

EVENTS OF 35TH STANZA

The 36th Stanza in the Life of Henry Thoreau

FALL 1852	JULY 1852	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER
WINTER 1852/1853	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER 1852
SPRING 1853	JANUARY 1853	FEBRUARY	MARCH
SUMMER 1853	APRIL	MAY	JUNE 1853

Following the death of [Jesus Christ](#) there was a period of readjustment that lasted for approximately one million years.

-[Kurt Vonnegut](#), THE SIRENS OF TITAN



JULY 1852



1852/1853: [Henry David Thoreau](#)'s 36th stanza began on his birthday, July 12th, Monday, 1852.

- A 2d expedition into the Maine woods.
- The 1st parts of A YANKEE IN CANADA appeared in [Putnam's Monthly](#).
- Prepublication excerpts from [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) appeared in [Putnam's Monthly](#).
- [Henry](#) took his sister [Sophia](#) in his boat up the Assabet river to a little island on which there was a spring in which the herb of St. Barbara, a rock cress that looks like mustard, was growing.
- Gazing up in horror and shock into the trees at the mangled and blackened body fragments of employees who had just been torn to shreds by the gunpowder they were in the process of manufacturing for a wage, [Henry](#) had been feeling that the lives of men were other than innocent, and that there was in nature an avenging power. However, several days later he found himself musing less about the non-innocence of the human — than about the innocence of the inhuman: "How innocent are Nature's purposes! How unambitious! Her elections are not Presidential. The springing & blossoming of this flower do not depend on the votes of men." The score he was calculating was working out to be: the inhuman, 1, the human, 0.

EVENTS OF 37TH STANZA


1852-1853

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- As he had done with his brother John Thoreau at the beginning of fall in 1839, at the beginning of this fall season [Henry](#) went river-sailing. This time he went with [Ellery Channing](#) to Peterboro and Mount Monadnock and returned from Troy, New Hampshire by train (when Ellery would return to Concord he would find his wife preparing to take their children and separate from him).
- He took his Aunt [Maria Thoreau](#) and 3 other Concord ladies for a winter afternoon of collecting chestnuts during which they managed to gather, the ground being bare and the leaves not frozen, all of 6 1/2 quarts.
- One day in the [Concord](#) woods, [Henry](#) spent all day hunting for a bee tree, to get its honey. He didn't get any but he told us everything about this quest –just everything –and it is fascinating.

BACKGROUND EVENTS OF 1852


BACKGROUND EVENTS OF 1853

 July 12, Monday, [1852](#): [Alfred Russel Wallace](#)'s ship sailed from South America on his return to England, with an abundance of collected biological specimens.





Leland Stanford of Wisconsin settled in [San Francisco](#).

[Henry Thoreau](#) for the 3d time (Dr. [Bradley P. Dean](#) has noticed) deployed in his journal a weather term that had been originated by [Luke Howard](#): “The clouds –**cumuli** lie in high piles along the Southern horizon – glowing downy or cream colored –broken into irregular summits in the form of bears erect –or demigods or rocking stones –infant Herculeses –and still we think that from their darker bases a thunder shower may issue. In other parts of the heavens are long stratified whitish clouds –and in the NW floating isles –white above & darker beneath.”¹



July 12. I observed this morning a row of several dozen swallows  perched on the telegraph wire by the bridge –& ever & anon a part of them would launch forth as with one consent –circle a few moments over the water or meadow and return to the wire again.

2 Pm to the Assabet.

Still no rain– The clouds –cumuli lie in high piles along the Southern horizon –glowing downy or cream colored –broken into irregular summits in the form of bears erect –or demigods or rocking stones –infant Herculeses –and still we think that from their darker bases a thunder shower may issue. In other parts of the heavens are *long* stratified whitish clouds –and in the NW floating isles – white above & darker beneath. The king bird [**Eastern Kingbird**  *Tyrannus tyrannus*] is active over the causeway notwithstanding the heat. & near the woods I hear the huckleberry bird [**Field Sparrow**  *Spizella pusilla*] –& the song sparrow [**Song Sparrow**  *Melospiza melodia*]. The Turtle dove [**Mourning Dove**  *Zenaida macroura*] flutters before you in shady wood paths or looks out with extended neck –losing its balance –slow to leave its perch. Now for another fluvial walk. There is always a current of air above the water blowing up or down the course of the river – so that this is the coolest highway. Divesting yourself of all clothing but your shirt & hat which are to protect your exposed parts from the sun –you are prepared for the fluvial excursion. You choose what depth you like –tucking your toga higher or or lower –as you take the deep middle of the road or the shallow side-walks. Here is a road where no dust was ever known –no intolerable drouth. Now your feet expand on a smooth sandy bottom –now contract timidly on pebbles –now slump in genial fatty greasy saponaceous mud amid the pads. You scare out whole schools of small [breams](#) & perch & sometimes a pickerel which have taken shelter from the sun under the pads. This river is so clear compared with the South branch or main stream –that all their secrets are betrayed to you. Or you



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meet with & interrupt a turtle taking a more leisurely walk up the stream. Ever and anon you cross some furrow in the sand made by a muskrat leading off to right or left to their galleries in the bank –& you thrust your foot into the entrance which is just below the surface of the water –& is strewn with grass & rushes of which they make their nests. In shallow water near the shore your feet at once detect the presence of springs in the bank emptying in –by the sudden coldness of the water –& there if you are thirsty you dig a little well in the sand with your hands, and when you return after it has settled & clarified itself get a draught of pure cold water their– The fishes are very forward to find out such places– And I have observed that a frog will occupy a cool spring however small. The most striking phenomenon in this stream is the heaps of small stones about the size of a walnut –more or less –which line the shore –in shallow water –one every rod or two. The recent ones frequently rising by more than 1/2 their height above the water at present *i.e.* a foot or 1 1/2 feet –& sharply conical –the older flattened by the elements and greened over with the thread like stem of *ranunculus filiformis* with its minute bright yellow flowers Some of these heaps contain two cartloads of stones –and as probably the creature that raised them took up one at a time It must have been a stupendous task– They are from the size of a hen’s egg down to the smallest gravel –and some are so perfect that I cannot believe they were made before the river fell. Now you walk through fields of the small *Potamogeton* (*heterophyllus* or *hybridus*) now in flower.– Now through the glossy pads of the white or the yellow water-lily –stepping over the now closed buds of the latter –now pause in the shade of a swamp white oak (–up to your middle in the cool element) to which the very skaters and water-bugs confine themselves for the most part It is an objection to walking in the mud that from time to time you have to pick the leaches off you The stinkpots shell covered with mud & fine green weeds –gives him exactly the appearance of a stone on the bottom –& I noticed a large snapping turtle on one of the dark brown rocks in the middle of the river– (apparently for coolness in company with a painted tortoise) so completely the color of the rock –that if it had not been for his head curved upwards to a point from anxiety I should not have detected him. Thus nature subjects them to the same circumstances with the stones & paints them alike as with one brush for their safety.

What art can surpass the rows of maples & elms & swamp white oaks which the water plants along the river –I mean in variety & gracefulness –conforming to the curves of the river–

1. [William M. White](#) has incorporated some of this talk of the clouds in his “found poetry” based on Thoreau’s journal entries:

*In other parts of the heavens
Are long stratified whitish clouds,
And in the northwest floating isles,
White above and darker beneath.*

*The kingbird is active over the causeway,
Notwithstanding the heat,
And near the woods
I hear the huckleberry-bird
And the song sparrow.*

*The turtle dove flutters before you
In shady wood-paths,
Or looks out with extended neck,
Losing its balance,
Slow to leave its perch.*

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Excepting those fences which are mere boundaries of individual property –the walker can generally perceive the reason for those which he is obliged to get over– This wall runs along just on the edge of the hill & following all its windings to separate the more level & cultivateable summit from the slope which is only fit for pasture –or woodlot –& that other wall below divides the pasture or woodlot –from the richer low grass ground or potatoe field. &c– Even these crooked walls are not always unaccountable & lawless.

The mower perchance cuts some plants which I have never seen in flower. I hear the toads still at night together with bull frogs but not so universally nor loud as formerly. I go to walk at twilight – at the same time that toads go to their walks and are seen hopping about the sidewalks or the pump. Now a quarter after nine –as I walk along the river bank long after starlight –and perhaps an hour or more after sunset I see some of those high pillared clouds of the day in the SW still reflecting a downy light from the regions of day they are so high. It is a pleasing reminiscence of the day in the midst of the deepening shadows of the night. –The daw bugs hum around me as I sit on the river bank beyond the ash-tree– Warm as is the night –one of the warmest in the whole year –there is an aurora a low arch of a circle in the north. The twilight endstonight apparently about 1/4 before 10. There is no moon²



“The Iron Horse” was appearing in Sartain’s Union Magazine (related to “Sounds,” paragraphs 5-13):

A stereotyped but unconscious despair is concealed under what are called the games and amusements of mankind. There is no play

2. William M. White’s version of a portion of the journal entry is:

*Ever and anon you cross some furrow in the sand,
Made by a muskrat,
Leading off to right or left
To their galleries in the bank,
And you thrust your foot into the entrance,
Which is just below the surface of the water
And is strewn with grass and rushes,
Of which they make their nests.*

*In shallow water near the shore,
Your feet at once detect the presence of springs
In the bank emptying in,
By the sudden coldness of the water,
And there, if you are thirsty,
You dig a little well in the sand with your hands,
And when you return,
After it has settled and clarified itself,
Get a draught of pure cold water there.*



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in them, for this comes after work.

“Quiet Desperation”

It is worth the while to remember always that whether we are well or sick rich or poor virtuous or vicious, we are equally and continuously invited to pursue the only right way -& that this is always glorious beyond conception- Indeed to forget this to lose our faith is really the greatest misfortune that can befall us.

How much stereotyped & what is worst of all unconscious despair is concealed under what are called the games & amusements of mankind. [Undecipherable words] have given up or indeed have never taken up or been taken up by Hope - They not only [undecipherable words] but they have the slenderest expectations on the future. They are moral bankrupts. (Shanley 53)

“Quiet Desperation”

I was also serenaded by a hooting owl. Near at hand you could fancy it the most melancholy sound in Nature, as if she meant by this to stereotype and make permanent in her choir the dying moans of a human being, -some poor weak relic of mortality who has left hope behind, and howls like an animal, yet with human sobs, on entering the dark valley, made more awful by a certain gurgling melodiousness,- I find myself beginning with the letters gl and I try to imitate it, -expressive of a mind which has reached the gelatinous mildewy stage in the mortification of all healthy and courageous thought. It reminded me of ghouls and idiots and insane howlings. But now one answers from far woods in a strain made really melodious by distance, -*Hoo hoo hoo, hoorer hoo*; and indeed for the most part it suggested only pleasing associations, whether heard by day or night, summer or winter. (125)



I rejoice that there are owls. Let them do the idiotic and maniacal hooting for men. It is a sound admirably suited to swamps and twilight woods which no day illustrates, suggesting a vast and undeveloped nature which men have not recognized. They represent the stark twilight and unsatisfied thoughts which all have. All day the sun has shone on the surface of some savage swamp, where the double spruce stands hung with usnea lichens, and small hawk circulate above, and the chickadee [**Black-capped Chickadee** **Parus atricapillus**] lisps amid the evergreens, and the partridge [**Ruffed Grouse** **Bonasa umbellus**] and rabbit skulk beneath; but now a more dismal and fitting day dawns, and a different race of creatures awakes to express the meaning of Nature there. (126)



I should not have wondered by this time to find that they had their respective musical bands stationed on some eminent chip, and played their national airs the while, to excite the slow and cheer the dying combatants. I was myself excited somewhat even as if they had been men. The more you think about it, the less the difference. (230)



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July 13, Tuesday, 1852: [Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Sophia Elizabeth Thoreau](#) commenting that Concord was “just as idiotic as ever in relation to the spirits and their knockings,” and expressing his own skeptical attitude that “If I could be brought to believe in the things which they believe, I should make haste to get rid of my certificate of stock in this and the next world’s enterprises, and buy a share in the first Immediate Annihilation Company that offered.”

SPIRITUALISM



To: Sophia Thoreau

From: HDT

Date: 13 July 52

Concord July 13th '52

Dear Sophia,

I am a miserable letter-writer, but perchance if I should say this at length, and with sufficient emphasis & regret, it would make a letter. I am sorry that nothing transpires here of much moment; or, I should rather say, that I am so slackened and rusty, like the telegraph wire this season, that no wind that blows can extract music from me. I am not on the trail of any elephants or mastodons, but have succeeded in trapping only a few ridiculous mice, which cannot feed my imagination. I have become sadly scientific. I would rather come upon the vast valley-like “spore” only of some celestial beast which this world’s woods can no longer sustain, than spring my net over a bushel of moles. You must do better in those woods where you are. You must have some adventures to relate and repeat for years to come — which will eclipse even Mother’s voyage to Goldsborough & Sissiboo. They say that [Mr Pierce the presidential candidate](#) was in town last 5th of July visiting [Hawthorne](#) whose college chum he was, and that Hawthorne is writing a life of him for electioneering purposes. Concord is just as idiotic as ever in relation to the spirits and their knockings. Most people here believe in a spiritual world which no respectable junk bottle — which had not met with a slip — would condescend to contain even a portion of for a moment — whose atmosphere would extinguish a candle let down into it, like a well that wants airing — in spirits which the very bull frogs in our meadows would blackball. Their evil genius is seeing how low it can

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degrade them. The hooting of owls —the croaking of frogs —is celestial wisdom in comparison. If I could be brought to believe in the things which they believe — I should make haste to get rid of my certificate of stock in this & the next world's enterprises, and buy a share in the first Immediate Annihilation Company that offered— I would exchange my immortality for a glass of small beer this hot weather.

Where are the heathen? Was there ever any superstition before? And yet I suppose there may be a vessel this very moment setting sail from the coast of North America to that of Africa with a missionary on board! Consider the dawn —& the sun rise —the rainbow & the evening — the words of Christ & the aspirations of all the saints! Hear music! See —smell —taste —feel —hear —anything —& then hear these idiots inspired by the cracking of a restless board — humbly asking “Please Spirit, if you cannot answer by knocks, answer by tips of the table”.!!!!!! Yrs H. D. Thoreau



July 13, Tuesday: A Journal. —a book that shall contain a record of all your joy —your extacy.


4 Pm to R.W.E's woodlot S of Walden. The pool by Walden is now **quite yellow** with the common utricularia (vulgaris) This morning the heavens were overcast with a fog which did not clear off till late in the forenoon —& heard the muttering of thunder behind it about 5 Am and thought it would rain at last but there were dewy cobwebs on the grass —and it did not rain but we had another hot dry day after all. The northern wild red cherry of the woods is ripe —handsome bright red but scarcely edible— Also sooner than I expected huckleberries both blue & black —the former not described by Gray or Big —in the greater abundance —and must have been ripe several days —they are thick enough to pick— The black only here & there The former is apparently a variety of the latter blue with bloom & a tough or thick skin. There are evidently several kinds of huckleberries and blueberries not described by botanists. Of the very early blueberries at least two varieties one glossy black with dark green leaves the other a rich light blue with bloom & yellowish green leaves —& more kinds I remember. I found the vaccinium Corymbosum well ripe on an exposed hill side. Each day now I scare up woodcocks by shady springs & swamps The dark purple amelanchier are the sweetest berries I have tasted yet. One who walks the woods & hills daily —expecting to see the first berry that turns —will be surprised at last to find them ripe & thick before he is aware of it —ripened he cannot tell how long before —in some more favorable situation. It is impossible to say what day almost what week the huckleberries begin to be ripe unless you are acquainted with & daily visit every huckleberry bush in the town —at least every place where they grow. Already the golden rod apparently Solidago stricta —Willow leaved G preaches of the lapse of time on the Walden road. How many a tale its yellow tells!— The polygala Sanguinea & P cruciata in Bristers meadow —both numerous & well out— The last has a fugacious? spicy scent in which methinks I detect the scent of nutmegs —afterward I find that it is the lower part of the stem & root which is most highly scented like checquerberry & not fugacious. The verbena urticifolia white vervain. Succory or Cichorium intybus. It appears to shut up this hot weather. Is that nettle like plant by the wall below Mrs Heywoods —Urtica gracilis? now in blossom. Polygonum aviculare —goose-grass about the door.

The weather has been remarkably warm for a week or 10 days —the thermometer at 95 degrees more or less —& we have had no rain. You have not thought of cold or of taking cold night or day, but only how you should be cool enough. Such weather as this the only use of clothing is to cover nakedness —and to protect the body from the sun. It is remarkable that though it would be a great luxury to throw aside all clothing now —except one thin robe to keep off the sun —yet throughout the whole community not one is found to do it.



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 July 14, Wednesday, 1852: It was after the Hawthornes completed their move from Lenox, Massachusetts to West Newton that THE BLITHEDALE ROMANCE appeared.³ This novel had, in the judgment of Henry James, Margaret Fuller as Zenobia, a major character who commits suicide from unrequited love.

The novel also mentioned her by name in a most disconcerting manner, as a friend of the narrator:

As I did not immediately offer to receive the letter, she [Priscilla] drew it back, and held it against her bosom, with both hands clasped over it, in a way that had probably grown habitual to her...it forcibly struck me that her air, though not her figure, and the expression of her face, but not its features, had a resemblance to what I had often seen in a friend of mine, one of the most gifted women of the age. I cannot describe it. The points, easiest to convey to the reader, were, a certain curve of the shoulders, and a partial closing of the eyes, which seemed to look more penetratingly into my own eyes, through the narrowed apertures, than if they had been open at full width. It was a singular anomaly of likeness co-existing with perfect dissimilitude....

"Priscilla," I inquired, "did you ever see Miss Margaret Fuller?"

"No," she answered.

"Because," said I, "you reminded me of her, just now, and it happens, strangely enough, that this very letter is from her!"

Priscilla, for whatever reason, looked very much discomposed.

"I wish people would not fancy such odd things in me!" she said, rather petulantly. "How could I possibly make myself resemble this lady, merely by holding her letter in my hand?"

"Certainly, Priscilla, it would puzzle me to explain it," I replied. "Nor do I suppose that the letter had anything to do with it. It was just a coincidence — nothing more."

Rufus William Griswold appeared in THE BLITHEDALE ROMANCE as "Doctor Griswold."

In this year Nathaniel also authored a campaign biography of Franklin Pierce that would make him deserving of a political plum. In this writing he did not name a cow after Fuller or suggest that she might commit suicide, or vent any of his other pet peeves, but he did something far worse: this writing was utterly condemnatory of the sort of abolitionist anti-slavery activities of which his neighbor Henry Thoreau, among others, had been

3. A claim of copyright has been made for THE SCARLET LETTER in 1962, for FANSHAWE and THE BLITHEDALE ROMANCE in 1964, for THE HOUSE OF SEVEN GABLES in 1965, and for THE MARBLE FAUN in 1968, by Ohio State UP. (We presume that those ostensibly appropriate and global copyright claims could actually have covered not more than whatever value was added to the works by that press at that time, such as their reformatting and pagination and suchlike.)

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guilty, and yet it was not an honest or sincere piece of writing.



Statesman Chum and Pretty Boy

President [Franklin Pierce](#) was in fact a [proslavery](#) drunkard whose qualification to be President was that he had been a totally undistinguished general in the war upon [Mexico](#). [Horace Mann, Sr.](#) commented in regard to the writing of this campaign biography that if Hawthorne could make out Pierce to be a great man or a brave man, “it will be the greatest work of fiction he ever wrote.” [Hawthorne](#) handled the hot matter of [slavery](#) in this campaign biography by suggesting that, for the present, [slavery](#) seemed to be in accord with God’s great plan, and that if we simply let it be, eventually in God’s good time –if indeed it was his will that it should be vanquished– human [slavery](#) would “vanish like a dream.”

And, the creative writer insisted, this was not mere puffery, it was what he really believed, those “are my real sentiments.” The opportunistic careerism of Pierce, it seemed, had been founded upon the highest moral principle, that of getting results, that of satisfying one’s lust to leave one’s mark upon the world which one has habited. So conveniently, these cronies had overseen the entire course of human history and had observed globally the fact that:

There is no instance, in all history, of the human will and intellect having perfected any great moral reform by methods which it adopted to that end.

Thoreau was continuing his reading in the racist volume about human skulls by [Professor Samuel George Morton](#) of the University of Pennsylvania, and making notes in his Indian Notebook #6 and his Fact Book:⁴

CRANIA AMERICANA



July 14. A writer who does not speak out of a full experience uses torpid words, wooden or lifeless words. such words as “humanitary,” which have a paralysis in their tails.

Is it not more attractive to be a sailor than a farmer? The farmer’s son is restless and wants to go to

4. Note carefully here, how our guy’s spirit seems incapable of being harmed by the toxic nature of these racist materials! Isn’t that simply marvelous? Can that be described by any other word than “marvelous”?

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sea. Is it not better to plow the ocean than the land? In the former case the plow runs further in its furrow before it turns. You may go round the world before the mast, but not behind the plow.

