past, with the expanded leaves, the shade and warm weather. Cultivated fields also are *leaving* out, *i.e.* corn and potatoes coming up. Most trees have bloomed and are now forming their fruit. Young berries, too, are forming, and birds are being hatched. Dor-bugs and other insects have come forth the first warm evening after showers.

The birds have now all (?) come and no longer fly in flocks. The hylodes are no longer heard. The bullfrogs begin to trump. Thick and extensive fogs in the morning begin. Plants are rapidly growing, — *shooting*. Hoeing corn has commenced (June 1st). It is now the season of growth. The first bloom of the year is over. Have not wild animals now henceforth (?) their young? and fishes too?

The pincushion galls on young white oaks are now among the most beautiful objects in the woods, coarse woolly white to appearance, spotted with bright red or crimson on the exposed side. It is remarkable that a mere gall, which at first we are inclined to regard as something abnormal, should be made so beautiful, as if it were the *flower* of the tree: that a disease, an excrescence, should prove, perchance, the greatest beauty, — as the tear of the pearl. Beautiful scarlet sins they may be. Through our temptations, — aye, and our falls, — our virtues appear. As in many a character, — many a poet, — we see that beauty exhibited in a gall, which was meant to have bloomed in a flower, unchecked. Such, however, is the accomplishment of the world. The poet cherishes his chagrins and sets his sighs to music. This gall is the tree's "[Ode to Dejection](#)." How oft it chances that the apparent fruit of a shrub, its apple, is merely a gall or blight! How many men meet with some blast in the moist growing days of their youth, and what should have been a sweet and palatable fruit in them becomes a mere puff and excrescence, ripening no kernel, and they say that they have experienced religion! For the hardening of the seed is the crisis. Their fruit is a gall, a puff, an excrescence, for want of moderation and continence. So many plants never ripen their fruit.

I see the effects of a frost last night and earlier in the hollow west of Laurel Glen. The young white oaks have suffered especially, their leaves shrivelled and now drying up, and the hickories are turned quite black. These effects are most noticeable, not in the deepest hollows, if they are shady, but in those where the wood has been cut off a year or two, next to standing wood which reflected the sun, and which were the warmest during the day. Are not those trees which are latest to leave out generally the most tender in this respect?

I notice that most of the *Smilacina racemosa* has had its tip or flower-bud nipped off. Eggs in ovenbird's nest [[Ovenbird](#) [Seiurus aurocapillus](#)]. The water-target leaves are conspicuous on the pond meadows now. The heart-leaves already on the river. A little of the pollen now along the shore of the still coves. The pitch pines near by have shed theirs.

The news of the explosion of the powder-mills was not only carried seaward by the cloud which its

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POWDER MILL

smoke made, but more effectually, though more slowly, by the fragments which were floated thither by the river. Melvin yesterday showed me quite a pile of fragments, — some short pieces of large timber, — still black with powder, which he had saved as they were drifting by. Nobody takes the trouble to record all the consequences of such an event. And some, no doubt, were carried down to the Merrimack, and by the Merrimack to the ocean, till perchance they got into the Gulf Stream and were cast up the coast of Norway, covered with barnacles, or who can tell what more distant strand?—still bearing some traces of burnt powder, still capable of telling how and where they were launched, to those who can read their signs. To see a man lying all bare, lank, and tender on the rocks, like a skinned frog or lizard! We did not suspect that lie was made of such cold, tender, clammy substance before.

Mingling with wrecks of vessels, which communicated a different tale, this wreck of a powder-mill was cast up on some outlandish strand, and went to swell the pile of driftwood collected by some native. Shouldered by whales. Alighted on at first by the muskrat and the peewee, — and finally perhaps the stormy petrel and the beach-birds. It is long before Nature forgets it. How slowly the ruins are being dispersed!

Viola pedata past its prime; and are not the *sagittata*, and run to leaf? and also the *cucullata* (?) (?), so that the *palmata* take their places? I am as white as a miller,—a rye-miller, at least, — with the lint from the young leaves and twigs. The tufts of pinks on the side of the peak by the pond grow raying out somewhat from a centre, somewhat like a cyme, on the warm dry side-hill — some a lighter, some a richer and darker, shade of pink. With what a variety of colors we are entertained! Yet most colors are rare or in small doses, presented us as a condiment or spice. Much of green, blue, black, and white, but of yellow and the different shades of red far less. The eye feasts on the colors of flowers as on titbits; they are its spices.

I hear now, it five o'clock, from this hill, a farmer's horn calling his hands in from the field to an early tea. Heard afar by the walker, over the woods at this hour or at noon, bursting upon the stillness of the air, putting life into some portion of the horizon, this is one of the most suggestive and pleasing of the country sounds produced by man. I know not how far it is peculiar to New England or the United States. I hear two or three prolonged blasts, as I am walking alone some sultry noon in midst of the still woods, — a sound which I know to be produced by human breath, the most sonorous parts of which alone reach me, — and I see in my mind the hired men and master dropping the implements of their labor in the field and wending their way with a sober satisfaction toward the house; I see the well-sweep rise and fall; I see the preparatory ablutions and the table laden with the smoking meal. It is a significant hum in a distant part of the hive. Often it tells me [the] time of day.

How much lupine is now in full bloom on bare sandy brows or promontories running into meadows, where the sod is half worn away and the sand exposed! The geraniums are now getting to be common. *Hieracium venosum* just out on this peak. And the snapdragon catchfly [*Silene Antirrhina*] is here abundantly in blossom, a little after 5 P.M., — a pretty little flower, the petals dull crimson beneath or varnished mahogany-color, and rose-tinted white within or above. It closed on my way home, but opened again in water in the evening. Its opening in the night chiefly is a fact which interests and piques me. Do any insects visit it then? Lambkill just beginning, the very earliest. A purple (!) Canada snapdragon.

New, bright, and glossy light-green leaves of the umbelled wintergreen are shooting on this hillside, but the old leaves are particularly glossy and shining, as if varnished and not yet dry, or most highly polished. Did they look thus in the winter? I do not know any leaf so wet-glossy.

Walking up this side-hill, I disturbed a nighthawk [**Common Nighthawk**  *Chordeiles minor*] eight or ten feet from me, which went, half-fluttering, half hopping, the mottled creature, like a winged toad, as **Nuttall** says the French of Louisiana(?) call them, down the hill as far as I could see. Without moving, I looked about and saw its two eggs on the bare ground, on a slight shelf of the hill, on the dead pine-needles and sand, without any cavity or nest whatever, very obvious when once you had detected them, but not easily detected from their color, a coarse gray formed of white spotted with a bluish or slaty brown, or umber, — a stone — granite — color, like the places it selects. I advanced and put my hand on them, and while I stooped, seeing a shadow on the ground, looked up and saw the bird, which had fluttered down the hill so blind and helpless, circling low and swiftly past over my head, showing the white spot on each wing in true nighthawk fashion. When I had gone a dozen rods, it appeared again higher in the air, with its peculiar flitting, limping kind of flight, all the while noiseless, and suddenly descending, it dashed at me within ten feet of my head, like an imp of darkness, then swept away high over the pond, dashing now to this side, now to that, on different tacks, as if, in pursuit of its prey, it had already forgotten its eggs on the earth. I can see how it might



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easily come to be regarded with superstitious awe. A cuckoo [**Black-billed Cuckoo**  *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*] very plainly heard.

“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.

 June 6, Monday, 1853: [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) left the *USS Susquehanna* for the Japanese shore with a party of officers, to visit the Prince Regent at Sheuti (Shuri). William Speiden, Jr. was not part of this.

A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

Started quite early this morning, traveled till about 9 o'clock, came to some grass and stopped till noon, then traveled till 4 o'clock. Drove 15 miles to-day. Roads very heavy. I am quite unwell to-day, scarcely able to sit up.

That evening [Friedrich Engels](#) wrote from Manchester to [Karl Marx](#) in London:

Dear Marx,
I had intended to write to you by the first post today, but was detained at the office until 8 o'clock. You will have received both Weydemeyer's and Cluss' anti-Willich statements in the *Criminal Zeitung*, i.e. direct from America. If not, write to me at once. As usual, papa Weydemeyer is too long-winded, very seldom makes a point, then promptly blunts it with his style, and unfolds his well-known lack of verve with rare composure. Nevertheless, the man has done his best, the story about Hentze, the "comrade-in-arms", and the influence of others on Hirsch's pen is nicely fashioned; his incredible style and his composure, regarded over there as impassibility, will appeal to the philistines, and his performance can, on the whole, be regarded as satisfactory. Cluss' statement, on the other hand, pleases me enormously. In every line we hear the chuckle of *l'homme supérieur* who, through "personal contact" with Willich, has, as it were, become physically conscious of his superiority. For lightness of style, this surpasses everything that Cluss has ever written. Never a clumsy turn of phrase, not a trace of *gêne*

[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)**COMMODORE PERRY****MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY**

LIST OF LETTERS remaining in the Old Cambridge
Post Office, June 1, 1853.

Allen Wm A	Ellis Charles	McCleary Wm
Allen J Addison	Egin Thomas	McGowan Thomas
Allen Geo N	Eastman Otis S	McCarren James
Atwood H T	Flanagan Daniel	McDermot Thomas
Billings Mary E	Fowle John	Mills Samuel
Brennan John	Foster Geo W	Neesh E & others
Barber James S	Foster Louis	Mapleton Richard
Bellows Dr A J	Fitzgerald John	Mansfield T & T
Brown A A	Firfield Laura M	Mann John M
Bagley Lucy	Follen E L	Murphy Timothy
Bungay Geo W	Fettyplace T J	Miller Daniel
Bennihan Jeremiah	Fair John R	Mason J O
Bradford Jeremiah G	Fumen Bridget	Mellen Sumner
Bruce Miss Louis	French Sophia E	Melville Nicholas
Buckley Mrs	Fortune Felix G	Merrill Hannah Mrs
Carpenter & Livingston	Gates Edwin	Manning N W Miss
Chick Sylvester	Gary Lovell	Mansfield H A
Church Maria B Miss	Green Joseph	Neiz Miss
Clifford Andrew	Gilbert Samuel A	Noyes F G
Cran Lucian B	Gould Seth	Nichols Susan F
Cooley Matie C	Guilford S M	Nichols Curtis C
Callaghan Catharine	Greenly Ann Louisa	Orbiton Catherine G
Callaghan Bridget	Galagher Phebe	Osborn Sarah L Mrs
Courier David	Gaudrich S G	Patterson William
Carlee Patrick	Gould George	Phelps A S Mrs
Carlton David C	Gregg Benjamin C	Peppard Caroline M
Coleman Michael	Gilbert Henry	Pye Mary A
Coran Richard	Hartney Mary	Prentiss Henry C
Clark Abra Miss	Haywood J L	Rand John B
Clark Mary Ann	Harney Mary	Randall G W
Connor Lucy	Hellerdy Bridget	Ranson Albert
Crane Margaret A	Hongley Patrick	Richardson Royal
Cookin Martha	Horker Elizabeth	Riley Patrick
Casey James	Hunting Henry E	Rosch Mary
Cox Sylvania Miss	Hanford Horace	Smith Parsons
Carswell James	Johnson N Jr	Shearer Lewis
Cushman Georgian	Kennedy John A	Short Robert
Coolidge Geo 2d	Nicolas Ellen	Story Mr
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Quin Michael	Kate Mrs	Taylor Myron H
Cox Margaret A	Lynch A	Tennent Thomas
Doane Eliza	Lee George	Tuttle John
Davin William	Lerois J W	Thurston Mary
Dashwood Mary	Lewis Abella Mrs	Underwood F H
Dealy Mary	Lincoln John P	Warren Clarissa
Day Israel W	Lincoln Dennis	Winship Sophia
Delany Patrick	Leonard Mary	Wheeler G W
Doogan James	Lovering J F	Wright Samuel J
Durgin Geo W	Laken Francis	Williams W H
Durgin Warren L	Lacompt W W	Walker Henry
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NATHAN FISKE, Postmaster.

or embarrassment. How well it becomes him thus to ape the worthy citizen of benevolent mien who nevertheless betrays the cloven hoof at every turn. How splendid, the sentence about



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“revolutionary agencies” being “a swindle” off which, according to Willich, he lives. The chivalrous one will have been surprised to find among the uncouth agents, a fellow who is so dashing, so adroit, so aggressive by nature and yet so unassumingly noble in his bearing, and who returns thrust for thrust a *tempo*. So subtly – far more subtly and deftly than himself. If only Willich had the discernment to discover this! But irritation and due reflection will, I trust, give him a little more insight.

It is obvious that we shall have to see this dirty business through to the bitter end. The more resolutely we tackle it the better. You’ll find, by the way, that it won’t be so bad after all. The chivalrous one has promised vastly more than he can fulfil. We shall hear of assassination attempts, etc., the Schramm affair will be glamorously tricked out, and such chimeras will be evoked as will cause us to stare at one another in amazement, not having the faintest idea what the man is actually talking about; at worst he will tell the story about Marx and Engels arriving drunk one evening at Great Windmill Street (*vide* Kinkel in Cincinnati, *coram* Huzelio). If he goes as far as that, I shall tell the scandal-loving American public what the Besançon Company used to talk about when Willich and the *formosus* pastor Corydon Rauf were not present. *Au bout du compte*, what can a brute of this kind find to tax us with? Mark my word, it will be just as *pauvre* as Teller’s smear.

I shall be seeing Borchardt within the next few days. If any recommendations are to be had, you can trust me to get them. But I hardly imagine that Steinthal, etc., have connections of the sort in London. It’s almost wholly outside their line of business. Besides, if only for fear of making a fool of himself, the fellow will attempt to put off doing anything about it up here. If it were not for Lupus, I’d consign the chap, etc. I can’t abide him, with his smooth, self-important, vainglorious, deceitful charlatan’s physiognomy.

If Lassalle has given you a good, neutral address in Düsseldorf, you can send me 100 copies. We shall arrange for them to be packed in bales of twist by firms up here; but they should not be addressed to Lassalle himself, since the packages will go to Gladbach, Elberfeld and so on, where they will have to be stamped and sent by post to Düsseldorf. However, we cannot entrust a package for Lassalle or the Hatzfeldt woman to any local firm, because, 1. they all employ at least one Rhinelander who knows all the gossip, or 2. if that goes off all right, the recipients of the bales will get to know about it, or 3. at the very best the postal authorities will take a look at the things before delivering them. We have a good address in Cologne, but are not, alas, very well acquainted with the people who are the principal buyers here for the firm in Cologne, and hence cannot expect them to do any smuggling. Indeed, what we shall tell the people here is that the packages contain presents for the fair sex.

From all this you will gather that I am once again on passable terms with Charles. The affair was settled with great dispatch at the first suitable opportunity. Nevertheless you will realise that the fool derives a certain pleasure from having been given preference over myself in one rotten respect at least, because of Mr Gottfried Ermen’s envy of my old man. *Habeat sibi*. He at any rate realises that, if I so choose, I can become *maître de la situation* within 48 hours, and that’s sufficient.



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The absence of landed property is indeed the key to the whole of the East. Therein lies its political and religious history. But how to explain the fact that orientals never reached the stage of landed property, not even the feudal kind? This is, I think, largely due to the climate, combined with the nature of the land, more especially the great stretches of desert extending from the Sahara right across Arabia, Persia, India and Tartary to the highest of the Asiatic uplands. Here artificial irrigation is the first prerequisite for agriculture, and this is the responsibility either of the communes, the provinces or the central government. In the East, the government has always consisted of 3 departments only: Finance (pillage at home), War (pillage at home and abroad), and *travaux publics*, provision for reproduction. The British government in India has put a somewhat narrower interpretation on nos. 1 and 2 while completely neglecting no. 3, so that Indian agriculture is going to wrack and ruin. Free competition is proving an absolute fiasco there. The fact that the land was made fertile by artificial means and immediately ceased to be so when the conduits fell into disrepair, explains the otherwise curious circumstance that vast expanses are now and wastes which once were magnificently cultivated (Palmyra, Petra, the ruins in the Yemen, any number of localities in Egypt, Persia, Hindustan); it explains the fact that one single war of devastation could depopulate and entirely strip a country of its civilisation for centuries to come. This, I believe, also accounts for the destruction of southern Arabian trade before Mohammed's time, a circumstance very rightly regarded by you as one of the mainsprings of the Mohammedan revolution. I am not sufficiently well acquainted with the history of trade during the first six centuries A.D. to be able to judge to what extent general material conditions in the world made the trade route via Persia to the Black Sea and to Syria and Asia Minor via the Persian Gulf preferable to the Red Sea route. But one significant factor, at any rate, must have been the relative safety of the caravans in the well-ordered Persian Empire under the Sassanids, whereas between 200 and 600 A.D. the Yemen was almost continuously being subjugated, overrun and pillaged by the Abyssinians. By the seventh century the cities of southern Arabia, still flourishing in Roman times, had become a veritable wilderness of ruins; in the course of 500 years what were purely mythical, legendary traditions regarding their origin had been appropriated by the neighbouring Bedouins, (cf. the Koran and the Arab historian Novairi), and the alphabet in which the local inscriptions had been written was almost wholly unknown although *there was no other*, so that *de facto* writing had fallen into oblivion. Things of this kind presuppose, not only a **superseding**, probably due to general trading conditions, but outright violent destruction such as could only be explained by the Ethiopian invasion. The expulsion of the Abyssinians did not take place until about 40 years before Mohammed, and was plainly the first act of the Arabs' awakening national consciousness, which was further aroused by Persian invasions from the North penetrating almost as far as Mecca. I shall not be tackling the history of Mohammed himself for a few days yet; so far it seems to me to have the character of a Bedouin reaction against the settled, albeit decadent urban fellaheen whose religion by then was also much debased, combining as it did a degenerate form of nature worship with a degenerate form of



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Judaism and Christianity.

Old Bernier's stuff is really very fine. It's a real pleasure to get back to something written by a sensible, lucid old Frenchman who constantly hits the nail on the head *sans avoir l'air de s'en apercevoir* [without appearing to be aware of it]. Since I am in any case tied up with the eastern mummery for some weeks, I have made use of the opportunity to learn Persian. I am put off Arabic, partly by my inborn hatred of Semitic languages, partly by the impossibility of getting anywhere, without considerable expenditure of time, in so extensive a language — one which has 4,000 roots and goes back over 2,000-3,000 years. By comparison, Persian is absolute child's play. Were it not for that damned Arabic alphabet in which every half dozen letters looks like every other half dozen and the vowels are not written, I would undertake to learn the entire grammar within 48 hours. This for the better encouragement of Pieper should he feel the urge to imitate me in this poor joke. I have set myself a maximum of three weeks for Persian, so if he stakes two months on it he'll best me anyway. What a pity Weitling can't speak Persian; he would then have his *langue universelle toute trouvée* [universal language ready-made] since it is, to my knowledge, the only language where "me" and "to me" are never at odds, the dative and accusative always being the same.

It is, by the way, rather pleasing to read dissolute old Hafiz in the original language, which sounds quite passable and, in his grammar, old Sir William Jones likes to cite as examples dubious Persian jokes, subsequently translated into Greek verse in his *Commentariis poeseos asiaticae*, because even in Latin they seem to him too obscene. These commentaries, Jones' Works, Vol. II, *De Poesi erotica*, will amuse you. Persian prose, on the other hand, is deadly dull. E.g. the *Rauzât-us-safâ* by the noble Mirkhond, who recounts the Persian epic in very flowery but vacuous language. Of Alexander the Great, he says that the name Iskander, in the Ionian language, is Akshid Rus (like *Iskander*, a corrupt version of *Alexandros*); it means much the same as *filusuf*, which derives from *fila*, love, and *sufa*, wisdom, "Iskander" thus being synonymous with "friend of wisdom".

Of a **retired** king he says: "He beat the drum of abdication with the drumsticks of retirement", as will *père Willich*, should he involve himself any more deeply in the literary fray. Willich will also suffer the same fate as King Afrasiab of Turan when deserted by his troops and of whom Mirkhond says: "He gnawed the nails of horror with the teeth of desperation until the blood of vanquished consciousness welled forth from the finger-tips of shame."

More tomorrow.



June 6. 4.30 A.M. — To Linnwa Woods.

Famous place for tanagers. Considerable fog on river. Few sights more exhilarating than one of these banks of fog lying along a stream. The linnæa just out. *Corydalis glauca*, a delicate glaucous plant rarely met with, with delicate flesh-colored and yellow flowers, covered with a glaucous bloom, on dry, rocky hills. Perhaps it suggests gentility. Set it down as early as middle of May or earlier. *Viburnum nudum*; may be [Bigelow's](#) *pyrifolium* (which [Gray](#) makes a variety), except that its scales are not black, though the peduncle of its cyme is short. That is apparently *Pyrola chlorantha*, so well budded now. *Galium triflorum* (?) there on the dry hillside; peduncles two-flowered as well as three, green or no petals.

Is that blackberry mixed with the linnæa swamp blackberry? It will open to-day or to-morrow. Begin



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to observe and to admire the forms of trees with shining foliage and each its shadow on the hillside. This morning I hear the note of young bluebirds in the air, which have recently taken wing, and the old birds keep up such a warbling and twittering as remind me of spring.

According to [Sophia](#)'s account she must have seen an emperor moth, "pea-green with a sort of maple keys for tail," in a lady's hand in Cambridge to-day. So it may have come out of the chrysalis seen May 23d.

P.M. — To Conantum by boat.

The *Potamogeton*. [a blank space] out two or three days, probably. The small primrose out at Hubbard's Swimming-Place, drooping at top like a smilacina's leaves. Blue-eyed grass now begins to give that slaty-blue tint to meadows. A breezy day, a June wind showing the under sides of leaves. The *now red* round white lily pads are now very numerous and conspicuous, red more or less on both sides and, with the yellow lily pads, turned up by the wind. In May and June we have breezes which, for the most part, are not too cold but exhilarating. I see the breams' nests and breams in them. The larger rushes are conspicuously above water. The *Viburnum dentatum*, that very conspicuously and regularly tooth-leaved shrub, like a saw — with coarse teeth, as yet *very few* flowers in its wines. This is at edge of Hubbard's Woods, opposite Hollowell place. As I sit looking over the side of the boat there, I see the bottom covered with small hypericums springing up in the yellowish water, and in the axils of the leaves under water are little sparkling, silvery beads of air, as are sometimes seen on plants covered with dew out of water, but I do not perceive them on the adjacent plants. The deep shadow of Conantum Cliff and of mere prominences in the hills, now at mid-afternoon as we row by, is very interesting. It is the most pleasing effect of the kind, or contrast of light and shade, that I notice. Methinks that in winter a shadow is not attractive. The air is very clear, — at least, as we look from the river valley, — and the landscape all swept and brushed. We seem to see to some depth into the side of Fair Haven Hill. *Rhus Toxicodendron*, the shrub, out at Bittern Cliff. The sidesaddle-flowers are now in their prime. There are some very large ones hereabouts, five inches in diameter when you flatten out their petals, like great dull-red roses. Their petals are of a peculiar but agreeable red, but their upper sides, — *i.e.* of their calyx-leaves, — shiny leather — red or brown-red, are agreeable. A slippery elm (*Ulmus fulva*) on Lee's Cliff, — red elm. Put it with the common, It has large, rough leaves and straggling branches — a rather small, much-spreading tree, with an appearance between the common elm and iron-wood.

The aspect of the dry rocky hills already indicates the rapid revolution of the seasons. The spring, that early age of the world, following hard on the reign of water and the barren rocks yet dripping with it, is past. How many plants have already dried up! — lichens and algae, which we can still remember, as if belonging to a former epoch, saxifrage, crowfoot, anemone, columbine for the most part, etc. It is Lee's Cliff I am on. There is a growth confined to the damp and early spring. How dry and crisp the turf feels there now, not moist with melted snows, remembering, as it were, when it was the bottom of the sea. How wet-glossy the leaves of the red oak, now fully expanded! They shine when the sun comes out as after rain. I find on a shelf of the rock the *Turritis stricta*, now gone to seed; but two feet two inches high ([Gray](#) allows but one foot?); pods upright and nearly three inches long, linear; and flat leaves decidedly lanceolate or linear; but some minute imperfect unexpanded flowers still on it appear as if they would have been yellowish.

In the very open park in rear of the Rocks on the hilltop, where lambkill and huckleberries and grass alternate, came to one of those handsome, round, mirror-like pools a rod or two in diameter and surrounded with a border of fine weeds, such as you frequently meet with on the top of springy hills. Though warm and muddy at bottom, they are very beautiful and glassy and look as if they were cool springs; so high, exposed to the light, yet so wild and fertile, as if the fertility of the lowland was transferred to the summit of the hills. These are the kind of mirrors at which the huntresses in the golden age arranged their toilets, — which the deer frequented and contemplated their branching horns in.



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June 9, Thursday, 1853: [Henry Thoreau](#) made an entry in his journal that he was later to copy into his early lecture "[What Shall It Profit?](#)" as:



[Paragraph 12] I had the following account from an Irish girl who went to live at a milk-farmer's in my neighborhood, the other day, not being strong enough to do the work of a village family. She said that twenty-two lodged in the house the first night, including two travelling pig-men—that he kept ten men—had six children and a deaf wife—and one of the men had his wife with him who helped sew, beside taking care of her own child. Also all the cooking and washing for his father and mother who lived in another house, and whom he was bound to carry through, was done in his house—and she was the only girl they hired. The workmen were called up at four by an alarm clock—which was set a quarter of an hour ahead of the clock down stairs, and that more than as much ahead of the town clock—and she was on her feet from that hour till nine at night. Each man had two pairs of overalls in the wash, and the cans to be scalded were countless. Having got through washing the breakfast dishes at a quarter before twelve Sunday noon by Scratchit's time—she left—no more to return. He had told her that the work was easy—that girls had lived with him to recover their health, and then gone away to be married.

[Paragraph 13] He is regarded as one of the most enterprising and

**Brad Dean's
Commentary**

Following completed inspection of American vessels, the *USS Susquehanna* got under steam, taking the *USS Saratoga* in tow, and departed for the Bonin (Ogasawara) Islands.

A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

We are in sight of stupendous "Court House Rock." Reached it by noon. It looks to be about two miles from the road, but is 8. One of our company visited it and found it to be a huge pile of sand rock, very soft. Could easily cut it with a knife. There are a great many names on it. It has the appearance of a Court House at a distance. It is said to be about 300 feet high. Came 17 miles to-day and camped in sight of Chimney rock.



June 9: 4.30 A.M. —To Nawshawtuct by boat.

A prevalent fog, though not quite so thick as the last described. It is a little more local, for it is so thin southwest of this hill that I can see the earth through it, but as thick as before northeast. Yet here and there deep valleys are excavated in it, as painters imagine the Red Sea for the passage of Pharaoh's host, wherein trees and houses appear as it were at the bottom of the sea. What is peculiar about it is that it is the tops of the trees which you see first and most distinctly, before you see their trunks or where they stand on earth. Far in the northeast there is, as before, apparently a tremendous surf breaking on a distant shoal. It is either a real shoal, *i.e.* a hill over which the fog breaks, or the effect of the sun's rays on it.

I was amused by the account which Mary, the Irish girl who left us the other day, gave of her experience at —, the milkman's, in the north part of the town. She said that twenty-two lodged in the house the first night, including two pig men, that Mr. — kept ten men, had six children and a deaf wife, and one of the men had his wife with him, who helped sew, beside taking care of her own child. Also all the cooking and washing for his father and mother, who live in another house and whom he is bound to carry through, is done in his house, and she, Mary, was the only girl they hired; and the workmen were called up at four by an alarm clock which was set a quarter of an hour ahead of the clock downstairs,— and that more than as much ahead of the town clock, — and she was on her feet from that hour till nine at night. Each man had two pairs of overalls in the wash, and the cans



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to be scalded were countless. Having got through washing the breakfast dishes by a quarter before twelve, Sunday noon, by ——'s time, she left, no more to return. He had told her that the work was easy, that girls had lived with him to recover their health, and then went away to be married. He is regarded as one of the most enterprising and thrifty farmers in the county, and takes the premiums of the Agricultural Society. He probably exacts too much of his hands.

The steam of the engine streaming far behind is regularly divided, as if it were the vertebra, of a serpent, probably by the strokes of the piston. The reddish seeds or glumes of grasses cover my boots now in the dewy or foggy morning. The diervilla out apparently yesterday. The first white lily bud. White clover is abundant and very sweet on the common, filling the air, but not yet elsewhere as last year.

8 A.M. – To Orchis Swamp; Well Meadow. Hear a goldfinch [**American Goldfinch**  *Carduelis tristis*]; this the second or third only, that I have heard. Whiteweed now whitens the fields. There are many star flowers. I remember the anemone, especially the rue anemone, which is not yet all gone, lasting longer than the true one above all the trientalis, and of late the yellow Bethlehem-star, and perhaps others.

I have come with a spy-glass to look at the hawks [**Red-tailed Hawk**  *Buteo jamaicensis*]. They have detected me and are already screaming over my head more than half a mile from the nest. I find no difficulty in looking at the young hawk (there appears to be one only, standing on the edge of the nest), resting the glass in the crotch of a young oak. I can see every wink and the color of its iris. It watches me more steadily than I it, now looking straight down at me with both eyes and outstretched neck, now turning its head and looking with one eye. How its eye and its whole head expresses anger! Its anger is more in its eye than in its beak. It is quite hoary over the eye and on the chin. The mother meanwhile is incessantly circling about and above its charge and me, farther or nearer, sometimes withdrawing a quarter of a mile, but occasionally coming to alight for a moment almost within gunshot, on the top of a tall white pine; but I hardly bring my glass fairly to bear on her, and get sight of her angry eye through the pine-needles, before she circles away again. Thus for an hour that I lay there, screaming every minute or oftener with open bill. Now and then pursued by a kingbird [**Eastern Kingbird**  *Tyrannus tyrannus*] or a blackbird , who appear merely to annoy it by dashing down at its back. Meanwhile the male is soaring, apparently quite undisturbed, at a great height above, evidently not hunting, but amusing or recreating himself in the thinner and cooler air, as if pleased with his own circles, like a geometer, and enjoying the sublime scene. I doubt if he has his eye fixed on any prey, or the earth. He probably descends to hunt.

Got two or three handfuls of strawberries on Fair Haven. They are already drying up. The huckleberry bedbug-smelling bug is on them. It is natural that the first fruit which the earth bears should emit and be as it were an embodiment of that vernal fragrance with which the air has teemed. Strawberries are its manna, found ere long where that fragrance has filled the air. Little natural lids or patches on the sides of dry hills, where the fruit sometimes reddens the ground. But it soon dries up, unless there is a great deal of rain. Well, are not the juices of early fruit distilled from the air?

Prunella out. The meadows are now yellow with the golden senecio, a more orange yellow, mingled with the light glossy yellow of the buttercup. The green fruit of the sweet-fern now. The *Juniperus repens* appears, though now dry and effete, to have blossomed recently.

The tall white *Erigeron annuus* (?), for thus is the only one described as white tinged with purple, just out.³¹ The bullfrogs are in full blast to-night. I do not hear a toad from my window; only the crickets beside. The toads I have but rarely heard of late. So there is an evening for the toads and another for the bullfrogs.



June 13, Monday, 1853: The *USS Plymouth* arrived in Japanese waters, with letters from the United States of America.

A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra, her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

31. I think it is *strigosus*, but tinged with purple sometimes.



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Started at the usual hour, traveled over heavy sandy roads. Indian wigwams are plenty all along. Trading posts every few miles. We are now in the Sioux nation. Came 14 miles to-day.

According to a news item that would appear on the following day in the Daily Alta California, the steamship *Pacific* of the Vanderbilt Line, having departed from Panama on May 25th, docked in San Francisco on this afternoon at half past 4 o'clock, bringing the information that there had been a:

Dreadful Railroad Accident at Norwalk!

The *Pacific* sailed from Panama for San Juan del Sud May 25th, at half past 9 P.M., and arrived at half-past 8 A.M. on the 28th. Left I at port steamers *Panama* and *Isthmus*. The *Panama* arrived from San Francisco the 25th, at 11 A.M. The *Pacific* sailed from San Juan the 30th, at 3 P.M., with 317 passengers, of which 50 are ladies and 28 children. The steamer *Sierra Nevada* arrived at San Juan the 28th, at 7 A.M. The *Pacific* arrived at Acapulco the 3d of June, at 6 A.M., and sailed the 4th at half-past 6 A.M. The steamer *Republic*, A. McLean, commander, arrived at Acapulco the 3d inst. At 5 A.M., and sailed for Panama same day at half-past 11 A.M. Passed on the afternoon and night of the 7th inst., in latitude of Cape St. Lucas, two steamers bound down. Since passing Cape St. Lucas have had a succession of northerly and westerly gales and a heavy head sea; have been detained by a dense fog off the harbor ten hours. Arrived at 4:15 P.M. Steamer *Sierra Nevada* passed Acapulco the 24th May, at 10:45 A.M. Steamer *J.L. Stephens* arrived at Acapulco the 24th at half-past 3 P.M.

The most dreadful accident recorded in the history of Railroads occurred at Norwalk, Conn. (on the New Haven Railroad) on the 6th of May. The irregularity of our files renders it impossible to give the details of this great catastrophe. It seems, however, that in consequence of the negligence or stupidity of some of the employees of the Company, the signals were either wrongly given or misunderstood, by which an express passenger train was rushed upon a bridge while the draw was up, and the cars thrown through the break. Forty-five persons were killed and twenty-seven wounded (out of 218 passengers on board). This casualty has given rise to a great deal of discussion in the papers.



June 13: 9 AM. – To Orchis Swamp.

Find that there are two young hawks [**Red-tailed Hawk**  *Buteo jamaicensis*]; one has left the nest and is perched on a small maple seven or eight rods distant. This one appears much smaller than the former one. I am struck by the large, naked head, so vulture-like [**Turkey Vulture**  *Cathartes aura* (~~Turkey Buzzard~~)], and large eyes, as if the vulture's were an inferior stage through which the hawk passed. Its feet, too, are large, remarkably developed, by which it holds to its perch securely like an old bird, before its wings can perform their office. It has a buff breast, striped with dark brown. Pratt, when I told him of this nest, said he would like to carry one of his rifles down there. But I told him that I should be sorry to have them killed. I would rather save one of these hawks than have a hundred hens and chickens. It was worth more to see them soar, especially now, that they are so rare in the landscape. It is easy to buy eggs, but not to buy hen-hawks. My neighbors would not hesitate to shoot the last pair of hen-hawks in the town to save a few of their chickens! But such economy is narrow and grovelling. It is necessarily to sacrifice the greater value to the less. I would rather never taste chicken's meat or hen's eggs than never to see a hawk sailing through the upper air again. This sight is worth incomparably more than a chicken soup or a boiled egg. So we exterminate the deer and substitute the hog. It was amusing to observe the swaying to and fro of the young hawk's head to





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counterbalance the gentle motion of the bough in the wind.

Violets appear to be about done, generally. Four-leaved loosestrife just out; also the smooth wild rose yesterday. The pogonia at Forget-me-not Brook.

What was that rare and beautiful bird in the dark woods under the Cliffs, with black above and white spots and bars, a large triangular blood-red spot on breast, and sides of breast and beneath white? Note a warble like the oriole, but softer and sweeter. It was quite tame. I cannot find this bird described. I think it must be a grosbeak.³² At first I thought I saw a chewink, [as] it sat within a rod sideways to me, and I was going to call [Sophia](#) to look at it, but then it turned its breast full toward me and I saw the blood-red breast, a large triangular painted spot occupying the greater part of the breast. It was in the cool, shaded underwood by the old path just under the Cliff. It is a memorable event to meet with so rare a bird. Birds answer to flowers, both in their abundance and their rareness. The meeting with some rare and beautiful flower, which you may never find again, perchance, like the great purple fringed orchis, at least. How much it enhances the wildness and the richness of the forest to see in it some beautiful bird which you never detected before!

[William M. White](#)'s version of [Henry Thoreau](#)'s journal entry would be:

*I would rather save one of these hawks
Than have a hundred hens and chickens.
It was worth more to see them soar
Especially now that they are so rare in the landscape.
It is easy to buy eggs,
But not to buy hen-hawks.*



June 19, Sunday, [1853](#): A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

What a welcome day will that be that brings us safe through that we may all rest once more on the Sabbath. Started about the usual hour, reached Horse-shoe Creek by noon. This is a beautiful stream, just such a stream as I should like to live close by. The water is so clear that we can see the bottom where it is six feet deep. The bottom is covered with stone of a variety of colors. There are a few fish here. The water is rather swift to catch them. Some beautiful shade trees along its banks. Two miles farther is a very bad hill to ascend about 1 mile in length and nothing but rocks from bottom to top. Drove on 4 miles farther and camped. Just about this time there was a severe hail storm some rain, and quite a cool evening.

The Reverend Dr. Bernard J. Bettelheim, physician and Church of England missionary to the Lew Chew mission at Naha, delivered a sermon on the topic of "Strangers" (after his time in the Far East, the Reverend Bettelheim would settle in the United States of America).

[Emily Dickinson](#) wrote to [Austin Dickinson](#):

Do you want to hear from me, Austin? I'm going to write to you altho' it dont seem much as if you would care to have me. I dont know why exactly, but things look blue, today, and I hardly know

32. Probably a rose-breasted grosbeak [[Rose-breasted Grosbeak](#) [Pheucticus ludovicianus](#)].



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what to do, everything looks so strangely, but if you want to hear from me, I shall love very much to write - Prof Tyler has preached today, and I have been all day - Susie [Susan Gilbert] walked home from meeting with us, and was so disappointed at having not letter from you - It really seems very unsafe to depend upon Judge Conkey, and that Mr Eaton too, I should think quite hazardous - Dont wait for them next time. We received your notes and the Poems, for which we thank you, last week - Father seemed much pleased with this letter, and all of us laughed a little - The remark concerning Mr Ford seemed to please father mightily - I dont dont [sic] mean what I said, but your opposition to me - He told me you'd "hit me off nicely." You make me think of Dickens, when you write such letters as that - I am going to read it to Sue - I should have done before, but the afternoon it came, we had terrible thunder showers, and it rained all evening long, and yesterday afternoon Father wanted us all to ride, so I have not had opportunity - I walked with her last evening - She wore her new things today, and looked beautifully in them - a white straw hat, trimmed with Rouches - mantilla of fawn colored silk, very handsomely finished, and white Dress. She is going after Miss Bartlett tomorrow morning at 5 - and begins her Dressmaking tomorrow -

She says she shall just get thro' by the time you get home - So shall Vinnie and I - there must be no sewing then - We are all pretty well, and the weather is beautiful - If you were here I think you would be very happy, and I think we should, but time has wings, and you will be with us soon. We have been free from company by the "Amherst and Belchertown Railroad" since Joel went home, tho' we live in constant fear of some other visitation -

"Oh would some power the giftie gie" folks, to see themselves as we see them. Burns. I have read the poems, Austin, and am going to read them again, and will hand them to Susie - They please me very much, but I must read them again before I know just [what] I think of "Alexander Smith" - They are not very coherent, but there's good deal of exquisite frensy, and some wonderful figures, as ever I met in my life - We will walk about it again - The grove looks nicely, Austin, and we think must certainly grow - We love to get there - it is a charming place. Everything is singing now, and everything is beautiful that can be in it's life.

So Joel did'nt have a remarkable trip up here - wonder which enjoyed it the most - the pestilence, or the victims - Dont tell him what I said - And think besides Aunt Lavinia must be very busy - Guess "Father will be tired" when they next visit here. Jerry gets along nicely, takes first-rate care of the horse, and seems unusually grand after having a message from you. It has the same effect as a big mug of cider, and looks a good deal better. I am glad your eye has got well. You must use it carefully, for a little while - I hope you received your hat - I had not time to write you with it, for I did it up late last night, after having folks here all the evening, and I hope it did not seem strange to you.

The time for the New London trip has not been fixed upon - I sincerely wish it may wait until you get home from Cambridge, if you would like to go.

The cars continue thriving - a good many passengers seem to arrive from somewhere, tho' nobody knows from where - Father



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expects his new Buggy to come by the cars, every day now, and that will help a little – I expect all our Grandfathers and all their country cousins will come here to pass Commencement, and dont doubt the stock will rise several percent that week. If we children and Sue could obtain board for the week in some "vast wilderness," I think we should have good times. Our house is crowded daily with the members of this world, the high and the low, the bond and the free, the "poor in this world's goods," and the "almighty dollar,["] and "what in the world are they after" continues to be unknown – But I hope they will past away, as insects on vegetation, and let us reap together in golden harvest time – that is you and Susie and me and our dear sister Vinnie must have a pleasant time to be unmolested together, when your school days end. You must not stay with Howland after the studies cease – We shall be ready for you, and you must come home from school, not stopping to play by the way! Mother was much amused at the feebleness of your hopes of hearing from her – She got so far last week once, as to take a pen and paper and carry them into the kitchen, but her meditations were broken by the unexpected arrival of Col Smith and his wife, so she must try again – I'm sure you will hear from her soon. We all send our love to you, and miss you very much, and think of seeing you again very much, and love dear Sue constantly. Write me again soon. I have said a good deal today.

Emilie.



June 19. P.M. — To Flint's Pond.

I see large patches of blue-eyed grass in the meadow across the river from my window. The pine woods at Thrush Alley emit that hot dry scent, reminding me even of days when I used to go a-blackberrying. The air is full of the hum of invisible insects, and I hear a locust. Perhaps this sound indicates the time to put on a thin coat. But the wood thrush [**Wood Thrush**  *Hylocichla mustelina*] sings as usual far in the wood. A blue jay [**Blue Jay**  *Cyanocitta cristata*] and a tanager [**Scarlet Tanager**  *Piranga olivacea*] come dashing into the pine under which I stand. The first flies directly away, screaming with suspicion or disgust, but the latter, more innocent, remains. The cuckoo [**Black-billed Cuckoo**  *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*] is heard, too, in the depths of the wood. Heard my night-warbler [**Ovenbird**  *Seiurus aurocapillus*, or **Common Yellowthroat**  *Geothlypis trichas?*] on a solitary white pine in the Heywood Clearing by the Peak. Discovered it at last, looking like a small piece of black bark curving partly over the limb.



No fork to its tail. It appeared black beneath; was very shy, not bigger than a yellowbird [**Yellow Warbler**  *Dendroica petechia*], and very slender.

In the middle of the path to Wharf Rock at Flint's Pond, the nest of a Wilson's thrush [**Veery**  *Catharus fuscescens* (~~Wilson's Thrush~~), five or six inches high, between the green stems of three or four goldenrods, made of dried grass or fibres of bark, with dry oak leaves attached loosely, making the whole nine or ten inches wide, to deceive the eye. Two blue eggs. Like an accidental heap. Who taught it to do thus? *Lobelia Dortmanna*, a day or two at most. No grass balls yet. That fine-rooted green plant on bottom sends up stems with black heads three or four inches. Do they become white? Every one who has waded about the shores of a pond must have been surprised to find how much warmer the water was close to the shore, where only three or four inches deep, than a little further out. I think I saw a young crow [**American Crow**  *Corvus brachyrhynchos*] not fully grown. Returned by Smith's Hill and the Saw Mill Brook. Got quite a. parcel of strawberries on the hill. The hellebore leaves by the brook are already half turned yellow. Plucked one blue early blueberry. The strain of the bobolink [**Bobolink**  *Dolichonyx oryzivorus* ~~Rice-bird~~]



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now begins to sound a little rare. It never again fills the air as the first week after its arrival. At the season we apprehend no long storm, only showers with or without thunder.



June 23, Thursday, 1853: The *USS Susquehanna* and *USS Saratoga* returned from the Bonin (Ogasawara) Islands to their previous anchoring points.

A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

Crossed Deer Creek three miles from camp. Plenty of good water, wood and fish. Fifteen miles from this is a deep muddy stream, tolerable good roads. Grass scarce. Sage brush for fuel.

The [Daily Dispatch](#) of Richmond, Virginia reported on “Stoweism” and “Black Swanism” as they were manifesting themselves in Great Britain (extract below):

The New York Express administers to the subjects of Queen Victoria, who have gone deliberately mad about “Uncle Tom” and the “Black Swan,” the most blistering flagellation we have met with for a long time. It contrasts the silly, but honest, enthusiasm of our countrymen with regard to Dickens, with the manufactured-to-order excitement now prevailing in England. First, it touches upon the reception of that “impudent nigger,” Fred Douglass, who was treated on a perfect footing of equality, by haughty English ladies, whose condescension “scarcely amounts to a bow, when the brightest and most gifted white men of our land appear among them.” “Those haughty dames,” it says, “not only received him in their mansions, and sat with him at the same table, but appeared side by side with him in their public drives, contrasting with their snowy benevolence with the soot of his countenance, while white Englishmen in livery stood meekly behind the carriages that bore this precious load, edified by the dusky lesson of British equality, and promoted, doubtless, by the atmosphere which made the bouquets quite superfluous.”

It introduces and [*sic*] especial admirer of Fred, in the person of a lady who has heretofore made not a little noise in the world, and who, we should have thought, might have been contented with the notoriety she has already acquired.

“Among these high born women, we are told, was Lady Byron – she, after driving the greatest poet of this century mad with her iron heartedness, subsided into a flood of gentle sympathies at the appearance of our Fred, and paraded London in an open carriage with this negro, side by side, on its silken cushions. Lady Byron must be fond of contrasts. – She who drove the handsomest man and the greatest genius of England from her side to make room for a characterless negro. But if the august widow falls into a caprice for a commemoration of her goodness in charcoal sketches in her old age, who shall not say it is the purest benevolence. She gave charity balls in her youth which her excited Lord deemed about as charitable as we think her appearance with the negro. But it is not the first time that such philanthropy has found root on a desolate hearthstone.”



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Next comes Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, who was invited to take possession, "for one morning" of Stafford House, "not," the writer says, "as a lady and a guest who is equal to equal," but as the high born of England received the Tom Thumbs and actresses whom "propinquity never makes nearer to august persons." As a proof that such is the character of her reception, no sooner is Stafford House cleared of her, than is it opened for the "Black Swan," who ruffles "her ebony plumage" in the aristocratic mansion quite as proudly as her predecessor had done before her. The writer cannot be induced to believe that there is any reality in all this outbreak of enthusiasm, or that its development has been caused by a novel which has awakened the sentimentality of a class "whose benevolence springs from novels and ends there." He thinks there is some more profound feeling at the bottom, and designates that feeling "the festering dislike which our respected mother entertains towards a nation that has thrown off her authority, and become not only independent of her, but her rival — the only rival of which she has any real cause to be jealous." "It is" he says "a jubilee over a pretext — though its foundation is in a fiction — by which a Republic can be held up to reprobation before the world." ...



June 23. 5 A.M. — Up Union Turnpike.

The-red morning-glory partly open at 5.45. Looking down on it, it is [a] regular pentagon, with sides but slightly incurved.

1.30 P.M. — To White Pond.

Sultry, dogdayish weather, with moist mists or low clouds hanging about, — the first of this kind we have had. I suspect it may be the result of a warm southwest wind met by a cooler wind from the sea. It is hard to tell if these low clouds most shade the earth or reflect its heat back upon it. At any rate a fresh, cool moisture and a suffocating heat are strangely mingled.

The *Specularia perfoliata* in flower at top of its leafy spikes for a few days, on Clamshell Hill, this side oaks. It is a rich-colored and handsome-shaped sort of lake-purple flower, — or color of a lilac violet. The lower and earlier flowers have no corollas. Perhaps one of the first-rate flowers, when many are open on the spike. Motherwort by roadside, probably yesterday. Pogonias are now very abundant in the meadow-grass, and now and then a calopogon is mixed with them. The last is broader and of more singular form, commonly with an unopened. bud above on one side. Devil's-needles of various kinds abundant, now perhaps as much as ever. Some smaller ones a brilliant green with black wings. That must be the flowering fern that grows in rings. Lupines not quite gone, though most are gone to seed. A skunk-cabbage leaf makes the best vessel to drink out of at a spring, it is so large, already somewhat dishing, oftenest entire, and grows near at hand, and, though its odor when the stem is cut off is offensive, it does not flavor the water and is not perceived in drinking.

Along Nut Meadow Brook stand now angelicas in flower, as high as your head, their great greenish umbels above their naked purple stems. Senecio is going and gone to seed. At Apple-Hollow Pond, the heart-leaf grows in small solid circles from a centre, now white with its small delicate flowers somewhat like minute water-lilies. Here are thousands of devil's-needles of all sizes hovering over the surface of this shallow pond in the woods, in pursuit of one another and their prey, and from time to time alighting on the bushes around the shore, — I hear the rustling of their wings, — while swallows are darting about in a similar manner twenty feet higher. Perhaps they descend and pick up a needle now and then. This might be called Heart-leaf Pond, if there were not so many of them. Wild radish, some time, for its jointed seed-vessels are two inches long.

The small caterpillars which I bring home on my clothes nowadays conic, off of the young oaks, black and probably others. Their leaves are made into sieves and riddled by them. The painted tortoise eggs which I saw being deposited by White Pond the 14th are now shrivelled shells on the surface. I every year, as to-day, observe the sweet, refreshing fragrance of the swamp-pink, when threading the woods and swamps in hot weather. It is positively cool. Now in its prime. There is another small, shallow Heart-leaf Pond, west of White, which countless devil's-needles are hovering

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over with rustling wing, and swallows and pewees no doubt are on hand. That very handsome cove in White Pond at the south end, surrounded by woods. Looking down on it through the woods in middle of this sultry dogdayish afternoon, the bay being' not so deep but that some reflection from the bottom affects it, the water is a misty bluish-green or glaucous color.' The rattlesnake and the wool grass have begun to bloom. The *e er ee er ter twee* is a pleasing wild note still pretty sure to be heard amid thick pine woods or on their edges, — rarely seen, though often heard.

