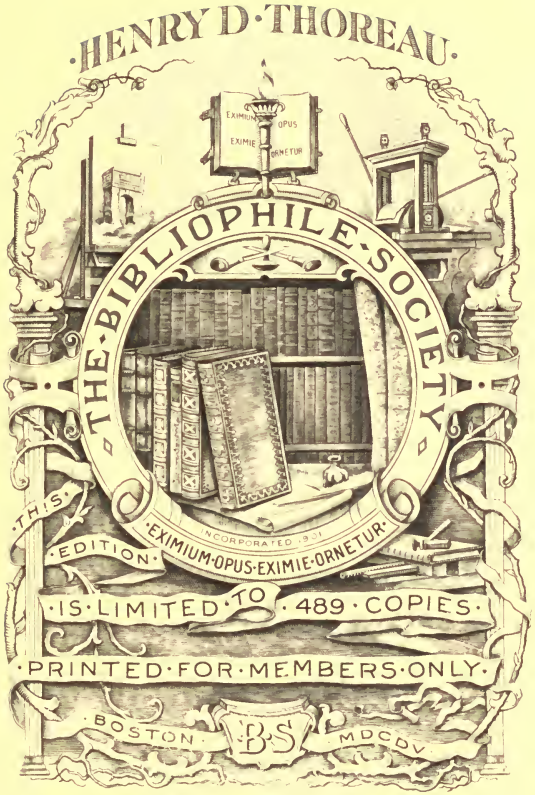
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THE FIRST AND LAST

JOURNEYS OF THOREAU

VOL. I


HENRY D THOREAU
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THE
FIRST AND LAST JOURNEYS
OF
THOREAU

LATELY DISCOVERED AMONG HIS UNPUBLISHED JOURNALS
AND MANUSCRIPTS

EDITED BY
FRANKLIN BENJAMIN SANBORN



BOSTON : MDCDV
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PREFATORY NOTE

TO THOREAU

Other names in Learning's page,
Brighter, in their day, than thine,
But ill withstand the test of age;
While thy renown has brighter grown,
And other ages than thine own
Resound thy praise unstintedly.

Henry D. Thoreau has attained to such an exalted position in the ranks of American authors that it seems quite needless for us to extol his virtues at this time. It may be remarked, however, that although Thoreau's genius has long been recognized abroad, and a secure place has by popular acclaim been accorded to him among the immortals in literature, there has been a tendency in some foreign quarters to place him foremost amongst American writers. In a letter, dated July 20, 1905, written from London, Doctor Garnett says:

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"I feel no doubt that the reputation of Thoreau, both as an essayist and as a practical philosopher, is augmenting, and that it is destined to rise still higher. The times are favourable to him. The increase of wealth and luxury has naturally begotten a reaction in many minds, — and disposed many more who see wealth and luxury out of their reach, — to inquire whether these are indeed essential to happiness. Hence a cult of 'The Simple Life' is springing up, of which the author of the book so entitled (M. Maeterlinck) and Mr. Edward Carpenter may be regarded as apostles. The wide circulation of their writings must gain readers for Thoreau, who, besides his great literary charm, has the advantage over most preachers of the natural life of having himself attained it. It is true that he was too much of a recluse to allow of his example being literally copied, but it affords an ideal for the votaries of simplicity; and his entire cast of thought is in harmony with the movement which is at present creating 'garden cities.' Every garden citizen should have a copy of Thoreau."

Such of the members of The Bibliophile

Society as are acquainted with the writings of Thoreau will at once appreciate the great importance of this publication, as being a valuable contribution to the literature of our country, and also as a work that will arouse a lively interest among collectors of First Editions. When an "unpublished manuscript" of Thoreau was first announced, it created somewhat of a sensation, and many admirers of this great poet-naturalist and philosopher ventured to assume that "it can't be so; it must be a forgery." But, startling as the fact may be, the Society has, through the liberality and kindness of Mr. Bixby, come into possession of an important collection of unpublished Thoreau manuscripts, which are now printed for the first time, and placed within the reach of the members of The Bibliophile Society.

Of the genuineness of the originals there can be no doubt, for every line is in the autograph of the author himself. Their authenticity is attested by the editor, Mr. F. B. Sanborn, who was the neighbor and personal friend of Thoreau, as also of Emerson, Hawthorne, and Channing. Mr. San-

born is Thoreau's biographer, and has at various times edited a number of his writings. It is indeed fortunate that the present manuscripts came to light in time to permit us to avail ourselves of the sound scholarship and thorough conversance of one who spent many years in personal contact and close fellowship with their distinguished author.

H. H. H.

INTRODUCTION

BY

F. B. SANBORN

No one who has not examined the various drafts of manuscript which finally issued in the printed page, can fully appreciate the pains taken by Thoreau to make his published writings conform to his peculiar standard of excellence. The *Sir Walter Ralegh*, lately printed for the members of The Bibliophile Society, was made up by him from three such drafts, each omitting and inserting something which the others had not.

Two drafts of Thoreau's earlier material which, with copious additions, came forth, after ten years of amendment and revision, as *A Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers*, now lie before me. The first, though a fragment, is the earliest diary of the voyage noted down in 1839, in the boat or tent, and afterwards written out more fully

in the Concord home. The second draft is also fragmentary, but covers "Sunday" and "Tuesday," which are omitted from the other, and contains many passages that he left out, or materially changed, when making his final copy for Munroe to print, — at the author's cost. This third and final draft, which would be very precious to collectors if extant, was probably destroyed as waste paper by the printers, or went to the paper-mill to be refashioned into sheets for other scribes. The present editor has followed mainly the first of these two tentative drafts, because it contains more unprinted matter; but he has also occasionally used passages from the second draft, which were omitted in printing the volume of 1849. Thus the charming portrayal of "a natural Sabbath, — a celestial day" in *The Week* (page 56), goes on in this second draft:

"The air was as elastic and crystalline as if it were a glass to the picture of the world, and explained the artifice of the picture-dealer, who does not regard his picture as finished until it is glassed. It was like the landscape seen through the bottom of a tum-

bler in my youth; when it appeared clothed in a vivid, quiet light, in which the barns and fences checquer and partition it with new regularity, and rough and uneven fields stretch away with lawn-like smoothness to the horizon. The clouds, finely distinct and picturesque, — the light blue sky contrasting with their feathery softness, — so ethereal that they seemed a fit drapery to hang over Persia; and the smith's shop resting in the Greek light was worthy to stand beside the Parthenon. Not only has that foreground of a picture its glass of transparent crystal spread over it, but the picture itself must be a glass to a remote background. We demand, chiefly of all, of pictures, that they be perspicuous in this sense, and the laws of perspective duly observed; that so, we may see through them to the reality or thing painted. It is not the oasis in the foreground of the desert, but the infinite level and roomy horizon, where the sky meets the sand, and into which leads the path of the pilgrim, that detains the eye and the imagination.

"Such a background do all our lives want,

and such Character always secures to itself. For the most part only the life of the anchorite will bear to be so considered; but all our motions should be as impressive as objects in the desert, — a broken shaft or crumbling mound against a limitless horizon. All character is thus unrelated, and of distinct outline. Men nowhere live as yet a natural life, around which the vine clings, and which the elm willingly shadows, — a life of equal simplicity and sincerity with Nature, and in harmony with her grandeur and beauty. The natural world has no inhabitant."

The verse, too, on the first page of "Sunday" (54) stands thus in the manuscript, with the name

MORNING

Thou unconverted Saint,
Early Christian without taint!
Heathen without reproach,
Who dost upon the evil day encroach;
Who, ever since thy birth,
Hast trod the outskirts of the earth!

Strict anchorite! who dost simply feast
On freshest dews, I 'll be thy guest,
And daily bend my steps to the East,
While the late-risen world goes West.

This strikes me as better than the shorter version previously printed.

At the opening of "Tuesday," too, after the high wind of Monday night, the two brothers were astir long before three A.M., and we have a passage never before printed, except a few words; it runs thus:

"At length, when all our effects were aboard, we launched our boat on the ever-wakeful river, and so shaking the clay from our feet we pushed into the fog. Buonaparte exaggerates the three o'clock in the morning courage; fear does not awake so early. Few men are so degenerate as to baulk Nature by not beginning the day well. In the morning we do not believe in expediency, but will start afresh without botching. By afternoon man has an interest in the past, and sees indifferently well either way. The morning dew breeds no cold. Disease is a sluggard that overtakes, never encounters us: we have the start each day, and may fairly distance him before the dew is off; but if we recline in the bowers of noon, he will come up with us after all. I have found an early morning walk to be a blessing for the whole day.

To our neighbors who have risen in mist and rain we tell of a clear sunrise and the singing of birds, as some traditionary mythus. We look back to those fresh but now remote hours, as to the dawn of time, when a solid and blooming health reigned, and every deed was simple and heroic."

Again, at the opening of "Wednesday," the sound of the farmyard chanticleer leads to one of those irregular poems that Thoreau often wrote, but seldom printed in full, though he liked to quote from them an occasional stanza or a couplet.

Upon the bank at early dawn
I hear the cocks proclaim the day,
Though the moon shines securely on,
As if her course they could not stay.

The stars withhold their shining not,
Or singly or in scattered crowds,
But seem like Parthian arrows shot
By yielding Night mid the advancing clouds.

Far in the east the larum rings,
As if a wakeful host were there;
And now its early clarion sings
To warn us sluggard knights beware.

One, on more distant perch, more clear
But fainter, brags him still;
But ah! he promises, I fear,
More than his master's household will fulfil.

The sound invades each silent wood,
Awakes each slumbering bird,
Till every fowl leads forth her brood,
Which in her nest the tuneful summons heard.

Methinks that Time has reached his prime;
Eternity is in the flower;
And this the faint, confuséd chime
That ushers in the sacred hour.

And has Time got so forward then?
From what perennial fount of joy
Dost thou inspire the hearts of men,
And teach them how the daylight to employ?

From thy abundance pray impart,
Who dost so freely spill,
Some bravery unto my heart,
And let me taste of thy perennial rill.

There is such health and length of years
In the elixir of thy note,
That God himself more young appears
From the rare bragging of thy throat.

These rough and daring verses have less value as poems than as quaint expressions of Thoreau's delicate perceptions. In the same

day's record we find a passage about guns (also omitted in printing), which gives a glimpse of Thoreau's boyhood, like the letter of Indian rhetoric to his brother John, in 1837, turning on the delights of hunting:

"There are few tools to be compared with a gun for efficiency and compactness. I do not know of another so complete an *arm*. It is almost a companion, like a dog. The hunter has an affection for his gun which no laborer has for the tool which he uses, — his axe or spade. I have seen the time when I could carry a gun in my hand all day on a journey, and not feel it to be heavy, though I did not use it once. In the country a boy's love is apt to be divided between a gun and a watch; but the more active and manly choose the gun. Like the first settlers, who rarely went to the field — hardly even to church — without their guns, we, their descendants, have not yet quite outgrown this habit of pioneers; and to-day the villager whose way leads him through a piece of wood, or over a plain where game is sometimes met with, will deliberate whether he shall not take his gun, because, as he says,

he 'may see something.' If the Indian and the bear are exterminated, the partridge and the rabbit are left."

In contrast with the poetry and philosophy of this young stoic, we find in the manuscript this legend:

"I have been told (a tradition in our family) that when my grandmother with her second husband, the Captain [Minott], first went into Kearsarge Gore in her chaise, — where, by the way, the inhabitants had baked a pig in expectation of their coming, which, as they did not come immediately, was kept baking for three days, — her chaise so frightened the geese in the road that they actually rose and flew half a mile. And the sheep all ran over the hills, with the pigs after them; and some of the horses they met broke their tackling or threw their riders; so that they had to put their chaise down several times to save life. When they drove up to the meeting-house, snap, snap, went the bridles of several of the horses that were tied there, and they scattered without a benediction. Though it was in the middle of sermon-time, the whole congregation rushed

out; 'for they thought it was a leather judgment a-coming.' The people about the door got hold of and got into the vehicle, so that they 'liked to have shaken it all to pieces' with curiosity. The minister's wife, too, got in and 'teetered up and down a little;' but she thought it was 'a darn tottlish thing' and said she 'would n't ride in it for nothin' in the world.' There was no service in the afternoon. The next day some old women took their knitting-work and sat in the chaise. As my grandfather had a lawsuit with a witch-woman there, the people prophesied that she would upset his chaise, till they remembered that there was silver-plating enough about it and the harness to lay all the witches in the country.

"My grandmother also instructed that people how to make coffee, which was pounded in a mortar; and by the time she went out of town the sound of the mortar was heard in all that land. By this time, no doubt, she and Ceres are equally regarded as mythological by their posterity. She also found that the young ladies there 'were taking on' because some that had been to Boston and pro-

vided themselves with umbrellas (since called parasols) were unable to unfurl them, — they frightened the horses so; and they were a dead loss on their hands. So that they 'wanted to get some young man of confidence' to go round among the horses with them a spell, to get them used to it."

This is plainly a Dunbar story, slightly embroidered by the dramatic talent of Mrs. Thoreau, whose mother, the grandmother of the tale, and widow of Rev. Asa Dunbar, afterwards married Captain Minott, of Concord. The Rev. Asa Dunbar's children had the "Lust zu fabuliren" which Goethe ascribes to his mother, and could "set out" an adventure to its full value. Oddly at variance with this rustic jest is the next omitted passage which follows the mention of the "mediterranean sea," on page 314 of *The Week*, and precedes what is said of Staten Island, where indeed these observations of the ocean-strand were first made in 1843.

"The most inland shore is seashore. What is the world but seashore everywhere? Aye, all men live upon this line in their daily experience, humming this vast rhyme, — al-

ways on the verge of unexplored oceans. We crawl along the endless beach, the product of sea slime, with here and there a wreck or fisher's house and a few pikes and shad poles, the waves, like untamable sea monsters, ever rolling to the land, spotted with oranges and limes, the waste of a demonic commerce. It is a vast, rank, lusty place, this beach of ours, strewn with horseshoes and crabs, and razor-clams, and whatever wrecks the sea casts up; corpses of men and beasts bleaching and rotting in the sun and waves, — and each tide turns them in their beds, and brings fresh sand to be their pillows.

> Between the traveller and the setting sun,
> Upon some drifting sand heap of the shore,
> A hound stands o'er the carcass of a man.

"Yet there are some delicate ocean flowers and fragile mosses which, if you wade in, you may lift up gently upon a paper, and prick out painfully with a needle."

In the "Sunday" at page 95 of *The Week*, there is mention of a reproof given to Thoreau by a "minister driving a poor beast to some horse-sheds." This was not on the

Merrimac, but in New Boston not far away, and when Ellery Channing was his companion, perhaps in 1846. In the second draft before me is a passage omitted in printing, which relates to the same journey, as follows:

"On the rocky shore in front of Moore's Falls I have since prepared a rather sumptuous but somewhat more innocent repast than our last, when travelling this way one summer's day with another companion. It was composed of crusts of bread which the farmers had refused, hens' eggs, for one of which we waited till it was laid, and a hasty pudding boiled on the rocks, amidst the roar of the rapids, and almost sprinkled with the foam. For our means were small, though our appetites were great, and we studied economy as well as the landscape. We saw a raft of logs, sixty or seventy feet long, go down these rocky rapids, which are a hundred rods in length. It was managed by two men, one at each end, with an oar fixed into the logs; and they were obliged to exert all their strength to incline it to the right or left, and avoid the rocks, — all the while half

concealed and wet with the waves and foam which dashed on them, and communicating by signs amid the roar of the rapids."

It was in this same tour with Channing that they climbed to the top of Uncannunuc, and saw the hills described in this omitted passage:

"Far in the East is seen Agamenticus Hill, in Maine, four miles from the sea, a noted landmark for sailors, on which Saint Aspenquid is said to have died in 1682, whose funeral was celebrated by the Indians 'by the sacrifice of 6,711 wild animals;' and, besides the more southern New Hampshire hills, Gunstock and Kearsarge in the north; and further yet some dim peaks which perhaps are the White Mountains themselves. A few miles further west is Joe English Hill in New Boston, which, seen from the road in Bedford, is a dark-looking eminence, very abrupt on one side, and shaped like a whale. Joe English was an Indian, grandson of Massononomet of Agawam (Ipswich) who fought on the side of the whites, and of whose exploits in their behalf many stories are told. He was finally shot by his own race in 1706,

and a grant was made to his widow and children by the Province, 'because he died in the service of his country.'"

Thoreau was for years striving to express in words what music signified to him. He attempted it in that paradoxical fragment called *The Service*, written out for *The Dial* in 1840, but not published in full till sixty years later. He attempted it again in the various drafts of *The Week*, and printed one or two such pages. But there remains in the manuscript before me a passage of which some lines were printed, but which deserves to be given as it stands. It was suggested by the rude drumming of the tyro calling men together for a country muster; but it rose far above that or any real music, into the ideal region where Thoreau was most at home. He said:

"Man should have an accompaniment of music through Nature. It relieves the scenery, which is seen through it as a subtler element, like a very clear morning air in autumn. A man's life should be a steady march to an inaudible but sweet and all-pervading music; and when he seems to halt, he will still be

marching on his post. His heart will sharpen and attune his ear, and he will never take a false step, even in the most arduous circumstances; for then the music will swell into corresponding sweetness and volume, and rule the movement it inspired.

"One music seems to be superior to another chiefly in its more perfect time, to use this word in a liberal sense. In its steadiness and equanimity lies its divinity. Music is the sound of the universal laws promulgated. It is the only assured tone. When men attain to speak with as settled a faith, and as firm assurance, their voices will ring and their feet march as the hero's. I feel a sad cheer when I hear these lofty strains, because there must be something in me as lofty that hears. But ah, I hear them not always! The clear morning notes seem to come through a veil of sadness to me; for possibly they are only the echo which my life makes.

Therefore a current of sadness deep
Through the strains of thy triumph is heard to sweep.

These cadences plainly proceed out of a very deep meaning, and a sustained soul. They

are perhaps the expression of the perfect knowledge which the saints attain. There are in music such strains as far surpass any faith which man ever had in the loftiness of his destiny. Things are to be learned which it will be sweet to learn, and worth the while. This cannot be all rumor.

"Here the woodcutters have felled an ancient pine forest, and brought to light, to those distant hills, a fair lake in the southwest. One wonders if the very bare earth did not experience emotion at beholding so fair a prospect. This gleam reflected by the evening sky will sow flowers here of various hues, with its slanted rays. That water lies there in the sun, revealed to those hills, as if it needed not to be seen. Its beauty seems yet lonely — sufficient."