[Morton](#) quotes Wafer as saying of some albinos among the Indians of Darien that “they are quite white, but their whiteness is like that of a horse, quite different from the fair or pale European, as they have not the least tincture of a blush or sanguine complexion.... Their eyebrows are milk-white, as is likewise the hair of their heads, which is very fine, inclining to a curl, and growing to the length of six or eight inches.... They seldom go abroad in the daytime, the sun being disagreeable to them, and causing their eyes, which are weak and poring, to water, especially if it shines towards them yet they see very well by moonlight, from which we call them moon-eyed.” In Drake’s “Collection of Voyages.” Neither in our thoughts in these moonlight walks, methinks, is there “the least tincture of a blush or sanguine complexion,” but we are, perchance, intellectually and morally albinos, children of Endymion whose parents have walked much by moonlight. Walking much by moonlight, conversing with the moon, makes us, then, albinos. Methinks we should rather represent Endymion in colorless marble, or in the whiteness of marble, than painted of the ruddy color of ordinary youths. Saw to-day for the first time this season fleets of yellow butterflies dispersing before us, [as] we rode along berrying on the Walden road. Their yellow fleets are in the offing. Do I ever see them in numbers off the road? They are a yellow flower that blossoms generally about this time. Like a mackerel fleet, with their small hulls and great sails. Collected now in compact but gorgeous assembly in the road, like schooners in a harbor, a haven; now suddenly dispersing on our approach and filling the air with yellow snowflakes in their zigzag flight, or as when a fair wind calls those schooners out and disperses them over the broad ocean. How deep or perhaps slaty sky-blue are those blueberries that grow in the shade! It is an unexpected and thrilling discovery to find such ethereal fruits in dense drooping clusters under the fresh green of oak and hickory sprouts. Those that grow in the sun appear to be the same species, only to have lost their bloom and freshness, and hence are darker. [Vide page 283]

E.C. DRAKE

ENDYMION

The youth gets together his materials to build a bridge to the moon, or perchance a palace or temple on the earth, and at length the middle-aged man concludes to build a wood-shed with them.

Trees have commonly two growths in the year, a spring and a fall growth, the latter sometimes equalling the former, and you can see where the first was checked whether by cold or drouth, and wonder what there was in the summer to produce this check, this blight. So is it with man; most have a spring growth only, and never get over this first check to their youthful hopes; but plants of hardier constitution, or perchance planted in a more genial soil, speedily recover themselves, and, though they bear the scar or knot in remembrance of their disappointment, they push forward again and have a vigorous fall growth which is equivalent to a new spring. These two growths are now visible on the oak sprouts, the second already nearly equalling the first.

Murder will out. [Morton](#) detects the filthiness of the lower class of the ancient Peruvians by the hair of old mummies being “charged with desiccated vermin, which, though buried for centuries in the sand, could not possibly be mistaken for anything else.”

(Thoreau would use the material about the albino “tribe” of native Americans, which he had obtained from Drake’s “Collection of Voyages” and mentioned in the above journal passage, in his essay “Night and Moonlight.”)

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July 15, Thursday, [1852](#): The New-York [Times](#) reported that Lola Montez had written to the editor, asking for that newspaper to apologize for having described her as a brazen prostitute who was hiding herself in shame after having taken advantage of men and who, also, was receiving the benefit of public charity (although in her letter she threatened legal action, no such admission would be forthcoming).

From its inception, the Peters Colony in Texas had been embroiled in controversy regarding the terms of agreement between the Texas Emigration and Land Company and the settlers it had recruited. [The "Hedgcoxe War of 1852," also known as the "Peters Colony Rebellion,"](#) an armed uprising of Texas colonists protesting what they viewed as an attempt by the Texas Emigration and Land Company to invalidate their land claims, had arisen when on February 10th, 1852 the Texas Legislature had enacted a compromise law according to which these colonists were to be given new guidelines and extended time in which to file their claims, while the company would be provided with an additional 1,088,000 acres of land. The colonists had continued their protests although Henry Oliver Hedgcoxe, agent of the Texas Emigration and Land Company, had alleged that the colonists had been granted until August 4th, 1852 to establish their claims. At a mass meeting of colonists in Dallas on this day, the agent was accused of fraud and corruption. On the following day, July 16th, 1852, [John Jay Good](#) would lead about 100 of the armed men of this mass meeting to Hedgcoxe's office in Collin County, seize the land company's files and deliver them to the Dallas County Courthouse. Hedgcoxe would flee to Austin, Texas on the next day, July 17th, 1852. On February 7, 1853 an amendment to the compromise law would be passed, satisfactory to both sides.



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



July 16, Friday, [1852](#): According to Frederick Karl's biography of [George Eliot](#), Marian Evans wrote to [Herbert Spencer](#) basically saying that she couldn't live without him. –He would sluff her off, introducing her to a friend of his, pretending to others that her nose was simply too long for his exacting tastes (it is probable that they were never intimate, and even that he died still a virgin).



Melodien-Quadrille op.112 by [Johann Baptist Strauss II](#) was performed for the initial time, in the Volksgarten, Vienna.

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



In the ["Hedgcoxe War of 1852," also known as the "Peters Colony Rebellion,"](#) an armed uprising of Texas colonists protesting what they viewed as an attempt by the Texas Emigration and Land Company to invalidate their land claims, [John Jay Good](#) led about 100 armed colonists to the Collin County office of agent of the Texas Emigration and Land Company Henry Oliver Hedgcoxe, seize the land company's files, and deliver them to the Dallas County Courthouse. Hedgcoxe would flee to Austin, Texas on the following day, July 17th, 1852. On February 7, 1853 an amendment to the compromise law would be passed, satisfactory to both sides.

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July 16, Friday: *Chenopodium album*(?) Pigweed. The common form of the arrow head with larger clear white flowers. Also another arrowhead with a leaf shaped not –not in flower. *Xyris* — — — yellow eyed grass –with 3 pretty yellow petals atop. The forget me not is still abundant. There is sport in the boys watermill which grinds no corn & saws no logs –& yields no money –but not in the man’s. *Pyrus arbutifolia melanocarpa* –fruit begins to be black. *Cephalanthus occidentalis* button-bush– The bass on Conantum is a very rich sight now –though the flowers are somewhat stale –a solid mass of verdure & of flowers with its massed & rounded outline– Its twigs are drooping weighed down with pendulous flowers –so that when you stand directly under it & look up you see one mass of flowers –a flowery canopy– Its conspicuous leaflike bracts too have the effect of flowers. The tree resounds with the hum of bees –bumble bees & honey bees –rose bugs & butterflies also are here— — a perfect susurrus –a sound as C says unlike any other in nature –not like the wind as that is like the sea. The bees abound on the flowers of the smooth sumac now. The branches of this tree touch the ground –and it has somewhat the appearance of being weighed down with flowers. The air is full of sweetness. The tree is full of poetry. I observe the yellow butterflies everywhere in the fields and on the pontederias –which now give a faint blue tinge to the sides of the rivers.– I hear the link link fall like note of the bobolink (?) in the meadows –he has lost the bobo off. Is it the Goldfinch that goes twittering over but which I cannot see? This is a still thoughtful day –the air full of vapors which shade the earth preparing rain for the morrow. The sarsaparilla berries are black. The weeds begin to be high in low grounds & low wood paths –the *Eupatorium purpureum* & Golden rods &c suggesting a certain fecundity & vigor in nature –so that we love to wade through their ranks. The *Rhixia Virginica* the meadow beauty high colored, more beautiful than you remembered. The *stachys aspera* or hedge nettles looking like a white *prunella* with a long spike in the meadows. The *platanthera lacera* ragged Orchis –an unpainted flower. Is that delicate rose purple flower in the Miles swamp with a long slender pannicle & large leaves in a sort of whorl with long petioles the *Desmodium acuminatum* –pointed leaved tick-trefoil or *hedysarum*? The *lechea major* larger pin weed everywhere in dry fields– Is it open?



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July 17, Saturday, [1852](#): Salvatore Cammarano died in Naples, about a week after substantially completing the libretto to "Il Trovatore." Although the outline was complete, part of the 3d act and all of the 4th had not yet been committed to writing. [Giuseppe Verdi](#) hired the Neapolitan poet Leone Emanuele Bardare to finish the work.

In the "[Hedgcoxe War of 1852,](#)" also known as the "[Peters Colony Rebellion,](#)" an armed uprising of Texas colonists protesting what they viewed as an attempt by the Texas Emigration and Land Company to invalidate their land claims, [John Jay Good](#) had led about 100 armed colonists to the Collin County office of agent of the Texas Emigration and Land Company Henry Oliver Hedgcoxe, seized the land company's files, and delivered them to the Dallas County Courthouse. On this day Hedgcoxe fled to Austin, Texas. On February 7, 1853 an amendment to the compromise law would be passed, satisfactory to both sides.

It was reported in the [Practical Christian](#) that, during a sermon at [Hopedale](#) delivered by the Reverend John Murray Spear, Medium, the spirit of [Benjamin Franklin](#) had manifested itself through the reverend, and had communicated its satisfaction with "the rise and progress of a people so **practical**, in respect to all that is necessary to human welfare, morally, intellectually and physically."



The [Hopedale](#) community would become more and more entangled in [Spiritualism](#) and table-rapping.

[Herman Melville](#) wrote to [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#):

My Dear Hawthorne: -

This name of "Hawthorne" seems to be ubiquitous. I have been on something of a tour lately, and it has saluted me vocally & typographically in all sorts of places & in all sorts of ways. I was at the solitary Crusoeish island of [Naushon](#) (one of the Elisabeth group) and there, on a stately piazza, I saw it gilded on the back of a very new book, and in the hands of a clergyman. - I went to visit a gentleman in Brooklyne, and as we were sitting at our wine, in came the lady of the house, holding a beaming volume in her hand, from the city - "My Dear," to her husband, "I have brought you Hawthorne's new book." I entered the cars at Boston for this place. In came a lively boy "Hawthorne's new book!" - In good time I arrived home. Said my lady-wife "there is Mr Hawthorne's new book, come by mail" And this morning, lo! on my table a little note, subscribed Hawthorne again. - Well, the Hawthorne is a sweet flower; may it flourish in every hedge. I am sorry, but I can not at present come to see you at Concord as you propose. - I am but just returned from a two weeks' absence; and for the last three months & more I have been an utter idler and a savage - out of doors all the time. So, the hour has come for me to sit down again. Do send me a specimen of your sand-hill, and a sunbeam from the countenance of Mrs. Hawthorne, and a vine from the curly arbor of Master Julian. As I am only just home, I have not yet got far

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into the book but enough to see that you have most admirably employed materials which are richer than I had fancied them. Especially at this day, the volume is welcome, as an antidote to the mooniness of some dreamers – who are merely dreamers – Yet who the devil aint a dreamer? H Melville My remembrances to Miss Una & Master Julian – & the “compliments” & perfumes of the season to the “Rose-bud.”



July 17, Saturday: Cooler weather –a gentle steady rain not shower –such coolness as rain makes –not sharp & invigorating –exhilarating as in the spring –but thoughtful –reminding of the fall –still –moist –unoppressive weather in which corn & potatoes grow –not a vein of the N-W. wind or the N-E. The coolness of the west tempered with rain & mist. As I walked by the river last evening. I heard no toads.– A coolness as from an earth covered with vegetation –such as the toad finds in the high grass. A verdurous coolness –not a snowy or icy one –in the shadow of the vapors which the heat makes rise from the earth. Can this be dog-day-ish?

Pm A summer rain– A gentle steady rain –long agathering –without thunder or lightning– Such as we have not & methinks could not have had earlier than this.

To Beck Stow’s I pick raspberries dripping with rain beyond Sleepy Hollow– This weather is rather favorable to thought –on all sides is heard a gentle dripping of the rain on the leaves –yet it is perfectly warm. It is a day of comparative leisure to many farmers. Some go to the mill-dam & the shops, some go a-fishing. The Antennaria Margaritacea Pearly Everlasting is out. & the thoroughworts –red & white begin to show their colors. Notwithstanding the rain some children still pursue their black berrying on the Great Fields. Swamp pink lingers still. Roses are not so numerous as they were– Some which I examine now have short stout hooked thorns & narrow bracts– Is it the R. Carolina? I love to see a clear crystalline water flowing out of a swamp over white sand & decayed wood –spring like. The year begins to have a husky look or scent in some quarters– I remark the green coats of the hazel nuts –& hear the permanent jay [Blue Jay  *Cyanocitta cristata*]. Some fields are covered now with tufts or clumps of Indigo weed yellow with blossoms –with a few dead leaves turned black here & there. Beck Stow’s swamp! What an incredible spot to think of in town or city! When life looks sandy & barren –is reduced to its lowest terms –we have no appetite & it has no flavor– Then let me visit such a swamp as this deep & impenetrable where the earth quakes for a rod around you at every step. –with its open water where the swallows  skim & twitter –its meadow & cotton grass –its dense patches of dwarf andromeda now brownish green— — with clumps of blue-berry bushes –its spruces & its verdurous border of woods imbowering it –on every side. The trees now in the rain look heavy & rich all day as commonly at twilight –drooping with the weight of wet leaves. That seriocarpus conyzoides prevails now & the entire leaved erigeron still abounds every where– The meadows on the Turnpike are *white* with the meadow rue *now more than ever*. They are filled with it many feet high. The lysimachia lanceolata is very common too. All flowers are handsomer in rain. Methinks the sweetbriar is done. The hard-hack whose spines are not yet abundant stands to me for agreeable coarseness. Swallows are active throughout this rain.

Lobelia inflata Ind. tobacco.

Lappa Major Burdock.

Amaranthus hybridus — though not yet red.

Verbena hastata.

blue vervain.

Gnaphalium uliginosum by the roadside.

cud-weed

Again methinks I hear the goldfinch [American Goldfinch  *Carduelis tristis*] but not for a day or two the bob-o-link [Bobolink  *Dolichonyx oryzivorus* Rice-bird].

At evening the prunellas in the grass like the sky glow purple which were blue all day– The vetch I looked for is mown –but I find it fresh elsewhere. The caducous polygala has the odor of checker-



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berry at its root & hence I thought the flower had a fugacious spicy fragrance Hypericum Canadense. The slender bell flower –galium like with a triangular stem in low grounds now.

NEVER READ AHEAD! TO APPRECIATE JULY 17TH, 1852 AT ALL ONE MUST APPRECIATE IT AS A TODAY (THE FOLLOWING DAY, TOMORROW, IS BUT A PORTION OF THE UNREALIZED FUTURE AND IFFY AT BEST).


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 July 18, Sunday, 1852: Giacomo Meyerbeer was appointed as an honorary member of the Akademie der Tonkunst in Vienna.

Waldo Emerson confided to his journal, mysteriously, that:

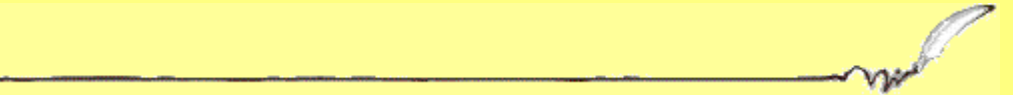
*H.T. makes himself characteristically the admirer of the common weeds which have been hoed at by a million farmers all spring & summer & yet have prevailed, and just now come out triumphant over all land, lanes, pastures, fields, & garden, such is their pluck & vigor. We have insulted them with low names too, pig-weed, smart-weed, red-root, lousewort, chickweed. **He** says that they have fine names, amaranth, ambrosia.*



Henry Thoreau took his boat to the Sudbury Meadows:

Long before Thoreau's lifetime, the alluvial plain of the Concord Valley lay at the bottom of a gray glacial lake. This beaded ribbon of turbid water extended the whole length of the valley, widening over bedrock basins that would later become meadows, and narrowing in bedrock constrictions. In Thoreau's epoch, every strong flood recreated the moccasin footprints of this ancient glacial lake at a lower level. The result was a "chain of handsome lakes" that was made higher, more frequent, and more long-lasting by the direct and indirect effects of the Billerica dam. He described the largest lake, over the Sudbury Meadows, as a "smaller Lake Huron," more than a mile across in every direction. Next in size was that over the Great Meadows of Concord, more than two miles long and half a mile wide. Both of these transient lakes could last for weeks at a time, which was long enough for him to be surprised when they finally disappeared. During floods, the already wide Carlisle reach expanded to resemble one of New York's smaller Finger Lakes.


— Professor Robert M. Thorson, THE BOATMAN, pages 120-121




July 18, Sunday: 8 1/2 Am to the Sudbury Meadows in boat Peter Robbins says that the rain of yesterday has not reached the potatoes after all –exorbitant potatoes! It takes a good deal to reach them. The white lilies & the floating heart are both well open at this hour and more abundant than I have noticed them before. Like ducks the former sit on the water as far as I can see on both sides. As we push away from Monroe's shore –the robins are singing & the swallows twittering. There is hardly a cloud in the sky. There are dewy cobwebs on the grass– So this is a fit morning for any adventure. It is one of those everlasting mornings with cobwebs on the grass which are provided for long enterprises. It is a sabbath within the water as well as in the air & on the land –and even the little pickerels not half so long as your finger appear to be keeping it holy amid the pads. There is a sort of dusty or mealy light on the breams tail & fins waving in clear water. The river is now in all its glory adorned with water lilies on both sides. Walkers & sailers ordinarily come hither in the

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afternoon –when the lilies are shut & so never see the river in its pride. They come after the exhibition is over for the day & do not suspect it. We are gliding swiftly up the river by Lee's bend. The surface of the water is the place to see the Pontederia from for now the spikes of flowers are all brought into a dense line –a heavy line of blue a foot or more in width –on one or both sides of the river. The pontederias are now in their prime –there being no withered heads, they are very freshly blue. In the sun when you are looking west they are of a violaceous blue. The lilies are in greater profusion than when we came to see them before. They appear to be too many for the insects –& we find enough untouched. Horse mint *Mentha Canadensis* is now out. We take a bath at Hubbard's bend. The water seems fresher as the air in the morning. Again under weigh we scare up the great bittern [**American Bittern**  *Botaurus lentiginosus* (~~Great Bittern~~)] amid the Pontederia –and rowing to where he alights –come within 3 feet of him & scare him up again. He flies sluggishly away ploughing the air with the coulter of his breast bone. and alighting ever higher up the stream – we scare him up many times in the course of an hour. The surface of the river is spotted with the radical leaves of the floating heart large & thin & torn –rarely whole –which something has loosened from the bottom. The larks & blackbirds & king-birds are heard in the meadows. But few button bushes are in blossom yet. Are they dark brown weed like fibrous roots of the plant itself that invest its stems below?

Harmless bright downy clouds form in the atmosphere on every side & sail the heavens.

After passing Hubbard's Bridge –looking up the smooth river between the rows of button bushes willows & pads –we see the sun shining on Fair Haven Hill behind a sun born cloud –while we are in shadow –a misty golden light –yellow fern-like with shadows of clouds flitting across its slope – and horses in their pasture standing with outstretched necks to watch us & now they dash up the steep in single file as if to exhibit their limbs & mettle– The carcass of a cow which has recently died lies on the sandy shore under Fair Haven –close to the water– –Perhaps she was poisoned with the water parsnip which is now in flower & abounds along the side of the river– We have left the dog in the middle of Fair Haven bay swimming in our wake –while we are rowing past Lee's & we see no more of him. How simple are the ornaments of a farm-house! To one rowing past in the middle of a warm summer day –a well at a distance from the house in the shadow of an oak –as here –is a charming sight. The house too with no yard but an open lawn sloping to the river. And young turkeys seen wandering in the grass & ever & anon hopping up as if a snake had scared them. The pontederias are alive with butterflies. Here is a fisherman's willow pole left to mark a lucky place –with green shoots at the top– The other day I noticed that neighbor Gorman's willow bean poles had grown more than his beans. We now go through the narrow gut at the bend near the town bound.

A comfortable day– Methinks we shall have no torrid blazing dry heats after this –but muggy dog-dayish weather tempered by mists & shadows of fogs, the evaporation of vegetation? The nights too can be decidedly cool. No one has ever put into words what the odor of water lilies expresses. A sweet & innocent purity. The perfect purity of the flower is not to be surpassed. They now begin to shut up. Looking toward the sun I cannot see them –cannot distinguish lilies from the sun –reflected from the pads. Thus we go on into the Sudbury meadows opening the hills. The near hills even have a misty blueness –a liquid one like a field of oats yet green– Both wish now to face up stream & see the hills open.

The *Peltandra Virginica* (*Calla*) which I saw well budded opposite the pantry July 1st has flowered & curved downward into the water & mud –but I observe other flowers to come. The columbine lingers still. The red eye sings at noon –& the song sparrow The bobolink I do not hear of late –not since this fall-like –late-feeling weather. Now the fogs have begun in mid summer– And mid haying time. We go inland to the Jenkins house spring –through the handsome oak grove white & black (?) 8 or 9 of them on the further edge of the meadow where the haymakers path comes in. Strawberries are still occasionally found in meadows. The *cerasus Virginiana* or choke cherry is turning –nearly ripe. We sit on the edge of the hill at the Jenkins house looking Northward over a retired dell in the woods –an unfrequented Johnswort & blackberry field –surrounded by a deep forest –with several tall white pines against the horizon –a study of which you would never tire. The swallows twitter over head –the locust we know not where is z-ing & the huckleberry bird [**Field Sparrow**  *Spizella pusilla*] is heard on the birches. The ground under the apple tree where we lie is strewn with small sun-baked apples –but we are not yet reminded of apples. When I think of the London times & the reviews here the review des deux mondes –& of the kind of life which it is possible to live here – I perceive that this the natural side has not got into literature– Think of an essay on human life



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through all which was heard the note of the huckleberry bird still ringing –as here it rings ceaselessly. As if it were the muse invoked.!

The Reveu des deux Mondes does not embrace this view of things, nor imply it. Which Neottia have I found? In the front & lowest rank –the narrow leaved polygonum in the river I see a flower or two beginning. The farmers have cut some meadow hay here In the broader meadows the river winds the most– Where there are no iron bound rocky hills to constrain it– Through all these Sudbury meadows it is a perfect meander –where no wind will serve the sailer long. It is a luxury to sit sailing or rowing here & look off to the hills at the deep shadows of the trees in which the cattle stand.