After bathing I paddled to the middle in the leaky boat. The heart-leaf, which grows thinly here, is an interesting plant, sometimes floating at the end of a solitary, almost invisible, threadlike stem more than six feet long, and again many purplish stems intertwined into loose ropes, or like large skeins of silk, abruptly spreading at top, of course, into a perfectly flat shield, a foot or more [in] diameter, of small heart-shaped leaves, which rise and fall on their stems as the water is higher or lower. This perfectly horizontal disposition of the leaves in a single plane is an interesting and peculiar feature in water-plants of this kind. Leaves and flowers made to float on the dividing line between two elements. No water-bugs nor skaters, except a very few close to the shore, though the waves do not run much. Where the water is five or six feet deep, straight sticks on the bottom are made by the undulation on the surface to look like snakes in motion. The blue flags are past their prime here. Again I saw and heard the [hummingbird](#) [**Ruby-throated Hummingbird**  *Archilochus colubris*] visit the blue flags. He announces himself by a sudden loud humming. Now, at about 5 P.M., only at long intervals is a bullfrog's trump heard. Some are white-throated, others yellow.

In the warm noons nowadays, I see the spotted small yellow eyes of the four-leaved loosestrife looking at me from under the birches and pines springing up in sandy upland fields. *Asclepias Cornuti*. Ours, I think, must be the *Cornus sericca*, not *stolonifera*. The willow by Hubbard's Bridge must be either *Salix discolor* or *eriocephala*; I think the former.

The other day I saw what I took to be a scarecrow in a cultivated field, and noticing how unnaturally it was stuffed out here and there and how ungainly its arms and legs were, I thought to myself, "Well, it is thus they make these things; they do not stand much about it;" but looking round again after I had gone by, I saw my scarecrow walking off with a real live man in it.

I was just roused from my writing by the engine's whistle, and, looking out, saw shooting through the town two enormous pine sticks stripped of their bark, just from the Northwest and going to Portsmouth Navy-Yard, they say. Before I could call Sophia, they had got round the curve and only showed their ends on their way to the Deep Cut. Not a tree grows now in Concord to compare with them. They suggest what a country we have got to back us up that way. A hundred years ago or more perchance the wind wafted a little winged seed out of its cone to some favorable spot, and this is the result. In ten minutes they were through the township, and perhaps not half a dozen Concord eyes rested on them during their transit.

Read  [Henry Thoreau's Journal for July 1853 \(æf. 35-36\)](#)



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July 1, Friday, 1853: The Boston police, who had been marked with a hat badge in addition to their watchhook, acquired a lapel badge in the shape of a brass star.

In New-York, Latting Observatory opened. One might view, from this platform fully 315 feet above the surface of the earth, see all the way to Queens, Staten Island, and the State of New Jersey! The tower could accommodate 1,500 people at a time (counting those who were trudging up its many steps, those who were standing on its 75-square-foot top platform, and those who were trudging down its many steps, a task which was being said to constitute good exercise).

The Cape Colony received a constitution which provided for a legislative council.

At about this point the Albany, New-York Northern Rail Road went out of business.

William Speiden, Jr. accompanied a few officers in a whaleboat up the Junk River and went on board a Japanese junk.

A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra, her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

Made quite an early start again. "Independence Rock" 2 miles ahead. Struck Sweet Water River 1 mile before we reached the rock. This rock is another curiosity. It is about 300 yds. long, by 100 yds wide and about 100 feet high. It is composed of beautiful white granite, and was named by a party of Americans passing it on the 4th of July, who chose the top of this rock and held their celebrations. Before leaving it they inscribed this name upon it with each of their names under that. There are upwards of several hundred names inscribed on the top and sides of it. All have a curiosity to climb to its top. It is situated on the north side of Sweet Water River. The northwest end is shaped like a dome, rather broken at the top, but it gradually slopes off to the ground which is level all around it. We forded the river 1 mile above the rock. Four miles farther is the "Devil's Gate" at the right of the road. This is one of the greatest among the many curiosities of nature. The river here runs through perpendicular rocks about 300 feet high in a channel from 50 to 80 feet wide. These rocks are granite also. Upon looking at this it would seem that it had been made expressly for that purpose by the blowing and blasting of many months; but not so, it is the great, the wondrous work of nature. The road here passes around the point of the mountain between two cliffs of rocks and strikes the river again. One-half mile ahead is a small creek. The road follows up the river 26 miles. Plenty of grass and water, fuel sage, camped in this distance. Traveled 18 miles to-day.



July 1: I am surveying the Bedford road these days, and have no time for my Journal. Saw one of those great pea-green emperor moths, like a bird, fluttering over the top of the woods this forenoon, 10 A.M., near Beck Stow's. Gathered the early red blackberry in the swamp or meadow this side of Pedrick's, where I ran a pole down nine feet. It is quite distinct from the evergreen one and is without prickles. Fruit red, middle-sized, with a few, perhaps ten or twelve, large globules. May be the *Rubus trifloras*, but not growing on hills.



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July 2, Saturday, 1853: The wedding of local newspaperman Patrick Purdy Hull with Lola Montez, at the Mission Dolores in San Francisco, California. Lola's show opened at the American Theatre.

Russian forces crossed the River Prut into Turkish territory, occupying Moldavia and Wallachia.

The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi*, *USS Susquehanna*, and *USS Saratoga* stood out of Naha Harbor taking the *USS Plymouth* in tow.

A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra, her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

Saturday the 2nd. Up the river for eight miles this morning, roads very sandy, wind blowing so hard we can scarcely see. Our eyes, nose, mouth and victuals all have the benefit of it. Camped on the bank of the river after a drive of 17 miles.

The Placer, California Herald reported that at a place called Gold Hill, during the previous week, a couple of miners had gone to work at their long toms and after filling them up with dirt, the heat being oppressive, had taken refuge in the shade. Returning to their long toms and taking out the contents of the riffle's box, about one pan-full of dirt altogether, and washing down that pan of dirt, they recovered more than 2 ounces of pure, bright gold.

There are almost as many miners about Gold Hill now as there was during the winter. On Tuesday, we saw a sluice erecting on the flat below town, which will be a quarter of a mile long. It is owned by Smith & Co. Also the miners of neighbor towns of Oro City and Virginia are making money. There is a demand for labors.

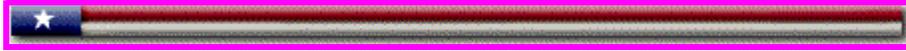


July 2: Cooler to-day. *Polygonum Persicaria*. The *Ranunculus Purshii* is very rarely seen now. I hear a harsh *keow* from a bittern flying over the river. The peewees [**Spotted Sandpiper** *Actitis macularia*] are quite noisy about the rocks in Merrick's pasture when I approach; have eggs or young there, which they are anxious about. The tall anemone in blossom, and no doubt elsewhere much earlier, — a week or ten days before this, — but the drought has checked it here. Saw on a maple leaf floating on the Assabet a kind of large aphides, thickly covering it. It was thickly coated with a mass of down, for their tails were like swan's-down, and, as they were constantly in motion, just stirring at least, it was as if there was a wind on it. Thimble-berries probably a day or two.



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 Our national birthday, Monday the 4th of July, 1853: Nathaniel Hawthorne's 49th birthday.



The California Daily Union reported that lack of water in Mosquito Canyon during the summer season had necessitated the suspension of many gold-mining operations:

A ditch that would supply an abundance of water through that vicinity would prove excellent paying property. A very large amount of gold was taken out of this canyon during the last eight months, and much will be taken out the coming winter.

There was a fire at the corner of Clay Street and Kearny Street in San Francisco, in which the loss would be estimated at \$6,000.

At a celebration dinner at Washington Hall in Springfield, Massachusetts, everyone stood up and cheered for one of the aged guests: the Reverend Jonathan Smith, who in the army of the Revolution had been a chaplain.

The American expedition members of our far-eastern fleet celebrated the 77th anniversary of our independence from Britain by firing off an impressive 17-gun salute. Well, they supposed it to be impressive. They were themselves impressed.

In Abington, Massachusetts there was a "Know Nothing Anti-Slavery celebration."

In Norwalk, Connecticut, Phineas Taylor Barnum began the celebrations by delivering an address before a crowd of 10,000.

In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the cornerstone of the West Philadelphia Institute was set into place. Some 10,000 citizens visited Independence Hall, with each celebrant entitled to sit for a moment in the chair of John Hancock. At the Chestnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia, the comedietta "My Uncle Sam" was



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performed.

In New-York, a 95-year-old, Daniel Spencer, “an old patriot of the Revolution, hailing from Canajoharie, New York,” was an honored participant in the celebration.

In Williamsburg, Virginia, Captain Taft’s Company of Light Artillery fired off a national salute of 32 guns.

Some 500 residents of [Baltimore](#) went on an excursion to nearby Annapolis, where a fight occurred between them and a group of local Annapolis people, resulting in two deaths and several injuries.

CELEBRATING OUR B-DAY



A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

This is indeed a beautiful morning to celebrate the anniversary of our Independence, but to us it is like all other days, the same work to do. Drove 18 miles today and have not much grass for our cattle to-night. Passed Ice-Springs at the right of the road. It is said ice can be found here at any season of the year by digging 2 or 3 feet deep. We saw some of it near the top of the ground.



July 4: The cotton-grass at Beck Stowe’s. Is it different from the early one? High blueberries begin. The oval-leaved drosera in bloom. *Campanula aparinoides*. I see now a later (?) rose in lower, wetter ground. *Polygala sanguinea*. The weeds are now so thick in the river — potamogetons, heart-leaf, *Ranunculus Purshii*, eel-grass, etc., etc. — as almost to conceal the stream and seriously to obstruct the passage of my boat. *Polygonum sagittatum*. The cymbidium now perhaps in its prime. I am attracted by the peculiar glaucous leaves of the rhodora. Noli-me-tangere. The beauty of some butterflies,— dark steel-blue with a light-blue edge. *Circæa*, some time, the small one, at Corner Spring. Parsnips. The bass appears now — or a few trees— to have bloomed here and there prematurely. The gall on the leaves of the slippery elm is like fruit. The greater plantain, a few days. The fine feathery tail of the *Equisetum sylvaticum* (?) nowadays in damp woods, near Corner Spring. The *Potamogeton hybridus* (?) in fruit and flower; though the spike is cylindrical like *P. heterophyllus*, yet the petioles are shorter than the floating leaves. What is the apparently wholly immersed potamogeton, upright with linear-lanceolate leaves? (No flower nor fruit now.) Also what is that small upright, round, tapering plant, three inches high, at bottom of river, with apparently bristle-formed leaves arranged alternately crosswise, visibly cellular? At Lee’s Cliff, under the slippery elm, *Parietaria Pennsylvaticum*, American pellitory, in flower, and near by *Anychia dichotoma*, forked chickweed (*Queria* [*sic*]) also in flower.



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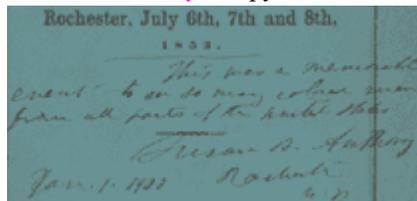
July 6, Wednesday, [1853](#): The 1,021-ton 180x36-foot clipper ship *Northern Light* with Captain Freeman Hatch of Eastham, Massachusetts at the helm had agreed to a speed competition with the captain of the clipper *Contest*. The *Contest* had departed San Francisco for New York on March 12th whereas the *Northern Light* had not departed that harbor for Boston until the following day, but on this 38th day of their passage, off Cape Horn, the *Northern Light* overtook the *Contest* (it was, you see, traveling entirely without cargo).

The crews of our various American vessels in Japanese waters engaged in target practice.

The Wisconsin state legislature incorporated the [Fox and Wisconsin River Improvement Company](#).

[Lola Montez](#) performed in Sacramento, [California](#).

The 10th national National Convention of Colored Men began in Rochester, New York. [William Cooper Nell](#) was in attendance as a representative from Massachusetts, and was appointed Vice President pro-tem and member of the Business Committee. [Frederick Douglass](#) was present and would publish the proceedings.³³ Below is Douglass's neighbor [Susan B. Anthony](#)'s copy:³⁴



[William Wells Brown](#), a free man since 1847, published in London [CLOTEL; OR, THE PRESIDENT'S DAUGHTER: A NARRATIVE OF SLAVE LIFE IN THE UNITED STATES](#), which depicted fictional slave daughters of [Thomas Jefferson](#) with his slave Curren. (This would be republished in heavily revised versions in 1860 as *MIRALDA, OR THE BEAUTIFUL QUADROON: A ROMANCE OF AMERICAN SLAVERY FOUNDED ON FACT*, in 1864 as *CLOTELLE: A TALE OF THE SOUTHERN STATES*, and in 1867 as *CLOTELLE; OR THE COLORED HEROINE. A TALE OF THE SOUTHERN STATES*. Later American editions would feature Clotel as the daughter of a Southern Senator.)

A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

Started at daylight this morning to find better grass. Two miles from camp is strawberry creek, and 4 miles farther is snow creek. Banks of snow on each side from 10 to 15 feet deep. Here we stopped to let our cattle graze. Their feet are very sore traveling over so much gravel. Two miles farther we came to willow creek, and 5 miles more and we found the last crossing of Sweet Water River. Here we camped again, found pretty good grass up a hollow to the right of it, near the snow top mountains. Sage for fuel.



July 6: I can sound the swamps and meadows on the line of the new road to Bedford with a pole, as if they were water. It may be hard to break through the crust, but then it costs a very slight effort to force it down, sometimes nine or ten feet, where the surface is dry. Cut a straight sapling, an inch or more in [diameter]; sharpen and peel it that it may go down with the least obstruction. The larch grows in both Moore's and Pedrick's swamps. Do not the trees that grow there indicate the depth of the swamp? I drink at the black and sluggish run which rises in Pedrick's Swamp and at the

33. PROCEEDINGS OF THE COLORED NATIONAL CONVENTION HELD IN ROCHESTER JULY 6TH, 7TH, AND 8TH, 1853. Rochester: Frederick Douglass, 1853.

34. At some point during this year [Susan B. Anthony](#) requested transfer from the Easton, New York Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Hicksite) to the Rochester Monthly Meeting (Hicksite). Despite this [Quaker](#) affiliation, she would be during her adult life a long-term attender at the Unitarian Church in Rochester.



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clearer and cooler one at Moore's Swamp, and, as I lie on my stomach, I am surprised at the quantity of decayed wood continually borne past. It is this process which, carried on for ages, formed this accumulation of soil. The outlets of a valley being obstructed, the decayed wood is no longer carried off but deposited near where it grew.



July 8, Friday, 1853: Mary Keyes was born to Martha Prescott Keyes and [John Shepard Keyes](#).

Early in July we had another daughter Mary, born on the 8.th and Martha got up nicely from her confinement, and was soon able to enjoy the shorter drives with me—

J.S. KEYES AUTOBIOGRAPHY

On the Oregon Trail, some camping utensils, a powder horn, and fragments of clothing were discovered. In a pocket of the pantaloons there was found a gold watch and key. To all appearances someone had been killed there but no papers providing a clue to a name were to be discovered.

Grand Duke Carl Friedrich of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach died at Belvedere Castle and was succeeded by his son Carl Alexander.

Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#)'s flagship USS *Mississippi* and its squadron of 3 accompanying ships came to anchor in deep water off Oragawa (Uraga), Tokyo's [Edo Bay, Japan](#). [Japanese](#) boats approached, signing for the ships to depart, and, unsuccessful in this, returned to shore. William Speiden, Jr. wrote that "they must certainly have all come to the opinion that we were a queer sort of people." That night the watch officer, Lieutenant John K. Duer, observed a puzzling sky object:

During the watch from midnight to 4 A.M. a very remarkable [meteor](#) was seen. It made its appearance in the south and west and illuminated the whole atmosphere. The spars, sails and hulls of the ships in company as well as our own reflected its glare as distinctly as though a blue light were burning from each at the same time. From the south and west about 15 degrees above the horizon it pursued a north-easterly course in a direct line for a long distance, when it fell gradually toward the sea and disappeared. Its shape was that of a large blue sphere with a red wedge-shaped tail, which it could be easily observed was formed of ignited particles, and resembled the sparks of a rocket as they appear upon its explosion.

The black vessels would lie in Tokyo Bay, menacing and silent, for a period of time, and then suddenly the Commodore would open negotiations by giving representatives of the Emperor 3 days to deliver a letter to their supreme leader — or else.

US MILITARY INTERVENTIONS

Commodore Matthew Perry's mission included establishing trade links and ensuring the humane treatment of shipwrecked whalers. Underlying purpose included the acquisition of the coaling stations that United States opium dealers such as the Perkins and the Delanos needed to speed communications between San Francisco and [Shanghai](#). After the treaty would be signed during March 1854, the festivities would include a sumo tournament. According to an article published in the [Harper's New Monthly Magazine](#) issue of May 1856, "The heralds... summoned the antagonists, and one having taken his place in the ring, he assumed an attitude of defense, with one leg in advance as if to steady himself, and his body, with his head lowered, placed in a





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position as if to receive an attack. Immediately after, in rushed the other, bellowing loudly like a bull, and making at once for the man in the ring, dashed, with his head lowered and thrust forward, against his opponent, who bore the shock with the steadiness of a rock, although the blood streamed down his face from his bruised forehead, which had been struck in the encounter. This manoeuvre was repeated again and again, one acting always as the opposing and the other as the resisting force, and thus they kept up this brutal contest until their foreheads were besmeared with blood, and the flesh of their breasts rose in great swollen tumors from the repeated blows." Koyanagi, "the reputed bully of the capital," would be among the sumotori in attendance.

A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

This morning while Nelson and one of the others were herding cattle they discovered some fragments of clothes and camping utensils, and upon examination found a gold watch and key in an old pantaloons pocket. From the appearance of things they supposed some one had been murdered, but could find no papers to give any clue to his name. His clothing, camping apparatus, powder-horn etc. were lying scattered about. Laid by all day to-day on account of our cattle's feet. Started at sunset to travel all night.



July 8: Large [enothera](#). Toads are still heard occasionally at evening. To-day I heard a hylodes peep (perhaps a young one), which have so long been silent.



July 9, Saturday, [1853](#): [Hector Berlioz](#) departed London after conducting Benvenuto Cellini.

The 4 American warships off Tokyo were brought "in a line so as to bear directly upon the town." William Speiden, Jr. noted that during the evening of this intimidating display of force they could sight the grandeur of Mount Fuji clearly because the clouds had lifted. The official Narrative of the Expedition (1856) would later state that "the question of landing by force was left to be decided by the development of succeeding events." [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) kept the ships at battle readiness and the crew "drilled as thoroughly as they are in time of active war." A corps of [Japanese](#) artists approached by boat to sketch the strange American steam vessels. Kayama Yezaimen, governor of Uraga, arrived with other [Japanese](#) authorities to seek audience with Perry. These officials were informed that the expedition wished to have a letter delivered to the Emperor of [Japan](#). A messenger was sent to inform the Emperor of the presence of the war ships and the stated request. Negotiations regarding the letter and a possible meeting between [Japanese](#) and American representatives would continue over the following days.

The Placer, [California Herald](#) learned from a correspondent that 13 miles from Auburn, below Barnes Bar on the North Fork of American River, a couple of miners had been averaging from 4 to 30 ounces of gold per day.

A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

Arrived at Little Sandy at sunrise this morning. Passed Dry Sandy 9 miles from Pacific Springs and the Junction of California and Salt Lake road 7 miles from Dry Sandy. Stopped at Little Sandy and had breakfast. No grass here. Drove on to Big Sandy 5 miles farther and camped for the day, to let our cattle rest for crossing the Desert which commences here at Big



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Sandy. Drove 3 miles down this stream and found good grass.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR JULY 9th]



July 10, Sunday, [1853](#): Treaty for the free navigation of the Parana River and the Uruguay River, between the United States of America and Argentina.

[READ THE FULL TEXT](#)

During this day and the following one, [Japanese](#) boats kept close company with the American expedition vessels as they surveyed the bay.

A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

Laid by all day to-day.



July 10: *Galium asprellum*, probably about the 5th or 6th. The side-flowering scutellaria now. Hedge-nettle, a day or two. *Lysimachia lanceolata* var. *hybrida*, some days. Yellow lily now common (since the 4th). The large real-vessels of the blue flag conspicuous. The rainbow rush has been in bloom for some time. *Epilobium coloratum*. A rough eupatorium budded at Hubbard's burning. *Ludwigia palustris*, probably for ten days. *Rubus Canadensis* now. The red capsules of the *Hypericum ellipticum* begin to show in low lands. The cardinal-flower shows red. At Cardinal Shore a large *Polygonum amphibium*, seven feet long, left by the water, creeping over the shore and rooting in it at the joints; not yet in flower.

The bream poised over its sandy nest on waving fin — how aboriginal! So it has poised here and watched its ova before this New World was known to the Old. Still I see the little cavities of their nests along the shore.

Lycopodium sinualtus. water horehound.



July 12, Tuesday, [1853](#): [Frances Richard Gourgas](#) died.

[Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) was refusing to meet with anyone of less than imperial Japanese rank. Therefore US commanders Franklin Buchanan and [Chief of Staff Henry Allen Adams, Captain of the Fleet](#) met with Kayama Yezaimen in the presence of interpreters, and were informed that [Commodore Perry](#) and his delegation of American officials would be received on a small island by officials appointed by the Emperor of [Japan](#) to negotiate, in order to allow him to hand over in a suitably dignified manner the letter he was hand-carrying from the President of the United States of America. A party was sent out to survey the island where the Japanese delegation was agreeing to receive the Commodore, and the surveyors proceeded to designate the small bay of that island as "Reception Bay."

In [San Francisco](#), the [Daily Alta California](#) reported on "Local Matters" such as the sale of pews in the First Congregational Church:

LOCAL MATTERS.

SALE OF PEWS. — At the sale of pews last evening in the First Congregational Church, the whole amount of premiums paid for choice of seats reached the sum of \$3,800. The first choice was taken by D.H. Haskell, Esq, at \$400. About fifty pews were sold



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at an advance on the appraised value. Notice was given that the Trustees would be in attendance at the Church every evening during the week, and that those wishing to rent pews would then be able to select their seats.

A VULTURE CAUGHT. — Officer Nugent succeeded in arresting in Sacramento, and bringing to this city last night, a man known here as Tom Lyons, who is one of the flock of vultures that hover in the region of Pacific wharf to pounce upon the unwary stranger. Lyons has been identified by the miner who was robbed of \$402 on Saturday morning last, as the one who first accosted him upon the wharf and afterwards robbed him of his little "pile."

HORSE THIEF. — Capt. M'Donald arrested yesterday a person by the name of Daniel McMillen, who is charged with stealing cattle in Tuolumne county, to the value at one time of \$1700, and at another about \$800.

POLICE COURT. — Before Recorder Baker.— July 11.

After the gallant "Major" had seated his flock, not forgetting to give the ladies the best places, the business of the Court commenced by calling upon—

James Cross, to answer to the charge of getting beastly drunk. James was found spread across the crossing, and rumor had whispered in the officers' ears that he was dead, but after they had felt of his pulse and such like et ceteras, they concluded a little switching would start him, which in fact it did. James looked very penitent, and pledged his honor that he was never drunk before; in fact he stated boldly that he had never drank any intoxicating liquor, before that day! Jeems looking very dismal, was allowed to cross the Major's path this time scott free.

John Chinaman was charged with helping himself to a nice pair of pants, and showed his good taste by taking them from the door of Keys & Co. The proof was positive as to his guilt, but the case was continued until to-day, to give John a chance to explain through an interpreter why he takes this dangerous course to show his preference for American costume.

Mr. Golden and Mrs. Golden were charged with being very disorderly, especially Mr. G. An English lady, "fat, fair and forty," declared that Golden was going to shoot her twice, was going to throw a tumbler at her 'ead, in fact vary the performances in this weak, piping time of peace, by various other little eccentricities. Mr. Golden took great pride in stating that he "never was 'intoxicated' in his life; that he drank as much liquor as any other man, but he was used to it, and had been since he was ten years of age (?)." It was one of those free and easy cases all round so the Golden couple were allowed to depart upon payment of costs.

Mary Holt was the e [sic] as a vagrant. "Molly" has managed to live about ten months out of the last twelve in the station home; she was released but a few days since, but Mary can not keep from paying her devoirs to the "rosy god."

"Tis true, 'tis pity, and pity 'tis, 'tis true."

for Mary has been a fine, buxom looking lass; she was sent back to her *mouton*, the city prison, to be detained there six months.



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Eden was another of the fair (?) sex, and sat cheek by jowl with Mary Holt; in fact she was a kindred spirit, and as spiritually inclined; but to hide her blushes, or so as not to disgrace the name of the gentle, lilly white sex, she had assumed the complexion of a negro, or had been born dark, for *she* was as black as the bottle she loved so well; her woolly head was encased in the ubiquitous plaid, cotton kerchief. She had been a slave; would get drunk all the time; her former mistress could not drive her away. She would call and did call a gentleman all the vile names that speech could frame; said gent's going to take a big club and kill her the next time (?) she appeared to be a regular "Topsy," and "Oh! I's so bad," seemed to be standing waiting to pop out from behind her ivory gates. The Recorder asked her if she had anything to say "Yeth indeedy, ise got a heap to say; 'taint neffen like it" "That will do, sit down. I shall send you below for 30 days." "No, no sir." "Sit down!"

Jean Dedeuvre was bound over to keep the peace in the sum of \$1000. towards a Mr. Cunningham or his workmen, and especially one that he had threatened to shoot for putting shanties on property, to the ownership of which as a matter of course there are several claimants.

Rose Church, charged with an assault with a deadly weapon, not appearing, her bail was declared forfeited.



July 12: White vervain. Checkerberry, maybe some days. Spikenard, not quite yet. The green-flowered lanceolate-leafed orchis at Azalea Brook will soon flower. Either *Gymnadenia tridentata* or *Platanthera flava*. *Circea alpina* (?) there, but nearly eighteen inches high. *Lycopus Virginicus*, not open in shade; probably in a day or two. Wood horse-tail very large and handsome there.



July 14, Thursday, 1853: The American delegation was received by the Japanese delegation at the location, on a small island, that their surveying party had just designated was to be known henceforward as "Reception Bay." "When we landed" William Speiden, Jr. recorded, "the Japanese to the number of six thousand were drawn up in lines along the borders of the Bay," colorful banners and pennants flying. Speiden found the array a most beautiful appearance, albeit disturbingly warlike. The rowboat conveying Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry of the United States Navy shoved off from the *USS Susquehanna* and landed on this small island as his various American military bands played "Hail Columbia." The Commodore's men fell into file and marched with him to a House of Reception specially prepared by the Lord of Toda, Japan for this ceremonial letter-hand-carry. Speiden was among these marchers. Perry informed the interpreters that because it would take time to receive a response from the Emperor, he intended to go away, and return the following spring with his flotilla of American warships. Meanwhile the American intention was merely to engage in a



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survey of the bay for purposes of (peaceful, hey, pay no attention to all the guns) navigation. This was an offer which it was supposing the locals couldn't conceivably refuse, but nevertheless it was categorically rejected and Major Jacob Zeilin of the [US Marines](#) would need to climb back on board the USS *Mississippi*, and this American panjandrum would need to sail away into the sunrise emptyhanded.

US MILITARY INTERVENTIONS

President [Franklin Pierce](#) opened [The Exhibition of the Industry of All Nations](#) at New-York's [Crystal Palace](#) on what would become Reservoir Square in what would become Bryant Park (adjacent to this, at the Latting Observatory, Elisha Graves Otis would be demonstrating his steam-powered passenger elevator).

A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

The toll for ferrying across is six dollars per wagon. We concluded to ferry ourselves again, drove down the river and commenced operations, took one load over and had to stop on account of high winds. The 2nd load, when we reached the opposite shore the box being nearly full of water and the current very swift, on jumping out the boat capsized, but fortunately we had on the wheels and axles of the wagon which sunk to the bottom, the water about 7 ft. We soon hauled them out by means of a chain with a large hook on it and lost nothing but the bolt of the coupling. Got all over by dark without any further accident.

[Waldo Emerson](#) and [Henry Thoreau](#) discussed plant specimens.

BOTANIZING



July 14: Heavy fog.

I see a rose, now in its prime, by the river, in the water amid the willows and button-bushes, while others, lower on shore, are nearly out of bloom. Is it not the R. Carolina? Saw something blue, or glaucous, in Beck Stow's Swamp to-day; approached and discovered the [Andromeda Polifolia](#), in the midst of the swamp at the north end, not long since out of bloom. This is another instance of a common experience. When I am shown from abroad, or hear of, or in any [way] become interested in, some plant or other thing, I am pretty sure to find it soon. Within a week [R.W.E.](#) showed me a slip of this in a botany, as a great rarity which [George Bradford](#) brought from Watertown. I had long

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been interested in it by [Linnaeus](#)'s account.



I now find it in abundance. It is a neat and tender-looking plant, with the pearly new shoots now half a dozen inches long and the singular narrow revolute leaves. I suspect the flower does not add much to it.

There is an abundance of the buck-bean there also. Holly berries are beginning to be ripe. The Polygonum Hydropiper, by to-morrow. Spargula arvensis gone to seed and in flower. A very tall ragged orchis by the Heywood Brook, two feet high, almost like a white fringed one. Lower ones I have seen some time.

The clematis there (near the water-plantain) will open in a day or two. Mallows gone to seed and in bloom. Erigeron Canadensis, butter-weed.



July 16, Saturday, 1853: By this point the pestilence known as “[black vomit](#)” had in [New Orleans](#) taken more than 300 lives. The populace was fleeing the city.



Kayama Yezaimen had visited the *USS Susquehanna*. He had viewed the functions of a steam warship and inspected its engine and armaments. He had brought with him gifts of lacquerware and had been handed in return a choice selection of garden seeds and choice cases of wine. [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) had transferred his command pennant from the *USS Susquehanna* to the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi*. On this day that vessel made its way up Yedo (Edo, now [Tokyo](#)) Bay. Pleasantries having been concluded, it was due time for the foreigners to just get the hell away and leave the Japanese the hell alone.

The *Niagara*, taking the [Hawthornes](#) away from America, docked in Liverpool.

The Placer, [California Herald](#) reported that at Lacy Bar, 4 gold miners had taken out as high as \$1,300 in one day, while in the neighborhood of Eastman Hill and Blue Canyon, which is the North Branch of the North Fork of American River 10 miles above Cold Springs, where 100 miners were at work, gold was being found in coarse pieces weighing from \$1.00 up to \$60. At Badger Bar, a short distance below the junction of the North



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and Middle Forks, there was bustle and activity because the Badger Co. had nearly completed construction of their flume. On the North Fork a mile and a half above Oregon Bar, 28 Chinamen were turning the river and 10 Americans who had a claim just above them had “joined flumes with the Celestials” and expected to be digging in the river bed in a fortnight. Earlier that spring, 3 miles above Rice’s Ferry higher up the North Fork, 17 Chinamen who had bought a river claim for \$1,000 had completed their flumes and would soon be washing out gold. A couple of miles above that point a party of Americans had completed their flume and were in the process of erecting a dam.

A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

Over hills and hollows, mountains and creeks, traveled 15 miles to-day and camped on Crow Creek.



July 16: *Rhus copallina* behind [Bent's](#)  added, not quite open. *Solidago stricta* (?) at [Cato's cellar](#), a day or two. The pasture thistle, more than a week. Is it the *Potamogeton heterophyllus* in Walden, now in flower and for some time? Door-grass.



WALDEN: East of my bean-field, across the road, lived Cato Ingraham, slave of Duncan Ingraham, Esquire, gentleman of Concord village; who built his slave a house, and gave him permission to live in Walden Woods;-Cato, not Uticensis, but Concordiensis. Some say that he was a Guinea Negro. There are a few who remember this little patch among the walnuts, which he let grow up till he should be old and need them; but a younger and whiter speculator got them at last. He too, however, occupies an equally narrow house at present. Cato's half-obliterated cellar hole still remains, though known to few, being concealed from the traveller by a fringe of pines. It is now filled with the smooth sumach, (*Rhus glabra*,) and one of the earliest species of golden-rod (*Solidago stricta*) grows there luxuriantly.

PEOPLE OF
WALDEN

CATO INGRAHAM
GOOSE POND



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 July 17, Sunday, 1853: Crowds of Japanese citizens gathered to witness the US squadron of warships leave anchorage and depart in stately fashion down the center of Tokyo Bay. (Have you noticed that this is not a perfect world?—in this procession the *USS Susquehanna* was ignominiously towing the *USS Saratoga* and the *USS Mississippi* was ignominiously towing the *USS Plymouth* but, other than that, everything was decidedly impressive.)

Bishop Alemany laid the cornerstone of St. Mary's Church at the corner of California Street and Dupont Street in San Francisco.

The term of John C. Hays as Sheriff of San Francisco, California was completed.

Dedication of the 1st Unitarian Church at 805 Stockton Street near Sacramento Street in San Francisco.



A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra, her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

Anxious to get better grass we drove to Thomas's Fork about 12 miles keeping the left hand road around the mountain to the river. Here we camped for the day.



July 17: The common amaranth. Young toads not half an inch long at Walden shore. The smooth sumach resounds with the hum of bees, wasps, etc., at Water-target Pond. I see two great devil's-needles, three inches long, with red abdomens and bodies as big as hummingbirds [], sailing round this pond, round and round, and ever and anon darting aside suddenly; probably to seize some prey. Here and there the water-targets look red, perhaps their under sides. A duck at Goose Pond. Rank weeds begin to block up low wood-paths, — goldenrods, asters, etc. The pearly everlasting. *Lobelia infata*. The *Solidago nemoralis* (?) in a day or two,—gray goldenrod. I think we have no *Hieracium Gronovii*, though one not veined always and sometimes with two or more leaves on stem. No grass balls to be seen.



July 25, Monday, 1853: Anton Bruckner applied for a position in the civil service.

Fire consumed the barks *Manco*, *Bacchus*, *Herbert*, and *Juno* that had been moored at the wharf at the foot of Market Street in San Francisco, with a loss estimated at \$50,000.

Allegedly, the bandit "Joaquin Murieta" (Joaquin Murrieta or Murieta or Murietta Carrillo) was shot dead. The white men who had gunned down this person, whoever he had been, when they followed smoke to a campfire in the San Joaquin Valley, asserted that his last words had been "No tire mass. Yo soy muerto."

The Riggers' and Stevedores' Union of San Francisco was organized, after longshoremen struck for higher pay and better working conditions.

In the Far East, the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* returned to anchor at Lew Chew.

A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra, her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

Our stock are very weak yet. Concluded to lie still till noon. Started at one o'clock and drove through a canyon to the head of a hollow 7 miles. This is the summit of the dividing ridge between the waters of Columbia and Bear River. One mile from the



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summit is a very large spring, one mile more is a similar one, 2 miles farther is a fine branch on which we camped. Good grass and excellent water.

[Henry Thoreau](#) reported with amusement that, belatedly, he had learned how to tie his shoes, and marveled that such a thing had not been part of his formal education:



July 25: Dodder, probably the 21st. Blue-curls. Burdock, probably yesterday.

P.M. — To Le Grosse's.

Cerasus Virginiana, — choke-cherry, — just ripe. White and red huckleberries said to be in Le Grosse's or Wetherbee's pasture. Could not find them. Cynoglossum Morisoni, beggar's-lice, roadside between Sam Barrett's mill and the next house east, in flower and fruiting probably ten days. Probably the same with plant found beyond the stone bridge, gone to seed, last year.

I have for years had a great deal of trouble with my shoe-strings, because they get untied continually. They are leather, rolled and tied in a hard knot. But some days I could hardly go twenty rods before I was obliged to stop and stoop to tie my shoes. My companion and I speculated on the distance to which one tying would carry you, — the length of a shoe-tie, — and we thought it nearly as appreciable and certainly a more simple and natural measure of distance than a stadium, or league, or mile. Ever and anon we raised our feet on whatever fence or wall or rock or stump we chanced to be passing, and drew the strings once more, pulling as hard as we could. It was very vexatious, when passing through low scrubby bushes, to become conscious that the strings were already getting loose again before we had fairly started. What should we have done if pursued by a tribe of Indians? My companion sometimes went without strings altogether, but that loose way of proceeding was not [to] be thought of by me. One shoemaker sold us shoestrings made of the hide of a South American jackass, which he recommended; or rather he gave them to us and added their price to that of the shoes we bought of him. But I could not see that these were any better than the old. I wondered if anybody had exhibited a better article at the World's Fair, and whether England did not bear the palm from America in this respect. I thought of strings with recurved prickles and various other remedies myself. At last the other day it occurred to me that I would try an experiment, and, instead of tying two simple knots one over the other the same way, putting the end which fell to the right over each time, that I would reverse the process, and put it under the other. Greatly to my satisfaction, the experiment was perfectly successful, and from that time my shoe-strings have given me no trouble, except sometimes in untying them at night.

On telling this to others I learned that I had been all the while tying what is called a granny's knot, for I had never been taught to tie any other, as sailors' children are; but now I had blundered into a square knot, I think they called it, or two running slip-nooses. Should not all children be taught this accomplishment, and an hour, perchance, of their childhood be devoted to instruction in tying knots?

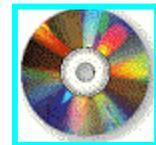
Those New-Hampshire-like pastures near Asa Melvin's are covered or dotted with bunches of indigo, still in bloom, more numerous than anywhere that I remember.



Famous Last Words:



"What school is more profitably instructive than the death-bed of the righteous, impressing the understanding with a convincing evidence, that they have not followed cunningly devised fables, but solid substantial truth."



— A COLLECTION OF MEMORIALS CONCERNING DIVERS DECEASED MINISTERS, Philadelphia, 1787



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“The death bed scenes & observations even of the best & wisest afford but a sorry picture of our humanity. Some men endeavor to live a constrained life — to subject their whole lives to their will as he who said he might give a sign if he were conscious after his head was cut off — but he gave no sign Dwell as near as possible to the channel in which your life flows.”

—Thoreau’s JOURNAL, March 12, 1853

1851	John James Audubon	shooting at sitting ducks on his estate, at age 66 despite stroke and senility	<i>“You go down that side of Long Pond and I’ll go down this side and we’ll get the ducks!”</i>
1852	Daniel Webster	his attendant was tardy in administering some brandy	<i>“I still live!”</i> 
1853	Joaquin Murieta	he was being chased and shot at	<i>“No tire mass. Yo soy muerto.”</i>
1857	Auguste Comte	he had been making himself the pope of a religion of science, “Positivism”	<i>“What an irreparable loss!”</i>
1859	John Brown	request	<i>“I am ready at any time — do not keep me waiting.”</i>
1862	Henry David Thoreau	he was editing manuscript	<i>“moose ... Indian”</i>
1864	General John Sedgwick	Battle of Spotsylvania	<i>“They couldn’t hit an elephant at this distance.”</i>
1865	Abraham Lincoln	on stage, an actor ad-libbed a reference to the presence of the President	The President laughed
<i>... other famous last words ...</i>			



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July 27, Wednesday, [1853](#): A treaty between the federal government of the United States of America and headmen of the Comanche, Kiowa, and Apache tribes. This treaty was entered into, as per usual, in good faith.

[READ THE FULL TEXT](#)

A treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation between the United States of America and Argentina.

[READ THE FULL TEXT](#)

Some 10 days after the ignominious completion of [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#)'s 1st visit, Tokugawa Ieyoshi (1793-1853) died and was succeeded as 13th shogun of the Tokugawa Shogunate of [Japan](#) by his son Tokugawa Iesada (1824-1858). (Shogun Iesada being in poor health, the 1854 negotiations with this foreigner would be conducted primarily by his emissary Abe Masahiro.)

A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

This morning we took out on the sage plains again, 6 miles brought us along side of the river again, 5 miles more and we come to a branch 10 ft. wide, very bad to cross, 3 miles farther we strike the river bottom. Here we camped again. Drove 17 miles.

Something that is of considerable significance to us may or may not have occurred on this day, of which there is no trace in [Henry Thoreau](#)'s journal:



July 27th. 8 A.M. — Rain, still quite soakingly. June & July perhaps only are the months of drought. The draught ceases with the dog-days.

P.M. — To White Pond in rain.

The autumnal dandelion now appears more abundantly within a week, *Solidago Lancelolata* also a few days prob. though only partially open.



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There are no torn-out pages in this area of Thoreau's journal, or blank spaces, to indicate that anything has been erased or removed. The above material is exactly everything that Thoreau had that he needed to offer a record of on July 27th, 1853. However, we happen now to know, which is to say we know **if the story as told by Alexander H. Japp is to be trusted** – a door allegedly happened to swing open unexpectedly while Henry was bathing and bandaging feet — on this day, Henry and his sister Sophia were caring in their home for a runaway slave.

Here is the incident as it would be presented by [Dr. Edward Waldo Emerson](#) without any accidentally swinging-open door:



When I went [to the Thoreau home] next morning, I found them all in a state of excitement by reason of the arrival of a fugitive negro from the South, who had come fainting to their door about daybreak and thrown himself upon their mercy. Thoreau took me in to see the poor wretch, whom I found to be a man with whose face, as that of a slave from the South, I was familiar. The negro was much terrified at seeing me, supposing I was one of his pursuers. Having quieted his fears by the assurance that I, too, but in a different sense [Conway is evidently referring to the fact that he had forgone his inheritance because of his family's owning slaves], was a refugee from the bondage he was escaping, and at the same time being able to attest the negro's genuineness, I sat and watched the singularly tender and lowly devotion of the scholar to the slave. He must be fed, his swollen feet bathed, and he must think of nothing but rest: again and again this coolest and calmest of men drew near to the trembling negro, and soothed him and bade him feel at home, and have no fear that any power should again wrong him. Thoreau could not walk with me that day, as had been agreed, but must mount guard over the fugitive, for slave-hunters were not extinct in those days, and so I went away, after a while.

Here is the same incident as it would be related in 1904 by the Reverend [Moncure Daniel Conway](#) in his late-



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life autobiography, again minus any accidentally swinging-open door:



He invited me to come next day for a walk, but in the morning, I found the Thoreaus agitated by the arrival of a coloured fugitive from Virginia, who had come to their door at daybreak. Thoreau took me to a room where his excellent sister, Sophia, was ministering to the fugitive, who recognized me as one he had seen. He was alarmed, but his fears passed into delight when after talking with him about our county I certified his genuineness. I observed the tender and lowly devotion of Thoreau to the African. He now and then drew near to the trembling man, and with a cheerful voice bade him feel at home, and have no fear that any power should again wrong him. That whole day he mounted guard over the fugitive, for it was a slave-hunting time. But the guard had no weapon, and probably there was no such thing in the house.

The next day the fugitive was got off to Canada, and I enjoyed my first walk with Thoreau.

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August 5, Friday, 1853: Tsar Nikolai accepted the “Vienna Note” of July 28th but Sultan Abdul-Mejid did not.

Back at safe anchor off Hong Kong and Macao, the far-eastern fleet of Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry prepared to wait out the winter season. Never mind, next year we’re going to impress the shit right out of those Japanese!

A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra, her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

Drive 3 miles this morning down a long, steep hill, came to the river again, no grass here. We watered and drove around through a valley about 3 miles and came to a small dry branch, followed up it and found two good springs. One mile farther we came to a small branch, rather bad to cross. This is close to the river. Three miles farther is Salmon Creek. One mile up this we found some grass. Camped here. Drove 10 miles today.

Karl Marx appeared in the pages of the New-York Daily Tribune, writing on India from London as of July 19th:

The progress of the India bill through the Committee has little interest. It is significant, that all amendments are thrown out now by the Coalition coalescing with the Tories against their own allies of the Manchester School.

The actual state of India may be illustrated by a few facts. The Home Establishment absorbs 3 per cent. of the net revenue, and the annual interest for Home Debt and Dividends 14 per cent—together 17 per cent. If we deduct these annual remittances from India to England, the military charges amount to about two-thirds of the whole expenditure available for India, or to 66 per cent., while the charges for Public Works do not amount to more than 2 3/4 per cent. of the general revenue, or for Bengal



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1 per cent., Agra $7\frac{3}{4}$, Punjab $\frac{1}{8}$, Madras $\frac{1}{2}$, and Bombay 1 per cent. of their respective revenues. These figures are the official ones of the Company itself.

On the other hand nearly three-fifths of the whole net revenue are derived from the land, about one-seventh from opium, and upward of one-ninth from salt. These resources together yield 85 per cent. of the whole receipts.

As to minor items of receipts and charges, it may suffice to state that the Moturpha revenue maintained in the Presidency of Madras, and levied on shops, looms, sheep, cattle, sundry professions, &c., yields somewhat about £50,000, while the yearly dinners of the East India House cost about the same sum. The great bulk of the revenue is derived from the land. As the various kinds of Indian land-tenure have recently been described in so many places, and in popular style, too, I propose to limit my observations on the subject to a few general remarks on the Zemindari and Ryotwar systems.

The Zemindari and the Ryotwar were both of them agrarian revolutions, effected by British ukases, and opposed to each other, the one aristocratic, the other democratic; the one a caricature of English landlordism, the other of French peasant-proprietorship; but pernicious, both combining the most contradictory character – both made not for the people, who cultivate the soil, nor for the holder, who owns it, but for the Government that taxes it.

By the Zemindari system, the people of the Presidency of Bengal were depossessed at once of their hereditary claims to the soil, in favor of the native tax gatherers called Zemindars. By the Ryotwar system introduced into the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay, the native nobility, with their territorial claims, *meras sees*, *jagheers*, &c., were reduced with the common people to the holding of minute fields, cultivated by themselves in favor of the Collector of the East India Company. But a curious sort of English landlord was the Zemindar, receiving only one-tenth of the rent, while he had to make over nine-tenths of it to the Government. A curious sort of French peasant was the Ryot, without any permanent title in the soil, and with the taxation changing every year in proportion to his harvest. The original class of Zemindars, notwithstanding their unmitigated and uncontrolled rapacity against the depossessed mass of the ex-hereditary landholders, soon melted away under the pressure of the Company, in order to be replaced by mercantile speculators who now hold all the land of Bengal, with exception of the estates returned under the direct management of the Government. These speculators have introduced a variety of the Zemindari tenure called *patnee*. Not content to be placed with regard to the British Government in the situation of middlemen, they have created in their turn a class of "hereditary" middlemen called *patnetas*, who created again their sub-*patnetas*, &c., so that a perfect scale of hierarchy of middlemen has sprung up, which presses with its entire weight on the unfortunate cultivator. As to the Ryots in Madras and Bombay, the system soon degenerated into one of forced cultivation, and the land lost all its value. "The land," says Mr. Campbell, "would be sold for balances by the Collector, as in Bengal, but generally is not, for a very good reason, viz.: that nobody will buy it."

Thus, in Bengal, we have a combination of English landlordism, of the Irish middlemen system, of the Austrian system,



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transforming the landlord into the tax-gatherer, and of the Asiatic system making the State the real landlord. In Madras and Bombay we have a French peasant proprietor who is at the same time a serf, and a métayer of the State. The drawbacks of all these various systems accumulate upon him without his enjoying any of their redeeming features. The Ryot is subject, like the French peasant, to the extortion of the private usurer; but he has no hereditary, no permanent title in his land, like the French peasant. Like the serf he is forced to cultivation, but he is not secured against want like the serf. Like the métayer he has to divide his produce with the State, but the State is not obliged, with regard to him, to advance the funds and the stock, as it is obliged to do with regard to the métayer. In Bengal, as in Madras and Bombay, under the Zemindari as under the Ryotwar, the Ryots-and they form 11-12ths of the whole Indian population – have been wretchedly pauperized; and if they are, morally speaking, not sunk as low as the Irish cottiers, they owe it to their climate, the men of the South being possessed of less wants, and of more imagination than the men of the North.

Conjointly with the land-tax we have to consider the salt-tax. Notoriously the Company retain the monopoly of that article which they sell at three times its mercantile value – and this in a country where it is furnished by the sea, by the lakes, by the mountains and the earth itself. The practical working of this monopoly was described by the Earl of Albemarle in the following words:

“A great proportion of the salt for inland consumption throughout the country is purchased from the Company by large wholesale merchants at less than 4 rupees per maund; these mix a fixed proportion of sand, chiefly got a few miles to the south-east of Dacca, and send the mixture to a second, or, counting the Government as the first, to a third monopolist at about 5 or 6 rupees. This dealer adds more earth or ashes, and thus passing through more bands, from the large towns to villages, the price is still raised from 8 to 10 rupees and the proportion of adulteration from 25 to 40 per cent. [...] It appears then that the people [...] pay from £21, 17s. 2d. to £27, 6s. 2d. for their salt, or in other words, from 30 to 36 times as much as the wealthy people of Great Britain.”

As an instance of English bourgeois morals, I may allege, that Mr. Campbell defends the Opium monopoly because it prevents the Chinese from consuming too much of the drug, and that he defends the Brandy monopoly (licenses for spirit-selling in India) because it has wonderfully increased the consumption of Brandy in India.

The Zemindar tenure, the Ryotwar, and the salt tax, combined with the Indian climate, were the hotbeds of the cholera – India's ravages upon the Western World – a striking and severe example of the solidarity of human woes and wrongs.

[Karl Marx](#)



August 5: Perfect dog-days. To-day is sultry, *i.e.* hot and cloudy, the air full of mist and here and there misty clouds; and you find yourself perspiring much before you are aware of it. Farmers



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complain that they cannot make hay this weather. I cannot dry my red huckleberries. The sun does not shine unobstructedly.

