

IX

1837-1847

(ÆT. 20-30)

[THIS chapter consists of paragraphs (chiefly undated) taken from a large commonplace-book containing transcripts from earlier journals. Thoreau drew largely from this book in writing the "Week," and to a less extent in writing "Walden." Passages used in these volumes (as far as noted), and those duplicating earlier journal entries already printed in the preceding pages, have been omitted. All the matter in the book appears to have been written before 1847.]

I was born upon thy bank, river,
My blood flows in thy stream,
And thou meanderest forever
At the bottom of my dream.

This great but silent traveller which had been so long moving past my door at three miles an hour, — might I not trust myself under its escort?

In friendship we worship moral beauty without the formality of religion.

Consider how much the sun and the summer, the buds of spring and the sered leaves of autumn, are re-

lated to the cabins of the settlers which we discover on the shore, — how all the rays which paint the landscape radiate from them. The flight of the crow and the gyrations of the hawk have reference to their roofs.

Friends do not interchange their common wealth, but each puts his finger into the private coffer of the other. They will be most familiar, they will be most unfamiliar, for they will be so one and single that common themes will not have to be bandied between them, but in silence they will digest them as one mind; but they will at the same time be so two and double that each will be to the other as admirable and as inaccessible as a star. He will view him as it were through "optic glass," — "at evening from the top of Fesolé." And after the longest earthly period, he will still be in apogee to him.

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

The robin is seen flying directly and high in the air at this season, especially over rivers, where in the morning they are constantly passing and re-passing in company with the blackbird.

I have never insisted enough on the nakedness and simplicity of friendship, the result of all emotions, their subsidence, a fruit of the temperate zone. The friend is an unrelated man, solitary and of distinct outline.

Must not our whole lives go unexplained, without regard to us, notwithstanding a few flourishes of ours, which themselves need explanation?

Yet a friend does not afford us cheap contrasts or encounters. He forbears to ask explanations, but doubts and surmises with full faith, as we silently ponder our fates. He is vested with full powers, plenipotentiary, all in all.

“Plato gives science sublime counsels, directs her toward the regions of the ideal; Aristotle gives her positive and severe laws, and directs her toward a practical end.” — DEGERANDO.

All day the dark blue outline of Crotched Mountain in Goffstown skirted the horizon. We took pleasure in beholding its outline, because at this distance our vision could so easily grasp the design of the founder. It was a pretty victory to conquer the distance and dimensions so easily with our eyes, which it would take our feet so long to traverse.

Notwithstanding the unexplained mystery of nature, man still pursues his studies with confidence, ever ready to grasp the secret, as if the truth were only contained, not withheld; as one of the three circles on the cocoanut is always so soft that it may be pierced with a thorn, and the traveller is grateful for the thick shell which held the liquor so faithfully.

Gracefulness is undulatory like these waves, and perhaps the sailor acquires a superior suppleness and grace through the planks of his ship from the element on which he lives.

The song sparrow, whose voice is one of the first heard in the spring, sings occasionally throughout the season, from a greater depth in the summer, as it were behind the notes of other birds.

As the temperature and density of the atmosphere, so the aspects of our life vary.

In this bright and chaste light the world seemed like a pavilion made for holidays and washed in light. The ocean was a summer's lake, and the land a smooth lawn for disport, while in the horizon the sunshine seemed to fall on walled towns and villas, and the course of our lives was seen winding on like a country road over the plain.¹

When we looked out from under our tent, the trees were seen dimly through the mist, and a cool dew hung

¹ [Week, p. 45; Riv. 57.]

upon the grass, and in the damp air we seemed to inhale a solid fragrance.

Communicating with the villas and hills and forests on either hand, by the glances we sent them, or the echoes we awakened. We glanced up many a pleasant ravine with its farmhouse in the distance, where some contributory stream came in; again the site of a saw-mill and a few forsaken cel-pots were all that greeted us.¹

While we sail here we can remember unreservedly those friends who dwell far away on the banks and by the sources of this very river, and people this world for us, without any harsh and unfriendly interruptions.

At noon his horn² is heard echoing from shore to shore to give notice of his approach to the farmer's wife with whom he is to take his dinner, frequently in such retired scenes that only muskrats and kingfishers seem to hear.

If ever our idea of a friend is realized it will be in some broad and generous natural person, as frank as the daylight, in whose presence our behavior will be as simple and unconstrained as the wanderer amid the recesses of these hills.

I who sail now in a boat, have I not sailed in a thought?
Vide Chaucer.

¹ [This follows matter used on p. 81 of *Week* (Riv. 101).]

² [The boatman's. See *Week*, p. 222; Riv. 276.]

The hardest material obeys the same law with the most fluid. Trees are but rivers of sap and woody fibre flowing from the atmosphere and emptying into the earth by their trunks, as their roots flow upward to the surface. And in the heavens there are rivers of stars and milky ways. There are rivers of rock on the surface and rivers of ore in the bowels of the earth. And thoughts flow and circulate, and seasons lapse as tributaries of the current year.

Consider the phenomena of morn, or eve, and you will say that Nature has perfected herself by an eternity of practice,— evening stealing over the fields, the stars coming to bathe in retired waters, the shadows of the trees creeping farther and farther into the meadows, and a myriad phenomena beside.

Occasionally we had to muster all our energy to get round a point where the river broke rippling over rocks and the maples trailed their branches in the stream.

The future reader of history will associate this generation with the red man in his thoughts, and give it credit for some sympathy with that race. Our history will have some copper tints and reflections, at least, and be read as through an Indian-summer haze; but such were not our associations. But the Indian is absolutely forgotten but by some persevering poets.

The white man has commenced a new era. What do our anniversaries commemorate but white men's exploits? For Indian deeds there must be an Indian mem-

ory; the white man will remember his own only. We have forgotten their hostility as well as friendship. Who can realize that, within the memory of this generation, the remnant of an ancient and dusky race of mortals called the Stockbridge Indians, within the limits of this very State, furnished a company for the war, on condition only that they should not be expected to fight white man's fashion, or to train, but Indian fashion. And occasionally their wigwams are seen on the banks of this very stream still, solitary and inobvious, like the cabins of the muskrats in the meadows.

They seem like a race who have exhausted the secrets of nature, tanned with age, while this young and still fair Saxon slip, on whom the sun has not long shone, is but commencing its career.

Their memory is in harmony with the russet hue of the fall of the year.¹

For the Indian there is no safety but in the plow. If he would not be pushed into the Pacific, he must seize hold of a plow-tail and let go his bow and arrow, his fish-spear and rifle. This the only Christianity that will save him.²

His fate says sternly to him, "Forsake the hunter's life and enter into the agricultural, the second, state of man. Root yourselves a little deeper in the soil, if you would continue to be the occupants of the country."

¹ [See p. 337.]

² [This and the succeeding paragraphs on the Indian were written in pencil on loose sheets of paper and slipped between the pages of the Journal.]

But I confess I have no little sympathy with the Indians and hunter men. They seem to me a distinct and equally respectable people, born to wander and to hunt, and not to be inoculated with the twilight civilization of the white man.