We land on the left half a mile above Sherman’s bridge –ramble to the “sand” & poplars –where I picked up two arrowheads– The spargula arvensis Corn spurrey which has long been in blossom –the raphanus raphanistrum wild radish– The Lycopus sinuatus horehound. Here is a horse who keeps the hill top for the breeze. We push still further up the river into the great meadow– Scaring the bitterns –the largest & the next in size. In many parts of the river the pickerel weed is several rods wide –its blueness akin to the misty blue air which paints the hills– You thin it by rising in the boat you thicken or deepen it by sitting low. (When we looked from the hills there was a general sheeny light from the broad level meadow –from the bent grass –watered –as it were with darker streaks where a darker grass the pipes &c bordered the for the most part concealed river.) The lilies are shut. First on the edge of the bright river in the sun in this great meadow are the pads –then the pontederia or polygonum –then the bull rushes standing in dense squadrons –or pipes or meadow grass then the broad heavens in which small downy clouds are constantly forming & dissolving– No fear of rain. The sky is a pretty clear blue –yet not such a skimmed milk blue methinks as in winter –some cream left in the milk– I cannot believe that any of these dissolving cloudlets will be rain bow tinged –or mother-o’ pearly– I observe that even in these meadows where no willows nor button-bushes line the shore –there is still a pretty constant difference between the shores. The border of pontederia is rarely of equal depth on both sides at once –but it keeps that side in the meander where the sediment is deposited– the shortest course which will follow the shore– as I have dotted it –crossing from this side to that as the river meanders –for on the longest side the river is active not passive –wearing into the bank –& runs there more swiftly– This is the longest line of blue that nature paints with flowers in our fields –though the lupines may have been more densely blue within a small compass– Thus by a natural law a river instead of flowing straight through its meadows –meanders –from side to side –& fertilizes this side or that & adorns its banks with flowers. The river has its active & its passive side –its right & left breast– Return– There is a grand view of the river from the Hill near Rices. The outlines of this hill as you ascend it & its various swells are very grateful –closely grazed with a few shade-trees on its sides. You look far S over the gulf meadow & N also. The meadow grass seen from this side has no sheen on it. Round Hill is a mathematical curve –

The petals of the rhexia have a beautiful clear purple with a violet tinge. The brasenia peltata or water shield which was budded July 1st is now in blossom –obscure reddish blossoms. To what plant does that elliptical pad belong whose lobes lap more than 1/2 inch –3 inches long & stem lenticular on a cross section? Does the Kalmiana so vary? What kind of lettuce (or Nabalus?) is that with triangular hastate leaves –reddish stem and apparently whitish flowers now budded? When near home –just before sun-down a little after (7-10) the sun still inconveniently warm –we were surprised to observe on the uppermost point of each pontederia leaf a clear drop of dew already formed –or flowing down the leaf— — where all seemed still warmth & dryness –also as often hanging from the lobes below– It appeared a wonderful chemistry by which this broad leaf had collected this pearly drop on its uppermost extremity. The sun –had no soon sunk behind the willows & the button-bushes than this process commenced.

And now we see a slight stem like smoke rising from amidst the pontederias. In half an hour the river & the meadows are white with fog like a frosted cake. As you stand on the bank in the twilight –it suddenly moves up in sprayey clouds –moved by an unfelt wind and invests you where you stand – its battallions of mists reaching even to the road.

But there is less in the morning. Every poet has trembled on the verge of science.

Got green grapes to stew

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July 19, Monday, [1852](#): Early during this morning there was a dreadful event in a residential neighborhood on the northern extremity of 7th Street near the City Spring in Richmond, Virginia: Jane Williams attacked 27-year-old Joseph Pendleton Winston of the firm of Nance and Wilson, 29-year-old Mrs. Virginia Bell Pankey Winston, and their 9-month-old Virginia Bell Winston with a kindling hatchet as they slept in their beds and cradle in their home. Jane Williams was as “a yellow woman of ordinary size, apparently 35 or 40 years of age, hair nearly strait, and with features indicative of great firmness” despite somehow having lost one of her eyes. The [slave](#) father John Williams had been being contracted out to work on the docks under John Enders during the day, but had been residing in the Winston home with his [slave](#) wife and their small [slave](#) child. The white family had recently threatened to sell the [slave](#) wife Jane without also selling her child; this had apparently planted “the germ of rebellion” in their minds. The funeral sermon on [Sunday, July 25th, 1852](#) by the Reverend Mr. T.V. Moore, D.D. at the 1st Presbyterian Church which the white family had attended, would place the blame for this awful crime squarely at the door of the obvious culprit — white owners were failing to civilize their slaves; there was “want of adequate moral instruction, the abandonment of them during part of their time to causes of corruption that are at work, and the growing relaxation of that system of firm restraint that such a state of facts imperatively demands.” On that same Sunday the [Reverend Robert Ryland of the local African Baptist Church](#), Jane’s pastor, would remind his parishioners that “God has given this country to the white people. They are the law-makers — the masters — the superiors. The people of color are the subjects — the servants — and even when not in bondage, the inferiors.” Jane would confess but attempt to persuade the court that her husband John Williams had had nothing to do with this. On [September 10th, 1852](#) she would be [hanged](#) before a crowd of some 6,000 citizens, on a gallows erected a short distance southeast of the Poor House on the side of the hill near the powder magazine, appropriate to the purpose of a graveyard for blacks. Her pastor the Reverend Ryland would explain to the assembled multitude, that in accordance with the promises of the gospel he needed to administer to the condemned person the consolation of religion — but had Jane 3 lives she would need to be hanged 3 times to make adequate payment for such a wicked and bloody deed as she had committed. He offered up a fervent prayer to Deity on her behalf, and then, Jane’s “drop” being but 20 inches, she would for some time kick and strangle. The memorial sermon of the Reverend Ryland at the African Baptist Church would include the information that Jane had explained that on the morning of her act the devil had taken possession of her. The [slave](#) husband John Williams would be [hanged](#) on [October 22d, 1852](#) despite an attempt to persuade the court that he had not, until afterward, had any awareness of his wife’s action (there is no record available, of what would then happen to their orphaned child, or even a record of its age or its gender or its name). The badly injured white slavemaster Joseph P. Winston would survive with “deep brain-cuts” and a sense of “swimming” in his head and be compensated by the Commonwealth of Virginia with \$500 for the execution of his property Jane, and \$850 for the execution of his property John — eventually he would succumb to an epileptic fit perhaps occasioned by such a severe brain injury.



July 19. Pm R.W.E’s Cliff. *Phytolacca decandra* poke in blossom. The *Cerasus pumila* ripe. The chestnuts on Pine Hill being in blossom reveal the rounded tops of the trees – separates them and makes a richer & more varied scene.

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July 20, Tuesday, 1852: Minister of the United States to the Netherlands George Folsom wrote to Secretary of State Daniel Webster in response to Webster's letter of January 27th, that "It is understood that the Dutch government has in its possession charts of the islands of [Japan](#), and perhaps topographical descriptions of those Islands or of their coasts." The Dutch had indeed already been aware of rumors of an "expedition from the United States against Japan." Folsom suggested that it would be useful for the Americans to reassure the Dutch that, in sending a naval force to Japan, we would have nothing in view contrary to the interests of those Hollanders who have hitherto treaded thither; but that, on the contrary, it is quite probable that their interests will derive material advantage therefrom. Such documents would indeed be supplied to the American government by the Dutch government to the extent of their capabilities, in time to be useful to [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) aboard the flotilla flagship *USS Mississippi* upon its entry during the following year into Yokohama Bay.



July 20. To Assabet behind Lee Place. Perceived a small weed coming up all over the fields –which has an aromatic scent. Did not at first discover that it was blue-curls. It is a little affecting that the year should be thus solemn & regular –that this weed should have withheld itself so long –biding its appointed time –& now without fail be coming up all over the land –still extracting that well known aroma out of the elements, to adorn its part of the year–! I also perceive one of the coarse late fleabanes making itself conspicuous. The stinging nettle is not very obvious methinks Fields are yellow with grain –being cut & stacked or still standing. Long rows I see from far as they were left by the cradle. *Elodea virginica* –marsh St Johnswort. Dug open a muskrats gallery– It was flat on the bottom –on sand –& quite regularly arched and strewn with coarse meadow grass or flags for a carpet– There was half of a critch-icrotch in it

Sunset to Cliffs- The clouds as usual are arranged with reference to the sunset. The sun is gone– An amber light –and golden glow– The first redness is on clouds in the E horizon– As we go by the farm houses the chickens are coming home to roost. The horns of the moon only 3 or 4 days old look very sharp –still cloudlike –in the midst of a blue space –prepared to shine a brief half hour before it sets. The redness now begins to fade on E. clouds & the W cloudlets glow with burnished copper alloyed with gold. As we approach the woods we perceive a fresh cool evening scent from them. The squeak of the night hawk [**Common Nighthawk** █ *Chordeiles minor* (Booming Nighthawk)] is heard –the hum of mosquitoes in the woods. The song sparrow [**Song Sparrow** █ *Melospiza melodia*] & the huckleberry bird [**Field Sparrow** █ *Spizella pusilla*]. The W clouds grow more red or fiery by fits & starts –and now as suddenly their glory departs –and they remain gray or greenish. We see from the hill darkness infolding the village collected first in the elm tops– If it were not for the light colored barns & white houses it would already be dark there. The redness of the clouds or the golden or coppery or fuscous glow appears to endure almost till starlight. Then the cloudlets in the W turn rapidly dark –the shadow of night advances in the east & the first stars become visible. Then & before the W clouds the light behind them having faded do or appear to disperse and contract & leave a clear sky. When I invert my head (on Fair Haven Hill) the dark cloudlets in the W horizon are like isles –like the tops of *mts* cut off by the gross atmosphere– The pitch pine woods are heavy & dark –but the river is full of golden light –& more conspicuous than by day. It is star light –you see the first star in the S W & know not how much earlier you might have seen it had you looked. Now the first whipporwill sings hollowly in the dark pitch pine wood on Bear Garden Hill –as if the night had never ceased & it had never ceased to sing –only now we heard it. And now when we had thought the day birds gone to roost –the wood thrush [**Wood Thrush** █ *Catharus mustelina*] take up the strain –the bull-frog trumps. We sit on the warm rocks (Cliffs.) Now is the evening red –late into the night almost it reaches –the gross atmosphere of day closest to the heels of the sun is the last to glow red– This general low fuliginous –lurid redness long after the sunset & the glowing of the clouds.

The Western sky is comparatively clear –the clouds that followed in day's train having swept by. Night is seen settling down with mists on Fair Haven Bay. The stars are few and distant– The fireflies fewer still– Will they again be as numerous as after the early thunder-showers? Now there is a *second* fuscous glow –brassy? glow on the few low western cloudlets –when we thought the sun





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had bid us a final adieu— Those small clouds the rearmost guard of day which were wholly dark —are again lit up for a moment —with a dull yellowish glow —& again darken —& now the evening redness deepens till all the W or NW horizon is red. —as if the sky were rubbed there with some rich Indian pigment —a permanent dye —as if the artist of the world had mixed his red paints on the edge of the inverted saucer of the sky— An exhilarating cheering redness —most wholesome— There should be a red race of men— I would look into the west at this hour till my face permanently reflect that red. It is like the stain of some berries crushed along the edge of the sky.— The crescent moon meanwhile has grown more silvery —& as it sank in west more yellowish —& the outline of the old moon in its arms was visible if you did not look directly at it— The first distinct moon light was observed some time before this like the first grey light of the dawn reflected from the tree tops below us.

Some dusky redness lasted almost till the last traces of daylight disappeared —The last took place about 10 o'clock, & about the same time the moon went down —

At evening the Eastern clouds —the W clouds —& the atmosphere of the W horizon have one history successively—a fainter glow & redness gradually & by stages —deepening —till the darkness prevails.

This afternoon in the gutter by roadside beyond S Wheelers —Penthorum sedoides(?) Ditch stone crop. Is that nettle like but smooth & I should say obtusely 4 angled plant in the low moist ground on the Assabet the Boehmeria cylindrica? Alisma Plantago —Water Plantain about out of flower —by the Assabet —small leaves like the plantain. What is that ternate leaved vine with yellow dusty excrescences by the Assabet? not in bloom. The Vernonia Novaboracensis is budded by the river side.



July 21, Wednesday, 1852: The traveler Enoch Conyers was enraptured by the potential farmland of the valley of the Bear River in the Oregon Territory: “On the bottoms of the Bear river is found the best grazing we have had on the whole journey. If this country were ever settled fine farms could be had here.”

Henry Thoreau wrote to H.G.O. Blake.

To: H.G.O. Blake
From: Henry Thoreau. Esq.
Date: 7/21/52

Concord July 21st '52

Mr Blake,

I am too stupidly well these days to write to you. My life is almost altogether outward, all shell and no tender kernel; so that I fear the report of it would be only a nut for you to crack, with no meat in it for you to eat. Moreover, you have not cornered me up, and I enjoy such large liberty in writing to you that I feel as vague as the air. However, I rejoice to hear that you have attended so patiently to anything which I have said heretofore, and have detected any truth[] in it. It encourages me to say more — not in this letter I fear — but in some book which I may write one day. I am glad to know that I am as much to any mortal as a persistent and consistent scarecrow is to a farmer — such a bundle of straw in a man's clothing as I am — with a few bits of tin to sparkle in the sun dangling about me! As if I were hard at work there in the field. However, if this kind of life saves any man's corn, — why he is the gainer. I am



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not afraid that you will flatter me as long as you know what I am[] as well as what I think, or aim to be, & distinguish between these two, for then it will commonly happen that if you praise the last, you will condemn the first.

I remember that walk to Asnebumskit very well; - a fit place to go to on a Sunday, one of the true temples of the earth. A temple you know was anciently "an open place without a roof," whose walls served merely to shut out the world, and direct the mind toward heaven; but a modern meeting house shuts out the heavens while it crowds the world into still closer quarters.

Best of all is it when as on a Mt. top you have for all walls your own elevation and deeps of surrounding ether.

The partridge berries watered with Mt dew, which we gathered there, are more memorable to me than the words which I last heard from the pulpit at least, and for my part I would rather walk toward Rutland than ~~toward~~ Jerusalem. Rutland - modern town - land of ruts - trivial and worn - not too[s]acred - with no holy sepulchre, but prophane green fields and dusty roads, - and opportunity to live as holy a life as you can; - where the sacredness if there is any - is all in your-self and not in the place.

I fear that your Worcester people do not often enough go to the hill tops, though, as I am told, the springs lie nearer to the surface on your hills than in your valleys. They have the reputation of being Free [S]oilers - Do they insist on a free atmosphere too, that is, on freedom for the head or brain as well as the feet? If I were consciously to join any party it would be that which is the most free to entertain thought.

All the world complain now a days of a press of trivial duties & engagements which prevents their employing themselves on some higher ground they know of, - but undoubtedly if they were made of the right stuff to work on that higher ground, provided they were released from all those engagements - they would now at once fulfil the superior engagement, and neglect all the rest, as naturally as they breathe.

They would never be caught saying that they had no time for this, when the dullest man knows that this is all that he has time for. No man who acts from a sense of duty ever puts the lesser duty above the greater. No man has the desire and the ability to work on high things, but he has also the ability to build himself a high staging.

As for passing through any great and glorious experience, and rising above it, - as an eagle might flie athwart the evening sky to rise into still brighter & fairer regions of the heavens, I cannot say that I ever sailed so creditably, but my bark ever seemed thwarted by some side wind and went off over the edge and now[]only occasionally tacks back toward the centre of that sea again. I have [outgrown] nothing good, but, I do not fear to say, fallen behind by whole continents of virtue which should have been passed as islands in my course; but I trust - what else can I trust? - that with a stiff wind some Friday, when I have thrown some of my cargo over board, I may make up for all that distance lost.

Perchance the time will [c]ome when we shall not be content to go back & forth upon a raft to some huge Homeric or Shakspearean Indiaman that lies upon the reef, but build a bark out of that

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wreck, and others that are buried in the sands of this desolate island, and such new timber as may be required, in which to sail away to whole new worlds of light & life where our friends are. Write again. There is one respect in which you did not finish you[r] letter, you did not write it with ink, and it is not so good therefore against or for you in the eye of the law, nor in the eye of
H. D. T.

[Thoreau](#) was written to by [William H. Sweetser](#) in [Charlestown, Massachusetts](#), asking for the autograph of this published author for the 15-year-old's collection.

To: HDT
From: William H. Sweetser
Date: 21 July 1852

Charlestown, Mass. July 21 1852.

Sir,
I am a boy 15 years of age collecting autographs and should be very much obliged if you would send me yours.
Yours respectfully,
W^m H. Sweetser.

To: H.G.O. Blake
From: Henry Thoreau. Esq.
Date: 7/21/52

Concord July 21st '52
Mr Blake,

I am too stupidly well these days to write to you. My life is almost altogether outward, all shell and no tender kernel; so that I fear the report of it would be only a nut for you to crack, with no meat in it for you to eat. Moreover, you have not cornered me up, and I enjoy such large liberty in writing to you that I feel as vague as the air. However, I rejoice to hear that you have attended so patiently to anything which I have said heretofore, and have detected any truth[] in it. It encourages me to say more – not in this letter I fear – but in some book which I may write one day. I am glad to know that I am as much to any mortal as a persistent and consistent scarecrow is to a farmer – such a bundle of straw in a man's clothing as I am – with a few bits of tin to sparkle in the sun dangling about me!
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
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H. D. T.*



July 21, Wednesday. 4 Am. Robins [**American Robin**  *Turdus migratorius*] sing as loud as in spring –& the chip bird [**Chipping Sparrow**  *Spizella passerina* (chip-bird or hair-bird)] breathes in the dawn. The eastern waters reflect the morning redness –& now it fades into saffron. And now the glow concentrates about one point. At this season the NE horizon is lit up & glows red & saffron –& the sun sets so far NW –that but a small part of the N. horizon is left unillustrated. The meadows are incrustated with –low –flat –white & apparently hard fog– Soon it begins to rise & disperse.

Walden Pond & Lake Superior are both uncommonly high this year.

At sunset to Corner Spring.


A broken strain from a bobolink [**Bobolink**  *Dolichonyx oryzivorus* Rice-bird]. A golden robin [**Northern Oriole**  *Icterus galbula* (Fiery Hangbird or Hangbird or Gold Robin or Golden Robin)] once or twice to-day. The *mimulus ringens* or monkey flower. One of the most noticeable of this class of flowers. Is that *Sium lineare* with a *smooth round* stem –& *fringe-serrate* linear leaves –without bulblets?

Eupatorium pubescens ovate leafed *Eupatorium* not quite out –with a fastigate corymb.

All sunsets are not equally splendid. To night there is not a cloud in the W. & the sun goes down without pomp or circumstance –only a faint glow in the gross atmosphere next the earth after a warm day. Those first (not moss) roses appear to be out of bloom– Those I see now have stout rather short hooked prickles or thorns

This evening is remarkably serene –it is awefully still –not a bird now heard –only the *fine* sound of crickets. I see the earliest star 15 or 20 minutes before the red is deepest in the horizon. I mean the atmospheric redness. It is not generally *i.e.* conspicuously star light till that begins to fade. Perhaps it is not time to light a candle till then –for some duskieness should intervene to separate between day & night. This redness is at first intenser as reflected in the river –as when you look into the horizon with inverted head all colors are intensified. Methinks I hear my old friend the locust in the alders. The river is perfectly smooth reflecting the golden sky & the red –for there is an unexpectedly bright & general golden or amber glow from the upper atmosphere in the W. At evening lakes & rivers become thus placid.

Every dimple made by a fish or insect is betrayed evening descends on the waters. There is not a breath of air. Now is the time to be on the water for there is no mist rising & little evening coolness or damp At morning & at evening this precious color suffuses the sky– Evening is the reverse of the day with all its stages intensified and exaggerated.

The roads & bridges are strewn with hay which was dropped from the loads. The whipperwill [**Whip-poor-will**  *Caprimulgus vociferus*] began to sing at earliest twilight. Do we perceive such a deep Indian red after the 1st star light –at any other season –as now in July? How far we smell carrion at night! A dead cow lies by the shore under Fair Haven nearly half a mile above this causeway –when I passed this way at earliest starlight –I did not smell it but now returning 1/2 hour later, it taints atmosphere of the causeway from one end to the other & I am obliged to hurry over –borne down over the meadow on the damp air. The root of the caducous *Polygala* has a checker berry odor –has the other?

It is midsummer –& looking from the hills at mid day –I see the waving blades of corn reflecting the



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light. The foliage of the trees looks green generally— The shrub oak leaves especially are not much injured —& the fields though rather brown are not so dry as I expected.



July 22, Thursday, 1852: [Nathaniel Hawthorne's THE BLITHEDALE ROMANCE](#) was reviewed both in the New-York Times and by [George Ripley](#) in the New-York Tribune.

The New-York [Independent](#) revealed that [Jenny Maria Lind-Goldschmidt](#) and her hubby [Otto Moritz David Goldschmidt](#) had perused, during their ocean passage back toward Europe, [Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe's UNCLE TOM'S CABIN](#).

JENNY LIND AND UNCLE TOM. — Grace Greenwood writes from England to the [National Era](#) that during her voyage, Jenny Lind and her husband, who were her fellow passengers, both read "Uncle Tom's Cabin" during the passage, the latter with "unbounded enthusiasm." Grace says, "I soon saw that the hearts of these two beat with an equal warmth for freedom, and that their sympathies for the oppressed were generous and deep."



July 22. This morning though perfectly fair except a haziness in the east which prevented any splendor—the birds do not sing as yesterday. They appear to make distinctions which we cannot appreciate, and perhaps sing with most animation on the finest mornings.

1 Pm Lees Bridge via Conantum Return by Clematis Br —

There men in the fields are at work thus indefatigably—more or less honestly getting bread for men—The writer should be employed with at least equal industry to an analogous though higher end.

Flocks of yellow breasted russet backed female bobolinks⁵ [[Bobolink](#) [Dolichonyx oryzivorus](#) ~~Rice-bird~~] are seen flitting stragglingly across the meadows— The bobolink loses his song as he loses his colors.