A man mowing in the Great Meadows killed a great water adder (?) the other day, said to be four feet long and as big as a man's wrist. It ran at him. They find them sometimes when they go to open their hay. I tried to see it this morning, but some boys had chopped it up and buried it. They said that they found a *great many* young ones in it. That probably accounts for its being so large round. The clintonia berries keep a long tune without wrinkling in a tumbler of water. The mower on the river meadows, when [he] comes to open his hay these days, encounters some overgrown water adder full of young (?) and bold in defense of its progeny, and tells a tale when he comes home at night which causes a shudder to run through the village, — how it came at him, and he ran, and it pursued and overtook him, and he transfixed it with a pitchfork and laid it on a cock of hay, but it revived and came at him again. This is the story he tells in the shops at evening. The big snake is a sort of fabulous animal. It is always as big as a man's arm and of indefinite length Nobody knows exactly how deadly its bite, but nobody is known to have been bitten and recovered. Irishmen introduced into these meadows for the first time, on seeing a snake, a creature which they have seen only in pictures before, lay down their scythes and run as if it were the evil one himself, and cannot be induced to return to their work. They sigh for Ireland, where they say there is no venomous thing that can hurt you.

[Inula](#) out (how long?), roadside just beyond Garfield's. Spikenard berries near Corner Spring just begin to turn. Collinsonia, not yet. Cohush berries not quite ripe. Pennyroyal in prime on Conantum. *Aster corymbosus* pretty plainly (a day or two) in the Miles Swamp or arboretum, — *Aster dumosus*, as I have called it also elsewhere.



August 10, Wednesday, [1853](#): The American far-eastern fleet was wintering ignominiously at anchor in Blenheim Reach, near [Canton](#). Nothing much was going on. A whole lot of waiting, a whole lot.

Preparations of the *Madagascar* to sail from the harbor of Melbourne, [Australia](#) in the direction of London were dramatically interrupted when police arrived to search the frigate and Captain Fortescue William Harris was ordered to delay its departure. The police arrested John Francis, a bushranger, on an accusation of robbery.

A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

A few Indians about our camp this morning trading moccasins etc. for shirts, powder and balls. Drove 13 miles without water, came to another creek, where we camped again. Oh! we are getting so tired of this business. Found very good grass. The Indians are very hostile in this vicinity. Emigrants should be always on their guard, a man was killed here a few days ago in the act of drinking out of the branch when an Indian shot an arrow through his heart. He left a wife and two little children to mourn his loss here on the dreary plains. It is not safe for any person to leave camp alone for they lay in ambush and watch their opportunity, and as their weapons make no report they only wait for one to get out of sight of camp and they are sure of him for they seldom miss their mark.



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[Henry Thoreau](#) made a notation about a visit from [Bronson Alcott](#) on this day, a notation that tells us so very much about what actually was **going down** in the abolition movement back then, so **very much**, that we now tend determinedly to ignore this telltale passage in its entirety. It is as if he had written this day's entry with a dry quill! Today's Thoreau scholars are determinedly PC about that era's abolitionists because they were antislavery — and antislavery has by now come to constitute total righteousness. Today's Thoreau scholars are determinedly PC about Unitarianism, for analogous reasons, and about Harvard University, for analogous reasons. However, this day's journal entry by Thoreau in evaluation of the situation as he was experiencing it in regard to the actual abolitionists he was actually encountering, warts and all, and the actual Unitarians he was actually encountering, warts and all, and the actual Harvard people he was actually dealing with, warts and all, definitively warns us most precisely **that we cannot afford to be so worshipful**. They were the sort of small men who could raise up only small men, they were the sort of trainers who could raise up only trainers. —But today's Thoreau scholars must lower Thoreau by a head so that he cannot so tower above them:

[Alcott](#) spent the day with me yesterday. He spent the day before with [Emerson](#). He observed that he had got his wine and now he had come after his venison. Such was the compliment he paid me. The question of livelihood was troubling him. He knew of nothing which he could do for which men would pay him. He could not compete with the Irish in cradling grain. His early education had not fitted him for a clerkship. He had offered his services to the Abolition Society, to go about the country and speak for freedom as their agent, but they declined him. This is very much to their discredit; they should have been forward to secure him. Such a connection with him would confer unexpected dignity on their enterprise. But they cannot tolerate a man who stands by a head above them. They are as bad —[Garrison](#) and [Phillips](#), etc— as the overseers and faculty of [Harvard College](#). They require a man who will train well under them. Consequently they have not in their employ any but small men, — trainers.



Aug. 10. 5 A.M. —I hear a warbling vireo [[Warbling Vireo](#) [Vireo gilvus](#)], golden robin [[Northern Oriole](#) [Icterus galbula](#) (~~Fiery Hangbird or Hangbird or Gold Robin or Golden Robin~~)], red-eye [[Red-eyed Vireo](#) [Vireo olivaceus](#) (~~red-eye~~)], and peawais [[Wood-Pewee](#), [Eastern](#) [Contopus virens](#) (~~Wood-Pewee or Peawai~~)].

August, royal and rich. Green corn now. and melons have begun. That month, surely, is distinguished when melons ripen. July could not do it. What a moist, fertile heat now! I see naked viburnum berries beginning to turn. Their whiteness faintly blushing.

[Alcott](#) spent the day with me yesterday. He spent the day before with [Emerson](#). He observed that he had got his wine and now he had come after his venison. Such was the compliment he paid me. The question of livelihood was troubling him. He knew of nothing which he could do for which men would pay him. He could not compete with the Irish in cradling grain. His early education had not fitted him for a clerkship. He had offered his services to the Abolition Society, to go about the country and speak for freedom as their agent, but they declined him. This is very much to their discredit; they should have been forward to secure him. Such a connection with him would confer unexpected dignity on their enterprise. But they cannot tolerate a man who stands by a head above them. They are as bad —[Garrison](#) and [Phillips](#), etc— as the overseers and faculty of Harvard College. They require a man who will train well *under* them. Consequently they have not in their employ any but small men, — trainers.

P.M. —To Walden and Saw Mill Brook.

These days are very warm, though not so warm as it was in June. The heat is furnace-like while I am climbing the steep bills covered with shrubs on the north of Walden, through sweet-fern as high as one's head. The goldfinch [[American Goldfinch](#) [Carduelis tristis](#)] sings *er, twe, twotter twotter*. I see again the *Aster patens* (*amplexicaulis* of Bigelow), though this has no branches nor minute leaves atop. Yet it differs from the *A. undulatus*, not yet out plainly, in that the latter's lower leaves



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sire petioled and hearted, with petioles winged at base. Find the *Arabis Canadensis*, or sickle-pod, on Heywood Peak, nearly out of bloom. Never saw it before. New plants spring up where old woods are cut off, having formerly grown here, perchance. Many such rarer plants flourish for a few years in such places before they are smothered. I have also found here, for example, round-lobed and naked-flowered desmodium and *Desmodium levigatum* [smooth ticktrefoil]. (??) and *Guaphalium decurrens* [cudweed, of the sunflower family] and queria [a genus of 6 flowering plants]. Toadstools, which are now very abundant in the woods since the rain, are of various colors, — some red and shining, some polished white, some regularly brown-spotted, some pink, some light-blue, — buttons. The *Ranunculus Repens* numerous out about Briton's Spring. A small red maple there, seven or eight feet high, all turned scarlet. It is glorious to see those great shining high blackberries, now partly ripe there, bending the bushes in moist, rocky sprout-lands, down amid the strong, bracing scented, tender ferns, which you crush with your feet. The whorled polygala in the Saw Mill Brook Path, beyond the *Desmodium Paniculatum*, may have been out as long as the caducous. Is not that small narrow fern I find on Conantum about rocks cherry spleenwort? Now in fruit. The trillium fruit (varnished and stained cherry wood) now ripe. Bochmeria in prime, for long time. Cohush berries ripe. By Everett's wall beyond Cheney's, small rough sunflowers, six feet high, with many branches and flowers. Saw an alder locust this morning. Hear a quail [**Northern Bobwhite**  *Colinus virginianus*] now. Of late, and for long time, only the *link*, *link* of bobolink [**Bobolink**  *Dolichonyx oryzivorus* ~~Rice-bird~~].



August 24, Wednesday, 1853: Chef George Crum invented the potato chip at Moon's Lake House near Saratoga Springs, New York (according to popular legend: there are, however, still in existence, earlier recipes for some such item).

There was no potato-chip solace for young William Speiden, Jr. He left ship in a fast boat heading for [Canton](#) and stopped on board the American clipper *Star of the Union* to witness a trial of members of its crew on a charge of mutiny. —Maybe that will be amusing. —Maybe they'll get flogged and sentenced to life imprisonment on bread and water. There's such a huge amount of nothing going down here.

The Reverend [Theodore Parker](#) wrote to [Professor Pierre Jean Édouard Desor](#), mentioning how tolerant he was of Spiritualism and Swedenborgianism.

A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

This morning bright and early we commenced ferrying ourselves across and by sunset had everything across without an accident. Gave a man six dollars to drive our stock across.

In [Henry Thoreau](#)'s journal entry below, what might "[R.W.E.'s heater piece](#)" have amounted to? The answer is to be found in an entry Thoreau would make on June 20th, 1855 in which he would refer to "a catbird's nest eight feet high on a pitch pine in Emerson's heater piece, partly of paper" — clearly, when Thoreau referred to Emerson's "heater piece," the reference must have been to a woodlot that supplied the Emerson family home's winter fuel.



Aug. 24. Another cool, autumn-like morning, also quite foggy. Rains a little in the forenoon and cloudy the rest of the day.

P.M. — To Saw Mill Brook *via* Trillium Woods.

A cool breeze blows this cloudy afternoon, and I wear a thicker coat.

The mulgedium by railroad is seven feet high, with great panicles of a regular, somewhat elliptic-



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lanceolate (?) form, two and a half feet long by ten inches. The *Prinos lavigatus* berries begin to redden. The farmers are beginning to clear out their ditches now.

Blue-stemmed goldenrod, apparently a few days in some places. The goldenrod which I have observed in bloom this year are (I do not remember the order exactly) (1) *stricta*, (2) *lanceolata*, (3) *arguta* (?), (4) *nemoralis*, (5) *bicolor*, (6) *odora*, (7) *altissima*, (8) *ulmifolia* (?), (9) *casia*. The 4th is the prevailing one and much the most abundant now. The 1st perhaps next, though it may be getting old. The *altissima* (7th) certainly next. It is just beginning to be abundant. Its tops a foot or more broad, with numerous recurved racemes on every side, with yellow and yellowing triangular points. It is the most conspicuous of all. The *bicolor* (5th) next, though not conspicuous. The 3d, 8th, 2d, and 6th perhaps never abundant. The *caesia* (9th) just begun.

The asters and diplopappi are about in this order: (1) *Radula*, (2) *D. cornifolius* (?), (3) *A. corymbosus*,³⁵ (4) *patens*, (5) *laevis*, (6) *dumosus* (?), (7) *miser*, (8) *macrophyllus*, (9) *D. umbellatus*, (10) *A. acuminatus*, (11) *puniceus*. The *patens* (4), of various forms, *some* lilac, is the prevailing blue or bluish one now, middle-sized and very abundant on dry hillsides and by woodpaths; the *laevis* next. The 1st, or *Radula*, is not abundant. (These three are all the distinctly blue ones yet.) The *dumosus* is the prevailing white one, very abundant; *miser* mixed with it. *D. umbellatus* is conspicuous enough in some places (low grounds), and *A. puniceus* beginning to be so. But *D. cornifolius*, *A. corymbosus*, *macrophyllus*, and *acuminatus* are confined to particular localities. *Dumosus* and *patens* (and perhaps *laevis*, not common enough) are the prevailing asters now.

The common large osmunda (?) is already considerably imbrowned, but the odorous dicksonia (?), which, like most ferns, blossoms later, is quite fresh. This thin, flat, beautiful fern it is which I see green under the snow.³⁶ I am inclined to call it the lace fern. (Peaches fairly begun.) It is a triangular web of fine lace-work surpassing all the works of art.

Solidago latifolia not yet. I see roundish silvery slate-colored spots, surrounded by a light ring, near the base of the leaves of an aster (*miser*?), one beneath another like the dropping of a bird, or as if some tincture had fallen from above. Some of the leaves of the *A. patens* are red. The alternate cornel berries, which are particularly apt to drop off early, are a dark, dull blue, not china-like. I see those of maple-leaned viburnum merely yellowish now. There grows by Saw Mill Brook a long, firmer, thimble-shaped high blackberry with small grains, with more green ones still on it, which I think like the New Hampshire kind. I see some black and some greenish light slate-colored fungi. This certainly is the season for fungi. I see on the shrub oaks now caterpillars an inch and a half or more long, black with yellowish stripes, lying along the petioles, — thick living petioles. They have stripped off the leaves, leaving the acorns bare. The *Ambrina* (*Chenopodium*, Bigelow) *Botrys*, Jerusalem-oak, a worm-seed, by [R.W.E.](#)'s heater piece. The whole plant is densely branched — branches, spike-like-and appears full of seed. Has a pleasant, more distinct wormwood-like odor. In a dry sprout-land (Ministerial Lot), what I will call *Solidago puberula*³⁷ will open in a day or two, — upright and similar to *stricta* in leaves, with a purple stem and smooth leaves, entire above, and a regular oblong appressed panicle. *Bidens chrysanthemoides*, of a small size and earlier, by Turnpike, now in prime there. I see cattle coming down from up-country. Why? Yellow Bethlehem-star still. *A. miser* (?) disk and elliptic-lanceolate leaves serrate in middle, may be as early as *dumosus*.



September 11, Sunday, 1853: A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

Got a late start this morning on account of one of our cattle straying off. Followed the river for six miles then crossed. Here we found the Indian Agency, the first frame house we have seen since we left the States. Here also we left the Umatilla and struck across to Butter Creek 10 miles which we made by sundown and found good grass and water. Drove 16 miles.

35. Or *cordilolius*.

36. [A mistake. See *postea*.]

37. *Vide* Sept. 1st.



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In [California](#), the 1st electric telegraph came into use, between Merchant's Exchange and Point Lobos.

An earthquake was experienced at Biloxi and several other vacation spots on the Gulf coast.

The captain of a Siamese man-of-war came aboard an American vessel anchored near [Canton](#) "complaining of his men being in state of mutiny & that his life was in danger and asked for assistance." Despite the obvious fact that this really wasn't any of our business, things had gotten so boring that the American vessel dispatched 10 of its [US Marines](#) to inspect this crew. —Maybe this would grant them an opportunity to relieve their boredom by that Heaven-sent opportunity, of killing somebody they didn't know.

US MILITARY INTERVENTIONS



Sept. 11. Sunday. Cool weather. Sit with windows shut, and many by fires. A great change since the 6th, when the heat was so oppressive. The air has got an autumnal coolness which it will not get rid of again.

P.M. — To Dugan's.

I think I can correct somewhat my account of the goldenrods of September 4th, [two] pages back. No. 2 may be *S. stricta*, after all. (*Vide* the one at Hosmer's ditch.) Is not the *puberula* of September 4th same with No. 2? Is not No. 3 one form of *S. altissima*? Doubt if I have seen *S. ulmifolia*. Is not No. 4 the true *S. puberula*? It is the same with that by Marlborough road, September 1st. The *speciosa* may not open for a week yet.

The present appearance of the solidago in Hosmer's ditch which may be *S. stricta* [*Vide* November 3d and 4th.] is a stout erect red stem with entire, lanceolate, thick, fleshy, smooth sessile leaves above, gradually increasing in length downward till ten inches long and becoming toothed. [Not sharply.] All parts very smooth. Not yet out. This apparently same with No. 2.

The *S. nemoralis* is not as fresh as a week ago. Perhaps that was the date for the goldenrods generally. Perhaps this is the time for asters. The conspicuous and handsome bluish masses of *A. puniceus*, erect or fallen, stretch in endless rows along the brook, often as high as your head; sometimes make islands in the meadow. *Polygonum articulatum* out, many of them, at the Desert. None out September 1st. Say, then, September 5th. *A. undulatus* is now in prime, very abundant along path-sides. The branches of its panicle are commonly of about equal length on different sides the stem, and as the flowers are crowded and stand vertically on the sides as well as horizontally above, they form one (or sometimes more) conical or pyramidal or cylindrical hollow panicles of middle-sized purplish flowers, roundly bunched.

Signs of frost last night in M. Miles's cleared swamp. Potato vines black. How much farther it is back to frost from the greatest heat of summer, *i.e.* from the 6th [of this month] back to the 1st of June, three months, than forward to it, four days!

Checkerberries are full-grown, but green. They must have been new mitchella berries, then, that I saw some time ago. River cornel berries have begun to disappear. In a stubble-field, I go through a very fine, diffusely branching grass now going to seed, which is like a reddish mist to my eyes, two feet deep, and trembling around me.

There is an aster in Hosmer's ditch, like *longifolius*, with linear leaves remotely toothed, red stem, smooth, three or four feet high, but scales not recurved and flowers much smaller, with many purplish disks.



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September 25, Sunday, 1853: The Divan unanimously decided that the Porte could not accept the Vienna note and agreed that a Grand Council needed to be convoked (on the following day this Grand Council, composed of 140 persons, assembled and came to the decision that the system of negotiations having been exhausted, it had come to be appropriate for the Sultan to issue a declaration of war).

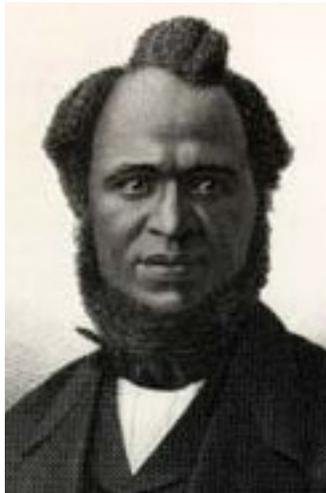
The *USS Susquehanna* came to anchor in Whampoa Reach, near Canton.

A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra, her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

Started out this morning after cutting some browse for our stock, drove 12 miles to a trading-post, where we found some feed of a coarse quality.

On a Sunday toward the end of September, which may have been this day or may have been the 18th, Mr. McDonald having been summoned to a church meeting in regard to another slaveowning member of the congregation (someone who allegedly was in need of extra spiritual guidance because allegedly he had just whipped one of his slaves to death), Jack Burton seized the opportunity and one of his master's mules and some rope, and well before dawn made his way toward the Missouri River. After several days of hiding and traveling he managed to reach Fayette and the home of his father-in-law, the free barber Lewis Tomlin. After one last visit to his wife and child, he would arm himself with a dirk, a couple of shirts, and about a dollar and a half — and make his dash toward Canada and life as a free man.

JOHN ANDERSON



Sept. 25. Sunday. Dined with Lowell. Said the largest pine Goddard's men cut last winter scaled in the woods forty-five hundred feet board measure, and was worth ninety dollars at the Bangor boom, Oldtown. They cut a road three miles and a half for this alone. They do not make much of a path, however. From L. I learned that the untouched white pine timber which comes down the Penobscot waters is to be found at the head of the East Branch and the head waters of the Allegash, about Eagle Lake and Chamberlain, etc., and Webster Stream. But Goddard had bought the stumpage in eight townships in New Brunswick. They are also buying up townships across the Canada line.



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September 26, Monday, 1853: The Turkish Divan having unanimously decided that the Porte could not accept the Vienna note and a Grand Council composed of 140 persons having assembled and come to the decision that the system of negotiations having been exhausted, it had come to be appropriate for the Sultan to issue a declaration of war, the Tsar and the Austrian Emperor met in Olmütz (Olomouc) to attempt to diffuse this crisis.

Anchored for the winter on the far-away reaches of the far-eastern river, William Speiden, Jr. celebrated his 18th birthday. Finally he was old enough to drink! The officers gathered in the mess to toast this youngster's health with a glass or two of wine. He and his father thought of his younger brother Theodore Speiden (1845-1878), who back at home in Washington DC would be celebrating his 8th birthday on roughly this same day (give or take, of course, an international trans-Pacific dateline).

A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

Started quite early this morning, drove until 4 o'clock and camped on Hog Back after doubling our way on very steep hills. Found some brush for our stock.

The Marysville, [California Herald](#) reported an allegation made that a party of 4 miners in the vicinity of Camptonville took out 400 ounces of coarse gold in a single week. The gold was reported to range from pieces worth \$2½ to nuggets weighing 5½ ounces. The reporter considered this claim to be dubious because gold was being gathered from "hill diggings" varying from about 20 to 75 feet deep in that region and was collected by quicksilver in sluices, and thus did not amount to "nuggets."



Sept. 26 and 27. Monday and Tuesday I was coming to Boston and Concord. Aboard the steamer Boston were several droves of sheep and oxen and a great crowd of passengers.



September 29, Thursday, 1853: A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

Drove out this morning quite early, this is a happy day to us. This day lands us where we can see once more a civilized community and once more enjoy the preached gospel and the society of Christians. Thanks be to the All Seeing Eye who has watched over us across the dreary plains and still more dreary mountains. Reached Oregon City about 3 o'clock. This the end of our journey of toil. We are landed safe in the "Willamette" Valley a point of great interest to all weary emigrants.



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[Queen Victoria](#) assisted at Balmoral in the laying of the cornerstone of the great tower of a new royal palace.

When the vessel *Annie Jane*, out of Liverpool, was driven onto Barra Island in the Hebrides with 450 Irish emigrant passengers, 348 perished.

TIMELINE OF ACCIDENTS



LOST AT SEA

Underway from Whampoa, the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* hoisted the Broad Pennant of [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#), and stood down the [Canton](#) River. They anchored at Cum Sing Moon (Chin-hsing-Men), north of Macao.



Sept. 29. Thursday. Cool and windy. Wind roars in the trees. *Viola cucullata*, *Aster puniceus* and *longifolius* still. *Solidago speciosa* out in Hubbard's Swamp since I went away, — say ten days ago. This must be a late one, then. *Diplopappus linariifolius*, *Aster undulatus*, and a few small ones. Red oak acorns fall. The witch-hazel at Lee's Cliff, in a fair situation, has but begun to blossom; has not been long out, so that I think it must be later than the gentian. Its leaves are yellowed. Barberry ripe. Sumachs and maples changed, but not trees generally. Bluets still. *Viburnum Lentago* berries yet. Lambkill blossoms again.



September 30, Friday, 1853: A wagon train, and true grit, had brought 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America, safely to the Willamette Valley of Oregon.

[Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) temporarily transferred his command to the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* (through December 19th).

[Johannes Brahms](#) arrived at the door of [Robert Schumann](#) in Düsseldorf, but was informed by a young Schumann that her parents were not at home. She suggested that he return on the following day.

The following appeared in [Frederick Douglass' Paper](#):

Musical Notices



COMMODORE PERRY

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LITTLE TOPSEY'S SONG. Words by Miss Eliza Cook. Composed and affectionately dedicated to his Mother, by Asa B. Hutchinson, as sung at the concerts of the Hutchinson Family. Boston: Oliver Pitman.

We have just been favored with a copy of this song. The lines, by Miss E. Cook, have been copied into our paper more than once; and we have seen them in many other journals. They are peculiarly touching, and characteristic of poor Topsey; and give a portraiture of the misery, darkness and degradation of the poor negro-slave child, that cannot be contemplated, by the true Christian philanthropist, without deep emotion. The music is very appropriate; the harmony of the three voices in the chorus is fine; and we should greatly enjoy to hear the sweet voices of the Hutchinsons singing.

“This is Topsey's human song
Under love's endeavor
Hurrah, then, for the white child's work,
Humanity for ever!”

The song deserves a wide circulation: and it will have it.

BURLINGTON, Vt., 1853.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS, ESQ.: DEAR SIR:—I take the liberty of sending you a few lines, and, though a stranger to you, I trust I am not so to the noble cause you so faithfully and zealously advocate. I am greatly interested in reading your valuable paper, which comes to me as regularly as the week rolls by; and I am rejoiced to see it so well filled with good news from all parts of the country, in relation to the success and progress of the cause of freedom. I wish to express to you my belief that the great National Convention, held in August last, will accomplish more good through its influence upon the minds of all classes of the people, than anything else which has been done since the organization of the Liberty Party; yet, perhaps some may think I should make here two exceptions, one in favor of Uncle Tom's Cabin, the other in favor of the Fugitive Slave Law—these have done a mighty work towards liberating the oppressed from an ignoble and almost helpless bondage. Our thanks and our gratitude are due to Mrs. Stowe, for the great and good work, while the most commanding intellects of the age are merely exerting their talents to amuse the people; her's [sic] have been exerted to instruct them in the path of duty—to enlighten their moral reception—and to excite their sympathies in favor of a helpless and oppressive people. Uncle Tom has paid a visit to almost every family in the country; and his earnest and tearful appeal to all of the best, and purest, and noblest feelings of human nature will never be forgotten by those who have given him a candid hearing. This leaven is silently, but surely working its way to the hearts of the great mass of the American people. The Fugitive Slave Law, intended, by its framers, to operate in favor of slavery, is doing much for universal liberty; it has lighted anew the torch of slavery agitation; and the severity of its enactments, and their execution, have raised up, in favor of the oppressed, a host of friends who are willing to sacrifice their lives and their fortunes to knock the fetters from their shackled limbs; it has driven many a victim to the land of freedom, where, on British soil, he enjoys the rights and immunities of a free-born citizen, which he cannot find in this great republic—it may well



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be considered a stepping-stone to liberty. In relation to the Convention, I will add, it seems to have imparted new action, and increased energy to the members of that body; and it is greatly to be hoped that a spirit of harmony will prevail through all the deliberations of the Council, and that they may be guided in their motives by disinterested benevolence. Before us lies a great and glorious work to be accomplished, and the time has fully come when energetic action seems to be indispensable. Resolutions are good, but right *action* is better. Let the spirit of reform be carried into action, and the good work will roll on to its consummation.—Friend J.W. Loguen has been recently laboring in our State, and, I hope, with good success. I am glad to find him a faithful and fearless champion of liberty. May the good spirit who guides and protects the faithful servant bless his labors. I hope to hear a good report of his doings in this section of the country.

Yours for the oppressed,
JAMES L. TAYLOR.



Sept. 30. Friday. Saw a large flock of black ducks  flying northwest in the form of a harrow.

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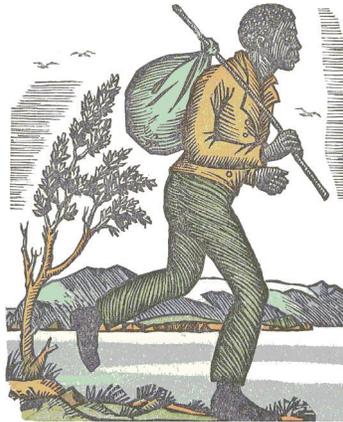
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 October 4, Tuesday, 1853: The Reverend John Lewis Russell got married with Hannah Buckminster Ripley. The newlyweds would settle down in Salem, Massachusetts (he would continue to preach, but occasionally).

At Sumla, Ottoman commander Omer Pasha delivered an ultimatum to the Russian commander Prince Gorchakov: On threat of war, Russia needed to evacuate the Danube Principalities.

The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* dropped her colors to half-mast to honor the death of Lieutenant Joseph Harrod Adams (1817-1853) of the sidewheel steam frigate *USS Powhatan*. (Chief of Staff Henry Allen Adams had the title "Captain of the Fleet." This Lieutenant Adams, a grandson of President John Adams and a nephew of President John Quincy Adams, by way of contrast, had entered the US Navy as a midshipman in 1831 and had been appointed as a naval lieutenant in 1843.)

In Rock Island, Jack Burton, who had never shaved anyone but himself, managed to persuade a barber to hire him.



In this community, the fugitive slave would meet members of a society of abolitionists, who would pay his

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way to [Chicago](#).

JOHN ANDERSON



Oct. 4. The maples are reddening, and birches yellowing. The mouse-ear in the shade in the middle of the day, so hoary, looks as if the frost still lay on it. Well it wears the frost. Bumblebees are on the *Aster undulatus*, and gnats are dancing in the air.



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October 7, Friday, 1853: Philologist George Adler was conveyed to New York's Bloomingdale Insane Asylum.

Captain Inglefield of the *Phoenix*, arriving at the Admiralty from Arctic seas, brought the happy news that on October 26th, 1850 Captain Robert McClure of the *HMS Investigator* had discovered — a Northwest Passage.

The funeral of Lieutenant Joseph Harrod Adams (1817-1853) at the American Burying Ground (the Old Protestant Cemetery) on shore in Macao was attended by American, French, and Portuguese officers (obviously, this would have included Chief of Staff Henry Allen Adams). William Speiden, Jr. made a record that when they returned to their vessel at its moorings in the river, they discovered that its entire US Marine guard was so drunk as to be out of commission.

Jack Burton started for Chicago, his fare paid by Rock Island abolitionists. He would reside for 3 weeks with another barber of color there before heading on to Windsor in Upper Canada.

JOHN ANDERSON



Oct. 6 and 7. Windy. Elms bare.



October 22, Saturday, 1853: Naval forces of Great Britain and France entered the Dardanelles (Bosphorus).

The vessel of Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry's far-eastern fleet carrying William Speiden, Jr. traveled from Macao to Cum Sing Moon, joining there the sidewheel steam frigate *USS Powhatan*.

On this night and on October 25th, Hector Berlioz conducted wildly successful performances before full houses in Brunswick.

Waldo Emerson entered "Sanborn & friends" in his journal, indicating that the meeting that Franklin Benjamin Sanborn had proposed by letter for September 10th had actually taken place in Concord on or about this date.

The St. Francis Hotel at Clay Street and Dupont Street in San Francisco was destroyed by fire. James Coleman,



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foreman of the [Herald](#), was killed and several firemen were injured.

In Kent, England, 30 hop pickers, many of them Gypsies, were killed when their wagon had fallen from a rotting bridge into the River Medway swollen by rains, near Hadlow. The tragedy, in which 16 members of a single Roma family died, would become known as the Hartlake Disaster. It was on this day that the inquest into that accident was held.

[Henry Thoreau](#) made an entry in his journal about how “One-eyed [John Goodwin](#), the fisherman, was loading into a hand-cart and conveying home the piles of driftwood which of late he had collected with his boat,”



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that he was later to copy into his early lecture [“WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT”](#) as:

[Paragraph 85] One afternoon late last fall I took my boat and dropt down the Concord River. One of my neighbors, a jolly fisherman,¹ was loading into a handcart and conveying home the piles of drift wood which he had collected with his skiff during the previous month. It was a beautiful evening, and a clear amber sunset lit up all the eastern shore, and that man’s employment, though he is regarded by most as a vicious character—so simple and direct—whose whole motive was so easy to fathom—thus to obtain his winter’s wood—charmed me unspeakably. So much do we love actions that are simple. They are all poetic.

[Paragraph 86] Consider how the broker collects his winter’s wood—what sport he makes of it—what are his boat and hand-cart! Postponing instant life, he makes haste to Boston in the cars, and there deals in stocks, not quite relishing his employment, and so earns the money with which he buys his fuel; and when perchance I meet him about this indirect and complicated business, I am not struck with the beauty of his employment. It does not harmonize with the sunset.

[Paragraph 87] How much more the former consults his genius, or some genius! I should be glad to get my fuel so—indeed, have got some of it so. I know very well that if I buy one necessary of life, I cheat myself to some extent. I deprive myself of the inexpressible pleasure which is the unfailing reward of satisfying any want of our nature simply and truly. Consider how far this division of labor is a division of life,—so that you get only a fraction for your share!

[Paragraph 88] All trade goes fatally against the grain. It postpones life and substitutes death. If the first generation does not die of it, the third or fourth does. In face of all statistics, I will never believe that it is the descendants of tradesmen who keep the state alive, but of simple yeomen and laborers. Indeed statistics tell us that the city is continually reinforced by the country. The oldest and wisest trader or politician grows not more human so. He makes a habit of disregarding the moral right—the rights of his own nature—sacrificing them to the conventional or legal—commits a slow suicide, in short, and thinks to recover by retiring on to a farm one day—but he becomes merely a gray wharf-rat at last, and if he does go into the country—I put it to him—if it is not with the habits and aims of such vermin?

[Paragraph 89] It is the simple life of the other and the vigor it imparts—that enable him, vagabond as he is, though he does get drunk and is sent to the house of correction so often, to hold up his head still among men.

[Paragraph 90] The merchant says to himself—“If I go to Boston every day and sell tape from morning till night—which I will admit is not a beautiful action—I shall be able to buy the best of fuel without stint.” Yes, but not the pleasure of picking it up by the river side which I may say is of more value than the warmth it yields—for when on the fire it keeps the vital heat in us only that we may repeat such pleasing exercises. It warms us twice and the first warmth is the most wholesome² and memorable, compared with which the other is mere coke.

[Paragraph 91] That fisherman stood on the solid earth—it looked solider under him. For such as he, no political economies with their profit and loss.

1. The fisherman is identified in the journal source of this passage as “One-eyed John Goodwin.”

2. The manuscript copy-text reads ‘wholsome’.

**Brad Dean's
Commentary**



Oct. 22. A week or more of fairest Indian summer ended last night, for to-day it rains. It was so warm day before yesterday, I worked in my shirt-sleeves in the woods. I cannot easily dismiss the subject of the fallen leaves. How densely they cover and conceal the water

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for several feet in width, under and amid the alders and button-bushes and maples along the shore of the river, — still light, tight, and dry boats, dense cities of boats, their fibres not relaxed by the waters, undulating and rustling with every wave, of such various pure and delicate, though fading, tints, — of hues that might make the fame of teas, — dried on great Nature's coppers. And then see this great fleet of scattered leaf boats, still tight and dry, each one curled up on every side lay the sun's skill, like boats of hide, scarcely moving in the sluggish current, — like the great fleets with which You mingle on entering some great mart, some New York which we are all approaching together. Or else they are slowly moving round in some great eddy which the river makes, where the water is deep and the current is wearing into the bank. How gently each has been deposited on the water! No violence has been used toward them yet. But next the shore, as thick as foam they float, and when you turn your prow that way, list! what a rustling of the crisped waves! Wet grounds about the edges of swamps look dry with them, and many a wet foot you get in consequence.

Consider what a vast crop is thus annually shed upon the earth. This, more than any mere grain or seed, is the great harvest of the year. This annual decay and death, this dying by inches, before the whole tree at last lies down and turns to soil. As trees shed their leaves, so deer their horns, and men their hair or nails. The year's great crop. I am more interested in it than in the English grass alone or in the corn. It prepares the virgin mould for future cornfields on which the earth fattens. They teach us how to die. How many flutterings before they rest quietly in their graves! A myriad wrappers for germinating seeds. By what subtle chemistry they will mount up again, climbing by the sap in the trees. The ground is all parti-colored with them.

For beautiful variety can any crop be compared with them? The dogwood (poison sumach) blazing its sins as scarlet, the early-blushing maple, the rich chrome (?) yellow of the poplar, the mulberry ash, the brilliant red huckleberry with which the hills' backs are painted like sheep's, — not merely the plain flavidness of corn, but all the colors of the rainbow. The salmon-colored oaks, etc., etc. The frost touches them, and, with the slightest breath of day or jarring of earth's axle, see in what showers they come floating down, at the first earnest touch of autumn's wand. They stoop to rise, to mount higher in coming years by subtler chemistry, and the sapling's first fruits, thus shed, transmuted at last, may adorn its crown, when, in after years, it has become the monarch of the forest.

Yesterday, toward night, gave [Sophia](#) and mother a sail as far as the Battle-Ground. One-eyed John Goodwin, the fisherman, was loading into a hand-cart and conveying home the piles of driftwood which of late he had collected with his boat. It was a beautiful evening, and a clear amber sunset lit up all the eastern shores; and that man's employment, so simple and direct, — though he is regarded by most as a vicious character, — whose whole motive was so easy to fathom, — thus to obtain his winter's wood, — charmed me unspeakably. So much do we love actions that are simple. They are all poetic. We, too, would fain be so employed. So unlike the pursuits of most men, so artificial or complicated. Consider how the broker collects his winter's wood, what sport he makes of it, what is his boat and hand-cart! Postponing instant life, he makes haste to Boston in the cars, and there deals in stocks, not quite relishing his employment, — and so earns the money with which he buys his fuel. And when, by chance, I meet him about this indirect and complicated business, I am not struck with the beauty of his employment. It does not harmonize with the sunset. How much more the former consults his genius, some genius at any rate! Now I should love to get my fuel so, — I have got some so, — but though I may be glad to have it, I do not love to get it in any other way less simple and direct. For if I buy one necessary of life, I cheat myself to some extent, I deprive myself of the pleasure, the inexpressible joy, which is the unfailing reward of satisfying any want of our nature simply and truly.

No *trade* is simple, but artificial and complex. It postpones life and substitutes death. It goes against the grain. If the first generation does not die of it, the third or fourth does. In face of all statistics, I will never believe that it is the descendants of tradesmen who keep the state alive, but of simple yeomen or laborers. This, indeed, statistics say of the city reinforced by the country. The oldest, wisest politician grows not more human so, but is merely a gray wharf rat at last. He makes a habit of disregarding the moral right and wrong for the legal or political, commits a slow suicide, and thinks to recover by retiring on to a farm at last. This simplicity it is, and the vigor it imparts, that enables the simple vagabond, though he does get drunk and is sent to the house of correction so often, to hold up his head among men.

“If I go to Boston every day and sell tape from morning till night,” says the merchant (which we will admit is not a beautiful action), “some time or other I shall be able to buy the best of fuel without stint.” Yes, but not the pleasure of picking it up by the riverside, which, I may say, is of more value than the warmth it yields, for it but keeps the vital heat in us that we may repeat such pleasing



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exercises. It warms us twice, axed the first warmth is the most wholesome and memorable, compared with which the other is mere coke. It is to give no account of my employment to say that I cut wood to keep me from freezing, or cultivate beans to keep me from starving. Oh, no, the greatest value of these labors is received before the wood is teamed home, or the beans are harvested (or winnowed from it). Goodwin stands on the solid earth. The earth looks solider under him, and for such as he no *political* economies, with *their* profit and loss, supply and demand, need ever be written, for they will need to use no policy. As for the complex ways of living, I love them not, however much I practice them. In as many places as possible, I will get my feet down to the earth. There is no secret in his trade, more than in the sun's. It is no mystery how he gets his living; no, not even when he steals it. But there is less double-dealing in his living than in your trade. Goodwin is a most constant fisherman. He must well know the taste of pickerel by this time. He will fish, I would not venture to say how many days in succession. When I can remember to have seen him fishing almost daily for some time, if it rains, I am surprised on looking out to see him slowly wending his way to the river in his oilcloth coat, with his basket and pole. I saw him the other day fishing in the middle of the stream, the day after I had seen him fishing on the shore, while by a kind of magic I sailed by him; and he said he was catching minnow for bait in the winter. When I was twenty rods off, lie held up a pickerel that weighed two and a half pounds, which he had forgot to show me before, and the next morning, as he afterward told me, he caught one that weighed three pounds. If it is ever necessary to appoint a committee on fish-ponds and pickerel, let him be one of them. Surely he is tenacious of life, hard to scale.



November 8, Tuesday, 1853: When a fireman was arrested, members of Crescent Engine Co. No. 10 of [San Francisco](#) fought the police.

When [Bronson Alcott](#) arrived in [Cincinnati, Ohio](#) by train on his 1st lecture tour in the great West, he found that everything about his visit had been prearranged by [Waldo Emerson](#)'s friend [Ainsworth Rand Spofford](#), a bookseller. Tickets admitting "a gentleman and a lady" had been retailed for \$2.50 each and the Apollo Rooms at the corner of 5th Street and Walnut Street had been leased. The initial conversation was to be on "Chaos" and was to take place on November 11th (general admission was being advertised at 50¢).

William Speiden, Jr. visited friends at [Macao](#) Roads.



Nov. 8. Mayweed and shepherd's-purse.

10 A.M. — Our first snow, the wind southerly, the air chilly and moist; a very fine snow, looking like a mist toward the woods or horizon, which at 2 o'clock has not whitened the ground. The children greet it with a shout when they come out at recess.

P. M. To riverside as far down as near Peter's, to look at the water-line before the snow covers it. By Merrick's pasture it is mainly a fine, still more or less green, thread-like weed or grass of the river bottom (?), sedges, utricularias (that coarse one especially, whose name I am not sure of, with tassels (?)), (*Utricularia vulgaris*?) yellow water ranunculus, potamogeton's translucent leaves, a few flags and pontederia stems. By Peter's there was much of that coarse triangular cellular stem mentioned yesterday as sparganium (?). I would not have thought it so common. There is not so much meadow grass or hay as I expected, for that has been raked and carried off. The pads, too, have wasted away and the pontederias' leaves, and the stems of the last for the most part still adhere to the bottom.

Three larks [[Eastern Meadowlark](#)  [Sturnella magna](#)] rise from the sere grass on Minott's Hill before me, the white of their outer tail-feathers very conspicuous, reminding me of arctic snowbirds by their size and form also. The snow begins to whiten the plowed ground now, but it has not overcome the russet of the grass ground. Birds generally wear the russet dress of nature at this season. They have their fall no less than the plants; the bright tints depart from their foliage or feathers, and they flit past like withered leaves in rustling flocks. The sparrow is a withered leaf.

The *Stellaria media* still blooms in Cheney's garden, and the shepherd's[-purse] looks even fresher.



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This must be near the end of the flower season. Perchance I heard the last cricket of the season yesterday. They chirp here and there at longer and longer intervals, till the snow quenches their song. And the last striped squirrel, too, perchance, yesterday. They, then, do not go into winter quarters till the ground is covered with snow.

The partridges [**Ruffed Grouse** **Bonasa umbellus** (Partridge)] go off with a whirl, and then sail a long way level and low through the woods with that impetus they have got, displaying their neat forms perfectly.

The yellow larch leaves still hold on, — later than those of any of our pines.

I noticed the other day a great tangled and netted mass of an old white pine root lying upon the surface, nearly a rod across and two feet or more high, too large even to be turned up for a fence. It suggested that the roots of trees would be an interesting study. There are the small thickly interwoven roots of the swamp white oaks on the Assabet.

At evening the snow turned to rain, and the sugaring soon disappeared.



November 21, Monday, 1853: Jerome Van Crowninshield Smith wrote to the Citizen's Union, accepting its having nominated him to be Mayor of Boston.

Bronson Alcott offered his 4th "conversation" at the Apollo Rooms at the corner of 5th Street and Walnut Street in Cincinnati, Ohio: "The Seminary" — the evening was in "every way delightful."

San Francisco experienced yet another earthquake shock.

William Speiden, Jr. was suffering from a violent fever and would be bedridden on board his vessel in Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry's far-eastern fleet until the 28th.

Cassius M. Clay wrote from Cincinnati, Ohio in response to an invitation from William Lloyd Garrison, President of the American Anti-Slavery Society, and from Wendell Phillips, Edmund Quincy, and Sydney Howard Gay, Secretaries of the American Anti-Slavery Society, that he address their annual convention at Boston:

Gentlemen:

Your kind letter of the 10th inst., inviting me to attend the Twentieth Anniversary of the American Anti-Slavery Society, is received. I should be proud to be with the pioneers of the cause of Liberty, on such a day, did time allow; but it does not. There is something significant in your going South. You have "conquered a peace" in Boston. When you were driven from New York, a few years ago, you immediately came in close sympathy with a large class of stern men and women, who before stood aloof in their countenance of your movement. New York is now won; and Philadelphia must now determine whether gracefully, or no, she will submit to the unconquerable truth, and the progress of the age! You are right when you class me with those who contend for "the speedy and eternal overthrow of Slavery in our land, by all rightful instrumentalities." I value it above all other questions. You fight outside of the Union; I within. So long as we agree in purpose, we will agree to disagree in the means. I love "the Union" as much as the "Silver Grays" or Southern canters; but I love it not for itself. I love it as the means to an end. I love it as the exponent and conservator of the principles of man's equality and self-government. I love it as the legacy of fathers who avowed that government had only its authority from the consent of the governed. I love it as the



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guardian also of religious liberty, and the true Christianity—that religion is between man and his god, and that no man can rightfully, in this respect, exercise censorship over others. I love the Union as the banner-bearer of the aspirants of Freedom of all lands and nations—lovely in order to be loved. But when it fails in these “glorious” ends—and in these only “glorious”—then, say I, let it perish for ever! And as I thus love it, I shall make eternal war upon all those canting scoundrels, whether in Church or State, who would pervert its true prestige to the retainment of Slavery, and its extension and perpetuity. I return the war of lynchers and “respectable” mobs! I return the war of those, however powerful, whose main business it is in these States to “crush out Abolitionism!” I return the war of those who would, by sermons, tracts, or literature, aid the reaction of anti-revolutionary avowals. I return the war of those, who, under the hallowed names of Democracy and Republicanism, stand by foreign despotisms, and who, amid blood and prisons, bear banners described with “law and order!” I return the war of the supreme Courts of the United States, who, under the pretence of devotion to law, pervert every principle of justice; of the President, of the slave Power, and of a servile congress! With a manly heart, which may be beaten down, but never conquered, I shall stand by you and all true men; and my voice shall ever be, “Don’t give up the ship.”

I am, truly, your friend, C.M. Clay



Nov. 21. Monday. A fine misty rain all night and to-day.

Raking so many cranberries has made me quite conversant with the materials of the river wreck. There are many middle-sized living black dor-bugs in it, as well as bugle-horn shells, as I find on washing out my cranberries in the kitchen to-day. I have got about two and a half bushels of clear cranberries, and added those of Saturday afternoon makes about three and a half. I find my best way of getting cranberries is to go forth in time of flood, just before the water begins to fall and after strong winds, and, choosing the thickest places, let one, with an instrument like a large coarse dung-fork, hold down the floating grass and other coarser part of the wreck mixed with [it], while another, with as common iron garden rake, rakes them into the boat, there being just enough chaff left to enable you to get them into the boat, yet with little water. When I get them home, I filled a half-bushel basket a quarter full and set it in a tub of water, and, stirring the cranberries, the coarser part of the chaff was held beneath by the berries rising to the top. Then, raising the basket, draining it, and upsetting it into as bread-trough, the main part of the chaff fell uppermost and was cast aside. Then, draining off the water, I jarred the cranberries alternately to this end and then to that of the trough, each time removing the fine chaff — cranberry leaves and bits of grass — which adhered to the bottom, on the principle of gold-washing, except that the gold was what was thrown away, and finally I spread and dried and winnowed them. It would have been better if the basket had been a very coarse riddle and the trough had had a rough bottom.

The last two nights, at least, there has been no freezing.

Is not the dew but a humbler, gentler rain, the nightly rain, above which we raise our heads and unobstructedly behold the stars? The mountains are giants which tower above the rain, as we above the dew in the grass; it only wets their feet.



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November 30, Wednesday, 1853: Next! The widower [Caleb G. Forshey](#) got married a 3d time, with Mary Eunice Williams of [Cincinnati, Ohio](#), a sister of his 2d wife Martha Annie Williams (after two sons who would die very young, they would produce two surviving sons Caleb Ethan Forshey born during January 1859 and Elmore Lindell Forshey born in about 1861; this 3d wife would outlive him).

On the same day, Russian forces destroyed the main Turkish army at Basgedikler and destroyed the Turkish fleet at Sinop on the Black Sea.

William Speiden, Jr. had recovered from his illness in the far-eastern fleet of [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) and in the following days would be socializing on the local shore.

When [Bronson Alcott](#) arrived again in [Cincinnati, Ohio](#), arrangements were made with wholesale grocer H.M. Chapin for a course of conversations there soon.



Nov. 30. 8 A.M. — To river, to examine roots.

I rake up almost everywhere from the bottom of the river that very fresh and bright green ranunculus, the handsomely divided leaf. I ascertain this morning that that white root with eyes and slaty-tinged fibres and sharp leaves rolled up, found gnawed off and floating about muskrat-houses, is the root of the great yellow lily. The leaf-stalk is yellow, while that of the white lily is a downy or mildewy blue black. The yellow lily root is, then, a principal item, it would seem, in their vegetable diet. I find that those large triangular or rhomboidal or shell-shaped eyes or shoulders on this root are the bases of leaf-stalks which have rotted off, but toward the upper end of the root are still seen decaying. They are a sort of abutment on which the leaf-stalk rested, and the fine black dots on them are the bases of the fine threads or fibres of the leaf-stalk, which, in the still living leaf-stalks, are distinguished by their purple color. These eyes, like the leaves, of course, are arranged spirally around the roots in parallel rows, in quincunx order, so that four make a diamond figure. The slate-tinged fibres spring from the bare white intervals between the bases of the leaves. Closely packed between, and protected by the under leafstalk, I find already the tender club-shaped yellow flower-bud a quarter of an inch in diameter, with a stem two inches long and wider than the bud. I am surprised to find these roots, even within to the bases of the leaves about the buds, infested with white grubs nearly half an inch long and minute, threadlike reddish and speckled worms. Also on the fibres are transparent elliptical chrysalids, the color of a snail-shell, containing insects apparently just ready to fly.

The white lily roots are more enveloped in down and fibre, a dark-blue or blackish down. I raked up one dark-brown root somewhat like a white lily, except that it was smooth and the leaf-stalks were very slender and the leaf-buds minute. Perhaps it was the kalmiana lily. I raked up one live clam in deep water, and could feel them like stones on the bottom.

All these leaves are lightly rolled up in the form of arrowheads, as thus best prepared to pierce whatever obstacles the mud or water may present. There is a vast amount of decaying vegetable matter at the bottom of the river, and what I draw up on my rake emits a very offensive odor.

P.M. — Down river by boat and inland to the green house beyond Blood's.

A mild and summery afternoon with much russet light on the landscape.

I think it was a flock of low-warbling tree sparrows³⁸ [[American Tree Sparrow](#)  [Spizella arborea](#)] which I saw amid the weeds beyond the monument, though they looked larger.