After the fragmentary journal of the voyage of 1839, interspersed as it is with extracts from later journals, comes a long series of extracts from the autumn journals kept at Staten Island, but ending in Concord, to which beloved home he returned at some date in November, 1843, now hard to fix. Probably it was during the interval between the dates,

November 9 and 20; for he had engaged to read a lecture on Poetry on the 29th, before the Concord Lyceum, and it was for that he made the selections from Ossian which appear briefly indicated in the journal. In publishing this lecture, as he did in *The Dial* for January 1844, he gave the extracts in full. They were taken from a work then recent and now almost forgotten, *The Genuine Remains of Ossian, Literally Translated, with a Preliminary Dissertation, by Patrick MacGregor*. This was published in London in 1841, under the patronage of the Highland Society of London; and it revived the interest in the Gaelic bards, which the inventions and mystifications of MacPherson in the eighteenth century had finally discouraged. The controversy over this Celtic poesy is not yet ended, and Thoreau's treating Ossian seriously has caused his critics some amusement.

It should be remembered that we are here dealing with an actual copy, in Thoreau's handwriting, of a journal no longer extant; and that the entries were made on the general subject of Poetry, which he was then studying for his lecture. Many of these en-

tries did not appear at all in the discourse; others were abridged or expanded, and most of them were varied in literary expression before appearing in *The Dial*, or afterward in *The Week*. A comparison of the three forms of the same criticism will throw light (as all the extracts from destroyed journals will, when compared with the finished page as Thoreau printed it) on his method of working. The passages here given will be found to differ from the same description or meditation elsewhere published, and the difference will usually be due to alterations made later by the author; but now and then, perhaps, to the difficulty experienced in reading his hasty chirography, often in faint penciling, and without much care in arrangement or punctuation.

The date of the passages on Love and Friendship and on Conversation cannot be fixed with certainty, but all were written before *The Week* was published in 1849, and most of them years before that.

Thoreau did not reach the age of thirty until July 1847, and most of the passages of affectionate sentiment were certainly written

before that age, and apparently between the beginning of 1839, when he was twenty-one, and 1845, when he built his Walden hermitage. He had just passed his twenty-second birthday (July 12) when preparing for his river voyage, and most of the passages quoted in this volume were written before he was twenty-seven. His youth was the season of paradox and social revolt, — the latter never proceeding so far as many of his critics have been ill-informed enough to declare. Even in college, before he was twenty, President Quincy, that sturdy mixture of conformity and non-conformity, had to defend him a little against the misconstruction of his professors, a class apt to be intolerant of originality, when they are keen enough to discover it. Writing to Emerson in June 1837, Quincy said:

"Your view concerning Thoreau is entirely in consent with that which I entertain. I was willing and desirous that whatever falling off there had been in his scholarship should be attributable to his sickness. He had, however, imbibed some notions concerning emulation and college rank which had a

natural tendency to diminish his zeal, if not his exertions. His instructors were impressed with the conviction that he was indifferent, even to a degree that was faulty. I have always entertained a respect for and interest in him, and was willing to attribute any apparent neglect or indifference to his ill-health rather than to wilfulness. . . . There is no doubt that, from some cause, an unfavorable opinion has been entertained of his disposition to exert himself. To what it has been owing may be doubtful. I appreciate very fully the goodness of his heart and the strictness of his moral principle; and have done as much for him as under the circumstances was possible."

No doubt an element of wilfulness entered into Thoreau's opinions and actions in his earlier life; such is wont to be the case with men of marked originality. His religious dissent, his literary and political heresies, appear sufficiently in this volume, and were seldom suppressed by him in publication. Emerson well said of him in his funeral eulogy, given in that old Concord meeting-house which Thoreau seldom entered, —

"Whilst he used in his writings a certain petulance of remark in reference to churches or churchmen, he was a person of a rare, tender, and absolute religion, — a person incapable of any profanation, by act or thought." This must be borne in mind in reading the ensuing pages; and also the further remark of Emerson, that "a certain habit of antagonism defaced his earlier writings, — a trick of rhetoric never quite outgrown."

Nothing of this appears in the Notes of the last of his journeys here developed and published without the aid of his interpolations. How much these would have added to the interest of the book when published, need not here be remarked. Thoreau would have introduced those characters of humor or adventure, like Martin Scott, Marquette, and La Salle, in the early and the more recent story of the Mississippi Valley; whose names merely occur in these Notes, but of whom a thousand anecdotes and adventures are known. He would doubtless have expanded his slight allusion to the Gascon Baron Lahontan (as the name is now written) into

some pages of the biography of that lively enemy of the Jesuits; and his keenness of insight might have lighted up the obscure question whether Lahontan ever saw the Minnesota River, on which Thoreau floated for days. Very likely he would have come to the same conclusion with that other French explorer, Nicollet, the Savoyard savant, who, in his report to the United States Government in 1841, of explorations made some years earlier, said:

"Having procured a copy of Lahontan's book, in which is a roughly made map of his Long River, I was struck with the remembrance of its course as laid down with that of the Cannon River, which I had previously sketched. I soon convinced myself that the principal statements of the Baron, and the few details he gives of the physical character of the river, coincide remarkably witn what I had found as belonging to Cannon River. Thus the lakes and swamps corresponded, and traces of Indian villages mentioned by him might be found in the growth of a wild grass that propagates itself around all old Indian settlements. His ac-

count of the mouth of the river is particularly accurate: 'We entered the mouth of Long River, a sort of lake almost covered with bulrushes, — I say almost, for there was exactly in its middle a small channel which we followed till evening.' "

Upon this account by Nicollet, E. D. Neill added in 1850 (a paper read in 1861 by Thoreau): "The supposition that Lahontan passed through Cannon River is not improbable; its sources are within four or five miles of an eastern branch of the Blue Earth River, and the intervening ground is a perfect level. The communication at the time of the voyage may have been complete, or been made so by a freshet, and he would thus have passed through the Blue Earth into St. Peter's River."

Minnesota, which now has nearly two million people, had at Thoreau's visit less than two hundred thousand, and a property valuation of less than forty million dollars, while now the aggregate exceeds seven hundred million dollars. It was therefore in a relatively primitive condition, and even its history had not been very carefully studied, though its His-

torical Society, whose scanty publications Thoreau sought and mastered, had existed for some ten years. Its botany and zoology were better known; but the terminology and classification of botany have so much changed in forty-four years that the scientific reader must look with charity on the lists of plants so industriously noted down by Thoreau. The text-books used by him were chiefly Asa Gray's *Manual of the Botany of the Northern United States*, and Alphonso Wood's *Class-Book of Botany, illustrated by a Flora of the Northern, Middle and Western States*. Both have been superseded by later works or newer editions; while for Minnesota alone the diligent researches of Professor Conway MacMillan and others have supplied a mass of details which make Thoreau's doubts and suggestions look at times almost puerile. But he was a naturalist who was also, like Linnæus, a poet, and even more profoundly poetic than the epoch-making Swede, whom he greatly admired, while viewing the mob of naturalists with humorous aversion. Their Latin and Greek terminology he styled "dead words with a tail,"

and yet few writers knew better than he how to introduce the graceful Latin of Linnæus with rhetorical effect. Channing said, "He spared no pains to make out his bird by Wilson and Nuttall;" and adds, "When he went to Minnesota in 1861 and found the crab-apple native, and native Indians, he pleased himself with a new friend, — the gopher with thirteen stripes;" Lahontan's "Swiss squirrel" with Swiss doublet and something like a Switzer's cap marked out on his thighs.

Probably the chief disappointment of Thoreau, in connection with his Minnesota Notes, was that he had not strength left him to elaborate his many observations on the American Indian into a volume. In 1859–60 he had declined the request of Mrs. Stearns, an ardent friend of John Brown, to write that hero's life, because he had his own manuscripts to edit, and specially those relating to the red man. The passages in this volume taken from the journal of 1839 had been supplemented by many hundred observations in Maine, in Canada, and now a few in Minnesota; he had read zealously, and

with pencil in hand, hundreds of Jesuit Relations and other books dealing with our problematical savages; yet now, when the work was almost ready to be commenced in methodical earnest, —

> Comes the blind Fury with the abhorrèd shears,
> And slits the thin-spun life.

How well Thoreau bore this frustration of his plans and hopes, all those who saw him during his long and fatal illness know and bear witness. Ellery Channing, who had been more with him than any other comrade in his many rambles, sums up the matter pathetically at the close of his *Thoreau the Poet-Naturalist*," when he says:

" His habit of engrossing his thoughts in a journal, which had lasted for a quarter-century; his out-of-door life, of which he used to say, if he omitted that, all his living ceased, — all this became so incontrovertibly a thing of the past that he said to me once, standing at the window, ' I cannot see on the outside at all; we thought ourselves great philosophers in those wet days, when we used to go out and sit down by the wall-sides.'

This was absolutely all he was ever heard by me to say of that outward world, during his illness; neither could a stranger in the least infer that he had ever a friend in field or wood. . . . He now concentrated all his force, caught the shreds of his fleeting physical strength, the moment when the destinies accorded to him a long breath, — to complete his stories of the Maine woods, then in press; endeavoring vainly to finish his lists of birds and flowers, and arrange his papers on Night and Moonlight. . . . Thirteen days before his death he said he could not fairly rouse himself for work, — could not see to correct his Allegash paper; 'it is in a knot I cannot untie.' His every instant now, his least thought and work, sacredly belonged to them, dearer than his rapidly perishing life, whom he should so quickly leave behind."

It has been a pleasure to his surviving friends, of whom but few now remain, to do for his memory and his fame what he could not do for himself, and so present to the world, which he too early abandoned, the profound or witty thoughts and the delicate observations that every page of his manu-

scripts could show. We have perhaps published much that he would have withheld; and certainly in connections that he would not have chosen. But the world has become eager for every word he wrote.

THE FIRST AND LAST
JOURNEYS OF THOREAU

Besides his daily and nightly walks about the Township of Concord and its immediate vicinity, in Acton, Bedford, Carlisle, Lincoln, Sudbury, and Stow, Henry Thoreau was frequently taking longer excursions, several of which were united by him in his first Book, the *Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers*. Of these the first was made in company with his elder brother John, and it began during the summer vacation of their small private school in Concord, in 1839. This school opened in the "Parkman House," a former residence of Deacon Parkman (one of the family of which Francis Parkman the historian was the most distinguished member), standing where the Concord Library now is. This

house was occupied by John Thoreau, Sr., and his large family, from the spring of 1837 to the late autumn of 1844; and the two brothers commenced their school in it during the summer of 1838. Just before that, Henry had made a visit to his father's relatives in Bangor, Maine, and on the way sought for a school to teach in that State, taking with him the kindly recommendation of the aged pastor of Concord, Dr. Ripley, then occupying the Old Manse.

In the household of the Thoreaus were then included two ladies from Boston, Mrs. Colonel Ward, widow of a Revolutionary officer, and her daughter, Miss Prudence Ward, an accomplished person and a faithful correspondent of her brothers and sisters. From her letters we get glimpses of the Thoreau brothers, and some mention of their voyage up the New Hampshire rivers. Thus, in April, 1838, Miss Ward writes as follows:

"April 2. I am writing now in a sick-chamber. My friend Maria Thoreau [aunt of Henry] isn't well, and I am head nurse for the day. At our house, Mrs. John Thoreau's

children are soon to leave her, — Helen and Sophia to keep school in Roxbury, and John and Henry to go to the West. They purpose instructing there, but have no fixed plan. (April 13.) Mrs. Thoreau is very busy preparing her sons to go to the West. John is expected home from Taunton to-morrow; he will stay here a week, and then set out with Henry. They will go as far as Louisville, in Kentucky, unless employment (school-keeping) can be found nearer. This plan was arranged while I was in Boston. To-day Henry has had a letter from President Quincy of Harvard College, speaking of a school in Alexandria, Virginia, to be opened the 5th of May. He is willing to take it, and if he is accepted, this may alter or delay a little their journey. Helen and Sophia have advertised their intention of opening a boarding-school in Roxbury. When there she found a suitable room, and a lady willing to board them with some of the scholars. This is a great undertaking, with H.'s feeble health. She wished to have Louisa Dunbar [Mrs. Thoreau's sister] for a partner, but she is other-

wise engaged. . . . Our bluebirds do battle every day with some martins, who are trying to take possession of their habitation. Luckily, the right is with the strongest, and the bluebirds are not to be ousted. Dr. Ripley preached last Sunday afternoon extempore, as his eyes will not admit of his reading his notes."

The school in Alexandria did not accept Henry Thoreau, and the journey to Kentucky was given up. May 2, 1838, Miss Ward wrote:

"Mr. Thoreau has begun to prepare his garden, and I have been digging the flowerbeds. Henry has left us this morning to try and obtain a school at the Eastward. John has taken one in West Roxbury. Helen is in another part of Roxbury establishing herself in a boarding and day school. Sophia will probably be wanted as an assistant; so the family are all disposed of. I shall miss these juvenile members very much, for they are the most important part of the establishment."

Two months later the brothers had given up all thoughts of teaching elsewhere, and

had begun their school in Concord, alternating it with gardening, — for Miss Ward wrote, June 29, 1838:

"Mr. Thoreau's potatoes and squashes look finely, and Henry's melons are flourishing. He has over sixty hills, and we are likely to have an abundance. He was much troubled with the cutworm. John's school is flourishing. There are four boys from Boston boarding with us. I want Ellen Sewall should make us a visit of a week or two. Tell little Mary Ward that we have a black kitten, and that the martins have driven away the bluebirds and taken possession of their box. Our flower-garden looks very gay. It is more forward than our neighbors', and is quite filled with a variety of roses and other flowers."

Ellen Sewall was the niece of Miss Ward, living in Scituate, where her father, a cousin of Mrs. Alcott, was pastor. She made her visit in Concord, and the two brothers fell in love with her, as will be mentioned later. In the autumn of this year (September 11, 1838), Henry gave his first lecture before the Concord Lyceum, on "Society," in the

Freemasons' Hall, on the public square. He afterwards gave eighteen other lectures before this same Lyceum; the last one in 1860. In the end of August, 1839, the two brothers, having built their boat, set forth in it for the White Mountains of New Hampshire, — rowing or sailing up the two rivers as far as Hooksett, and then travelling to the mountains and back, to find their boat where they had left it. Of this journey Miss Ward wrote, September 30, 1839:

"The young gentlemen returned from their expedition to the White Mountains in less than a fortnight; having gone nearly to Concord, N. H., in their boat, —from there they travelled most of the way on foot, returning to their boat by stage. Their return was very expeditious, — coming in the boat fifty miles the last day. Having so much of his vacation left, John thought he would visit his sisters at Roxbury, and also go to Scituate. We knew not for certain whether Mr. Sewall would be gone. It seems he had set off that very day. John enjoyed himself, however, very well with Ellen and the boys. Caroline told you of the very pleasant visit

we had from Ellen; and we have also heard directly from there by John Thoreau."

A slight notice of John's visit also came from Ellen to her aunt, accompanying some flowers pressed in a pamphlet sermon, on the inside of the cover of which the maiden wrote, "I have enjoyed Mr. John's visit exceedingly, though sorry that father and mother were not at home."

How sorry she was for their absence we may well imagine. And now for,—

I. THOREAU'S DIARY OF THE FIRST VOYAGE

On the Merrimac River, September 2, 1839

Early this morning we were again on our way, steering through the fog as before. The countrymen, recruited by the day of rest [Sunday being the day before], were already awake, and had begun to cross the ferry on the business of the week. The fog soon dispersed and we rowed leisurely along, with a clear sky and a mild atmosphere, between the territories of Dunstable [1]

[1] Dunstable was originally all in Massachusetts; but when the courts sustained the right of New Hampshire to a part of

and Nashua on the one hand, and Hudson on the other. It was from the former place [then a frontier town], it will be remembered, that the famous Captain Lovewell, with his company, marched in quest of the Indians, on the 18th of April, 1725. He was the son of "an ensign in the army of Oliver Cromwell, who came to this country and settled at Dunstable, where he died at the great age of one hundred and twenty years." In the words of the old nursery tale, written about a hundred years ago [speaking of the Captain, not the Ensign]:

He and his valiant soldiers did range the woods full wide,
And hardships they endured, to quell the Indians' pride.

In the shaggy pine forest Pigwacket he met the rebel Indians and conquered them; and a remnant returned home to enjoy the fruits of their victory in the township which was granted them by the State.

the township, it became a border town between Massachusetts and New Hampshire, and also a frontier settlement, liable to Indian attack. The township granted the Lovewell men was Pembroke in New Hampshire, but was granted by the Province of Massachusetts.

Of all our valiant English there were but thirty-four;
And of the rebel Indians there were about fourscore;
And sixteen of our English did safely home return,
The rest were killed and wounded, for which we all must mourn.

Our worthy Captain Lovewell among them there did die;
They killed Lieutenant Robbins, and wounded good young Frye,
Who was our English chaplain; he many Indians slew,
And some of them he scalped when bullets round him flew.

Alas! our brave forefathers have exterminated all the Indians, and their degenerate children no longer dwell in garrisoned houses, nor hear any war-whoop in their path; but rest in disgraceful peace, it may be, while enemies as active are still in the field. It would be well, perchance, if many an English chaplain in these days could exhibit as unquestionable trophies of his valor as did good young Frye.

And braving many dangers, and hardships on the way,
They safe arrived at Dunstable the thirteenth day of May.

Two of the seven who marched from Concord (whence we have sailed) who were wounded, were fourteen days in the wilder-

ness, escaping toward the mountains. One of them cut his moccasins into strings and with a hook caught fishes in a pond, but the fruits (as cranberries) which they ate, are said to have come out through their wounds.

Meanwhile we were advancing farther into the country and into the day, which last proved almost as golden as the preceding, — the slight bustle and activity of Monday being added to the Sundayness of Nature. Occasionally one would run along the shore for a change; examining the country, and visiting the nearest farm-houses, while the other followed the winding of the river, alone, with the view of meeting the companion at some distant point and hearing the report of each other's adventures, — how the farmer praised the coolness of his wells, and his wife offered the stranger a draught of milk. For though the country was so new, and the inhabitants unobserved and unexplored by us (shut in between the steep banks that still and sunny day), we did not have to travel far to find where men inhabited like wild bees and

had sunk wells in the loose sand and loam. There dwelt the subject of the Hebrew Scriptures and the *Esprit des Lois*, whose thin vaporous smoke curled up through the noon. All that is told of mankind, — of the inhabitants of the Upper Nile, and the Sunderbunds, and Timbuctoo, and the Orinoko, is experience there. And there have lived original and free-thinking men, perhaps, — those men of whom we read in the history of New Hampshire.