Tansy is now conspicuous by the road sides —covered with small red butter-flies. It is not an uninteresting plant. I probably put it down a little too early Is that a slender bell-flower with entire leaves by the Corner road? The green berries of the arum are seen —and the now reddish fruit of the trillium —and the round green pea-sized green berries of the axil flowering Sol. Seal. Farmers have commenced their meadow haying. The aster macrophyllus large-leaved in Miles' swamp. Is not that the L. Ciliata or hairy stalked Loosestrife by the C road —not the Lanceolata? Eupatorium sessilifolium now whitish. A strong W. wind saving us from intolerable heat —accompanied by a blue haze making the *mts* invisible. We have more of the furnace-like heat today after all. The rhus glabra flowers are covered with bees *large* yellowish wasps and butterflies— They are all alive with them— How much account insects make of some flowers. There are other botanists than I. The A syriaca is going to seed. Here is a king-fisher [[Belted Kingfisher](#) [Ceryle alcyon](#)] frequenting the C. brook Pond. They find out such places. Huckleberrying & blackberrying have commenced. The round leafed Sundew. Monotropa uniflora —Ind. pipe. Solidago Canadensis? almost out. Either a *smooth* Polygonum hydropiperoides or a white P. Amphibium var. terrestre. The spear thistle Cnicus lancolatum. Galium circaezans wild liquorice in Baker Farm swamp.

What is that minute whitish flower with an upright thread like stem & thread like linear leaves —with

5. Cruickshank has commented that some of the "female" bobolinks were undoubtedly young birds, and still others males already changed into their winter dress.



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a kind of interrupted spike or raceme of small whitish erect bell-like flowers –the corolla divided by a stout partition from which projects the style –with 3 distinct segments in the edge of the bell each side the partition? Also found a very narrow leaved whitish aster (?)



July 23, Friday, [1852](#): The 1st interment in the new US National Cemetery at the Presidio, on San Francisco peninsula in [California](#).

The Sacramento [Daily Union](#) described [David Colbreth Broderick](#) as “the head and face, the absolute dictator, of the Democratic Party in [California](#).”



July 23, Friday: Pm to Anurnuck Herbage is drying up –even weeds are wilted & the corn rolls. Agriculture is a good school in which to drill a man Successful farming admits of no idling. Now is the haying season– How active must these men be all the country over that they may get through this work in season. A few spoiled windrows –all black and musty have taught them that they must make hay while the sun shines & get it in before it rains.

Much that I had taken to be the lanceolate loose strife –is the heart-leaved –especially by the corner road. *Pycnanthemum muticum mt* mint Have I not mistaken this for the other species heretofore?

The dwarf choke-cherry is ripe now long before the rum-cherry. Also the pyrus arbutifolia. *Cnicus pumilum* –pasture thistle. *Chenopodium hybridum* maple-leaved goose foot.

What is that is that white hairy plant –with lanceolate leaves –& racemes now with flat burs 1 to 3 & a long spine in the midst –& 5 ovate calyx leaves left –these turned to one side of the peduncle— burrs very adhesive –close to road in meadow just beyond Stone bridge on right. long out of bloom

Every man says his dog will not touch you– Look out nevertheless.

20 ms after 7 I sit at my window to observe the sun set. The lower clouds in the north & S W grow gradually darker as the sun goes down –since we now see the side opposite to the sun –but those high over head whose under sides we see reflecting the day are light. The small clouds low in the W sky were at first dark also, but as the sun descends they are lit up and a-glow all but their cores– Those in the E though we see their sunward sides are a dark blue –presaging night –only the highest faintly glowing. A roseate redness clear as amber suffuses the low western sky –in which the small clouds are mostly melted only their golden edges still revealed The atmosphere there is like some kinds of wine perchance –or molten cinnabar –if that is red –in which also all kinds of pearls & precious stones are melted. Clouds generally near the horizon except near the sun are now a dark blue. (The sun sets) It is half past 7. The roseate glow deepens to purple– The low western sky is now & has been for some minutes a splendid map where the fancy can trace islands continents & cities beyond compare– The glow forsakes the high E clouds, the uppermost clouds in the West now darken the glow having forsaken them too –they become a dark blue –and anon their under sides reflect a deep-red –like heavy damask curtains –after they had already been dark– The general redness gradually fades into a pale reddish tinge in the horizon & with a clear white light above it –in which the clouds grow more conspicuous & darker & darker blue –appearing to follow in the wake of the sun and it is now 1/4 to 8 or 15 ms after sunset. 25 ms from the first. A quarter of an hour later or 1/2 hour after sunset the white light grows cream colored above the increasing horizon redness –passing through white into blue above. The w clouds high & low are now dark fuscous not dark blue but the E clouds are not so dark as the W. Now about 20 ms after the first glow left the clouds above the sun’s place –there is a 2nd faint fuscous or warm brown glow on the edges of the dark clouds there –sudden and



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distinct –& it fades again and it is early star-light –but the tops of the E clouds still are white reflecting the day– The cream color grows more yellowish or amber About 3/4 of an hour after sunset the evening red is deepest –*i.e.* a general atmospheric redness close to the W horizon. There is more of it after all than I expected –for the day has been clear & rather cool –& the evening red is what was the blue haze by day. The moon now in her first quarter now begins to preside –her light to prevail –though for the most part eclipsed by clouds. As the light in the W fades the sky then seen between the clouds has a singular clarity & serenity.

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 July 24, Saturday, 1852: Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka departed Paris by rail, heading toward Spain.

Annen-Polka op.117 by Johann Baptist Strauss II was performed for the initial time, in "Zum wilden Mann," Vienna.

Henry Thoreau waded out onto the sandbar at the neck of his cove on Walden Pond to get a reading of how much deeper the pond had become this year than it had been during his memorable pic nic and chowder kettle on the sandbar at his age of 7, in 1823. What he found was that the pond had become roughly 6 feet fuller than this lowest stage that he had known. He made an entry in his journal that he was later to copy into his early lecture "WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT" as:

**Brad Dean's
Commentary**

[Paragraph 31] Most men would feel insulted, if it were proposed to employ them in throwing stones over a wall, and then in throwing them back, merely that they might earn their wages. But many are no more worthily employed now. For instance: just after sunrise, one summer morning, I noticed Hayden¹ walking beside his team, which was slowly drawing a heavy hewn stone swung under the axle, surrounded by an atmosphere of industry,—his day’s work begun,—his brow commenced to sweat,—a reproach to all sluggards and idlers,—pausing abreast the shoulders of his oxen, and half turning round with a flourish of his merciful whip, while they gained their length on him. And I thought, Such is the labor which the American Congress exists to protect,—honest, manly toil,—honest as the day is long,—that makes his bread taste sweet, and keeps society sweet,—which all men respect and have consecrated: one of the sacred band, doing the needful, but irksome drudgery. Indeed, I felt a slight reproach, because I observed this from the window, and was not abroad and stirring about a similar business. The day went by, and at evening I passed a rich man’s yard,² who keeps many servants, and spends much money foolishly, while he adds nothing to the common stock, and there I saw Hayden’s stone³ lying beside a whimsical structure intended to adorn this Lord Timothy Dexter’s premises,⁴ and the dignity forthwith departed from Hayden’s labor,⁵ in my eyes. In my opinion, the sun was made to light worthier toil than this.

[Paragraph 32] There is a coarse and boisterous money-making fellow in the north part⁶ of our town, who is going to build a bank-wall under the hill along the edge of his meadow. The powers have put this into his head to keep him out of mischief, and he wishes me to spend three weeks digging there with him. The result will be that he will perhaps get some more money to hoard, and leave for his heirs to spend foolishly. If I do this, most will commend me as an industrious and hard-working man; but if I choose to devote myself to certain labors which yield more real profit, though but little money, they may be inclined to look on me as an idler. Nevertheless, as I do not need the police of meaningless labor to regulate me, and do not see anything absolutely praiseworthy in this fellow’s undertaking, any more than in many an enterprise of our own or foreign governments, however amusing it may be to him or them, I prefer to finish my education at a different school.

1. It is odd that Thoreau uses Eldridge G. Hayden’s last name in the lecture for his usual practice was to preserve the anonymity of individuals. It is clear from the Nantucket [Inquirer](#) report of the lecture, however, that Thoreau read either the form “H.”—which is the form in the [Inquirer](#)—or “Hayden.” [Bradley P. Dean’s] decision to emend the essay copy-text from “one of my neighbors’ to ‘Hayden’” was based on the assumption that Thoreau would not have read “H.” in his lecture.

2. Dean emended the copy-text from “the yard of another neighbor” to “a rich man’s yard” per the Nantucket [Inquirer](#) summary of the lecture. The rich man was Samuel G. Wheeler [See [JOURNAL](#) 5:95 and the last sentence in [“LIFE MISSPENT”](#) 6; Wheeler “ran off” in December 1856 after borrowing money from, among others perhaps, Captain Elwell, who “was obliged to take [Wheeler’s] farm to save himself.”]

3. Dean emended the copy-text from “the stone of the morning” to “Hayden’s stone” per the Nantucket [Inquirer](#)’s “H.’s stone.”

4. Timothy Dexter (1747-1806) was a wealthy merchant and self-proclaimed “Lord” who lived in Newburyport. According to [THE NATIONAL CYCLOPEDIA OF AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY](#) (NY: James T. White, 1929), 6:226, “In [Dexter’s] garden was a group of forty enormous columns, surrounded with mammoth statues of the world’s great men, himself included among the number, with the modest inscription, ‘I am the greatest man in the East.’”

5. Dean emended the copy-text from “the teamster’s labor” to “Hayden’s labor” per the Nantucket [Inquirer](#)’s “H.’s labor.”

6. Bradley P. Dean has emended the essay copy-text from “outskirts of our town” to the journal form, “north part of our town” ([JOURNAL](#) 4:252) on the assumption that Thoreau used the journal form until he dropped [“WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT?”](#) [“WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT?”](#) 18, the first sentence of which contains the word “outskirts.” The “money-making fellow” Thoreau mentions has not been identified.

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He also made an entry that he would copy into ["WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT"](#) in combination with an entry made on May 27, 1851 and an entry made on August 7, 1853 as:

[Paragraph 34] The ways by which you may get money almost without exception lead downward. To have done anything by which you earned money merely is to have been truly idle or worse. If the laborer gets no more than the wages which his employer pays him, he is cheated, he cheats himself. If you would get money as a writer or lecturer, you must be popular, which is to go down perpendicularly. Those services which the community will most readily pay for it is most disagreeable to render. You are paid for being something less than a man. The State does not commonly reward a genius any more wisely. Even the poet-laureate would rather not have to celebrate the accidents of royalty. He must be bribed with a pipe of wine; and perhaps another poet is called away from his muse to gauge that very pipe. As for my own business, even that kind of surveying which I could do with most satisfaction my employers do not want. They would prefer that I should do my work coarsely and not too well, ay, not well enough. When I observe that there are different ways of surveying, my employer commonly asks which will give him the most land, not which is the most correct.

Brad Dean's
Commentary

[Thoreau](#) made a comment in his journal on this day, on which [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#) would wax eloquent:

"I am frequently invited to survey farms in a rude manner, a very insignificant labor, ... but I am never invited by the community to do anything quite worth the while to do." As a consequence, he performed his surveying with little enthusiasm and frequent complaint in his private journal. Though he clearly enjoyed the mathematical precision and the outdoor settings that came with this vocational choice, he considered client-driven land surveying to be his "portrait-painting" – his "art" that wasn't really art. As with the majority of service jobs in any economy, Thoreau did this to cover his room and board, the costs of travel, and incidental expenses. His true career goal was to earn the bulk of his income from the fine art of writing commercially successful books and giving public lectures to ticketed audiences. This never happened, so he kept on with surveying, somewhat begrudgingly, to near the end of his life.
 – [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 117



July 24, Saturday: The Cardinal flower probably open today.

The quails are heard whistling this morning near the village

It would be well if the false preacher of Christianity were always met and balked by a superior –more living and elastic faith in his audience; just as some missionaries in India are balked by the easiness with which the Hindoos believe every word of the miracles & prophecies, being only surprised "that they are so much less wonderful than those of their own scripture which also they implicitly believe."

INDIA

RAMMOHAN ROY




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3 1/2 Pm to Goose Pond.


Is that slender narrow-leaved weed which is just coming into flower everywhere the *Erigeron Canadense* –which has spread so far and wide? Not only blue-curls but wormwood –both aromatic herbs are seen preparing for their reign –the former a few inches high now over all fields –which has reserved itself so long & most do not recognize it but you stoop & pluckit and are thankful for the reminiscence of autumn which its aroma affords –the latter still larger shows itself on all compost heaps & in all gardens –where the *Chenopodium* & *Amaranth* are already rank. I sympathize with weeds perhaps more than with the crop they choke –they express so much vigor –they are the truer crop which the earth more willingly bears– The ground is very dry –the berries are drying up –it is long since we have had any rain to speak of. Gardeners use the watering pot. The sere & fallen leaves of the birches in many places redden the ground;– This heat & drouth has the effect of autumn to some extent– The smooth sumac berries are red. However there is a short fresh green on the shorn fields –the aftermath. When the first crop of grass is off & the aftermath springs –the year has passed its culmination

7 Pm to the hills by Abel Hosmers.

How dusty the roads –wagons –chaises –loads of barrels &c all drive into the dust & are lost. The dust now, looking toward the sun, is white & handsome like a vapor in the morning –curling round the head & load of the teamster –while his dogwalks obscured in it under the wagon– Even this dust is to one at a distance an agreeable object. I heard this afternoon the cool water twitter of the goldfinch [**American Goldfinch**  *Carduelis tristis*] & saw the bird. They come with the springing aftermath. It is refreshing as a cup of cold water to a thirsty man to hear them, now only one at a time. Walden has fallen about 6 inches from where it was a month or so ago. I found by wading out on the bar that –it had been about 6 feet higher than the lowest stage I have known. Just after sunrise this morning I noticed Haden walking beside his team which was slowly drawing a heavy hewn stone swung under the axle –surrounded by an atmosphere of industry. His days work begun– Honest peaceful industry –conserving the world –which all men –respect –which society has consecrated. A reproach to all sluggards & idlers. Pausing abreast the shoulders of his oxen & half turning round with a flourish of his merciful whip while they gained their length on him. And I thought such is the labor which the American congress exists to protect –honest manly toil– His brow has commenced to sweat. Honest as the day is long. One of the sacred band doing the needful but irksome drudgery. Toil that makes his bread taste sweet –& keeps society sweet. The day went by and at evening I passed a rich man’s yard who keeps many servants and foolishly spends much money while he adds nothing to the common stock. and there I saw Haden’s stone lying beside a whimsical structure intended to adorn this Lord Timothy Dexter’s mansion –and the dignity forthwith departed from Haden’s labor –in my eyes– I am frequently invited to survey farms in a rude manner a very and insignificant labor –though I manage to get more out of it than my employers –but I am never invited by the community to do anything quite worth the while to do. The industry of the poor traced to the end is found to be subserving some rich man’s foolish enterprise. There is a coarse boisterous money-making fellow –in the N part of the town who is going to build a bank wall under the hill along the edge of his meadow –the powers have put this into his head to keep him out of mischief –and he wishes me to spend three weeks digging there with him– The result will be that he will perchance get a little more money to hoard or leave for his heirs to spend foolishly when he is dead– Now if I do this the community will commend me as an industrious & hard-working man –but as I choose to devote myself to labors which yield more real profit though but little money they regard me as a loafer– But as I do not need this police of meaningless labor to regulate me and do not see any thing absolutely praiseworthy in his undertaking however amusing it may be to him, I prefer to finish my education at a different school.

The corn now forms solid phalanxes –though the ears have not set –& the sun going down the shadows even of corn-fields fall long over the meadows –& a sweetness comes up from the shaven grass. & the crickets creak more loud in the new springing grass– Just after sunset I notice that a thin veil of clouds far in the E –beyond the nearer & heavier dark grey masses –glows a fine rose color –like the inner bark or lining of some evergreens. The clear solemn western sky till far into night – was framed by a dark line of of clouds with a heavy edge –curving across the NW sky at a

considerable height –separating the region of day from that of night. Lay on a lichen covered hill which looked white in the moon-light

 July 25, Sunday, 1852: Dedication of the present St. Mary’s Roman Catholic Church structure in Newport, Rhode Island.

Early during the morning of July 19th, 1852 there had been a dreadful event in a residential neighborhood on the northern extremity of 7th Street near the City Spring in Richmond, Virginia: Jane Williams had attacked 27-year-old Joseph Pendleton Winston of the firm of Nance and Wilson, 29-year-old Mrs. Virginia Bell Pankey Winston, and their 9-month-old Virginia Bell Winston with a kindling hatchet as they slept in their beds and cradle in their home. Jane Williams was as “a yellow woman of ordinary size, apparently 35 or 40 years of age, hair nearly strait, and with features indicative of great firmness” despite somehow having lost one of her eyes. The slave father John Williams had been being contracted out to work on the docks under John Enders during the day, but had been residing in the Winston home with his slave wife and their small slave child. The white family had recently threatened to sell the slave wife Jane without also selling her child; this had apparently planted “the germ of rebellion” in their minds. The funeral sermon on this Sunday by the Reverend Mr. T.V. Moore, D.D. at the 1st Presbyterian Church which the white family had attended, placed the blame for this awful crime squarely at the door of the obvious culprit — white owners were failing to civilize their slaves; there was “want of adequate moral instruction, the abandonment of them during part of their time to causes of corruption that are at work, and the growing relaxation of that system of firm restraint that such a state of facts imperatively demands.” On this same Sunday the Reverend Robert Ryland of the local African Baptist Church, Jane’s minister, reminded his parishioners that “God has given this country to the white people. They are the law-makers — the masters — the superiors. The people of color are the subjects — the servants — and even when not in bondage, the inferiors.”



July 25, Sunday: 4 Am. to Cliffs

This early twitter or breathing of chip birds [Chipping Sparrow Spizella passerina (chip-bird or hair-bird)] in the dawn sounds like something organic in the earth. This is a morning celebrated by birds. Our blue-bird [Eastern Bluebird Sialia sialis] sits on the peak of the house & warbles as in the spring –but as he does not now by day. This morning is all the more glorious for a white fog –which though not universal is still very extensive over all lowlands –some 50 feet high or more – though there was none at 10 last night– There are white cob-webs on the grass. The battalions of the fog are continually on the move. How hardy are cows that lie in the fog chewing the cud all night. They wake up with no stiffness in their limbs. They are indifferent to fogs as frogs to water –like hippopotami fitted are they to dwell ever on the river bank of this world –fitted to meadows & their vicissitudes. I see where in pastures of short firm turf they have pulled up the grass by the roots & it lies scattered in small tufts. (To anticipate a little when I return this way I find two farmers loading their cart with dirt –and they are so unmanly as to excuse themselves to me for working this sunday morning –by saying –with a serious face that they are burying a cow –which died last night –after some month of sickness –which however they unthinkingly admit that they killed last night being the most convenient time for them –and I see that they are now putting more loads of soil over her body to save the manure– How often men will betray their sense of guilt and hence their actual guilt by their excuses –where no guilt necessarily was. I remarked that it must be cold for a cow lying in such fogs all night but one answered properly– “Well, I dont know how it may be with a sick cow, but it wont hurt a well crittur any.” The ditch stone crop is abundant in the now dry pool by the roadside near Hubbards.) From Fair Haven Hill –the sun having risen –I see great wreathes of fog far NE revealing the course of the river –a noble sight –as it were the river elevated –or rather the ghost of the ample stream that once flowed to ocean between these now distant uplands in another geological period –filling the broad meadows.– The dews saved to the earth by this great

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musketquid condenser refrigerator and now the rising sun makes glow with downiest white the ample wreathes which rise higher than the highest trees. The farmers that lie slumbering on this their day of rest how little do they know of this stupendous pageant. The bright fresh aspect of the woods glistening with moisture when the early sun falls on them As I came along the whole earth resounded with the crowing of cocks –from the eastern unto the western horizon, and as I passed a yard I saw a white rooster on the topmost rail of a fence pouring forth his challenges for destiny to come on –

This salutation was travelling round the world Some six hours since had resounded through England France & Spain –then the sun passed over a belt of silence where the atlantic flows –except a clarion here & there from some cooped up cock upon the waves –till greeted with a general all hail along the Atlantic shore. Looking now from the rocks –the fog is a perfect sea over the great Sudbury meadows in the SW –commencing at the base of this cliff & reaching to the hills south of Wayland & further still to Framingham –through which only the tops of the higher hills are seen as islands – great bays of the sea many miles across where the largest fleets would find ample room –& in which countless farms & farm houses are immersed. The fog rises highest over the channel of the river and over the ponds in the woods which are thus revealed– I clearly distinguish where white pond lies by this sign –and various other ponds methinks to which I have walked 10 or 12 miles distant, & I distinguish the course of the assabet far in the west & SW beyond the woods Every valley is densely packed with the downy vapor– What levelling on a great scale is done thus for the eye! The fog rises to the top of round hill in the sudbury meadows whose sunburnt yellow grass makes it look like a low sand bar in the ocean and I can judge thus pretty accurately what hills are higher than this by their elevation above the surface of the fog. Every meadow & water-course makes an arm of this bay– The primeval banks make thus a channel which only the fogs of late summer & autumn fogs fill. The Wayland hills make a sort of promontory or peninsula like some Nahant. If I look across thither I think of the sea monsters that swim in that sea –& of the wrecks that strew the bottom many fathom deep— — where in an hour when this sea dries up farms will smile & farmhouses be revealed.– A certain thrilling vastness or wasteness it now suggests. This is one of those ambrosial white –ever-memorable fogs presaging fair weather– It produces the most picturesque and grandest effects –as it rises & travels hither & thither enveloping & concealing trees & forests & hills– It is lifted up now into quite a little white **mt** over Fair Haven Bay and even on its skirts only the tops of the highest pines are seen above it –& all adown the river it has an uneven outline like a rugged **mt** ridge in one place some rainbow tints and far far in the S horizon near the further verge of the sea over Saxonville? is heaved up into great waves as if there were breakers there. In the mean while the wood thrush [*Catharus **mustelina***] & the jay & the robin sing around me here, & birds are heard singing from the midst of the fog. And in one short hour this sea will all evaporate & the sun be reflected from farm windows on its green bottom. It is a rare music the earliest bee's hum amid the flowers –revisiting the flower bells just after sunrise.