I am attracted nowadays by the various withered grasses and sedges, of different shades of straw-color and of various more or less graceful forms. That which I call fescue grass is quite interesting, gracefully bending to the zephyr, and many others are very perfect and pure. Wool-grass is one of the largest and most conspicuous. I observe it rising thinly above the water in which it is reflected, two or three feet, and all its narrow rustling leaves stream southeasterly from the stems, though it is now quite calm, proving the prevalence of northwesterly winds. An abundance of withered sedges and other coarse grasses, which in the summer you scarcely noticed, now cover the low grounds, — the granary of the winter birds. A very different end they serve from the flowers which decay so early. Their rigid culms enable them to withstand the blasts of winter. Though divested of color, fairly bleached, they are not in the least decayed but seasoned and living like the heart-wood.

Now, first since spring, I take notice of the cladonia lichens, which the cool fall rains appear to have

38. Undoubtedly; also Dec. 3d.



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started. The *Callitriche verna* is perfectly fresh and green, though frozen in, in the pools.

We are going across the Hunt and Mason pastures. The twigs of young cedars with apparently staminate buds have even a strawberry-like fragrance, and what a heavenly blue have the berries! — a peculiar light blue, whose bloom rubs off, contrasting with the green or purplish-brown leaves.

I do not know so fine a pine grove as that of Mason's. The young second-growth white pines are peculiarly soft, thick, and bushy there. They branch directly at the ground and almost horizontally, for the most part four or five large stems springing from the ground together, as if they had been broken down by cattle originally. But the result is a very dark and dense, almost impenetrable, but peculiarly soft and beautiful grove, which any gentleman might covet on his estate.

We returned by the bridle-road across the pastures. When I returned to town the other night by the Walden road through the meadows from Brister's Hill to the poorhouse, I fell to musing upon the origin of the meanders in the road; for when I looked straight before or behind me, my eye met the fences at a short distance, and it appeared that the road, instead of being built in a straight line across the meadows, as one might have expected, pursued a succession of curves like a cow-path. In fact, it was just such a meandering path as an eye of taste requires, and the landscape-gardener consciously aims to make, and the wonder is that a body of laborers left to themselves, without instruments or geometry, and perchance intending to make a straight road, — in short, that circumstances ordinarily, — will so commonly make just such a meandering road as the eye requires. A man advances in his walk somewhat as a river does, meanderingly, and such, too, is the progress of the race. The law that plants the rushes in waving lines along the edge of a pond, and that curves the pondshore itself, incessantly beats against the straight fences and highways of men and makes them conform to the line of beauty which is most agreeable to the eye at last.

But to return to the walk of the day. Though there were some clouds in the west, there was a bright silver twilight before we reached our boat. C. remarked it descending into the hollows immediately after sunset. A red house could hardly be distinguished at a distance, but a white one appeared to reflect light on the landscape. At first we saw no redness in the sky, but only some peculiar dark wisp-like clouds in the west, but on rising a hill I saw a few red stains like veins of red quartz on a ground of feldspar.

The river was perfectly smooth except the upwelling of its tide, and as we paddled home westward, the dusky yellowing sky was all reflected in it, together with the dun-colored clouds and the trees, and there was more light in the water than in the sky. The reflections of the trees and bushes on the banks were wonderfully dark and distinct, for though frequently we could not see the real bush in the twilight against the dark bank, in the water it appeared against the sky. We were thus often enabled to steer clear of the overhanging bushes.

It was an evening for the muskrats to be abroad, and we saw one, which dove as he was swimming rapidly, turning over like a wheel.



December 17, Saturday, 1853: Piano Sonata no.1 op.1 by [Johannes Brahms](#) was performed publicly for the initial time, in the Leipzig Gewandhaus, by the composer. The work, and Brahms (in his first Leipzig performance), were well received.

Aboard a vessel of the far-eastern American fleet of [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#), William Speiden, Jr. was underway from [Macao](#) to [Hong Kong](#) (this vessel would return to its anchorage at Macao Roads the following day).

The Brooklyn Rail Road Company was formed.

The Placer, [California Herald](#) reported that on the South Fork of the Feather River, gold miners were saying that their "records" were waiting impatiently for water. The diggings there had been very rich particularly in

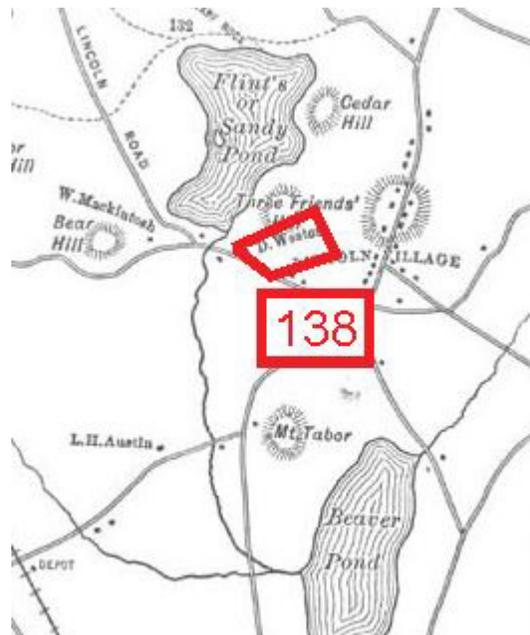
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the vicinity of a thriving little town two miles away, known as Stringtown. "If a sufficient quantity of water falls this winter, there will be an immense amount of gold taken out." A mile to the northeast, Oregon City was expecting a rich harvest to the miners. The flourishing town of Enterprise had just sprung up a mile above Oregon City, and extensive preparations were being made there for working the banks which are exceedingly rich.

In serious financial difficulty, Louis Moreau Gottschalk set sail from [New-York harbor](#) for his home in New Orleans.

[Henry Thoreau](#) made a plan of land belonging to David Weston in Lincoln.



December 17. While surveying for Daniel Weston in Lincoln to-day, saw a great many — maybe a hundred — silvery-brown cocoons, wrinkled and flattish, on young alders in a meadow, three or four inches long, fastened to the main stem and branches at same time, with dry alder and fragments of fern leaves attached to and partially concealing them; of some great moth.



December 19, Monday, 1853: Cornelius Yager of Santa Clara deeded one square foot of land and right of way to the Pacific and Atlantic Rail Road Company for construction of a railroad from [San Jose](#) to [San Francisco](#).

Aboard a vessel of the far-eastern American fleet of [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#), William Speiden, Jr. was carried up the Canton River past the Bogue. It came to anchor in Whampoia Reach.

Sometime after the incident of the spading competition, [Michael Flannery](#) had quit working for [Abiel H. Wheeler](#) and become a field laborer instead for [Elijah Wood](#). At this point he visited [Henry Thoreau](#) and related his continuing efforts to get his family from Ireland. That evening Thoreau wrote to [H.G.O. Blake](#):

An Irishman came to see me to-day, who is endeavoring to get his family out to this New World. He rises at half past four, milks twenty-eight cows (which has swollen the joints of his fingers), and eats his breakfast, without any milk in his tea or coffee,





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before six; and so on, day after day, for six and a half dollars a month; and thus he keeps his virtue in him, if he does not add to it; and he regards me as a gentleman able to assist him; but if I ever get to be a gentleman, it will be by working after my fashion harder than he does.

THOREAU ON THE IRISH

From this day into December 21st, Thoreau would be surveying a Corner Spring woodlot that James P. Brown was selling to William Wheeler, which was cut in 1853-1854. (Brown lived near Nut Meadow Brook, and according to the Concord Town Report for 1851-1852, Thoreau had laid out a town road near his house and had been paid \$4.⁰⁰ for this by the town.)



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/13.htm



Thoreau wrote to [Spencer Fullerton Baird](#) in regard to [Louis Agassiz](#)'s American Association for the Advancement of Science, to withdraw his name, pleading that he would be unable to attend meetings and explaining that the kind of science he was attracted to was the science of the Reverend [Gilbert White](#)'s

THE NATURAL HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES OF SELBORNE

and [Alexander von Humboldt](#)'s

ASPECTS OF NATURE

— as he understood very well that this was bound suitably to render him unattractive to them.³⁹

In this letter Thoreau made reference to a poem that had been published anonymously in Punch, or the London Charivari, by [Thomas Hood](#), entitled "[The Song of the Shirt.](#)"

In this letter, also, Thoreau made reference to pamphlet of 10 pages of blue paper just put out by the Smithsonian Institution that was going to become part of his personal library, [Spencer Fullerton Baird](#)'s DIRECTIONS FOR MAKING COLLECTIONS IN NATURAL HISTORY, PREPARED FOR THE USE OF THE PARTIES ENGAGED IN THE EXPLORATION OF A ROUTE FOR THE PACIFIC RAILROAD ALONG THE 49TH PARALLEL.

39. Harding and Bode, CORRESPONDENCE, pages 309-10. He gave quite a different reason for not becoming a member in his JOURNAL: "*The fact is I am a mystic, a transcendentalist, and a natural philosopher to boot.*"  Although it has been alleged many times that this reading had great influence on [Henry Thoreau](#), quite frankly I have been unable myself to verify that Thoreau took this species of nature writing as [Waldo Emerson](#) had, with any seriousness.



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GOD IN CONCORD by Jane Langton © 1992

Viking Penguin

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Penguin Books USA Inc.

*If you are going into that line, —going to besiege
the city of God, —you must not only be strong
in engines, but prepared with provisions to
starve out the garrison.*

Thoreau, Letter to Harrison Blake,
December 19, 1853

Homer took his convictions about Pond View to Police
Chief James Flower

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To: Harrison Gray Otis Blake

From: HDT

Date: 19 and 22 December 1853

Concord Dec 19th 53

Mr Blake,

My debt has accumulated so that I should have answered your last letter at once, if I had not been the subject of what is called a press of engagements, having a lecture to write for last Wednesday, and surveying more than usual besides. — It has been a kind of running fight with me — the enemy not always behind me, I trust.

True, a man cannot lift himself by his own waist-bands, because he cannot get out of himself, but he can expand himself, (which is better, there being no up nor down in nature) and so split his waist-bands, being already within himself.

You speak of doing & being — & the vanity real or apparent of much doing — The suckers, I think it is they, make nests in our river in the spring of more than a cart-load of small stones, amid which to deposit their ova. The other day I opened a muskrats' house. It was made of weeds, five feet broad at base & 3 feet high, and far and low within it was a little cavity, only a foot in diameter where the rat dwelt. It may seem trivial — this piling up of weeds, but so the race of muskrats is preserved. We must heap up a great pile of doing for a small diameter of being. — Is it not imperative on us that we do something — if we only work in a tread-mill? and, indeed, some sort



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of revolving is necessary to produce a centre & nucleus of being. What exercise is to the body – employment is to the mind & morals. Consider what an amount of drudgery must be performed – how much hum-drum & prosaic labor goes to any work of the least value. There are so many layers of mere white lime in every shell to that thin inner one so beautifully tinted. Let not the shell fish think to build his house of that alone; and pray what are its tints to him? Is it not his smooth close-fitting shirt merely? whose tints are not to him, being in the dark, but only when he is gone or dead, and his shell is heaved up to light a wreck upon the beach, do they appear. With him too it is a song of the shirt – “work – work – work” – & this work is not merely a police in the gross sense, but in the higher sense, a discipline. If it is surely the means to the highest end we know, can any work be humble or disgusting? Will it not rather elevating as a ladder – the means by which we are translated? How admirably the artist is made to accomplish his self culture by devotion to his art! The woodsawyer through his effort to do his work well, becomes not merely a better woodsawyer, but measurably a better man. Few are the men that can work on their navels – only some Brahmens that I have heard of. To the painter is given some paint & canvass instead. – to the Irishman a bog, – typical of himself. – In a thousand apparently humble ways men busy themselves to make some right take the place of some wrong, – if it is only to make a better paste-blackening – and they are themselves so much the better morally for it.

You say that you sit & aspire, but do not succeed much. Does it concern you enough that you do not? Do you work hard enough at it— Do you get the benefit of discipline out of it? If so, persevere. Is it a more serious thing than to walk a thousand miles in a thousand successive hours? Do you get any corns by it? Do you ever think of hanging yourself on account of failure?

If you are going into that line – going to besiege the city of God – you must not only be strong in engines – but prepared with provisions to starve out the garrison. An Irishman came to see me today who is endeavoring to get his family out to this New World. He rises at half past 4 & milks 28 cows – (which has swollen the joints of his fingers) & eats his breakfast, without any milk in his tea or coffee, before 6 – & so on day after day for six & a half dollars a month – & thus he keeps his virtue in him – if he does not add to it – & he regards me as a gentleman able to assist him – but if I ever get to be a gentleman, it will be by working after my fashion harder than he does – If my joints are not swollen, it must be because I deal with the teats of celestial cows before break-fast, (and the milker in this case is always allowed some of the milk for his breakfast) to say nothing of the flocks & herds of Admetus afterward.

It is the art of mankind to polish the world, and every one who works is scrubbing in some part.

If the mark is high & far, you must not only aim aright, but draw the bow with all your might. You must qualify your self to use a bow



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which no humbler archer can bend.

Work – work – work!

Who shall know it for a bow? It is not of yew-tree. It is straighter than a ray of light – flexibility is not known for one of its qualities.

Dec 22nd

So far I had got when I was called off to survey. – Pray read the Life of Haydon the painter – if you have not. It is a small revelation for these latter days – a great satisfaction to know that he has lived – though he is now dead. Have you met with the letter of a Turkish cadi at the end of Layard's "Nineveh & Babylon" that also is refreshing & a capital comment on the whole book which preceeds it – the oriental genius speaking through him.

Those Brahmins put it through, they come off – or rather stand still, conquerors, with some withered arms or legs at least to show – & they are said to have cultivated the faculty of abstraction to a degree unknown to Europeans, – If we cannot sing of faith & triumph – we will sing our despair. We will be that kind of bird. There are day owls & there are night owls – and each is beautiful & even musical while about its business.

Might you not find some positive work to do with your back to Church & State – letting your back do all the rejection of them? Can you not go upon your pilgrimage, Peter, along the winding mountain path whither you face? A step more will make those funereal church bells over your shoulder sound far and sweet as a natural sound

Work – work – work!

Why not make a very large mud pie & bake it in the sun! Only put no church nor state into it, nor upset any other pepper -box that way. – Dig out a wood-chuck for that has nothing to do with rotting institutions – Go ahead.

Whether a man spends his day in an extacy or despondency – he must do some work to show for it – even as there are flesh & bones to show for him. We are superior to the joy we experience.

Your last 2 letters methinks have more nerve & will in them than usual – as if you had erected yourself more – Why are not they good work – if you only had a hundred correspondents to tax you?

Make your failure tragical – by the earnestness & steadfastness of your endeavor – & then it will not differ from success – Prove it to be the inevitable fate of mortals – of one mortal – if you can.

You said that you were writing on immortality – I wish you would communicate to me what you know about that – you are sure to live while that is your theme –

Thus I write on some text which a sentence of your letters may have furnished.

I think of coming to see you as soon as I get a new coat – if I have money enough left – I will write to you again about it.

Henry D. Thoreau



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[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRIES IN HIS JOURNAL FOR DECEMBER 19TH-21ST]



December 23-24, Friday and Saturday, 1853: The steamer *San Francisco* was wrecked 300 miles out of New-York harbor, but its passengers were rescued:

TIMELINE OF ACCIDENTS

I understand the large hearts of heroes,
The courage of present times and all times;
How the skipper saw the crowded and rudderless wreck of the steam-ship,
and Death chasing it up and down the storm,
How he knuckled tight and gave not back an inch, and was faithful of days
and faithful of nights,
And chalk'd in large letters on a board, *Be of good cheer, We will not desert you*;
How he saved the drifting company at last,
How the lank loose-gowned women look'd when boated from the side of
their prepared graves,
How the silent old-faced infants and the lifted sick, and the sharp-lipp'd
unshaved men;
All this I swallow, it tastes good, I like it well, it becomes mine,
I am the man, I suffer'd, I was there.

— [Walt Whitman](#)

On the stage of [Concord](#)'s Town Hall, [Caroline Downes Brooks Hoar](#) set up a [Christmas](#) tree for the children of Concord, decorating it with candles and gifts. 700 children and their teachers formed a semicircle in front of the stage, a hymn was sung — and St. Nicholas appeared. While he addressed the assembly presents were passed out and bags of candy were tossed into the crowd. A box had been prepared for residents of the poor farm, and there were specific gifts for Concord notables such as Josiah Bartlett and Waldo Emerson.

This is the [Christmas](#) season on which Ellen Emerson in boarding school at age 14 had written home to her father Ralph Waldo Emerson and her mother Lidian Emerson, asking for specific presents:

Dear Mother, This is only a despatch about presents which I am writing in haste.... I want presents for nine girls, pretty little ornaments and trifles of that kind are fashionable here.... May I have in my Christmas box some candy of various kinds, some macaroons ... and cocoa-nut cakes and some apples?... Two cakes of "Chocolat Perfectionné", some almond candy, some vanilla cream candy and particularly I want a whole quantity of barley candy....



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We note that it is clear from this note what is the state of development of the commercialized [Christmas](#) gift-giving tradition at this point in time: Ellen has received Christmas presents before and expects Christmas presents again, and she is thinking at least primarily of items to be purchased in stores rather than items to be made at home.

In a heavy gale the rudderhead of the [Staffordshire](#), a clipper packet ship valued at \$120,000 with a figurehead of a witch, out of Liverpool heading for Boston, was sprung.

William Speiden, Jr. of the far-eastern American fleet of [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) noticed that thousands of dollars in silver coinage were being distributed among the various vessels of America's Far-Eastern Squadron. (There's no need to be so curious, Bill.)

Santa Claus, or Saint Nicholas, was definitely a presence by this year, or, at least, he rated a mention in the [New Hampshire Gazette](#):

The genuine New England article for the reception of all the Christmas and New Year's gifts which the good Santa Claus chooses to bestow upon children [is] an article wonderfully characteristic of our thrift and also of our want of poetic taste, ... the woolen stocking, red or blue.... by the least imaginative among the young folks, suspended at the head of the bed, but by those whose intuitive belief in the marvelous is stronger, as near the fireplace as possible, in order to make sure that Saint Nicholas will not overlook it.

The Placer, [California Herald](#) reported having learned from the pages of the [Nevada Young American](#) that rich new diggings had been discovered on a small stream emptying into the Middle Yuba River, a stream known as Wolf Creek. The gold from this locale was of such pure quality as to sell readily at \$17.40 per ounce. Many were doing remarkably well, and 3 of the miners had been able to take out 32 ounces in 3 days.



Dec. 24. The rain of yesterday concluded with a whitening of snow last evening, the third thus far. Today is cold and quite windy.

P.M. — To the field in Lincoln which I surveyed for Weston the 17th.

Walden almost entirely open again. Skated across Flint's Pond; for the most part smooth but with rough spots where the rain had not melted the snow. From the hill beyond I get an arctic view northwest. The mountains are of a cold slate-color. It is as if they bounded the continent toward Behring's Straits.

In Weston's field, in springy land on the edge of a swamp, I counted thirty-three or four of those large silvery-brown cocoons within a rod or two, and probably there many more about a foot from the ground, commonly on the main stem — though sometimes on a branch close to the stem — of the alder, sweet-fern, brake, etc., etc. The largest are four inches long by two and a half, bag-shaped and wrinkled and partly concealed by dry leaves, — alder, ferns, etc., — attached as if sprinkled over them. This evidence of cunning in so humble a creature is affecting, for I am not ready to refer it to an intelligence which the creature does not share, as much as we do the prerogatives of reason. This radiation of the brain. The bare silvery cocoons would otherwise be too obvious. The worm has evidently said to itself: "Man or some other creature may come by and see my casket. I will disguise it, will hang a screen before it." Brake and sweet-fern and alder leaves are not only loosely sprinkled over it and dangling from it, but often, as it were, pasted close upon and almost incorporated into it. Saw Therien yesterday afternoon chopping for Jacob Baker in the rain. I heard his axe half a mile off, and also saw the smoke of his fire, which I mistook for a part of the mist which was drifting about. I asked him where he boarded. At Shannon's. He asked the price of board and said I was a *grass* boarder, *i.e.* not a regular one. Asked him what time he started in the morning. The sun was up when he got out of the house that morning. He heard Flint's Pond whooping like cannon the moment



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he opened the door, but sometimes he could see stars after he got to his chopping-ground. He was working with his coat off in the rain. He said he often saw gray squirrels running about and jumping from tree to tree. There was a large nest of leaves close by. That morning he saw a large bird of some kind. He took a French paper to keep himself in practice, — not for news; he said he did n't want news. He had got twenty-three or twenty-four of them, had got them bound and paid a dollar for it, and would like to have me see it. He had n't read it half; there was a great deal of reading in it, by gorry. He wanted me to tell him the meaning of some of the hard words. How much had he cut? He was n't a-going to kill himself. He had got money enough. He cut enough to earn his board. A man could not do much more in the winter. He used the dry twigs on the trees to start his fire with, and some shavings which he brought in his pocket. He frequently found some fire still in the morning. He laid his axe by a log and placed another log the other side of it. I said he might have to dig it out of a snowdrift, but he thought it would not snow. Described a large hawk killed at Smith's (which had eaten some hens) its legs "yellow as a sovereign;" apparently a goshawk [~~Goshawk~~ **Accipiter gentillis** (~~Cape Eagle or Partridge Hawk~~)]. He has also his beetle and wedges and whetstone. In the town hall this evening, my white spruce tree, [see page 22.] one of the small ones in the swamp, hardly a quarter the size of the largest, looked double its size, and its top had been cut off for want of room. It was lit with candles, but the starlit sky is far more splendid to-night than any saloon.



December 25, Christmas, Sunday, 1853: Heavy frost this morning covered the ground in San Francisco, California.

In Grass Valley, Lola Montez threw a party for the little neighborhood girls. One of these little neighborhood girls would grow up to be a performer: 6-year-old Lotta Crabtree, whose mother Mary Ann Crabtree happened to be running a boarding house in the neighborhood.

Edwin Booth appeared in "Richard the Third" at the new Metropolitan Theatre in San Francisco.

In a heavy gale the bowsprit of the Staffordshire, a clipper packet ship valued at \$120,000 with a figurehead of a witch, out of Liverpool heading for Boston, was carried away, bringing down the foremast with it. As the vessel floundered in the waves some of those on board set off in rowboats.

William Speiden, Jr. of the far-eastern American fleet of Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry enjoyed Christmas dinner at the home of Mrs. De Silver in Hong Kong.

Russian and Turkish forces clashed at Cetate on the Danube near Craiova without strategic result.

Henry Thoreau delivered himself of one of his more interesting remarks about Boston as a city of barrels and about the Long Wharf in Boston Harbor:



Dec. 25. P. M. — Skated to Fair Haven and above. At seven this morning the water had already oozed out at the sides of the river and flowed over the ice. It appears to be the result of this bridging of the river in the night and so obstructing the channel or usual outlet.

About 4 P.M. the sun sunk behind a cloud, and the pond began to boom or whoop. I noticed the same yesterday at the same hour at Flint's. It was perfectly silent before. The weather in both cases clear, cold, and windy. It is a sort of belching, and, as C. said, is somewhat frog-like. I suspect it did not continue to whoop long either night. It is a very pleasing phenomenon, so dependent on the altitude of the sun.

When I go to Boston, I go naturally straight through the city down to the end of Long Wharf and look off, for I have no cousins in the back alleys. The water and the vessels are novel and interesting. What are our maritime cities but the shops and dwellings of merchants, about a wharf projecting into



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the sea, where there is a convenient harbor, on which to land the produce of other climes and at which to load the exports of our own? Next in interest to me is the market where the produce of our own country is collected. Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Charleston, New Orleans, and many others are the names of wharves projecting into the sea. They are good places to take in and to discharge a cargo. Everybody in Boston lives at No. so-and-so, Long Wharf. I see a great many barrels and fig-drums and piles of wood for umbrella-sticks and blocks of granite and ice, etc., and that is Boston. Great piles of goods and the means of packing and conveying them, much wrapping-paper and twine, many crates and hogsheads and trucks, that is Boston. The more barrels, the more Boston. The museums and scientific societies and libraries are accidentals. They gather around the barrels, to save carting. [Cape Cod, page 268; Riv. 324, 325.]

LONG WHARF

BOSTON

NEW-YORK

PHILADELPHIA

CHARLESTON

NEW ORLEANS

WHARVES OF BOSTON

Apparently the ice is held down on the sides of the river by being frozen to the shore and the weeds, and so is overflowed there, but in the middle it is lifted up and makes room for the tide. I saw, just above Fair Haven Pond, two or three places where, just before the last freezing, when the ice was softened and partly covered with sleet, there had been a narrow canal, about eight inches wide, quite across the river from meadow to meadow. I am constrained to believe, from the peculiar character of it on the meadow end, where in one case it divided and crossed itself, that it was made either by muskrats or otters or minks repeatedly crossing there. One end was for some distance like an otter trail in the soft upper part of the ice, not worn through.

HDT

WHAT?

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December 29, Thursday, [1853](#): The far-eastern American fleet of [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) fired off a 13-gun salute at daybreak in memory of the late Vice President of the US William Rufus de Vane King (1786-1853). It fired another 17 guns at noon. It fired 21 at sunset. King, a US senator from Alabama and former US Minister to France, had been a close companion to President James Buchanan. Though very ill at the time of his election, he had been sworn in as vice president under Franklin Pierce during March 1853, dying on April 18th mere weeks into his term in office. He was a great loss to our nation, one worthy of a 13-gun salute at dawn, a 17-gun salute at noon, and a 21-gun salute at sunset.

In London, James Wilson set up the Chartered Bank of India, [Australia](#), and China under a Royal Charter from [Queen Victoria](#). This entity would set up agencies in [Hong Kong](#) and Singapore in 1859. In 1862 it would begin to issue a Hong Kong Dollar banknote, and after a merger with Standard Bank would eventuate as Hong Kong's present-day Standard Chartered Bank.

[Henry Thoreau](#) recorded in his journal the rebuffing of an intervention he had attempted in regard to [Alek Therien](#):



Dec. 29. We survive, in one sense, in our posterity and in the continuance of our race, but when a race of men, of Indians for instance, becomes extinct, is not that the end of the world for them? Is not the world forever beginning and coming to an end, both to men and races? Suppose we were to foresee that the Saxon race to which we belong would become extinct the present winter, — disappear from the face of the earth, — would it not look to us like the end, the dissolution of the world? Such is the prospect of the Indians. All day a driving snow-storm, imprisoning most, stopping the cars, blocking up the roads. No school to-day. I cannot see a house fifty rods off from my window through [it],⁴⁰ yet in midst of all I see a bird, probably a tree sparrow [[American Tree Sparrow](#) [Spizella arborea](#)], partly blown, partly flying, over the house to alight in a field. The snow penetrates through the smallest crevices under doors and side of windows.

P.M. — Tried my snow-shoes. They sink deeper than I expected, and I throw the snow upon my back. When I returned, twenty minutes after, my great tracks were not to be seen. It is the worst snow-storm to bear that I remember. The strong wind from the north blows the snow almost horizontally, and, beside freezing you, almost takes your breath away. The driving snow blinds you, and where you are protected, you can see but little way, it is so thick. Yet in spite, or on account, of all, I see the first flock of arctic snowbirds (*Emberiza nivalis*) [[Dark-eyed Junco](#) [Junco hyemalis](#) (~~Slate-colored Sparrow or Snow-bird or F. Hyemalis~~)] near the depot, white and black, with a sharp, whistle-like note. An hour after I discovered half a pint of snow in each pocket of my greatcoat. What a contrast between the village street now and last summer! The leafy elms then resounding with the warbling vireo [[Warbling Vireo](#) [Vireo gilvus](#)], robins [[American Robin](#) [Turdus migratorius](#)], [bluebirds](#) [[Bluebird](#), [Eastern](#) [Sialia sialis](#)], and the fiery hangbird [[Northern Oriole](#) [Icterus galbula](#)], etc., to which the villagers, kept indoors by the heat, listen through open lattices. Now it is like a street in Nova Zembla, — if they were to have any there. I waded to the post-office as solitary a traveller as ordinarily in a wood-path in winter. The snow is mid-leg deep, while drifts as high as one's head are heaped against the houses and fences, and here and there range across the street like snowy mountains. You descend from this, relieved, into capacious valleys with a harder bottom, or more fordable. The track of one large sleigh alone is visible, nearly snowed up. There is not a track leading from any door to indicate that the inhabitants have been forth to-day, any more than there is track of any quadruped by the wood-paths. It is all pure untrodden snow, banked up against the houses now at 4 P.M., and no evidence that a villager has been abroad to-day. In one place the drift covers the front-yard fence and stretches thence upward to the top of the front door, shutting all in, and frequently the snow lies banked up three or four feet high against the front doors, and the windows are all snowed up, and there is a drift over each window, and the clapboards are all hoary with it. It is as if the inhabitants were all frozen to death, and now You threaded the desolate streets weeks after that calamity. There is not a sleigh or vehicle of any kind on the Mill-Dam, but one saddled horse on which a farmer has come into town. The cars are nowhere. Yet they are warmer, merrier than ever there within. At the post-office they ask each traveller news of the cars, — "Is there any train up or down?" — or how deep the snow is on a level.

40. In an ordinary snow-storm, when snowing fast, Jan. 1st, '54, I can see E. Wood's house, or about a mile.

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Of the snow bunting [Snow Bunting  *Plectrophenax nivalis*], [Wilson](#) says that they appear in the northern parts of the United States “early in December, or with the first heavy snow, particularly if drifted by high winds.” This day answers to that description exactly. The wind is northerly. He adds that “they are... universally considered as the harbingers of severe cold weather.” They come down from the extreme north and are common to the two continents; quotes Pennant as saying that they “inhabit not only Greenland but even the dreadful climate of Spitzbergen, where vegetation is nearly extinct, and scarcely any but *cryptogamous* plants are found. It therefore excites wonder, how birds, which are graminivorous in every other than those frost-bound regions, subsist: yet are there found in great flocks both on the land and ice of Spitzbergen.” P. also says that they inhabit in summer “the most naked Lapland Alps,” and “descend in rigorous seasons into Sweden, and fill the roads and fields: on which account” the Laplanders call them “*hardwarsfogel*,” hard-weather birds. Also P. says “they overflow [in winter] the more southern countries in amazing multitudes.” W. says their colors are very variable, “and the whiteness of their plumage is observed to be greatest towards the depth of winter.” Also W. says truly that they seldom sit long, “being a roving restless bird.” Peabody says that in summer they are “pure white and black,” but are not seen of that color here. Those I saw to-day were of that color, behind A. Wheeler’s. He says they are white and rustybrown here.

These are the true winter birds for you, these winged snowballs. I could hardly see them, the air was so full of driving snow. What hardy creatures! Where do they spend the night?

The woodchopper goes not to the wood to-day. His axe and beetle and wedges and whetstone he will find buried deep under a drift, perchance, and his fire all extinguished.

As you go down the street, you see on either hand, where erst were front yards with their parterres, rolling pastures of snow, unspotted blankness swelling into drifts. All along the path lies a huge barrow of snow raised by the arctic mound-builder. It is like a pass through the Wind River Mountains or the Sierra Nevada, — a spotless expanse of drifted snow, sloping upward over fences to the houses, deep banks all along their fronts closing the doors. It lies in and before Holbrook’s piazza, dwarfing its columns, like the sand about Egyptian temples.

The windows are all sealed up, so that the traveller sees no face of inhabitant looking out upon him. The housekeeper thinks with pleasure or pain of what he has in his larder. No shovel is put to the snow this day. To-morrow we shall see them digging out. The farmer considers how much pork he has in his barrel, how much meal in his bin, how much wood in his shed. Each family, perchance, sends forth one representative before night, who makes his way with difficulty to the grocery or post-office to learn the news; *i.e.*, to hear what others say to it, who can give the best account of it, best can name it, has waded farthest in it, has been farthest out and can tell the biggest and most adequate story; and hastens back with the news. I asked [Therien](#) yesterday if he was satisfied with himself. I was trying to get a *point d’appui* within him, a shelf to spring an arch from, to suggest some employment and aim for life. “Satisfied!” said he; “some men are satisfied with one thing, and some with another, by George. One man, perhaps, if he has got enough, will be satisfied to sit all day with his back to the fire and his belly to the table; that will satisfy him, by gorry.” When I met him the other day, he asked me if I had made any improvement. Yet I could never by any manoeuvring get him to take what is called a spiritual view of things, of life. He allowed that study and education was a good thing, but for him it was too late. He only thought of its expediency; nothing answering to what many call their aspirations.

He was humble, if he can be called humble who never aspires.

He cut his trees very low, close to the ground, because the sprouts that came from such stumps were better. Perhaps he distinguished between the red and scarlet oak; one had a pale inner bark, the other a darker or more reddish one. Without the least effort he could defend prevailing institutions which affected him, better than any philosopher, because he implicitly accepted them and knew their whole value. He gave the true reason for their prevalence, because speculation had never suggested to him any other. Looking round among the trees, he said he could enjoy himself in the woods chopping alone in a winter day; he wanted no better sport.

The trees were frozen, — had been sometimes, — but would frequently thaw again during the day. Split easier for it, but did not chop better.

The woodchopper to-day is the same man that Homer refers to, and his work the same. He, no doubt, had his beetle and wedge and whetstone then, carried his dinner in a pail or basket, and his liquor in a bottle, and caught his woodchucks, and cut and corded, the same. The thoughts and associations of summer and autumn are now as completely departed from our minds as the leaves are blown from the trees. Some withered deciduous ones are left to rustle, and our cold immortal evergreens. Some lichenous thoughts still adhere to us.

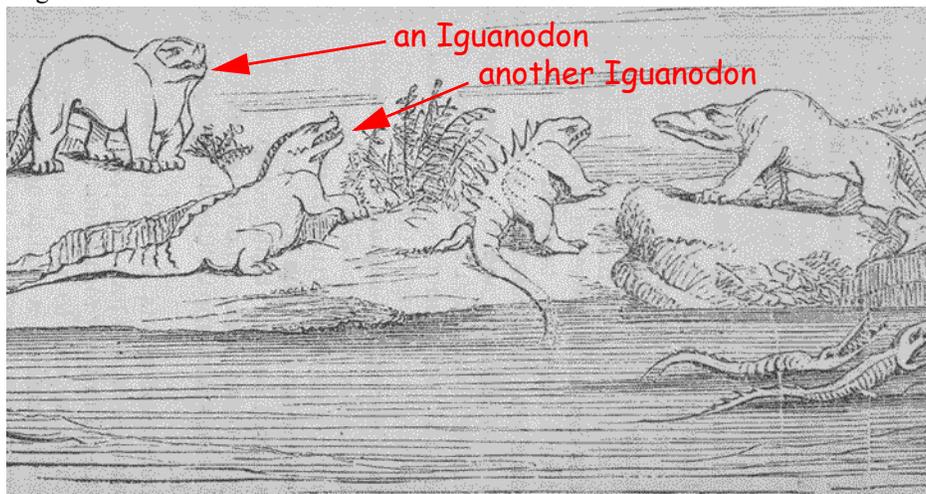
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 December 31, Saturday, 1853: Aboard the far-eastern American fleet of [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#), William Speiden, Jr. noted: “The last day of the year—it ends quietly. A year hence, hope to be home.” What, homesick already, lad? –Are things too quiet for you, after all that cannon fire?

[Sir Richard Owen](#) hosted a dinner party in the bowels of the beast: inside the partially completed model of *Iguanodon*, which was being prepared under his direction by Benjamin Waterhouse Hawkins for display in the [Crystal Palace](#) at Sydenham. Owen got to sit at the head of the table, which was inside the beast’s head, and 11 others were seated at this table. (There was an adjoining table, outside the model, that seated another 10 (had Owen been aware of the true size of *Iguanodon*, this other table would have fitted inside the model as well).

By the way, it was Owen’s agenda to use the [dinosaurs](#) to argue against that new scientific theory, the one about “evolution.” The magnificence and perfection of these terrible lizards was a central part of his argument from design.



I wonder, would the menu that night have included iguana?





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1854

Read  [Henry Thoreau's Journal for January 1854 \(æf. 36\)](#)

 January 1, Sunday, [1854](#): 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 a New Year celebration in the strait of Victoria Island, [Hong Kong](#), Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) provided egg nog for his officers aboard his flagship *Susquehanna*. A good time was had by all.

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



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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.⁴¹

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](#):

To: HDT
From: Ralph Waldo Emerson
Date: 1 January 1854

1 Jan^y 1854
Dear Henry,
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

41. 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.



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H.D. Thoreau.

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



Jan. 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.

[Transcript]

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](#) [Pooecetes 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,⁴² 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 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.

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



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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 présents 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 6, Friday, [1854](#): Sherlock Holmes was born (or so we have been informed).

Aboard the US steam frigate *Mississippi* beautifully decorated with flags, with Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) as guest of honor, there was a theatrical entertainment in Hong Kong harbor for some 200 invitees.

The hulk of the Pacific Mail Steam Ship Company's steamer *SS San Francisco*, that had been built in New-York and had foundered on December 23d off the coast of the Carolinas during its initial voyage toward [San Francisco](#) when its engines broke down, on this day slipped beneath the waves.

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.



Jan. 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



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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.



January 8, Sunday morning, 1854: Aboard [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#)'s far-eastern fleet, Court Martial sentences were rendered for cases of disgraceful conduct.

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.



Jan. 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."

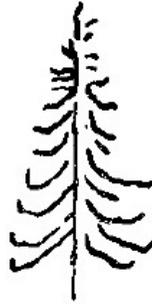
I have often been attracted by this harmonious tint in his and other drawings, and sometimes, especially, have observed it in nature when at sunset I inverted my head. We love not so well the landscape represented as in broad noon, but in a morning or evening twilight, those seasons when the imagination 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](#) [Picooides 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

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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 he 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; he 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 not 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



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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.



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 January 14, Saturday, 1854: The Placer, California Herald copied from the Marysville Herald that new and rich diggings had been discovered at Hesse's Crossing. In one claim, 2 young men had been at work for 9 weeks. The 1st week's work netted \$91 and the production had steadily increased up to last week, when they took out \$500. "There are but few miners in that region at present."

The fleet of Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry received letters from home by a mail steamer, that had been written during November 1853, as his *Powhatan* got underway and stood out of the Hong Kong harbor with the *Lexington* in tow, followed by the *Mississippi* towing the *Southampton* — and the *Susquehanna* departing last with the Commodore aboard.

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.

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[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

Viking Penguin

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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

Penguin Books USA Inc.

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 [**Ruffed Grouse** ■ *Bonasa umbellus* (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 (?) (*pratum*); 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



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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 deicere 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 Parcaë, 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.”

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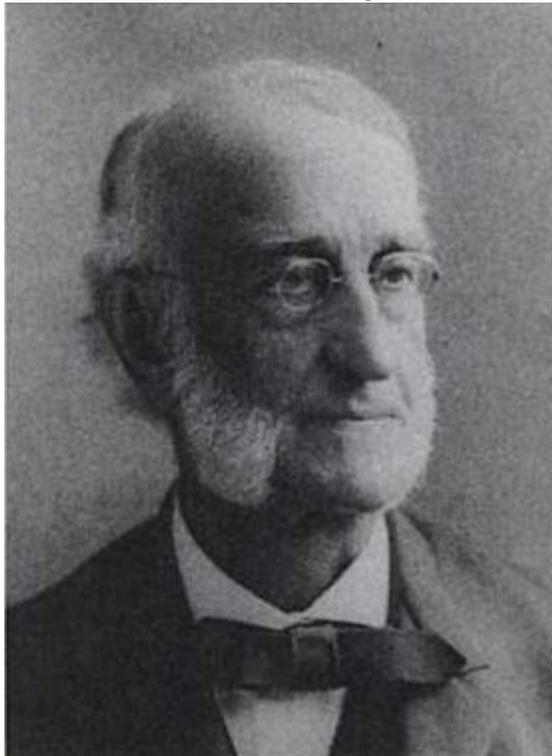
MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

 January 21, Saturday, 1854: [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."

The fleet of Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) came to anchor near the island of Okinawa in the Nansei, or Ryukyu, Islands, at Naha, Lew Chew.

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.



To: H.G.O. Blake

From: HDT

Date: 1/21/54

*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*





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*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
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[]*

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*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 † 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*



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<<lines missing at bottom of xerox>>
*squab — divested of your air
inflated pinions. (By the way, excuse*

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*this writing, for I am using the stub
of the last feather I chance to pos-
sess —) 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 char-
acters 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 per-
chance 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.*

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*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*



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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.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR JANUARY 21ST]



January 22, Sunday, 1854: 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.

William Speiden, Jr. of the flotilla of Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) visited friends in Okinawa, including Usesato, a local resident, and Elizabeth Bettelheim, wife of Church of England missionary the Reverend Doctor Bettelheim.



Jan. 22nd 54 Saw Jan 20th some tree sparrows [[American Tree Sparrow](#) [Spizella arborea](#)] 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

[Transcript]



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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 [**Snowy Owl**  *Nyctea scandiaca* ~~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 deep & would not bear.

CAT

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

ELLERY CHANNING



January 23, Monday, 1854: 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.

Visiting the capital of the Ryukyu Kingdom, Shuri, William Speiden, Jr. of the flotilla of Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) was surprised at the contrast it offered with other parts of Okinawa.

[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.⁴³

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.

43. 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?

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 January 25, Wednesday, 1854: The flotilla of Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) experimented with a new oven and found that 100 pounds of flour yielded 39 loaves of bread weighing a total of 106 pounds. These loaves were distributed to officers' messes and to the sick, aboard the various ships.

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

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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.”



Jan. 25. At noon return to Concord.

A very cold day.

Satin a man in Worcester this morning who took a pride in never wearing gloves or mittens. Drives in the morning. Said he succeeded by keeping his arm and wrist well covered. He had a large hand, one of his fingers as big as three of mine. But this morning he had to give up. The 22d, 23d, 24th, and 25th of this month have been the coldest spell of weather this winter.

Clear and cold and windy.



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January 29, Sunday, morning, [1854](#): The steamer *Columbia* delivered the [Kip](#) family to its [California](#) destination, the community of San Francisco.

William Speiden, Jr. of the flotilla of Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) and a friend Arthur Sinclair, Jr., a captain's clerk from the *Supply*, made the serious social blunder, seemingly to the amusement of the natives, of engaging local children in play-marching — until this provoked an intervention.

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.

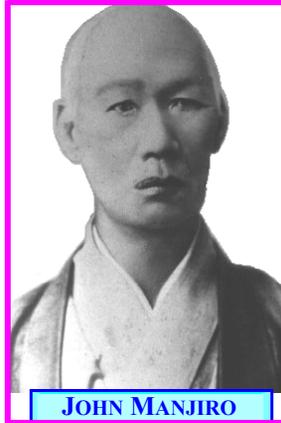
[Varro](#) says that *gluma* seems to be *a glubendo* because the grain is shelled from its follicle (*deglubitur*). *Arista*, the beard of grain, is so called because it dries first (*quod arescit prima*). The grain, *granum*, is a *gerendo*, for this is the object of planting, that this maybe borne. “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 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.

COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

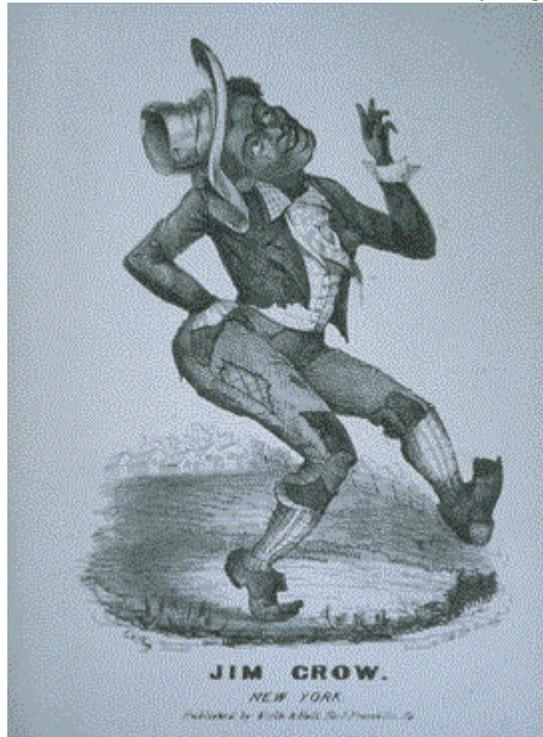
February 1854: The US naval force under the command of Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) that had landed in [Nagasaki](#) in 1853, at this point returned to Japanese waters, this time with 7 ships (4 sailing vessels and 3 steamships) and 1,600 men, demanding that they were going to open trade with [Japan](#) or know the reason why. After a standoff, the Commodore would be able to land and begin peace and trade talks on March 8th, 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" (the Japanese fascination with black Americans, noticeable even today, began here).



ME HAPPY SO ME SING

THE MINSTREL SHOW



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

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

Read  [Henry Thoreau's Journal for February 1854 \(æf. 36\)](#)



February 1, Wednesday, [1854](#): Railroad passengers rode on narrow gauge tracks for the 1st time, between Buffalo, [New York](#) and Erie, Pennsylvania.

HISTORY OF RR

The [U.S. Marine](#) guard of the flotilla of Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) engaged in drills on the [Okinawa](#) shore (we have no preserved record of whether these island foreigners were in any way impressed or intimidated).

[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.





COMMODORE PERRY

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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 3, Friday, 1854: William Speiden, Jr. was with the landing party that accompanied Commodore Perry on his visit to the Prince Regent at the palace at Shuri. He noted in his journal that the Prince Regent of Lew Chew, Sho Tai, being still but a small child, actually it was his Regent with whom the Commodore was meeting (Sho Tai would serve as the last King of the Ryukyu Kingdom, which would end with the creation in 1879 of the [Okiwana](#) Prefecture).

[Henry Thoreau](#) mused about the attractions of the [Hollowell Farm](#) he had once schemed 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



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY



February 12, Sunday, 1854: [Robert Schumann](#) was suffering constant hallucinations, hearing heavenly instruments and J.S. Bach's "Ein feste Burg."

William Speiden, Jr. reported that the *Mississippi*, *Lexington*, and *Vandalia* were at anchor in the Bay of Hawat-su. The US frigates had come upon the *Macedonian* aground there and came to her aid, hauling off with steam power and towing her to safe anchorage.

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

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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 lisping 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.⁴⁴ 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 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

44. [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 lisping 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.*

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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.



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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, 1854: The squadron of Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry moved up Edo Bay, with the *Susquehanna*, *Powhatan*, and *Mississippi* towing the *Lexington*, *Vandalia*, and *Macedonian*. William Speiden, Jr. went on deck and sighted Mount Fuji covered in snow. The squadron reached anchor near Uruga, where Japanese authorities boarded the *Powhatan* and Captain of the Fleet Henry A. Adams engaged in cultural exchange.

Henry Thoreau walked to Walden Pond at 7 AM to skate. In the afternoon the snow prevented further skating.



Feb. 13: Monday. 7 A.M. — To Walden.

A warm morning, overcast. The ice does not ring when I strike it with an axe. Tried to drive a stake

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in two places outside a wood, but found it frozen. Failed also in two places within the wood, but succeeded in a third.

P.M. — It snows again, spoiling the skating, which has lasted only one day. I do not remember the winter when the ice remained uncovered a week.

 February 14, Tuesday, 1854: 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.

When [Japanese](#) officials visiting the *Powhatan* expressed their appreciation for the terms of [President Millard Fillmore](#)'s letter asking for greater cooperation between the nations on matters of interaction and trade, according to William Speiden, Jr. they also commented that although our "President's letter said that we had come for amiable purposes," they were noticing that peculiarly we never acceded to any of their requests. Then, when the Americans requested permission to survey the bay and erect signal staffs on shore, the Japanese delegation courteously responded that they hoped the Americans would refrain from any such surveying until preliminary negotiations regarding the presidential letter had been completed. Um....

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](#).



Feb. 14. P.M. — Down railroad.
A moist, thawing, cloudy afternoon, preparing to rain.



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The telegraph resounds at every post. It is a harp with one string, — the first strain from the American lyre. In Stow's wood, by the Deep Cut, hear the *gnah gnah* of the white-breasted, black-capped nuthatch [**White-breasted Nuthatch**  ***Sitta carolinensis*** (~~White-bellied Nuthatch~~)]. I went up the bank and stood by the fence. A little family of titmice [**Chickadee, Black-capped**  ***Parus atricapillus*** (~~Titmouse, Titmice~~)] gathered about me, searching for their food both on the ground and on the trees, with great industry and intentness, and now and then pursuing each other. There were two nuthatches at least, talking to each other. One hung with his head down on a large pitch pine, pecking the bark for a long time, — leaved blue above, with a black cap and white breast. It uttered almost constantly a faint but sharp *quivet* or creak, difficult to trace home, which appeared to be answered by a baser and louder *gnah gnah* from the other. A downy woodpecker [**Downy Woodpecker**  ***Picoides pubescens***] also, with the red spot on his hind head and his cassock open behind, showing his white robe, kept up an incessant loud tapping on another pitch pine. All at once an active little brown creeper [**Brown Creeper**  ***Certhia americana***] makes its appearance, a small, rather slender bird, with a long tail and sparrow-colored back, and white beneath. It commences at the bottom of a tree and glides up very rapidly, then suddenly darts to the bottom of a new tree and repeats the same movement, not resting long in one place or on one tree. These birds are all feeding and flitting along together, but the chickadees are the most numerous and the most confiding. I observe that three of the four thus associated, viz. the chickadee, nuthatch, and woodpecker, have black crowns, at least the first two, very conspicuous black caps. I cannot but think that this sprightly association and readiness to burst into song has to do with the prospect of spring, — more light and warmth and thawing weather. The titmice keep up an incessant faint tinkling *tchip*; now and then one utters a lively *day day day*, and once or twice one commenced a gurgling strain quite novel, startling, and springlike. Beside this I heard the distant crowing of cocks and the divine harmony of the telegraph, — all spring-promising sounds. The chickadee has quite a variety of notes. The *phebe* [**Eastern Phoebe**  ***Sayornis phoebe***] one I did not hear to-day. I perceive that some of these pools by the Walden road which on the 6th looked so green have frozen blue.