Father Le Jeune, a French missionary, affirmed "that the Indians were superior in intellect to the French peasantry of that time," and advised "that laborers should be sent from France in order to work for the Indians."

The Indian population within the present boundaries of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut has been estimated not to have exceeded 40,000 "before the epidemic disease which preceded the landing of the Pilgrims," and it was far more dense here than elsewhere; yet they had no more land than they wanted. The present white population is more than 1,500,000 and two thirds of the land is unimproved.

The Indian, perchance, has not made up his mind to some things which the white man has consented to; he has not, in all respects, stooped so low; and hence, though he too loves food and warmth, he draws his tattered blanket about him and follows his fathers, rather than barter his birthright. He dies, and no doubt his Genius judges well for him. But he is not worsted in the fight; he is not destroyed. He only migrates beyond the Pacific to more spacious and happier hunting-grounds.

A race of hunters can never withstand the inroads of a race of husbandmen. The latter burrow in the

night into their country and undermine them; and [even] if the hunter is brave enough to resist, his game is timid and has already fled. The rifle alone would never exterminate it, but the plow is a more fatal weapon; it wins the country inch by inch and holds all it gets.

What detained the Cherokees so long was the 2923 plows which that people possessed; and if they had grasped their handles more firmly, they would never have been driven beyond the Mississippi. No sense of justice will ever restrain the farmer from plowing up the land which is only hunted over by his neighbors. No hunting-field was ever well fenced and surveyed and its bounds accurately marked, unless it were an English park. It is a property not held by the hunter so much as by the game which roams it, and was never well secured by warranty deeds. The farmer in his treaties says only, or means only, "So far will I plow this summer," for he has not seed corn enough to plant more; but every summer the seed is grown which plants a new strip of the forest.

The African will survive, for he is docile, and is patiently learning his trade and dancing at his labor; but the Indian does not often dance, unless it be the war dance.

In whatever moment we awake to life, as now I this evening, after walking along the bank and hearing the same evening sounds that were heard of yore, it seems to have slumbered just below the surface, as in the spring the new verdure which covers the fields has never retreated far from the winter.

All actions and objects and events lose their *distinct* importance in this hour, in the brightness of the vision, as, when sometimes the pure light that attends the setting sun falls on the trees and houses, the light itself is the phenomenon, and no single object is so distinct to our admiration as the light itself.

If criticism is liable to abuse, it has yet a great and humane apology. When my sentiments aspire to be universal, then my neighbor has an equal interest to see that the expression be just, with myself.

My friends, why should we live?

Life is an idle war, a toilsome peace;

To-day I would not give

One small consent for its securest ease.

Shall we outwear the year

In our pavilions on its dusty plain,

And yet no signal hear

To strike our tents and take the road again?

Or else drag up the slope

The heavy ordnance of religion's train?

Useless, but in the hope

Some far remote and heavenward hill to gain.

The tortoises rapidly dropped into the water, as our boat ruffled the surface amid the willows. We glided along through the transparent water, breaking the reflections of the trees.

Not only are we late to find our friends, but mankind are late, and there is no record of a great success in history.

My friend is not chiefly wise or beautiful or noble. At least it is not for me to know it. He has no visible form nor appreciable character. I can never praise him nor esteem him praiseworthy, for I should sunder him from myself and put a bar between us. Let him not think he can please me by any behavior or even treat me well enough. When he treats, I retreat.¹

I know of no rule which holds so true as that we are always paid for our suspicion by finding what we suspect. There can be no fairer recompense than this. Our suspicions exercise a demoniacal power over the subject of them. By some obscure law of influence, when we are perhaps unconsciously the subject of another's suspicion, we feel a strong impulse, even when it is contrary to our nature, to do that which he expects but reprobrates.

No man seems to be aware that his influence is the result of his entire character, both that which is subject and that which is superior to his understanding, and what he really means or intends it is not in his power to explain or offer an apology for.

No man was ever party to a secure and settled friendship. It is no more a constant phenomenon than

¹ [See *Week*, pp. 286, 287; *Riv.* 356.]

meteors and lightning. It is a war of positions, of silent tactics.

I mark the summer's swift decline;
The springing sward its grave-clothes weaves.¹

Oh, could I catch the sounds remote!
Could I but tell to human ear
The strains which on the breezes float
And sing the requiem of the dying year!

Sept. 29, 1842. To-day the lark sings again down in the meadow, and the robin peeps, and the bluebirds, old and young, have revisited their box, as if they would fain repeat the summer without the intervention of winter, if Nature would let them.

Beauty is a finer utility whose end we do not see.

Oct. 7, 1842. A little girl has just brought me a purple finch or American linnet. These birds are now moving south. It reminds me of the pine and spruce, and the juniper and cedar on whose berries it feeds. It has the crimson hues of the October evenings, and its plumage still shines as if it had caught and preserved some of their tints (beams?). We know it chiefly as a traveller. It reminds me of many things I had forgotten. Many a serene evening lies snugly packed under its wing.

¹ *Vide* the Fall of the Leaf poem. [This note is written in pencil between this line and the following stanza. The poem referred to is reprinted (without these lines) in *Excursions, and Poems*, p. 407.]

Gower writes like a man of common sense and good parts who has undertaken with steady, rather than high, purpose to do narrative with rhyme. With little or no invention, following in the track of the old fablers, he employs his leisure and his pen-craft to entertain his readers and speak a good word for the right. He has no fire, or rather blaze, though occasionally some brand's end peeps out from the ashes, especially if you approach the heap in a dark day, and if you extend your hands over it you experience a slight warmth there more than elsewhere. In fair weather you may see a slight smoke go up here and there. He narrates what Chaucer sometimes sings. He tells his story with a fair understanding of the original, and sometimes it gains a little in blunt plainness and in point in his hands. Unlike the early Saxon and later English, his poetry is but a plainer and directer speech than other men's prose. He might have been a teamster and written his rhymes on his wagon-seat as he went to mill with a load of plaster.

The banks by retired roadsides are covered with asters, hazels, brakes, and huckleberry bushes, emitting a dry, ripe scent.¹

Facts must be learned directly and personally, but principles may be deduced from information. The collector of facts possesses a perfect physical organization, the philosopher a perfect intellectual one. One

¹ [This refers to the middle of September and follows matter used in *Week*, on p. 357 (Riv. 443).]

can walk, the other sit; one acts, the other thinks. But the poet in some degree does both, and uses and generalizes the results of both; he generalizes the widest deductions of philosophy.¹

Oct. 21, 1842. The atmosphere is so dry and transparent and, as it were, inflammable at this season that a candle in the grass shines white and dazzling, and purer and brighter the farther off it is. Its heat seems to have been extracted and only its harmless refulgent light left. It is a star dropped down. The ancients were more than poetically true when they called fire Vulcan's flower. Light is somewhat almost moral. The most intense — as the fixed stars and our own sun — has an unquestionable preëminence among the elements. At a certain stage in the generation of all life, no doubt, light as well as heat is developed. It guides to the first rudiments of life. There is a vitality in heat and light.

Men who are felt rather than understood are being most rapidly developed. They stand many deep.