Of flowers observed before June 11th the following I know or think to be still in blossom viz—

Stellaria media

Shepherd's purse Probably

Potentilla Canadensis

Columbine?

Hedyotis

Grasses & Sedges

Sorrel??

Trifolium procumbens yel. clover

Celandine

Red Clover

in favorable moist & shady places

Tall Crowfoot

Forget-me-not common

Hypoxis erecta

Blue-eyed grass scarce

Sarracenia??



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Nuphars both not numerous
Ranunculus Purshii??
Ribwort
Cotton-grass common
Rubus Canadensis?
Cistus very scarce
Canada Snap Dragon Potentilla argentea not very common?
White-weed may be here & there
White clover??
Meadow-rue very common
High blackberry?
Bitter-sweet still.
Yarrow very common
Knawel?
Utricularia vulgaris?

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Gone out of Blossom since June 10th (of those observed after June 10th before June 24th) the following

Iris versicolor
Broom rape?
Fumaria?
Viburnums
Dracaena
Carrion-flower
Cornels
Silene antirrhina?
Erigeron strigosum
Wax-work?
Large purple orchises.
Hound's tongue?
Tufted Loose-strife
4 leaved " ??
A veronica
Aralia hispida
Grape vines
Moss rose & early straight thorned (?)
Pyrolas?
Swamp pink? may linger somewhere
Prinos laevigatus
Pogonia?
Iris Virginica
Elder?
Mitchella?
Diervilla
Mt Laurel
Sweet briar.

Of those observed between June 10th & 24th the following are still common.

Marsh speedwell
Floating heart
Mullein
Dog's bane
Cow wheat
Butter & eggs
Prunella



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Epilobium
Some or most galiums.

During the last decade of his life, Thoreau visited his rivers more than twice as often as the upland woods and lakes that he is far better known for writing about.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 3



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 July 26, Monday, 1852: In Avignon, Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka obtained homeopathic treatment for a “nervous condition.”

Sachsen-Kürassier-March op.113 by [Johann Baptist Strauss II](#) was performed for the initial time, in Bierhalle Fünfhaus, Vienna.

[Henry Thoreau](#) checked out, from [Harvard Library](#), [William Gilpin](#)'s OBSERVATIONS, RELATIVE TO PICTURESQUE BEAUTY, MADE IN THE YEAR 1772 ON SEVERAL PARTS OF ENGLAND, PARTICULARLY THE MOUNTAINS AND LAKES OF CUMBERLAND AND WESTMORELAND (1788).

[GILPIN'S OBSERVATIONS, I](#)[GILPIN'S OBSERVATIONS, II](#)

He also checked out OBSERVATIONS, RELATIVE CHIEFLY TO PICTURESQUE BEAUTY, MADE IN THE YEAR 1776,

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ON SEVERAL PARTS OF GREAT BRITAIN; PARTICULARLY THE HIGH-LANDS OF [SCOTLAND](#) BY [WILLIAM GILPIN](#)
(London: R. Blamire, 1792).



He had a conversation with the [Harvard College](#) librarian, the entomologist [Dr. Thaddeus William Harris](#), about the emperor moth *Atticus Luna*.



(During this year a monograph that [Thoreau](#) had accessed, by his former science teacher Dr. Harris, during the preparation of his “Natural History of Massachusetts” essay, was receiving a 2d edition via White & Potter in Boston, as *A TREATISE ON SOME OF THE INSECTS OF NEW ENGLAND WHICH ARE INJURIOUS TO VEGETATION*. This 2d edition has been found in Thoreau’s personal library.)

INJURIOUS INSECTS

He responded to a 15-year-old [Charlestown, Massachusetts](#) autograph-seeker, [William H. Sweetser](#), who had written to him:

To: Wm. H. Sweetser

From: HDT

Date: July 26, 1852



Concord July 26 '52

Wm. H. Sweeter

*This is the way I write when I have a poor pen
and still poorer ink.*

Yrs.

Henry D. Thoreau



July 26, Monday: By my intimacy with nature I find myself withdrawn from man. My interest in the sun & the moon –in the morning & the evening compels me to solitude.

The grandest picture in the world is the sunset sky. In your higher moods what man is there to meet? You are of necessity isolated. The mind that perceives clearly any natural beauty is in that instant withdrawn from human society. My desire for society is infinitely increased –my fitness for any actual society is diminished.

Went to Cambridge & Boston today. Dr Harris says that my great moth is the Atticus Luna –may be regarded as one of several emperor moths They are rarely seen being very liable to be snapped up by birds. Once, as he was crossing the college yard, he saw the wings of one coming down which reached the ground just at his feet. What a tragedy! –the wings came down as the only evidence that such a creature had soared –wings large & splendid which were designed to bear a precious burthen through the upper air. So most poems even epics are like the wings come down to earth while the poet whose adventurous flight they evidence has been snapped up the ravenous vulture of this world. If this moth ventures abroad by day some bird will pick out the precious cargo & let the sails and rigging drift –as when the sailor meets with a floating spar & sail and reports a wreck seen in a certain lat. & long. For what were such tender & defenceless organizations made. The one I had being put into a large box beat itself its wings &c all to pieces in the night in its efforts to get out – depositing its eggs nevertheless on the sides of its prison. Perchance the entomologist never saw an entire specimen –but as he walked one day the wings of a larger species than he had ever seen came fluttering down. The wreck of an argosy in the air.

He tells me the glow worms are 1st seen he thinks in the last part of August. Also that there is a large & brilliant glow worm found here more than an inch long as he measured it to me on his finger. –but rare

Perhaps the sunset glows are sudden in proportion as the edges of the clouds are abrupt –when the sun finally reaches such a point that his rays Can be reflected from them.

A 10 Pm I see high columns of fog formed in the lowlands lit by the moon –preparing to charge this higher ground– It is as if the sky reached the solid ground there –for they shut out the woods.

Flowers observed between June 23d & July 27th

x	Those observed in very good season
xx	" " " rather early
S	Those which have been in blossom for a day or two
X	" " " some days
o	" " " some time
V	" " " not quite open

Rubus hispidus seen July 6th	o
Potamogeton hybridus seen June 26th–	o
" narrow leaved (leaves seen July 10)	o



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Linnaea borealis June 24th going out of blossom

June 24th	Vaccinium macrocarpum	x
	Calopogon pulchellus	V
	Asclepias quadrifolia	s
x	Spiraea salicifolia	
x	Archangelica atropurpurea	
25th xx	Maruta cotula	
x	Prinos verticillatus	
x	Convolvulus sepium	
	-seen by another 19th ult	
	Linaria vulgaris	
	Specularia perfoliata	S
26th	x	Nymphaea odorata
	Sagittaria variabilis small form o	
27th	Epilobium angustifolium prob about 16th	
	Hedyotis longifolia	O
28th	x	Oenothera biennis
29th	Leonurus Cardiacap ap in good season	
	Sparganium ramosum pretty good season	
29th xx	Pontederia cordata	
	Anemone Virginiana	X
30th	Nepeta cataria ap. in good season	
July 1st	xx	Trifolium arvense
	Lysimachia stricta	V
	Ligustrum vulgare	X
	Hypericum ellipticum	S
x	Polygonum sagittatum	
x	Lobelia spicata	
	Krigia Virginica ap in pretty good season	
	Comarum palustre	O
2nd x	Mollugo verticellata	
x	Polygonum convolvulus	
	Cornus stolonifera	S
3d x	Lilium Canadense	
	Chimaphila umbellata	O
x	Polygonum persicaria	
x	Ceanothus Americanus	
x	Asclepias purpurascens	
x	Daucus carota	
4th	Lysimachia lanceolata var hybrida	S
	Gratiola aurea	"
5th	Typha latifolia	X
	Campanula aparinoides ap in good season	
x	Cicuta maculata	



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x	Asclepias Cornuti	
x	" incarnata	
6th	x	Cirsium arvense
	Vicia cracca	O
x	Pastinaca sativa	
x	Agrimonia Eupatoria	
	Tanacetum vulgare	V
6th	Castanea vesca	S
x	Lilium Philadelphicum	
	Lycopodium dendroideum	S
	Galium trifidum	X
	" triflorum	X
	Scutellaria lateriflora	S
	Circaea alpina	S
7th x	Spiraea tomentosa	
	Pyrola rotundifolia	
		(?) Elliptica
		(?) Chlorantha
		(?) some earlier some later O
x	Plantago major	
x	Lepidium Virginicum	
x	17-18-or 19th aster (?) of Gray	
8th	Small globose white flower with grasslike leaves in mud	X
	Sium latifolium	S
9th x	Tilia Americana	
	Asclepias obtusifolia ap in good season	
x	Lactuca elongata	
	Ludwigia palustris	O
	Utricularia cornuta	S
	Ilysanthes gratioides	S
	Sisymbrium amphibium ?	X
x	Galium asprellum	
10th x	Portulaca oleracea	
	Melilotus leucantha ap in pretty good season	
x	Scutellaria galericulata	
	Drosera longifolia	X
x	Seriocarpus conyzoides (?)	
11th x	Polygonum hydropiperoides	?
	Large orange lily strayed from cult.	S
x	Impatiens fulva	
13		
x	Solidago stricta ?	
July 13th	Polygala sanguinea	S
" cruciata	S	
	x verbena urticifolia	
	cichorium intybus	S
		Urtica gracilis S
	Polygonum aviculare	O



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16th		
x	chenopodium album	
	Common form of sagittaria	S
x	Xyris	
x	cephalanthus occidentalis	
x	Rhexia Virginica	
x	Stachys aspera	
x	Platanthera lacera	
	Desmodium acuminatum	S
	xx	Lechea major
17th	x	Antennaria margaritacea
	Rosa Carolina ?	X
	Lobelia inflata	S
x	Lappa major	
x	Amaranthus hybridus	
x	Verbena hastata	
x	Gnaphalium uliginosum	
	Hypericum Canadense	S
18th		
x	Mentha Canadensis	
	Peltandra Virginica about end of 1st week of July	
	A Neottia well out	
x	A narrow leaved polygonum front rank in river	
	Spergula arvensis	O
	Raphanus raphanistrum	X
	x	Lycopus sinuatus
	Brasenia peltata	O
	since July 1st	
19		
	Phytolacca decandra	S
20th		
	Elodea Virginica	X
x	Penthorum sedoides	
	Boehmeria cylindrica ?	S
	Alisma plantago	O
21st	x	
	Mimulus ringens	
	Sium Lineare (?) with round smooth stem	
22nd		
	Aster macrophyllus	S
	Lysimachia ciliata	O
	Drosera rotundifolia	X
	Monotropa uniflora	S
xx	Solidago Canadensis ?	
x	Either Polygonum hydropiperoides or amphibium	
x	Cnicus lanceolatum	
	Galium circaezans	O
	unknown flower.	
	Quite small aster like flower just out	
23d		
x	Pycnanthemum muticum	



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x enicis pumilum
x chenopodium hybridum
unknown plant out of flower

24th

x Lobelia Cardinalis
x Erigeron Canadense?

25

x Polygonum hydropiper.

Miscellaneous observations within same dates—

June 24th	White ash keys excrescences on grape leaves & vines uncommonly cool weather Many grasshoppers for first time most June grass dead in dry fields Pine tops incline Panicked Andromeda has froth on it.
25th	Season of wild roses White pine cones 1/2 inch long A fine wiry grass in sproutlands
26th	Silvery undersides of maples & other leaves in breeze V. Pennsylvanicum ripe for a day or two on hills
27	Meadow fragrance still perceived Freshness of the year nearly passed Fields generally incline to a reddish or brownish green Partridge with her brood. Strawberries in their prime
29th	Blue berries brought to sell Yel. water ranunculus scarce
30th	Lower shoots of dwarf Andromeda 6 inches long Shrub oak acorns as big as peas Bobolinks rarely heard for a week.
July 1st	Roses in their prime Rubus triflorus (?) ripe
2nd	Clover heads drying up
3d	Have seen no violets for some time Rubus strigosus ripe prob. a day or two Hardly a geranium now
4th	Young pouts 1 inch long moss rose ap. out of bloom
5th	Thimble berry ripe Vaccinium fuscatum (?) ripe by RR Season progresses to berrying time & locust weather Buttercups have generally disappeared.
6th	Caterpillar nests on shrub oaks
7th	First really foggy morning
7th	Do not see the arethusa now
8th	Drooping heads of rattlesnake grass Great Moth—Atticus Luna on river. Pontederia begins to show
9th	First hear a tanager this year Bathing a great luxury Warm weather Vaccinium vacillans here & there ripe

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Rubus Canadense
 White spruce shoots a strawberry fragrance? fir.
 10th Hottest weather thus far
 11th Fishes nests left dry–
 Elder–pogonias, & calopogons Abundant
 Shade important & significant.
 13th Cerasus Pennsylvanica ripe
 Gaylussacia blue for a day or two ripe
 " resinosa ripe
 Vaccinium corymbosum ripe
 15 Fleets of yel. butterflies in road
 16 Link link fall note of bobolink
 a Goldfinch twitters over
 Sarsaparilla berries black
 17th Gentle summer rain (misty–) dew like filling the air & on leaves
 Roses early kind not numerous swamp pinks still numerous
 Green coats of hazel nuts
 Yellow flowered bunches of Indigo weed
 Entire leaved erigeron abounds
 Meadows white with meadow rue
 18 Pontederias in prime
 White lilies in greatest profusion
 Cooler–breezier–(muggy–shady) weather after heats
 A columbine still
 Strawberries still found under high mead. grass
 Green grapes ready for stewing
 19th Cerasus pumila may be a day or two
 Chestnut blossoms have made a great show sometime
 20th Aromatic leaves of blue curls appear
 21st A broken strain from a bobolink
 A golden robin 2 or 3 times
 Early straight thorned roses out of bloom
 Alder locust
 22nd Flock of female bobolinks
 Green berries of arum–axil flowerd Sol.
 seal & reddish fruit of Trillium
 Farmers fairly begin meadow haying
 More furnace like heat after all
 Huckle berrying & blackberrying commence
 23d Cerasus Virginiana ripe
 Pyrus arbutifolia"
 24th Some smooth sumac berries red
 Fresh green on shorn fields
 Goldfinch plainly about on willows
 25th Morning fog filling lowlands like a sea & evening battalions.



July 27, Tuesday, 1852: The beginning of a 2-day convention in Baltimore, Maryland, for “Free Colored People”:

A very novel and important Convention has been in session in Baltimore, the city of our childhood. A free colored people’s Convention assembled to consider their condition and the means of their elevation! Yes! the free colored people of a slave state have been permitted, with comparative safety under official

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protection, to meet like men, and to consider questions of vital importance to themselves and to this nation. From our inmost soul we thank God for this favorable sign of the times. This Convention is the first dawn of moral resurrection to our long buried people. We thought we knew something of Maryland, and of the colored people of Maryland; but we underrated the magnanimity of the one and the courage of the other. We did not venture to hope that such a meeting could be held in Baltimore. There has been a liberality, too, displayed by the press for which we were quite unprepared. The ability with which the proceedings appear to have been conducted, was confessedly, highly creditable to the members of the convention. Some of these proceedings we hope to lay before our readers in our next number. We shall do this not because we agree in the conclusions arrived at, but because we wish faithfully to discharge the duty of a journalist.



July 27. 4 Pm to Assabet behind Lee Place

It is pleasing to behold at this season contrasted shade and sunshine on the side of neighboring hills. They are not so attractive to the eye when all in the shadow of a cloud or wholly open to the sunshine. Each must enhance the other.

That the luxury of walking in the river may be perfect it must be very warm –such as are few days even in July –so that the breeze on those parts of the body that have just been immersed may not produce the least chilliness– It cannot be too warm –so that –with a shirt to fend the sun from your back –you may walk with perfect indifference –or rather with equal pleasure alternately in deep & in shallow water. Both water and air must be unusually warm –other wise we shall feel no impulse to cast ourselves into & remain in the stream. To day it is uncomfortably cool for such a walk. It is very pleasant to walk up & down the stream however studying the further bank –which is 6 or 7 feet high & completely covered with verdure of various kinds– I observe grape vines with green clusters almost fully grown hanging over the water –& hazel nut husks are fully formed & are richly autumnally significant. Viburnum delnitatum elder –& red-stemmed cornel –all with an abundance of green berries help clothe the bank –as the asclepia incarnata & meadow rue fill the crevices.

Above all there is the Cardinal flower just opened –close to the water’s edge –remarkable for its intense scarlet color –contrasting with the surrounding green.

I see young breams in small schools only 1 inch long –light colored & semi transparent as yet long in proportion to their depth. some 2 inches long are ludicrously deep already –like little halibuts– making the impression by their form of vast size like halibuts or whales– They appear to be attended & guarded still by their parents. What innumerable enemies they have to encounter!

BREAM

The sun on the bottom is indispensable and you must have your back to it.

Wood cocks have been common by the streams & springs in woods for some weeks

Aster dumosus? by wood paths

1/4 before 7 Pm to Cliffs

It has been a clear cool breezy day for the season. There is only one white bar of cloud in the north– I now perceive the peculiar scent of the cornfields The corn is just high enough & this hour is favorable. I should think the ears had hardly set yet. Half an hour before sundown you perceive the cool damp air in valleys surrounded by woods –where dew is already formed.

I am sure that if I call for a companion in my walk –I have relinquished in my design some closeness



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of communion with nature. The walk will surely be more common-place. The inclination for society indicates a distance from nature. I do not design so wild & mysterious a walk.


The bigoted & sectarian forget that without religion or devotion of some kind nothing great was ever accomplished.

On Fair Haven Hill. The slight distraction of picking berries is favorable to a wild abstracted poetic mood. –to sequestered or transcendental thinking. I return ever more fresh to my mood from such slight interruptions.

All the clouds in the sky are now close to the W horizon so that the sun is nearly down before they are reached and lighted or gilded. Wachuset free of clouds has a fine purplish tinge –as if the juice of grapes had been squeezed over it –darkening into blue –I hear the scratching sound of a worm at work in this hardwood pile on which I sit.


We are most disturbed by the suns dazzle when it is lowest. Now the upper edge of that low blue bank is gilt where the sun has disappeared –leaving a glory in the horizon through which a few cloudy peaks send ray like shadows. Now a slight rosy blush is spreading N & S over the horizon sky –and tinging a few small scattered clouds in the east– A blue tinge southward makes the very edge of the earth there a **mt** That low bank of cloud in the W. is now exactly the color of the **mts** – a dark blue. We should think sacredly –with devotion. That is one thing at least we may do magnanimously. May not every man have some private affair which he can conduct greatly – unhurriedly? The river is silvery as it were plated & polished smooth –with the slightest possible tinge of gold tonight. How beautiful the meanders of a river thus revealed– How beautiful hills & vales –the whole surface of the earth a succession of these great cups –falling –away from dry or rocky edges to gelid green meadow & water in the midst –where night already is setting in. The thrush –now the sun is apparently set –fails not to sing– Have I heard the veery lately? All glow on the clouds is gone except from one higher small rosy pink or flesh colored isle. The sun is now probably set. There are no clouds on high to reflect a golden light into the river. How cool and assuaging the thrush's note [**Wood Thrush**  *Hylocichla mustelina*] after the fever of the day. I doubt if they have any thing so richly wild in Europe– So long a civilization must have banished it. It will only be heard in America perchance while our star is in the ascendant I should be very much surprised if I were to hear in the strain of the nightingale such unexplored wildness & fertility reaching to sundown –inciting to emigration– Such a bird must itself have emigrated long ago– Why then was I born in America I might ask –

I should like to ask the assessors what is the value of that blue **mt** range in the NW horizon to Concord –and see if they would laugh or seriously set about calculating it. How poor comparatively should we be without it! It would be descending to the scale of the merchant to say it is worth its weight in gold– The privilege of beholding it –as an ornament –a suggestion –a provocation –a heaven on earth– If I were one of the fathers of the town I would not sell this sight which we now enjoy for all the merely material wealth & prosperity conceivable– If need were we would rather all go down to-gether–

The huckleberry bird [**Field Sparrow**  *Spizella pusilla* (~~Rush Sparrow~~ or *juncorum* or ~~Huckleberry bird~~)] as usual & the night-hawk squeaks & booms –& the bull frog trumps –just before the earliest star. The evening red is much more remarkable than the morning red. The solemnity of the evening sky! I turn round & there shines the moon silvering the small clouds which have gathered –she makes nothing red. New creaking or shrilling from crickets (?) for a long time past – more fine & piercing than the other. Aster dumosus? by wood paths

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 July 28, Wednesday, 1852: [Andrew Jackson Downing](#),⁶ his wife and her mother (Mrs. de Wint), his sister, his younger brother, and a Mrs. Wadsworth left the Downing residence “Highland Gardens” overlooking



RESIDENCE OF THE LATE A. J. DOWNING. NEWBURGH, ON THE HUDSON.