CHANTICLEER

This greater liveliness of the birds methinks I have noticed commonly in warm, thawing days toward spring. F. Brown, who has been chasing a white rabbit this afternoon with a dog, says that they do not run off far, — often play round within the same swamp only, if it is large, and return to where they were started. Spoke of it as something unusual that one ran off so far that he could not hear the dogs, but he returned and was shot near where he started. He does not see their forms, nor marks where they have been feeding.



February 18, Saturday, 1854: 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.

Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) hauled down his Broad Pennant from the *Susquehanna* and hoisted it on board the *Powhatan*. The Americans continued to survey the [Japanese](#) bay.

The [California](#) gazette [Sierra Citizen](#)⁴⁵ delivered words of hardy insight:

MINES AND MINING IN SIERRA COUNTY. — Perhaps in no part of the State have such changes taken place as on the head waters of the several branches of the Yuba. Soon after the tide of emigration, began to roll into this country some adventurous individuals not satisfied with the riches of the bars below followed the course of the river farther and farther until at length they arrived at the Forks, which was then considered almost equal to the achievement of Mungo Park. After the approach of winter they

45. Previously known as the [Mountain Echo](#).



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returned to the lower settlements, with such bewildering stories of whole pans full of gold that could be had for the digging, that in the following spring every steamboat and ox-wagon was freight with all sorts of people, with all sorts of indescribably apparatus, with which they confidently expected to exhaust the resources of the Yuba in an incredibly short space of time.

The fame of the Yuba spread far and wide, and then commenced a general rush to its head waters. No matter how rich the claim might be on the bars below, it was abandoned under the impression, that if the river was rich so low down there must be mountains of gold at its source.

The general idea, then, was that the thin scales found below had been washed down from some monstrous gold hill above, hence everyone was desirous of pushing as far as possible into the mountains, thinking that the further he could get the better would be the opportunity of realizing the extravagant visions that half demented him. Since then one cannot travel in any direction without meeting prospecting parties, some looking for Gold Lake, some burrowing in the hill side, while under the nearest tree another party, half discouraged, half hopeful, are smoking their pipes around a camp-fire, trying to solve the perplexing question, whether it is better to continue wandering through the mountains and take the chances, or to return to the river and work for five dollars a day.

Within the last four years the restless, untiring energy of the miners have been gradually developing the resources of this region. Instead of the mines being exhausted in two or three years, as many wise-acres predicted, they are now in a more prosperous condition than they ever were. It is true, that the richest surface deposits have been exhausted, and in the most practicable places the bed of the river has been worked. But attention has been turned to the unexhaustible treasures of the hills, which for several years were neglected.

The day has gone by, for amateur miners to lay down the law-book, the scalpel, or the pen, make a flying visit to the mines and return with both pockets full of gold. It now requires the strong arm and iron will, to dig deep in the bowels of the earth. For this the professional gentleman and the man of leisure are not prepared.

[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.

**ROSS/ADAMS
COMMENTARY**



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

In the afternoon he walked to Yellow Birch Swamp, which he found more to his liking.

Bear in mind, when you read in [Thoreau](#)'s journal below, "But the last part of January and all February thus far have been alternate thaw and freeze and snow. It has more thaws, even as the running "r" (root of $\rho\acute{\epsilon}\omega$) occurs twice in it and but once in January. I do not know but the more light and warmth plainly accounts for the difference. It does not take so much fuel to keep us warm of late." — that [Gordon V. Boudreau](#), on page 95 his 1990 *THE ROOTS OF WALDEN AND THE TREE OF LIFE* (Nashville TN: Vanderbilt UP), was of the considered judgment that Thoreau must have had "a speech 'defect' that gave a peculiar sort of 'burr' sound to the letter r, thus the terminal syllable of each '-ber' month would elicit an equivalent shiver from him." He justifies such an inference in Footnote #6 on page 215. His justification totally is that he is an uninventive copyist: he had merely lifted this without consideration from page 346 of [Professor Walter Roy Harding](#)'s 1965 *THE DAYS OF HENRY THOREAU* (NY: Alfred A. Knopf), whereas this professor had uninventively merely lifted it without consideration from page 2 of [William Ellery Channing](#)'s 1873 *THOREAU, THE POET-NATURALIST / WITH MEMORIAL VERSES* (Boston: Roberts Brothers).⁴⁶

[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."



Feb. 18. P.M. — To Yellow Birch Swamp.

As I remember January, we had one (?) great thaw, succeeded by severe cold. It was harder getting about, though there may have been no more snow because it was light, and there was more continuous cold and clear sparkling weather. But the last part of January and all February thus far have been alternate thaw and freeze and snow. It has more thaws, even as the running "r" (root of $\rho\acute{\epsilon}\omega$) occurs twice in it and but once in January. I do not know but the more light and warmth plainly accounts for the difference. It does not take so much fuel to keep us warm of late. I begin to think that my wood will last. We begin to have days precursors of spring.

I see oil ice by the riverside, front of N. Barrett's, very slender insects a third of an inch long, with grayish folded wings reaching far behind and two antennæ. Somewhat in general appearance like the long wasps. At the old mill-site, saw two pigeon woodpeckers dart into and out of a white oak. Saw the yellow under sides of their wings. It is barely possible I am mistaken, but, since Wilson makes them common in Pennsylvania in winter, I feel pretty sure. Such sights make me think there must be bare ground not far off south. It is a little affecting to walk over the hills now, looking at the reindeer lichens here and there amid the snow, and remember that ere long we shall find violets also in their midst. What an odds the season makes! The birds know it. Whether a rose-tinted water lily is sailing amid the pads, or Neighbor Hobson is getting out his ice with a cross-cut saw, while his oxen are eating their stalks. I noticed that the ice which Garrison cut the other day contained the lily pads and stems within it. How different their environment now from when the queenly flower, floating on the trembling surface, exhaled its perfume amid a cloud of insects! Hubbard's wooded hill is now almost bare of trees. Barberries still hang on the bushes, but all shrivelled. I found a bird's nest of grass and mud in a barberry bush filled full with them. It must have been done by some quadruped or bird. The curls of the yellow birch bark form more or less parallel straight lines up and down on all sides of the tree, like parted hair blown aside by the wind, or as when a vest [*sic*] bursts and blows open.

46. Thus doth worshipful footnoting make exaggerating idiots of us all! — Had Thoreau actually had any kind of noticeable speech "defect" there would of course have been hundreds of inane lyceum attenders who could not have failed to make a note of such in their dear 19th-Century diaries. Channing also described Thoreau as blue-eyed — among a bunch of other stuff that he simply made up in order to garner some jingling coin from the trade press.



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Rabbit-tracks numerous there, sometimes quite a highway of tracks over and along the frozen and snow-covered brook. How pleasant the sound of water flowing with a hollow sound under ice from which it has settled away, where great white air bubbles or hollows, seen through the ice and dark water, alternately succeed each other. The *Mitchella repens* berries look very bright amid the still fresh green leaves. In the birch swamp west of this are many red (?) squirrel nests high in the birches. They are composed within of fibres of bark. I see where the squirrels have eaten walnuts along the wall and left the shells on the snow.

Channing has some microscopic reading these days. But he says in effect that these works are purely material. The idealist views things in the large.

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.

What a contrast between the upper and under side of many leaves, — the indurated and colored upper side and the tender, more or less colorless under side, — male and female, — even where they are almost equally exposed! The under side is commonly white, however, as turned away from the light toward the earth. Many in which the contrast is finest are narrow, revolute leaves, like the delicate and beautiful *Andromeda Polifolia*, the ledum, *Kalmia glauca*. De Quincey says that “the ancients had no experimental knowledge of severe climates.” Neither have the English at home as compared \with us of New England, nor we, compared with the Esquimaux.

This is a common form of the birch scale, — black, I think, — not white, at any rate.



The handsome lanceolate leaves of the *Andromeda Polifolia*, dark. but pure and uniform dull red above, strongly revolute, and of a delicate bluish white beneath, deserve to be copied on to works of art.

 February 19, Sunday, 1854: 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.

Officials visited the *Powhatan* bearing gifts of fresh produce, etc., to convey a message that “the Mandarin who was at Uraga was prepared to hand over the Japanese Emperor’s response to President Millard Fillmore’s letter and had full power to negotiate in regard to anything it contained.” They hoped Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry would come ashore to participate in such a negotiation.

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.



Feb. 19: Many college text-books which were a weariness and a stumbling-block, when *studied*, I have since read a little in with pleasure and profit. For several weeks the fall has seemed far behind, spring comparatively near. Yet I cannot say that there is any positive sign of spring yet; only we feel that we are sloping toward it. The sky has sometimes a warmth in its colors more like summer. A few birds have possibly strayed northward further than they have wintered.

P.M. — To Fair Haven by river, back by railroad. Though the wind is cold, the earth feels the heat of the sign higher in the heavens and melts in plowed fields. The willow twigs rise out of the ice beside the river, the silvery down of each catkin just peeping from under each scale in some places, — the work probably of last fall’s sun, — like a mouse peeping from under its covert. I incline to walk now in swamps and on the river and ponds, where I cannot walk in summer. I am struck by the

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greenness of the green-briar at this season, still covering the alders, etc., twelve feet high and full of shining and fresh berries. The greenness of the sassafras shoots makes a similar impression.

The large moths apparently love the neighborhood of water, and are wont to suspend their cocoons over the edge of the meadow and river, places more or less inaccessible, to men at least. I saw a button-bush with what at first sight looked like the open pods of the locust or of the water asclepias attached. They were the light ash-colored cocoons of the *A. Promethea*, four or five, with the completely withered and faded leaves wrapped around them, and so artfully and admirably secured to the twigs by fine silk wound round the leaf-stalk and the twig, — which last add nothing to its strength, being deciduous, but aid its deception, — they are taken at a little distance for a few curled and withered leaves left on. Though the particular twigs on which you find some cocoons may never or very rarely retain any leaves, — the maple, for instance, — there are enough leaves left on other shrubs and trees to warrant their adopting this disguise. Yet it is startling to think that the inference has in this case been drawn by some mind that, as most other plants retain some leaves, the walker will suspect these also to. Each and all such disguises and other resources remind us that not some poor worm's instinct merely, as we call it, but the mind of the universe rather, which we share, has been intended upon each particular object. All the wit in the world was brought to bear on each case to secure its end. It was long ago, in a full senate of all intellects, determined how cocoons had best be suspended, — kindred mind with mine that admires and approves decided it so. The hips of the late rose, though more or less shrivelled, are still red and handsome. It outlasts other hips. The sweet-briar's have lost their color and begun to decay. The former are still very abundant and showy in perfect corymbs of a dozen or so amid the button-bushes. It might be called the water-rose. The trees in the maple swamp squeak from time to time like the first fainter sounds made by the red squirrel. I have little doubt the red squirrel must lay up food, since I see them so rarely abroad. On the cherry twigs you see the shining clasp of caterpillars' eggs. The snow not only reveals a track but sometimes hands it down to the ice that succeeds it. The sled-track which I saw in the slight snow over the ice here February 2d, though we have had many snows since and now there is no snow at all, is still perfectly marked on the ice.

Much study a weariness of the flesh, eh? But did not they intend that we should read and ponder, who covered the whole earth with alphabets, — primers or bibles, — coarse or fine print? The very débris of the cliffs — the stivers [?] of the rocks — are covered with geographic lichens: no surface is permitted to be bare long. As by an inevitable decree, we have come to times at last when our very waste paper is printed. Was not He who creates lichens the abettor of Cadmus when he invented letters? Types almost arrange themselves into words and sentences as dust arranges itself under the magnet. Print! it is a close-hugging lichen that forms on a favorable surface which paper offers. The linen gets itself wrought into paper that the song of the shirt may be printed on it. Who placed us with eyes between a microscopic and a telescopic world?

There are so many rocks under Grape-vine Cliff that apparently for this reason the chopper saws instead of cuts his trees into lengths. The wood fern (*Dryopteris marginalis*?) still green there. And are they not small saxifrages so perfectly green and fresh, as if just started, in the crevices? I wait till sundown on Fair Haven to hear it boom, but am disappointed, though I hear much slight crackling. But, as for the previous cracking, it is so disruptive and produces such a commotion that it extends itself through snowdrifts six inches deep, and is even more distinct there than in bare ice, even to the sharpest angle of its forking. Saw an otter-track near Walden.



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February 21, Tuesday, 1854: Carnivals-Spektakel-Quadrille op.152 by Johann Baptist Strauss II was performed for the initial time, in Schwender's Colosseum, Vienna.

In Placerville, California a gold-mining gazette had begun on February 17th, under the masthead Mountain Democrat. This new publication reported that it had been advised of a discovery: "new and extensive hill and surface diggings have recently been discovered in our immediate neighborhood. The diggings are richer, deeper and covers a greater extend of ground than any heretofore discovered. The lode was first open by a party who has been at work for some time past, 7 miles above this place, near the head of 'Chunk Canyon' a tributary of the North Branch of Weber creek, from which point the lode was traced down the divide, nearly forming a connection with the Coon Hollow Lode, which for richness stands unrivaled. Shafts have and after being opened which prospected from the surface three cents to the bucket and in some instances as high as 75 cents. Eight cents however is about the general average. Chunk Canyon and Iowa Ditch furnish water, but not sufficient for the demand."

The *Vandalia* got underway and headed toward Uruga with Captain of the Fleet Henry A. Adams on board, to meet with Japanese officials from Edo.

In the afternoon Henry Thoreau walked to Goose Pond by way of Tuttle Patch.



Feb. 21. A.M. — A fine, driving snow-storm.
Have seem no good samples of the blue in snow this winter. At noon clears up.

P.M. — To Goose Pond by Tuttle Path.

A little snow, lodged on the north side of the woods, gives them a hoary aspect, — a mere sugaring, however. The snow has just ceased falling — about two inches deep, in the woods, upon the old and on bare ground; but there is scarcely a track of my animal yet to be seen, except here and there the surface of the snow has been raised and broken interruptedly where some mouse came near the surface in its travels, and in one wood I sec very numerous tracks, probably of red squirrels, leading to and from three or four holes in the earth close together, somewhat like those in an ant's nest, — quite a broad beaten path to some stumps with white pine cones on them and single tracks to the base of trees. It has now got to be such weather that after a cold morning it is colder in the house, — or we feel colder, — than outdoors, by noon, and are surprised that it is no colder when we come out. You cannot walk too early in new-fallen snow to get the sense of purity, novelty, and unexploredness. The snow has lodged more or less in perpendicular lines on the northerly sides of trees, so that I am able to tell the points of compass as well as by the sun. I guide myself accordingly. It always gladdens me to see a willow, though catkinless as well as leafless, rising above the new-fallen, untrodden snow, in some dry hollow in the woods, for then I feel nearer to spring. There are some peculiarly dry and late looking ones I see there, but it is enough that they are willows. The locust pods are open or opening. Little beans they hold. What delicate satin-like inside linings they have!

The difference between the white and black (?) birch scales (*Vide* [p. 130]) is that the wings of the first are curved backward like a real bird's. The seeds of this also are broadly winged like an insect



will, two little antennæ. The ice in the fields by the poorhouse road — frozen puddles — amid the snow, looking westward now while the sun is about setting, in cold weather, is green.

Montanus in his account of New Netherland (Amsterdam, 1671), speaking of the beaver, says, "The wind-hairs which rise glittering above the back fall off in the summer and grow again in the fall."



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 February 22, Wednesday, 1854: Captain of the American Fleet Henry A. Adams landed at Uraga and met with Japanese dignitaries including Hayashi, prince counselor of Daigaku (Hayashi-Daigaku-no-kami). Their discussion was carried on with the aid of interpreters, in simultaneous Japanese, English, and Dutch translation.

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 24, Friday, 1854: 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.

Walter Savage Landor’s sister Elizabeth Savage Landor died at the age of 77 (the body would be interred on March 2d in St. Chad’s Churchyard, Bishops Tachbrook, Warwick District, Warwickshire).

William Speiden, Jr. observed the busy boat traffic in Edo harbor, Japan.



Feb. 24. P.M. — To Walden and Fair Haven.

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In Wheeler's Wood by railroad. Nuthatches [**White-breasted Nuthatch** █ *Sitta carolinensis* (~~White-bellied Nuthatch~~)] 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.

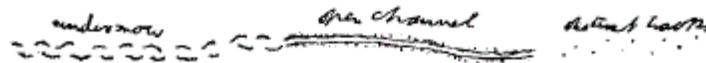
Meanwhile chickadees [**Black-capped Chickadee** █ *Parus atricapillus* (~~Titmouse, Titmice~~)], with their silver tinkling, are flitting high above through the tops of the pines. Measured the ice of Walden in three places, —

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 [**Ruffed Grouse** █ *Bonasa umbellus*] 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, 1854: The American squadron gathered near Yokohama, Japan. The *Vandalia* returned from Uraga with Captain of the American Fleet Henry A. Adams on board. The functionaries invited Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry to visit Uraga personally, to be handed a letter from the Japanese Emperor to the American President. William Speiden, Jr. noted that “Capt. A was told ... that it had been the custom of the Japanese for many years past to hold no intercourse with any other people than the Dutch, and that with them it was very limited, but that while we were away the Emperor had called a meeting of the principal great men of the Empire, and had taken the vote, whether the Americans should be received and treated as friends or not. They accordingly agreed that the Americans should be received and treated as friends” (meanwhile some Russians were allegedly being warned to “leave Japan immediately”).

Sacramento became the capital of California.

In California, the Sierra Citizen reported that a Mr. McMillen of the gold-mining camp known as Minnesota, who was one of the “oldest inhabitants” of that settlement, had furnished them with the following statement:

The North Fork Tunnel, during the last two weeks yielded nearly \$5,000. The company have been engaged in constructing sluices



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and mining machinery, which when completed will enable them to work to better advantage. The claims in this company are valued at from \$2,200 to \$2,600 each. Some time since they found a slug weighing 12 ounces. Some six weeks ago a mass of quartz and gold was taken from the Blue Tunnel, for which \$1,900 was offered and refused. Some of the drifts run into the hill from six to eight hundred feet, with side-drifts running in every direction so that several acres in the vicinity of the town have been excavated and are supported by timbers.

The distance to the bed rock in some places is 150 feet and at the bottom a stratum of cement is found extremely hard, so much so that the miner cannot drift more than from six inches to a foot in a day. Immediately under this cement the gold is generally found. In the neighborhood of the diggings now being worked, there are numerous ravines which will be worked as soon as the water-ditches now in progress shall have been completed.

SMITH'S DIGGINGS. - A few days since a boulder as found at this place supposed to be worth from five to six thousand dollars. It is a mass of quartz rock with veins of gold running through it, the exact value cannot be ascertained until broken to pieces. The rock is some eighteen inches in diameter. Large rocks containing gold in the crevices and on the surface, are frequently found in this section, giving rise to false report, which are seized upon and embellished by the lovers of the marvelous.

CHIP'S DIGGINGS. - Since finding the large quartz boulder reported in our last week's paper, nothing of special interest has been communicated. These diggings have been less worked than any other on the Minnesota range. Active operations are now carried on and the tunnels which have been cut through the rim of the basin into the main deposit are paying well. Claims here are valued at from two to five thousand dollars, though here, as in all other mining districts, there are many claims worth nothing at all.

CRAIG'S FLAT. - During the past year the American Company have expended large sums in digging ditches and constructing flumes in which the water of Little Canyon are conveyed to Craig's Flat. Since the spring some \$23,000 have been invested in this work, which is considered one of the most valuable ditches in the county.

WATER COMPANIES. - There is no enterprise fraught with so much interest to the Northern Mining Districts, as that of supplying the hill and gulch diggings with a sufficiency of water to work during the dry season. Hitherto the miners have had to depend on the little wet-weather streams that only flow while the ground is saturated with water and while the weather is too stormy to work; and just at the time when everything is in readiness to operate successfully, the water fails and the miner is either compelled to abandon his claim altogether or remain on the ground six of eight months, expending the little money he had saved during the raining season.

It is but lately that attention has been directed to the dry diggings on the dividing ridges between the different tributaries of the Yuba. Formerly, little parties of from two to six men, with rockers and pans, might be seen pitching their tents on the hill-side and making preparations for what they



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considered extensive operations. But after a couple of days unsuccessful labor in the adjacent ravine the camp would be deserted, the little party scattered in every direction, and the rich diggings that were going to be discovered were forgotten in the pursuit of something else.

Continued failures of this kind induced people to believe that the palmy days of this region were over. The bed of the river had been flumed and the rich crevices worked out, and the rich little bars entirely washed away. Then absolute necessity compelled the miners to look elsewhere. Some went to the Southern Mines, but in a few months returned poorer than when they left; others returned to places where they had worked for a few days, during a prospecting expedition, and commenced sinking shafts and opening tunnels, which resulted in the most extensive dry diggings in the State.

But one great obstacle remained to be overcome, the want of water. Gold could be found in many places, but not in quantities sufficient to be profitably worked with the primitive apparatus used for washing on the river. Sluices were constructed and kept in readiness for the commencement of the rainy season, but when that time came the deep snows and stormy weather prevented the miners from improving the time.

At Sear's Diggings, ditches have been dug and flumes have been constructed, which have already made that district one of the most important in the Northern Mines, though on account of the smallness of the streams, water cannot be obtained during the driest part of the season. Thrifty little towns are springing up in all directions on the line of these ditches, which are every year receiving additions of intelligent and industrious citizens.

[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:

To: George Thatcher

From: HDT

Date: 2/25/54

Concord Feb. 25th '54

Dear Cousin,

I should have answered you earlier if a wood-merchant whom I 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,





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to assist me in determining. This is the result.

Oak chiefly 4A 53rd 156 Cords at \$2.75^{pr} ^{cord standing} large & small
429

[Whit]e & Pitch Pine 3A 30 rd	143½ Cords 2	287
Pitch Pine 146 rd	16½ Cords 2	41.25
Young P. Pine 100 rd	5 cord 2	10.

\$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



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

(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.)



March 3, Friday, 1854: [Japanese](#) officials for the 1st time boarded the *USS Mississippi*. “They were very friendly and sociable” and quite curious about the functioning of this American vessel.

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.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR MARCH 3D]



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 March 5, Sunday, 1854: [Henry Thoreau](#) chatted with [Ellery Channing](#), and in the afternoon he walked to Upper Nut Meadow.

William Speiden, Jr. reported that it had become his duty as purser's clerk to muster the men.

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. Sunday. [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 [[Eastern Bluebird](#) [Sialia sialis](#)] 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 angelia a 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 [[Crow](#), [American](#) [Corvus brachyrhynchos](#)], 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. Methinks I see them going southwest in the fall.

 March 6, Monday, 1854: [US Marine](#) Robert Williams died of a head injury while on liberty at Cum Sing Moon (the Americans would negotiate for the body to be buried on the [Japanese](#) shore). The American ship was listed to starboard in order to caulk it below the waterline.

[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.⁴⁷



⁴⁷. This thief would do time.



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To: HDT
From: Greeley & McElrath
Date: 3/6/54

*Office of the Tribune[,]
New York, 6 March 185[4]
Mr. Henry D[.] Thoreau[]
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]*

To: HDT
From: Horace Greeley
Date: 3/6/54

*New York
Mar. 6, 1854.
Dear Sir:
I presume your
first letter containing
the \$2 ~~ha~~ 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*



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you to collect and arrange your Miscellanea[n]es, and send them to me. Put in 'Katahdin,' 'Carlyle,' 'A Winter Wood,' and 'Canada,' &c. and I will try to find a publisher 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 12 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 checkerberrying 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



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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.



March 8, Wednesday morning, 1854: 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



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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](#) a 2d time, and began to negotiate a trade agreement. Although he had been able to go ashore for the 1st landing, on this occasion William Speiden, Jr. was not among those fortunate 500 who were invited to this party, including 3 bands of music, and thus would need to make his notes of the events as related to him by the ship’s chaplain. The negotiations took place in a large house erected specifically for this purpose. The Americans felt optimistic that more than one Japanese port would be opened to their commerce. While the American officers walked along the shore, Japanese artists made sketches of their dress and appearance, including uniforms, pistols, swords, and other paraphernalia. Speiden inserted into his journal a drawing of his father the purser, William Speiden, Sr., and of a branch in bloom done by a Japanese boy of about 11 years of age, as well as a sketch of the Commodore done by another such boy. Speiden also inserted a copy of the response to the American President’s letter conveyed by the Imperial Commissioners (dated February 23d, 1854 and May 1st, 1854), in reply to the letter the Perry expedition had delivered the previous year (“... for us to continue bigotedly attached to the ancient laws, seems to misunderstand the spirit of the age, and we wish rather to conform to what necessity requires....”). A new Emperor was ascended to the throne since Perry’s 1st landing, and the message stated that the Japanese would comply with the American request for provisions and aid to sailors in distress.

US MILITARY INTERVENTIONS

[Henry Thoreau](#) made a journal entry that resulted in a portion of the following paragraph from “Life without Principle”:

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



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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.”

MICHAEL FLANNERY

Lightning this evening, after a day of successive rains.

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March 9, Thursday, 1854: 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, covering the area bounded by Jackson Street, the Bay, and Washington Street.

William Speiden, Jr. was not himself able to attend at the burial of [US Marine](#) Robert Williams at [Yokohama](#) under the ministrations of a Buddhist priest as well as of an American chaplain, but did render an account provided by one of the officers whom Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) had allowed ashore.

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.



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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 [redacted] (?) and sheldrakes [Both Common Merganser [redacted] *Mergus merganser* and Red-breasted Merganser [redacted] *Mergus serrator* are called sheldrakes, but Thoreau used this name for the Common Merganser, *Mergus merganser*.] 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.

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 March 13, Monday, 1854: Louis Moreau Gottschalk gave his initial performance in Havana.

The Americans under Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry conveyed a passel of presents intended for the Japanese Emperor and Empress and for their commissioners at Yokohama, concentrating on things that Americans appreciated that obviously they would appreciate likewise such as clocks, a telescope, telegraph instruments and wire, a miniature locomotive with passenger car and rail; various agricultural implements, rifles, swords, pistols, whiskey, champagne, wine, perfumes, teas, books such as John James Audubon's BIRDS OF AMERICA and THE QUADRUPEDS OF AMERICA — and so on and so forth.

VIVIPAROUS QUADRUPEDS

BIRDS OF AMERICA

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.

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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.

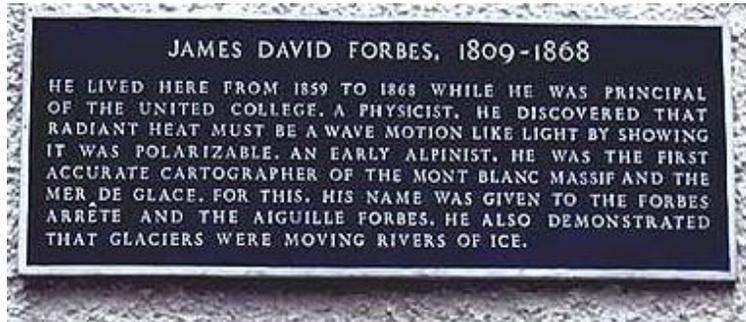


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Besides purchasing a [telescope](#) (above) for eight dollars (more than a week's total wages, order of magnitude approximately \$800 in today's greenbacks), [Henry Thoreau](#) stopped by the [Boston Society of Natural History](#) and checked out:

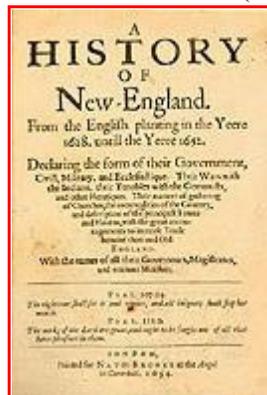
- [James David Forbes](#) (1809-1868)'s TRAVELS THROUGH THE ALPS OF SAVOY AND OTHER PARTS OF THE PENNINE CHAIN, WITH OBSERVATIONS ON THE PHENOMENA OF GLACIERS (1843)



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)⁴⁸



- The Reverend Thomas Shepard's THE CLEAR SUNSHINE OF THE GOSPEL BREAKING OUT ON THE INDIANS OF NEW ENGLAND (1648)⁴⁹



Mar. 13th, [1854](#) 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 lineatum*. Bought a telescope today for 8 dollars — Best military spyglass with 6 slides which shuts up to about

48. 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.

49. The Reverend Shepard was a founder of Harvard College.



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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 17, Friday, [1854](#): The city government of [Worcester, Massachusetts](#) purchased some parkland (the 1st occasion on which any US city had ever done any such thing).

Treaty talks between [Japanese](#) officials and Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) continued. Members of the expedition with special functions, such as Daguerreotypist Eliphalet M. Brown, Jr., telegraphists William B. Draper and John P. Williams, the agriculturist/botanist Dr. James Morrow, and some engineers, were allowed ashore in order to set up their equipment and otherwise prepare to conduct demonstrations. A railway was set up, consisting of a locomotive pulling one car (one would suppose that the track was a loop but we don't know that), as a magnificent gift from the US President to the Emperor of Japan.

On a remarkably warm morning for the season, almost like a May morning, [Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed a house lot 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 gyrenus 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 19, Sunday, [1854](#): When the *Supply* arrived in [Japanese](#) waters bearing a load of coal and other stores, the squadron under Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) rose to a strength of 9 vessels.

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.



COMMODORE PERRY



MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

March 19. Sunday. 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 [[American Crow](#)  *Corvus brachyrhynchos*] he had just seen which followed him “eying down, eying down.”

Saw in Mill Brook behind Shannon’s three or four shiners⁵⁰ (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 [[American Passenger Pigeon](#)  *Ectopistes migratorius* (~~Pigeon, Wild~~)⁵¹] yesterday.

Flint’s Pond almost entirely open, — much more than Fair Haven.



March 24, Friday, 1854: Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) accepted [Japanese](#) gift items of manufacture, lacquerware, silks, finely painted porcelain, fans, pipes, dolls, soy, charcoal and 4 small spaniels of a rare breed, intended not for him personally but to be carried home to [US President Franklin Pierce](#).

Despite the fact that no had as yet been declared to be in existence, 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, , 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

50. Minnows?

51. Now extinct.



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

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 [Dark-eyed Junco  *Junco hyemalis* (Slate-colored Sparrow or Snow-bird)] drifting about with their jingling



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

note. The same ducks under Clamshell Hill. The elm buds were apparently expanded before this cold, which began on the 18th. 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 [**Black Duck**  *Anas rubripes* (~~Dusky Duck~~)] — 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 27, Monday, 1854: Duke Carlo III of Parma died of the wounds he had received on the previous day and was succeeded by his son Roberto.

William Speiden, Jr. offers in his diary of the Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) expedition to [Japan](#) an account of commissioners being welcomed to banquets aboard the *Macedonian* and the *Powhatan*. Speiden attended the banquet aboard the *Powhatan* and witnessed the toasts offered to the health of the Emperor of Japan and [President of the United States of America Franklin Pierce](#). Speiden's own father proffered one of these toasts: "California and Japan, next door neighbors, may they soon step in and spend the evening with each other." At the conclusion of the banquet the Japanese guests were subjected to a minstrel entertainment. With the evening finally over, the son speculated to his journal that "I truly believe that the new era which is now about to take place in the History of the Japanese Empire, will be one in which far more greater changes will occur than we have at this time any reason to anticipate, and that too before many years have passed."

Russia declared war on France. As if that were not quite enough news for any given day — amidst a group of titles by Ticknor, Reed & Fields the Boston [Evening Transcript](#) provided in its 2d column of its 2d page a "Literary Announcement," of [Henry Thoreau](#)'s WALDEN.

[TIMELINE OF WALDEN](#)



March 27, Saw a hawk — probably marsh hawk [**Northern Harrier**  *Circus cyaneus* Marsh Hawk (~~Hen Harrier or Frog Hawk~~)] — by meadow.

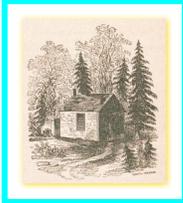
[THE ACTUAL JOURNAL](#)

COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY



March 28, Tuesday, 1854: After the Requiem mass for the funeral of Michael Arne, prior of St. Florian and friend of Anton Bruckner, Bruckner's Vor Arneths Grab for chorus and 3 trombones and Libera me, Domine for chorus, 3 trombones, cello, double bass, and organ were heard for the initial time.



Rumors were circulating through the American fleet in the Far East that the Japanese negotiators had agreed to open a couple of ports to American vessels, one of them to be the port of Shimoda.

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'."⁵²

ROSS/ADAMS COMMENTARY

In the chapter "Visitors" the author had deployed the phrase "a ridiculous mouse."⁵³ 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

52. Thoreau would not finish with his editing of this 1st proof until May.

53. Those with the benefit of the classical education would have received this as a reference to Horace.

COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

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 [[Common Snipe](#) [Gallinago gallinago](#)] or a woodcock [[Woodcock](#), [American](#) [Scolopax minor](#)]; it appeared rather small for the last.⁵⁴ Pond opening on the northeast. A flock of hyemalis [[Dark-eyed Junco](#) [Junco hyemalis](#) (~~Slate-colored Sparrow or Snow-bird~~)] drifting from a wood over a field incessantly for four or five minutes, — thousands of them, notwithstanding the cold. The fox-colored sparrow [[Fox Sparrow](#) [Passerella iliaca](#) (~~Fox-colored Sparrow~~)] sings sweetly also. Saw a small slate-colored hawk, with wings transversely mottled beneath, — probably the sharp-shinned hawk [[Sharp-shinned Hawk](#) [Accipter striatus](#) (slate-colored hawk, including subspecies *perobscurus*, *velox*, *suttoni*, *madrensis*, *fringilloides*, and *venator*)]. Got first proof of “Walden.”

TIMELINE OF WALDEN



March 31, Friday, [1854](#): William Speiden, Jr. was among the few permitted to come ashore on this day and proceed with Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) to the House of Reception. On behalf of the United States of America the Commodore signed a treaty with [Japanese](#) officials to establish a “permanent” relationship between their nations. In the Treaty of Kanagawa the Japanese pledged that they would save shipwrecked Americans, provide fuel for American ships, and allow opportunities 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.

54. Probably a snipe.

COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY



April 4, Tuesday, 1854: Chief of Staff Henry Allen Adams was dispatched to convey the newly signed Kanagawa treaty to officials in the United States of America. He departed on board the *USS Saratoga* to begin his homeward journey.

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 folks were suspected either of having been up to no good or of having too good a time).



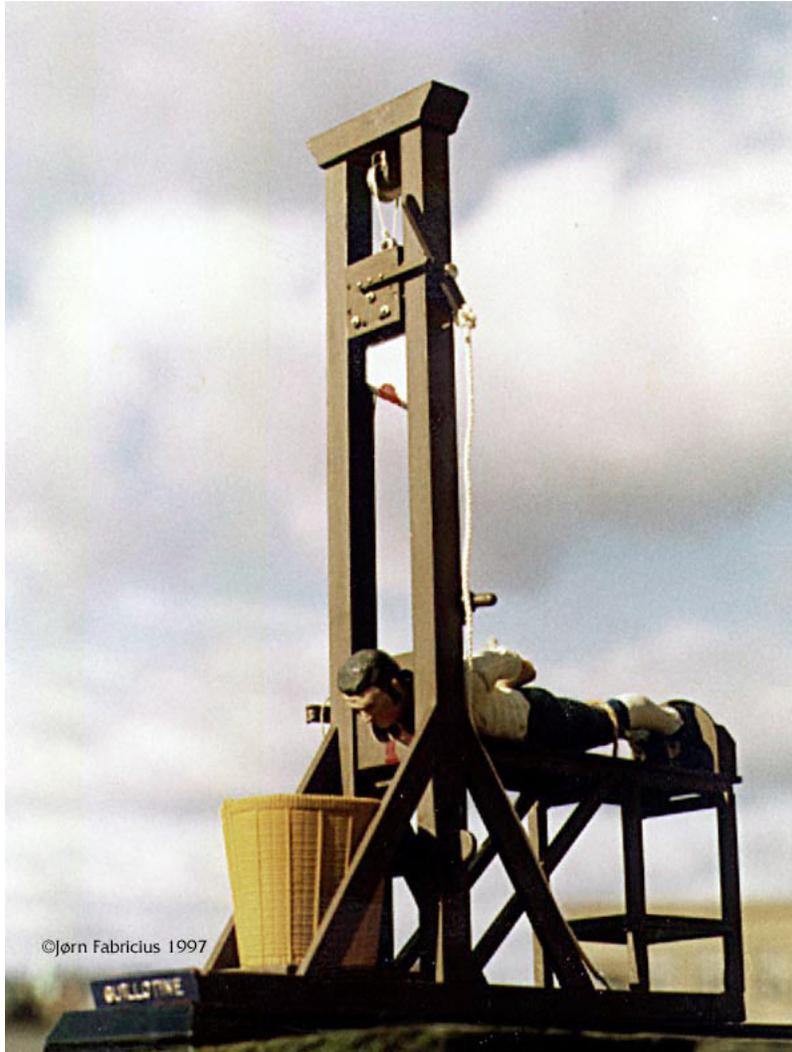
April 4. All day surveying a wood-lot in Acton for Abel Hosmer. He says that he has seen the small slate-colored hawk pursue and catch doves [~~Turtle Dove~~ **Mourning Dove** *Zenaida macroura*], i.e. the sharp-shinned [~~Sharp-shinned Hawk~~ **Sharp-shinned Hawk** *Accipter striatus*]. Has found some trouble in driving off a large slate-colored hawk from a hen in his yard, at which he pounced again close by him, — undoubtedly a goshawk. Has also noticed the butcher-bird [~~Northern Shrike~~ **Northern Shrike** *Lanius excubitor* (~~Butcher-bird~~)] catching other birds. Calls him the “mock-bird.” I observe that all the farmers have pretty much the same stories of this kind to tell. They will describe a large, bold slate-colored hawk (the goshawk) [~~Goshawk~~ **Goshawk** *Accipter gentillis* (~~Cape Eagle, Partridge Hawk~~)] about here some two years ago, which caught some of their hens, and the like. The afternoon very pleasant.

[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)

COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

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](#).

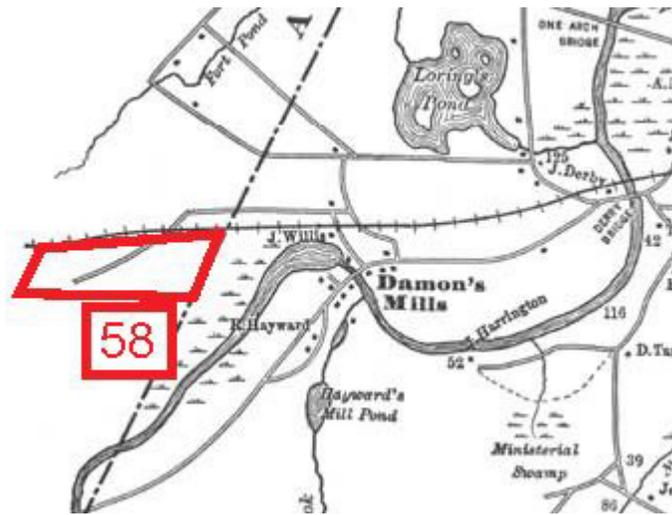


HEADCHOPPING

[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.

COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY



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.

US MILITARY INTERVENTIONS

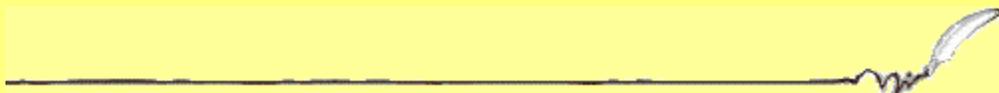


April 6, Thursday: The Americans of the fleet in the Far East made a gift to the [Japanese](#) of their 12-pound Howitzers, with boat and field carriage and other equipment.

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



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY



April 6. P.M. — Up Assabet.

A still warmer day than yesterday — a warm, moist rain-smelling west wind. I am surprised [to] find so much of the white maples already out. The light-colored stamens show to some rods. Probably they began as early as day before yesterday. They resound with the hum of honey-bees, heard a dozen rods off, and you see thousands of them about the flowers against the sky. They know where to look for the white maple and when. This susurrus carries me forward some months toward summer. I was reminded before of those still warm summer moons when the breams' nests are left dry, and the fishes retreat from the shallows into the cooler depths, and the cows stand up to their bellies in the river. The reminiscence came over me like a summer's dream. The alders, both kinds, just above the hemlocks, have just begun to shed their pollen. They are hardly as forward as the white maples, but these are not in so warm a position as some. I am in doubt which (alder or maple) may be earliest this year. Have not looked so closely as last year. In clearing out the Assabet Spring, disturbed two small speckled (*palustris*) frogs just beginning to move. Saw flying over what I at first thought a gull, then a fish hawk [Osprey  *Pandion haliaetus* (Fish Eagle or Fish Hawk)]. Heard the snipe [Common Snipe  *Gallinago gallinago* (Wilson's Snipe or Brown Snipe)] over the meadows this evening; probably to be heard for a night or two; sounds on different days as if approaching or receding; — over the meadows recently become bare.



April 10, Monday, 1854: The Americans of the fleet in the Far East drew within sight of Edo and then turned and stood for Yokohama.

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.



COMMODORE PERRY



MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

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.

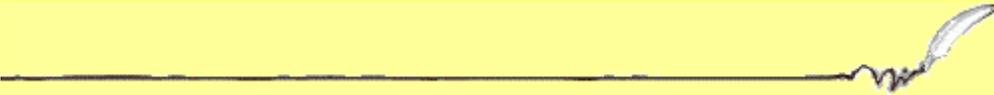
Saw a dead sucker yesterday.

CRUICKSHANK COMMENTARY

P.M. — To Great Meadows by boat, and sail back.

"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



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 [**Blue-winged Teal**  *Anas discors*] 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



April 18, Tuesday, 1854: 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.

The Americans of the fleet in the Far East found the bay of the island of Oshima, "a small harbour but a very pretty place."

[Henry Thoreau](#) sent off some [Harvard Library](#) books, hand carry, with a note to [Thaddeus William Harris](#).





COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

To: Thaddeus W. Harris
From: HDT
Date: 18 April 1854

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).

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 [**Hermit Thrush**  *Catharus guttatus*].] 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 [**Palm Warbler**  *Dendroica palmarum*]. It is remarkable that they too are found about willows, etc., along the water. Saw another warbler [*Vide* April 25.] [**Yellow-rumped Warbler**  *Dendroica coronata*] 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 [**Wood Duck**  *Aix sponsa*] 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 [**Common Grackle**  *Quiscalus quiscula* (~~Crow Blackbird~~)] 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 *bobylee* 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.



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

 April 21, Friday, 1854: [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.

Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) went ashore to return an official call of the [Japanese](#) Governor. The men made jest of a Marine who took a misstep while attempting to land and fell overboard (“So up sprang Jones to lead the way / When overboard he tumbled in the Bay”).

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,

**Brad Dean's
Commentary**

He had some questions about classic Greek philosophy, for instance questions about an Athenian philosopher named Aristokles, who had been characterized as [Plato](#) or “broad” after the shoulders that he had developed as a wrestler in his youth:

COMMOD PERRY



MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

April 21. 6 A.M. — Heard the bay-wing [^]one of the seringos sparrow [Vesper Sparrow **Pooecetes gramineus**] 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* [Dark-eyed Junco **Junco hyemalis** (~~Slate-colored Sparrow or Snow-bird~~)] 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 anemones 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 [Purple Martin **Progne subis**]. A martin was found dead the 18th after the snows, and many bluebirds [Bluebird, Eastern **Sialia sialis**] in Brookfield.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY



April 22, Saturday, 1854: [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.

Officers received permission to visit Shimoda, remaining within 10 miles of the shoreline. Shore leave had been restricted since an incident of unauthorized leave that took place earlier during negotiations raised objection by the [Japanese](#). William Speiden, Jr. went ashore with his friend Anton L.C. Portman and others. They walked out into the country. Speiden noted the picturesque scenery, the presence of many children, and a visit with some young Japanese ladies.

[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]

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COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY



April 26, Wednesday, 1854: The jury in the trial of [Matthew Flounoy 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.

In the American fleet in the Far East, Court Martial sentences were read for 2 men.

At 2:30PM [Henry Thoreau](#) went on foot to Lee’s Cliff. That evening there was a heavy thunder-shower.



April 26. Heard at 8 A.M. the peculiar loud and distinct ring of the first toad, at a distance. April-morning weather, threatening showeriness.

2.30 P.M. — To Lee’s Cliff on foot.

A still, warm, overcast clay with a southwest wind (this is what the Indians made so much of), and the finest possible dew-like rain in the air from time to time, now more of the sun. It is now so warm that I go back to leave my greatcoat for the first time, and the cooler smell of possible rain is refreshing. The toads ring more or less.

When the toads begin to ring,
Then thinner clothing bring,
Or off your greatcoat fling.

It is not yet time for thin clothes. Did I hear a tree-toad to-day? As I go over Hubbard’s land I see A. Wheeler burning brush, clearing up on Fair Haven. Great volumes or clouds of white smoke are blown gently northeastward, while the bright-scarlet flame is seen here and there creeping along its edge. They begin to burn on the lee side. The farmers are now busily plowing, some setting out roots and planting. I seem to perceive a slight fragrance in the air.

Found part of a bird’s head and bill, — I think that of the thrush I saw on the 18th and yesterday. The bill (with notch) and what part of the head is left are exactly like the hermit thrush in F. Brown’s collection, except that mine is yellow inside bill (but his has probably faded); and I see that the latter’s legs, which W. calls dusky, are light enough for my bird, and the colors above — olivaceous, and foxy rump and tail - are the same, but the hermit thrush’s spots on breast appear darker. I think I have seen or heard of more dead birds than usual this season, - read of bluebirds, heard of a martin (both killed by cold), also seen a dead robin or two and this thrush.

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.

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Birds sing all day when it is warm, still, and overcast as now, much more than in clear weather, and the hyla too is heard, as at evening. The hylodes commonly begins early in the afternoon, and its quire increases till evening. I hear now snipes far over the meadow incessantly at 3.15 P.M. The men bogging in the meadow do not hear them, and much else.

The swamp sparrow, very dark, with chestnut and black, and quirk of the tail, flits shyly under the alders along the causeway; hides or lurks behind the trunks like song sparrow and hardly rests a moment in one place.

The lark on the top of an apple tree sings a *tchea te che*, then perhaps *tche tehea*, only a plaintive clear round note. Hear the first chewink [[Ground-bird](#),⁵⁵ [Ground-robin](#), [Chewink](#) ([Rufous-sided Towhee](#) [Pipilo erythrophthalmus](#))] hopping and chewinking among the shrub oaks.



COMMODORE PERRY

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To-day the air is full of birds; they attend the opening of the buds. The trees *begin* to leaf, and the leaf-like wings of birds are in the air. The buds start, then the insects, then the birds. Saw probably a pigeon hawk [Merlin  *Falco columbarius* (~~Pigeon Hawk~~)] skim straight and low over field and wood, and another the next day apparently dark slate-color. It is warm and still, almost sultry, as if there might be a thunder-shower before night. Now look down on Fair Haven. How pleasant in spring a still, overcast, warm day like this, when [lie water is smooth! The sweet-gale in blossom, forming islets surrounded by water, on the meadow, looks like sere brown leaves left on. At the Cliff the *Arabis laevigata*⁵⁶ is just out to-day; the honeysuckle will be, say, the very earliest, to-morrow.⁵⁷ A barberry bush quite forwardly leafing under the rock, and a young apple. The early gooseberry quite green.

9 P.M. — Quite a heavy thunder-shower, — the 2nd lightning, I think.

The vivid lightning, as I walk the street, reveals the contrast between day and night. The rising cloud in the west makes it very dark and difficult to find my way, when there comes a flash which lights up the street for a moment almost as brightly as the day, far more so than moonlight, and I see a person on the sidewalk before me fifty rods off—



May 6, Saturday, 1854: 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.

An accidental fall from the foretopsail yard took the life of a sailor named Parish, who would be buried in a Buddhist temple yard on that far-eastern shore.

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":

The late terrific shipwrecks on the Jersey shores, by which so

55. Thoreau occasionally used this term for such ground-feeding birds as Savannah Sparrow  *Passerculus sandwichensis*, Song Sparrow  *Melospiza melodia*, and Vesper Sparrow  *Poocetes gramineus*.

56. Probably *T. stricta*.

57. *Vide* May 1st.



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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](#)



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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:

BRAD DEAN'S COMMENTARY

[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 6. 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 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

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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* [Dark-eyed Junco Junco *hyemalis* Slate-colored Sparrow] and tree sparrows [American Tree Sparrow *Spizella arborea*] are with us singing in the cold mornings with the song sparrows [Song Sparrow *Melospiza melodia* (*melodia*)], 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 might 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 dog 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.

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May 7, Sunday, 1854: The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* was approached by a boat carrying 2 Japanese men who had heard of America and wish to visit it, but could not do so due to laws forbidding Japanese to travel abroad. They hoped the Americans would allow them passage. Their request refused, they returned to shore. They were later reported seen detained as prisoners. Near this point in his journal, William Speiden, Jr. inserted a 4-page copy of "A Translated letter from two Intelligent Japanese."

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 7. I have noticed the steel-colored, velvet-like lichen on the stumps of maples especially, also on oaks and hickories. Sometimes, where a maple grove has been cut down some years, every stump will be densely clothed with them.