In many parts the Merrimack is as wild and natural as ever, and the shore and surrounding scenery exhibit only the revolutions of nature. The pine stands up erect on its brink, and the alders and willows fringe its edge; only the beaver and the red man have departed.

My friend knows me face to face, but many only

¹ [*Week*, p. 387; Riv. 478.]

venture to meet me under the shield of another's authority, backed by an invisible *corps du r serve* of wise friends and relations. To such I say, "Farewell, we cannot dwell alone in the world."

Sometimes, by a pleasing, sad wisdom, we find ourselves carried beyond all counsel and sympathy. Our friends' words do not reach us.

The truly noble and settled character of a man is not put forward, as the king or conqueror does not march foremost in a procession.

Among others I have picked up a curious spherical stone, probably an implement of war, like a small paving-stone about the size of a goose egg, with a groove worn quite round it, by which it was probably fastened to a thong or a withe and answered to strike a severe blow like a shotted colt. I have since seen larger ones of the same description.

These arrowheads are of every color and of various forms and materials, though commonly made of a stone which has a conchoidal fracture. Many small ones are found, of white quartz, which are mere equilateral triangles, with one side slightly convex. These were probably small shot for birds and squirrels. The chips which were made in their manufacture are also found in large numbers wherever a lodge stood for any length of time. And these slivers are the surest indication of Indian ground, since the geologists tell us that this stone is not to be found in this vicinity.

The spear-heads are of the same form and material only larger.

Some are found as perfect and sharp as ever, for time has not the effect of blunting them, but when they break they have a ragged and cutting edge. Yet they are so brittle that they can hardly be carried in the pocket without being broken.

It is a matter of wonder how the Indians made even those rude implements without iron or steel tools to work with. It is doubtful whether one of our mechanics, with all the aids of Yankee ingenuity, could soon learn to copy one of the thousands under our feet. It is well known the art of making flints with a cold chisel, as practiced in Austria, requires long practice and knack in the operator, but the arrowhead is of much more irregular form, and, like the flint, such is the nature of the stone, must be struck out by a succession of skillful blows.

An Indian to whom I once exhibited some, but to whom they were objects of as much curiosity as [to] myself, suggested that, as white men have but one blacksmith, so Indians had one arrowhead-maker for many families. But there are the marks of too many forges — unless they were like travelling cobblers — to allow of this.

I have seen some arrowheads from the South Seas which were precisely similar to those from here, so necessary, so little whimsical is this little tool.

So has the steel hatchet its prototype in the stone one of the Indian, as the stone hatchet in the necessities of man.

Venerable are these ancient arts, whose early history is lost in that of the race itself.

Here, too, is the pestle and mortar,—ancient forms and symbols older than the plow or the spade.

The invention of that plow which now turns them up to the surface marks the era of their burial. An era which can never have its history, which is older than history itself. These are relics of an era older than modern civilization, compared with which Greece and Rome and Egypt are modern. And still the savage retreats and the white man advances.

I have the following account of some relics in my possession which were brought from Taunton [?] in Bristol County. A field which had been planted with corn for many years. The sod being broken, the wind began to blow away the soil and then the sand, for several years, until at length it was blown away to the depth of several feet, where it ceased, and the ground appeared strewed with the remains of an Indian village, with regular circles of stones which formed the foundation of their wigwams, and numerous implements beside.

Commonly we use life sparingly, we husband it as if it were scarce, and admit the right of prudence; but occasionally we see how ample and inexhaustible is the stock from which we so scantily draw, and learn that we need not be prudent, that we may be prodigal, and all expenses will be met.

Am I not as far from those scenes, though I have wandered a different route, as my companion who has

finished the voyage of life? Am I not most dead who have not life to die, and cast off my sere leaves?

It seemed the only right way to enter this country, borne on the bosom of the flood which receives the tribute of its innumerable vales. The river was the only key adequate to unlock its maze. We beheld the hills and valleys, the lakes and streams, in their natural order and position.

A state should be a complete epitome of the earth, a natural principality, and by the gradations of its surface and soil conduct the traveller to its principal marts. Nature is stronger than law, and the sure but slow influence of wind and water will balk the efforts of restricting legislatures. Man cannot set up bounds with safety but where the revolutions of nature will confirm and strengthen, not obliterate, them.

Every man's success is in proportion to his *average* ability. The meadow flowers spring and bloom where the waters annually deposit their slime, not where they reach in some freshet only. We seem to do ourselves little credit in our own eyes for our performance, which all know must ever fall short of our aspiration and promise, which only we can know entirely; as a stick will avail to reach further than it will strike effectually, since its greatest momentum is a little short of its extreme end. But we do not disappoint our neighbors. A man is not his hope nor his despair, nor his past deed.¹

¹ [Week, p. 133; Riv. 166.]

But it is in the order of destiny that whatever is remote shall be near. Whatever the eyes see, the hands shall touch. The sentinels upon the turret and at the window and on the wall behold successively the approaching traveller whom the host will soon welcome in the hall.

It is not to be forgotten that the poet is innocent; but he is young, he is not yet a parent or a brother to his race. There are a thousand degrees of grace and beauty before absolute humanity and disinterestedness.

The meanest man can easily test the noblest. Is he embraced? Does he find him a brother?

I am sometimes made aware of a kindness which may have long since been shown, which surely memory cannot retain, which reflects its light long after its heat. I realize, my friend, that there have been times when thy thoughts of me have been of such lofty kindness that they passed over me like the winds of heaven unnoticed, so pure that they presented no object to my eyes, so generous and universal that I did not detect them. Thou hast loved me for what I was not, but for what I aspired to be. We shudder to think of the kindness of our friend which has fallen on us cold, though in some true but tardy hour we have awakened. There has just reached me the kindness of some acts, not to be forgotten, not to be remembered. I wipe off these scores at midnight, at rare intervals, in moments of insight and gratitude.

Far o'er the bow,
Amid the drowsy noon,
Souhegan, creeping slow,
Appeareth soon.¹

Methinks that by a strict behavior
I could elicit back the brightest star
That hides behind a cloud.

I have rolled near some other spirit's path,
And with a pleased anxiety have felt
Its purer influence on my opaque mass,
But always was I doomed to learn, alas!
I had scarce changed its sidereal time.

Gray sedulously cultivated poetry, but the plant would not thrive. His life seems to have needed some more sincere and ruder experience.

Occasionally we rowed near enough to a cottage to see the sunflowers before the door, and the seed-vessels of the poppy, like small goblets filled with the waters of Lethe, but without disturbing the sluggish household. Driving the small sandpiper before us.

FOG ²

Thou drifting meadow of the air,
Where bloom the daisied banks and violets,

¹ [The first four lines of a poem the rest of which appears on pp. 234, 235 of *Week* (Riv. 290, 291).]

² [This poem appears, slightly abridged and altered, in *Week*, p. 201 (Riv. 249).]