While we were engaged in these reflections, and thought ourselves the only navigators of this water, suddenly a canal-boat, like some huge river-horse, with its large sail set, glided round a point before us, and changed the scene in an instant. And then another and another glided into sight, and we found ourselves once more in the current of commerce.

At length we were delivered from this fleet of junks, and ascended the river in solitude once more. In the middle of the day we rested under a willow or maple, which hung over the water; and drew forth a melon for our repast, contemplating at our leisure the

lapse of that river and of human life. As this current, with its floating twigs and leaves, so did all things pass in review before us; while far away, in cities and marts on this very stream, the old routine was proceeding still.

There is a tide in the affairs of men,

as the poet says; and yet the ebb always balanced the flow, and the shores were unchanged, but in longer periods than we can measure. Now and then 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. There is generally a backwater or eddy on the sides of the stream, which the boatman takes advantage of.

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, on the other hand, 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 our thoughts flow and circulate, and lapse into the current year. As things flow they circulate, and all streams are tributary to the ocean, which itself does not stream.

There are moments when all anxiety and stinted toil and desires must cease, in the infinite leisure and repose of Nature. Laborers must have their nooning undisturbed. The sailor, in a sultry day, stretched on the deck of his craft, and drifting with the sluggish water, is even more of a philosopher than a reformer. Sometimes we cease to row against the stream, and float or sail upon the tide of life, — rock, tree, kine, knoll, and all the panorama of the shore assuming new and varying positions as wind and water shift the scene, favoring the liquid lapse of thought.

When I go into the Museum and see the mummies, wrapped in their linen bandages, I see that the times began to need reform as long ago as when these walked the earth. I go out into the streets, and meet men who declare that other times and other dynasties

are now at hand. But still I know that as man stood in Thebes so does he stand in Dunstable to-day.

The sap of all noble schemes drieth up, and the schemers return again and again, in despair, to "common sense and labor;" but to return is not the right way, nor will it be the last.

Such is the testimony of the poet, and Time seems longer than Eternity; but there are secret articles which the historian can never know, as often in the treaties of states there are secret articles inserted which are of more importance than all the rest. So in our treaties with the gods, the faintest and most secret clauses are ever the most vital. All things teach Man to be calm and patient. The language of excitement is only picturesque; but you must be calm to utter oracles, not such as the Delphic priestess uttered. Enthusiasm is a supernatural serenity. Such is the oldest history. Mankind seem anciently to have exercised the passive virtues; and all these active Saxon qualities seem modern.

While lying on our oars under the wil-

lows in the heat of the day, our boat being held by an osier put through the staple in its prow, and slicing the melons which are a fruit of the East, our thoughts reverted to Arabia, Persia, and Hindustan, the lands of contemplation, the dwelling-places of the ruminant nations; and in the experience of this noontide is found apology for the instinct of the opium, betel, and tobacco chewers. Mount Sabér, according to the French traveller and naturalist Botta, is celebrated for producing the Kát tree, of which the soft tops of the twigs and tender leaves are eaten, says his reviewer, "and produce an agreeable, soothing excitement; restoring from fatigue, banishing sleep, and disposing to the enjoyment of conversation."

What a dignified Oriental life might be lived along this stream! browsing the tree-tops, and chewing mallows and apple-tree buds, like the camelopards, rabbits, and partridges! I have sometimes wished to go away and live by some river or a certain pond-side; and have had no other reason to give my friends than that so I might have a fair opportunity to hear the wind whis-

pering among the reeds, and see the spring come in.

But sometimes man's blood seems to circulate faster than the currents of the universe, and he has his morning while she has her noon. Eternity is merely living, and the tune unchangeable.

One wonders if setting hens are troubled with *ennui*, those long March days sitting on and on, in the crevice of a hay-loft, in this inactive employment.

At length we threw our rinds into the water for the fishes to nibble, and added a breath to the life of living men. Our melons lay at home on the sandy bottom of the Merrimac; and our potatoes in the sun and water, in the bottom of the boat, looked like a fruit of the country. Again we rowed steadily upward, Saxon-wise, as it were, against the current of Nature, again from time to time scaring up a kingfisher or a summer duck, — the former flying rather by vigorous impulses than by steady and patient steering with this short rudder of his, — sounding his rattle along the fluvial street.

And now another scow hove in sight, sweeping down the river; and, hailing it, we attached ourselves to its side, and floated back in company, chatting with the boatmen, and obtaining a draught of cooler water from their jug. They appeared to be merchants from among the hills, who had taken this means to get to the seaboard, and see the world; and who would possibly visit the Falkland Isles and the China Sea before they again saw the waters of the Merrimac, — or peradventure they might never return. They had already embarked the private interests of the landsman in the larger venture of the race, and were ready to mess with mankind, — securing only the till of a chest to themselves. But still the noon prevailed; and we turned our prow ashore, under the oaks of a retired pasture, sloping to the water's edge, and bordered with hazel, in the town of Hudson. Still had India the better part of our thoughts, and that old noontide philosophy.

Here then the actual voyage ended for the night; but the Oriental scriptures and

their antiquity occupied the debate of the two brothers, and the journal goes on, —

We will not inquire into the antiquity of this Scripture. One might as well investigate the chronology of light and heat. Let the sun shine. Menu understood the matter best when he said: "Those persons best know the divisions of days and nights, who understand that the day of Brahma, which endures to the end of a thousand such ages, gives rise to virtuous exertions; and that his night endures as long as his day." The true India is neither now nor then, East nor West. Who has not lived under the Mussulman and Tartar dynasty? You will not have to penetrate far into the summer day to come to these. In the New England noontide are more materials for Oriental history than the Sanscrit contains. In every man's brain is the Sanscrit. Was not Asia mapped there before it was in any geography? The Vedas and their Angas are not so ancient as serene and deliberate thought. The mind contemplates them as Brahma his scribe.

Why will we be imposed on by antiquity? Is the babe young? When I behold it, it seems more ancient than Nestor or the Sibyl, and wears the wrinkles of Saturn himself. It is more venerable than the oldest man, and does not soon learn to attend to these new things. And do we live but in the present? How broad a line is that?

I sit now on a stump whose rings number centuries of growth. If I look around, I see that the sod is composed of the remains of just such stumps — ancestors to this. The earth is covered with mould. I thrust this stick many æons deep in its surface. With my heel I make a deeper furrow than the elements have ploughed here for a thousand years; and I unearth walnuts and acorns which were buried before the Vedas were written. If I listen, I hear the croaking of frogs, which is older than the slime of Egypt; or the distant drumming of a partridge on a log, as if it were the pulse-beat of the summer air. I raise my fairest and freshest flowers in the old mould. Why! what we would fain call new is not skin deep; the earth is not yet stained by it. It is not the

fertile ground we walk upon, but the leaves that flutter over our heads. The newest is but the oldest, made visible to our senses. When we dig up the soil from a thousand feet below the surface, we call it, and the plants which spring from it, new; and when our vision pierces deeper into space, and detects a remoter star, we call that new also. It had shone only to itself, and quite superior to our observation. And now in an instant and distinctly it is shown to these woods as if its rays had travelled hither from Eternity. So are these old truths like serene lakes in the horizon, at length revealed to us, which have so long been reflecting their own sky in their bosom. And thus serene is Antiquity always, like the horizon in which the wind never blows. Silenter and silenter grows the memory as she wanders farther back. When I revolve it again in my mind, gazing into the West at evening, whether these ordinances of the Hindoos are to be passed by as the whims of an Asiatic brain, I seem to see the divine Brahma himself sitting in the angle of a cloud and revealing himself to the senile Menu; and this

fair modern world is only a reprint of the Laws of Menu with the Gloss of Culluca. Tried by a New England eye, or the mere practical wisdom of modern times, they are but the oracles of a race already in its dotage. But held up to the sky, which is the only impartial and incorruptible ordeal, they seem of a piece with its depth and serenity; and I am assured that they will have a place and significance as long as there is a sky to test them by.

Suddenly a boatman's horn was heard, echoing from shore to shore to give notice of his approach to the farmer's wife, with whom he was to take his dinner; though in that retired place only the muskrats and kingfishers seemed to hear. And the current of our reflections being thus disturbed, went on and mingled with the music.

Proceeding on our way in the afternoon, the banks became lower, or receded farther from the channel; leaving a few trees only to fringe the water's edge, among which were the maple, birch, and bass. The last — (also called the lime or linden) the whitewood of the mechanic — overhung the

water with its broad leaf, affording a grateful shade to us sailors. The inner bark of this genus is the material of the fisherman's matting, and the peasant's shoes, of which the Russians make so much use. In the wildest scenes is the raw material of the most refined life. Here is bast for our shoes and for matting, and rushes for our light, and no doubt there is papyrus by this river's side; while the goose surely flies overhead. It was a new tree to us, with its broad and handsome leaf, but still like those we knew. What an impulse was given, some time or other, to vegetation that now nothing can stay it! but everywhere it is Nature's business constantly to create new leaves and repeat the type in many materials. One who travelled hastily through her territories would say that she was a vast manufactory of leaves. The leaf is her constant cipher. It is grass in the field, — the garment she wears; it flutters on the oak; it springs in the mould upon a jar; and in animal, vegetable, and mineral; in fluids and in crystals, — plain or variegated, fresh or decayed, it acts a principal part in the economy of the

universe. The flower is the colored leaf, and the trunk the leaf-stalk, or, as it were, folded leaves; and in the bare tree-stock in the winter is seen the naked fibre and outline of the leaf, which in the spring will be filled with vegetable pulp, and layers of leaves make the soil itself in which new forests are planted.

In all her various products Nature only develops her simplest germs; and whether it be tangled and weathered vines, or cedar or oak forests, or wide-stretching grain-fields, — all are to be referred to one; all belong to one head like the curls of a maiden's hair.

It seems to have been no great stretch of invention to have created birds. The hawk perchance, which now takes its flight over the top of the wood, was at first only a leaf which fluttered in its aisles. From rustling leaves, she came, in the course of ages, to the loftier flight and clear carol of the bird. Look up at the tree-tops and see how finely she finishes off her work there, as if she would never have done. See how the pines spire, without end, higher and higher, and give a graceful fringe to the earth! And

who shall count the finer cobwebs that soar and float away from their utmost tops, and the myriad insects that lodge between them?

Salmon Brook comes in from the east, under the railroad, but we sailed up far enough into the meadows which border it to learn its piscatorial history from a haymaker on its banks. He told me that the silver eel was formerly abundant here, and pointed to some sunken creels at its mouth. Pennichook forms the northern boundary of Nashua, which we expected to reach before night. In these fair meadows, where the haymaker rested on his rake and told us all he knew, we were tired and yet our eyes ranged over them contentedly, and we touched their margins with our hands; and we made that afternoon a pleasant and memorable acquaintance. But we could not afford to loiter in this pleasant roadstead, and so stood out to sea again.[1]

We soon after passed the village of Nashua upon the river of the same name, where a

[1] Here in the original journal stood the verses about Salmon Brook, which now appear on page 463 of *The Week*, where the brothers are passing that water in their chilly return voyage of September 12.

stately covered bridge spans the Merrimac. This river, one of the largest tributaries of the Merrimac, so pleasant a stream where it winds through the meadows of Lancaster and Groton, was here so obstructed, by falls and factories, that we did not delay to explore it. While one threaded the stream, his companion rowed steadily on to meet him above at a pine-wooded island at the mouth of the Nashua, where a few sheep, the only inhabitants, who were reposing in the shade upon its summit, reminded us of Colchos and the Argo.

We rowed slowly on before sunset, looking for a solitary place to spend the night. A few red clouds began to be reflected in the yellowish water, and soon the village was out of sight, the woods were gained again, and the calm surface of the water was only dimpled by the muskrats crossing the stream.

We camped this night on the confines of Nashville, near the Pennichook brook, on the west bank, in a deep ravine, under the skirts of a pine wood, where the dead pine-needles were our carpet, and the tawny boughs stretched protecting arms over us.

The kindling a fire and spreading our buffalo skins was too frank an advance to be resisted. The fire and smoke seemed to tame the scene. The rocks consented to be our walls, and the pines our roof.

Already we stood upon the verge of the forest, with such right as the aborigines of the country. A forest is in all mythologies a sacred place; as the oaks among the Druids, and the grove of Egeria; and what is Robin Hood without his Barnsdale and Sherwood? It is the life that is lived in the unexplored scenery of the wood that charms us. The oldest villagers are more indebted to the neighborhood of wild Nature than to the operations of man's creation.

There is something indescribably wild and beautiful in the aspect of the forests, skirting and occasionally getting into the midst of new towns; which, like the sand-heaps of fresh fox-burrows, have sprung up in their midst. The uprightness of the pines and maples asserts the ancient rectitude and vigor of Nature. Our lives need the relief of such a background, where the pine still flourishes and the jay still screams. So near us is

the forest of undreamed-of exploits, and the whole genii of untamed and winged thoughts.

I shall not soon forget the sounds which we heard as we were falling asleep this night, on the banks of the Merrimac. Far into the night we heard some tyro beating a drum incessantly, in preparation for a country muster in Candia, as we learned, and we thought of the line, —

When the drum beat at dead of night.

The very firmament echoed his beat, and we could have answered him that it would be answered, and the forces be mustered. Fear not, thou drummer of the night, we too will be there! And still he drummed on alone in the silence and the dark. This stray sound from a far-off sphere came to our ears from time to time to remind us of those fabulous Arabian notes we had almost forgotten. It was as if our shoulders jogged the stars.

Occasionally we hear a remote sound from a distant sphere, with so unprejudiced a sense for the sweet and significant, that we seem for the first time to have heard at all; and

then the cheapest sound has a larger meaning and a wider undulation than we knew.

When we hear any musical sound in Nature, it is as if it were a bell ringing; we feel that we are not belated, but in season wholly, and enjoy a pensive and leisure hour.

What a fine and beautiful communication from age to age of the fairest and noblest thoughts, — the aspirations of ancient men preserved, — even such as were never communicated by speech, — is music! It is the flower of language, — thought colored and curved, tinged and wreathed, — fluent and flexible. Its crystal fountain tinged with the sun's rays, and its purling ripples reflecting the green grass and the red clouds. It teaches us, again and again, to trust the remotest and finest as the divinest instinct, and it makes a dream our only real experience.

There was a high wind this night which we afterwards learned had been still more violent elsewhere, and had done much injury to corn-fields far and near. But we only heard it sigh occasionally that it could not shake the foundations of our tent; and

laid our ears closer to the ground with a sense of security, while the blast swept on to alarm other men.

The pines murmured, the water rippled, and the tent rocked a little, and before sunrise we were ready to pursue our voyage as usual.

As late as 1724 there were no houses or settlements on the north side of the Nashua. In September of that year two men who were engaged in making turpentine on this side were taken captive and carried to Canada by a party of thirty Indians. Ten of the inhabitants of Dunstable, going to look for them, found the hoops of their barrels cut and the turpentine spread on the ground; but one, named Farwell, perceiving that the turpentine had not done spreading, concluded that the Indians had been gone but a short time, and they consequently went in instant pursuit. Following directly on the trail of the Indians (contrary to the advice of Farwell) they fell into an ambuscade near Thornton's Ferry on the Merrimac, and nine were killed; Farwell alone escaping after a vigorous pursuit. He lived to fight another

day. The next year he was Lovewell's lieutenant at Pigewacket, but that time he left his bones in the wilderness.

> Gentle river, gentle river,
> Lo, thy streams are stained with gore,
> Many a brave and noble captain
> Floats along thy willowed shore;
> All beside thy limpid waters,
> All beside thy sands so bright,
> Indian chiefs and Christian warriors
> Joined in fierce and mortal fight.

Tuesday, September 3, is mostly omitted from this fragment of a journal; and there was not much to record on the Merrimac; for in the volume Thoreau goes out of his way, both in time and space, to record a journey taken five years later, to meet his friend Channing in 1844 (who had come up from New York, and awaited Thoreau at the foot of the Berkshire mountain, Saddleback, where the Concord pilgrim had passed the night). This journey Thoreau, in *The Week*, breaks into two parts, printing the last first, near the beginning of his "Tuesday," where it runs on for fourteen pages. Then after

sixteen pages devoted to the Merrimac and its suggestions, while waiting for the canal lock to fill at Cromwell's Falls, he takes up the tale of his tramp from Shelburne Falls on the Deerfield River, up the valley of that stream, and over the Hoosac Mountain, through which the railroad has since bored its way. This takes up ten pages more; so that, of the seventy-five pages given to "Tuesday" in *The Week*, twenty-five, at least, are devoted to this journey of 1844 from the Connecticut valley to the Catskills; while seven more are given to the pseudo-Anacreon, and Thoreau's translations of his odes. As an excuse for introducing these digressions, Thoreau says, "Our voyage this Tuesday forenoon furnishes but few incidents of importance." At the end of that day's record he says: "Just before sundown we reached some more falls, in the town of Bedford, where some stone-masons were repairing the locks in a solitary part of the river. . . . One young man of our own age left his work and helped us through the locks with a sort of quiet enthusiasm; telling us we were at Coos Falls; and we could distinguish the strokes

of his chisel for many sweeps after we had left him. We wished to camp this night on a large rock in the middle of the stream, just above these Falls; but the want of fuel, and the difficulty of fixing our tent firmly, prevented us; so we made our bed on the mainland opposite, on the west bank, in the town of Bedford, in a retired place, as we supposed, there being no house in sight."

This encounter with the masons and mention of the rock will explain what is said at the opening of the next day, September 4,— the fifth day since they had left Concord; for their voyage began Saturday, August 31, 1839.

Wednesday, September 4.

We supposed we had selected a retired part of the shore, but we discovered this morning that we had pitched our tent directly in the path of the masons, whom we had seen crossing the river in their boat the evening before, while we were surveying the rock. And now, going to their work again, they came upon us as we were rolling up our tent, and tarried to examine our furni-

ture and handle our guns, which were leaning against a tree. This was the first and only time that we were observed in our camping ground by any one, — though our white tent on an eminence must have been a conspicuous object, — so much room is there still in Nature, and so easy would it be to travel the length and breadth of the land without the knowledge of its inhabitants. Thus without skulking, far from the dust and din of travel, we had beheld the country at our leisure by daylight and by night, secure of the best introduction to Nature; for all other roads intrude and bring the traveller to a stand; but the river has stolen into the scenery it traverses without intrusion, watering and adorning it, and is as free to come and go as the zephyr.