Our principal rain this spring was April 18th, 29th, and 30th and again, May 3d and 4th, apparently the settling storm of the season. The great source of freshets far and wide. I observed the swallows yesterday, — barn swallows [Barn Swallow Hirundo rustica] and some of those white-bellied with grayish-brown backs [Tree Swallow Tachycineta bicolor (White-bellied Swallow)], — flying close to the surface of the water near the edge of the flooded meadow. Probably they follow their insect prey.

P.M. — To Cliffs.

The causeways being flooded, I have to think before I set out on my walk how I shall get back across the river.

The earliest flowers might be called May-day flowers, — if indeed the sedge is not too far one for one then. A white-throated sparrow [White-throated Sparrow Zonotrichia albicollis] still (in woods). *Viburnum Lentago* and *nudum* are both leafing, and I believe I can only put the former first because it flowers first. Cress at the Boiling Spring, one flower. As I ascend Cliff Hill, the two leaves of the Solomon's-seal now spot the forest floor, pushed up amid the dry leaves. *Vaccinium Pennsylvanicum* leafing. Flowers, e.g. willow and hazel catkins, are self-registering indicators of fair weather. I remember how I waited for the hazel catkins to become relaxed and shed their pollen, but they delayed, till at last there came a pleasanter and warmer day and I took off my greatcoat while surveying in the woods, and then, when I went to dinner at noon, hazel catkins in full flower were dangling from the banks by the roadside and yellowed my clothes with their pollen. If man is thankful for the serene and warm day, much more are the flowers.

From the Cliffs I again admire the flood, — the now green hills rising out of it. It is dark-blue, clay, slate, and light-blue, as you stand with regard to the sun. With the sun high on one side it is a dirty or clayey slate; directly in front, covered with silvery sparkles far to the right or north, dark-blue; farther to the southwest, light-blue. My eyes are attracted to the level line where the water meets the hills now, in time of flood, converting that place into a virgin or temporary shore. There is no strand, — nothing worn; but if it is calm we fancy the water slightly heaped above this line, as when it is poured gently into a goblet. (How in the bring we value any smoothness, gentleness, warmth!) It does not beat, but simply laves the hills (already the peetweet [Spotted Sandpiper Actitis macularia (Peetweet)] flutters and teeters along it a flight further back), submerging the blossoming flowers which I went to find. I see the sweet-gale deeply buried, and the *V. blanda*, etc., etc., and the *A. calyculata* and the cowslips. I see their deluged faces at the bottom and their wrecked petals afloat. I paddle right over Miles's meadow, where the bottom is covered with cowslips in full bloom; their lustre diminished, they look up with tearful faces. Little promontories at Lee's Cliff, clothed with young pines, make into the water; yet they are rarely submerged; as if nature or the trees remembered even the highest floods and kept out of their way, avoiding the shore, leaving a certain neutral ground. Early strawberry just out. I found an *Amelanchier Botryapium*, with its tender reddish-green leaves already fluttering in the wind and stipules clothed with white silky hairs, and its blossom so far advanced that I thought, it would open to-morrow. But a little farther there was another which did not rise above the rock, but caught all the reflected heat, which to my surprise was fully open; yet a part which did rise above the rock was not open. What indicators of warmth! No thermometer could show it better. The *Amelanchier Botryapium* leaves begin now to expand. The



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juniper branches are now tipped with yellowish and expanding leaf-buds; put it just before the larch. I begin to see cows turned out to pasture. I am inclined to think some of these are coarse, windy days, when I cannot hear any bird.

What are those small ferns under the eaves of the rocks at the Cliffs, their little balls unrolling as they ascend, now three or four inches high? How many plants have these crimson or red stigmas? Maples, hazels, sweet-gale, sweet-fern. High blackberry leafing. The leaves are now off the young oaks and shrub oaks on the plain below the Cliffs, except the white oaks, which leaf later. I noticed it elsewhere, — first May 5th, when for a day or two before perhaps — they suddenly cast off their winter clothing; and the plain now appears thinly covered with gray stems, but in a short month they will have put on a new green coat. They wear their leaves almost all the year. The partridge [**Ruffed Grouse**  *Bonasa umbellus*] and rabbit must do without their shelter now a little while. A ruby-crested wren [**Ruby-crowned Kinglet**  *Regulus calendula* (~~Ruby-crested Wren~~)] by the Cliff Brook, — a chubby little bird. Saw its ruby crest and heard its harsh note.⁵⁸ The birds I have described as such were the same. Hellebore is the most noticeable herb now. Alders, young maples of all kinds, and *Ostrya*, etc., now beginning to leaf. I observe the phenomena of the seashore by our riverside, now that there is quite a sea on it and the meadow, though the waves are but eight inches or a foot high. As on the sea beach, the waves are not equally high and do not break with an equally loud roar on the shore; there is an interval of four or five or half a dozen waves between the larger ones. In the middle of the meadow, where the waves run highest, only the middle and highest parts of the waves are whitened with foam. Where they are thinnest and yield to the wind apparently, while their broad leas are detained by friction on the bottom, their tops for their whole length curve over very regularly like a snow-drift, and the water is evenly poured as over a dam and falls with foam and roar on the water and shore. It is exhilarating to stoop low and look over the rolling waves northwest. The black rolling leaves remind me of the backs of waves [*sic*; whales?]. It is remarkable how cleanly the water deposits its wreck, now spotted with cranberries. There is a bare space of clean grass, perfectly clean and about a foot wide, now left between the utmost edge of the breakers and the steep and abrupt edge of the wreck. So much it has gone down. Thus perfectly the water deposits what floats on it on the land. The oak buds — black, shrub, etc., except white oak — are now conspicuously swollen. A spreading red maple in bloom, seen against a favorable background, as water looking down from a hillside, is a very handsome object, presenting not a dense mass of color but an open, graceful and ethereal top of light crimson or scarlet, not too obvious and staring, slightly tingeing the landscape as becomes the season, — a veil of rich workmanship and high color against the sky, or water, [or] other trees.

At sunset across the flooded meadow to Nawshawtuct. The water becoming calm. The sun is just disappearing as I reach the hilltop, and the horizon's edge appears with beautiful distinctness. As the twilight approaches or deepens, the mountains, those pillars which point the way to heaven, assume a deeper blue. As yet the aspect of the forest at a distance is not changed from its winter appearance, except where the maple-tops in blossom in low lands tinge it red. And the elm-tops are in fruit in the streets; and is there not [a] general but slight reddish tinge from expanding buds? Seared up ducks  of some kind.



May 17, Wednesday, 1854: At Hakodate, [Japan](#), William Speiden, Jr. reported seeing many whales. He proclaimed the harbor “magnificent” and one that would “accommodate a great many vessels.”

[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.

The water is now tepid in the morning to the hands (may have been a day or two), as I slip my hands

58. This was the same I have called golden-crowned; and so described by W[ilson], I should say, except that I saw its ruby crest. I did n't see the crest of the golden-crowned, and I did not hear this ruby-c sing like the former. Have I seen the two?



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down the paddle. Hear the wood pewee [~~Wood-Pewee, Eastern~~ **Contopus virens** (~~Wood-Pewee or Peawai~~)], 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



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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

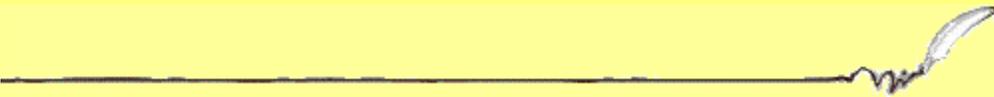


some distance at arm's length to prevent his biting him. They are frequently seen fighting and their shells heard striking together.

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 generally 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



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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 the richer for the variety of its inhabitants. Saw a large gray squirrel

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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,
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,



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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.



May 19, Friday, 1854: Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) met on board ship with [Japanese](#) officials, They reported that residents had heard little of the 31 March 1854 treaty and that the inhabitants at Hakodate, believing the American ships had evil intentions, had been packing up their goods and abandoning the city for the interior.

[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 19. 5.30 A.M. — To Nawshawtuct and Island.

Ranunculus Purshii will apparently open to-day. Its little green buds somewhat like a small yellow lily. The water has now fallen so much that the grass is rapidly springing up through it on the meadows. Red-wing's [[Red-winged Blackbird](#) [Agelaius phoeniceus](#) Red-wing⁵⁹] nest with two eggs. A geranium, apparently yesterday. Celtis for several days. Button-bush began to leaf, say the 17th; *i.e.*, some of its buds began to burst. Choke-cherry out. *Aralia nudicaulis*, apparently yesterday. The red-eye [[Red-eyed Vireo](#) [Vireo olivaceus](#)]. The early thorn looks as if it would open to-day.

59. The "Red Wing" chieftainship of Red Wing, Minnesota did not refer to the red wing of this blackbird, but referred rather to a swan's wing dyed red that was the badge of office of the chiefly dynasty.

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I hear the *sprayer*-note frog now at sunset. Now for four or five days, — though they are now for the most part large, — or since the 15th came in, the young and tender oak leaves, disposed umbrella-wise about the extremities of last year's twigs, have been very attractive from their different tints of red. Those of the black and white oaks are, methinks, especially handsome, the former already showing their minute and tender bristles, and all handsomely lobed. Some of the black oak leaves are like a rich, dark-red velvet; the white oak have a paler and more delicate tint, somewhat flesh-colored, though others are more like the black, — what S. calls a maroon red. So of the bear scrub oak; the swamp white and chinquapin are more of a downy or silvery white. The white pine shoots are now two or three inches long generally, — upright light marks on the body of dark green. Those of the pitch pine are less conspicuous. Hemlock does not show yet. The light shoots, an inch or so long, of the fir balsam spot the trees. The larch is a mass of fresh, airy, and cool green. Arbor-vita, red cedar, and white show no life except. on the closest inspection. They are some of the latest trees. The juniper is about with the fir balsam. I have already described the oaks sufficiently. The hazel is now a pretty green bush. Butternuts, like hickories, make a show suddenly with their large buds. I have not examined the birches, except the white, this year. The alders are slow to expand their leaves, but now begin to show a mass of green along the river, and, with the willows, afford concealment to the birds' nests. The birds appear to be waiting for this screen. The robin's █ nest and eggs are the earliest I see. Saw one in the midst of a green-briar over the water the other day, before the briar had put out at all, which shows some foresight, for it will be perfectly invisible, if not inaccessible, soon. The great poplar is quite late to leaf, especially those that blossom; not yet do they show much, — a silvery leaf. The golden willow is the only tree used about here at the same time for a fence and for shade. It also prevents the causeways from being washed away. The black willow is the largest as well as the handsomest of our native willows. Young elms are leafing pretty fast, old ones are late and slow. The samaræ of the elms first make a thick top, leaf-like, before the leaves come out. Ash trees are like hickories in respect to the size of the young leaves. The young leaflets of the wild holly (*Nemopanthes*) on the 17th were peculiarly thin and pellucid, yellow-green. I know of none others like them. Those of the black alder are not only late but dark. The button-bush is not only very late, but the buds are slow to expand, and methinks are very far apart, so that they do not soon make a show; for the most part at a little distance there is no appearance of life in them even yet. The sweet viburnum and also the naked are early to make a show with their substantial leaves. The andromedas are all late, — if I remember, the clustered (?) the earliest. The common swamp-pink is earlier to leaf but later to blossom than the *nudiflora*. The rhodora is late, and is *naked* flowering. The mountain laurel is one of the latest plants. The resinous dotted leaves of the huckleberry are interesting. The high blueberries are early (to bloom) and resound with the hum of bees. All the cornels begin to leaf apparently about the same time, though I do not know but. the round-leaved is the earliest.⁶⁰ I have not observed the dwarf. The witch-hazel is rather late, and can afford to be. One kind of thorn is well leafed, the other not. The mountain-ash is the first tree which grows here, either naturally or otherwise, to show green at a little distance. Is it not true that trees which belong peculiarly to a colder latitude are among our earliest and those which prefer a warmer among our latest? The chokeberry's shining leaf is interesting. With what unobserved secure dispatch nature advances! The amelauchiers have bloomed, and already both kinds have shed their blossoms and show minute green fruit. There is not an instant's pause! The beach plum — such as I have observed — is the latest to begin to expand of all deciduous shrubs or trees, for aught I know. The sight of it suggests that we are near the seacoast, that even our sands are in some sense littoral, — or beaches. The cherries are all early to leaf, but only one, perhaps the wild red, and that in one place, is in mass enough to make much show. The woodbine is well advanced — shoots two or three inches long. It must have begun to leaf more than a week ago. The linden leafs suddenly and rapidly, — a round, thin, transparent-looking (?) leaf.

A washing day, — a strong rippling wind, and all things bright.

60. The C. Florida is rather late.



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May 20, Saturday, [1854](#): William Speiden, Jr. went ashore. His party took a walk and visited a Buddhist temple, which he deemed “the handsomest one I have ever seen in [Japan](#).” They shopped at the local stores and admired the large scale of the streets and the houses. Speiden noted special processes that should be used in shopping and paying for goods that differed from those to which Americans are accustomed.

[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.

A storekeeper and a deputy sheriff of Middlesex County, [Mr. Moses Prichard](#) owned a parcel of land on Main Street in Concord, adjoining that of Joseph Holbrook. Perhaps it was a brick house?



May 20. Woodbine shoots (brick house) already two or three inches long; put it, say, with the red oak. *Potentilla argentea*. White [*sic*] spruce, male flowers. White ash, apparently a day or two. [Mr. Prichard](#)'s. The English hawthorn opens at same time with our earlier thorn. Very low thunder-clouds and showers far in the north at sunset, the wind of which, though not very strong, has cooled the air. Saw the lightning, but could not hear the thunder. I saw in the northwest first rise, in the rose-tinted horizon sky, a dark, narrow, craggy cloud, narrow and projecting as no cloud on earth, seen against the rose-tinged sky, — the crest of a thunder-storm, beautiful and grand. The steadily increasing sound of toads and frogs along the river with each successive wanner night is one of the most important peculiarities of the season. Their prevalence and loudness is in proportion to the increased temperature of the day. It is the first earth-song, beginning with the croakers, (the cricket's not yet), as if the very meads at last burst into a meadowy song. I hear a few bullfrogs and but few hylodes. Methinks we always have at this time those washing winds as now, when the choke-berry is in bloom, — bright and breezy days blowing off some apple blossoms.



May 23, Tuesday, [1854](#): An earthquake was felt in [San Francisco](#).

[Japanese](#) authorities complained to [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) that Americans had been coming ashore and rummaging through the wares of shops, paying inadequately or removing items without payment, with the storekeepers feeling unable to protest. They also accused Americans of desecrating temples by playing cards on the premises. The Commodore inquired among the officers as to the circumstances for such poor conduct, and temporarily suspended shore leave.

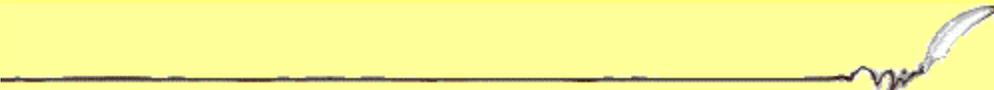
In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) sailed up the [Assabet River](#) to Cedar Swamp.



May 23. Tuesday. P.M. —To Cedar Swamp by 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 cobwebs, apparently those I saw on the bushes the morning of the 12th, are now covered with

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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 day (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 [**Red-shouldered Hawk**  *Buteo lineatus* (~~Hen-Hawk~~) or **Red-tailed Hawk**  *Buteo jamaicensis* (~~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 [**Wood Duck**  *Aix sponsa*], alternate blue and chestnut (?) forward, which flew into and lit in the woods; or was it a teal [**Teal, Blue-winged**  *Anas discors*]? Afterward two of them, and my diver [**Common Loon**  *Gavia immer* (~~Diver or Great Northern 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 (?).

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 [~~Red-bird~~ (**Scarlet Tanager**  *Piranga olivacea*)] 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. 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 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.⁶¹

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

HUMMINGBIRDS

AEOLIAN HARP

COMMODORE PERRY

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JENNY LIND

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' [**Bank Swallow**  *Riparia riparia*] holes in a small upright bank within a space of twenty by one and 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.

61. [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.

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 May 24, Wednesday, 1854: [Henry Thoreau](#) left at 4:30AM for the Cliffs, and in the afternoon went to Pedrick's meadow.

Americans were allowed on shore to shop at a [Japanese](#) bazaar, at which items were made available for sale with specific prices marked on them. The *Southampton* set off to survey Volcano Bay.

In Pennsylvania, John Miller Dickey and Sarah Emlen Cresson founded Lincoln University as the 1st Black college in United States of America.

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.⁶² [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#) would lead an assault on the jail, and in the attempt to rescue Burns, a deputized truckman named

62. 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](#).

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[James Batchelder](#) would be killed, some say by a blunderbuss.⁶³



A [telegram](#) originating in [Washington DC](#), allegedly from President of the United States of America Franklin Pierce,⁶⁴ 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.⁶⁵

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 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,

63. [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.

64. 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!

65. Hopefully, this hired thug was not in the employ of the White House plumbers.





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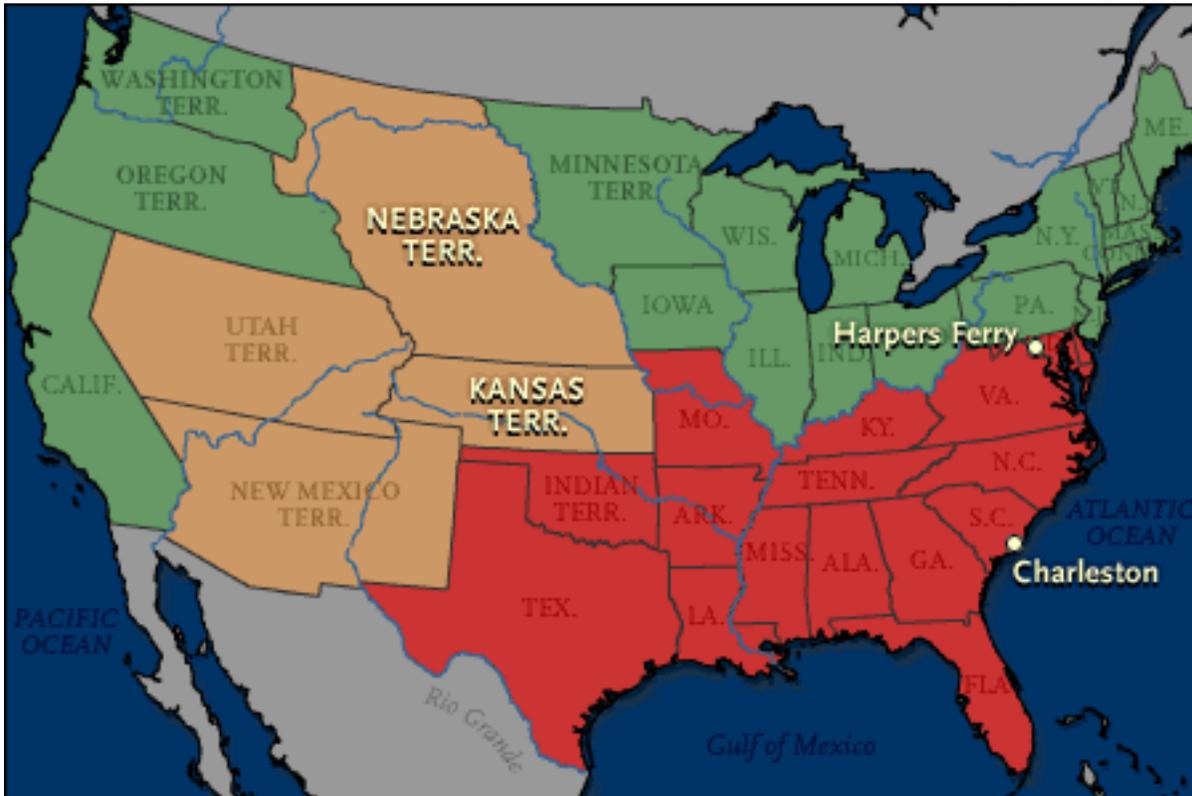
Burns was stealing himself and his services from their rightful owner. The next day in court there a broken bone would be seen to be protruding from his right hand, but this had not been the result of harm he had sustained while he was being taken into custody, for as a child that hand had been damaged 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

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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?”⁶⁶ 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 24. 4.30 A.M. — To Cliffs.

A considerable fog, but already rising and retreating to the river. There are dewy cobwebs on the grass. The morning came in and awakened me early, — for I slept with a window open, — and the chip-bird [[Chipping Sparrow](#) [Spizella passerina](#) (chip-bird or hair-bird)] was heard also. As I go along the causeway the [sun] rises red, with a great red halo, through the fog. When I reach the hill, the fog over the river already has its erectile feathers up. I am a little too late. But the level expanse of it far in the east, now lit by the sun, with countless tree-tops like oases seen through it, reminds of vast tracts of sand and of the seashore. It is like a greater dewy cobweb spread over the earth. It gives a wholly new aspect to the world, especially in that direction. The sun is eating up the fog. As I return down the hill, my eyes are cast toward the very dark mountains in the northwest horizon, the

66. THE JOURNAL OF HENRY D. THOREAU, ed. Bradford Torrey and [Francis Henry Allen](#), 14 volumes. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1906, 6:313.



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remnants of a hard blue scalloped rim to our saucer. As if a more celestial ware had formerly been united there to our earthen. Old china are they, worth keeping still on our sideboards, though fragmentary.

The early cinquefoil now generally yellows the banks. Put the sage willow with the black for the present. The black spruce apparently blossomed with the white but its leaf-buds have not yet fairly started.

P.M. — To Pedrick's meadow.

The side-flowering sandwort well out in Moore's Swamp. The pyrus has now for some days taken the place of the amelanchier, though it makes less show. How sweet and peculiar the fragrance of the different kinds of cedar! It is imparted to your hands. Lady's-slipper since the 18th; say 22d. Waded into Beck Stow's. The water was so cold at first that I thought it would not be prudent to stand long in it, but when I got further from the bank it was comparatively warm. True, it was not then shaded nor quite so deep, but I suppose there were some springs in the bank. Surprised to find the *Andromeda Polifolia* in bloom and apparently past its prime at least a week or more. It is in water a foot and a half deep, and rises but little above it. The water must have been several inches higher when it began to bloom. A timid botanist would never pluck it. Its flowers are more interesting than any of its family, almost globular, crystalline white, even the calyx, except its tips, tinged with red or rose. Properly called water andromeda: you must wade into water a foot or two deep to get it. The leaves are not so conspicuously handsome as in the winter. Also the buck-bean, apparently as old, — say a week, — in the same depth of water. The *calyculata* almost completely done, and the high blueberry getting thin. *Potentilla Canadensis* var. *simplex*, perhaps two days. I find a male juniper, with effete blossoms quite large, yet so fresh that I suspect I may have antedated it. Between Beck Stow's and Pedrick's meadow. The red cedar has grown considerably, after all. My *Rubus triflorus* (only Bigelow and Gray place it on hillsides) is nearly out of bloom. It is the same I found at the Miles Swamp; has already some green fruit as big as the *smallest* peas. Must be more than a week old. It is the only annual rubus described. May it not be a new kind?

This evening I hear the hum of dor-bugs, — a few, — but listen long in vain to hear a hylodes.

There being probably no shrub or tree which has not begun to leaf now, I sum up the order of their leafing thus (wild and a few tame).⁶⁷

Their buds begin to burst into leaf:—

The earliest gooseberry in garden and swamp, April 20.

? Elder, longest shoots of any, in some places (May 5).

Raspberry in swamps.

Thimble-berry (perhaps in favorable places only).

Wild red cherry in some places.

Meadow-sweet.

? Red currant, but slow to advance; observed only ours, which is late?

? Second gooseberry.

Salix alba, April 27.

?? Black currant, not seen.

Small dark native willow blossoming (?) and leafing.

?? Early willow, two-colored, not seen.

?? Muhlenberg's (?), not seen.

Young black cherry.

Choke-cherry shoots.

Viburnum Lentago } not carefully distinguished between.
? " *nudum* }

Diervilla, advances fast.

Barberry in favorable places.

Some young apples in favorable places.

Young' alders, blow to advance, both kinds.

Early robe.

? Moss rose, not seen.

Sweet-fern, slow to advance.

Mountain-ash, May 5, larger leaves than any show green at a distance.

Cultivated cherry.

67. *Vide* [p. 255].



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Pyrus arbutifolia.
? Late pyrus, not seen.
Horse-chestnut.
Hazel, May 5.
? Beaked hazel, not distinguished.
Early large apples.
Late gooseberry in garden.
? Pears, not seen.
Wild red cherry generally; or let it go with the earliest.
? Dwarf or sand cherry.
Hardhack.
? Clematis, shoots five or six inches long, May 16.
Low blackberry,
?? *Rufus triflorus*, eight inches high, May 22.
? Quince.
?? Mayflower, not seen.
Young red maples.
?? Fever-root, four or five inches high, May 12.
Creeping juniper comes forward like fir balsam.
Larch, opens slowly; makes a show, May 12.
Vaccinium Pennsylvanicum.
Amelanchier Botryapium, fast.
High blackberry.
? *Sempervirens*, not seen.
Young rock maple.
? Large white "
Alders generally.
?? Linnaea, not seen.
Ostrya.
Amelanchier oblongifolia.
Early trembles suddenly.
?? Dwarf cassandra.
Balm-of-Gilead.
Early thorns.
? Late ", not seen.
Yellow birch.
? Cockspur thorn, not seen.
Canoe birch, shoots.
White ", shoots.
? Black, young (large not
? Canada plum.
Pitch pine.
?? Bear-berry, not seen.
? Norway pine, not seen.
White pine.
Young hornbeam.
Cornus alternifolia.
? Round-leaved [cornel], seen late.
Panicked cornel.
Silky "
Sweet-gale, May 11.
Red oak, May 11.
Bass, sudden.
Young chestnuts and lower limbs; full leafing of large not seen.
?? Clethra, seen late. [*Vide* forward.]
Old hornbeam.
?? Maple-leaved arrow-wood, not seen till late.
Arrow-wood.



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Butternut.
High blueberry.
Rhus Toxicodendron.
? var. *radicans*, seen late.
Sweet-briar generally; earliest not seen.
? Swamp rose, seen late.
?? Beech, not seen.
White-ash, May 12.
Fir-balsam.
? Fever-bush, seen rather late.
?? Woodbine, not seen.
Black shrub oak.
Elm, young.
? Slippery [elm], not seen.
Great red maples, May 13.
Clustered andromeda, 13th.
Young *Populus grandidentata* (large three or four days later?)
Black oak.
Black willow.
?? Sage ", seen late.
? Chinquapin oak.
? Chestnut ", not seen.
Celtis.
?? Cranberry.
Locust, 14th.
Nemopantes.
? Witch hazel, in our garden.
Swamp white oak. slow.
? Large sugar maples, not well observed.
White swamp-pink.
Buttonwood.
Cornus florida.
Panicked andromeda, not generally; several days later.
? Waxwork, seen but lost place.
Pignut hickory, make a show suddenly.
? Mockernut hickory.
?? Black walnut.
Young white oak (old 15th, slow).
Prinos -verticillatus, 15th.
? Single-berry prinos, seen late.
Huckleberries, black.
N.B. — Trees generally!!
Grape.
Smilax.
?? Pinweeds, seen late, six or more inches high; the large, May 22.
?? Cistus, as early at least.
Mulberry, May 16.
?? Carrion-flower, four or five feet long, the 31st of May.
White spruce, slow. [Here, "White" is crossed out in pencil, and "black, white variety" substituted.]
Sassafras, slow.
Lambkill.
?? Mountain laurel, not seen
?? Andromeda Polifolia, seen
? Rhodora.
Tupelo.
Poison-dogwood.
Jersey tea.
Azalea nudiflora, 17th.



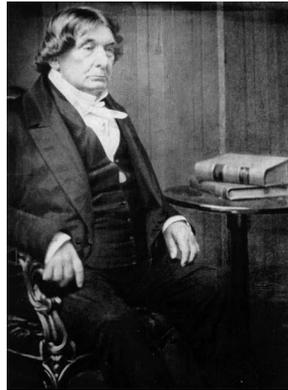
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Button-bush, but does not show, being few buds.
Beach plum, 19th; scarcely makes any show the 24th, no more than the button-bush.
? Red cedar.
White " growth not obvious, and difference in trees; not sure of date.
Arbor-vita
Young hemlocks, 20th; old, 21st.
Checkerberry, 20th, shoots just visible.
? Mountain sumach, 22d. [The 31st May it is much more forward than the button-bush at Cliffs, and perhaps started first.]
? Black spruce [Dark variety], 24th, hardly yet at Potter's.
Of common deciduous shrubs or trees, the buttonbush is the latest to leaf, and, from the fewness of its buds, *i.e.* the great intervals between them, they appear later than other plants which leaf nearly at the same time. Their being subject to overflows at this season may have to do with this habit, as hardhacks, etc., under these circumstances are equally late.
Of all deciduous shrubs and trees the mountain sumach at Hubbard's field is the latest to leaf. I have not observed those under Fair Haven. [*Vide* May 31.]
The beach plum at a little distance does not make so much show of green even as the button-bush. Do the young shoots show more?
Tree-toads heard oftener, and at evening I hear a dor-bug hum past. The mouse-ear down begins to blow
in fields.



May 28, Sunday, 1854: 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.

William Speiden, Jr. attended the funeral of a crew member of the *Vandalia*, who was buried on shore near a small temple.



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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* [**Dark-eyed Junco** **Junco hyemalis** (~~Slate-colored Sparrow or Snow-bird or *F. Hyemalis*~~)], fox-colored sparrow [**Fox Sparrow** **Passerella iliaca** (~~Fox-colored Sparrow~~)], rusty grackles [**Rusty Blackbird** **Euphagus carolinus** (~~Rusty Grackle~~)], tree sparrows, [**American Tree Sparrow** **Spizella arborea**] have all gone by; also the purple finch [**Purple Finch** **Carpodacus purpureus** (~~American Linnet~~)]. The snipe [**Common Snipe** **Gallinago gallinago**] has ceased (?) to boom. I have not heard the phoebe [**Eastern Phoebe** **Sayornis phoebe** (~~Bridge-Pewee~~)] of late, and methinks the bluebird [**Eastern Bluebird** **Sialia sialis**] and the robin [**American Robin** **Turdus migratorius**] 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-bug 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 exuvia or cases of some 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

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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 [Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularia* (Peewee)] dashing away. Four pale-green (?) eggs, finely sprinkled with brown, in a brown thrasher's [Brown thrasher *Toxostoma rufum*] 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



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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 30, Tuesday, [1854](#): William Speiden, Jr. attended a concert of the [Japanese](#) Olio Minstrels on board the *Powhatan*. “A large number of the Japanese were on board and seemed highly pleased.”

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

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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



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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



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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



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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



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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



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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.



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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



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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



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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



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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



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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 of 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 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



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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



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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



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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



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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



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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;

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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.

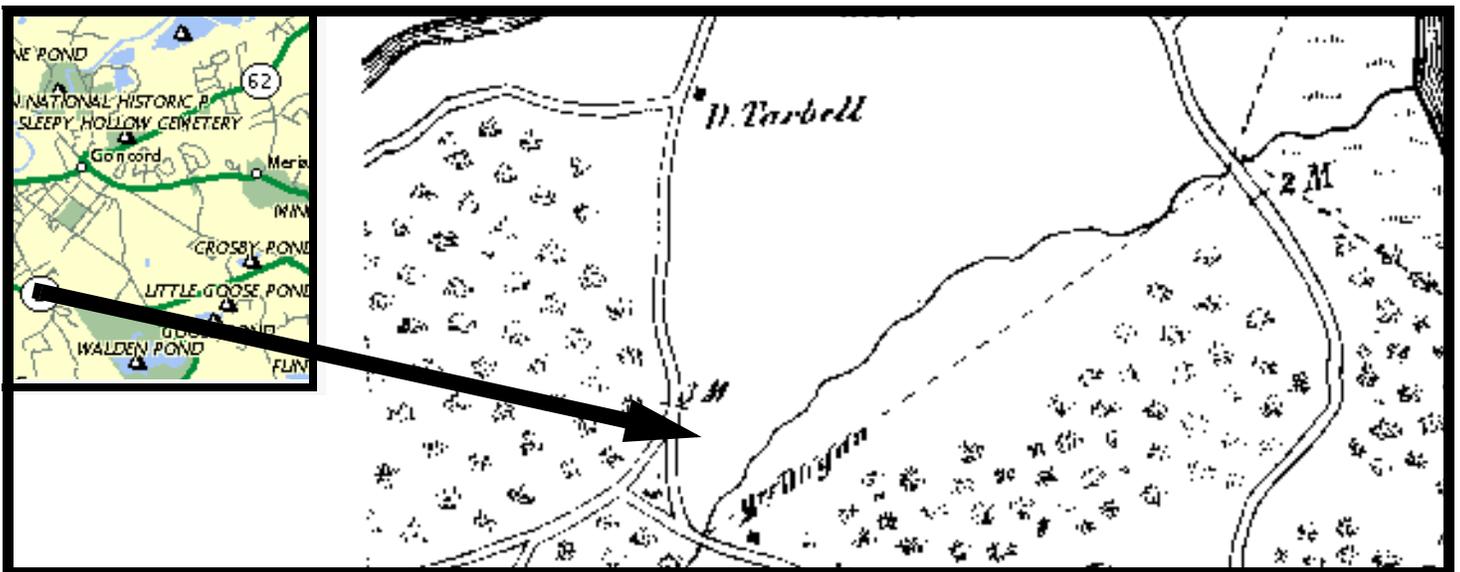
SECTION 37. And be it further enacted, That all treaties, laws, and other, engagements made by the government of the United States with the Indian tribes inhabiting the territories embraced within this act, shall be faithfully and rigidly observed, notwithstanding any thing contained in this act; and 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.

 June 7, Wednesday, 1854: At Shimoda, Japan. "Early this morning we had a peep at our old friend Mt. Fuji-towering high into the heavens."

At 6 AM [Henry Thoreau](#) walked up the railroad tracks. In the afternoon he visited the Linnæa Hills and then the [Dugan Desert](#):

JENNY DUGAN





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June 7. Wednesday. 6 A.M. — Up railroad.

Viburnum dentatum. Grape yesterday. *Viburnum nudum*, June 5. A thick fog this morning, through which at last rain falls, — the first after a considerable and first dry spell. As yet nothing has suffered from dryness; the grass is very green and rank, owing to the cold spring, the June-grass converting hillside pastures into mowing-land, and the seeds (or chaff?) of many grasses begin to fall on my shoes.

P.M. — To Dugan Desert via Linnaea Hills.

Curled dock. *Linnæa* abundantly out some days: say 3d or 4th. It has not rained since morning, but continues cloudy and is warm and muggy, the sun almost coming out. The birds sing now more than ever, as in the morning, and mosquitoes are very troublesome in the woods. The locusts so full of pendulous white racemes five inches long, filling the air with their sweetness and resounding with the hum of humble and honey bees, are very interesting. These racemes are strewn along the path by children. Is that the *Cratægus Crus-Galli?*, roadside between Joe Hosmer's and Tarbell's? Again I am struck by the rank, dog-like scent of the rue budded to blossom. Along the wood-paths and in wood-side pastures I see the golden basins of the cistus. I am surprised at the size of green berries, — shad-bush, low blueberries, choke-cherries, etc., etc. It is but a step from flowers to fruit.

As I expected I find the desert scored by the tracks of turtles, made evidently last night, though the rain of this morning has obliterated the marks of their tails. The tracks are about seven eighths of an inch in diameter, one half inch deep, two inches apart (from centre to centre) in each row, and the rows four or five inches apart; and they have dabbled in the sand in many places and made some small holes. Yesterday was hot and dusty, and this morning it rained. Did they choose such a time? Yesterday I saw the painted and the wood tortoise out. Now I see a snapping turtle, its shell about a foot long, out here on the damp sand, with its head out, disturbed by me. It had just been excavating, and its shell — especially the fore part and sides — and especially its snout, were deeply covered with earth. It appears to use its shell as a kind of spade whose handle is within, tilting it now this way, now that, and perhaps using its head and claws as a pick. It was in a little cloud of mosquitoes, which were continually settling on its head and flippers, but which it did not mind. Its sternum was slightly depressed. It seems that they are very frequently found fighting in the water and sometimes dead in the spring, maybe killed by the ice. Some think that the suckers I see floating are killed by the ice.

The *Linaria Canadensis* well out, near Heart-leaf Pond. How long? *Cenothera pumila* in low ground. Angelica at Nut Meadow Brook. The low blackberry leaves on Dennis's lupine hill are now covered beneath with that orange rust.⁶⁸ Were those premature scarlet leaves which I saw at the Rock on the 4th the shadbush?⁶⁹ Common iris, some days; *one withered*.

Saw again what I have pronounced the yellow-winged sparrow (*Fringilla passerina*) [**Grasshopper Sparrow**  *Ammodramus savannarum* (~~Yellow-winged Sparrow or Savannarum or savanna~~), with white line down head and yellow over eyes and my seringo note; but this time yellow of wings not apparent; ochreous throat and breast; quite different from the bay-winged, and smaller. Does the bay-wing [**Vesper Sparrow**  *Pooecetes gramineus* (~~Bay-wing or White-in-tail or Grass Finch or Grass-bird~~)] make the seringo note? [No.]

Now the river is reduced to summer width. It is in the spring that we observe those dark-blue lakes on our meadows. Now weeds are beginning to fill the stream.

This muggy evening I see fireflies, the first I have seen or heard of at least. This louring day has been a regular fisherman's day, and I have seen many on the river, a general turnout.

68. The same on thimble-berry the 13th June.

69. Yes; it was dying.



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June 12, Monday, 1854: 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.

Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) had an interview with 7 [Japanese](#) princes, including some Treaty commissioners.

The body of William Board was discovered on the island of Okinawa. This American was alleged to have while intoxicated on shore committed a home invasion during which he raped a woman. It would appear that he had been chased down by villagers, stoned, and drowned (if course, nobody would be willing to turn these local perpetrators over to the "justice" of a western fleet).

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went to [Walden Pond](#), and by sunset he was on [Clamshell Hill](#).



June 12. P.M. — To Walden.

Clover now reddens the fields. Grass in its prime. Comfrey in front of Stow's well out some days apparently. With the roses now fairly begun I associate summer heats. *Galium trifidum* var. *latifolium* (?), smooth-angled, some with linear leaves. Is it *tinctorium*? Hear the evergreen-forest note, and see the bird on the top of a white pine, somewhat creeper-like, along the boughs, and golden head except a black streak from eyes, black throat, slate-colored back, forked tail, white beneath, — *er te, ter ter te*. Another bird with *yellow* throat near by may have been the other sex. Is it the golden-winged warbler? [**Golden-winged Warbler**  *Vermivora chrysoptera*] [*Vide* June 17th.]

Pyrola chlorantha. *Rosa lucida*, probably yesterday, the 11th, judging from what I saw Saturday, *i.e.* the 10th. A bud in pitcher the 13th. The *R. nitida* is the most common now. The round-leaved cornel is well out at Heywood Peak, probably two or three days. Perhaps this and the maple-leaved viburnum are as early as the *V. nudum* and *V. dentatum*, only more rare. Scared a kingfisher [**Belted Kingfisher**  *Ceryle alcyon*] on a bough over Walden. As he flew off, he *hovered* two or three times thirty or forty feet above the pond, and at last dove and apparently caught a fish, with which he flew off low over the water to a tree. Mountain laurel at the pond. A narrow-leaved potamogeton well out at the bathing-place, — leaves two to three inches long. Four-leaved loosestrife.

Silene antirrhina, how long? Do I not see two birds with the seringo note, — the Savannah (?) sparrow [**Savannah Sparrow**  *Passerculus sandwichensis* (*passerina* or *seringo* or *seringo-bird*)], larger with not so bright a yellow over eye, none on wing, and white breast, and beneath former streaked with dark and perhaps a dark spot, and the smaller yellow-winged [**Grasshopper Sparrow**  *Ammodramus savannarum* (~~Yellow-winged Sparrow~~ or *Savannarum* or *savanna*)], with spot on wing also and ochreous breast and throat? The first sings *che che rar, che ra-a-a-a-ar*.

Sundown. — To Clamshell Hill.

Nightshade a day or two. The cracks made by cold in pastures in the winter are still quite distinct. Phleum or herd's-grass (:). I sit on the Clamshell Hill at sunset, while several kinds of swallows are playing low over it chasing each other, and occasionally alighting on the bare hillside. The level rays of the sun shine into and light up the trunk and limbs of a swamp white oak on Hubbard's meadow.

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 June 15, Thursday, 1854: 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.

On the far eastern island, the remains of the American Robert Williams were moved for internment.

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.



June 15. 5.30 A.M. — To Island and Hill.

A young painted tortoise on the surface of the water, as big as a quarter of a dollar, with a reddish or orange sternum. I suppose that my skater insect is the hydrometer. Found a nest of tortoise eggs, apparently buried last night, which I brought home, ten in all, — one lying wholly on the surface, — and buried in the garden. The soil *above* a dark virgin mould about a stump was unexpectedly hard.⁷⁰

P.M. — Up Assabet to Garlic Wall.

That tall grass opposite the Merrick Swimming-Place is getting up pretty well, and blossoming with a broad and regular spike, for some time. This is the third afternoon that we have had a rumbling thunder-cloud arise in the east, — not to mention the west, — but all signs have failed hitherto, and I resolve to proceed on my voyage, knowing that I have a tight [roof] in my boat turned up. The froth on the alders, andromeda, etc., — not to speak of the aphides, — dirties and apparently spots my clothes, so that it is a serious objection to walking amid these bushes these days. I am covered with this spittle-like froth. At the Assabet Spring I must have been near a black and white creeper's [**Black-and-white Warbler** ■ *Mniotilta varia* (~~Black and white Creeper~~)] nest. It kept up a constant chipping. Saw there also, probably, a chestnut-sided warbler [**Chestnut-sided Warbler** ■ *Dendroica pensylvanica*]. A yellow crown, chestnut stripe on sides, white beneath, and two yellowish bars on wings. A red oak there has many large twigs drooping withered, apparently weakened by some insect. May it not be the locust of yesterday? Black willow is now gone to seed, and its down covers the water, white amid the weeds. The swamp-pink apparently two or even three days in one place. Saw a wood tortoise, about two inches and a half, with a black sternum and the skin, which becomes orange, now ochreous merely, or brown. The little painted tortoise of the morning was red beneath. Both these young tortoises have a distinct dorsal ridge. The garlic not in flower yet. I observed no *Nuphar lutea* var. *Kalmiana* on the Assabet.

7 P.M. — To Cliff by railroad.

Cranberry. *Prinos lævigatus*, apparently two days. Methinks the birds sing a little feebler nowadays. The note of the bobolink [**Bobolink** ■ *Dolichonyx oryzivorus*] begins to sound somewhat rare. The sun has set, or is at least concealed in a low mist. As I go up Fair Haven Hill, I feel the leaves in the sprout-land oak, hickory, etc., cold and wet to my hand with the heavy dew that is falling. They look

70. These were stinkpots and only a few feet from water's edge.



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dry, but when I rub them with my hand, they show moist or wet at once. Probably I thus spread minute drops of dew or mist on their surface. It cannot be the warmth of my hand, for when I breathe on them it has no effect. I see one or two early blueberries prematurely turning. The *Amelanchier Botryapium* berries are already reddened two thirds over, and are somewhat palatable and soft, — some of them, — not fairly ripe.



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June 28, Wednesday, 1854: The 1st interment in San Francisco's Laurel Hill Cemetery.

Generals D. Dulce and Leopoldo O'Donnell launched a right-wing revolt against the Spanish crown and its liberal ministry.

In America's fleet in the far eastern waters, the *Mississippi* and *Powhatan* got under way, towing the *Southampton*. The *Macedonian* and *Supply* were still awaiting favorable winds.

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 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."⁷¹ 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.



June 28. A.M. — To Island.

Tall anemone. Pontederia to-morrow.

71. 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."



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A thunder-shower in the afternoon.

 June 29, Thursday, 1854: The American fleet in far eastern waters lay off the island of Oshima, Japan.

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.

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 this day and returning to Boston to preach for Father Taylor during summer vacation. However, his Meadville studies would have so undermined the Methodist theology that he would become a minister-at-large for the Unitarian Benevolent Fraternity of Churches of Boston (he would be ordained under Unitarian auspices in the Hollis Street Church).



June 29. Another clear morning after last evening's rain.

P.M. — To lime-kiln.

Spurry, a good while. Cichorium at Simon Brown's, three or four days (early); also catnep, about two days. Canada thistle yesterday. Earliest cultivated cherries, a week ago. Hazelnut burs now make a show. *Veronica serpyllifolia* still. The cherry-bird [Cedar Waxwing  *Bombycilla cedrorum* (Cherry-bird)]'s note is like the fine peep of young partridges [Ruffed Grouse  *Bonasa umbellus* (Partridge)] or woodcocks [Woodcock, American  *Scolopax minor*].



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 June 30, Friday, 1854: 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.

The Americans on their fleet in far eastern waters encountered and boarded the English ship *Great Britain*, out of Shanghai headed toward London. Her captain explained he thought the American ships were Russians, and had therefore attempted to evade, since England and France had entered hostilities with Russia. The *Mississippi* arrived within sight of the port of Naha, Lew Chew, and anchored there the morning of July 1st. At this point in volume one of his journal, William Speiden, Jr. inserted “Lines found in a Japanese Tea box” as translated by the Reverend S. Wells Williams.

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.



June 30. P.M. — Walden and Hubbard’s Close.

Jersey tea. Young oak shoots have grown from one and a half to three or four feet, but now in some cases appear to be checked and a large bud to have formed. Poke, a day or two. Small crypta Elatine, apparently some days at least, at Callitriche Pool. *Rubus triflorus* berries, some time, — the earliest fruit of a rubus. The berries are very scarce, light (wine?) red, semitransparent, showing the seed, — a few (six to ten) large shining grains and rather acid. *Lobelia spicata*, to-morrow.

Read  [Henry Thoreau’s Journal for July 1854 \(æf. 36-37\)](#)

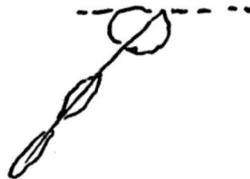
 July 1, Saturday, 1854: The *Mississippi* and *Powhatan* anchored at port at Naha, Lew Chew.

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 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



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surface covered with small rayed or star-shaped spawn (?) A great quantity of it.

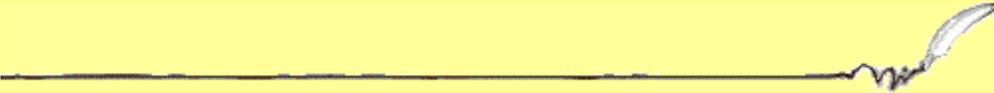


July 2, Sunday, 1854: The Reverend Mr. G.H. Morton (Moreton), an English missionary at Lew Chew, delivered the sermon for Divine Service aboard the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi*. William Speiden, Jr. concluded the 1st volume of his journal by writing: "This day I close this book, I know that there are a great many mistakes in it, such as misspelt words, words left out & tautology. I have endeavored to please myself. I do not know how it will please others, hope, well." He followed the entry with a roster of officers of the *Mississippi*, penned in the last pages of the journal.

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, — from one to two feet high, — upright-flowered, more



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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 sprout-land; aspect of a buttercup and *Potentilla Norvegica* with burs. [Also near (north of) Assabet Bathing-Place, out of bloom, July 8.] I see some *Lysimachia stricta* (?), with ends of petals coppery-reddish.



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 July 3, Monday, [1854](#): On this day, with the US steam frigate *Mississippi* in port at Naha, Lew Chew, William Speiden, Jr. began a 2d volume of his Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) expedition journal, beginning the new volume with the case of William Board, the American who was alleged to have committed a home invasion while intoxicated on shore, during which he was alleged to have raped an Okinawan woman. This man's body had been discovered on June 12th and it appeared he had been chased down by villagers, stoned, and drowned (if course, nobody was willing to turn the perpetrators over to the "justice" of the western fleet).