Newburgh, New York⁷ to be picked up by the Hudson River steamboat *Henry Clay*. They were bound for Newport, Rhode Island. The vessel had left Albany at 7 AM, and another vessel, the *Armenia*, had pulled away from the dock at roughly the same time. Initially the *Armenia* had taken the lead, but then the two passenger vessels began racing for the advantage which would result in getting to the various landings along the river earliest, so as to get the benefit of additional passengers and freight, and so as to be first at the cords of wood stacked at the landings. Just above Kingston the *Henry Clay* deliberately cut across the bow of the *Armenia*, splintering its larboard woodwork to the cheers of its passengers. Some passengers complained to the captain, as the *Henry Clay* was passing Yonkers, that the steam engine was getting so hot that they could not bear to walk past it amidships. Embers were shooting from the smokestack. When some of these embers fell on a stretched canvas covering, a fire broke out and within five minutes the situation became so hopeless that at Riverdale in the Bronx the captain rammed the vessel into the east bank of the river. The passengers at the stern could not get past the flames amidships and as the fire consumed the vessel they were forced to leap into the

6. He was in the process of regularizing the naming of varieties of apples, such as the Grand Sachem, the Maiden Blush, the Vittles and Drink, the Sine Qua Non, the Jonathan, and the Mouse.

7. Highland Gardens is long gone, but some Newburgh homes that [Andrew Jackson Downing](#) showing his influence do still remain. There is a Sherwin-Williams series of exterior house colors named in his honor. Newburgh's Downing Park amounts to a smaller version of New York's Central Park.

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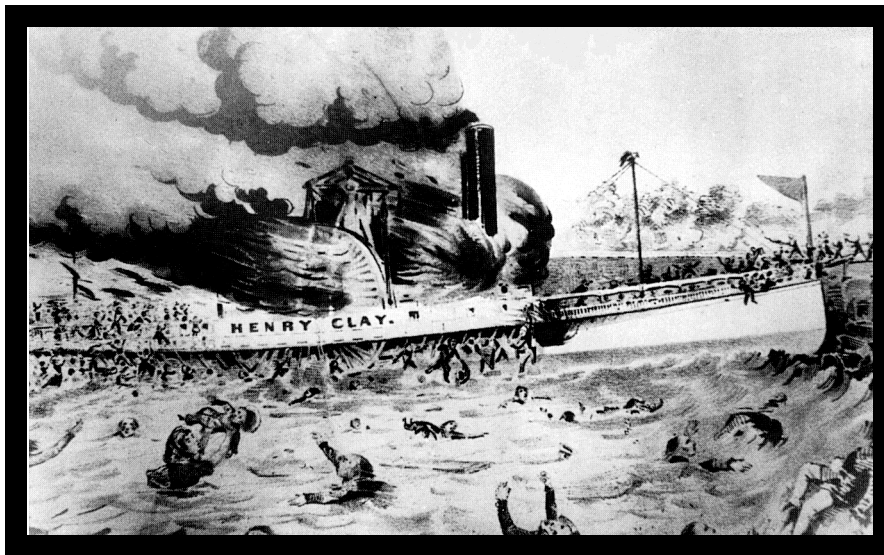
deep, rapidly flowing river. The remains of former mayor of New-York [Stephen Allen](#) were recovered and are interred in the New-York Marble Cemetery. The remains of [Andrew Jackson Downing](#) were recovered and are interred in Cedar Hill Cemetery just north of Newburgh, New York.⁸

[Maria Louisa Hawthorne](#) drowned a few feet from the bank of the river.

Professor [Jacob Whitman Bailey](#), his wife [Maria Slaughter Bailey](#), their 17-year-old daughter [Maria Whitman Bailey](#) (who was ill), and their 9-year-old son [William Whitman Bailey](#) had been on a brief family outing. William managed to grab a floating wicker chair. Meanwhile, the father struggled to save his wife and daughter:

Swimming with his feet, Jacob held his wife and daughter afloat until they could hold onto ropes hanging from the ship. A drowning woman pulled him under water. When he came up again the two Marias were gone and flames were everywhere. A stranger pulled him ashore.

The father could not believe his son was alive, until taken to him.⁹ The area would be crowded for days with New-Yorkers seeking to recover the bodies of loved ones:



In total there were some 70 or 80 fatalities.

Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka arrived in Toulouse. While there Glinka's "daily suffering" would cause him to abandon his intention to make a 2d trip to Spain.

[Mary Brown Jones](#), widow of [William Jones](#), died of [tubercular consumption](#) in [Concord](#), Massachusetts. Her inscription would read "In memory of a beloved Mother Mary relict of William Jones died July 28, 1852 aged 74 y'rs / Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord."

The Baltimore, Maryland [Sun](#) reported on the 1st day of the convention there for "Free Colored People":

8. The uncompleted Mall in Washington DC would be taken over by W.D. Brackenridge and John Saul, who would of course continue until all appropriated funds were exhausted.

9. The family nurse "Aunt" Nancy Lewis, a manumitted slave, would need to take on the task of raising young William. While Robert E. Lee was Superintendent of West Point, from 1852 to 1855, his play companion was Robert E. Lee, Jr.



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This body re-assembled at 10 o'clock yesterday morning at Washington Hall, the Rev. William Tasker, of Frederick, President, in the chair. The convention was opened with prayer by the president.

A note was received from H.H. Webb, of Baltimore, declining to serve as a delegate in the convention, stating that he was not able to attend, and did not approve of the manner in which he was elected.

In the absence of Josiah Hughes, of Dorchester, one of the Secretaries, Cornelius Campbell was appointed to fill the vacancy.

The proceedings of Monday not being ready, on motion, the report in the "Sun" was read in lieu thereof.

William Williams, of Baltimore, arose and stated that his name appeared in the committee on the platform through a mistake - he was not a delegate to the convention.

On motion, James A. Handy, of Baltimore, and William Perkins, of Kent, were appointed on the platform committee, to fill the vacancies occasioned by the withdrawal of Webb and Williams.

Charles Wyman and Allen Lockerman, delegates from Caroline county, appeared and took their seats.

Several of the delegates from Dorchester county and other places, were not present, having gone home in consequence of the disturbances on Monday afternoon.

B. Jenifer, chairman of the committee on the platform, made the following report, which was read by Charles O. Fisher:

Whereas, The present age is one distinguished for inquiry, investigation, enterprise and improvement in physical, political, intellectual and moral sciences, we hold the truths to be self-evident that we are, as well as all mankind, created equal, and are endowed by our Creator with the right to enquire into our present condition and future prospects; and as a crisis has arisen in our history presenting a bright and glorious future, may we not hope that [before] long the energies of our people may be aroused from their lethargy, and seek to obtain for themselves and posterity the rights and privileges of freemen - therefore,

Resolved, That while we appreciate and acknowledge the sincerity of the motives and the activity of the zeal of those who, during an agitation of twenty years have honestly struggled to place us on a footing of social and political equality with the white population of this country, yet we cannot conceal from ourselves the fact that no advance has been made towards a result to us so desirable; but that on the contrary, our condition as a class is less desirable than it was twenty years ago.

Resolved, that in the face of an immigration from Europe, which is greater each year than it was the year before, and during the prevalence of a feeling in regard to us, which the very agitation intended for good, has only served apparently to embitter, we cannot promise ourselves that the future will do that which the past has failed to accomplish.

Resolved, That recognizing in ourselves the capacity to conduct honorably, and creditably, in public affairs;



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to acquire knowledge, and to enjoy the refinements of social intercourse; and having a praiseworthy ambition that this capacity should be developed to its full extent, we are naturally led to enquire where this can best be done, satisfied as we are that in this country, at all events from present appearances, it is out of the question.

Resolved, That in comparing the relative advantages of Canada, the West Indies and Liberia – these being the places beyond the limits of the United States to which circumstances have directed our attention – we are led to examine the claims of Liberia particularly, where, alone, we have been told that we can exercise all the functions of a free republican government, and held an honorable position among the nations of the earth.

Resolved, That in thus expressing our opinions it is not our purpose to counsel emigration as either necessary or proper in every case. The transfer of an entire people from one country to another, must necessarily be the work of generations – each individual now and hereafter must be governed by the circumstances of his own conditions of which he alone can be the judge, as well in regard to the time of removal, as to the place to which he shall remove; but deeply impressed ourselves with the conviction, that sooner or later removal must take lace, we would counsel our people to accustom themselves to the idea of it, and in suggesting Liberia to them, we do so in the belief that in there alone they can reasonably anticipate an independent national existence.

Resolved, That as the subject is one of the greatest importance to us, and the consideration of which, whatever may be the result, cannot be put aside, we recommend to our people in this State to establish and maintain an organization in regard to it, the great object of which shall be enquiry and discussion, which, without committing any one, shall lead to accurate information, and that a convention like the present, composed of delegates from the counties and Baltimore city, be annually held at such time and place as said convention, in their judgment, may designate.

A motion was made to accept the report, which lead to debate, John H. Walker speaking at length in opposition to the resolutions, and hoped that they would be referred back to the committee, contending that there should have been a recommendation to raise a fund to see a lawyer, or some influential citizen of this State, to go to Annapolis next winter to endeavor to obtain a change of legislation in reference to the colored race.

B. Jenifer, of Dorchester, replied to Walker, urging that his views were in opposition to the spirit of the circular which called them together, and of a majority of the delegates present.

At one o'clock the convention took a recess.

Afternoon session – The Convention re-assembled at 4 o'clock,

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the resolutions being again debated by various delegates – John H. Walker, B. Jenifer, C. Perry, and others.

The Rev. D— Stokes moved to lay the motion to adopt the platform on the table, which was determined in the affirmative. On motion of Mr. Stokes, the convention went into committee of the whole, Charles Williamson in the chair, and took up the report of the committee in sections.

The two first resolutions were adopted, the third referred back to committee, and pending the further action on the remainder of the resolution, the Convention adjourned till this morning, at 9 o'clock.

The proceedings were conducted with much order yesterday, the lookers on behaving in a very quiet manner. The crowd in the street, with few exceptions, also preserved a more creditable deportment.



July 28. Pm to Yellow pine Lake.

Epilobium colorata road side just this side of Dennis Water lobelia is it that C. shows me? There is a yellowish light now from a low tufted yellowish broad leaved grass in fields that have been mown— A June like breezy air. The large shaped sagittaria out—a large crystalline white 3 petalled flower— Enough has not been said of the beauty of the shrub oak leaf Q. ilicifolia—of a thick firm texture for the most part injured by insects intended to last all winter—of a glossy green above & now silky smooth downy beneath—fit for a wreath or crown. The leaves of the chinquapin oak might be intermixed. Grass hoppers are very abundant—several to every square foot in some fields. I observed some leaves of woodbine which had not risen from the ground—turned a beautiful bright red—perhaps from heat & drought—though it was in a low wood.— This Ampelopsis Quinquefolia is in blossom— Is it identical with that about RWE's posts which was in blossom July 13th— Aster radula? in J.P. Browns meadow Solidago Altissima? beyond the corner bridge out some days at least—but not rough hairy Golden rod & asters have *fairly* begun *i.e.* there are several kinds of each out. What is that slender hieracium or aster like plant in woods on Corner road with lanceolate sessile coarsely—feather veined leaves—sessile & remotely toothed—minute clustered imbricate buds? or flowers & buds? Panicked.

The evenings are now sensibly longer—& the cooler weather makes them improvable.

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



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EVER FOR AN INSTANT EXISTED.



July 29, Thursday, [1852](#): Per [George Templeton Strong](#)'s New-York diary:

Heard that the *Henry Clay* had been burnt.... The loss of life seems to have been fearful, and the transaction a case of wholesale murder. Reckless racing leading to mischief, and then panic and frenzy among the passengers, imbecility in the officers, and murderous absence even of boats to save a dozen or two.

The New-York Herald reported on [Herman Melville](#)'s new book *PIERRE, OR THE AMBIGUITIES*, "in which it is understood that he has dressed up and exhibited in Berkshire, where he is living, some of the ancient and most repulsive inventions of the George Walker and Anne Radcliffe sort — desperate passion at first sight, for a young woman who turns out to be the hero's sister.... It is conceded that Mr. Melville has written himself out."

The Baltimore, Maryland Sun reported on the 2d day of the convention there for "Free Colored People":

The convention re-assembled at 10 o'clock yesterday morning, at Plowman street Hall. Ephraim Lawson, Vice President, in the Chair, who opened the proceedings with prayer.

A note was received from the President, Rev. Wm. Tasker, stating that indisposition would prevent him from presiding over the deliberations of the body the remainder of its session.

The attendance of delegates was small in the morning, and very few lookers on were present.

The platform being again taken up, F. Harris, of Baltimore, presented a protest against the adoption of the fourth resolution, which pointed out Liberia as the place of emigration for the colored people, because it recommends emigration to that place contrary to the wishes of his constituents, and a majority of the free colored people of the city and State. He contended that if they were for Liberia, they should say so at once, and tell the mob out doors that they were endeavoring to send them all there — not to say one thing in the convention and another outside.

James A. Jones, of Kent, said that Harris was endeavoring to shape his course the way the wind blowed. For himself, he hoped that the entire platform would be adopted, and without further debate he moved that the fourth resolution be passed.

Stephen W. Hill, of Baltimore, contended that the resolutions did not look to an immediate emigration to Africa — that they only recommended Liberia as a place where they could enjoy the blessings of Liberty, and as the most country for the colored man whenever they should be disposed to seek another home.

William Perkins, of Kent, in answer to the protest of Harris, said that the only platform they recommended for adopting, left it to every man to go where he pleased, or to remain here if it suited him better. Let Mr. Harris go to his constituents and

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tell them that the convention only recommended what it thought best; its action was binding on no man.

F. Harris, in reply, asked if the convention had examined Liberia. They recommended that place for them to emigrate to, and yet they had not made any examination of Liberia to know whether it would suit. Did they know anything of the climate or agriculture of Liberia to lay before the people? Let them examine Canada, Jamaica and other places, and then if they found Liberia the best place, why say so to the people.

Chas. Williamson said he had had it in his power to examine most countries. He had been in Canada twice; in the West government, Trinidad five years. During that time he had examined the countries with a view to see which was the best for the colored people. He was sixty-seven years of age and could expect little for himself. In the West Indies capital ruled the people – the government recognize you, but the planters, who had been accustomed to drive on slaves, knew you not. If they went to Canada they would not better their condition – he had lived there seventeen months at one time. It would cost money to get to Canada – money to get to the West Indies. The Canadas are peopled with many persons from this country. The leading men were principally Yankees. In the West Indies he had to take his hat around to get the dead out of the way of the turkey-buzzards – that showed their sympathy. In Canada you cannot be recognized in office – in the West Indies it is better, and some colored persons get into office. The Canadas are a fine country, but he asserted here that he felt there could be no permanent home for them except in Africa, where their children could enjoy all the blessings of liberty. That was the best country for them. In the United States they did not want the colored people anymore, they had got the use of them, and now in this State the new constitution did not recognize them at all. (A voice – “Yes, as chattels.”) The minister of Hayti to this country was not recognized by the President, and had to go home again. Liberia, on the west coast of Africa, had as fine, or better, climate as regards atmosphere than the West Indies. He wished to go where they would be free, for their moral culture here he considered out of the question.

James A. Handy, of Baltimore, remarked that they lived in an interesting age of the world – that it was the glory of our day that assistance is offered to the immortal principles of man, and it struggles to free itself from the trammels and superstitions of the past, and of the oppressions and burthens of the present. We live in an age of physical, moral and intellectual wonders, and that man is truly fortunate who lives at the present and has the privilege of aiding in carrying forward the great enterprise of redeeming, disenthraling and restoring back in all their primitive glory three millions of down-trodden people to the land of their forefathers. On the western shore of Africa there was the infant republic of Liberia attracting the attention of all the enlightened nations of the earth. For four years she had maintained her position as an independent State, and today she was prosperous, happy and acknowledged by England, France, Russia and Prussia – four of the greatest powers of the earth; and before this year is out the United States will be willing, ready and anxious to



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cultivate friendly relations with that garden spot – that heritage which a kind and overruling providence has prepared for us and not only for us, but for all the able sons and daughters of Ham.

One word in relation to the inducements held out by Liberia – Asia could not exceed the variety of the productions of Africa – Europe with her numerous manufactories and eternal resources, could not cope with her in physical greatness – America with her noble institutions of power, facilities of improvement, promises of greatness and high hopes of immortality, was this day far, very far behind her in natural resources. Nothing can excel the value of her productions – sugar-cane grows rapidly, cotton a native plant, corn and hemp flourish in great perfection; oranges, coffee, wild honey, lemons, mahogany, cam-wood, satin-wood, rose-wood, &c., abound there; mules, oxen, horses, sheep, hogs, fowls of all kinds, are in the greatest abundance. She holds out a rich temptation to commerce and a strong inducement to emigration. To the latter, the United States owed what she was, making her one of the most effective nations of the world. For years the glorious galaxy of stars which arose in the western hemisphere have been casting their generous, grateful light over the social, moral and political darkness of the East, but today the commanding tide of commerce is changing. From the Pacific shores the genius of American enterprise and industry has opened a nearer highway to the Celestial Empire, and is now by a closer interchange of fraternal relations, unbolting the massive door, and securing the commerce of China and Japan.

On the lap of American civilization and around the altars of this Christian land, have been born the moral elements of civil and Christian power, ordained by heaven [for] the redemption of Africa. For the last 2000 years, that wretched land of mystery and crime has been abandoned to the cupidity of most cruel barbarism, surpassing in degradation, guilt and woe, all other nations of the earth. Pre-eminently high on the page of prophetic scripture is chronicled in most of unequivocal language the name and future redemption of Africa. For twelve centuries the problem "how shall Africa be redeemed" has been unsolved, although earnestly sought for by the civil and religious powers of Europe; but in every instance it has been in vain, and the cloud of her wretchedness blackened on each failure. Mysterious and inscrutable are the ways of Providence to accomplish her restoration, lift her from the jaws of death, bind her as a jewel to the throne of righteousness, and give her a place among the civilized nations of mankind. God in his pity, wisdom and goodness, has opened the way for a part of her crushed children, pre-doomed by bloody superstition to altars of death, to be delivered from immolation and find an asylum under a form of ameliorated service in the bosom of this country; and here their children have been born, elevated and blessed under redeeming auspices. In the lapse of time, by the same benevolent providence, many of this people have become free, and to such the voice of heaven emphatically speaks, thundering forth in invigorating term, "Arise and depart for this is not your rest." This makes us bold in saying that emigration is the only medium by which the long closed doors of that continent are to be opened; by her own children's returning, bearing social and

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moral elements of civil and religious power, by which that continent is to be resuscitated, renovated and redeemed.

Thirty-one years ago the first emigrant ship that ever sailed eastward, from these shores to Africa, conveying to that dark land, a missionary family of some two hundred souls – her own returning children, enriched with the more enduring treasures of the western world; there by them on the borders of that continent, overshadowed with the deepest gloom were raised the first rude temples of civilization – the first halls of enlightened legislation – the first christian altars to the worship of Almighty God that have ever proved successful, or of any permanent, practical utility. Then and there arose the long promised light, the star of hope to the benighted millions of Africa. Since that day the star has risen higher and higher, the light extended along the coast and reaching far back towards the mountains of the Moon, radiating, elevating and purifying; and to-day we behold a nation born on the western coast of Africa, respected, prosperous and happy. Here then is practically and beautifully solved, on the true utilitarian principles of this wonder-working age, the mysterious problem. By whom is Africa to be redeemed? The answer comes rumbling back to us, over the towering billows of the Atlantic, from the republic of Liberia, with a voice that starts our inmost souls, falling with ponderous weight upon the ears of the free colored people of this Union – “thou art the man, thou art the woman.”

James A. Jackson, of Baltimore, eulogized Hayti as standing as high the West India islands as the United States does above the republic of Mexico, in the point of commercial importance. This island had tried the experiment of republicanism and had changed it. It was now a question with the colored people, in their present condition, whether they were more suited to a republican than monarchical government. The productions of the soil of Hayti and of her forests were referred to, and the fact alleged that she would produce more than all the other West India islands put together. The exports and imports of the United States to and from the island were cited as an illustration of her prosperity. A comparison was made of the commerce of Liberia and that of Hayti, the latter country being held up in a very favorable light.

Nicholas Penn, of Frederick, spoke in favor of emigration to Liberia. They did not want an island. The colored population increased so fast that they needed no island but a continent for them. His constituents wished him to examine Africa, and he hoped it would be done. Liberia was the only place for them. The white man fought for and claimed this country, and he was not going to give it up to them. In the language of Patrick Henry, will we be ready tomorrow or next day to act more than now? No! – Now was the time, and he hoped this enterprise would spread far and wide until the whole people should understand it, and all unite in the glorious movement. Let us appoint men to go and examine Liberia, and report to us just what it is. We want a home, and we were sent here to examine and determine on what would be best to recommend.

B. Jenifer, of Dorchester, said all these statements about Africa were theoretical – gained thro’ geography, and went on to state that he had spent near eleven months in Africa, had

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traveled it over and examined its productions and resources. He had been sent for that purpose by a colored colonization society of his country; but did not wish to discuss Liberia at this time. Mr. Handy had so ably discussed the subject, and in all of which he fully coincided with him. The true question for this convention to decide was whether they should remain here, or to seek a home in Liberia or elsewhere.