And in whose fenny labyrinths
 The bittern booms and curlew peeps,
 The heron wades and boding rain-crow clucks;
 Low-anchored cloud,
 Newfoundland air,
 Fountain-head and source of rivers,
 Ocean branch that flowest to the sun,
 Diluvian spirit, or Deucalion shroud,
 Dew-cloth, dream drapery,
 And napkin spread by fays,
 Spirit of lakes and seas and rivers,
 Sea-fowl that with the east wind
 Seek'st the shore, groping thy way inland,
 By whichever name I please to call thee,
 Bear only perfumes and the scent
 Of healing herbs to just men's fields.

I am amused with the manner in which Quarles and his contemporary poets speak of Nature, — with a sort of gallantry, as a knight of his lady, — not as lovers, but as having a thorough respect for her and some title to her acquaintance. They speak manfully, and their lips are not closed by affection.

“The pale-faced lady of the black-eyed night.”

Nature seems to have held her court then, and all authors were her gentlemen and esquires and had ready an abundance of courtly expressions.

Quarles is never weak or shallow, though coarse and untasteful. He presses able-bodied and strong-backed words into his service, which have a certain rustic fragrance and force, as if now first devoted to literature

after having served sincere and stern uses. He has the pronunciation of a poet though he stutters. He certainly speaks the English tongue with a right manly accent. To be sure his poems have the¹ musty odor of a confessional.

How little curious is man,
 Who hath not searched his mystery a span,
 But dreams of mines of treasure
 Which he neglects to measure,
 For threescore years and ten
 Walks to and fro amid his fellow men
 O'er this small tract of continental land,
 His fancy bearing no divining wand.
 Our uninquiring corpses lie more low
 Than our life's curiosity doth go;
 Our most ambitious steps climb not so high
 As in their hourly sport the sparrows fly.
 Yonder cloud's blown farther in a day
 Than our most vagrant feet may ever stray.
 Surely, O Lord, he hath not greatly erred
 Who hath so little from his birthplace stirred.
 He wanders through this low and shallow world,
 Scarcely his bolder thoughts and hopes unfurled,
 Through this low wallèd world, which his huge sin
 Hath hardly room to rest and harbor in.
 Bearing his head just o'er some fallow ground,
 Some cowslip'd meadows where the bitterns sound,
 He wanders round until his end draws nigh,

¹ [There is a blank space here before “musty,” as if Thoreau had sought another adjective to go with it.]

And then lays down his aged head to die.
 And this is life! this is that famous strife!
 His head doth court a fathom from the land,
 Six feet from where his grovelling feet do stand.

What is called talking is a remarkable though I believe universal phenomenon of human society. The most constant phenomenon when men or women come together is talking. A chemist might try this experiment in his laboratory with certainty, and set down the fact in his journal. This characteristic of the race may be considered as established. No doubt every one can call to mind numerous conclusive instances. Some nations, it is true, are said to articulate more distinctly than others; yet the rule holds with those who have the fewest letters in their alphabet. Men cannot stay long together without talking, according to the rules of polite society. (As all men have two ears and but one tongue, they must spend the extra and unavoidable hours of silence in listening to the whisperings of genius, and this fact it is that makes silence always respectable in my eyes.) Not that they have anything to communicate, or do anything quite natural or important to be done so, but by common consent they fall to using the invention of speech, and make a conversation, good or bad. They say things, first this one and then that. They express their "opinions," as they are called.

By a well-directed silence I have sometimes seen threatening and troublesome people routed. You sit musing as if you were in broad nature again. They cannot stand it. Their position becomes more and

more uncomfortable every moment. So much humanity over against one without any disguise, — not even the disguise of speech! They cannot stand it nor sit against it.

Not only must men talk, but for the most part must talk about talk, — even about books, or dead and buried talk. Sometimes my friend expects a few periods from me. Is he exorbitant? He thinks it is my turn now. Sometimes my companion thinks he has said a good thing, but I don't see the difference. He looks just as he did before. Well, it is no loss. I suppose he has plenty more.

Then I have seen very near and intimate, very old friends introduced by very old strangers, with liberty given to talk. The stranger, who knows only the countersign, says, "Jonas — Eldred," giving those names which will make a title good in a court of law. (It may be presumed that God does not know the Christian names of men.) Then Jonas, like a ready soldier, makes a remark, — a benediction on the weather it may be, — and Eldred swiftly responds, and unburdens his breast, and so the action begins. They bless God and nature many times gratuitously, and part mutually well pleased, leaving their cards. They did not happen to be present at each other's christening.

Sometimes I have listened so attentively and with so much interest to the whole expression of a man that I did not hear one word he was saying, and saying too with the more vivacity observing my attention.

But a man may be an object of interest to me though his tongue is pulled out by the roots.

Men sometimes do as if they could eject themselves like bits of pack-thread from the end of the tongue.

Scholars have for the most part a diseased way of looking at the world. They mean by it a few cities and unfortunate assemblies of men and women, who might all be concealed in the grass of the prairies. They describe this world as old or new, healthy or diseased, according to the state of their libraries, — a little dust more or less on their shelves. When I go abroad from under this shingle or slate roof, I find several things which they have not considered. Their conclusions seem imperfect.

As with two eyes we see and with two ears we hear, with the like advantage is man added to man. Making no complaint, offering no encouragement, one human being is made aware of the neighboring and contemporaneous existence of another. Such is the tenderness of friendship. We never recognize each other as finite and imperfect beings, but with a smile and as strangers. My intercourse with men is governed by the same laws with my intercourse with nature.

Buonaparte said that the three-o'clock-in-the-morning courage was the rarest, but I cannot agree with him.¹ Fear does not awake so early. Few men are so degenerate as to balk nature by not beginning the day well.

I hold in my hands a recent volume of essays and

¹ [See *Excursions*, p. 208; Riv. 255.]

poems, in its outward aspect like the thousands which the press sends forth, and, if the gods permitted their own inspiration to be breathed in vain, this might be forgotten in the mass, but the accents of truth are as sure to be heard on earth as in heaven. The more I read it the more I am impressed by its sincerity, its depth and grandeur. It already seems ancient and has lost the traces of its modern birth. It is an evidence of many virtues in the writer. More serenely and humbly confident, this man has listened to the inspiration which all may hear, and with greater fidelity reported it. It is therefore a true prophecy, and shall at length come to pass. It has the grandeur of the Greek tragedy, or rather its Hebrew original, yet it is not necessarily referred to any form of faith. The slumbering, heavy depth of its sentences is perhaps without recent parallel. It lies like the sword in its native pasture, where its roots are never disturbed, and not spread over a sandy embankment.

On fields o'er which the reaper's hand has passed,
Lit by the harvest moon and autumn sun,
My thoughts like stubble floating in the wind
And of such fineness as October airs,
There, after harvest, could I glean my life,
A richer harvest reaping without toil,
And weaving gorgeous fancies at my will,
In subtler webs than finest summer haze.

In October the air is really the fine element the poets describe.¹ The fields emit a dry and temperate

¹ [*Week*, p. 377; Riv. 465.]

odor. There is something in the refined and elastic air which reminds us of a work of art. It is like a verse of Anacreon or a tragedy of Æschylus.

All parts of nature belong to one head, as the curls of a maiden's hair. How beautifully flow the seasons as one year, and all streams as one ocean!