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

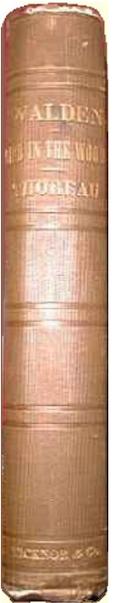
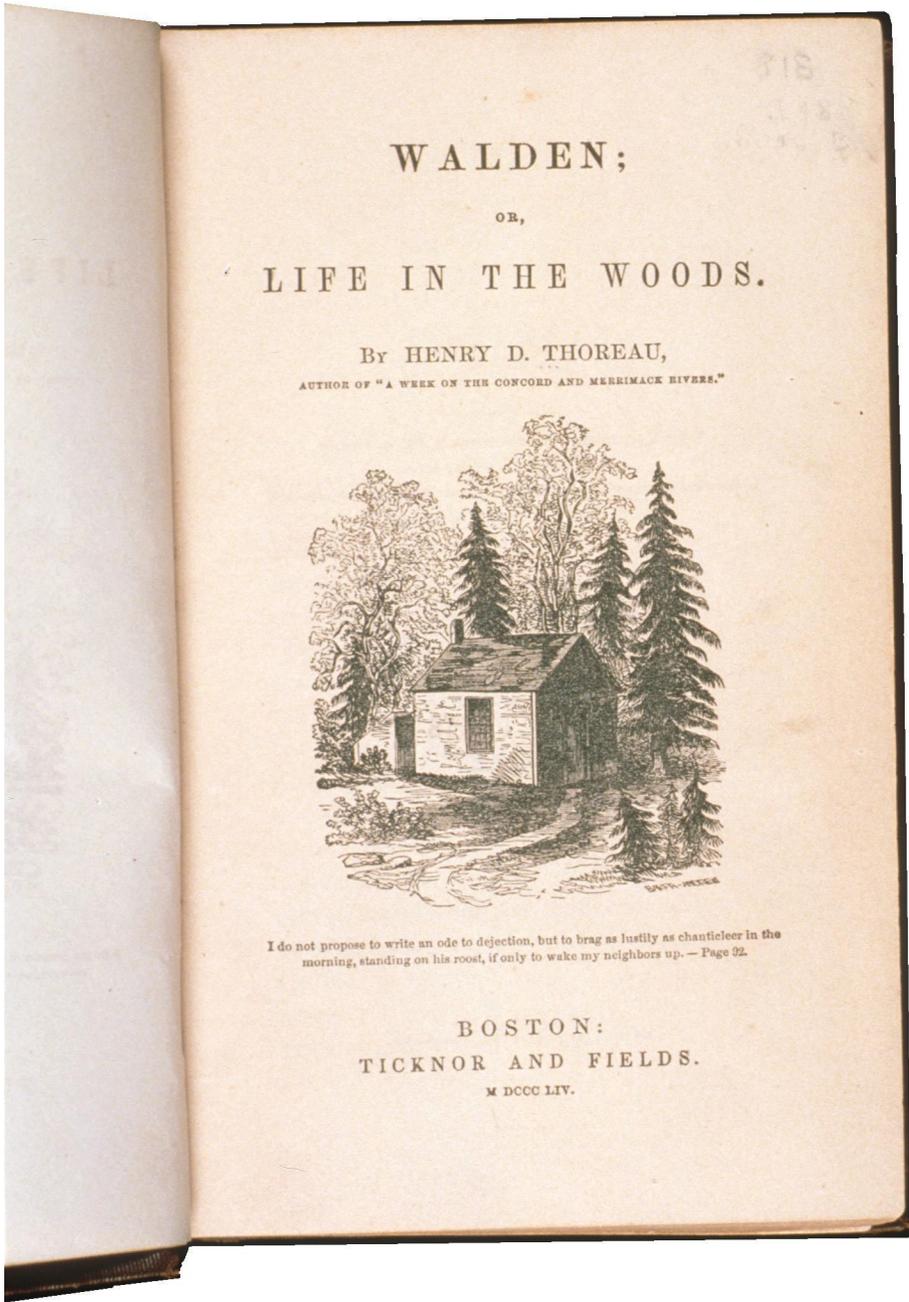
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In [Boston](#), the sheets of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) were passing through the printing press!





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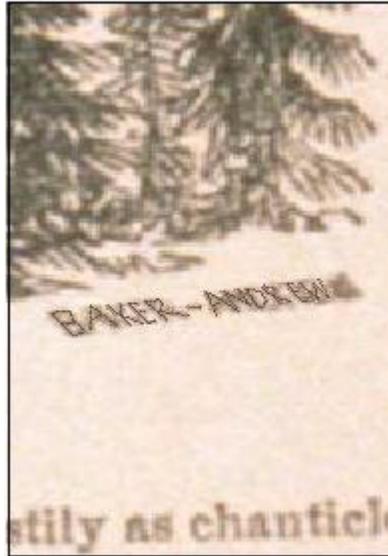
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The firm of Baker & Andrew, Engravers of Boston had rendered [Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau](#)'s drawing of the shanty on the pond as an engraving for the title page.

[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 [[Purple Finch](#) [Carpodacus purpureus](#) ([American Linnet](#))] these days about the houses, — à twitter witter weeter wee, à witter witter wee.

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 seats 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



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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, 1854: 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

America's Independence Day was celebrated with a reading of the Declaration of Independence by officers and crew aboard the *USS Mississippi* in far-eastern waters, plus the singing of "The Star Spangled Banner," plus a recitation "America, My Native Home," while "Hail Columbia" and "Yankee Doodle" were rendered by the vessel's band of musicians.

[Henry Thoreau](#) went at "8 A.M. – To Framingham."



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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 federal union.



ROSS/ADAMS COMMENTARY

[Thoreau](#) was a secessionist — he considered 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,

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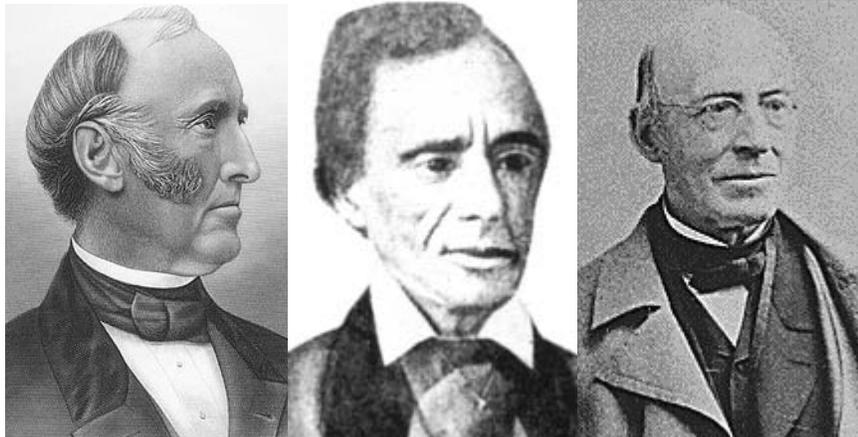
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and confined her remarks to an appeal for funds), and [Lucy Stone](#), as were [Wendell Phillips](#), [Charles Lenox](#)



[Remond](#), and [William Lloyd Garrison](#).⁷²



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



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[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

72. 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.

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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.





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–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 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



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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

[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

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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

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heart.”⁷³

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.

73. 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.

8 A.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.

CHANGE IS ETERNITY, STASIS A FIGMENT



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 July 5, Wednesday, 1854: George Scott and LeRoy Arnold, a 3d assistant engineer, were brought before Court Martial on board the *USS Powhatan* (Arnold would in 1856 resign his naval commission).

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



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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

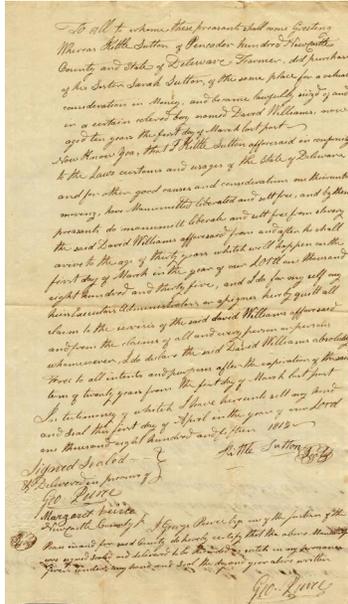
EDWARD GREELEY LORING



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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.

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 *circæa* 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*.

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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 New Year, that I Little Sutton aforesaid in conformity
 to the Laws customs and usages of the State of Delaware
 and for other good causes and considerations on this
 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 which 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 assignees hereby quit all
 claim to the services 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 which I have hereunto set my hand
 and Seal the first day of April in the year of our Lord
 one thousand eight hundred and fifteen

Signed Sealed -
 of Delaware in presence of
 Geo. P. Perry
 Margaret Peirce
 New Castle County

Little Sutton

Geo. P. Perry

I George P. Perry by 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
 given under my hand and Seal the day and year above written

Geo. P. Perry

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.



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 July 6, Thursday, 1854: 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 Manzanera 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.

Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#), dissatisfied that Okinawans had neglected to voluntarily turn over to Western justice the killer of William Board, an American accused of a drunken home invasion and rape, took possession of the *Ameku Dera*, which his US Squadron had been using as a hospital. He desired the islanders “to make stronger efforts to find out the murderer of the man, Board.”

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. Very 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, 4⁵/₈; 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





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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.

Plantain, some days, and gnaphalium, apparently two or three days.



July 7, Friday, 1854: As tension over the William Board affair escalated on the island of Okinawa, the American fleet prepared to land marines with a howitzer, to take further possessions in Lew Chew. This was prevented, however, by the Lew Chewan regent and his entourage coming aboard the Western flagship, bringing with them the local person who they said had killed Board. Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) decreed that the man should suffer the same punishment as if he had murdered a fellow island native in response to those aggravated circumstances (home invasion, rape). Informed that what the native authorities would normally do would be to banish such an offender to an uninhabited island for the remainder of his life, the Commodore allowed the man to be removed from the ship and taken back to the island to be disposed of by the native authorities as they saw fit.

[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 [**American Woodcock**  *Scolopax minor*] at the spring under Clamshell. *Campanula aparinoides*, apparently three or four days. The clover heads are turned brown and dry, and whiteweed is also drying up. I think that that is the water dock just opening in J.P. Brown's meadow. Disturbed two broods of partridges [**Ruffed Grouse**  *Bonasa umbellus* (~~Partridge~~)] 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.



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 July 11, Tuesday, 1854: 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 Calbraith Perry](#) brought a present of agricultural implements ashore on Lew Chew (Ryukyu) and met with local authorities. A compact between the United States and the local government was negotiated to help govern future encounters and avoid the kind of difficulties already experienced. It stipulated that help be provided for arriving American ships in navigating the coastal waters and seeking anchorage, and courtesy and protection should be extended to Americans shipwrecked in the vicinity. It also stipulated a burial yard for the bodies of citizens of the United States of America. Although Americans would be free to come ashore at Naha without being monitored or spied upon, if they "violently go into houses, or trifle with women, or force people to sell them things, or do other such illegal acts; they shall be arrested by the local officers, but not maltreated, and shall be reported to the Captain of the ship to which they belong, for punishment by him." This Treaty of Naha was signed in English and Chinese at the town hall of Naha by the Commodore as commander-in-chief of the U.S. Naval Forces in East India, China, and Japan Seas, by Sho Fu Fing, Superintendent of Affairs in Lew Chew, and by Ba Rio-si, Treasurer of Lew Chew at Shui, on behalf of the government of Lew Shew under the reign of Hien Fung (salient in the background of such a document was, of course, its implicit recognition that the islands were not dependencies either of [Japan](#) or of [China](#).)

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](#).

COMMODORE PERRY



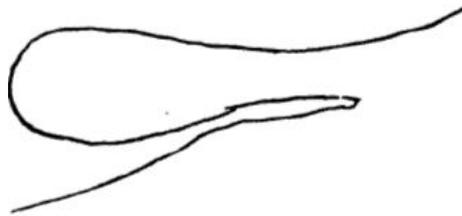
MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

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 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.



July 12, Wednesday, 1854: [George Eastman](#) was born in Waterville, New York.

Commander Henry A. Adams, who had been dispatched during April to convey the Kanagawa treaty to the United States, arrived in [Washington DC](#).

[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.

In the afternoon our birthday boy went to Dodge's Brook.

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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 *lilium Canadense* (at Dodge Brook corner by road), approaching *Superbum*, four and a half feet high, with a whorl of four flowers, and two more above, somewhat pyramidal, and petals recurved.

[Transcript]



July 14, Friday, 1854: The Sultan of Muscat ceded the Kuria Muria Islands to Great Britain.

In the Rkuku Islands, local government officials were welcomed aboard [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#)'s flagship to be entertained for the evening by that vessel's minstrel group (unfortunately, we have no record of the manner in which they received such a blackface pantomime).

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. Am-phicarp[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.

[Transcript]





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 July 17, Monday, 1854: In San Francisco, the Calvary Presbyterian Church was organized.

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).

The *USS Mississippi* departed Lew Chew (Ryuku) waters in company of the *USS Powhatan*. The Reverend Doctor Bernard J. Bettelheim, who was departing his missionary post at Naha, was aboard the *USS Powhatan* traveling toward Hong Kong.

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



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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 acuminatum* 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 21, Friday, 1854: Coming to anchor in the Lymoon Passage near Hong Kong, ships of the fleet of Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry experienced a sea "as smooth as a mill pond."

A republication 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).

TIMELINE OF ESSAYS

**ROSS/ADAMS
COMMENTARY**

It was so hot in Concord that it was almost impossible to work outdoors, and there were few people to be seen.

That night was the hottest yet that year. It was beginning to be too hot for Henry to disappear upstairs into his



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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.”



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR JULY 21ST]



July 22, Saturday, [1854](#): 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.”

Upon its arrival at Victoria Island, the American Consul and Governor of Hong Kong visited the *USS Mississippi*.

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

[Transcript]





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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 XXXX—. 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 dark red. The Epilobium coloratura lower leaves very dark red. Gerardia flava — ap[arently] 2 or 3 days, Lupine Hillside up RR, near fence. Also Solidago odora, a day or a XXX there, & what I will call S. puberula — to-morrow.

S. altissima on RR, a day or a XXX. When the flower buds of the Boehmeria, just ready to open, are touched with a pin, the stamens spring out remarkably, scattering their pollen.



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July 25, Tuesday, 1854: The *USS Mississippi* left Victoria Island in the strait of Hong Kong, coming to anchor in Blenheim Reach of the river: "While below at Hong Kong we heard that the Rebels were expected to attack Canton, and we have come up for the purpose of sending assistance to the American residents of that place." That evening they dispatched Lieutenant John Mellen Brady Clitz and members of the crew upriver toward Canton with a howitzer.

[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.

[Transcript]

Are we likely ever to have 2 days' rain in June & the 1st half of July? There is considerable wind too



P.M. — To Bare Hill, Lincoln, via railroad.

High blackberries, a day or two XXX. The middle umbellet of the bristly aralia in some places, also a day or more. Solidago bicolor, to-morrow. XXX

I still see the cracks in the ground in old pastures, made last winter. The turtle dove [**Mourning Dove** *Zenaida macroura* (~~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. Hedyotis 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 & 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 2. Hear a woodthrush [**Hermit Thrush** *Catharus guttatus*]. Desmodium nudiflorum, a week at least. Have I not noticed it before? I now start some packs' of partridges [**Ruffed Grouse** *Bonasa umbellus* (~~Partridge~~)], old & young — going off together — without mewing.

Saw in woods a toad, dead-leaf color with black spots.



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July 26, Wednesday, 1854: 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.

The steam tender *USS Queen* arrived in the morning from Hong Kong, Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) went aboard, and 30 marines with officers, and the vessel headed up the Canton River with 2 howitzers. Meanwhile, the *USS Vincennes* and surveying steamer *USS John Hancock* headed downriver toward [Macao](#).

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 flocks 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



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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. *Gymnadeina* [*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.



July 27, Thursday, 1854: The *USS Fenimore Cooper* arrived and came to anchor in the harbor near the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi*.

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]

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 July 28, Friday, 1854: 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		
<u>August 30, 1850</u>	<u>John White Webster</u>	last <u>Harvard College</u> professor to be <u>hanged</u> by the neck in <u>Boston</u>
<u>July 28, 1854</u>	William B. Sheppard	last public open-air <u>hanging</u> in <u>San Francisco</u> , at the Presidio before a crowd of not less than 10,000
<u>July 25, 1857</u>	<u>John Lewis</u>	<u>hanged</u> 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.

The *USS Mississippi*, with the *Fenimore Cooper* in tow, stood down the Canton River. The *Fenimore Cooper* would be delivered to the Macao Roads, while the *Mississippi* would pass through Cum Sing Moon passage and come to anchor off Victoria Island, Hong Kong.

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 [Ruffed Grouse  Bonasa umbellus (Partridge)] begin to go off in packs. Lark [Horned lark  Eremophila alpestris] still sings, and robin . Small sparrows [Chipping Sparrow  Spizella passerina (chip-bird or hair-bird?)] still heard. Kingbird [Eastern Kingbird  Tyrannus tyrannus] lively. Veery [Veery  Catharus fuscescens] and wood thrush (?) not very lately, nor oven bird

[Transcript]





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[Ovenbird █ *Seiurus aurocapillus*].
Red-eye [Red-eyed Vireo █ *Vireo olivaceus*] and chewink [~~Ground-bird~~,⁷⁴ ~~Ground-robin~~, Chewink
(Rufous-sided Towhee █ *Pipilo erythrophthalmus*)] common.
Night-warbler [Common Yellowthroat █ *Geothlypis trichas?*] [[^]see forward] and evergreen-
forest [Black-throated Green Warbler █ *Dendroica virens* or *Setophaga virens* ~~Evergreen-forest
bird~~] note not lately.
Cherry-bird [Cedar Waxwing █ *Bombycilla cedrorum*] common.
Turtle dove [Mourning Dove █ *Zenaida macroura* (~~Turtle Dove~~)] seen.

74. Thoreau occasionally used this term for such ground-feeding birds as Savannah Sparrow █ *Passerculus sandwichensis*,
Song Sparrow █ *Melospiza melodia*, and Vesper Sparrow █ *Poocetes gramineus*.



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July 29, Saturday, 1854: When the *Plymouth* got underway out of Hong Kong harbor, bound homeward to the United States of America, it brought presents of birds and Japanese “Chin” (spaniel) dogs from the Emperor of Japan. It also carried some stones from Shimoda in Japan, and Naha in Lew Chew (Ryukus), as specimens intended for display at the Washington Monument.

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.

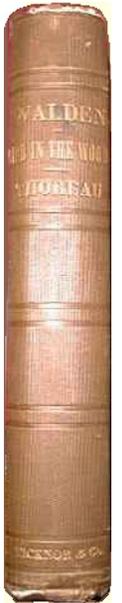
[Reprints “Sounds,” pages 111.18-114.21.]

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]





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 July 31, Monday, 1854: Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) visited the English frigate *Spartan* and then the *USS Mississippi* got underway through the Green Island passage for Macao Roads off [Hong Kong](#), where the *USS Vincennes* was waiting at anchor.

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. His letter of resignation was handled routinely. He would travel to San Francisco's What Cheer House, on his way via Nicaragua and New-York to St. Louis to reunite with his family (he would live in poverty with his family for 7 years, at times selling firewood on the street).



July 31. Blue-curls. Wood thrush [[Hermit Thrush](#)  [Catharus guttatus](#)] still sings. [Transcript]
Desmodium rotundifolium. Lespedeza hirta, say 26th, at Heywood Peak.



 August 2, Wednesday, 1854: William Speiden, Jr. visited onshore at [Macao](#), stopping at the Union Hotel with his father, the purser William Speiden, Sr. When young William was tasked with returning the band members, half of whom were "beastly drunk," to the ship by a small boat, he, faced with high winds and seasick passengers, decided to abandon the effort and return to shore, foisting responsibility for these drunken-lout bandmen onto Captain Sydney Smith Lee.

[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](#).⁷⁵

TIMELINE OF WALDEN

[Thoreau](#)'s holograph title page draft for [WALDEN](#), as preserved in the photograph on page 140 of Van Doren's 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

75. 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.



[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)

COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

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.

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



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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 unctious 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



Aug. 2. Wednesday. Surveying in Lincoln.

[Transcript]

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



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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 cast 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 uninterrupted! 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 4, Friday, 1854: 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.

William Speiden, Sr. and a company of other naval officers left Macao on the steamer *Hong Kong* and boarded in Cum Sing Moon harbor the American side-wheel steam frigate gunship *USS Mississippi*.

A Graduation Act (“An Act to Graduate and Reduce the Price of the Public Lands to actual Settlers and Cultivators”) made female US citizens eligible to be homesteaders “in their own right” (white female citizens, something that goes without saying).

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.

TIMELINE OF WALDEN



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Aug. 4. Friday. P.M. — Via Turnpike to Smith's Hill.

[Transcript]

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.



August 10, Thursday, 1854: The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* raised anchor and moved from its Cum Sing Moon anchorage to a Macao Roads anchorage. There William Speiden, Sr. and his son again visited ashore.

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).



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Review of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) on the 2d page of the Boston Atlas:

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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.



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[Reprints "Conclusion," pages 328.5-329.16.]

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Aug. 10. 4.30 A.M. — To Cliffs.

[Transcript]

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 bloom. Does it shut by day? The woods are comparatively still at this



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season. I hear only the faint peeping of some robins (a few song sparrows on my way), a wood pewee, kingbird [**Eastern Kingbird** **Tyrannus tyrannus**], 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** **Carduelis 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.



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 August 11, Friday, 1854: William Speiden, Jr. returned to the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* as it got underway up the Canton River, passing the Bogue and anchoring at Blenheim Reach. Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry took the fast boat for Canton. A heavy squall came up in which lightning struck the *Mississippi*'s mainmast. Other Chinese and American vessels were also struck or damaged during this storm. William Speiden, Jr., in the process of going ashore when the squall came up, was “thoroughly drenched” and took refuge on shore with the ship’s carpenter “where we expected every moment to be carried away” by the storm.

 Henry Thoreau sent a book, presumably WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS, to Senator Charles Sumner, and also wrote (presumably) to James Thomas Fields.

To: James Fields

From: HDT

Date: 8/11/54

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.



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MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

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 14, Monday, 1854: [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."⁷⁶ 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.⁷⁷

The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* was at anchor in the Canton River, below the first Pagoda, where they did some repairs and caulked the ship's hull. The American marine guard sent earlier to protect American merchants in Canton returned by cutter and the *Mississippi* got underway in company of the *Susquehanna*.

76. 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.

77. [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.



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

 August 15, Tuesday, 1854: 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 viewed a section of pontederia leaf through Mr. Russell's microscope.

[Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) and all the men who departed with him for Canton returned and came again aboard the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi*, which this time anchored at Victoria, Hong Kong. Over the following week the ship would be taking on provisions and stores and the men would be allowed to go on port liberty. It's so nice to have a powerful nation backing you up while you are out having fun! What could be nicer than that?

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,⁷⁸ 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

78. 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?



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in her diary:



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



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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 it 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 Annursnack 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 Annursnack 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 $14 \frac{3}{4}$ feet in circumference; at six feet from ground, $15 \frac{1}{12}$ feet in circumference; at five feet, $15 \frac{4}{12}$; 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 dwell 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.



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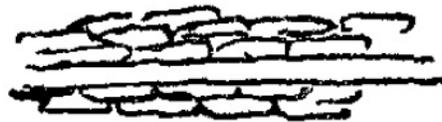
Lycopodium dendroideum pollen, apparently some days.

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.



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 August 24, Thursday, 1854: There was a national emigration convention in Cleveland, Ohio.

The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* got underway with the US commissioner to [China](#) and [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) aboard, to Macao Roads. The crew scraped the ship inside and out and set up the rigging. William Speiden, Jr. went ashore with his father, to Mr. Goodridge's house.

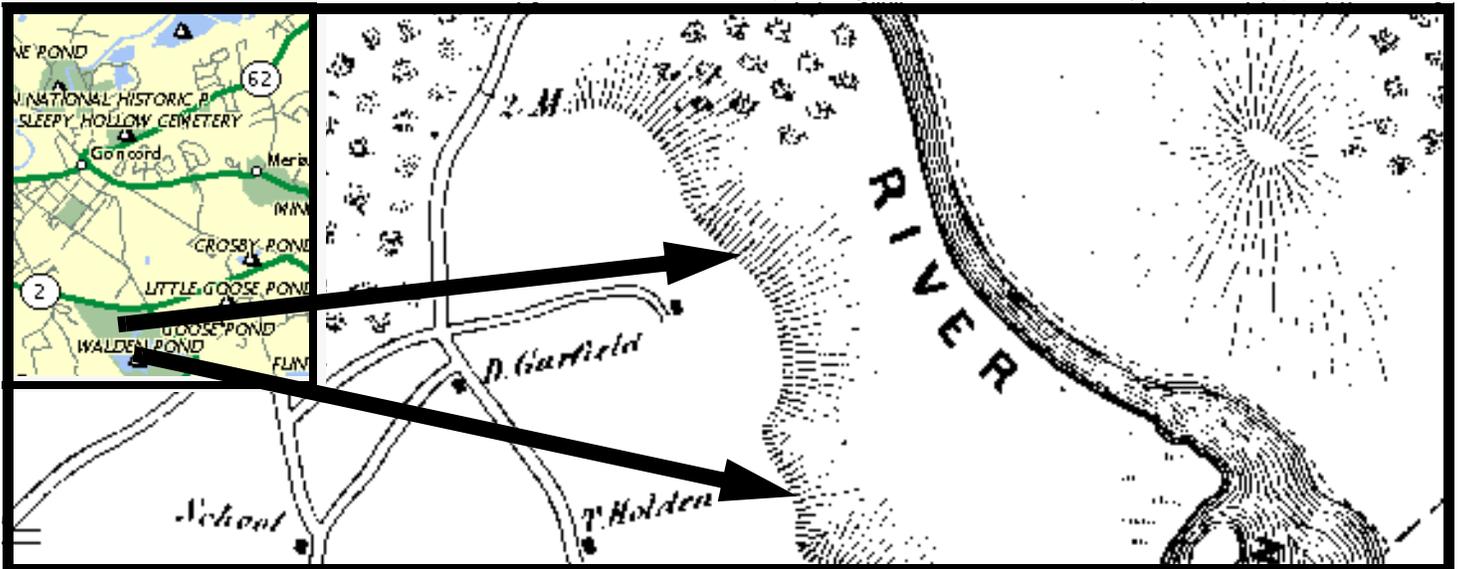
In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went upriver by boat to Assabet Bath (Gleason 4/E5).

"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



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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



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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 [**Great Blue Heron**  *Ardea herodias* (~~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.



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

 August 28, Monday, 1854: 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 French minister plenipotentiary to Canton, Alphonse de Bourboulon, came aboard the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* with Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry, and it returned to its anchorage off Hong Kong.

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.]

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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. Andnowthatlamgoii.(along the path to the meadow in the woods beyond Peter’s, I perceive the fall



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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.



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September 2, Saturday, [1854](#): Sir John Bowring, British governor of Hong Kong, visited the side-wheel American steam frigate *USS Mississippi* (an English political economist, Bowring was serving as governor from 1854 to 1859).

“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.

[TIMELINE OF WALDEN](#)

[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)**COMMODORE PERRY****MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY****ZOROASTER**

[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.

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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.



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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.]



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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.]**



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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.

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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.



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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.]



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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.

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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.



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"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 [**Chipping Sparrow** █ ***Spizella passerina*** (~~chip-bird~~ or ~~hair-bird~~)] and showing ashy under sides as they fly. A *part* the same as yesterday's. Are they Savannahs [**Savannah Sparrow** █ ***Passerculus sandwichensis*** (~~*passerina*~~ or ~~seringo~~ or ~~seringo-bird~~)], or bay-wings [**Vesper Sparrow** █ ***Pooecetes gramineus*** (~~Bay-wing~~ or ~~White-in-tail~~ or ~~Grass Finch~~ or ~~Grass-bird~~ or ~~seaside-finch~~)], 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 [**American Tree Sparrow** █ ***Spizella arborea***] 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,

[Transcript]





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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.]

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 dogsbane still in flower. The *Bidens Beckii* is oftenest eaten (?) off just below the blossom. Saw what I think must be a solitary wood (?) duck [**Wood Duck**  *Aix sponsa*]. 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 mikania 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 [**White-throated Sparrow**  *Zonotrichia albicollis*]?

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



COMMODORE PERRY

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September 4, Monday, 1854: 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."

The *USS Susquehanna* and *USS Southampton* got underway out of Hong Kong harbor headed for home by way of Japan. As they departed they politely saluted Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry and his side-wheel command steam frigate *USS Mississippi*.



Monday Sep 4th A multiflorus X  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.



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

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— 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.

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September 9, Saturday, 1854: The *Hancock* and *Fenimore Cooper* went to sea and the US store ship *Lexington* departed for the United States of America.

A publication depicted Boston Harbor, and Lafayette's grave:



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 *Sternotherus 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.

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

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little muddy-bottomed hollows in the meadows where we find the schools of young thus landlocked.

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September 11, Monday, 1854: [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) and Lieutenant Silas Bent left the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* and started passage home to the United States of America aboard the British mail steamer *Ganges* via an overland route. The *USS Mississippi* saw its Commodore off with a 17-gun salute as his Broad Pennant was being hauled down. Plans for the *USS Mississippi* itself to go to sea would be forestalled by bad weather. (Some sources disagree, suggesting instead that Perry and Bent had left aboard the Peninsular & Oriental mail steamer *Hindostan* and would travel via the Isthmus of Suez toward European destinations.) In any event, Perry would journey via Ceylon to the Isthmus of Suez and on to Europe, and from there on to American ports — and thus would arrive on our East Coast in advance of his *USS Mississippi*.



[Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by an aspiring author Catharine V. Devero or Devereaux in Millbury, Massachusetts.

To: HDT

From: Catharine V. Devero [Emily Thornwell]

Date: 9/11/54

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.

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My little volume is divided into four departments: Death in the 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 elemosynary 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



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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

1x1

MASS.

Postage: PAID

3

Address: *Henry D. Thoreau, Esq.,*

Concord,

Mass.

“Measured to-day the little *Sternothaerus 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/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/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

[Transcript]





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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.

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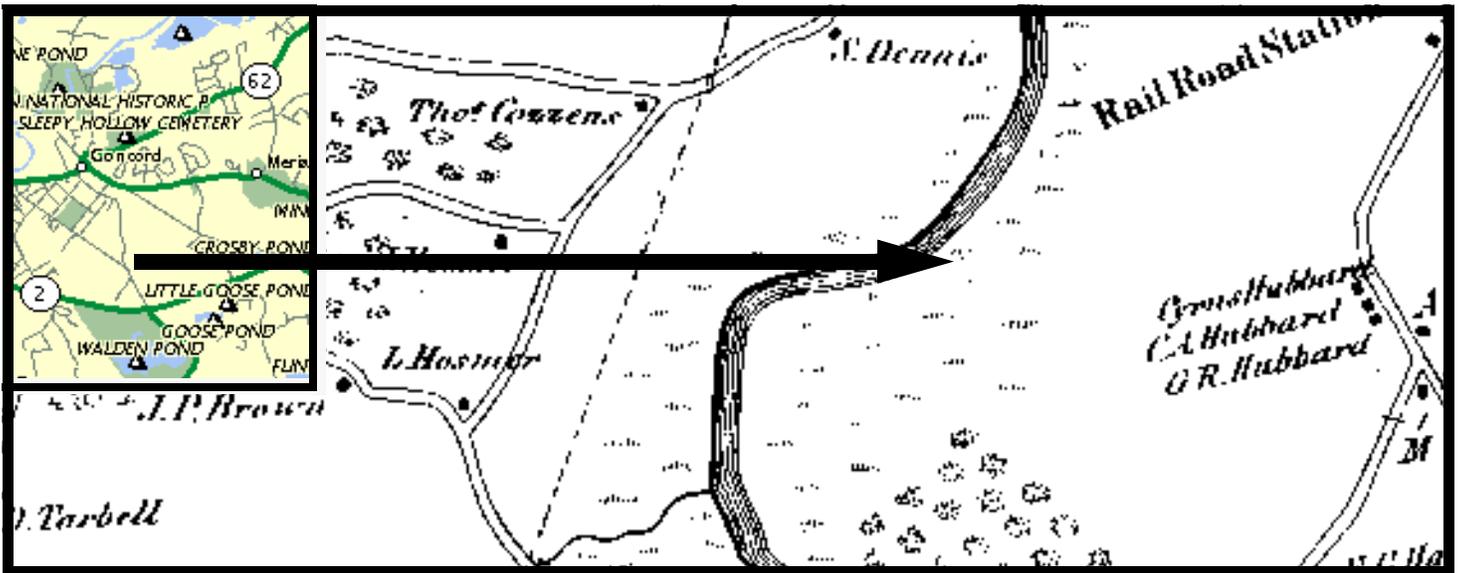
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 September 12, Tuesday, 1854: The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* went to sea on her voyage home to the United States of America. She stood out of the Victoria harbor and through the Lymoon passage, with the *USS Vincennes* and the *Porpoise* also underway. The bad weather would continue, and William Speiden, Jr. would contemplate whether he had any regrets abandoning [China](#), whether he would miss those acquaintances he was leaving behind — though he had described the majority of English residents he had found there to be “a regular snobby sett [set].” He noted that although the Chinese pilot who helped guide them out of harbor had gone back to the port, another Chinese citizen with him had chosen to remain on board as a waiter. In 1856, he would return to work in Hong Kong as a US naval storekeeper — so all this can't have been that bad an experience.

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-days, 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 I 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 [[Bluebird](#), [Eastern](#), [Sialia sialis](#)] 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



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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 [x] have been seen on the burnt Brooks's meadow. Marsh speedwell and yellow Bethlehem-star still out.

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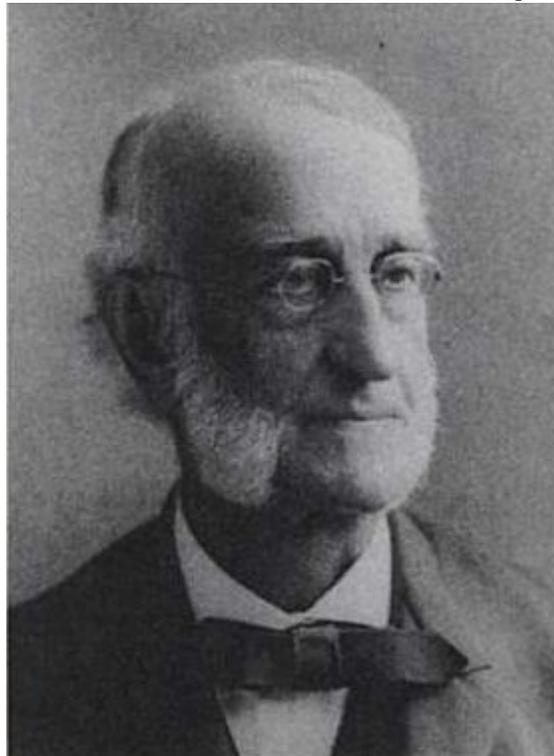
 September 21, Thursday, 1854: The USS *Porpoise*, a 10-gun brig with approximately 80 men on board, was somehow lost at sea sometime after this date. No trace has ever been found.

LOST AT SEA



When the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* arrived at Shimoda, Japan, the *Susquehanna* and *Southampton* were already at anchor.

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



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“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

Brad Dean's Commentary

To: H.G.O. Blake
From: HDT
Date: 9/21/54

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

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the day of its publication, and it should have reached you before. I am encouraged 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 demand on me.

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[As for the excursion you] speak of, I should like it right well, indeed I thought of proposing the same thing to you & Brown some months ago. Perhaps if 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--

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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



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in that shape, I feel as if [my]

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*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.

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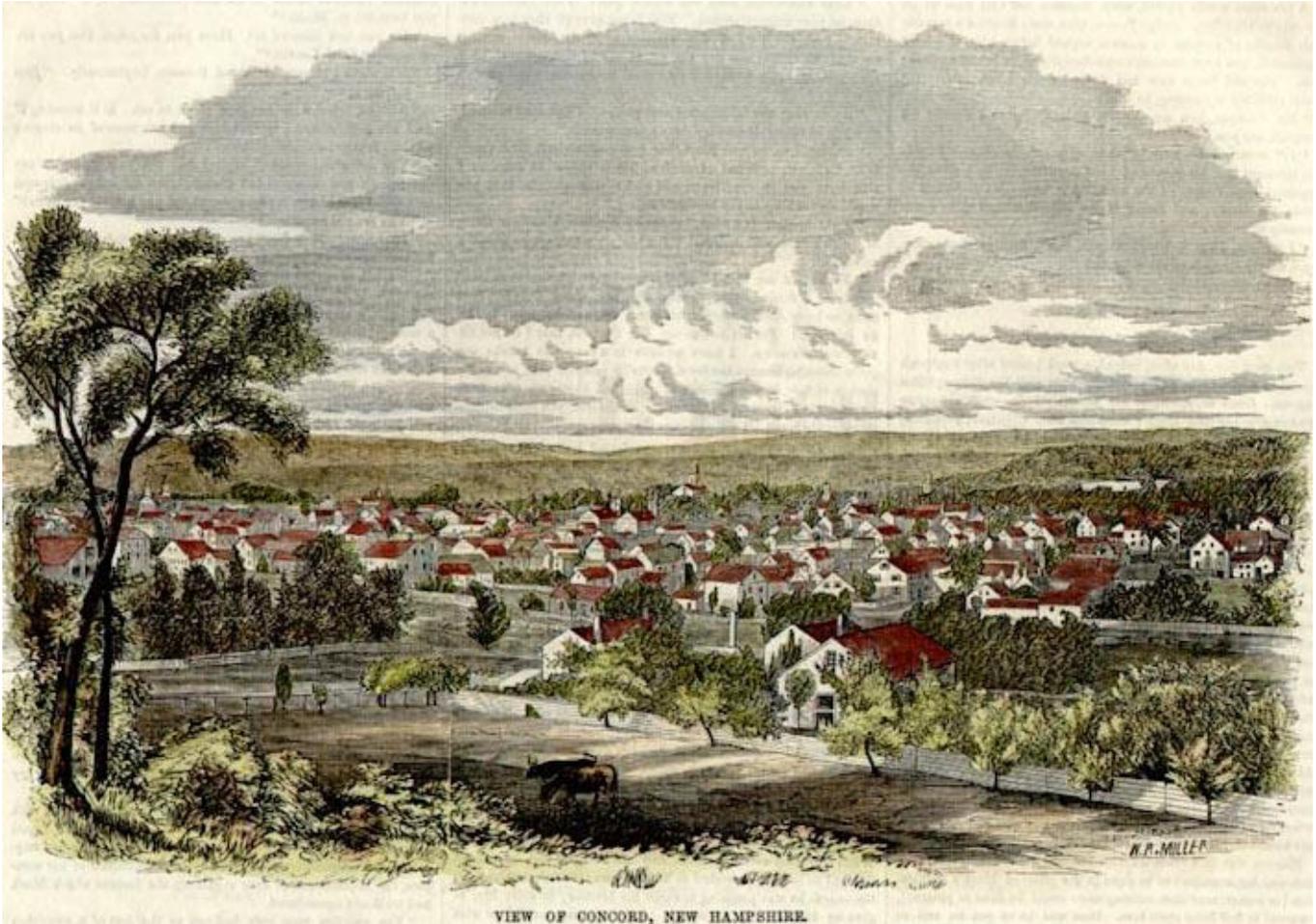
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 September 30, Saturday, 1854: [Gleason's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion](#) presented an image of [Concord, New Hampshire](#):



VIEW OF CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE.

MAGAZINE

CONSULT THE WIKIPEDIA

Adams departed from New-York to return to the Far East with an official copy of the ratified Kanagawa treaty, as approved by the US Senate and President Franklin Pierce.

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](#)



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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.

The 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 [Song Sparrow] ■ *Melospiza melodia* (*melodia*) 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



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the frost had touched have already fallen entirely, leaving a thin crop of green ones to take their turn.

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[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.



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

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.



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

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.



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

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



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY



October 1, Sunday, [1854](#): 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).

A delay occurred as the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* tried to head out to sea from Shimoda, Japan

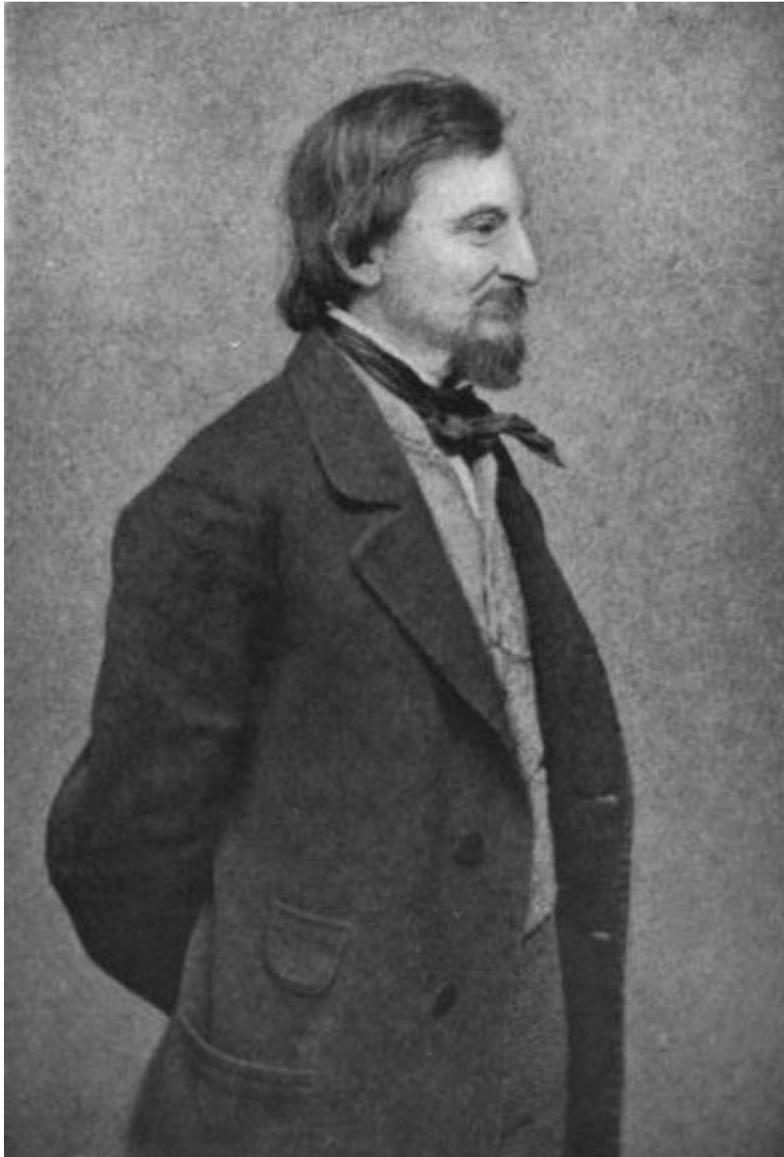
[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)

COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

with the *Southampton* in tow, because the *Southampton* ran afoul while clearing Centre Island. Things were put to rights and they made sail with double-reefed topsails with the vessel in tow and at sundown were able to cast it off. The *USS Susquehanna* had meanwhile left Shimoda, Japan for Honolulu. William Speiden, Jr. noted that before leaving [Japan](#), the ship's band had gone ashore to play and had been followed by thousands in a parade around town. "Our visit to [Japan](#) this time has been an exceedingly pleasant one." He went on shore during their time at Shimoda and visited friends, including Dr. Watanabe Tayarn and his wife.

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.



To: Daniel Ricketson

From: HDT

Date: 1 October 1854

Concord Mass, Oct 1st '54



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

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



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY



October 23, Monday, 1854: [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.

The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* reached Honolulu, Oahu, in the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii). The *USS Susquehanna* was already waiting there in harbor and was gratified at their arrival, since they had themselves experienced a very unpleasant 23-day passage from [Japan](#). A cyclone on October 7th had given them “an awful time and [we] never expected to reach port again.” They had lost their port whaleboat and port dingy as well as the port wheelhouse and head rail in this violent storm, and their head bulwarks had been smashed in. The day after the cyclone abated, a strong wind had carried away their fore topgallant mast. Then their main topgallant sail had been lost in a squall. Despite all this difficulty they had made the passage a day and a half faster than the *USS Susquehanna* which had experienced merely beautiful sailing breezes the entire way.

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Thaddeus William Harris](#).

To: [Thaddeus W. Harris](#)
From: HDT
Date: 23 October 1854

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]



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY



October 24, Tuesday, [1854](#): 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).

In a company of officers from the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* and other vessels, William Speiden, Jr. went on shore in the Hawaiian Islands to attend a presentation to King Kamehameha III.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 24TH]



October 26, Thursday, [1854](#): 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.

Mataio Kekuanao'a (1794-1868), governor of Oahu from 1839 to 1864, visited the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi*, while King Kamehameha III was a guest aboard the *USS Susquehanna*. That evening a large ball was given on board the *St. Mary's*.

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.

To: HDT
From: Charles B. Bernard
Date: 26 October 1854

*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 solicitation 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



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY



October 30, Monday, 1854: King Kamehameha III was treated to a short excursion on board the *USS Susquehanna*, after which the American gunboat sailed out to sea heading toward San Francisco.

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Charles Sumner](#).



To: Charles Sumner
From: HDT
Date: 10/30/54

*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 2^d 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]



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY



November 6, Monday, 1854: 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.

When the US. store ship *Southampton* arrived in an American port, the body of Marine Private William Miller was carried ashore for interment.

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.

[Transcript]

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 [Osprey Pandion haliaetus (Fish-Eagle or Fish-Hawk)] I saw flying over the Assabet, or a goshawk [Goshawk Accipter gentillis (Cape Eagle, Partridge Hawk)]? White beneath, with slender wings.

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

To: HDT From: A. Fairbanks

Date: 6 November 1854

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.”

To: HDT

From: Daniel Foster

Date: 11/6/54



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

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 in-
vitation 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 in-
tercourse with you when I lived in Con-
cord & 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*



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

*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 cheer-
fulness 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[.]*



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

*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!)⁷⁹

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

VOLUME II

 November 8, Wednesday, [1854](#): [Henry Thoreau](#) raked clams.

The Constituent Cortes opened in Spain.

Foreign dignitaries, including French, Peruvian, Bremen, and Danish consuls, visited the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi*. They were joined by the Governor of Oahu, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Minister of Finance of the Kingdom of Hawaii.



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 [[Common Snipe](#)  [Gallinago gallinago](#)] by riverside this windy afternoon, which goes off with a sound like creaking tackle.

[Transcript]

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

79. 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!

COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

 November 9, Thursday, 1854: Franz Liszt conducted his symphonic poem *Festklänge* in its 1st performance, with Schiller's play *Huldigung der Künste*.

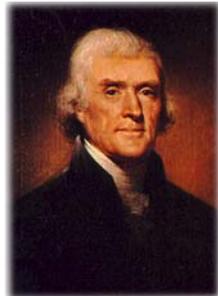
After 16 days in port the American side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* sailed, and William Speiden, Jr. noted "We just left Honolulu, a place I should desire soon to visit again. I have left some very dear friends. I have never visited a place where I enjoyed myself so much.... We are now off to San Francisco with a head wind, going between six and seven knots."



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR NOVEMBER 9TH]

 November 21, Tuesday, 1854: The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* sighted San Francisco, California at daybreak, discovering that the *USS Susquehanna* was already lying at anchor there — that ship had experienced another unpleasantly fast passage on its trip between Oahu and California, having again encountered a gale.

[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. 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

[Transcript]



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY



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.

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 November 22, Wednesday, 1854: On his separate travels, [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) had visited the home of his son-in-law August Belmont (1813-1890), who as an appointee of President Franklin Pierce was serving as American ambassador to the Netherlands, at The Hague (Belmont was the husband of Perry's daughter Caroline).

Meanwhile William Speiden, Jr. socialized in [San Francisco](#), with shore visits and ladies and gentlemen from the city coming on board. He stayed at the house of Thomas Larkin and enjoyed a ride around the municipality.

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 *I puritani* 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

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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. 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.

[Transcript]

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



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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.

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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, [1854](#): In [San Francisco](#), William Speiden, Jr. received letters from home with good news, which makes him glad, and he attended a performance by the Bacchus Minstrels.

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 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



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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]



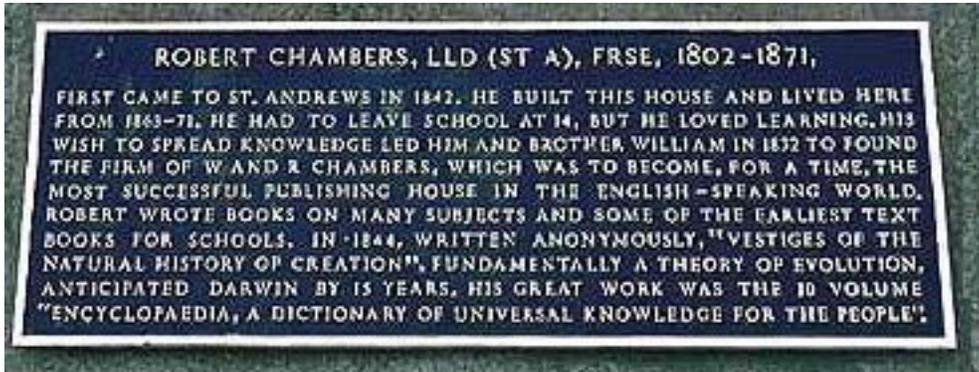
COMMODORE PERRY

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 November 24, Friday, 1854: 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](#).



After having had a good time on shore leave in [San Francisco](#), William Speiden, Jr. came back aboard as the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* took a turn around San Francisco harbor. They anchored off Benicia.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR NOVEMBER 24TH]

 December 16, Saturday, 1854: 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](#).⁸⁰ “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 side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* stood out of [San Francisco](#) harbor, and William Speiden, Jr. penned a long journal entry about his sojourn in California. He noted that “our visit to California will ever be looked back to with a great degree of pleasure.” His father had traveled inland to visit William Speiden, Jr.’s aunt and uncle in Sacramento, followed by some days visiting together in San Francisco. The Speidens had then taken a steamer up the Sacramento River to Sacramento, and from there had taken a long ride into the country to see the American River at Coloma where “gold was first discovered.” They observed gold panning and had dinner at Patterson’s Hotel. William Speiden, Jr. received dental care in Sacramento, having need of

80. Woodman would be one of the small number purchasing [Thoreau’s WALDEN](#). Whether he would read it, we wish we knew.



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an emergency extraction involving chloroform. After return to the ship at Benicia, “we had a number of ladies on board to visit the ship, nearly every day. A great many parties were given on shore to which the officers were always invited.” William Speiden, Jr. had attended the Pike County Ball at the town of Martinez on December 8th. The ship had left Benicia on December 13th and returned to anchor off San Francisco. While in California the *Mississippi* had lost “17 or 18 men by desertion and discharged 5 or 6, the term of their enlistment being up.”