John H. Walker, after some difficulty, got the floor and offered a substitute for the report of the committee on the platform, which was unanimously adopted. The following is substitute:

Whereas, The present age is one eminently distinguished for inquiry, investigation, enterprise and improvement in physical, political, intellectual and moral sciences; and, whereas, among our white neighbors every exertion is continually being made to improve their social and moral condition, and develop their intellectual faculties; and, whereas, it is a duty which mankind, (colored as well as white,) owe to themselves and their Creator to embrace every opportunity for the accomplishment of this mental culture, and intellectual development, and general social improvement; and, we, the free colored people of the stat of Maryland, are conscious that we have made little or no progress in improvement during the past twenty years, but are now sunken into a condition of social degradation which is truly deplorable, and the continuing to live in which we cannot but view as a crime and transgression against our God, ourselves and our posterity; and, whereas, we believe that a crisis in our history has arrived when we may choose for ourselves degradation, misery and wretchedness, on the one hand, or happiness, honor and enlightenment, on the other, by pursuing one of two paths which are now laid before us for our consideration and choice; may we not, therefore, hope that our people will awaken from their lethargic slumbers, and seek for themselves that future course of conduct which will elevate them from their present position and place them on an equality with the other more advanced races of mankind – may we not hope that they will consider seriously the self-evident proposition that all men are created equal, and endowed by the Creator with the, same privilege of exerting themselves for their own and each other's benefit; and, whereas, in commencing the great and glorious work of our own moral elevation, and of our social and intellectual improvement, we are of the opinion that an organization of the friends of this just and holy cause is absolutely necessary for effecting the object so much to be desired, and we are therefore – Resolved, That we will, each and every one, here pledge ourselves to each other and to our God, to use, on every and all occasions, our utmost efforts to accomplish the objects set forth in the foregoing preamble; and that we will, now, and forever hereafter, engraft this truth in our prayers, our hopes, our instructions to our brethren and our children – namely, that degradation is a sin and a source of misery, and it is a high, an



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honorable and a blessed privilege we enjoy, the right to improve ourselves and transmit to posterity happiness instead of our misery – knowledge instead of our ignorance.

Resolved, That while we appreciate and acknowledge the sincerity of the motives and the activity of the zeal of those who, during an agitation of twenty years have honestly struggled to place us on a footing of social and political equality with the white population of the country, yet we cannot conceal from ourselves the fact that no advancement has been made towards a result to us so desirable; but that on the contrary, our condition as a class is less desirable now than it was twenty years ago.

Resolved, That in the face of an immigration from Europe, which is greater each year than it was the year preceding, and during the prevalence of a feeling in regard to us, which the very agitation intended for good has only served apparently to embitter, we cannot promise ourselves that the future will do that which the past has failed to accomplish.

Resolved, That we recognize in ourselves the capacity of conducting our own public affairs in a manner at once creditable and well calculated to further among us the cause of religion, virtue, morality, truth and enlightenment – and to acquire for ourselves the possession and enjoyment of that elevated refinement which so much adorns and beautifies social intercourse among mankind, and leads them to a proper appreciation of the relations existing between man and Deity – man and his fellow-men, and man and that companion whom God has bestowed upon him, to console him in the hour of trouble and darkness, or enjoy with him the blessings that heaven vouchsafed occasionally to shower upon our pathway through life.

Resolved, That in a retrospective survey of the past, we see between the white and colored races a disparity of thought, feeling and intellectual advancement, which convinces us that it cannot be that the two races will ever overcome their natural prejudices towards each other sufficiently to dwell together in harmony and in the enjoyment of like social and political privileges, and we therefore hold that a separation of ourselves from our white neighbors, many of whom we cannot but love and admire for the generosity they have displayed towards us from time to time, is an object devoutly to be desired and the consummation of which would tend to the natural advantage of both races.

Resolved, That comparing the relative advantages afforded us in Canada, the West Indies, and Liberia – these being the places beyond the limits of the United States to which circumstances have directed our attention – we are led to examine the claims of Liberia particularly, for there alone, we have been told, that we can exercise all the functions of a free republican government, and hold an honorable position among the



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nations of the earth.

Resolved, That this Convention recommend to the colored people of Maryland the formation of societies in the counties of this State and the city of Baltimore, who shall meet monthly, for the purpose of raising means to establish and support free schools for the education of our poor and destitute children, and for the appointment each month of a person whose duty it shall be to collect such information in relation to the condition of the colored emigrants in Canada, West Indies, Guiana, and Liberia, as can be obtained by him from all available sources, which information shall be brought to these monthly meetings above alluded to, and read before them for the instruction of all, in order that when they are resolved, if they should so resolve to remove from this country to any other, they may know what will be their new homes.

Resolved, That as this subject is one of the greatest importance to us and the consideration of which, whatever may be the result, cannot be put aside, we recommend to our people in this State to establish and maintain an organization in regard to it, the great object of which shall be enquiry and discussion, which, without committing any, may lead to accurate information; and that a convention like the present, composed of delegates from the respective counties in the State and from Baltimore city, be held annually at such times and places as may be hereafter designated.

Resolved, That in thus expressing our opinions it is not our purpose to counsel emigration as either necessary or proper in every case. The transfer of an entire people from one country to another, must necessarily be the work of generations. Each individual now and hereafter must be governed by the circumstances of his own condition, of which he alone can be the judge, as well in regard to the time of removal, as to the place to which he shall remove; but deeply impressed ourselves with the conviction that sooner or later removal must take place, we would counsel our people to accustom themselves to that idea.

Resolved, That this Convention recommend to the ministers of the gospel among the free colored population of Maryland to endeavor, by contributions from their congregations and by other means, to raise funds for the purpose of forwarding the object of educating the children of the destitute colored persons in this State; and that they also impress upon the minds of their bearers the benefits which would necessarily result from the development of their intellects, and the bringing into fullest use those mental powers and reasoning faculties which distinguish mankind from the brute creation; and that this be requested of them as a part of their duty as ministers of the religion of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

F. Harris entered his protest against the adoption of the fourth resolution.



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A motion made to adjourn *sine die* at 2 o'clock, P.M., was lost; and a resolution restricting each speaker to five minute speeches was adopted.

Wm. Perkins spoke of the law enforced in Kent county, by which the children of free colored persons, whom the officers decided the parents were unable to support, were bound out; and also of the law which prohibited a colored person returning to the State if he should happen to leave it. They were oppressed and borne down.

James A. Jones, of Kent, thought his native county equal to any other in the State, and that colored persons were not more oppressed there than elsewhere in the State.

Charles O. Fisher moved that a committee of five be appointed to draw up a memorial to the Legislature of Maryland, praying more indulgence to the colored people of the State, in order that they may have time to prepare themselves for a change in their condition, and for removal to some other land.

Daniel Koburn, of Baltimore, in referring to the oppressive laws of the State, said the hog law of Baltimore was better moderated than that in reference to the colored people. The hog law said at certain seasons they should run about, and at certain seasons be taken up; but the law referring to colored people allowed them to be taken up at any time.

Charles Dobson, of Talbot, said that the time had come when free colored men in his county had been taken up and sold for one year, and when that year was out, taken up and sold for another year. Who knew what the next Legislature would do; and if any arrangements could be made to better their condition, he was in favor of them. He was for the appointing the committee on the memorial.

B. Jenifer, of Dorchester, opposed the resolution; he was not in favor of memorializing the Legislature – it had determined to carry out certain things, and it was a progressive work.

Chas. Wyman, of Carolina; Joseph Bantem, of Talbot; John H. Walker, Chas. O. Fisher, and others, discussed the resolution, which was finally adopted.

The following is the committee appointed: Jno. H. Walker and James A. Handy, of Baltimore; Wm. Perkins, of Kent; Thomas Buller of Dorchester, and Daniel J. Ross, of Hartford county.

A resolution of thanks to the officers of the Convention, the reporters of the morning papers, and authorities for their protection, was adopted. The proceedings were also ordered to be printed in pamphlet form.

The Convention, at 3 o'clock, adjourned to meet on the second Monday in November, 1853, at Frederick, Md.

The proceedings of the Convention yesterday were conducted in the most credible manner, and no disturbances took place either in or out of the Hall by the "outsiders" a feeling reprimand, administered by the police to several of the rowdies, having had a beneficial effect. In the Convention, during its sittings, much talent has been observable in a number of the members, who have displayed an eloquence, power of argument and knowledge, that would have done credit to any legislative body. The object of the Convention was clearly set forth, and various matters debated in the most entertaining manner.

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[Henry Thoreau](#) made an entry in his journal (except for the 1st 7 words, which appear in the manuscript copy-text, this sentence is drawn from the journal source) that he was later to copy into his early lecture "[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT.](#)" as:

**Brad Dean's
Commentary**

[Paragraph 77] It is commonly said that history is a history of war, but it is at the same time a history of development. A savage tribe has enough stirring incidents in its annals, wars and murders enough, surely, to make interesting anecdotes without end, such a chronicle of startling and monstrous events as fill the daily papers and suit the appetite of barrooms; but the annals of such a tribe do not furnish the materials for history.



July 29, Thursday: Pm To Burnt Plain

The forget me not still by the brook. Floating heart was very common yesterday in J.P. Brown's woodland Pond. Gaultheria Procumbens in bloom on this years plants. The Mitchella repens shows small green fruit. & the trientalis is gone to seed black in a small white globule. Proserpinaca palustris for how long? Euphorbia maculata how long? I see a bluet still in damp ground. Apples now by their size remind me of the harvest. I see a few roses in moist places with short curved thorns and narrow bracts. Eupatorium perfoliatum just beginning. The ranunculus repens var filiformis is still very abundant on the river shore. I see a geranium leaf turned red in the shade of a copse –the same color with the woodbine seen yesterday. These leaves interest me as much as flowers. I should like to have a complete list of those that are the first to turn red or yellow.

How attractive is color especially red –kindred this with the color of fruits in the harvest –& skies in the evening. The colors which some rather obscure leaves assume in the fall in dark copses or by the road side for the most part unobserved interest me more than their flowers– There is also that plant with a lake or claret underside to its radical leaves in early spring –what is that?

It did me good this afternoon to see the large soft looking roots of alders occupying a small brook in a narrow shady swamp laid bare at a distance from their base –covered with white warts sometimes on a green ground –with what rapacity they grasped with what tenacity they held to life –also filling the wet soil with innumerable fibres –ready to resist the severest drought.

Blue curls & wormwood springing up every where with their aroma –especially the first –are quite restorative– It is time we had a little worm wood to flavor the somewhat tasteless or cloying summer –which palls upon the taste. That common rigid narrow leaved faint purplish aster in dry woods by shrub oak paths Aster linarifolius of Big. –but it is not *savory* leaved. I do not find it in Gray.

Lespedeza violacea? is that under Fair Haven. It must have been out a week. Can that be Hypericum mutilum grown so high in Potter's low field? That is ap. solidago nemoralis in dry fields. Lechea minor?

It is commonly said that history is a history of war –but it is at the same time a history of development. Savage nations –any of our Indian tribes for instance –would have enough stirring incidents in their annals –wars and murders enough surely to make interesting anecdotes without end –such a chronicle of startling & monstrous events as fill the daily papers & suit the appetite of bar rooms –but the annals of such a tribe do not furnish the materials for history.



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- Henry Thoreau



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July 30, Friday, 1852: Jefferson Davis's wife Varina gave birth to a son whom they would name Samuel Emory Davis.

Nathaniel Hawthorne learned of the death of his younger sister in the burning and sinking of the steamer *Henry Clay*. In George Templeton Strong's New-York diary we find some interesting applications of imagery obtained from the contemporary institution of capital punishment by hanging:



Went up by railroad last night. The funeral took place this morning, attended by nearly every one on the Point; a melancholy business it was. I shall never forget poor Bailey's figure, and look of apathy – almost of stupor; and the three little boys clinging round him and crying, unnoticed; the still sunlight on the cemetery, the burial service, the multitude of sad faces, the two coffins with which we all felt that all the life and hope and heart of one man were sinking into the earth to wither into dust. And all this and so much beside, that the Henry Clay might beat the Armenia. It is time that this drowning and burning to death of babies and young girls and old men to gratify the vanity of steamboat captains were stopped. I would thank God for the privilege of pulling the cap over the eyes of the captain and owners of this boat, and feel as I completed my hangman's office that I had not lived utterly in vain.... The scene at the wreck yesterday morning was hideous: near thirty bodies exposed along the shore – many children among them. And some enterprising undertakers from Yonkers and New York had sent up their stock of coffins on speculation. "Looking for deceased friend, sir?" "Buying a coffin, sir?" "Only five dollars, sir, and warranted." Public feeling is very strong now. But it will die out within the week. These scoundrels will never be punished, not even indicted. Damn them! No, I retract that, for God knows we all stand in need of something less than the rigor of justice. But a thousand years or so of fire and brimstone after hanging in this world, would be a moderate award of retribution....

A poem written by John Greenleaf Whittier and dedicated to Harriet Beecher Stowe was published in Frederick Douglass' Paper:

Dry the tears for holy Eva,
With the blessed angels leave her,
Of the form so sweet and fair
Give to earth the tender care.
For the golden locks of Eva
Let the sunny southland give her
Flowery pillow of repose
Orange bloom and budding rose.

All is light and peace with Eva,
There the darkness cometh never,
Tears are wiped and fetters fall,
And the Lord is all in all.
Weep no more for happy Eva
Wrong and sing no more shall grieve her,

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

Care and pain and weariness
Lost in love so measureless.


Gentle Eva, loving Eva
Child confessor, true believer,
Listener at the Master's knee,
"Suffer such to come to me."
Oh for faith like thine, sweet Eva,
Lighting all the solemn river,
And the blessing of the poor
Wafting to the heavenly shore,




July 30, Friday: The fore part of this month was the warmest weather we have had; the last part sloping toward autumn has reflected some of its coolness, for we are very forward to anticipate the fall. Perhaps I may say the spring culminated with the commencement of haying –& the summer side of the year in mid July.

3 1/2 Pm to Flints Pond

How long is it since I heard a veery [Veery  *Catharus fuscescens*]? Do they go or become silent when the goldfinch [American Goldfinch  *Carduelis tristis*] heralds the autumn? Do not all flowers that blossom after mid. July remind us of the fall? After midsummer we have a belated feeling as if we had all been idlers –& are forward to see in each sight –& hear in each sound some presage of the fall. –just as in mid. age man anticipates the end of life.

Tansy is a prevalent flower now –dog's bane still common– Night hawks [Common Nighthawk  *Chordeiles minor* (Booming Nighthawk)] squeak & fly low over Thrush alley at 4 Pm. A small purple orchis *Platanthera psychodes* –quite small –so that I perceive what I called by this name before must have been the *fimbriata*. The sand cherry is a handsome fruit but not very palatable. *Hedeoma pulegioides* pennyroyal is out of bloom ap for some time –in the ruts of an old path through a copse. *Lobelia dortmanna* water L. ap. for some time. A small kind of potamogeton which I have not examined before –most like the *P. hybridum* but with a cylindrical spike. The ripple marks on the east shore of Flints are nearly parallel firm ridges in the white sand one inch or more apart– They are very distinctly felt by the naked feet of the wader. What are those remarkable spherical masses of fine grass or fibres looking like the nests of water mice –washing toward the shore at the bottom amid the weeds–? quite numerous over a long shore. I thought they must be nests of mice till I found some solid. The clethra *alnifolia* is just beginning –(as the swamp pink shows its last white petals–) but August will have its beauty. It is important as one of the later flowers. High-blackberries ripe ap –for a day or two That succulent plant by Tuttle's sluice appears to be *Sedum telephium* –Garden Orpine or live for ever –called also house leek –since it will grow if only one end is tucked under a shingle.

What a gem is a bird's egg especially a blue or a green one –when you see one broken or whole in the woods–! I noticed a small blue egg this afternoon washed up by Flint's Pond & half buried by White sand –& and as it lay there alternately wet & dry no color could be fairer –no gem could have a more advantageous or favorable setting. Probably it was shaken out of some nest which overhung the water. I frequently meet with broken egg shells where a crow [American Crow  *Corvus Brachyrhynchos*] perchance or some other thief has been marauding. And is not that shell something very precious that houses that winged life?– Caught in a thunder shower –when S of Flints Pond –came back by C. Smith's road. Stood under thick trees. I care not how hard it rains if it does not rain more than 15 minutes– I can shelter myself effectually in the woods. It is a grand sound that of the rain on the leaves of the forest 1/4 of a mile distant approaching.– But I got wet through after all being caught where there were no trees.

THOREAU AS
ORNITHOLOGIST



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



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

AUGUST 1852



August [1852](#): This month's issue of [Harper's New Monthly Magazine](#).

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May-August [1852](#): From May until August, the [Reverend Samuel Joseph May](#) was making a 2d inspection of the settlements of escaped slaves along the border inside Canadian territory, for the benefit of the American Anti-Slavery Society. Upon his return he would report that although these black Americans in exile were comparatively prosperous, the unpleasant truth was that the racial prejudice they were encountering in [Canada](#) was as extreme as any they had endured inside the United States of America.

[RESISTING THE FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW](#)



When in August the warriors of the Yuma asked for peace talks, the troops of Lieutenant Thomas Sweeny approached with fixed bayonets and the native Americans felt they needed to retreat. However, they would

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WHAT?

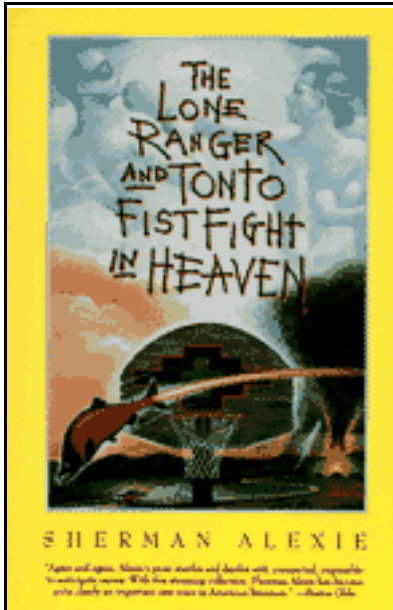
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again request these peace talks.

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WHITE ON RED, RED ON WHITE



[Henry Thoreau](#)'s "A Poet Buying a Farm" appeared in [Sartain's Union Magazine](#) (this essay is related to the 1st, 2d, 3d, and 5th paragraphs of "Where I Lived, and What I Lived For," with slight variations of wording and of punctuation, plus a snippet from "Sounds"). This magazine would then fold, and so we don't know whether Thoreau would have wanted to continue with this sort of piecemeal publication:



WALDEN: At a certain season of our life we are accustomed to consider every spot as the possible site of a house. I have thus surveyed the country on every side within a dozen miles of where I live. In imagination I have bought all the farms in succession, for all were to be bought, and I knew their price. I walked over each farmer's premises, tasted his wild apples, discoursed on husbandry with him, took his farm at his price, at any price, mortgaging it to him in my mind; even put a higher price on it, -took every thing but a deed of it, -took his word for his deed, for I dearly love to talk, -cultivated it, and him too to some extent, I trust, and withdrew when I had enjoyed it long enough, leaving him to carry it on. This experience entitled me to be regarded as a sort of real-estate broker by my friends. Wherever I sat, there I might live, and the landscape radiated from me accordingly. What is a house but a *sedes*, a seat? -better if a country seat. I discovered many a site for a house not likely to be soon improved, which some might have thought too far from the village, but to my eyes the village was too far from it. Well, there I might live, I said; and there I did live, for an hour, a summer and a winter life; saw how I could let the years run off, buffet the winter through, and see the spring come in. The future inhabitants of this region, wherever they may place their houses, may be sure that they have been anticipated. An afternoon sufficed to lay out the land into orchard woodlot and pasture, and to decide what fine oaks or pines should be left to stand before the door, and whence each blasted tree could be seen to the best advantage; and then I let it lie, fallow perchance, for a man is rich in proportion to the number of things which he can afford to let alone.



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PEOPLE OF
WALDEN

WALDEN: My imagination carried me so far that I even had the refusal of several farms, -the refusal was all I wanted,- but I never got my fingers burned by actual possession. The nearest that I came to actual possession was when I bought the Hollowell Place, and had begun to sort my seeds, and collected materials with which to make a wheelbarrow to carry it on or off with; but before the owner gave me a deed of it, his wife -every man has such a wife- changed her mind and wished to keep it, and he offered me ten dollars to release him. Now, to speak the truth, I had but ten cents in the world, and it surpassed my arithmetic to tell, if I was that man who had ten cents, or who had a farm, or ten dollars, or all together. However, I let him keep the ten dollars and the farm too, for I had carried it far enough; or rather, to be generous, I sold him the farm for just what I gave for it, and, as he was not a rich man, made him a present of ten dollars, and still had my ten cents, and seeds, and materials for a wheelbarrow left. I found thus that I had been a rich man without any damage to my poverty. But I retained the landscape, and I have since annually carried off what it yielded without a wheelbarrow. With respect to landscapes,-

“I am monarch of all I *survey*,
My right there is none to dispute.”

HOLLOWELL FARM

ALEXANDER SELKIRK

WILLIAM COWPER



WALDEN: I have frequently seen a poet withdraw, having enjoyed the most valuable part of a farm, while the crusty farmer supposed that he had got a few wild apples only. Why, the owner does not know it for many years when a poet has put his farm in rhyme, the most admirable kind of invisible fence, has fairly impounded it, milked it, skimmed it, and got all the cream, and left the farmer only the skimmed milk.




WALDEN: All that I could say, then, with respect to farming on a large scale, (I have always cultivated a garden,) was, that I had had my seeds ready. Many think that seeds improve with age. I have no doubt that time discriminates between the good and the bad; and when at last I shall plant, I shall be less likely to be disappointed. But I would say to my fellows, once for all, As long as possible live free and uncommitted. It makes but little difference whether you are committed to a farm or the county jail.

TIMELINE OF WALDEN

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 August 1852: Aboard the island of [Cuba](#) in the Caribbean, the controlling Spaniards discovered the “Conspiracy of Vuelta Abajo.” Some of the conspirators would manage to escape to the USA, while others would be caught and condemned to death (the wealthy leader Francisco de Frías himself, the rich being different from thee and me, would only be sent to prison).



Late during this month, widower and single parent [H.G.O. Blake](#) wrote to [Henry Thoreau](#), and to [Bronson Alcott](#), in regard to his impending marriage with his longtime student Nancy Pope Howe Conant. In his letter to Alcott he inquired, obviously in conjunction with this fiancée, how a man and a woman could “help each other to be more truly solitary in the good & beautiful sense, to be more truly free, to be nearer the common Friend that [than?] we could be, apart? For we aim, I think, at nothing less than that. How shall we treat each other, with what reserve, with what Holy Reverence, so that the Mystery, the Poetry, & Beauty which hang about the dawning of love, may not be changed by too close an intercourse, by sharing, in common, the cares of daily life, into a prosaic & vulgar familiarity.”