I hate museums; there is nothing so weighs upon my spirits. They are the catacombs of nature. One green bud of spring, one willow catkin, one faint trill from a migrating sparrow would set the world on its legs again. The life that is in a single green weed is of more worth than all this death. They are dead nature collected by dead men. I know not whether I muse most at the bodies stuffed with cotton and sawdust or those stuffed with bowels and fleshy fibre outside the cases.

Where is the proper herbarium, the true cabinet of shells, and museum of skeletons, but in the meadow where the flower bloomed, by the seaside where the tide cast up the fish, and on the hills and in the valleys where the beast laid down its life and the skeleton of the traveller reposes on the grass? What right have mortals to parade these things on their legs again, with their wires, and, when heaven has decreed that they shall return to dust again, to return them to sawdust? Would you have a dried specimen of a world, or a pickled one?

Embalming is a sin against heaven and earth, — against heaven, who has recalled the soul and set free the servile elements, and against the earth, which is

thus robbed of her dust. I have had my right-perceiving senses so disturbed in these haunts as to mistake a veritable living man for a stuffed specimen, and surveyed him with dumb wonder as the strangest of the whole collection. For the strangest is that which, being in many particulars most like, is in some essential particular most unlike.

It is one great and rare merit in the old English tragedy that it says something. The words slide away very fast, but toward some conclusion. It has to do with things, and the reader feels as if he were advancing. It does not make much odds what message the author has to deliver at this distance of time, since no message can startle us, but how he delivers it, — that it be done in a downright and manly way. They come to the point and do not waste the time.

They say that Carew was a laborious writer, but his poems do not show it. They are finished, but do not show the marks of the chisel. Drummond was indeed a quiddler, with little fire or fibre, and rather a taste *for* poetry than a taste *of* it.

After all, we draw on very gradually in English literature to Shakespeare, through Peele and Marlowe, to say nothing of Raleigh and Spenser and Sidney. We hear the same great tone already sounding to which Shakespeare added a serener wisdom and clearer expression. Its chief characteristics of reality and unaffected manliness are there. The more we read of the

literature of those times, the more does acquaintance divest the genius of Shakespeare of the in some measure false mystery which has thickened around it, and leave it shrouded in the grander mystery of daylight. His critics have for the most part made their [*sic*] contemporaries less that they might make Shakespeare more.

The distinguished men of those times had a great flow of spirits, a cheerful and elastic wit far removed from the solemn wisdom of later days. What another thing was fame and a name then than now! This is seen in the familiar manner in which they were spoken of by each other and the nation at large, — *Kit Marlowe*, and *George (Peele)*, and *Will Shakespeare*, and *Ben Jonson*, — great *jellows*, — *chaps*.

We pass through all degrees of life from the least organic to the most complex. Sometimes we are mere pudding-stone and scoriæ.

The present is the instant work and near process of living, and will be found in the last analysis to be nothing more nor less than digestion. Sometimes, it is true, it is indigestion.

Daniel deserves praise for his moderation, and sometimes has risen into poetry before you know it. Strong sense appears in his epistles, but you have to remember too often in what age he wrote, and yet that Shakespeare was his contemporary. His style is without the tricks of the trade and really in advance of his

age. We can well believe that he was a retired scholar, who would keep himself shut up in his house two whole months together.

Donne was not a poet, but a man of strong sense, a sturdy English thinker, full of conceits and whimsicalities, hammering away at his subject, be it eulogy or epitaph, sonnet or satire, with the patience of a day laborer, without taste but with an occasional fine distinction or poetic phrase. He was rather *Doctor Donne*, than the *poet Donne*. His letters are perhaps best.

Lovelace is what his name expresses, — of slight material to make a poet's fame. His goings and comings are of no great account. His taste is not so much love of excellence as fear of failure, though in one instance he has written fearlessly and memorably.

How wholesome are the natural laws to contemplate, as gravity, heat, light, moisture, dryness. Only let us not interfere. Let the soul withdraw into the chambers of the heart, let the mind reside steadily in the labyrinth of the brain, and not interfere with hands or feet more than with other parts of nature.

Thomson was a true lover of nature and seems to have needed only a deeper human experience to have taken a more vigorous and lofty flight. He is deservedly popular, and has found a place on many shelves and in many cottages. There are great merits in "The Seasons" — and the almanac. In "Autumn:" —

“Attemper’d suns arise,
 . . . while broad and brown, below,
 Extensive harvests hang the heavy head.
 Rich, silent, deep, they stand.”

The moon in “Autumn :” —

“Her spotted disk,
 Where mountains rise, umbrageous dales descend,
 . . . gives all his blaze again,
 Void of its flame, and sheds a softer day.
 Now through the passing cloud she seems to stoop,
 Now up the pure cerulean rides sublime.
 The whole air whitens with a boundless tide
 Of silver radiance, trembling round the world.”

My friend, thou art not of some other race and family of men;—thou art flesh of my flesh, bone of my bone. Has not nature associated us in many ways? ¹ Water from the same fountain, lime from the same quarry, grain from the same field compose our bodies. And perchance our elements but reassert their ancient kindredship. Is it of no significance that I have so long partaken of the same loaf with thee, have breathed the same air summer and winter, have felt the same heat and cold, the same fruits of summer have been pleased to refresh us both, and thou hast never had a thought of different fibre from my own? ²

Our kindred, of one blood with us. With the favor and not the displeasure of the gods, we have partaken the same bread.

¹ [*Week*, p. 302; Riv. 375.]

² [*Week*, p. 302; Riv. 375.]

It is hard to know rocks. They are crude and inaccessible to our nature. We have not enough of the stony element in us.

It is hard to know men by rumor only. But to stand near somewhat living and conscious. Who would not sail through mutiny and storm farther than Columbus, to reach the fabulous retreating shores of some continent man?

My friend can only be in any measure my foe, because he is fundamentally my friend; for everything is after all more nearly what it should rightfully be, than that which it is simply by failing to be the other.

It [friendship] cannot be the subject of reconciliation or the theme of conversation ever between friends. The true friend must in some sense disregard all professions of friendship and forget them.

It is as far from pity as from contempt. I should hesitate even to call it the highest sympathy, since the word is of suspicious origin and suggests suffering rather than joy. It was established before religion, for men are not friends in religion, but over and through it; and it records no apostasy or repentance, but there is a certain divine and innocent and perennial health about it.

Its charity is generosity, its virtue nobleness, its religion trust. We come nearer to friendship with flowers and inanimate objects than with merely affectionate

and loving men. It is not for the friend to be just even, — at least he is not to be lost in this attribute, — but to be only a large and free existence, representative of humanity, its general court. Admirable to us as the heavenly bodies, but like them affording rather a summer heat and daylight, — the light and fire of sunshine and stars, — rather than the intense heats and splendors which our weakness and appetite require.