As we shoved away from the rocks in the morning the small green bittern, the genius of this shore, stood probing the mud for its food, — a melancholy contemplative bird, with ever an eye upon us, though so industriously at work. It was running along over the wet stones, like a wrecker in his storm coat, — looking out for wrecks of

snails and cockles. Then away it goes with a limping flight, uncertain where it will alight, until a rod of clean sand amid the alders invites its feet. But now our steady approach compels it to another flight, a new retreat. I have seen them standing by the half-dozen together, with their heads thrust into the mud under the water. It is a bird of the oldest Thalesian school, and no doubt believes in the priority of water to the other elements. When the world was made, from water was it made; when the earth subsided from the waters, was it left on the shore, a relic, perhaps, of some slimy antediluvian age, which yet inhabits these bright American rivers, along with us Yankees. It is of my kindred after all, then; and I have a lingering respect for my unreclaimed brother. There is something venerable in the race of birds, which might have trodden the earth while yet in a transitory and imperfect state. What second advent does it look forward to? Meanwhile, bravely supporting its fate, it continues to fulfil its end, without sympathy from proud man.

The neighboring wood was alive with

pigeons, which were now moving south, looking for mast —and like ourselves, spending their noon in the shade. It is pleasant to stand in the oak or white pine woods, and hear the slight, aery, winnowing sound of their wings, and their gentle, tremulous cooing. You will frequently discover a single pair in the depths of the wood sitting at noon upon the lower branches of the white pine; so silent and solitary, and with such a hermit-like appearance, as if they had never strayed beyond the skirts of the forest; while the acorn which was gathered in the woods of Maine is still undigested in their crops.

We passed in the late forenoon a large and densely wooded island, which would have been an addition to a nobleman's estate. We fancied we could see the deer glancing between the stems of the trees. It was a perfect San Salvador or Bahama isle; and if it had been at evening or nearer nightfall we should have occupied and taken possession of it in the name of our majesties; but we passed on, like Americus Vespucius, flattering ourselves that we should discover a mainland. We soon after saw

the Piscataquoag emptying on our left, and heard the Falls of Amoskeag above.

It was here, according to tradition, that the sachem Wonolancet resided; and when at war with the Mohawks, his tribe are said to have concealed their provisions in the cavities of the rocks in the upper part of these Falls.

The future reader of history will associate this generation with the red man in his thoughts, and give it credit for some sympathy with his race. Our history will have some copper tints and reflections at least, and be read as through an Indian-summer haze. But such are not our associations. The Indian has vanished as completely as if trodden into the earth; absolutely forgotten but by a few persevering poets. The white man has commenced a new era. Instead of Philip and Logan, there are Webster and Crockett on the plains; instead of the Council House is the Legislature. What do our anniversaries commemorate but white men's exploits? For Indian deeds there must be an Indian memory; the white man will remember only his own. The foeman is dead or dying. We have forgotten their

hostility as well as friendship. This oldest race, a venerable and hospitable nation, gave us liberty to settle and plow these fields. Who can realize that, within the memory of this generation, the remnant of an ancient and dusky race of warriors now, like Ossian's heroes, no more resident on this earth, furnished a company to the war, on condition only, as they wrote to the General Court, that they should not be expected to train or fight white man's fashion, but Indian fashion. And occasionally their wigwams are seen on the banks of this very stream, still solitary and withdrawn, like the cabins of the muskrats in the meadow.

They seem like a race who have exhausted the secrets of Nature ; tanned with age, while this younger and still fair Saxon race, 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. And yet they did not always retreat before the ravages of time, — more than before the arrows of their foes. These relics in the fields, which have preserved their rugged forms so long, are evidence of

the vital energy of the people that made them. Wherever I go, I am still on the track of the Indian. The light sandy soil which the first settlers cultivated were the Indian corn-fields, and with every fresh plowing the surface is strewn with their relics. Arrow-heads, spear-heads, tomahawks, axes, chisels, gouges, pestles, mortars, hoes, pipes of soapstone, ornaments for the neck and breast, and other curious implements of war and of the chase, attract the transient curiosity of the farmer. I have myself collected some hundreds, and am as surely guided to their localities as to the berry-fields in autumn. Unlike the white man, they selected the light and sandy plains and rising grounds, near to ponds and streams, which the squaws could easily cultivate with their rude hoes.

And where these fields have been harrowed and rolled for grain, in the fall, their surface yields its annual crop of arrow-heads and other relics, as regularly as of grain. And the circles of burnt stones on which their fires were built are seen dispersed by the plow on every side.

The arrow and spear heads are of any color,

and of various forms and material, though commonly made of a stone which has a conchoidal fracture. Many small ones of white quartz are mere equilateral triangles, with one side slightly convex. These were probably small shot for birds and squirrels. The chips which were broken off in making them are also found in large quantities, wherever a lodge has stood for a season. And these slivers are the surest indication of Indian ground, since the geologists tell us that the stone of which they are principally made does not occur in this manner, nor in most neighborhoods where they are found. The spear-heads are of the same form and material, only larger. Some are still as perfect and sharp as ever, since time has not the effect of injuring them; but, when broken, they still preserve a ragged and cutting edge. Yet they are so brittle that they can hardly be carried in the pocket without being broken.

It is matter of wonder how the Indians manufactured even these rude implements without iron or steel tools. Which one of our mechanics, with all the aids of Yankee

ingenuity, could soon learn to copy one of the thousand specimens under his feet? It is well known that the art of making flints with a cold chisel, as practised on the continent of Europe, requires long practice and a knack in the operator; but the arrow-head is of much more irregular form, and, like the flint, can only be struck out by a succession of skilful blows.

An Indian to whom I once exhibited some arrow-heads (to whom they were as much objects of curiosity as to myself) suggested that, as many white men have but one blacksmith, so the Indians had one arrow-head-maker for many families. But there are marks of too many fingers—unless they were like travelling cobblers—to admit of this supposition. I have seen arrow-heads from the South Sea, precisely similar to those found here; so necessary and so little whimsical is the form of this little tool. So has the steel hatchet its prototype in the stone one of the Indian, as the stone hatchet its original in the necessities of man.

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

too, are the pestle and mortar,—those ancient forms and symbols older than the plow or the spade. The invention of the plow, which now turns them up, marks the era of their burial,—an era which can never have its history,—which is older or more primitive 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. Some of these implements deserve notice for the constancy with which they occur, and their uniformity wherever found. They are part of the history of the Indian, and identified with his life. These slowly wrought, durable, and widely dispersed forms in stone mark the prevalent peculiarities and permanent customs of the red man. Many of them are symbols which cannot be interpreted at this day. A small pear-shaped implement of stone, two or three inches long, with a short neck, is found everywhere; its use is unknown.

In one instance the surface of a corn-field, plowed in an unusually dry and windy sea-

son, has blown away to the depth of several feet, exposing the foundations of an Indian village, interspersed with relics of every description, whose use can only be conjectured. The bodies of warriors of other centuries are dug up in our gardens, their soapstone pipes still unbroken, — the arrow and spear heads, released from their bondage, again lying loose in the dust by the side of the brave, — the deer-horns which were his trophy and his amulet, and the record in stone of the scalps he had taken. I am interested by the sight of these arrow-heads and spear-heads; which, though their shafts have long since crumbled into dust, are still pointed and sharp and undying as the Indian's revenge.

The Indians, who hid their possessions in holes, and affirmed that "God had cut them out for that express purpose," seem to have understood their philosophy better than the Royal Society of London, which, many years ago, gave an account of these holes in their Philosophical Transactions, and declared that "they seem plainly to be artificial."

There were many white basins found in the

limestone rock at Shelburne Falls in Dearsfield River, from one foot to four or five feet in diameter, and as many in depth, with smooth and delicately carved brims like goblets. Their origin is apparent to the most careless observer. Some stone which the current has washed down, meeting with obstacles in front, revolves as on a pivot where it lies; gradually sinking, in the course of ages, deeper and deeper into the rock; and in new freshets receiving the assistance of fresh stones drawn into this trap, and doomed to revolve for limitless periods, doing more than Sisyphus-like penance for stony sins, until it wears through the bottom of its prison or is released by some more violent freshet, or some revolution of Nature. In one instance, near the edge of the Fall, they had finally worn quite through the rock, so that a portion of the river leaked through and anticipated the fall.

But the most remarkable instance of this kind is the well-known Basin of the Pemigewasset, in the head waters of this stream, near the Franconia Notch, by the roadside, in the town of Lincoln, N. H., where

a mere brook, which may be passed at a stride, falling upon a rock, has worn it to an oval basin from twenty to thirty feet in diameter, and proportionately deep; the water passing out, probably, after one or more revolutions, by a deep channel, though scarcely more than a foot in width, and directly opposite its entrance. It has a rounded brim of glassy smoothness, and is filled with cold, pellucid greenish water. Smaller "pot-holes" may be observed also at the Flume, at Bottom's Falls; and more or less generally, I presume, about all falls.

The Manchester Manufacturing Company have constructed a canal at the Amoskeag Falls, almost a mile long, through which we passed. We presently came upon several canal-boats at intervals of a quarter of a mile, standing up to Hooksett with a light breeze, and one by one they disappeared round a point above. With their broad sails set, they moved slowly up the stream in the sluggish and fitful breeze, as if impelled by some mysterious counter current, like antediluvian birds, — a grand motion so slow and steady, it reminded us of

the beauty of the expression "standing out" applied to a vessel to describe its gradual and steady progress, as it were without shuffling, by mere rectitude and disposition. The steersman of one of the boats offered to take us in tow, but when we came alongside we found that he intended to take us on board, as otherwise we should retard his own voyage too much. As we were too heavy to be lifted aboard, we left him and proceeded up the stream a half a mile, to the shade of some maples, to spend our noon.

In the course of half an hour several boats passed up the river, at intervals of half a mile; and among them came the boat we have mentioned, keeping the middle of the stream, with a fair wind. When within speaking distance, the steersman called out ironically, that if we would come alongside now he would take us in tow. We made no haste to give chase until our preparations were completed, by which time they were a quarter of a mile ahead. Then with all our sails set, and plying our four oars, we shot swiftly up the stream, and one after another we overtook them; and, as we glided close

under the side of our acquaintances, we quietly promised, if they would throw us a rope, to take them in tow. Thus we gradually overhauled each boat in succession until we had the river to ourselves again.

Thursday, September 5.

When we awoke this morning we heard the ominous, still deliberate, sound of raindrops on our cotton roof. The rain had pattered all night, and now the whole country wept, — the drops falling in the river and on the alders, and on the pastures; but, instead of any bow in the heavens, there were the trills of the tree-sparrow all the morning. The cheery faith of this little bird atoned for the silence of the whole woodland quire. It was a cloudy, drizzling day, with occasional brightenings in the mist, when the trill of the tree-sparrows seemed to be ushering in sunny hours.

We learned afterward that we had pitched our camp upon the very spot which a few summers before had been occupied by a roving party of Penobscots, as if we had at

length been led by an Indian instinct. We could see rising before us a dark conical eminence called Hooksett Pinnacle.[1] This

[1] The Pinnacle is a small hill rising sharply some two hundred feet above the river near the bank at Hooksett Falls, affording the best view of the Merrimac as a river. Thoreau said of it, and the view therefrom:

"I have sat upon its summit, a precipitous rock only a few rods long, when the sun was setting and filling the river valley with a flood of light. You can see up and down the Merrimac several miles each way. The broad and straight river, full of light and life, with its sparkling and foaming falls, the islet which divides the stream, the village of Hooksett on the shore almost directly under your feet, — so near that you can converse with its inhabitants, or throw a stone into its yards, — the woodland lake at its western base, and the mountains in the north and northeast, make a scene of rare beauty and completeness."

These northern and eastern mountains are those in Strafford and Rockingham counties; while at the south, near by is the graceful Uncannunuc, which Thoreau thought the best point from which to view the Merrimac valley. Its Indian name signifies "Two breasts," and it is visible from high hills in Concord, as Wachusett and Monadnoc are. The brothers left their boat "safe in its harbor under Uncannunuc Mountain," instead of taking it with many difficulties to "New Concord" as Thoreau calls the capital of New Hampshire, which in fact was named for the Massachusetts town where the British were repulsed, while Rumford was the name of the Indian region known as Penacook. This capital, Thoreau says, "would have been the proper place to conclude our voyage, uniting Concord with Concord by these meandering rivers; but our boat was moored some miles below its port." Before the building of railroads there was much commerce on the river, and Concord was the head of rather a difficult navigation.

was the utmost limit of our voyage; for a few hours more in the rain would have taken us to the last of the locks, and our boat was too heavy to be dragged around the long and numerous rapids that would occur.

On foot indeed we continued up along the banks, feeling our way with a stick through the showery and foggy day, and climbing over the slippery logs in our path; still with as much pleasure and buoyancy as in brightest sunshine, pushing on whither our path led through the genial drenching rain; and cheered by the tunes of invisible waterfalls, scenting the fragrance of the pines and the wet clay under our feet, with visions of toadstools and wandering frogs, and festoons of moss hanging from the spruce trees, and thrushes hiding silent under the leaves; the road still holding together through that watery weather, like faith, and reaching to distant points, while the travellers confidently followed its lead. We had resolved to travel to those White Mountains whither the old colonists went in search of the Great Carbuncle,—the Crystal Hills, which one Darby

Field, the Irishman, had visited, as Winthrop says. On foot indeed we continued up along its banks, till it became the Pemigewasset that leaped by our side, — and still another, the wild Ammonoosuc that murmured in our ears, — whose puny channel we crossed at a stride, wondering that it should be so rapid to forsake the pleasant land of its birth. But why should we take the reader, who may be gentle and tender, through this rude tract, where the ways are steep, and the inns none of the best for such as are tenderly bred? Rustic men and rough truth would he have to encounter, and many a cool blast near the mountain side.

Here again a break occurs, of a week instead of a day. For now the two brothers were on foot, making their way through Concord and Plymouth, Holderness, Lincoln, Franconia, and Bethlehem, to the Notch of the White Mountains and to the summit of Mount Washington, their highest peak, which Thoreau calls Agiocochook. In this foot-journey they called on Nathaniel P. Rogers, at Plymouth, a friend of the Tho-

reaus, and a brilliant anti-slavery orator and writer; and made other stops and observations which did not get into the printed volume, even if entered in the daily journal. In fragments of a diary which I have seen, Thoreau says that he and his brother left their boat at Hooksett, September 4, walked to Concord, N. H., September 5, on the 6th took the stage-coach to Plymouth, and thence on foot to Tilton's tavern in Thornton. He notes that the "mountain scenery commences on Sanbornton Square." On the 7th they were at the Franconia Notch, where they saw the "Old Man of the Mountain;" on the 8th reached Tom Crawford's at the Great Notch; and on September 10th went up Mount Washington. Returning by North Conway, they were again at Hooksett, September 12, where the fragmentary journal re-commences.

In the Tuesday's record, in *The Week* (here omitted), Thoreau quotes from his poem *Away, Away!* which was written early in July, 1839, on the Assabet River in Concord. Another poem of that summer, written July 20, *The Breeze's Invitation*, seems

to depict an imaginary voyage through the air with Ellen Sewall, then perhaps visiting her friends in Concord.

Like two careless swifts let's sail,
(Zephyrus shall think for me)
Over hill and over dale;
Riding on the easy gale
We will scan the earth and sea.

Yonder see that willow tree,
Winnowing the buxom air!
You a gnat and I a bee,
With our merry minstrelsy
We will make a concert there.

One green leaf shall be our screen
Till the sun doth go to bed;
I the king and you the queen
Of that peaceful little green,
Without any subject's aid.

To our music Time shall linger,
And Earth open wide her ear;
Nor shall any need to tarry,
To immortal verse to marry
Such sweet music as he'll hear.[1]

[1] This year 1839 was marked by the writing of many verses, some of which were destroyed without seeing the light, as Thoreau said in his last illness, while others were handed to Emerson for publication in *The Dial* of 1840. The long poem, *Sympathy*, supposed to relate to Ellen Sewall, was written June 24, 1839. On the 21st of May, 1838, after returning from his

Emerson added his briefer and equally pointed commendation to Dr. Ripley's[1]

two weeks' tour in Maine, this verse appears among the fragments preserved :

> How long I slept I know not, but at last
> I felt my consciousness returning fast ;
> For Zephyr rustled past with leafy tread,
> And heedlessly with one heel grazed my head.

In this Maine journey, mentioned above, Thoreau went on May 3 from Boston to Portland by boat ; thence by coach to Bath and Brunswick. May 7 he went to Augusta by Gardiner and Hallowell ; meeting at the latter an old English gentleman, of whom he says : " Though I peered into his eyes, I could not discern myself in them. He walked and fluttered like a strange bird at my side."

May 8, Thoreau went to Bangor and Oldtown ; then after a visit to his cousins at Bangor, he went to Belfast May 11, and thence by sailboat, May 13, to Castine ; and May 17 he returned by boat to Boston and Concord, without having found any school in want of a teacher like himself. Like the good Dr. Ripley, who gave him a certificate of fitness for teaching, the Maine committees must have had " their eyesight much impaired," not to recognize Thoreau's qualifications ; though his personal aspect at that time was not very attractive, — far less so than his brother John's. Dr. Ripley wrote :

Concord, May 1, 1838.

[1] To the Friends of Education : — The undersigned very cheerfully hereby introduces to public notice the bearer, Mr. David Henry Thoreau, as a teacher in the higher branches of useful literature. He is a native of this town, and a graduate of Harvard University. He is well disposed and well qualified to instruct the rising generation. His scholarship and moral character will bear the strictest scrutiny. He is modest and mild in his disposition and government, but not wanting in energy of character, and fidelity in

compliment given below, — "I shall esteem the town fortunate that secures his services." That town, as it proved, was his native Concord.

Thursday, September 12.

Finding our boat safe in its harbor under the Uncannunuc Mountain, with a fair wind and the current in our favor, we commenced our return voyage at noon, sitting at our ease and conversing, or in silence watching for the end of each reach in the river, as a bend concealed it from view. As the season was now farther advanced, the wind blew steadily from the north, and we were enabled to lie upon our oars without much loss of time when it pleased us. The lumbermen throwing down wood from the top of the high bank, thirty or forty feet above the water, that it might be sent down the river, paused

the duties of his profession. It is presumed his character and usefulness will be appreciated more highly as an acquaintance with him shall be cultivated. Cordial wishes for his success, reputation and usefulness attend him as an instructor and gentleman.