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]

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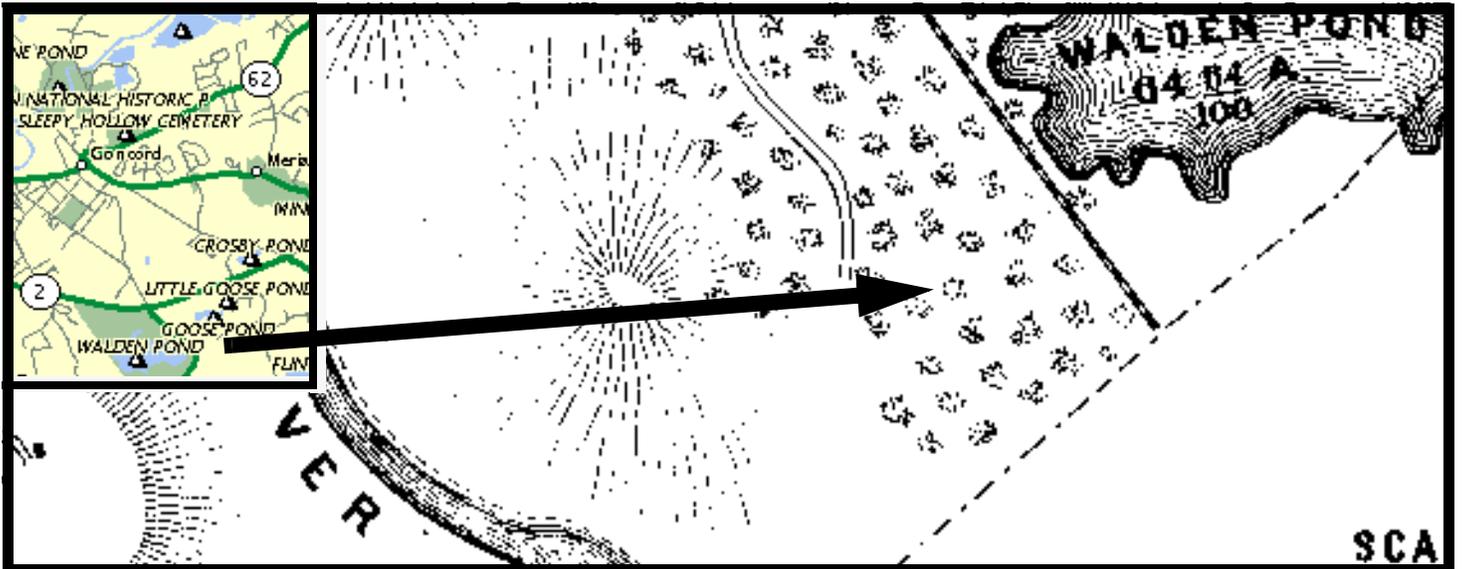
COMMODORE PERRY

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December 18, Monday, 1854: The effects of the 17 or 18 deserters were sold on board the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* at auction.

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,

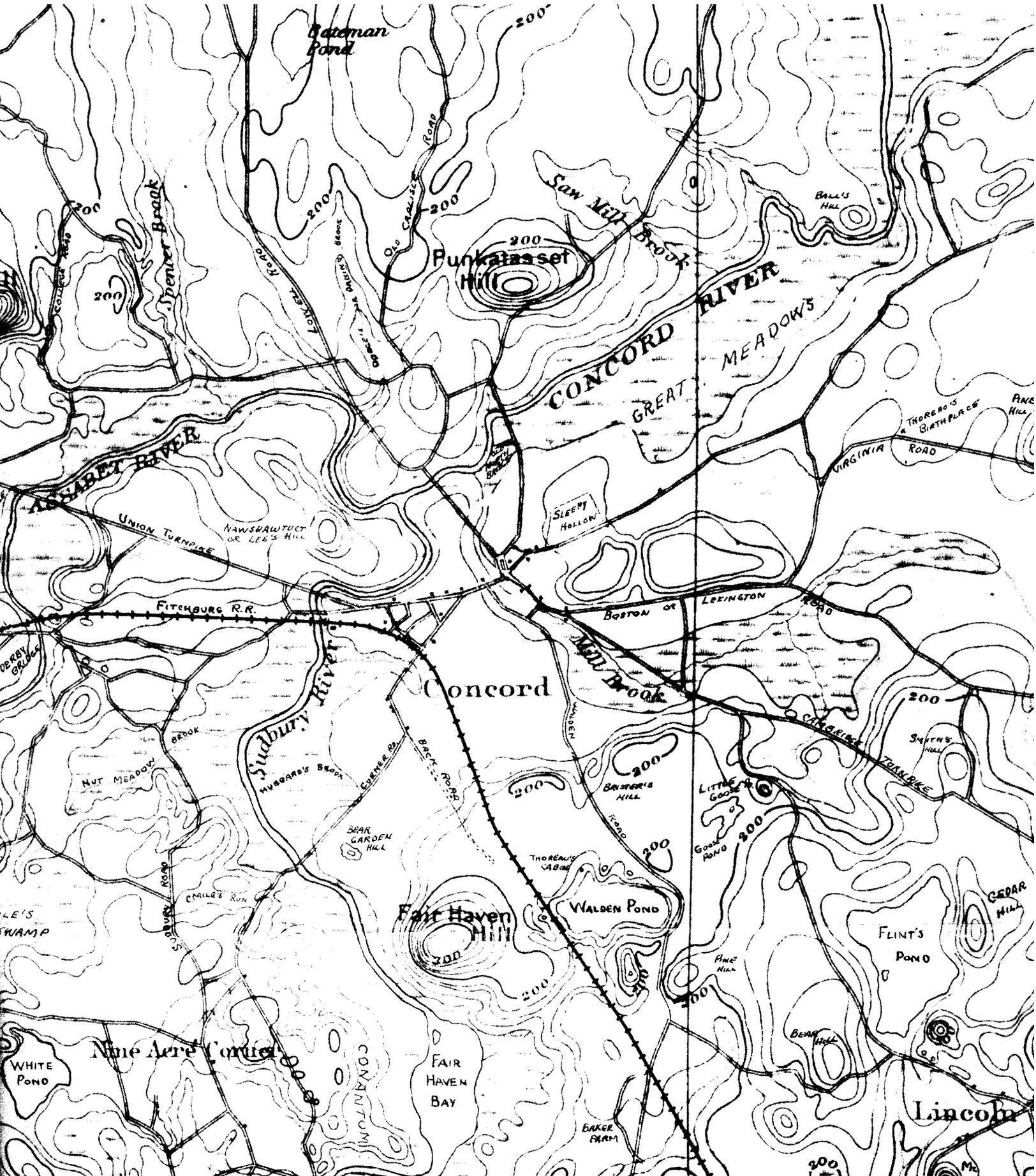
HDT

WHAT?

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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, nor 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:



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":

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Reprinted in CRITICAL ESSAYS ON HENRY DAVID THOREAU'S WALDEN, ed. Joel Myerson (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1988), pages 37-9.



Dec. 18. P.M. — Down railroad via Andromeda Ponds to river. Snowed a little finely last night and this forenoon. I see a few squirrels' tracks in the woods and, here and there in one or two places, where a mouse's gallery approached the surface. The powdery surface is broken by it. I am surprised to find in the Andromeda Ponds, especially the westernmost one, north side, an abundance of decodon, or swamp loosestrife. Where a partridge [**Ruffed Grouse** **Bonasa umbellus** (Partridge)] took to wing I find the round red buds of the high blueberry plucked about the swamps.



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 December 28, Thursday, 1854: 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

[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. 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

[Transcript]



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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 (?).

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-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.

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December 30, Saturday, 1854: The 1st US oil refinery, the Pennsylvania Rock Oil Company, was incorporated in New-York.

Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry departed from Liverpool, England, for the United States.

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]



COMMODORE PERRY

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1855

 January 1, Monday, 1855: Two [New-York](#) lawyers, George Bissell and Jonathan Eveleth, formed Pennsylvania Rock Oil Company, the 1st oil company in the United States.

Ottawa, Ontario was incorporated as a city.

In Hamburg, Germany, an overflow of the Elbe River put the greater part of the city under water.

[Henry Allen Adams](#) returned to [Hong Kong](#).

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) and [Ellery Channing](#) skated to Pantry Brook. The [Nantucket Island Inquirer](#) printed a long account of Thoreau's lecture, which began:

"What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" By Henry D. Thoreau, Esq. Notwithstanding the damp, uncomfortable weather of Thursday evening, and the muddy streets, a large audience assembled to listen to the man who has rendered himself notorious by living, as his book asserts, in the woods, at an expense of about sixty dollars per year, in order that he might there hold free communion with Nature, and test for himself the happiness of a life without manual labor or conventional restraints. His lecture may have been desultory and marked by simplicity of manner; but not by paucity of ideas.¹

1. Nantucket [Inquirer](#), January 1, 1855, page 2, columns 2-3; Don Jordan, "Thoreau's Nantucket Lecture," [Thoreau Society Bulletin](#) 166 (Winter 1984): 1-3.

The reviewer went on for 128 sentences, the lengthiest contemporary newspaper summary of any of Thoreau's lectures. Clearly, "[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT](#)" had been well received.

[Louisa May Alcott](#) began her diary for the new year:

Twenty-two Years Old

The principal event of the winter is the appearance of my book "Flower Fables." An edition of sixteen hundred. It has sold very well, and people seem to like it. I feel quite proud that the little tales that I wrote for Ellen E. when I was sixteen should now bring money and fame.

I will put in some of the notices as "varieties." Mothers are always foolish over their first-born.

Miss Wealthy Stevens paid for the book, and I received \$32.

ELLEN EMERSON
THE ALCOTT FAMILY



Jan. 1. P.M. — Skated to Pantry Brook with C.
All the tolerable skating was a narrow strip, often only 2 or 3 feet wide, between the frozen spew and

[Transcript]



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the broken ice of the middle.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL



January 3, Wednesday, 1855: The federal Congress confirmed the transference of the “Boston Corner” tract from Massachusetts to [New York State](#).

The [Minnesota](#) legislature voted to send an immigration commissioner to [New-York City](#). Beginning in the month of June, Eugene Burnand of St. Paul would propagandize on Manhattan Island, urging denizens of Gotham to emigrate west and create new, more expansive, homes in the Minnesota Territory.

After a pleasant passage down the Caribbean coast, the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* stood up Panama Bay to Taboga Island, 12 miles beyond the Panama Naval Yard.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR JANUARY 3d]



January 11, Thursday, 1855: [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#), having taken commercial passage from Liverpool, England, arrived at [New-York](#).

Warsaw’s Academic Department of Union School was incorporated.

[Johannes Brahms](#) made his 1st visit to the insane asylum near Bonn, where he found [Robert Schumann](#) in good spirits. Doctors still refused admittance to Clara Schumann.



Jan. 11th Am. Skated to Lee’s Bridge and Farrar’s Swamp — call it Otter Swamp.

[Transcript]

A fine snow had just begun to fall, so we made haste to improve the skating before it was too late. Our skates made tracks often nearly an inch broad in the slight snow which soon covered the ice. All along the shores and about the islets the water had broadly overflowed the ice of the meadows, and frequently we had to skate through it, making it fly. The snow soon showed where the water was. It was a pleasant time to skate, so still, and the air so thick with snowflakes that the outline of near hills was seen against it and not against the more distant and higher hills. Single pines stood out distinctly against it in the near horizon. The ground, which was 2/3 bare before, began to gray about Fair Haven Pond, as if it were all rocks. There were many of those grubs and caterpillars on the ice half a dozen rods from shore, some sunk deep into it. This air, thick with snowflakes, making a background, enabled me to detect a very picturesque clump of trees on an islet at Pole Brook, — a red (?) oak in midst, with birches on each side.

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

THE ACTUAL JOURNAL

COMMODORE PERRY

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 January 12, Friday, 1855: [Abraham Lincoln](#) purchased a pair of gloves, and sewing materials, for Mrs. Lincoln.

Felipe Alvitre was [hanged](#) in Los Angeles, [California](#).

William Speiden, Jr. reported a pleasant stay at Panama Bay, including his trip to the city of Panama of January 4th. [Calvin Carver Damon](#) died of consumption in Concord, Massachusetts at the age of 50.

[Dorcas Honorable Esop](#), last woman of the Nantucket native Americans, died. She had been born in 1776.



FAMOUS LASTS		
July 28, 1854	William B. Sheppard	last public open-air hanging in San Francisco attended by a huge crowd, at the Presidio before a crowd of not less than 10,000
January 12, 1855	Dorcas Honorable Esop	last of the Nantucket native Americans
March 8, 1862	Captain Nathaniel Gordon	had been smuggling fresh slaves into the USA, hanged for this (classified as piracy)



Jan. 12th Pm To Flint's Pond via Minott's meadow.

After a spitting of snow in the forenoon — [^I see the blue sky here and there &] the sun is coming out. It is still and warm. The earth is 2/3 bare. I walk along the Mill-Brook below Emerson's, looking into it for some life.

[Transcript]



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

Perhaps what moves us in winter is some reminiscence of far-off summer. How we leap by the side of the open brooks! What beauty in the running brooks! What life! What society! The cold is merely superficial; it is summer still at the core, far, far within. It is in the cawing of the crow [**American Crow**  *Corvus Brachyrhynchos*], the crowing of the cock, the warmth of the sun on our backs. I hear faintly the cawing of a crow far, far away, echoing from some unseen wood-side, as if deadened by the spring-like vapor which the sun is drawing from the ground. It mingles with the slight murmur of the village, the sound of children at play, as one stream empties gently into another, and the wild and tame are one. What a delicious sound! It is not merely [[^]the] crow calling to crow, for it speaks to me too. I am part of one great creature with him; if he has voice, I have ears. I can hear what he calls, and have engaged not to shoot nor stone him if he will caw to me each spring. On the [[^]one] hand, it may be, is the sound of children at school saying their a.b. abs — on the other, far in the wood-fringed horizon, the cawing of crows from their blessed eternal vacation [[^]out at their long recess]. Children who have got dismissed! While the vaporous incense goes up from all fields of the spring (if it were spring). Ah, bless the Lord, O my soul! bless him for wildness, for crows that will not alight within gunshot! and bless him for hens, too, that croak and cackle in the yard!

Where are the shiners now, and the trout? I see none in the brook. Have the former descended to the deep water of the river? [[^]Ah, may I be there to see when they go down! Why can they not tell me?] Or gone into the mud? There are few or no insects for them now.

The strong scent of this red oak, just split and corded, is a slight compensation for the loss of the tree. How cheering the sight of the evergreens now, on the forest floor, the various pyrolas, etc., fresh as in summer!

What is that mint whose seed-vessels rubbed are so spicy to smell — minty — at the further end of the pond by the Gourgas wood-lot — ? horsemint? or calamint?

On Flint's-Pond I find Nat Rice fishing. He has not caught one. I asked him what he thought the best time to fish. He said, "When the wind first comes south after a cold spell, on a bright morning."

Well may the tender buds attract us at this season, no less than partridges, for they are the hope of the year, the spring rolled up. The summer is all packed in them.

Observed this afternoon the following oak leaves:—

1st, the white oak — the most withered and faded and curled; many [[^]spotted] with black dot-lichens.

2nd, the bear scrub, the most firm and fresh-colored and flat

3d, the black, moderately firm, the darkest above, much curled

4th, scarlet, Firmest after the [[^]Bear] Scrub, with much freshness and life; some conspicuously red still (unwithered); lobes remarkably distorted

5, Red [[^]considerably] ~~very much~~ withered and lifeless [and worn, thin and faded; [[^]some reddish slightly] ~~not small~~ & not inclined to curl

6, Swamp white, pretty firm and bright, but considerably curled

7, I suspect that the small chinquapin is deciduous, for I could not find one [[^]leaf] in all my walk January 1st, though I looked along the Lupine Wall. Those on the ground are considerably withered, faded, & curled — yet pretty firm.

For color, perhaps all may be called brown, & vary into each other more or less

The 1st, as both sides are seen, pale-brown with a salmon tinge beneath.

2nd, clear reddish-brown, leather-like, above, often paler, whitish or very light beneath, silveryish

3d, Dusky-brown above (not always), clear tawny (?) brown beneath.

4th, clear pale-brown (except the unfaded red ones), leather-like, very generally reddish, nearly the same both sides.

5th, Quite pale brown [[^]or slightly reddish] nearly the same both sides; some, prematurely dead, are yellowish—

6th, Deep rusty-colored brown, often bright leather-red, silvervish-white beneath.

7th, [[^]Leaves on ground] Pale brown, much like a withered red. but whitish beneath like bear shrub. {one-half blank page}

The oak leaves now resemble the dif. kinds. of calf, sheep, & Russia [[^]leather] ~~te~~ [[^]Morocco — a





COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

few scarlet oaks] of different ages—



THE ACTUAL JOURNAL
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GOD IN CONCORD by Jane Langton © 1992

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66

*Ah, bless the Lord, O my soul! bless him for
 wildness, for crows that will not alight
 within gunshot!*
Journal, January 12, 1855

**It was mid-autumn in Concord. Sugar maples flamed along
 Walden Street. The swam maples had already lost their**

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 January 26, Friday, 1855: Ellen Devereux Osgood was born to Mrs. Ellen Devereux Sewall Osgood and the Reverend Joseph Osgood in Cohasset, Massachusetts (Ellen would get married with John Gannett Littlefield on April 20th, 1893).

The Point No Point Treaty was signed in the Washington Territory.

Sardinia declared war on Russia.

Henry Allen Adams arrived at Shimoda, Japan with the ratified Japan/US treaty and viewed a radically altered landscape, wrought by the natural disaster of the previous month.

Henry Thoreau was written to by Friend Daniel Ricketson in New Bedford, Massachusetts.



To: HDT
From: Daniel Ricketson
Date: 1/26/55
{No MS — printed copy RICKETSON AND HIS FRIENDS, pp. 39-40}



COMMODORE PERRY

MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

BROOKLAWN, N. BEDFORD,

26 Jan., 1855.

DEAR SIR,— I fully intended to have gone to Boston yesterday; but not being very well, deferred it until to-day, and now we are visited by a severe snowstorm, so that I fear the railway track may be obstructed. I shall not, therefore, be able to reach Concord this time. My only fear is that you may have gone to Boston in expectation of meeting me there; but as I have not heard from you to this effect I have no very strong reason to think so, and hope that you have not.

I should like very much to see Concord and its environs with the Laird of Walden, and hope at no very distant time to do so, should it meet his pleasure. I hope also to see your lordship again here, and to visit with you some of our rural retreats.

Yours,

D. RICKETSON.

H.D. Thoreau, Esq.,

Concord, Mass.



Jan 26—55 This morning it snows again—A fine dry snow with no wind to speak of giving a wintry aspect to the landscape—

What a Proteus is our weather— Let me try to remember its freaks— We had remarkably steady sleighing ~~for~~ on a little snow some 6 inches deep from the 5th of December all through the month— & some way into Jan. It came damp & froze up solid— Yet there was none in Boston the while. There was however a little rain near the end of December—& occasional slight flurries of snow.

Jan 6th After some comparatively pleasant days— there was a raw northerly wind & fine drifting or driving snow in the P.m. as I walked over the Great Meadows—forming shallow drifts on the ice— but it soon stopped.⁷⁶

Jan 7th I was surprised when I opened the door in the P.m. by the warm south wind—& sudden softening & melting of the snow— It was a Jan. thaw without rain—the manure beginning to wash off the ice in the streets. The winters back was broken & I dreamed of spring &c &c

Jan 8th the same— The ice in roads washed bare—the brooks full of melted snow— But it is still clear weather & warm.

Jan 9 A cloudy day—wet underfoot—threatening snow—dif. to get on to the river [[^]yet] —water many rods wide each side over the ice

Jan 10 Suddenly cold again. [[^]& blustering] All waters frozen up— go onto the swamps—keeping cars covered.

Jan 11th Make haste to improve the skating in the Pm—though it is beginning to snow— —& the is soon covered 1/2 inch. Then it stops at night.

Jan 12 After a nother slight spitting of snow in the fore noon, it clears up very pleasant & warm in the Pm & I walk by the brooks—looking for fish—hearing the crows caw in the horizon & thinking of spring.

Jan 13 Still warm— In roads both muddy—wet—& slippery where ice—thick & misty air threatening rain.

Jan 14 Clear & cold— All things frozen again. excellent skating on Meadows. Skated to Baker Farm.

Transcript



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MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY

Jan 15 In the fore noon spit a little snow making shallow drifts on the ice—through which I skated in the Pm to Bedford. stopped snowing.

Jan 16 snowed a little again. spoiling the skating.

Jan 17 forget

Jan 18 Rained hard all day—washed off the little snow left down to the ice— Staid in all day— Water over shoes in the mid. of the road— The gutters turned to mill brooks. Few go out.

Jan 19 In the night rain turned to damp snow—which at first made slosh—then for most part prevailed over the water which ran off underneath—Stuck to the houses & trees & made a remarkable winter scene. A driving damp snow with a strong NW wind all day—lodging on the trees within the woods beyond all—account— Walked in woods in midst of it to see the pines bent down & the white oaks &c & broken— Snow birds *i.e.* linarias in yard. Making drifts by walls

Jan 20 Still higher wind in night (snow over) shaking the snow from trees—Now almost bare—snow 7 or 8 inches on level in woods—but almost all in drifts under the vales in fields. The sudden-frozen slosh ponds— partly run off—like spewed bread. Hardly bear yet. Not very cold. Go studying drifts. Fine clear weather.

Jan 21st Becomes over cast at noon— A fine snow spits then turns to fine—hail then rain glazing a little.

Jan 22d Rained all night. Walking now worse than ever this year—mid-leg deep in gutters. Lakes in the street—River risen—a freshet—breaking up ice a foot thick—flows under dry causeway bridges a torrent—muskrats driven out by hundreds & shot—dark angry waves where was lately ice and snow—Earth washed bare—radical leaves appear & russet hills—still rains a little.

Jan 23 [^Fair weather] Water still rising ove the Redbridge road—though suddenly fallen in many hollows in fields leaving [^thin] ice 2 feet above it around—& by clumps—

Great work done by brooks last night by brooks— Have to go round 2 or 3 miles to find a dry causeway. not strong enough for skating.

Jan 24 Not strong enough to skate on meadows went to Walden. At dark—snowed 3/4 inch & spoiled prospect of skating.

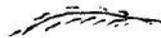
Jan 25 Clear bright & mild—Water still higher than before—over the causeways

Jan 26 —A fine snow falling—spoiling all prospect of skating on this broad ice— Is not good skating the surest sign of snow or foul weather?

To Continue the 26th

Pm to Walden—

A thick driving snow—([^Something like—but less than that of the 19th]) There is a strong easterly wind— & the snow is very damp— In the deepest hollows on the Brister-Hill path it has already lodged handsomely— Suppose you descend into the deepest circular one—far beneath the sweep of the blustering wind—where the flakes at last drop gently to their resting places— There is a level white circular floor—indicating ice beneath—& all around the white-pines under an accumulating snowy burthen are hung with drooping white wreathes or fans of snow The snow on Pitch pines takes the forms of large balls, on; White pines often of [^great] rolling-pins— Already the trees are bending in all directions into the paths & hollows as here— The birches here are bowed inward to the open circle of the pond hole—their tops ap. buried in the old snow



Nothing can be prettier than the snow on the leafless shrub oaks—the twigs are so small & numerous—little snowy arms crossing each other at every imaginable angle—like a whirligig. It is



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surprising what a burden of snow already rests on little bare twigs hardly bigger than a knitting needle—both as they stand perpendicularly & horizontally.

The great damp flakes come & soon bridge across the interval even 2 inches over between the forks of such twigs where they are horizontal—one sticking to Another— It rests on such horizontal twigs commonly in the form of a prism resting on one corner [^vertical section where no wind].



And in many places where the wind is felt—theso little walls of snow are built out at an angle with the perpendicular, in the direction whence the snow comes (a vertical section—or end)



Damp as it is—it like swans down—as if it lay as light as well as thick. As it is with these Shrub-oaks —so with the largest trees in the stiller parts of the woods—& even the lowest dead limbs of the white pines are not prevented by the upper from bearing their part of the burden.

I am afraid I have not described vividly enough the aspect of that Lodging Snow of the 19th & today partly I am Imagine the innumerable twigs & boughs of the forest (as you stand in its still midst) crossing each other at every conceivable angle on every side from the ground to 30 feet in height — with each its zigzag wall of snow 4 or 5 inches high—so innumerable at different distances one behind another that they completely close up the view like a loose woven downy screen—into which however stooping & winding you ceaselessly advance— The wintriest scene. Which perhaps can only be seen in perfection while the snow is yet falling before wind & thaw begin. Else you miss, you lose, the delicate touch of the Master. A coarse woof & warp of snowy batting— leaving no space for a bird to perch.

I see where a partridge [Ruffed Grouse ■ Bonasa umbellus (Partridge)] has waddled through the snow still falling—making a continuous track— I look in the direction to which it points—& see the bird just skimming over the bushes 15 rods off. The plumes of pitch pines are first filled up solid— then they begin to make great snowy casse-têtes—or pestles. In the fields the air is thick with driving snow—you can only see a dozen rods into its woof & warp It fills either this ear or that & your eyes with hard cutting blinding scales if you face it. It is forming shelly drifts behind the walls—& stretches in folds across the roads— But in deep withdrawn hollows in the woods—the flakes at last come gently & deviously down—lodging on every twig & leaf—& forming deep & downy—~~but~~ & level beds between & on the ice of the pools. The lowermost twigs support not less snow but more. In many places where you knew there was a thrifty young wood—there appears to be none—for all is bent down & almost completely buried in the snow. [^& you are stepping over them.] The P— pines are most round headed— —& the [^young] White oaks are most leaved at top—& hence suffer most—



What changes in the aspect of the earth—one day russet hills—& muddy ice—& yellow & greenish pools in the fields— the next all painted white—the fie[l]ds & woods & roofs laid on thick— The great sloshy pools in the fields freezing as they dried away—look like bread that has spewed in the baking the fungi of a night—an acre in extent—but trust not your feet on it—for the underside is not done.—there the principle of water still prevails.

Methinks that after any great storm in winter whether of snow or rain—the equilibrium of the air is again disturbed & there comes a high wind shaking down the snow & drying up the water.





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 March 1855: THE SONG OF “HIAWATHA” was complete. In his notes to the poem, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow quoted from the coffee-table publication by Mrs. Mary Henderson Eastman, *DAH-CO-TAH; OR, LIFE AND LEGENDS OF THE SIOUX AROUND FORT SNELLING*.

Officially designated to succeed Professor Longfellow as Smith Professor of Modern Languages and Literatures at Harvard College, James Russell Lowell went off to tour Europe again — to brush up on his foreign languages.

From Chile, the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* passed through the Straits of Magellan to Rio de Janeiro and on toward New-York.

 April 1855: After a number of “removal” years spent in a clapboard on North Pleasant Street, the Dickinsons were able to repurchase their “The Mansion” home at 280 Main Street in Amherst, Massachusetts, from Samuel Mack.

From Chile, the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* had passed through the Straits of Magellan to Rio de Janeiro, and during this month arrived at New-York.

Waldo Emerson received a note from Professor Louis Agassiz:

*It will give me great pleasure to have your daughter attend my school and I feel proud in the confidence you place in me in trusting to my care ... one who must be so dear to you. I trust this circumstance may lead to a personal acquaintance between us which I regret has not been brought about before.*

Harvard College’s racist biologist during that era, and his wife, had set up their home in Cambridge as a racially and sexually segregated school, in order to educate Ellen Emerson and Louisa May Alcott among other toney white girls. We have, in the introduction to the character known as Professor Bhaer in LITTLE WOMEN, OR, MEG, JO, BETH AND AMY, an impression of the author’s regard for her stocky Cambridge professor:

I was thanking my stars that I’d learned to make nice buttonholes,
when the parlor door opened and shut, and some one began to hum, —

“*Kennst du das Land,*”

like a big bumblebee. It was dreadfully improper, I know, but I couldn’t resist the temptation, and lifting one end of the curtain before the glass door, I peeped in. Professor Bhaer was there, and while he arranged his books, I took a good look at him. A regular German — rather stout, with brown hair tumbled all over his head, a bushy beard, good nose, the kindest eyes I ever saw, and a splendid big voice that does one’s ears good, after our sharp or slipshod American gabble. His clothes were rusty, his hands were large, and he hadn’t a really handsome feature in his face, except his beautiful teeth, yet I liked him, for he had a fine head, his linen was very nice, and he looked like a gentleman, though two buttons were off his coat and there was a patch on one shoe. He looked sober in spite of his humming, till he went to the window to turn the hyacinth bulbs toward the sun, and stroke the cat, who received him like an old friend. Then he smiled, and when a tap came at the door, called out in a loud, brisk tone, — “*Herein!*”



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1856

 **1856:** An Irish mercenary demonstrated British boxing and cudgel-fighting in [Nanking](#) at the home of the T'ai-p'ing general Yang Hsiu-ch'ing, to the amusement of all.

Leaving his family in the United States, the Reverend [Issachar J. Roberts](#) 罗孝全 returned early in this year to [Canton](#) by way of the [Isthmus of Panama](#) and the port of San Francisco. “Old Roberts” would need to wait four years in Canton and Hong Kong before way would open for him to pay his anticipated influential visit to the T'ai-p'ing “Heavenly King” in Nanking, [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全.

The 1st volume of the report NARRATIVE OF THE EXPEDITION OF AN AMERICAN SQUADRON TO THE [CHINA](#) SEAS AND [JAPAN](#), PERFORMED IN THE YEARS 1852, 1853, AND 1854 UNDER THE COMMAND OF [COMMODORE MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY](#), USN, BY ORDER OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES COMPILED FROM NOTES AND JOURNALS OF PERRY AND HIS OFFICERS BY PERRY AND FRANCIS L. HAWKS, WITH ILLUSTRATIONS, was published under order of the Congress of the United States of America in Washington DC (volume 2 would be published in 1857 and Volume 3 in 1858). In Commodore [Perry](#)'s report of his expedition to open [Japan](#) he opined that “the people of America” would be able “in some form or other” eventually to “extend their dominion and their power” until they have “placed the Saxon race upon the Eastern shores of Asia.”⁸¹

RACISM

Wilhelm Heine published his GRAPHIC SCENES OF THE [JAPAN](#) EXPEDITION, helping to feed Western interest in Oriental art and Orientalism.

William Speiden, Jr. would become a US naval storekeeper in [Hong Kong](#) and would serve in that position until 1864 — then spending the final portion of his life in [New-York](#) City.

81. This attitude of Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#)'s would be repeatedly referred to, with approval, in the 1940s and early 1950s, by the intelligence sidekick [General Douglas MacArthur](#) referred to as “my little fascist,” General Charles A. Willoughby (“Willoughby” was an Englishing of the Junker family name “von Tschepp-Weidenbach,” and this intelligence chief was not only a [racist](#) but also an unequivocal and exceedingly vocal [Antisemite](#).)



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1858

 March 4, Thursday, 1858: [Henry Thoreau](#) perused A DICTIONARY OF THE ABNAKE LANGUAGE, IN NORTH AMERICA created by the French Jesuit missionary [Father Sébastien Rasles S.J.](#) of the province of Québec in 1691, as published in 1833 by [John Pickering](#).

“HUCKLEBERRIES”: Father Raslles – who was making a DICTIONARY OF THE ABENAKI LANGUAGE in 1691 (at Norridgewock?) – says that their word for blueberries was fresh Satar, dry Sakisatar – and the words in their name for July meant when the blueberries are ripe. This shows how important they were to them.

Henry noted that what people who speak a language “have a word for, they have a thing for,” that when a lexicographer supplies the word used in a native language, “the question is settled, — that is a clincher. Let us know what words they had and how they used them, and we can infer almost all the rest.” Had he noticed that in none of the many thousands of native languages spoken on [the West Coast of this continent](#), were there any local words for “gold” or “shoe” or “hat” — so that when the Spanish arrived belatedly on the scene their words for these items were adopted by the natives and incorporated into their idioms, recognizable variations of the Spanish “oro” and the Spanish “zapato” and the Spanish “sombrero,” Thoreau would have been able to come to the inference that prior to the arrival of these Europeans, these local native populations had no need for shoes to protect their feet from stuff on the path, or for hats to protect their heads from the sun, and had not paid the least attention to the fact that shiny fragments of yellow metal littered their streambeds. The painful bristles of plants, bristles that make walking barefoot painful now, happen to have been introduced by plants that are not native to the West Coast, plants that are quite recently intrusive such as thistles, so there had been no great need for shoes. Back then people had enough sense to stay out of the direct sun of summer so, although women did weave baskets that they wore on their heads for adornment, there was not that much of a demand for the sort of hat you would need to shade your skull from the sun. Real shade does the trick quite nicely! The local peoples had their wampum, strings of shaped seashells that served the economic function of cash money, so why would they have needed to go to the labor of digging up and carrying around heavy pieces of yellow rock?

The complete answer to “Why didn’t you discover gold?” would thus be “Well, we would’ve if there’d been some point to it.”

[Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) died in [New-York](#).

At the final meeting of the Topeka legislature in the [Kansas Territory](#) there was not a quorum, due entirely to a lack of interest.

In a speech before the federal Senate, James Henry Hammond outlined a “Mudsill” theory of economic life:

In all social systems there must be a class to do the menial duties, to perform the drudgery of life. That is, a class requiring but a low order of intellect and but little skill. Its requisites are vigor, docility, fidelity. Such a class you must have, or you would not have that other class which leads progress, civilization, and refinement. It constitutes the very mud-sill of society and of political government; and you might as well attempt to build a house in the air, as to build either



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the one or the other, except on this mud-sill. Fortunately for the South, she found a race adapted to that purpose to her hand. A race inferior to her own, but eminently qualified in temper, in vigor, in docility, in capacity to stand the climate, to answer all her purposes. We use them for our purpose, and call them slaves. We found them slaves by the common "consent of mankind," which, according to Cicero, *lex naturae* est. The highest proof of what is Nature's law. We are old-fashioned at the South yet; slave is a word discarded now by "ears polite;" I will not characterize that class at the North by that term; but you have it; it is there; it is everywhere; it is eternal.

The Senator from New York said yesterday that the whole world had abolished slavery. Aye, the name, but not the thing; all the powers of the earth cannot abolish that. God only can do it when he repeals the fiat, "the poor ye always have with you;" for the man who lives by daily labor, and scarcely lives at that, and who has to put out his labor in the market, and take the best he can get for it; in short, your whole hireling class of manual laborers and "operatives," as you call them, are essentially slaves. The difference between us is, that our slaves are hired for life and well compensated; there is no starvation, no begging, no want of employment among our people, and not too much employment either. Yours are hired by the day, not cared for, and scantily compensated, which may be proved in the most painful manner, at any hour in any street in any of your large towns. Why, you meet more beggars in one day, in any single street of the city of New-York, than you would meet in a lifetime in the whole South. We do not think that whites should be slaves either by law or necessity. Our slaves are black, of another and inferior race. The status in which we have placed them is an elevation. They are elevated from the condition in which God first created them, by being made our slaves. None of that race on the whole face of the globe can be compared with the slaves of the South. They are happy, content, unambitious, and utterly incapable, from intellectual weakness, ever to give us any trouble by their aspirations. Yours are white, of your own race; you are brothers of one blood. They are your equals in natural endowment of intellect, and they feel galled by their degradation. Our slaves do not vote. We give them no political power. Yours do vote, and, being the majority, they are the depositories of all your political power. If they knew the tremendous secret, that the ballot-box is stronger than "an army with banners," and could combine, where would you be? Your society would be reconstructed, your government overthrown, your property divided, not as they have mistakenly attempted to initiate such proceedings by meeting in parks, with arms in their hands, but by the quiet process of the ballot-box. You have been making war upon us to our very hearthstones. How would you like for us to send lecturers and agitators North, to teach these people this, to aid in combining, and to lead them?



March 4. Thermometer 14° this morning, and this makes decent sleighing of the otherwise soft snow. [Transcript]



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Father Rasle's dictionary of the Abenaki language amounts to a very concentrated and trustworthy natural history of that people, though it was not completed. What they have a word for, they have a thing for. A traveller may tell us that he thinks they used a pavement, or built their cabins in a certain form, or soaked their seed corn in water, or had no beard, etc., etc.; but when one gives us the word for these things, the question is settled, — that is a clincher. Let us know what words they had and how they used them, and we can infer almost all the rest. The lexicographer not only says that a certain people have or do a certain thing, but, being evidently a disinterested party, it may be allowed that he brings sufficient evidence to prove it. He does not so much assert as exhibit. He has no transient or private purpose to serve.

CALIFORNIA

The snow *balls* particularly when, as now, colder weather comes after a damp snow has fallen on muddy ground, and it is soft beneath while just freezing above.
I grow so fast and am so weighed down and hindered, that I have to stop continually and look for a rock where I may kick off these newly acquired heels and soles.



July 29, Thursday, 1858: In Tokyo, a 1st [Treaty of Amity and Commerce](#) was entered into between [Japan](#) and the United States of America, on board the sidewheel steam frigate *USS Powhatan* in Edo (Tokyo Bay), [Japan](#), further opening [Japan](#) to foreign trade. This called for exchange of diplomats, opening 6 additional Japanese ports to US trade each with its own US consul, a fixed tariff, opening of 3 Japanese ports as US Navy supply depots, and abolition of the opium trade. The agreement added the ports of Kanagawa and Nagasaki to the harbors that would be open to American ships. This would be termed “the Harris Treaty” since it had been negotiated by American Consul to [Japan](#) and [New-York](#) merchant Townsend Harris (1804-1878) with the Tokugawa Shogunate.

After one failure, the *USS Niagara* and the *HMS Agamemnon* reached a point in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean to begin laying the east half and the west half of an ocean-floor transatlantic telegraph cable. The *Niagara* made for Newfoundland while the *Agamemnon* made for Ireland.



July 29: P.M. —To Pine Hill, looking for the *Vaccinium Pennsylvanicum* berries. I find plenty of bushes, but these bear very sparingly. They appear to bear but one or two years before they are overgrown. Also they probably love a cool atmosphere, for they bear annually on mountains, as Monadnock. Where the woods have been cut a year or two they have put forth fresh shoots of a livelier green. The *V. vacillans* berries are in dense clusters, raceme-like, as huckleberries are not. I see nowadays young martins [**Purple Martin**  *Progne subis*] perched on the dead tops of high trees; also young swallows on the telegraph wire.

In [the Chinese novel “Ju-Kiao-Li, or The Two Fair Cousins.”](#) I find in a motto to a chapter (quoted): “He who aims at success should be continually on his guard against a thousand accidents. How many preparations are necessary before the sour plum begins to sweeten! ... But if supreme happiness was to be attained in the space of an hour, of what use would be in life the noblest sentiments?” (Page 227.) Also these verses on page 230:—

“Nourished by the study of ten thousand different works,
The pen in hand, one is equal to the gods.
Let not humility take its rank amongst virtues:
Genius never yields the palm that belongs to it.”

Again, page 22, vol. ii:—

“If the spring did not announce its reign by the return of the leaves,



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The moss, with its greenish tints, would find favor in men's eyes."

THE TWO FAIR COUSINS



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1856

 **1856:** An Irish mercenary demonstrated British boxing and cudgel-fighting in [Nanking](#) at the home of the T'ai-p'ing general Yang Hsiu-ch'ing, to the amusement of all.

Leaving his family in the United States, the Reverend [Issachar J. Roberts](#) 罗孝全 returned early in this year to [Canton](#) by way of the [Isthmus of Panama](#) and the port of San Francisco. “Old Roberts” would need to wait four years in Canton and Hong Kong before way would open for him to pay his anticipated influential visit to the T'ai-p'ing “Heavenly King” in Nanking, [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全.

The 1st volume of the report NARRATIVE OF THE EXPEDITION OF AN AMERICAN SQUADRON TO THE [CHINA](#) SEAS AND [JAPAN](#), PERFORMED IN THE YEARS 1852, 1853, AND 1854 UNDER THE COMMAND OF [COMMODORE MATTHEW CALBRAITH PERRY](#), USN, BY ORDER OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES COMPILED FROM NOTES AND JOURNALS OF PERRY AND HIS OFFICERS BY PERRY AND FRANCIS L. HAWKS, WITH ILLUSTRATIONS, was published under order of the Congress of the United States of America in Washington DC (volume 2 would be published in 1857 and Volume 3 in 1858). In Commodore [Perry](#)'s report of his expedition to open [Japan](#) he opined that “the people of America” would be able “in some form or other” eventually to “extend their dominion and their power” until they have “placed the Saxon race upon the Eastern shores of Asia.”⁸²

RACISM

Wilhelm Heine published his GRAPHIC SCENES OF THE [JAPAN](#) EXPEDITION, helping to feed Western interest in Oriental art and Orientalism.

William Speiden, Jr. would become a US naval storekeeper in [Hong Kong](#) and would serve in that position until 1864 — then spending the final portion of his life in [New-York](#) City.

82. This attitude of Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#)'s would be repeatedly referred to, with approval, in the 1940s and early 1950s, by the intelligence sidekick [General Douglas MacArthur](#) referred to as “my little fascist,” General Charles A. Willoughby (“Willoughby” was an Englishing of the Junker family name “von Tschepp-Weidenbach,” and this intelligence chief was not only a [racist](#) but also an unequivocal and exceedingly vocal [Antisemite](#).)



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1858

 March 4, Thursday, 1858: [Henry Thoreau](#) perused A DICTIONARY OF THE ABNAKE LANGUAGE, IN NORTH AMERICA created by the French Jesuit missionary [Father Sébastien Rasles S.J.](#) of the province of Québec in 1691, as published in 1833 by [John Pickering](#).

“HUCKLEBERRIES”: Father Raslles – who was making a DICTIONARY OF THE ABENAKI LANGUAGE in 1691 (at Norridgewock?) – says that their word for blueberries was fresh Satar, dry Sakisatar – and the words in their name for July meant when the blueberries are ripe. This shows how important they were to them.

Henry noted that what people who speak a language “have a word for, they have a thing for,” that when a lexicographer supplies the word used in a native language, “the question is settled, — that is a clincher. Let us know what words they had and how they used them, and we can infer almost all the rest.” Had he noticed that in none of the many thousands of native languages spoken on [the West Coast of this continent](#), were there any local words for “gold” or “shoe” or “hat” — so that when the Spanish arrived belatedly on the scene their words for these items were adopted by the natives and incorporated into their idioms, recognizable variations of the Spanish “oro” and the Spanish “zapato” and the Spanish “sombrero,” Thoreau would have been able to come to the inference that prior to the arrival of these Europeans, these local native populations had no need for shoes to protect their feet from stuff on the path, or for hats to protect their heads from the sun, and had not paid the least attention to the fact that shiny fragments of yellow metal littered their streambeds. The painful bristles of plants, bristles that make walking barefoot painful now, happen to have been introduced by plants that are not native to the West Coast, plants that are quite recently intrusive such as thistles, so there had been no great need for shoes. Back then people had enough sense to stay out of the direct sun of summer so, although women did weave baskets that they wore on their heads for adornment, there was not that much of a demand for the sort of hat you would need to shade your skull from the sun. Real shade does the trick quite nicely! The local peoples had their wampum, strings of shaped seashells that served the economic function of cash money, so why would they have needed to go to the labor of digging up and carrying around heavy pieces of yellow rock?

The complete answer to “Why didn’t you discover gold?” would thus be “Well, we would’ve if there’d been some point to it.”

[Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) died in [New-York](#).

At the final meeting of the Topeka legislature in the [Kansas Territory](#) there was not a quorum, due entirely to a lack of interest.

In a speech before the federal Senate, James Henry Hammond outlined a “Mudsill” theory of economic life:

In all social systems there must be a class to do the menial duties, to perform the drudgery of life. That is, a class requiring but a low order of intellect and but little skill. Its requisites are vigor, docility, fidelity. Such a class you must have, or you would not have that other class which leads progress, civilization, and refinement. It constitutes the very mud-sill of society and of political government; and you might as well attempt to build a house in the air, as to build either



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the one or the other, except on this mud-sill. Fortunately for the South, she found a race adapted to that purpose to her hand. A race inferior to her own, but eminently qualified in temper, in vigor, in docility, in capacity to stand the climate, to answer all her purposes. We use them for our purpose, and call them slaves. We found them slaves by the common "consent of mankind," which, according to Cicero, *lex naturae est*. The highest proof of what is Nature's law. We are old-fashioned at the South yet; slave is a word discarded now by "ears polite;" I will not characterize that class at the North by that term; but you have it; it is there; it is everywhere; it is eternal.

The Senator from New York said yesterday that the whole world had abolished slavery. Aye, the name, but not the thing; all the powers of the earth cannot abolish that. God only can do it when he repeals the fiat, "the poor ye always have with you;" for the man who lives by daily labor, and scarcely lives at that, and who has to put out his labor in the market, and take the best he can get for it; in short, your whole hireling class of manual laborers and "operatives," as you call them, are essentially slaves. The difference between us is, that our slaves are hired for life and well compensated; there is no starvation, no begging, no want of employment among our people, and not too much employment either. Yours are hired by the day, not cared for, and scantily compensated, which may be proved in the most painful manner, at any hour in any street in any of your large towns. Why, you meet more beggars in one day, in any single street of the city of New-York, than you would meet in a lifetime in the whole South. We do not think that whites should be slaves either by law or necessity. Our slaves are black, of another and inferior race. The status in which we have placed them is an elevation. They are elevated from the condition in which God first created them, by being made our slaves. None of that race on the whole face of the globe can be compared with the slaves of the South. They are happy, content, unambitious, and utterly incapable, from intellectual weakness, ever to give us any trouble by their aspirations. Yours are white, of your own race; you are brothers of one blood. They are your equals in natural endowment of intellect, and they feel galled by their degradation. Our slaves do not vote. We give them no political power. Yours do vote, and, being the majority, they are the depositories of all your political power. If they knew the tremendous secret, that the ballot-box is stronger than "an army with banners," and could combine, where would you be? Your society would be reconstructed, your government overthrown, your property divided, not as they have mistakenly attempted to initiate such proceedings by meeting in parks, with arms in their hands, but by the quiet process of the ballot-box. You have been making war upon us to our very hearthstones. How would you like for us to send lecturers and agitators North, to teach these people this, to aid in combining, and to lead them?



March 4. Thermometer 14° this morning, and this makes decent sleighing of the otherwise soft snow. [Transcript]



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Father Rasle's dictionary of the Abenaki language amounts to a very concentrated and trustworthy natural history of that people, though it was not completed. What they have a word for, they have a thing for. A traveller may tell us that he thinks they used a pavement, or built their cabins in a certain form, or soaked their seed corn in water, or had no beard, etc., etc.; but when one gives us the word for these things, the question is settled, — that is a clincher. Let us know what words they had and how they used them, and we can infer almost all the rest. The lexicographer not only says that a certain people have or do a certain thing, but, being evidently a disinterested party, it may be allowed that he brings sufficient evidence to prove it. He does not so much assert as exhibit. He has no transient or private purpose to serve.

CALIFORNIA

The snow *balls* particularly when, as now, colder weather comes after a damp snow has fallen on muddy ground, and it is soft beneath while just freezing above.
I grow so fast and am so weighed down and hindered, that I have to stop continually and look for a rock where I may kick off these newly acquired heels and soles.



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1860



1860: Jonathan Goble, who had accompanied Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#)'s 1852-1854 voyage to [Japan](#) as a marine, returned there as the 1st [Baptist](#) missionary to that archipelago.



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1861

 Easter Sunday, 1861: The only set of chimes in the city of [Providence](#) (*Moshasuck*), [Rhode Island](#), the set that pertained to Grace Church, were on this day played for the 1st time. Each bell of this set of bells, 16 in all, had been inscribed with the names of the various individuals and organizations that had donated it. The First Light Infantry and the Marine Corps of Artillery had been involved. The Infantry bell had been donated with the condition that the chimes would be rung on each September 10th anniversary of Captain [Oliver Hazard Perry](#)'s victory on Lake Erie, a military contest in which, obviously, God had been on the side of the winner.

 December 18, Wednesday, 1861: Documentation of the [international slave trade](#), per [W.E. Burghardt Du Bois](#): "In Relation to Captured Africans: Letter from the Secretary of the Interior ... as to contracts for returning and subsistence of captured Africans." –HOUSE EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT, 37 Cong. 2 sess. I. No. 12.

A funeral held in honor of Heinrich August Marschner in Hannover had, despite very cold weather, substantial turnout.

William Speiden, Sr. died in Washington DC. The remains would be placed in the Congressional Cemetery.



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1863

➡ March 14, Saturday, 1863: The Reverend [Moncure Daniel Conway](#) posted, to [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#), a receipt for a sum of money.

[Waldo Emerson](#) wrote, perhaps from Concord, to [Charles Wesley Slack](#) regretting that he was unable to accept a speaking engagement at the [Boston Music Hall](#).



On this day, and on the one preceding it, and the one following it, people were killing each other at Fort Anderson / Deep Gully. Ordered upriver for the operations against Port Hudson, Louisiana, the *USS Mississippi* sailed alone but accompanied 6 other vessels that had been lashed in pairs. It grounded while attempting to pass the Confederate forts guarding Port Hudson. Captain Melancton Smith and his executive officer George Dewey attempted to refloat the vessel. Failing in this, they destroyed her machinery, spiked her battery, and set what remained on fire. When the flames reached the vessel's magazines, it blew up and sank. Of the *Mississippi's* crew, 64 perished but 223 were rescued by accompanying Union vessels. Seaman Andrew Brinn, Boatswain's Mate Peter Howard, and US Marine Corps Sergeant Pinkerton R. Vaughn would receive the Medal of Honor.

US CIVIL WAR



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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





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Prepared: May 19, 2020



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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.

Commonly, the first output of the algorithm has obvious deficiencies and we need to go back into the modules stored in



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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.