Yesterday I skated after a fox over the ice. Occasionally he sat on his haunches and barked at me like a young wolf. It made me think of the bear and her cubs mentioned by Captain Parry, I think. All brutes seem to have a genius for mystery, an Oriental aptitude for symbols and the language of signs; and this is the origin of Pilpay and Æsop. The fox manifested an almost human suspicion of mystery in my actions. While I skated directly after him, he cantered at the top of his speed; but when I stood still, though his fear was not abated, some strange but inflexible law of his nature caused him to stop also, and sit again on his haunches. While I still stood motionless, he would go slowly a rod to one side, then sit and bark, then a rod to the other side, and sit and bark again, but did not retreat, as if spellbound. When, however, I commenced the pursuit again, he found himself released from his durance.

Plainly the fox belongs to a different order of things from that which reigns in the village. Our courts, though they offer a bounty for his hide, and our pulpits, though they draw many a moral from his cunning, are in few senses contemporary with his free forest life.

To the poet considered as an artist, his words must be as the relation of his oldest and finest memory, and wisdom derived from the remotest experience.

I have thought, when walking in the woods through a certain retired dell, bordered with shrub oaks and pines, far from the village and affording a glimpse only through an opening of the mountains in the horizon, how my life might pass there, simple and true and natural, and how many things would be impossible to be done there. How many books I might not read!

Why avoid my friends and live among strangers?
Why not reside in my native country?

Many a book is written which does not necessarily suggest or imply the phenomenon or object to explain which it professes to have been written.

Every child should be encouraged to study not man's system of nature but nature's.

Giles Fletcher knew how to write, and has left English verses behind. He is the most valuable imitator of the Spenserian stanza, and adds a moral tone of his own.

TO A MARSH HAWK IN SPRING

There is health in thy gray wing,
Health of nature's furnishing.
Say, thou modern-winged antique,
Was thy mistress ever sick?

In each heaving of thy wing
 Thou dost health and leisure bring,
 Thou dost waive disease and pain
 And resume new life again.

Man walks in nature still alone,
 And knows no one,
 Discovers no lineament nor feature
 Of any creature.

Though all the firmament
 Is o'er me bent,
 Yet still I miss the grace
 Of an intelligent and kindred face.

I still must seek the friend
 Who does with nature blend.
 Who is the person in her mask,
 He is the friend I ask;

Who is the expression of her meaning,
 Who is the uprightness of her leaning,
 Who is the grown child of her weaning.

We twain would walk together
 Through every weather,
 And see this aged Nature
 Go with a bending stature.

The centre of this world,
 The face of Nature,

The site of human life,
 Some sure foundation
 And nucleus of a nation,
 At least, a private station.

It is the saddest thought of all, that what we are to others, that we are much more to ourselves, — avaricious, mean, irascible, affected, — we are the victims of these faults. If our pride offends our humble neighbor, much more does it offend ourselves, though our lives are never so private and solitary.

If the Indian is somewhat of a stranger in nature, the gardener is too much a familiar. There is something vulgar and foul in the latter's closeness to his mistress, something noble and cleanly in the former's distance. Yet the hunter seems to have a property in the moon which even the farmer has not. Ah! the poet knows uses of plants which are not easily reported, though he cultivates no parterre. See how the sun smiles on him while he walks in the gardener's aisles, rather than on the gardener.

Not only has the foreground of a picture its glass of transparent crystal spread over it, but the picture itself is a glass or transparent medium to a remoter background. We demand only of all pictures that they be perspicuous, that the laws of perspective have been truly observed. It is not the fringed foreground of the desert nor the intermediate oases that detain the eye and the imagination, but the infinite, level, and roomy horizon, where the sky meets the sand, and heavens and

earth, the ideal and actual, are coincident, the background into which leads the path of the pilgrim.

All things are in revolution; it is the one law of nature by which order is preserved, and time itself lapses and is measured. Yet some things men will do from age to age, and some things they will not do.

"Fisherman's Acct. for 1805¹ Began March 25

	cts.
D ^d Mr. Sam ¹ Potter 2 q ^{ts} W I 3/ 1 lb sugar 10 ^d	\$0.64
One Cod line 5/	84
April 8 Q ^t W I 1/6 & 1 lb Sugar 10 ^d & Brown Mug	48
9 Q ^t N E rum 1/ 10 th D ^o . of D ^o 1/	33
13 Q ^t N E rum & 1 lb Sugar 15 th 2 Q ^t N E rum 2/	62
17 Q ^t W I 1/6 D ^o N E 1/ lb Sugar 9 ^d & Q ^t N E Rum	71
22 Q ^t N E rum 1/ lb sugar 9 ^d & Q ^t N E rum 1/	44½
23 Q ^t N E rum 1/ D ^o of D ^o & sugar 5 ^d	39
24 Q ^t N E rum 1/ lb sugar 9 ^d	28½
29 Q ^t N E rum 1/ & lb sugar 9 ^d —30th Rum 1/	44½
May first Q ^t rum ½ lb Sugar 1/5 ^d	22
Q ^t N E rum 1/ & ½ lb Loaf Sugar 9 ^d	29
4 Q ^t rum 1/ Sugar 5 ^d	22
6 Q ^t N E rum 1/ & lb good sugar 11 ^d .	31
7 Q ^t N E rum 1/ 8 th Q ^t N E rum 1/ & ½ lb Sugar 5 ^d .	40
11 Q ^t N E rum 11 ^d lb Sugar 10 ^d	29
15 Q ^t rum & lb Sugar 1/9 & Q ^t N E rum	44
16 To a Line for the Scene 3/	0.50
20 To Q ^t N E rum 11 ^d lb Sugar 10 ^d	0.29
21 To Q ^t N E rum 11 ^d & lb Sugar 10 ^d	0.29
27 To Q ^t W I 1/6 & lb Sugar 10 ^d .	0.39
June 5th 1805 Settled this acc ^t by Recev.g Cash in Full	\$8.82½

How many young finny contemporaries of various character and destiny, form and habits, we have even

¹ [See *Week*, pp. 33, 34; *Riv.* 41, 42.]

in this water! And it will not be forgotten by some memory that we *were* contemporaries. It is of *some* import. We shall be some time friends, I trust, and know each other better. Distrust is too prevalent now. We are so much alike! have so many faculties in common! I have not yet met with the philosopher who could, in a quite conclusive, undoubtful way, show me *the*, and, if not *the*, then how *any*, difference between man and a fish. We are so much alike! How much could a really tolerant, patient, humane, and truly great and natural man make of them, if he should try? For they are to be understood, surely, as all things else, by no other method than that of sympathy. It is easy to say what they are not to us, *i. e.*, what we are not to them; but what we might and ought to be is another affair.

In the tributaries the brook minnow and the trout. Even in the rills emptying into the river, over which you stride at a step, you may see small trout not so large as your finger glide past or hide under the bank.

The character of this [the horned pout], as indeed of all fishes, depends directly upon that of the water it inhabits, those taken in clear and sandy water being of brighter hue and cleaner and of firmer and sweeter flesh. It makes a peculiar squeaking noise when drawn out, which has given it the name of the minister or preacher.

The bream is the familiar and homely sparrow, which makes her nest everywhere, and is early and late.

The pickerel is the hawk, a fish of prey, hovering over the finny broods.

The pout is the owl, which steals so noiselessly about at evening with its clumsy body.

The shiner is the summer yellowbird, or goldfinch, of the river.

The sucker is the sluggish bittern, or stake-driver.