(Signed) Ezra Ripley,
Senior Pastor of the First Church in Concord, Mass.

N. B. It is but justice to observe here that the eyesight of the writer is much impaired.

in their work to watch our retreating sail. And by this time, indeed, we had become known as a strange craft upon the river, and had acquired the nickname of "the Revenue Cutter." The sound of the timber rolled down the steep banks, or the vision of a distant scow just heaving in sight round a headland, enhances the majestic silence and vastness of Nature. They were the primeval and natural echoes that were awakened. In many parts the Merrimac 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.

Through the din and desultoriness even of a Byzantine noon is seen the fresh and primitive and savage nature in which Scythians and Ethiopians dwell. What is echo? what are light and shade, day and night, ocean and stars, earthquake and eclipse, then? The works of man, which we call art, are swallowed up in immensity. The savage will find his overthrow in the Aegean Sea. On the other hand, there is all the refine-

ment of civilized life in the woods, under a sylvan garb. The wildest scenes even have an air of domesticity and homeliness to the citizen, and when the flicker's cackle is heard in the clearings, he is reminded that civilization has imported nothing into them. Science is welcome to their deepest recesses, for there, too, Nature obeys the same old civil laws. The little red bug on the stump of a pine, — for him the wind shifts, and the sun breaks through the clouds.

With this propitious breeze and the additional help of our oars, we soon reached the Falls of Amoskeag at the mouth of the Piscataquoag, and recognized, as we passed rapidly by, many a fair bank and islet upon which our thoughts had rested on the upward passage. All the world reposes in beauty to him who preserves equipoise in his life, and moves serenely on his path without resistance, as he who sails down a stream. He has only to steer, keeping his boat in the middle of the stream and carrying it round the portages. Our boat was like that which Chaucer describes in his *Dream* in which the knight took his departure from the island, —

To journey for his marriage,
And return with such an host,
That wedded might be least and most.

Which barge was as a man's thought,
After his pleasure to him brought,
The queene her selfe accustomed aye
In the same barge to play,
It needed neither mast ne rother
I have not heard of such another,
No maister for the gouvernaunce,
Hie sayled by thought and pleasaunce,
Without labour, east and west,
All was one, calme or tempest.

So we sailed this afternoon. "It is beautiful, therefore," said Pythagoras, "when prosperity is present with intellect, and when sailing, as it were, with a prosperous wind, actions are performed looking to virtue, just as a pilot looks to the motions of the stars." Without any design or effort of ours, the ripples curled away in the wake of our boat, like ringlets from the head of a child, while we went serenely on our way. So always, in the performing of our proper work, the forms of beauty fall naturally around our path, like the curled shavings which drop from the plane, or the borings from the auger; and

our work makes no rubbish or dirt. How much gracefulness we learn from the ripples and curves of running water, and the form and motions of trees on the shore! And the sailor derives some suppleness from his element, even through the planks of his ship.

We passed in broad daylight the scene of our night's encampment at Coos Falls, and at length pitched our tent on the west bank in the northern part of Merrimac, opposite to the large island on which we had spent our noon in our way up the river.

When we looked out from under our tent this evening the trees were seen dimly through the mist like spectres, and a cool dew hung upon the grass, which seemed to rejoice in the night. In the damp air we seemed to imbibe a solid fragrance.

Nature is a greater and more perfect art. When the overhanging pine drops into the water; by the action of the sun, and the wind rubbing it against the shore, its boughs are worn white and smooth, and take fantastic forms as if turned by a lathe. She has perfected herself by an eternity of practice.

Consider the evening stealing over the fields. The stars come to bathe in retired waters; the shadows of the trees creeping farther and farther into the meadows, and a myriad phenomena beside. Nature supplies inexhaustible means by the most frugal methods. Having carefully determined the extent of her charity, she establishes it forever; her almsgiving is an annuity. She supplies to the bee only so much wax as is necessary for its cell, so that no poverty could stint it more; but the little economist which fed the Evangelist in the desert still keeps in advance of the immigrant, and fills the cavities of the forest for his repast.

It is wholesome to contemplate the natural laws, — gravity, heat, light, moisture, dryness. Though to the indifferent and casual observer the laws of Nature are mere science, to the enlightened and spiritual they are not only facts, but deeds, — the purest morality, or modes of divine life. Science must have love and reverence and imagination for her pioneers and counsellors, as well as ants, or sturdy and patient husbandmen, to complete and fence and settle her clearings.

Degerando said justly that "Plato gives science sublime counsels, — directs her toward the regions of the ideas; Aristotle gives her positive and severe laws, and directs her toward a practical end." Only, in our researches into Nature, let not the higher faculties interfere with the lower. Let the mind reside steadily in the labyrinth of the brain; let the affections, not misplaced, have their constant residence in the heart; and not interfere with the hands and feet, more than with birds and monkeys and other parts of Nature.

Nature aids the efforts of the honest inquirer; for, by the visible form or shell, truth is simply contained, not withheld; as one of the three circles of the cocoa-nut 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. The works of science, as they improve in accuracy, are liable to lose the freshness and vigor, and the readiness to appreciate the profounder and more imposing secrets of Nature; which is a marked merit in the false theories of the ancients. I like

the slight pride and satisfaction, and even emphatic and exaggerated style, in which the old naturalists speak of the operations of Nature. They are better qualified to appreciate than to discriminate the facts. Modern science is deficient in this poetic perception. The assertions of the ancient naturalists are not without value even when disproved.

"The Greeks," says Goethe, "had a common proverb, λάγος καθεύδων, 'a sleeping hare,' for a dissembler or counterfeiter, because the hare sees when she sleeps; for this is an admirable and rare work of Nature, that all the residue of her bodily parts take their rest, but the eye standeth continually sentinel." Facts must be learned directly and personally. The collector of facts must possess a perfect physical organization; the philosopher a perfect intellectual organization. But in the true poet they are so fairly but mysteriously balanced, that we can see the results of both, and generalize even the widest deductions of philosophy.

Seed, stalk, flower, — for as yet the fruit eludes our grasp, — and whether we had best eat it or plant it is uncertain. At any rate,

when it is mature it drops to the ground, and if it is not disturbed springs again. Some dig up the root, some sever the stalk, some pluck the flower, some gather the kernel; but all equally interrupt the order of Nature. The wise incline to make an innocent use of all, and regard each as one of the phases of the flower.

We passed a ferry and fall on our way home, rowing between Manchester and Bedford. The canal-boats go down many of these falls at high water without danger, and some of them even at low water, though locks are at hand. Sometimes even a small boat is guided down in the deepest part, by humoring the current, and keeping the boat perfectly straight and upright, — though not without danger; for two lads, we were told, had been drowned at Coos Falls the week before, while making the experiment.

No such risks were run by the cautious Thoreaus, who, the next (Friday) morning, at five o'clock, had fifty miles to run before the wind, which had now shifted to the northwest and blew coldly autumnal; and

they sped along past all their up-stream camping places, until they were passed through the locks at Lowell about noon, and launched upon the adverse but gentle current of the Concord. Up this they pressed with oar and sail, until, late in the evening of September 13, the boat "was grating against the bulrushes of its native port," somewhere near the mouth of the Mill Brook; and they drew it up and fastened it by its chain to the wild apple-tree, where it was easily reached from the "Parkman House," to which they hastened home.

When Hawthorne came, three years later, to dwell in the Old Manse, he wished for a boat for his excursions, and after John Thoreau's death, early in 1842, and Henry's departure for Staten Island in the spring of 1843, this adventurous but rather clumsy boat was turned over to Hawthorne and Ellery Channing. Thoreau thereafter made his river-voyages in a newer boat, which for a time he kept moored on Walden.

II

WALKS AND MEDITATIONS

IN NEW YORK

From May 10 to the last week in November, 1843, Thoreau had his home with William Emerson, the elder brother of his Concord friend, at Castleton on Staten Island, where he taught the sons of the family in the mornings, and had much time to himself afterwards. His rambles about the island and his descriptions of the views from its high points were utilized by him in *The Week;* and his studies in Ossian and Chaucer which appear in that volume were mostly made at Staten Island in the autumn of 1843. He says in the "Wednesday" chapter, relating incidents of his life four years later than the actual Merrimac voyage:

"From an old ruined fort on Staten Island I have loved to watch all day some vessel

whose name I had read in the morning through the telegraph-glass, when she first came upon the coast. . . . On Sundays I beheld from some interior hill the long procession of vessels getting to sea, — reaching from the city wharves through the Narrows and past the Hook, quite to the ocean stream." Writing to Emerson, August 7, he adds: "I study the aspects of commerce at its Narrows here, where it passes in review before me; and this seems to be beginning at the right end to understand this Babylon of New York." But he was more interested in literature.

Thus he writes:

Staten Island, Sunday, 24th of September, 1843.

The poet is he that hath fat enough, like bears and marmots, to suck his claws o' winters. He feeds on his own marrow. He hybernates in this world till spring breaks. He records a moment of pure life. Who can see these cities and say that there is any life in them? I walked through New York yesterday, and met no real and living person. I love to think of dormice and all the tribe

of dormant creatures, who have such a superfluity of life, while man is pining; enveloped in thick folds of life impervious to winter. I love to think, as I walk over the snowy plain, of those happy dreamers that lie in the sod. The poet is a sort of dormouse; early in the autumn he goes into winter-quarters till the sun shall fetch the year about. But most men lead a starved existence, like hawks that would fain keep on the wing and trust to pick up a sparrow now and then.

I hate museums; there is nothing so weighs upon the spirits. They are catacombs of Nature. They are preserved death. One green bud of spring, one willow-catkin, one faint trill from some migrating sparrow, might set the world on its legs again. 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. The life that is in a single green weed is of more worth than all this death. They are very much like the written history of the world, and I read Rollin and Ferguson with the same feeling.

It is one great and rare merit of the old tragedy that it says something. The words slide away very fast, but toward some conclusion. It has to do with things and not words; and the reader feels as if he were advancing. It does not seem to make much odds what the author has to say at this distance of time, if he only deliver himself of it in a downright and manly way. We like Marlowe because he is so plain-spoken and direct, and does not waste the time.

I think that the mythological system, interwoven as it is so mysteriously and perfectly with the astronomical, points to a time when a grander and mightier genius inhabited the earth than now. There is a grandeur and perfection about this scheme which match with the architecture of the heavens themselves.

Thursday, September 28.

We have never conceived how many natural phenomena would be revealed to a simpler and more natural life. Rain, wind, sunshine, day and night, would be very different to experience if we were always true.

We cannot deceive the ground under our feet. We never try. But we do not treat each other with the same sincerity. How much more wretched would the life of man be if there was the same formality and reserve between him and his intercourse with Nature that there is in human society!

It is a strange world we live in, with this incessant dream of friendship and love; where is any? Genius cannot do without these; it pines and withers. I believe that the office of music is to remind us continually of the reality and necessity of the fine elements of love and friendship. One mood always forgets another, and till we have loved we have not imagined the heights of love. Love is an incessant inspiration. By the dews of love the arid desert of life is made as fragrant and blooming as a paradise.

The world waits yet to see man act greatly and divinely upon man. What are social influences as yet? The poor human flower would hold up its drooping head at once, if this sun should shine on it. That is the dyspepsia with which all men ail.

In purer, more intellectual moods we trans-

late our gross experiences into fine moralities. Sometimes we would fain see events as merely material, — wooden, rigid, dead; but again we are reminded that we actually inform them with better life, by which they live; that they are the slaves and creatures of our conduct. When dull and sensual, I believe they are corn-stalks good for cattle,—neither more nor less. The laws of Nature are science; but, in an enlightened moment, they are morality and modes of divine life. In a medium intellectual state they are æsthetics. What makes us think that time has lapsed is that we have relapsed.

Strictly speaking, there can be no criticism of poetry other than a separating of that which is poetry from that which is not, — a detecting of falsehood. From the remotest antiquity we detect in the literature of all nations, here and there, words of a loftier tone and purport than are required to transact the daily business of life. As Scott says, they float down the sea of time like the fragments of a parted wreck, — sounds which echo up among the stars rather than through the valleys of earth; and yet are heard plainly

enough, to remind men of other spheres of life and activity. Perhaps I may say that I have never had a deeper and more memorable experience of life in its great serenity, than when listening to the trill of a tree-sparrow among the huckleberry bushes after a shower. It is a communication to which a man must attend in solitude and silence, and may never be able to tell to his brother. The least sensual life is that experienced through pure senses. We sometimes hear, and the dignity of that sense is asserted.

Friday, September 29.

I am winding up my music-box; and, as I pause, meanwhile the strains burst forth like a pent-up fountain of the middle ages. Music is strangely allied to the past. Every era has its strain. It awakens and colors my memories.

The first sparrow of spring! The year beginning with younger hope than ever. The first silvery warblings heard over the bare and dank fields, as if the last flakes of winter tinkled as they fell. What, then, are histories, chronologies, and all written revela-

tions? Flakes of warm sunlight fall on the congealed fields. The brooks and rills sing carols and glees for the spring. The marsh-hawk already seeks the first stirring life that awakes. The sough of melting snow is heard in all dells, and on all the hillsides, and by the sunny river-banks; and the ice dissolves in the ponds. The earth sends forth, as it were, an inward heat; not yellow like the sun, but green is the color of *her* flames; and the grass flames up on the warm hill-sides as her spring fire. Methinks the sight of the first sod of fresh grass in the spring would make the reformer reconsider his schemes; the faithless and despairing man revive. Grass is a symbol of perpetual growth, — its blade like a long green ribbon, streaming from the sod into the summer, checked indeed by the frost, but anon pushing on again, lifting its last year's spear of withered hay with the fresh life below. I have seen when early in spring the clumps of grass stood with their three inches of new green upholding their withered spears of the last autumn. It is as steady a growth as the rill which leaps out of the ground, — indeed it

is almost identical with that; for in the vigorous fertile days of June when the rills are dry, the grass-blades are their only channels. And from year to year, the herds drink this green stream, and the mower cuts from the out-welling supply, — what the several needs require.

So the human life but dies down to the surface of Nature; but puts forth its green blade to eternity. When the ground is completely bare of snow, and a few warm days have dried its surface, it is pleasant to compare the faint tender signs of the infant year, just peeping forth, with the stately beauty of the withered vegetation which has withstood the winter. The various thistles which have not yet sown their seeds; the graceful reeds and rushes, whose winter is more gay and stately than their summer, as if not till then was their beauty ripe. I never tire of admiring their arching, drooping, and sheaf-like tops. It is like summer to our winter memories, and one of the forms which art loves to perpetuate, — wild oats perchance, and Life Everlasting, whose autumn has now arrived. These unexhausted granaries of the

winter with their seeds entertain the earliest birds.

We are obliged to respect that custom which stamps the loaf of bread with the sheaf of wheat and the sickle. Men have come at length, after so many centuries, to regard these gifts properly. The gift of bread even to the poor is perhaps better received than any other! more religiously given and taken, and is not liable to be a stone. The manner in which men consider husbandry is marked, and worthy of the race. They have slowly learned thus much. Let the despairing race of men know that there is in Nature no sign of decay, but universal uninterrupted vigor. All waste and ruin has a speedy period. Who ever detected a wrinkle on her brow, or a weather seam, or a gray hair on her crown, or a rent in her garment? No one sees Nature who sees her not as young and fresh, without history. We may have such intercourse with her to-day, as we imagine to constitute the employment of gods. We live here to have intercourse with rivers, forests, mountains, — beasts and men. How few do we see conversing with these things!

We think the ancients were foolish who worshipped the sun. I would worship it forever if I had grace to do so. Observe how a New England farmer moves in the midst of Nature, — his potato and grain fields; and consider how poets have dreamed that the more religious shepherd lived; and ask which was the wiser, which made the highest use of Nature? As if the Earth were made to yield pumpkins mainly! Did you ever observe that the seasons were ripening another kind of fruit?

Men have a strange taste for death who prefer to go to a museum to behold the cast-off garments of life, rather than handle the life itself. Where is the proper herbarium, the cabinet of shells, the museum of skeletons, but in the meadow where the flowers bloomed, or by the seaside where the tide cast up the fish, or on the hills where the beast laid down his life? Where the skeleton of the traveller reposes in the grass, — there may it profitably be studied. What right has mortal man to parade any skeleton on its legs, when we see the gods have unloosed its sinews? what right to imitate

heaven with his wires, or to stuff that body with sawdust, which Nature has decreed shall return to dust again?

All the fishes that swim in the ocean can hardly atone for the wrong done by stuffing and varnishing and encasing under glass the relics of one inhabitant of the deep. Go to Italy or Egypt if you would behold these things, where bones are the natural product of the soil which bears tombs and catacombs. Would you live in a dried specimen of a world, — a pickled world? Embalming is a sin against heaven and earth, — against heaven who has recalled the soul, and set free the servile elements; against earth, who is thus robbed of her dust.

I have had my right-perceiving senses so disturbed in these haunts, as for long to mistake a veritable living man, in the attitude of repose, musing, like myself, as the time and place require, for a stuffed specimen. So are men degraded in consequence.

Monday, October 2.

There must be all degrees of life, from a stone — if we can find any starting-point —

to God. There are very few fibres in the stone, very little organism. Sometimes we are conscious of the simple, but slow and insensate, life in which it lives. We are mere pudding-stone or scoriæ in the world. But suddenly we may be informed with new life, and pass through all the scales of being, up to the most complex and nearest to God, — furnished with countless nerves, and imbibing more and more of vital air or inspiration.

How suddenly and intently do all the eras which we call history awaken and glimmer in us, — all the dynasties that have passed away are still passing in our memory. There is room for Alexander to march, and for Hannibal to conquer. The grand three-act drama of past, present, and future, where does its scene lie but within the compass of this same private life which beats within its ribbed walls?

We may say that our knowledge is infinite, for we have never discovered its limits; and what we know of infinity is a part of our knowledge still.

History is the record of my experience.

I can read only my own story, never a syllable of another man's.

Friday, October 6.

Gleams of life and a wise serenity pass over us from time to time, like flakes of sunlight over the fields in cloudy weather. In some happier moment, when more sap flows in the withered stalk of my life, I recognize myself as a part of the hour, and Syria and India stretch away from my present as they do in history.

Sunday, October 8.

Daniel, the poet, does really sometimes deserve praise for his moderation, and you find him risen into poetry before you know it. Some strong sense appears in his epistles; but you have to remember so often in what age he wrote, and yet that Shakespeare was his contemporary. In his style, and what may be called the tricks of the trade, he is really in advance of his age, — much of it.