The minnow is the hummingbird.

The trout is the partridge woodpecker.

The perch is the robin.¹

We read Marlowe as so much poetical pabulum. It is food for poets, water from the Castalian Spring, some of the atmosphere of Parnassus, raw and crude indeed, and at times breezy, but pure and bracing. Few have so rich a phrase! He had drunk deep of the Picrian Spring, though not deep enough, and had that fine madness, as Drayton says,

“Which justly should possess a poet’s brain.”

We read his “Dr. Faustus,” “Dido, Queen of Carthage,” and “Hero and Leander,” especially the last, without being wearied. He had many of the qualities of a great poet, and was in some degree worthy to precede Shakespeare. But he seems to have run to waste for want of seclusion and solitude, as if mere pause and deliberation would have added a new element of greatness to his poetry. In his unquestionably fine, heroic tone it would seem as if he had the rarest part of genius, and education could have added the rest. The “Hero

¹ [This appears in pencil on a loose sheet of paper inclosed between the pages of the Journal.]

and Leander” tells better for his character than the anecdotes which survive.

I fain would stretch me by the highway-side,

To thaw and trickle with the melting snow,

That mingled soul and body with the tide

I too might through the pores of Nature flow,¹

Might help to forward the new spring along,

If it were mine to choose my toil or day,

Scouring the roads with yonder sluice-way throng,

And so work out my tax on *Her* highway.

Yet let us thank the purblind race

Who still have thought it good

With lasting stone to mark the place

Where braver men have stood.

In Concord, town of quiet name

And quiet fame as well, . . .

I’ve seen ye, sisters, on the mountain-side,

When your green mantles fluttered in the wind;

I’ve seen your footprints on the lake’s smooth shore,

Lesser than man’s, a more ethereal trace;

I have heard of ye as some far-famed race,

Daughters of gods, whom I should one day meet,

Or mothers, I might say, of all our race.

I reverence your natures, so like mine

Yet strangely different, like but still unlike.

Thou only stranger that hast crossed my path,

¹ [*Eccursions, and Poems*, p. 409. See also p. 71.]

Accept my hospitality; let me hear
The message which thou bring'st.

Made different from me,

Perchance thou 'rt made to be

The creature of a different destiny.

I know not who ye are that meekly stand
Thus side by side with man in every land.
When did ye form alliance with our race,
Ye children of the moon, who in mild nights
Vaulted upon the hills and sought this earth?
Reveal that which I fear ye cannot tell,
Wherein ye are not I, wherein ye dwell
Where I can never come.

What boots it that I do regard ye so?

Does it make suns to shine or crops to grow?

What boots [it] that I never should forget

That I have sisters sitting for me yet?

And what are sisters?

The robust man, who can so stoutly strive,

In this bleak world is hardly kept alive.

And who is it protects *ye*, smooths *your* way?

We can afford to lend a willing ear occasionally to those earnest reformers of the age. Let us treat them hospitably. Shall we be charitable only to the poor? What though they are fanatics? Their errors are likely to be generous errors, and these may be they who will put to rest the American Church and the American government, and awaken better ones in their stead.

Let us not meanly seek to maintain our delicate lives in chambers or in legislative halls by a timid watchful-

ness of the rude mobs that threaten to pull down our baby-houses. Let us not think to raise a revenue which shall maintain our domestic quiet by an impost on the liberty of speech. Let us not think to live by the principle of self-defense. Have we survived our accidents hitherto, think you, by virtue of our good swords, — that three-foot lath that dangles by your side, or those brazen-mouthed pieces under the burying hill which the trainers keep to hurrah with in the April and July mornings? Do our protectors burrow under the burying-ground hill, on the edge of the bean-field which you all know, gorging themselves once a year with powder and smoke, and kept bright and in condition by a chafing of oiled rags and rotten stone? Have we resigned the protection of our hearts and civil liberties to that feathered race of wading birds and marching men who drill but once a month? — and I mean no reproach to our Concord train-bands, who certainly make a handsome appearance — and dance well. Do we enjoy the sweets of domestic life undisturbed, because the naughty boys are all shut up in that whitewashed “stone-yard,” as it is called, and see the Concord meadows only through a grating.

No, let us live amid the free play of the elements. Let the dogs bark, let the cocks crow, and the sun shine, and the winds blow!

Ye do commend me to all virtue ever,

And simple truth, the law by which we live.

Methinks that I can trust your clearer sense

And your immediate knowledge of the truth.

I would obey your influence, one with fate.

There is a true march to the sentence, as if a man or a body of men were actually making progress there step by step, and these are not the mere *disjecta membra*, the dispersed and mutilated members though it were of heroes, which can no longer walk and join themselves to their comrades. They are not perfect nor liberated pieces of art for the galleries, yet they stand on the natural and broad pedestal of the living rock, but have a principle of life and growth in them still, as has that human nature from which they spring.¹

It is a marvel how the birds contrive to survive in this world. These tender sparrows that flit from bush to bush this evening, though it is so late, do not seem improvident, [but appear] to have found a roost for the night. They must succeed by weakness and reliance, for they are not bold and enterprising, as their mode of life would seem to require, but very weak and tender creatures. I have seen a little chipping sparrow, come too early in the spring, shivering on an apple twig, drawing in its head and striving to warm it in its muffled feathers; and it had no voice to intercede with nature, but peeped as helpless as an infant, and was ready to yield up its spirit and die without any effort. And yet this was no new spring in the revolution of the seasons.

Our offense is rank, it smells to heaven. In the midst of our village, as in most villages, there is a slaughterhouse, and throughout the summer months, day and

¹ [Here follows matter printed on pp. 105, 106 of *Week* (Riv. 130-132).]

night, to the distance of half a mile, which embraces the greater part of the village, the air [is] filled with such scents as we instinctively avoid in a woodland walk; and doubtless, if our senses were once purified and educated by a simpler and truer life, we should not consent to live in such a neighborhood.

George Melvin, our Concord trapper, told me that in going to the spring near his house, where he kept his minnows for bait, he found that they were all gone, and immediately suspected that a mink had got them; so he removed the snow all around and laid open the trail of a mink underneath, which he traced to his hole, where were the fragments of his booty. There he set his trap, and baited it with fresh minnows. Going again soon to the spot, he found one of the mink's fore legs in the trap gnawed off near the body, and, having set it again, he caught the mink with his three legs, the fourth having only a short bare bone sticking out.

When I expressed some surprise at this, and said that I heard of such things but did not know whether to believe them, and was now glad to have the story confirmed, said he: "Oh, the muskrats are the greatest fellows to gnaw their legs off. Why I caught one once that had just gnawed his third leg off, this being the third time he had been trapped; and he lay dead by the trap, for he could n't run on one leg." Such tragedies are enacted even in this sphere and along our peaceful streams, and dignify at least the hunter's trade. Only courage does anywhere prolong life, whether of man or beast.

When they are caught by the leg and cannot get into the water to drown themselves, they very frequently gnaw the limb off. They are commonly caught under water or close to the edge, and dive immediately with the trap and go to gnawing and are quackled and drowned in a moment, though under other circumstances they will live several minutes under water. They prefer to gnaw off a fore leg to a hind leg, and do not gnaw off their tails. He says the wharf rats are very common on the river and will swim and cross it like a muskrat, and will gnaw their legs and even their tails off in the trap.