He strikes us like a retired scholar who has a small vein of poesy, which he is ambitious to work. He would keep himself

shut up in the house two whole months together, they say.

Thursday, October 12.

It is hard to read a contemporary poet critically; for we go within the shallowest verse and inform it with all the life and promise of this day. We are such a near and kind and knowing audience as he will never have again. We go within the fane of the temple and hear the faint music of the worshippers; but posterity will have to stand without and consider the vast proportions and grandeur of the building. It will be solidly and conspicuously great and beautiful, for the multitudes who pass at a distance, as well as for the few pilgrims who enter in to its shrine.

The poet will prevail and be popular in spite of his faults, and in spite of his beauties too; he will be careful only that you feel the hammer hit, without regarding the form of its head. No man is enough his own overseer to take cognizance of *all* the particulars which impress men in his actions. The impression will always proceed from a

more general influence than he can ever dream of. We may count our steps, but we must not count our breaths. We must be careful not to mix consciousness with the vital functions.

May the gods deliver us from too critical an age, — when cross-eyed, near-sighted men are born, who, instead of looking out and bathing their eyes in the deep heaven, introvert them, and think to walk erect and not to stumble by watching their feet, and not by preserving pure hearts.

Saturday, October 14.

What an impulse was given, some time or other, to the principle of vegetation that now nothing can stay it! I understand why one said he thought he could write an epic to be called *The Leaf*. What is a leaf, and how much does it cover? In the veins and fibres of the leaf see the future tree, — the grove. It is the print of Nature's footstep, — this form. See how Nature works and produces leaves. It is her symbol, her standard, emblem, device; where she has been she leaves her patterns. Whether in

ice or air, vegetable or coral, she works the same figure. Set away a jar in the dark, and mould-leaves make haste to grow over it; and "clothe the naked" is the omnipresent and everlasting law. Nature has only to breathe on the glass and the form of leaves appears. Nature loves these forms and has not tired of repeating them for how many centuries.

Monday, October 16.

We often hear the expression "the natural life of man." We should rather say "the unnatural life of man." It is rare indeed to find a man who has not long ago departed out of Nature. We only have a transient glimpse of some solitary feature in a serener moment. If anything ails a man so that he does not perform his functions, — especially if his digestion be poor, — though he has considerable nervous strength still, what does he do? why he sets about reforming the world. If he has failed in all undertakings hitherto, learned that life is short and *errare est humanum*, what does he do? Why, he reforms the world. If he has committed

some heinous sin and repented; that is, having done it, is now calling to mind that he has done it, — what does he do? Why, he sets about reforming the world. Do you hear? The world is going to be reformed, — formed again, made over, — formed rather, made for once. — Well, well, think away, old boy. — But wait till I've explained it. — So long gone unformed, or rather uninformed! Do you hear it, ye Patagonians, ye Tartars, ye Néz Percés? The world is going to be reformed or rather formed once for all, — presto! change! Methinks I hear the glad tidings already.

Publish it over the green prairies of the West, over the silent pampas of the South American continent, and the parched African deserts, and the wide-stretching Siberian versts; through the populous Indian and Chinese villages, — along the Indus, Ganges, and Hydaspes!

Saturday, October 21.

I have seen such a hollow, glazed life as on a painted floor, — which some couples lead; with their basement, parlor with fold-

ing doors, a few visitors' cards and the latest Annual; such life only as there is in the shells on the mantelpiece. The very children cry with less inwardness and depth than they do in the cottage. There they do not *live*, it is there they reside. There is no hearth in the centre of that house. The atmosphere of the apartments is not yet peopled with the spirits of its inhabitants; but the voices sound hollow and echo, and we see only the paint and the paper.

Sunday, October 22.

Through all his vice and deformity the ineradicable health of man is seen. The superabundant mirth that will be seen in any All-Fools' Day, though the mob be composed of the lame, the blind, and the infirm, the poor and vicious; yet the innocent mirth will put a new face on the matter.

[Here follows a series of semi-comic epitaphs:]

EPITAPH ON PURSY

Traveller, this is no prison,
He is not dead, but risen.

Then is there need
To fill his grave;
And, truth to save,
That we should read, —
In Pursy's favor
Here lies the engraver.

This and the following lines appear to be Thoreau's own composition, — suggested, perhaps, by some collection of epitaphs he had found in one of the New York libraries, where he had been industriously reading Donne, Daniel, Quarles, Lovelace, etc., and was soon to read fragments of Ossianic poetry, on which he comments in *The Week*.

EPITAPH ON THE WORLD

Here lies the body of this world,
Whose soul, alas! to hell is hurled.
Its golden youth long since was past,
Its silver manhood went as fast,
And iron age drew on at last;
'Tis vain its character to tell,
The several fates which it befell.
What year it died, when 'twill arise,
We only know that here it lies.

Donne was not a poet, but a man of strong sense, — a sturdy English thinker, full of con-

ceits and whimsicalities; hammering away at his subject, be it eulogy or epitaph, sonnet or satire, with the patience of a day-laborer, without the least taste, but with an occasional fine distinction and poetic utterance of a high order. He was rather Doctor Donne than the poet Donne. He gropes for the most part. 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 the good as fear of the bad, though, in one or two instances, he has written fearlessly and memorably.

Tuesday, October 24.

Though I am old enough to have discovered that the dreams of youth are not to be realized in this state of existence, yet I think it would be the next greatest happiness always to be allowed to look under the eyelids of Time and contemplate the Perfect steadily, with the clear understanding that I do not attain to it.

Though music agitates only a few waves of air, yet it affords an ample field for the imagination. It is a solid ground and palpitating heaven. Science distinguishes its base and its air. There are few things so evanescent and intangible as music; it is like light and heat, in physics, — still mooted themes. In æsthetics music occupies the same mysterious place as light and electricity in physics. It seems vain to ask ourselves what music is. If we ponder the question, it is soon changed to, What are we? It is everything but itself. It adorns all things and remains hidden itself. It is unsuspectedly the light which colors all the landscape. It is, as it were, the most subtle ether, the most volatile gas. It is a sovereign electuary which enables us to see all things.

You must store up none of the life in your gift; it is as fatal as to husband your breath. We must *live* all our *life*.

What shall we make of the wonderful beauty of Nature, which enchants us all our youth, and is remembered till our death? — the love we bear to the least woody fibre, or

earthly particle, or ray of light? Is not here the true anatomy, where we study our own elements and composition? Why should man love the sunflower, and the color of the walls and trees?

Thursday, November 2.

I believe that there is an ideal or real Nature, infinitely more perfect than the actual, as there is an ideal life of man; else where are the glorious summers which in vision sometimes visit my brain? When Nature ceases to be supernatural to a man, what will he do then? Of what worth is human life if its actions are no longer to have this sublime and unexplored scenery? Who will build a cottage and dwell in it with enthusiasm if not in the Elysian fields?

Saturday, November 4.

We must look to the West for the growth of a new literature, manners, architecture, etc. Already there is more language there, which is the growth of the soil, than here; good Greekish words there are in abundance, — good because necessary and expressive; "diggings," for instance. If you analyze a

Greek word you will not get anything simpler, truer, more poetical; and many others, also, which now look so ram-slang-like and colloquial when printed, another generation will cherish and affect as genuine American and standard. Read some western stump-speech, and though it be untoward and rude enough, there will not fail to be some traits of genuine eloquence, and some original and forcible statement, which will remind you of the great orators of antiquity. I am inclined to read the stump-speeches of the West already rather than the Beauties of our Atlantic orators.

Here is an extract from the speech of a man named Strong, whom the reporter "understood to live somewhere over near the Mississippi, in the mining country. He had a pitcher of whiskey brought into the court room and set on the table before him, from which he drank long and frequently." It was a speech in defence of a member of the Legislative Council of the Territory (Wisconsin), who had shot a fellow-member in a dispute in the Council Chamber. This is a part of his address to the jury:

"*Gentlemen of the Jury:* I don't know what your religion is, nor I don't care. I hain't got much myself, though Jesus Christ was a mighty good man. Now, gentlemen, I am one of those kind of men who live pretty fast. I believe men generally live over about the same surface: some live long and narrow, and others live broad and short."

Adverting to an old gentleman, one of the witnesses, he says:

"I would not like to charge him with perjuring himself, because he and I were members of the Council together. We were tolerable good friends, though always quarrelling. He was always on one side; he was just like the handle of this pitcher," taking up the pitcher and pointing to the handle. "Here, gentlemen, this was him, and here," pointing to the nose of the pitcher, "this was the estimable Moses, and these were our relative positions. I believe we never got so near as to drink a glass of water together, but I 'll drink his health now anyhow," catching up the pitcher, and pouring down a strangler of whiskey. "As for the murdered man," he said, "he is dead; there is no doubt

of it; he is dead! dead! dead as a smelt; in the language of Tippecanoe and Tyler too, 'he is a gone coon.'" And before he concluded he reeled with intoxication. And the speech of the Secretary of the State which followed is said to have been "dignified, able, and suited to the occasion, as was, also, the closing argument for the prosecution."

Perhaps it is needless to add that the defendant was acquitted.

Sunday, November 5.

It is remarkable how language, as well as all things else, records only life and progress, never death and decay. We are obliged often to contradict ourselves to express these, as the tree requires the vital energy to push off its dead leaves. We have to say, for instance, "grows or waxes less."

So the poet only records the actions of the coward as well as those of the hero, and of the unjust as well as the just.

Tuesday, November 7.

When Ossian personifies the sun and addresses him, it is unnecessary to suppose, as

his editor does, that he believed the sun to be an "animated being," like the deer or lion. Wherein are we more believers in a God than the heathen, with their mysterious magic rites? as if one name were not as good as another. It is time to have done with these follies. I confess to more sympathy with the Druidical and Scandinavian, as handed down to us, than with the actual creeds of any church in Christendom. They have been reproached for worshipping the ghosts of their fathers rather than any unsubstantial forms; but do we not worship the ghosts of our fathers?

It is the characteristic of all religion and wisdom to substitute being for seeming, and to detect the *anima* or soul in everything. It is merely an evidence of inner faith when God is practically believed to be omnipresent. None of the heathen are too heathenish for me but those who hold no intercourse with their god. I love the vigorous faith of those heathen who sternly believed something. I say to these modern believers, "Don't interrupt those men's prayers." How much more do the moderns know about God

and human life than the ancients? the English than the Chaldæans, or than the Tartars? Does English theology contain the recent discoveries?

Ossian feels and asserts the dignity of the bard. His province is to record the deeds of heroes.

> I straightway seize the unfutile tales
> And send them down in faithful verse.

An heroic deed is his star in the night. The simple, impressive majesty of human life as seen through his mists, is that Ossian we know and remember. Who has discovered any higher morality than this? any truer philosophy? — a simple, brave, persevering life adorned with heroic deeds.

The reserved strength of Ossian, and moral superiority to most poets of what is styled a barbarous era, appears in the fact that he can afford to pass over the details of the battle, leaving the heroism to be imagined from what has already been described of the character of the hero, while he hastens to hint at the result. Most heroic poets of a rude period delight mainly in the mere sound of

blows and the flowing of blood. But Ossian has already described the result of the battle when he has painted the character of the heroes.

See an example in *Callon and Colvala:*

> When I heard who the damsel was
> Frequent dropped the warrior's tears.
> I blessed the radiant beam of youth,
> And bade the bard advance.
> Dweller of the mountain cave,
> Why should Ossian speak of the dead?
> They are now forgot in their land,
> And their tombs are seen no more, etc.;

or in *Ca-Lodin:*

> We engaged, and the enemy won;

or in *Croma;*

> We fought along the narrow vale;
> The enemy fled; Romarr fell by my sword.

No poet has done such justice to the island of foggy fame.

What a contrast between the stern and desolate poetry of Ossian and that of Chaucer and the early English bards! The bard indeed seems to have lost much of his dignity and the sacredness of his profession. He

does not impose upon us. He has lost all his sternness and bardic *furor*, and but conceives the deed which the other has prepared to perform. It is a step from the forest and crag to the fireside, — from the hut of the Gael or Stonehenge with its circles of stones to the house of the Englishman. No hero stands at the door, prepared to break forth into song or heroic actions, but a homely Englishman who has begun to cultivate the comforts of a roof; or a studious gentleman who practises the art of song. He possibly may not receive us. There is not room for all mankind about his hearth. He does not love all things, but a few.

I see there a yellow fireside blaze, and hear the crackling fuel, and expect such heroism as consists with a comfortable life.

In the oldest poems only the most simple and enduring features of humanity are seen; such essential parts of a man as Stonehenge exhibits of a temple. We see the circles of stone, and the upright shafts of the man; we cannot tell whether this was civilized or savage; truly it was neither. For these simple, necessary traits are before and after civiliza-

tion and are superior to it. All the culture that had a beginning must in the world's history have an end. It is like the fashions of France; like the tricks taught to a few tame bears and monkeys. How wise we are! how ignorant the savage! we with our penknife with a hundred blades, he with his gnarled club. Ask his senses if they are not well fed, if his life is not well earned.

When we come to the pleasant English verse it seems as if the storm had all cleared away, and it were never to thunder and lighten any more. These stern events are traditionary.

We darkly behold (in the poetry of the obscurest eras) the forms of men, — such as can be seen afar through the mist, — no costume, no dialect, but for language you have a tongue itself. As for costume — we can dispense with that, — the skins of beasts or bark of trees are always to be had, — what if the man is naked?

The figurative parts of Ossian are like Isaiah and the Psalms, — the same use is made of gaunt Nature. He uses but few and simple images; but they are drawn from

such objects as are familiar to men in all ages. To the poet who can use them greatly in his song, and make them convey his thoughts, the elements and stars seem to be nearer and more friendly. And other men involuntarily relinquish to him somewhat of their claim on Nature. The sun and the sea and the mists are his more than ours.

Let two stand on the highway, and it shall be known that the sun belongs to one rather than to the other; the one will be found to claim, while the other simply retains, possession. The winds blow for one more than another; and on numerous occasions the uncertain or unworthy possessors silently relinquish their right in them. The most doubtful claimants have paid their money and taken a deed of their birthright, but the real owner is forever known to all men wherever he goes, and no one disputes his claim. For he cannot help using and deriving the profit, while to the dishonest possessor an estate is as idle as his parchment deed of it, and that is all he has purchased. Wherever the owner goes, inanimate things will fly to him and adhere.

What a fame was it that these Ossianic bards and heroes sought? To Fingal, Swaran says:

> The hunter coming from the hills,
> As he rests on a tomb, will say:
> Here the mighties, Fingal and Swaran,
> Joined battle, with their hundred bands.
> Thus will the weary hunter speak
> And our fame will abide forever.

Thursday, November 9.

In Pindar the same importance is attached to fame. Next to the performance of noble deeds is the renown which springs from them.

Ossian is like Homer and like the Indian. His duans are like the seasons of the year in northern latitudes.

Who are the inhabitants of London and New York but savages who have built cities, and forsaken for a season hunting and war? Who are the Blackfeet and the Tartars but citizens roaming the plains and dwelling in wigwams and tents?

When it comes to poetry, the most polished era finds nothing wanting or that offends its taste in the real poetry of the rudest.

I must confess I fear that the Muse has stooped in her flight when I come to the literature of civilized nations and eras. We then first hear of different ages of poetry; of Augustan and Elizabethan ages; but the poetry of runic monuments is for every age. The whole difference seems to be that the poet has come within doors. The old bard stood without. How different are Homer and Ossian from Dryden and Pope and Gray, and even Milton and Shakespeare! Hosts of warriors earnest for battle could not mistake nor dispense with the ancient bards. There was no danger of their being overlooked by their generations. They spoke but as they acted. Take one of our modern, well arranged poems, and expose it to the elements, as Stonehenge has been exposed. Let the rains beat on it and the winds shake it, and how will its timbers look at the end of a few centuries? I like to hear, when they dig beneath some mysterious flat stone far under the mould, of the few huge bones they find and the sword which modern men cannot wield.

When the stern old bard makes his heroes

weep, they seem to weep from excess of very strength and not from weakness. It is the perspiration of a monument in the heat of summer; it is as a sacrifice — a libation — of fertile natures. We hardly know that tears have been shed. Only babes and heroes may weep.

Their pleasure and their sorrow are made of the same stuff as are the rain and the snow, the rainbow and the mist.

November 19.

Pastoral poetry belongs to a highly civilized and refined era. It is the pasture as seen from the hall window — the shepherd of the manor. Its sheep are never actually shorn nor die of the rot. The towering, misty imagination of the poet has descended into the plain and become a lowlander, and keeps flocks and herds. Between the hunting of men and boars and the feeding of sheep is a long interval. Really the shepherd's pipe is no wax-compacted reed, but made of pipe-clay, and nothing but smoke issues from it. Nowadays the sheep take care of themselves for the most part.

The older and grander poems are characterized by the few elements which distinguish the life they describe. Man stands on the moor between the stars and the earth,—shrunk to the mere bones and sinews. It is the uncompounded, everlasting life which does not depart with the flesh. The civilized and the uncivilized eras chronicle but the fluctuating condition; the summer or winter lean upon the past estate of man.

Our summer of English poesy, which, like the Greek and Latin before it, seems now well advanced toward its fall, is laden with the fruit and foliage of that season, with all the bright tints of autumn; but the winter of age will scatter its myriad clustering and shading leaves, with their autumnal tints, and leave only the desolate and fibrous boughs to sustain the snow and rime, and creak in the winter's wind.

Man simply lives out his years by the vigor of his constitution. He survives storms and the spear of his foes, and performs a few heroic deeds, and then the cairns answer questions of him. The Scandinavian is not encumbered with modern fashions, but stands

free and alert, a naked warrior. Civilization does not much more than dress men. It puts rings on the fingers and watches in the side-pocket.

What do inventors invent for the naked feet and hands? They often only mend the gloves and the shoes which they wear. They make cloth of a finer texture, but they do not toughen the skin.

So when the ancient bards come to narrative and description, they describe character only, not costume, which may change. They knew how to threaten; their threats might have deterred a man. Now there are no such things as vengeance and terror.

November 20.

When I remember the tumultuous popular joy of our cattle-show mobs, how they rushed hither and thither, with license and without license, with appetite for the huge delights of the day; now hastening with boisterous speed after the inspired negro, from whose larynx there issued a strain which made the very streets vibrate and curl like a banner, and the sky throb and palpitate with sym-

pathy ; as if the melodies of all Congo and the Guinea Coast had irrupted into our streets ; now to see the procession of a hundred yoke of oxen, all as august and grave as Osiris; now to gaze at the droves of neat cattle, and milch cows, all as unspotted and πότνια as Isis or Io, — I cannot help thinking of the feast of Adonis at Sestos and Abydos.