These would be times that tried men's souls, if men had souls to be tried; aye, and the souls of brutes, for they must have souls as well as teeth. Even the water-rats lead sleepless nights and live Achillean lives. There are the strong will and the endeavor. Man, even the hunter, naturally has sympathy with every brave effort, even in his game, to maintain that life it enjoys. The hunter regards with awe his game, and it becomes at last his medicine.¹

Of Cadew or Case worms there are the Ruff-coats or Cockspurs, whose cases are rough and made of various materials, and the Piper Cadis or Straw-worm, made of reed or rush, and straight and smooth.

Carlyle's works are not to be studied, — hardly re-read. Their first impression is the truest and the deepest. There is no reprint. If you look again, you will be dis-

¹ [See *Journal*, vol. vi, Feb. 5, 1854.]

appointed and find nothing answering to the mood they have excited. They are true natural products in this respect. All things are but once, and never repeated. The first faint blushes of the morning gilding the mountain-tops, with the pale phosphorus and saffron-colored clouds, — they verily transport us to the morning of creation; but what avails it to travel eastward, or look again there an hour hence. We should be as far in the day ourselves, mounting toward our meridian. There is no *double entendre* for the alert reader; in fact the work was designed for such complete success that it serves but for a single occasion. It is the luxury of wealth and art when for every deed its own instrument is manufactured. The knife which sliced the bread of Jove ceased to be a knife when that service was rendered.

For every inferior, earthly pleasure we forego, a superior, celestial one is substituted.

To purify our lives requires simply to weed out what is foul and noxious and the sound and innocent is supplied, as nature purifies the blood if we will but reject impurities.

Nature and human life are as various to our several experiences as our constitutions are various. Who shall say what prospect life offers to another? Could a greater miracle take place than if we should look through each other's eyes for an instant? We should live in all the ages of the world in an hour, — aye, in all the worlds of the ages. What I have read of rhapsodists, of the primitive poets, Argonautic expeditions, the life of demigods and heroes, Eleusinian mysteries, etc., sug-

gests nothing so ineffably grand and informing as this would be.

The phœbe came into my house to find a place for its nest, flying through the windows.

It was a bright thought, that of man's to have bells; no doubt the birds hear them with pleasure.

To compete with the squirrels in the chestnut harvest, picking oftentimes the nuts that bear the mark of their teeth.

I require of any lecturer that he will read me a more or less simple and sincere account of his own life, of what he has done and thought, — not so much what he has read or heard of other men's lives and actions, but some such account as he would send to his kindred from a distant land, — and if he has lived sincerely, it must have been in a distant land to me, — describing even his outward circumstances and what adventures he has had, as well as his thoughts and feelings about them. He who gives us only the results of other men's lives, though with brilliant temporary success, we may in some measure justly accuse of having defrauded us of our time. We want him to give us that which was most precious to him, — not his life's blood but even that for which his life's blood circulated, what he has got by living. If anything ever yielded him pure pleasure or instruction, let him communicate it. Let the money-getter tell us how much he loves wealth, and what means he takes

to accumulate it. He must describe those facts which he knows and loves better than anybody else. He must not write on foreign missions. The mechanic will naturally lecture about his trade, the farmer about his farm, and every man about that which he, compared with other men, knows best. Yet incredible mistakes are made. I have heard an owl lecture with perverse show of learning upon the solar microscope, and chancicleer upon nebulous stars, when both ought to have been sound asleep, the one in a hollow tree, the other on his roost.

After I lectured here before, this winter, I heard that some of my townsmen had expected of me some account of my life at the pond. This I will endeavor to give to-night.

I know a robust and hearty mother who thinks that her son, who died abroad, came to his end by living too low, as she had since learned that he drank only water. Men are not inclined to leave off hanging men to-day, though they will be to-morrow. I heard of a family in Concord this winter which would have starved, if it had not been for potatoes — and tea and coffee.

It has not been my design to live cheaply, but only to live as I could, not devoting much time to getting a living. I made the most of what means were already got.

To determine the character of our life and how adequate it is to its occasion, just try it by any test, as for instance that this same sun is seen in Europe and in

America at the same time, that these same stars are visible in twenty-four hours to two thirds the inhabitants of the globe, and who knows how many and various inhabitants of the universe. What farmer in his field lives according even to this somewhat trivial material fact.

I just looked up at a fine twinkling star and thought that a voyager whom I know, now many days' sail from this coast, might possibly be looking up at that same star with me. The stars are the apexes of what triangles! There is always the possibility—the possibility, I say—of being *all*, or remaining a particle, in the universe.

In these days and in this country, a few implements, as the axe, shovel, etc., and, to the studious, light and stationery and access to a few books, will rank next to necessities, but can all be obtained at a very trifling cost. Under the head of clothing is to be ranked bedding, or night-clothes.

We are very anxious to keep the animal heat in us. What pains we take with our beds! robbing the nests of birds and their breasts, this shelter within a shelter, as the mole has a bed of leaves and grass at the end of its burrow.

In the summer I caught fish occasionally in the pond, but since September have not missed them.

In a man or his work, over all special excellence or failure, prevails the general authority or value.

Almost any man knows how to earn money, but not one in a million knows how to spend it. If he had known so much as this, he would never have earned it.

All matter, indeed, is capable of entertaining thought.

The complete subjugation of the body to the mind prophesies the sovereignty of the latter over the whole of nature. The instincts are to a certain extent a sort of independent nobility, of equal date with the mind, or crown,—ancient dukes and princes of the regal blood. They are perhaps the mind of our ancestors subsided in us, the experience of the race.

A small sum would really do much good, if the donor spent himself with it and did not merely relinquish it to some distant society whose managers do the good or the evil with it. How much might be done for this town with a hundred dollars! I could provide a select course of lectures for the summer or winter with that sum, which would be an incalculable benefit to every inhabitant. With a thousand dollars I could purchase for this town a more complete and select library than exists in the State out of Cambridge and Boston, perhaps a more available one than any. Men sit palsied and helpless by the side of their buried treasures.¹

After all those who do most good with money, do it with the least, because they can do better than to acquire it.

March 13, 1846. The song sparrow and blackbird

¹ [See *Walden*, pp. 120, 121; Riv. 171, 172.]

heard to-day. The snow going off. The ice in the pond one foot thick.

Men talk much of coöperation nowadays, of working together to some worthy end; but what little co-operation there is, is as if it were not, being a simple result of which the means are hidden, a harmony inaudible to men. If a man has faith, he will coöperate with equal faith everywhere. If he has not faith he will continue to live like the rest of the world, whatever company he is joined to. To coöperate thoroughly implies to get your living together. I heard it proposed lately that two young men should travel together over the world, the one earning his means as he went, the other carrying a bill of exchange in his pocket. It was easy to see that they could not long be companions, or co-operate, since one would not operate at all. They would part company at the first and most interesting crisis in their adventures.

END OF VOLUME I