Such as had no loves at all, —

Went lovers home from this great festival.

So enriched and reinforced did men go home from this our fair.

My life is far among those clouds yonder, as if they hung over the land where I would fain dwell. I see its atmosphere through the distant boughs of the elms.

The grandeur of the similes is another feature which characterizes great poetry. The poet seems to speak a gigantic and universal language. Its images and pictures ever occupy much space in the landscape as if they could only be seen from mountains and plains with a wide horizon, or across arms of the sea. They were not slight and transient like the stains on a whitewashed

wall. Oivana says to the spirit of her father, "gray-haired Torkil of Torne," seen in the skies:

Thou glidest away like receding ships.

So when the hosts of Fingal and Starne joined battle, the bard thus describes the approach of the enemy, —

With murmurs loud like rivers far,
The race of Torne hither moved.

Ossian expresses his wonder simply. His wonder is as simple and strictly said as his life is single and of few elements.

When his hero dies he allows us a short misty glance into futurity, yet into as clear and unclouded a life as his first. When in Carbodia, MacRoine is slain, —

The hero fell lifeless, etc.

There are but few objects to distract these heroes' sight. Their life is as uncluttered as the course of the stars, which they gaze after.

The wrathful kings on cairns apart, etc.

Through the grim nights and the cloudy days, with stern hope, the bard and warrior

wait but for one heroic deed. The earth is a vast arena, — a sand plain or heath for heroic actions. The bard is sufficiently great and true to himself to make his thought take place of everything else. There is for the time no other philosophy, no other poetry.

November 21.

The philosophy of Ossian is contained in the opening of the third duan of *Ca-Lodin*, —

Whence have sprung the things that are, etc.

The only vicious and immoral is an unsuccessful and ignoble warrior. He dies and is forgotten, —

Strangers come to build a tower, etc.

Again the philosophy of life and the simple forcible statement of the thought, —

Why shouldst thou build a hall of pomp,
Son of many-winged time? etc.

The size and grandeur of the machinery is again illustrated by, —

A thousand orators inclined,
To hear the lay of Fingal.

Even Ossian, the hero-bard, seems to regret the strength of his race, —

How beauteous, mighty man, was thy mind, etc.

The Death of the Sun combines many of the peculiarities of Ossian.

Their tears remind us of a weeping sinew. Crodar, blind and old, receives Ossian, son of Fingal, who comes to aid him in war, —

My eyes have failed, etc.,

says he. Here are more of Ossian's natural and vigorous similes. Cudulin is fighting, —

As rills that gush, etc.

And again Cudulin retires from fight, —

Dragging his spear behind, etc.

When a hero dies the bard utters a short biblical sentence, which will serve for epitaph or biography, —

The weak will find, etc.

And so of Fillan's tears. He weeps like a hero, —

Fillan was no veteran in war, etc.

The ancient blinded heroes passed the remainder of their days listening to the lays of the bards, and feeling the weapons which laid their enemies low.

The reward of the hero is to be remembered, —

A generation comes like a rapid flood, etc.

They move by vast strides, —

Islands dart out of our way,
And hide them behind our fleet.

When the hero falls, it is still in the midst of peaceful Nature, —

Stretched across a purling rill, etc.

I have heard a painter, who complained of the difficulty of separating the reflection in still water truly, advised to make ripples where he did not want reflections!

These studies and meditations close thus, after Thoreau's return to Concord:

Sunday, January 10, 1844.

I believe that no law of mechanics, which is observed and obeyed from day to day, is better established in the experience of men than this, — that love never fails to be repaid in its own coin; that just as high as the waters rise in one vessel just so high they will rise in every other into which there is com-

munication, either direct or under ground or from above the stars. Our love is, besides, some such independent fluid element in respect to our vessels, which still obeys only its own, and not our laws, by any means, without regard to the narrow limits to which we would confine it.

Nor is the least object too small for the greatest love to be bestowed upon.

[*From a later Manuscript.*]

The end of a celestial marriage, however, as I dream, is not the propagation of the species, but it is the end for which the species is continued, — the maturation of the species. The species is not continued for the sake of continuance. Even by a terrestrial marriage man serves himself mainly, though the ends of nature are being served through him. Nature provides many seeds and generations because of many failures. The only excuse for reproduction is improvement. Nature abhors repetition. The ultimate fruit of a tree is not a seed, but much more a flower, or rather a truly flourishing tree. If the earth began with spring it will end with summer.

The feminine is the mother of the masculine, and the latter still draws nourishment from the breast of the former. The tenderness and affection of woman, her mild prophetic eye, her finer instincts, exert an influence on man from which he is never weaned. So that in this sense the umbilical cord is never cut, though the apron-string may be. Her oracular nature still broods over man. His wisdom, compared with her fertile and dewy instinct, is like the lightning which issues from the bosom of the cloud.

Woman is a nature older than I, and commanding from me a vast amount of veneration, like Nature. She is my mother at the same time that she is my sister, so that she is at any rate an elder sister. I cannot imagine a woman no older than I. Methinks that I am younger than aught that I associate with. The youngest child is more than my coeval.

My most intimate acquaintance with woman has been a sisterly relation, or at most a catholic virgin-mother relation, — not that it has always been free from the suspicion of a lower sympathy. She has ex-

erted the influence of a goddess over me; cultivating my gentler humane nature; cultivating and preserving purity, innocence, truth.

We lose our friends when we cease to be friends, not when they die; then they depart; then we are sad and go into mourning for them. Death is no separation compared with that which takes place when we cease to have confidence in those with whom we have walked in confidence. When we cease to love one whom we had loved; when we know him no more; when we look for him and cannot find him, — how completely is he departed! No things can be farther asunder than friends estranged; our courses inevitably diverge, and we feel the fibres being rent. What can restore him to life for me? This miracle was never performed. Shall I never see him more? What fate has driven a wedge between us? Friends estranged are buried alive to one another; we miss them from their accustomed place. Let us endeavor, then, to save the lives of our friends as long as we can. Two were not made to stand in company always. Where are they who were once our friends, but are so no

longer? Where are we whose friend is dead? are we in this world?

If you would know what it is to be separated from those we love, think not of death, but of estrangement. Whom we have once seen we shall never see again; whom we have never seen we shall see anon. Friends meet and part as when two pilgrims, who have walked together many days in sweet society, sharing the adventures of the road, with mutual aid and entertainment, reach a point where their courses diverge, and linger there awhile. And then, bidding each other farewell, one takes this road and the other that; and as they withdraw, they mutually turn to wave a last adieu, and watch each other's retreating figures, until at last they are concealed from one another by a bend in the road; and the sun goes down behind the mountains. And they are sorry to part, leaving each alone; but their duty calls them different ways. And one climbs upon a rock that he may see his late fellow-traveller a little longer, and yearns that they should once more communicate freely with each other their thoughts and feelings.

When our companion fails us we transfer our love instantaneously to a worthy object, — as the sunlight which gilds the walls and fences, when these are removed falls instantaneously on the mountains and domes and spires in the horizon. . . . Actually I have no friend. I am very distant from all actual persons, — and yet my experience of friendship is so real and engrossing that I sometimes find myself speaking aloud to the ideal friend.

A friend in need is not a friend indeed, — for all the world are our friends then. What we need is a friend. He is not our friend who visits us only when we are sick, but he whose preventive visits keep us well, — who never lets us need. . . . I delight to come to my bearing, not walk in procession with pomp and parade, but to walk with the builder of the universe; not to live in this restless, nervous, bustling, trivial nineteenth century, but to stand or sit thoughtfully while it goes by.

We hesitate to call our friends our brothers and our sisters; for the name attaches but to a part of them; for they are more than half

ideal. It would be taking names in vain. We are not aware of the uses to which we put each other.

If I valued my friends less, I should visit them oftener. There are few to whom Friendship is a sufficiently sacred relation. Most are prepared for a vulgar quarrel and truce. I cherish so many fancies about it, and so religiously, that I never get to speech on the subject. I have been grieved at the readiness with which my friend could say that I was offended. I had tenderly cherished the flower of our friendship till one day my friend treated it as a weed. It did not survive the shock, but drooped and withered from that hour. A friend avoids the subject of Friendship in conversation. It is a very sacred relation, which is not liable to a vulgar difference. He whom we associate with our daily affairs is our acquaintance. He whom we associate with our social joys is what the world commonly calls our friend. He whom we associate with our Elysium is beloved by us.

I have a friend whom I heartily love, whom I would always treat tenderly; who in-

deed is so transfigured to me that I dare not identify my ideal with the actual. The fit time has never come for that. If I could believe that my friend would tenderly and wisely enough sustain the declaration of my love, I should make him privy to my dreams. But I fear that some more terrestrial cousin may be introduced; that if ideals can thus commingle, actuals will begin to obtrude themselves. I am afraid to contrast my dreams so rudely with the actual day, — to tell them by daylight. I was never so near my friend when he was bodily present as when he was absent. And yet I am indirectly accused by this friend of coldness and disingenuousness, when I cannot speak for warmth and sincerity.

"Ask and ye shall receive;" but asking is not merely the form of asking: we must ask as purely and undesignedly as we would that another should give.

My so-called friend comes near being my greatest enemy; for, when he deceives me more than any, he betrays as an enemy has no opportunity of doing.

There is no kind of cheating, no dishon-

esty, so fatal to all society as the disposition to get more than you give; to get the whole of your friend while you give him but a part of yourself; to meet him with designs upon him who comes without designs; to make a conscious use of that relation whose fruit surpasses utility, and inspires to unconscious nobleness. That man is not my friend who for any reason withholds from me what I bestow on him.

One man wishes me to be the friend of his whim. I 'll be the inveterate, relentless foe of it whenever it comes in my way. One wishes me to prove to him that I am his friend, and then he says he will be mine. How can I prove it to him in such a case? how can I prove what is not true?

I am more reinforced when I renounce entirely a hesitating and unreliable friendship than when I surround myself with such allies. My friend died long ago; why follow a body to the graveyard? why toll the bell to-day? his knell has died away. There still remain his clothes; shall we have a third service when they are decayed?

When we separate finally and completely

from one who has been our friend, we separate with content, without grief, as gently and naturally as night passes into day. But grief and pain take place when the separation is partial and transient, when there is a lingering sympathy.

From this high discourse of Love, Marriage, and Friendship, the exact date of which in its final form cannot well be determined, but probably just before the publication of *The Week* in 1849, we pass now to an essay in a lighter mood, which Thoreau himself, in the Manuscript before me, entitles, —

CONVERSATION[1]

Talking is very singular. Men and women get together and then talk. They cannot even stay long together without talking, according to the rules of polite society. Not that they communicate what they have to say, or do anything natural or important to be done; but by common consent they fall

[1] We are indebted to Mr. John P. Woodbury for the privilege of printing this little essay, which seems to have eluded all editors of Thoreau up to the present year, when parts of it came out in the *Atlantic*. What we here print is the original form.

to using the invention of speech, and make a conversation good or bad; they say things, first this one and then that one. They express their opinions, — nor must long periods of silence occur.

Sometimes they go over many thousand miles of land and water for this purpose. Occasionally I have seen a hundred men and women at once, where conversations were advertised, so wholly given over to talk that they seemed to forget that they had other organs than tongues and ears; as if they could eject themselves like bits of packthread from the tip of the tongue. It is very much as if the trees next me, when I went into the wood, — the trees having heard of this, all set their leaves a-rustling, as if I only came to hear that; and I said to myself, "I shall not be able to tell when the wind blows." Whereupon they stopt, — but the aspen has rustled ever since.

A man may be an object of interest to me though his tongue be plucked out by the root. I am very much molested by those who require that I should talk; they who cannot live near me with pleasure unless I

converse, I do not live near, but at the antipodes of. I may have a good deal still, without having anything to say. Indeed, I have not much, my friends, — at least not much to speak of. By a well-directed silence I have sometimes seen threatening and troublesome persons routed, — unconsciously and innocently, no doubt. 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! With a little silence, things take shape as they should.

Sometimes I have listened so attentively to the whole expression and utterance of a man, with such absorbed interest, that I did not hear one word he was saying, — and saying, too, with the more vivacity, observing my attention. And after all he thought I did not hear him! The fact was I heard him from all his mouths, and half his purport was open to me; as if my ears were sieves and strained his words of all their meaning, — letting fall the husks. And I heard, through

him, him that spoke to him, and listened at the same keyhole with himself, cheek by jowl with him.

Not only must men talk, but for the most part must talk about talk; and scholars even about books, or dead and buried talk. Sometimes my friend expects a few periods from me; and is he exorbitant? He thinks he has delivered his opinions, and now it is my turn, — but I made no bargain. He thinks he has said a good thing; but I don't see the difference; he looks just as he did before. Well, if he has, 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, — for they did not happen to be present at each other's christening. The stranger, who knows only the countersign, says, "Jonas" — "Eldrad," giving those names which will make a title good in a court of law. (We may presume 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 Eldrad swiftly re-

sponds and unburdens his breast; and so the action is begun. 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; but better late than never.

There is good society, and there is bad.

This is plainly a fragment, and, from the handwriting, belongs to the early period of Thoreau's literary life. He notes in a late Journal that he wrote an essay on *Sound and Silence* in December, 1838; and during the next three years he returned now and then to the same subject. Thus in February, 1841, when he was not quite twenty-four years old, he says: "I have been breaking silence these twenty-three years, and have hardly made a rent in it. Silence has no end; speech is but the beginning of it." This seems like part of that series of paradoxes of which this fragmentary essay is another part. In his later writing, as will be noticed, particularly in his last journey, now to be recorded, the paradox has almost disappeared.

ADDENDUM

FROM MANUSCRIPTS WHICH HAVE BUT
RECENTLY COME TO LIGHT

ADDENDUM

Since the preceding pages of this volume were printed, Mr. Bixby has acquired a number of other unpublished MSS. of Thoreau, recently discovered among the papers of the Thatcher family, mostly dating from the years before 1845. For many years they remained in obscurity with these distant relatives of Thoreau, to whom they had been left by his sister Sophia at her death. She gave most of her brother's papers to Mr. Blake, who left them as a heritage to Mr. E. H. Russell, of Worcester, Mass.; but it appears that for some reason she wished to keep these particular MSS. in the family, and so left them with the Thatchers, with whom she was staying at the time of her death. Some of these contain poems quoted in part in *The Week* in 1849; and several of these poems are first drafts, or more complete forms of those pre-

viously printed in *The Dial*, or omitted, by the fastidiousness of Emerson, from *The Winter's Walk;* or by Thoreau himself from *The Week*, or from *Walden*. These, with the prose passages with which they were originally connected, are given in this Appendix. A number of the poems were written on paged sheets, with other memoranda, showing that they were originally written in some Journal from which they were torn out and preserved from destruction, — most of the early Journals having perished. Others were written on separate sheets, but for some reason were never printed. Facsimiles of four of the manuscript poems are inserted in this volume.

The earlier MS. gives the following wording of the poem entitled *Morning* printed on page xiv of this volume: —

Heathen without reproach,
Who dost upon the civil day encroach, —
Who, ever since thy birth,
Has trod the outskirts of the earth: —
The coward's hope, the brave man's way
And distant promise of a day, —
While the late-risen world goes west,
You daily bend my steps to east.

To the mountains

And when the sun sets on the Camp
Bell sleep serene within the camp,
Trusting to his instinct skill
Who leads the stars the garden hills,
Where discipline doth never cease
To watch the slumberings of peace,
And from the visions hold afar
The melancholy din of war. —

Forget our sentries still on high,
The earth your pallet and your canopy
the sky.

From steadfast stars I will not move
Remembering my watch to prove,

With all your Indian stoics from year to year
Be but civil demons still appear,
Still to my mind
Be an inhuman and unkind,
And wear an untamed aspect to my sight
After the "civilized" night
As if ye had lain out
Like the Indian scout
Who lingers in the pavilion of the town
With unexplored grace and savage poise,

August 1841

Mountains were always singularly attractive to Thoreau (see page xxiv), as indeed they are to poets generally. The verses originally printed in *The Dial* on Mountains were begun in August, 1841, and then entitled *To the Mountains*. These unprinted lines seem to have been intended as a closing to the poem, although they appear in the original on a separate sheet (see facsimile of original MS.), under the following heading: —

TO THE MOUNTAINS

And when the sun puts out his lamp
We 'll sleep serene within the camp,
Trusting to His invet'rate skill
Who leads the stars o'er yonder hill;
Whose discipline doth never cease
To watch the slumberings of peace,
And from the virtuous hold afar
The melancholy din of war;
For ye, our sentries still outlie, —
The earth your pallet, and your screen the sky.

From steadfastness I will not swerve,
Remembering my sweet reserve.

With all your kindness shown from year to year
Ye do but civil demons still appear;
Still, to my mind,
Ye are inhuman and unkind,

And bear an untamed aspect to my sight,
After the " civil-suited " night;
As if ye had lain out
Like to the Indian scout
Who lingers in the purlieus of the towns
With unexplored grace and savage frowns.

August, 1841.

[A little more than a year later, Thoreau wrote the following in his Journal, this fragment of which was rescued and preserved by the Thatcher family] : —

Saturday, October 15, 1842.

Thursday, I went over to Naushautuct[1] only to look into the horizon; for, as long as I have lived here, and as many times as I have been there, I could not have told how it appeared. When I discovered over how

[1] This is the way Thoreau then spelled the Indian name of the hill between the two rivers Assabet and Musketaquid, which he so often visited from the Parkman house (where the Library now stands) in which he was living in 1842. It commands a view of nine or ten townships, — Acton, Bedford, Billerica, Carlisle, Concord, Lincoln, Lexington, Sudbury, Wayland and Framingham, — in whole or in part; and was often the resort of the villagers. Wachusett, Watatic and Monadnoc with the nearer Peterboro Hills can be descried from it in clear weather, and Nobscot, the nearest high hill in Framingham, above the Wayside Inn. — Ed.

many miles of Bedford and Carlisle and Acton my eye ranged, even into Billerica and Framingham, — which never had occurred to me before, though I was familiar with the roads leading thither, — the nearest horizon seemed proportionately to extend itself, and to embrace many Actons and Carlisles; and I thought I would not travel to see these places, and balk the Fates who placed them thus under my eyes. The most familiar and best-known facts leave no distinct impression on our minds; no man can tell how his horizon looks at evening. We do not know, till the time comes, which way the river runs, which hills range, or that the hill takes in our homestead in its sweep. At first our birth and existence sunder all things, as if, like a wedge, we had been thrust up through into Nature, and not till the wound heals do we begin to see her unity.

Page xxvii. — The passage beginning, "Here the Woodcutters" has nothing to do with the preceding passage on Music, and should have been detached from it. In connection with it, however, may now be read

that unpublished poem, never quite finished, the last lines of which were taken to enrich the epigram on *Mist*. The title here is—

FOG

Dull water-spirit and Protean god,
Descended cloud, fast anchored to the earth,
That drawest too much air for shallow coasts;
Thou ocean branch that flowest to the sun,
Incense of earth, perfumed with flowers;
Spirit of lakes and rivers, seas and rills,
Come to revisit now thy native scenes;
Night thoughts of earth, — dream drapery,
Dew cloth and fairy napkin;
Thou drifting wind-blown meadow of the air.

Page xxix. — On *Love and Friendship*, several poems and fragments appear in the newly discovered MSS. They show the same ideality and hyperbole which appear in the passages already published on these topics. For example, we discover the following lines, entitled *The Friend*, — not dated, but evidently as early as 1847: —

THE FRIEND

The great Friend
Dwells at the land's end, —
There lives he
Next to the Sea;

Fleets come and go,
Carrying commerce to and fro, —
But still sits he on the sand,
And maketh firm that headland;
Mariners steer them by his light,
Safely in the darkest night:
He holds no visible communion,
For his friendship is a union.
Many men dwell far in land,
But he alone sits on the strand,
Whether he ponders men or books
Ever still he seaward looks,
Feels the sea-breeze on his cheek,
At each word the landsmen speak;
From some distant port he hears,
Of the ventures of past years,
In the sullen ocean's roar
Of wrecks upon a distant shore;
In every companion's eye
A sailing vessel doth descry;
Marine news he ever reads
And the slightest glances heeds.

Near is India to him
Though his native shore is dim,
But the bark which long was due,
Never — never — heaves in view,
Which shall put an end to commerce
And bring back what it took from us,
(Which shall make Siberia free
Of the climes beyond the sea)
Fetch the Indies in its hold,

All their spices and their gold,
And men sail the sea no more, —
The sea itself become a shore
To a broader deeper sea,
A profounder mystery.

Page 11. — The following is a more complete amplification of the thought recorded at the top of the above page, with a poem suggested by it: —

There dwelt along at considerable distances on this interval a quiet agricultural and pastoral people, with every house its well (as we sometimes proved), and other customary fixtures; and every household, though never so still and remote, it received in the noon-tide its dinner hour and probably its dinner about these times. There they lived on, those New England people, farmer-lives, — father and grandfather and great-grandfather, on and on without noise; keeping up tradition, and expecting besides fair weather and abundant harvest, we did not learn what. Contented were they to live, since it was so contrived for them, and where their lives had fallen.

How little room is man,
He hath not reached his mystery's bourn,
Bred dreams of mines of treasure,
Which he neglect to measure.

For three years later
Drake, Doughty and his fellowmen,
Do circumnavigate each track of continental land,
Their fancy bearing wondering wand.
For unenquiring corpses lie more low
Than any life environ'd doth go,
One most ambitious stoic climbs to sight
To win the bounty of the Spanish Main
And Yonder clouds blown father'd day
Other unmoist vagrant fetching earthy.
Bank, Island, to last of great Lord,
Who hath so little from his birthplace stirred
He wanders through this low shallow and
Seeing his boldest thoughts whose unfurled,
Through this the so called world which he hugs in
Both hardly room or rest and harbour in.
Leaving his head yesterday some fellow found,
Some coastlipped meadow, where the kittens round
He wanders round until he ends drowning high,
And then lays down his aged head to die;
And this is life, this is that famous stage.

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 three-score years and ten
Walks to and from 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.
And 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-walléd world which his huge sin
Hath hardly room to rest and harbor in.
Bearing his head just o'er some fallow ground,
Some cowslipped meadows where the bitterns sound,
He wanders round until his end draws nigh,
And then lays down his aged head to die, —
And this is life;
This is that famous strife!

Page 62. — To this chapter the following on *Autumn and Winter* should be added: —

THE THREADBARE TREES

The threadbare trees so poor and thin,
  They are no wealthier than I,
But with as brave a core within,
  They rear their boughs to the October sky.

Poor knights they are that bravely wait
  The charge of winter's cavalry,
Keeping a simple Roman state,
  Discumbered of their Persian luxury.

I hearing get, who had but ears,
  And sight, who had but eyes before,
I moments live, who lived but years,
  And truth discern, who knew but learning's lore.

These changes we already beheld with prophetic vision, for summer passes into autumn in some unimaginable epoch and point of time, like the turning of a leaf. It is pleasant to hear once more the crackling flight of grasshoppers amid the stubble. It is pleasant when summer is drawing to a close to hear the cricket piping a Niebelungenlied in the grass.

The feathered race are, perhaps, the truest heralds of the season, since they appreciate a thousand delicate changes in the atmosphere

which is their own element, of which man cannot be aware. The occasional and transient notes of such birds as migrate early, heard in midsummer or later, are among the earliest indications of the advancing year, plaintively recalling the spring. The clear whistle of the oriole is occasionally heard among the elms at this time, as if striving to reawaken the love season, or, as if, in the long interval since the spring it had but paused a moment to secure its prey. It harmonizes with the aftermath springing under our feet. The faint, flitting note of the goldfinch marks the turning point of the year, and is heard in the gardens by the middle of August, as if this little harbinger of the Fall were prompting Nature to make haste. Its lisping, peeping note, so incessant and universal that it is hardly distinguished, more than the creak of the crickets, is one of Nature's ground-tones, and is associated with the rustling of the leaves and the swift lapse of time. The lark too sometimes sings again down in the meadow, as in the spring, and the robin peeps, and the bluebirds, old and young, revisit their boxes and hollow

trees, as if they would fain repeat the summer without the intervention of winter.

Dense flocks of bobolinks, russet and rustling like seeds of the meadow grass floating on the wind, or like ripe grain threshed out by the gale, rise before us in our walk. Each tuft gives up its bird. The purple finch or American linnet is seen early in October moving south in straggling flocks and alighting on the apple trees, reminding us of the pine and spruce, juniper and cedar, on whose berries it feeds. In its plumage are the crimson hues of October evenings, as if it had caught and preserved some of their beams. Many a serene evening lies snugly packed under its wing. Then, one after another these little passengers wing their way seasonably to the haunts of summer, with each a passing warning to man: —

> Until at length the north winds blow,
> And beating high mid ice and snow,
> The sturdy goose brings up the rear,
> Leaving behind the cold, cold year.

Page 83. — Continuing his remarks on Lovelace, Thoreau says:

Poetry is a purer draught of life.

Thursday. — I am pleased with the manner in which Quarles and his contemporaries speak of Nature. The utmost poetry of their expression is after all a sort of gallantry — of a knight to his lady. They do not speak as sincere lovers of Nature or as very conversant with her; but as possessing a thorough respect for her, and a good title to her acquaintance. They can speak of, and to her, well and manfully because their lips are not closed by affection. "The pale faced lady of the black-eyed light [*sic*]," says Quarles.

I do not think there was in that age an unusual devotion to Nature; but she certainly held her court then, and all authors were her gentlemen and esquires then, and had always ready an abundance of courtly expressions.

Quarles is always full-mouthed; he is not often weak or shallow, though he is coarse and untasteful. He writes lines which it employs the whole tongue to utter.

He runs in conceits, as well as Herbert. He uses many able-bodied and strong-back

words, which have a certain rustic fragrance and force, like countrymen come to town — as if now first devoted to literature, after having served sincere and stern purposes.

Page 104. — The following verses, with the prose accompanying them may be added under *Love* (see also bottom of page 106): —

THE VIRGIN

With her calm, inquiring eyes
She doth tempt the earth to rise;
With humility over all,
She doth tempt the sky to fall.
In her place she still doth stand,
A pattern unto the firm land;
While revolving spheres come round
To embrace her stable ground.

Page 108. — The following poem continues the thought recorded on the 108th page, and connects it with page 109: —

SOLITUDE

We walk in Nature still alone,
And know no one,
Discern no lineament nor feature
Of any creature.
Though all the firmament
Is o'er us bent.

Yet still we miss the grace
Of an intelligent and kindred face.
We still must seek the friend
Who does with Nature blend,
Who is the person in her mask,
He is the man we ask:
Who is the expression of her meaning,
Who is the uprightness of her leaning,
Who is the grown child of her weaning, —
The site of human life,
The face of Nature;
Some sure foundation
And nucleus of a nation.
We twain would walk together
Through every weather,
And see this aged Nature
Go with a bending stature.

I was made erect and lone,
And within me is the bone.
Still my vision will be clear,
Still my life will not be drear.
To the center all is near.
Where I sit there is my throne;
If age choose to sit apart,
If age choose, give me the start;
Take the sap and leave the heart.

But after all, men do not wend asunder, their courses do not diverge; but as the web of destiny is woven it is fulled, and they are

cast more and more into the centre. "Although friendship between good men is interrupted, still their principles remain unaltered. The stalk of the lotus may be broken, and the fibres remain connected." Persons are only the vessels which contain the nectar, and the hydrostatic paradox is the symbol of Love's law. Love finds its level and rises to its fountain-head in all breasts, and its slenderest column balances the ocean. —

> Love equals swift and slow
> And high and low,
> Racer and lame,
> The hunter and his game.

Friends are indeed the ancient and honorable of the earth, for this especially is a natural and durable league.

Because I stand aloof from politics, and devote myself to the search after truth, let me not be accused of a want of patriotism, or of indifference to my country. "On the contrary," as Anaxagoras replied in a like case, pointing to the heavens, "I esteem it infinitely." My country is free!

The authority of government, even such as I am willing to submit to — for I will

[illegible] Ministers of State can't care,
He cannot get release,
Administer in our affairs,
Nor settle in our peace,

'Tis ours to treat with kings,
And please our country's foes,
Than treat with conscience of the things
Which duty conscience knows.

There's not the heart of the great,
Nor heart of the mean,
And of them an Empire State
'Tis the Knights Queen

[illegible] as ever such a Queen, willing to submit to the Honorable know and can do better than I,

What is your whole Republic worth?
Ye hold out vulgar luxury,
Why will ye be departing earth
When all of heaven is yours?

He's governed well who rules wisely,
Who despot-vetoes him,
There's no defaulter steals his pelf,
Nor revolution grim.

'Tis neither silver says nor gold
'S the better currency,
The only piece that will hold
Is earnest honesty.

cheerfully obey those who know and can do better than I, and in many things even those who know and can do much less — is still an impure one: to be strictly just it must have the sanction and consent of the governed. It can have no pure right over my person and property but what I concede to it. —

Spes sibi quisque.
Each one his own hope.

TRUE FREEDOM

Wait not till slaves pronounce the word
To set the captive free, —
Be free yourselves, be not deferred,
And farewell, slavery!

Ye all are slaves, ye have your price,
And gang but cries to gang;
Then rise, the highest of ye rise; —
I hear your fetters clang.

Think not the tyrant sits afar;
In your own breasts ye have
The District of Columbia,
And power to free the slave.

The warmest heart the north doth breed
Is still too cold and far;
The colored man's release must come
From outcast Africa.

"Make haste and set the captive free!"
Are ye so free that cry?
The lowest depths of slavery
Leave freedom for a sigh.

What is your whole Republic worth?
Ye hold out vulgar lures;
Why will ye be disparting earth
When all of heaven is yours?

He's governed well who rules himself,
No despot vetoes him;
There's no defaulter steals his pelf,
Nor revolution grim.

'Tis neither silver, rags, nor gold,
'S the better currency;
The only specie that will hold,
Is current honesty.

The minister of state hath cares,
He cannot get release,—
Administer his own affairs,
Nor settle his own peace.

'Tis easier to treat with kings
And please our country's foes,
Than treat with Conscience of the things
Which only Conscience knows.

There's but the party of the great,
And party of the mean;
And if there is an Empire State,
'Tis the upright, I ween.

Ages are past; as the work of today is present, so some flitting perspectives and demi-experiences of the life that is in Nature are in time veritably future; or rather outside to time, perennial, young, divine, in the wind and rain which never die.

OUR NEIGHBORS

The respectable folks,
Where dwell they?
They whisper in the oaks,
And they sigh in the hay,
Summer and winter, night and day,
Out on the meadow, there dwell they.
They drink at the brooks and the pilgrim's cup,[1]
And with the owl and the nighthawk sup;
They suck the breath of the morning wind,
And they make their own all the good they find.
They never die,
Nor snivel nor cry,
For they have a lease of immortality.
A sound estate forever they mend,
To every asker readily lend,
To the ocean, wealth,
To the meadow, health,
To Time, his length,
To the rocks, strength,

[1] The four lines in italics are struck out by the author in the original.

To the stars, light,
To the weary, night,
To the busy, day,
To the idle, play, —
And so their good cheer never ends,
For all are their debtors and all their friends.

Such is a race which has long had a foothold in this land, and which these vagrant immigrants shall never displace.

TRANSCENDENTAL FARMING

What have I to do with plows? I cut another furrow than you see. Where the off ox treads, there is it not; it is farther off; where the nigh ox walks, it will not be; it is nigher still. If corn fails, my crop fails not. What of drought, what of rain!

My ground is high,
But 'tis not dry;
What you call dew
Comes filtering through.

Buy a farm? Buy a broom! What have I to pay for a farm with, that a farmer will take? —

If from your price ye will not swerve,
Why then I'll think the gods reserve
A greater bargain there above;
Out of their sup'rabundant love,

Prodigies.

Ye powers that rule your realms
And circumscribed power,
Not wide as are my dreams,
Nor vast as is that hour.

What can ye give which I have not?
What can ye take which I have got?
Can ye defend the dangerless?
Can ye inherit weakedness?

Can ye entreat the hour not earned?
Or can ye scare who will not learn?
Can ye infame who have not turned,
To virtue's cause or Love's cause?

Ye are late comers into life,
Who have not earned your heritage,
But proud your right to title and to
Love to your throne, and tithe and homage.

Have meantime better for me cared,
And so will get my stock prepared;
Plows of new pattern, hoes the same,
Designed a different soil to tame;
And sow my seed broadcast in air,
Certain to reap my harvest there.

INDEPENDENCE

Ye princes, keep your realms
  And circumscribéd power,-
Not wide as are my dreams,
  Nor rich as is this hour.

What can ye give which I have not?
What can ye take which I have got?
Can ye defend the dangerless?
Can ye inherit nakedness?

Can ye instruct who have not learned?
  Or can ye learn who will not hear?
Can ye inflame who have not burned
  To Virtue's cause or Love's career?

Ye are late comers into life,
  Who have not learned your heritage,
But proved your right with toil and strife
  Unto your thrones, and title war to wage.

[We close this Appendix with an introductory prose passage, and a poem of considerable length, originally written, as shown by a date on the Journal-page, Friday, Octo-

ber 14, 1842; but used in part by Thoreau in the manuscripts of his *Winter Walk*, which were published by Emerson a year later in *The Dial* of October, 1843. But this scrupulous editor omitted most of the author's verses. It seems best, therefore, to print them here entire, with the prose immediately preceding them in the preserved fragment of the Journal in which they appear. The whole of the verses were originally written on pages 194–198 of the Journal for the autumn of 1842, — long since destroyed, — after using most of its contents either in *The Week* or in *Walden*.]

THE WINTER WALK

Silently we unlatch the door, letting the drift fall in, and step forth like knights encased in steel — to sport with the cutting air. Still through the drifts I see the farmer's early candle — like a paled star — emitting a lonely beam from the cottage indoors as, one by one, the sluggish smoke begins to ascend from the chimneys of the farm-houses 'midst the trees. Thus from each domestic altar does incense go up each morning to the

heavens. Once the stars lose some of their sparkle and a deep blue mist skirts the eastern horizon, a lurid and brazen light foretells the approaching day. You hear the sound of woodchopping at the farmer's door — the baying of the housedog and the distant clarion of cocks. The frosty air seems to convey only, and with new distinctness, the finer particles of sound to our ears. It comes clear and round like a bell, as if there were fewer impediments than in the green atmosphere of summer, to make it faint and ragged. And beside, all Nature is tight drawn and sonorous like seasoned wood. Sounds now come to our ears from a greater distance in the horizon than in the summer. For then Nature is never silent, and the chirp of crickets is incessant, but now the farthest and faintest sound takes possession of the vacuum. Even the barking of dogs and lowing of cattle is melodious. The jingling of the ice on the trees is meet and liquid. I have heard a sweeter music in some lone dale, where flowed a rill released by the noonday sun from its own frosty fetters — while the icicles were melting upon the

apple trees, and the ever present chic-a-dee and nuthatch flitted about.

A WINTER AND SPRING SCENE

The willows droop,
The alders stoop,
The pheasants group
  Beneath the snow;
The fishes glide
From side to side,
In the clear tide,
  The ice below.

The ferret weeps,
The marmot sleeps,
The owlet keeps
  In his snug nook.
The rabbit leaps,
The mouse out-creeps,
The flag out-peeps,
  Beside the brook.

The snow-dust falls,
The otter crawls,
The partridge calls
  Far in the wood;
The traveller dreams,
The tree-ice gleams,
The blue jay screams
  In angry mood.

The apples thaw,
The ravens caw,

The squirrels gnaw
  The frozen fruit;
To their retreat
I track the feet
Of mice that eat
  The apple's root.

The axe resounds,
And bay of hounds,
And tinkling sounds
  Of wintry fame;
The hunter's horn
Awakes the dawn
On field forlorn,
  And frights the game.

The tinkling air
Doth echo bear
To rabbit's lair,
  With dreadful din;
She scents the air,
And far doth fare,
Returning where
  She did begin.

The fox stands still
Upon the hill
Not fearing ill
  From trackless wind.
But to his foes
The still wind shows
In treacherous snows
  His tracks behind.

Now melts the snow
In the warm sun.
The meadows flow,
The streamlets run.
The spring is born,
The wild bees bum,
The insects hum,
And trees drop gum.
And winter's gone,
And summer's come.

The chic-a-dee
Lisps in the tree,
The winter bee
  Not fearing frost;
The small nuthatch
The bark doth scratch
Some worm to catch
  At any cost.

The catkins green
Cast o'er the scene
A summer sheen,
A genial glow.

I melt, I flow,
  And rippling run,
Like melting snow
  In this warm sun.

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