Read  [Henry Thoreau's Journal for August 1852 \(æf. 35\)](#)



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August 1, Sunday, 1852: The Black Methodists of San Francisco established their 1st church, Zion Methodist Episcopal.

Per Ellen Gould Harmon White's THE YOUTH'S INSTRUCTOR (just launched as an 8-page monthly the subscription price for which was to be 25 cents):

Dear Young Friends,

You live in a dark and wicked world, subject to sickness, pain and death. You may see many things that look beautiful; but how soon they fade away. You may have a dear friend that you love; but soon that one may be torn from you by sickness and death, and you will then feel lonesome.

You should have something substantial to fix your minds and affections upon, that can give real satisfaction and joy, and cheer your spirits in this dark world, and cause your sorrows to bring joy in the end.

There is a blight upon everything. The earth feels the curse that God pronounced upon it, because of the disobedience of our first parents. They broke the command of God in eating of the forbidden tree, after he had given them the privilege of eating of all the other trees in the garden. They listened to the tempter, ate of the forbidden tree, and were expelled from the beautiful garden of Eden.

The earth that was then so beautiful, was cursed, and the flaming sword was placed around the tree of life to guard it, lest man, in his sin, should approach that tree, and eat of its immortal fruit, and by so doing, live in sin for ever.

The tree of life was designed to perpetuate immortality. Adam and Eve could eat of that tree, and enjoy its rich immortal fruit, until they transgressed the command of God. Death was then pronounced upon them, and all that should ever live upon the earth. There was no way of escape for us; no provision that we might again have access to the tree of life, if we would repent. Whatever evils might befall us, there was then no other way than to bear them without hope of having right to the tree of life, to eat of its leaves and fruit, and be healed. We must ever suffer and groan beneath the curse.

But the Son of God, who was with the Father before the world was, took pity upon us in our lost condition, and offered to step in between us and the wrath of an offended God. Said Jesus, I will give my life for them. I will take the burden of the sins of the world upon men, and will make a way possible for these transgressors to find pardon and enjoy thy favor again, that they may repent and keep thy commandments, and again have access to the tree of life. God consented to give his only Son to die for lost man.

The lovely Jesus laid aside his glory, and came into this dark world, and took upon himself our nature, to be wounded for our transgressions, to be bruised for our iniquities. O, what love for us.—He led a self-denying life, and had not where to lay his head. He was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, was despised and rejected, and finally was crucified for us.

But you must not think that you have nothing to do, because Christ died for you. You must repent of all of your sins, and give your hearts to God, and then believe that the blood of Christ will cleanse you from all sin. Then if you keep all the




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commandments of God, the Sabbath with the rest, you may through the merits of Christ, be brought back to the tree of life. This will be when Jesus comes to raise the righteous dead, and change the living saints. Then you will have right to the tree of life, and eat of the leaves, and immortal fruit of the tree of life and live for ever in perfect happiness.—Read Revelation 22:14. In the next paper I will speak of the beauties of the New Earth.
E.G.W.
Rochester



Aug. 1. P.M. —To Conantum.

Is not that the small-flowered hypericum? The berries of what I have called the alternate-leaved cornel are now ripe, a, very dark blue — blue-black — and round, but dropping off prematurely, leaving handsome *red* cymes, which adorn the trees from a distance. *Chelone glabra* just out. Singing birds are scarce. I have not heard the catbird [**Gray Catbird**  *Dumetella carolinensis*] or the thrush [**Wood Thrush**  *Catharus mustelina*] for a long time. The peawai [**Eastern Wood-Pewee**  *Contopus virens* (~~Wood-Pewee or Peewee or Peawai~~)] sings yet. *Early* apples are ripe, and the sopsivine scents my handkerchief before I have perceived any odor from the orchards. The small rough sunflower (*Helianthus divaricatus*) tells of August heats; also *Helianthus annuus*, common sunflower. May it not stand for the character of August? Found a long, dense spike of the *Orchis psycodes*. Much later this than the great orchis. The same, only smaller and denser, not high-colored enough.



August 2, Monday, 1852: **Ellery Channing** walked past the red farmhouse next-door to the **Waldo Emersons** in which he and his wife Ellen had lived in 1843-1844, and waxed nostalgic:

There is a house in which I spent one of the most happy years of my life.

Henry Thoreau for the 4th time (**Dr. Bradley P. Dean** has noticed) deployed in his journal a weather term that had been originated by **Luke Howard**: “We have had a day or two (and here is another) of hanging clouds not threatening rain yet affording shade, so that you are but little incommoded by the sun in a long walk. Varied, dark, and downy **cumulus** –fair-weather clouds, well nigh covering the sky– with dark bases and white glowing fronts and brows.” Thoreau sat on Fair Haven Hill and thought some thoughts which lead me to infer that whatever “knowledge” he had of the historical events which had occurred in the vicinity of Wachusett and in the vicinity of Mount Misery –historical events relating to his personal Huguenot ancestry and to his honest concern over genocide against Native American groups– could at most have been a subliminal and intuitive “knowledge” and must be considered to have been completely severed from any actual historical record available to him. —For he displays, in the following passage from his journal, no awareness whatever that there had been a Huguenot settlement near Wachusett in Nipmuc Country, or that these religious refugees had been driven into the Calvinist and Puritan towns by the threat from the Nipmuc tribe when it allied with Metacom, or that the local center of forest resistance to the Europeans in 1675-1676 had been the vicinity of Wachusett, or that there had been Concord Native Americans living on Sandy or Flint’s Pond, or that some of the Native American women and children had been murdered by white Concordians on the slopes of Mount Misery:



Aug. 2. At 5.30 this morning, saw from Nawshawtuct the trees on the Great Meadows

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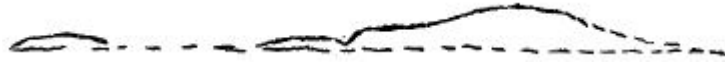
against and rising out of the dispersing wreaths of fog, on which the sun was shining.

Just before sunset. At the window. — The clear sky in the west, the sunset window, has a cloud both above and below. The edges of these clouds about the sun glow golden, running into fuscous. A dark shower is vanishing in the Southeast. There will commonly be a window in the west. The sun enters the low cloud, but still is reflected brightly, though more brassily perhaps, from the edges of the upper cloud. There is as yet no redness in the heavens. Now the glow becomes redder, tingeing new edges of the clouds near and higher up the sky, as they were clipped in an invisible reddening stream of light, into a rosy bath. Far in the southwest, along the horizon, is now the fairer rose-tinted or flesh-colored slay, the west being occupied by a dark cloud mainly, and, still further south, a huge boulder shines like a chalk cliff tinged with pink. The rear of the departing shower is blushing.

Before this, at 2 P.M., walked to Burnt Plain.

I do not remember to have heard tree-toads for a long time. We have had a day or two (and here is another) of hanging clouds, not threatening rain, yet affording shade, so that you are but little incommoded by the sun in a long walk. Varied dark and downy cumulus, fair-weather clouds, well-nigh covering the sky with dark bases and white yellowing fronts and brows. You see the blue sky on every side between clouds. Is this peculiar to this season, early August? the whole cope equally divided into sky and cloud. Merely a rich drapery in the sky. Arras or curtains to adorn the gorgeous days. The midday is very silent. *Trichostema dichotomum* just out. The common St. John's-wort is now scarce. The reddening sumach berries are of rare beauty. Are they crimson or vermilion? Some sumach leaves, where the stem has broken, have turned red. Blue-eyed grass lingers still. Is the dodder out of bloom, or merely budded? It is a new era with the flowers when the small purple fringed orchis, as now, is found in shady swamps standing along the brooks. It appears to be alone of its class. Not to be overlooked, it has so much flower, though not so high-colored as the arethusa. Together with the side-flowering skull-cap, etc. The arethusas, pogonias, calopogons all gone, and violets of all kinds.

We had a little rain after all, but I walked through a long alder copse, where the leafy tops of the alders spread like umbrellas over my head, and heard the harmless pattering of the rain on my roof. Wachusett from Fair Haven Hill looks like this: —



the dotted line being the top of the surrounding forest. Even on the low principle that misery loves company and is relieved by the consciousness that it is shared by many, and therefore is not so insignificant and trivial, after all, this blue mountain outline is valuable. In many moods it is cheering to look across hence to that blue rim of the earth, and be reminded of the invisible towns and communities, for the most part also unremembered, which lie in the further and deeper hollows between me and those hills. Towns of sturdy uplandish fame, where some of the morning and primal vigor still lingers, I trust. Ashburnham, Rindge, Jaffrey, etc.,—it is cheering to think that it is with such communities that we survive or perish. Yes, the mountains do thus impart, in the mere prospect of them, some of the New Hampshire vigor. The melancholy man who had come forth to commit [suicide](#) on this hill might be saved by being thus reminded how many brave and contented lives are lived between him and the horizon. Those hills extend our plot of earth; they make our native valley or indentation in the earth so much the larger. There is a whitish line along the base of Wachusett more particularly, as if the reflection of bare cliffs there in the sun. Undoubtedly it is the slight vaporous haze in the atmosphere seen edgewise just above the top of the forest, though it is a clear day. It, this line, makes the mountains loom, in fact, a faint whitish line separating the mountains from their bases and the rest of the globe.



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August 3, Tuesday, [1852](#): [Francis Thomas Green alias Francis Thomas Brown](#) had allegedly, on March 13th, shot “John the Tinker” Jones in the back of the neck at Buckley Creek in New South Wales, Australia. On this day the accused, most respectably attired in a black dress coat and trousers, light vest, black hat, etc. entered the dock with the most extraordinary collectedness and in firm voice pleaded “Not guilty.” The court took testimony while the accused protested repeatedly that the evidence against him was merely circumstantial. After the jury found him guilty he addressed them saying that he was “perfectly innocent of the charge,” and that, if executed, his death would but add “one more to the number of victims who have fallen over circumstantial evidence.” He folded his arms over his breast and stood firmly in front of the dock to receive sentence. His Honor, in a most impressive and touching address, proceeded with the extreme sentence of the law upon the prisoner, holding out no hope that mercy would in this world be extended to him and imploring him to make use of the short time which would be allotted him on earth, in preparing to meet his Maker. The prisoner bowed respectfully and was re-conveyed in a guarded vehicle to the Darlinghurst prison facility to await [hanging](#).

The 1st American intercollegiate athletic event — a boat race between Yale and Harvard.

The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* reached Eastport, Maine on its freighted mission to save

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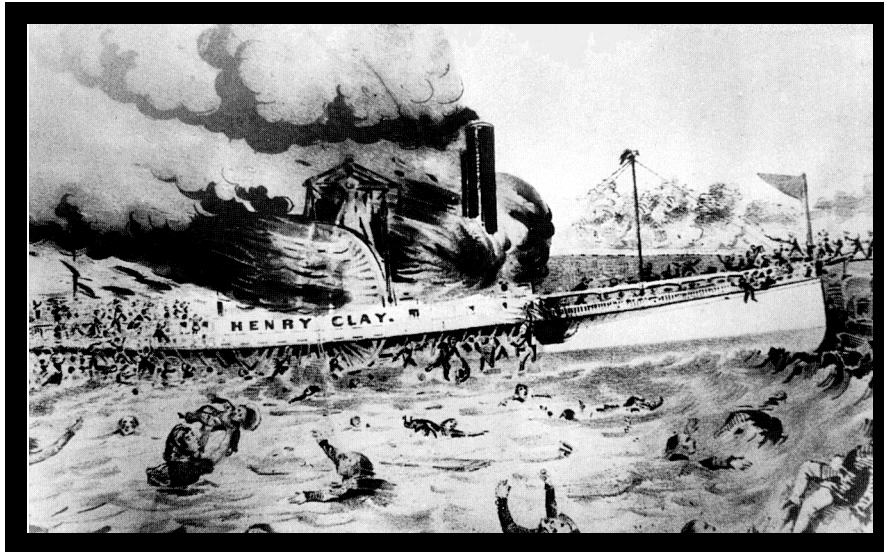
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American seafish from death in the nets and on the hooks of British fishermen.

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

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

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



The Lansingburgh, New York [Gazette](#) reviewed [Herman Melville](#)'s *PIERRE, OR THE AMBIGUITIES*:

A new work from the pen of Mr. Herman Melville cannot fail of being received with approbation. The author, in this, has chosen a new field where in to give the rein to his vivid imagination, and unsurpassed beauty of description. "Pierre Glendenning," the hero of this tale, is a fine character, well conceived and admirably sustained. The book is full of sterling incident and abounds in numerous fine passages. The chief disappointment experienced while reading it is in coming to the end. Frailty and vice are delineated with energy and acuteness, and in the most glowing language. Whether Mr. Melville will find more admirers ashore than a float we know not, but we hold that the work now before us places him indisputably in the highest list of eloquent writers.

[Robert Schumann](#)'s overture *Julius Cæsar* was being performed for the initial time, in Düsseldorf.

After a tumultuous 9 months of music-making, Louis Moreau Gottschalk departed from Madrid.

In the 1st official [Harvard-Yale](#) regatta, Harvard's 8-oar shell defeated Yale's on Lake Winnepesaukee, New Hampshire (the trophy was awarded by [General Franklin Pierce](#)).



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

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

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

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

P.M. — To Boulder Field.





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

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

What remarkable customs still prevail at funerals! The chief mourner, though it may be a maiden who has lost her lover, consents to be made a sort of puppet and is by them put forward to walk


behind the corpse in the street, before the eyes of all, at a time which should be sacred to grief; is, beside, compelled, as it were, to attend to the coarse and unfeeling, almost inevitably to her impertinent, words of consolation or admonition, so called, of whatever clerical gentleman may be in the neighborhood. Friends and neighbors of the family should bury their dead. It is fitting that they should walk in procession with parade and even assumed solemnity. It is for them to pay this kind of respect to the dead, that it be not left to hirelings alone. It is soothing to the feelings of the absent mourners. They may fitly listen to the words of the preacher, but the feelings of the mourners should be respected.

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

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

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



 August 4, Wednesday, 1852: Henry Thoreau noted the lavish flora of the “Miles Blueberry Swamp.”

CHARLES MILES





Although papers of incorporation were filed on this day for a “Sacramento Valley Railroad,” it would not be until February 22d, 1856 that the 1st train would travel on 23 miles of track between Sacramento, California and Folsom and, in the interim, a train would begin to travel over the Arcata and Mad River Railroad on December 15th, 1854).

The Boston Post “reviewed” Herman Melville’s PIERRE, OR THE AMBIGUITIES:

As the writer of the fascinating and *Crusoish* “Typee,” Mr Melville has received considerable attention from those whose hard fate it is, to “notice” new books; and as emanating from the writer of “Typee,” Mr. Melville’s subsequent works, ranging from fair to execrable, have been held worthy of lengthy critiques, while critics have been at some pains to state, in detail and by means of extracts, their various merits and defects.



Aug. 4. To Walden by poorhouse road.

Have had a gentle rain, and now with a lowering sky, but still I hear the cricket. He seems to chirp from a new depth toward autumn, new *lieferungs* of the fall. The singular thought-inducing stillness after a gentle rain like this. It has allayed all excitement. I hear the singular watery twitter of the goldfinch [American Goldfinch  *Carduelis tristis*], *ter tweeter e et or e ee*, as it ricochets over, he and his russet (?) female. The chirp of the constant chip-bird [Chipping Sparrow  *Spizella passerina*] and the plaintive strain of the lark [Eastern Meadowlark  *Sturnella magna* (Lark)], also. I must make a list of those birds which, like the lark and the robin [American Robin  *Turdus*

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migratorius], if they do not stay all the year, are heard to sing longest of those that migrate. The bobolink [[Bobolink](#) [Dolichonyx oryzivorus](#) ~~Rice-bird~~] and thrasher [[Brown Thrasher](#) [Toxostoma rufum](#) ~~Red-mavis~~], etc., are silent. English-haying is long since done, only meadow-haying going on now. I smell the fragrant life-everlasting, now almost out; another scent that reminds me of the autumn. The little bees have gone to sleep amid the clethra blossoms in the rain and are not yet aroused. What is that weed somewhat like wormwood and amaranth on the ditch by roadside here? [*Acalypha Virginica*, three-seeded mercury.] What the vine now budded like clematis in the wall? Most huckleberries and blueberries and low blackberries are in their prime now. A pleasant time to behold a small lake in the woods is in the intervals of a gentle rain-storm at this season, when the air and water are perfectly still, but the sky still overcast; first, because the lake is very smooth at such a time, second, as the atmosphere is so shallow and contracted, being low-roofed with clouds, the lake as a lower heaven is much larger in proportion to it. With its glassy reflecting surface, it is somewhat more heavenly and more full of light than the regions of the air above it. There is a pleasing vista southward over and through a wide indentation in the hills which form its shore, where their opposite sides slope to each other so as to suggest a stream flowing from it in that direction through a wooded valley, toward some distant blue hills in Sudbury and Framingham, Goodman's and Nobscot; that is, you look over and between the low near and green hills to the distant, which are tinged with blue, the heavenly color. Such is what is fair to mortal eyes. In the meanwhile the wood thrush sings in the woods around the lake.

Pycnanthemum lanceolatum, probably as early as the other variety, *Hypericum corymbosum*. Spotted St. John's-wort, some time in July.

History has not been so truthfully or livingly, convincingly, written but that we still need the evidence, the oral testimony of an eye-witness. Hence I am singularly surprised when I read of the celebrated [Henry Jenkins](#) (who lived to be same one hundred and sixty nine years old), who used to preface his conversation in this wise, "About a hundred and thirty years ago, when I was butler to [Lord Conyers](#)," etc. I am surprised to find that I needed this testimony to be convinced of the reality of Lord Conyers's existence.



August 5, Thursday, [1852](#): In [San Francisco](#), the Reverend Flavel S. Mines, A.M., rector of Trinity Church, died.

Thoreau made a comment in his journal on this day, that an older Emerson would in a later timeframe (1864) find disturbing — a remark that would cause him to muse upon "Thoreau poison":

In Journal, 1852, August 6, he [[Henry Thoreau](#)] writes, "Hearing that one with whom I was acquainted had committed suicide, I said, 'I did not know, when I planted the seed of that fact, that I should hear of it.'" I see the Thoreau poison working today in many valuable lives, in some for good, in some for harm.

My own comment upon this mentioning of suicide in Thoreau's journal would be that it's not really a reference to suicide — it is, rather, a reference to [Empedocles of Agrigentum in Sicily](#) and his "theory of effluxes" or "simulacra" — which had been an ancient doctrine according to which we can only become aware of something of which we have ourselves some share of participation — *similia similibus percipiuntur*, only like can perceive like. Rather than being a "Thoreau poison," the remark about the person who he learned had committed suicide reminds me of the attitude Thoreau would take on February 5th, 1854 toward the muskrat

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that, according to George Melvin, had gnawed off its third leg to get free of yet another trap. “For whom are psalms sung and mass said, if not for such worthies as these? When I hear the church organ peal, or feel the trembling tones of the base viol, I see in imagination the musquash gnawing off his leg, I offer a note that his affliction may be sanctified to each and all of us. Prayer and praise fitly follow such exploits. I look round for majestic pains and pleasures. They have our sympathy, both in their joys and in their pains. When I think of the tragedies which are constantly permitted in the course of all animal life, they make the plaintive strain of the universal harp which elevates us above the trivial. When I think of the muskrat gnawing off his leg, it is as the plectrum on the harp or the bow upon the viol, drawing forth a majestic strain or psalm, which immeasurably dignifies our common fate. Even as the worthies of mankind are said to recommend human life by having lived it, so I could not spare the example of the muskrat.”

“SYMPATHY”



Aug. 5. I can tell the extent to which a man has heard music by the faith he retains in the trivial and mean, even by the importance he attaches to what is called the actual world. Any memorable strains will have unsettled so low a faith and substituted a higher. Men profess to be lovers of music, but for the most part they give no evidence in their opinions and lives that they have heard it. It would not leave them narrow-minded and bigoted.



Hearing that [one with whom I was acquainted](#) had committed [suicide](#), I said I did not know when I had planted the seed of that fact that I should hear of it.

P.M. — To C. Miles’s blueberry swamp.

There is a pond-hole there perfectly covered with the leaves of the floating-heart and whiter than ever with its small white flowers, as if a slight large-flaked snow had fallen on it. The ground rises gently on every side, and first by the edge grow a few gratiolas, then the *Lysimachia stricta*, with a few blossoms left, then, a rod or two distant, in the higher rows of this natural coliseum, the red-panicked racemes of the hardhack rise. That is a glorious swamp of Miles’s, — the more open parts, where the dwarf andromeda prevails. Now, perhaps, an olivaceous green is the tint, not at all reddish, the lambkill and the bluish or glaucous rhodora and the pyrus intermixed making an extensive rich moss-like bed, in which you sink three feet to a dry bottom of moss or dead twigs, or, if peaty ground, it is covered with cup lichens; surrounded all by wild-looking woods, with the wild white spruce advancing into it and the pitch pine here and there, and high blueberry and tall pyrus and holly and other bushes under their countenance and protection. These are the wildest and richest gardens that we have. Such a depth of verdure into which you sink. They were never cultivated by any. Descending wooded hills, you come suddenly to this beautifully level pasture, comparatively open, with a close border of high blueberry bushes. You cannot believe that this can possibly abut on any cultivated field. Some wood or pasture, at least, must intervene. Here is a place, at last, which no woodchopper nor farmer frequents and to which no cows stray, perfectly wild, where the bitter and the hawk are undisturbed. The men, women, and children who perchance come hither blueberrying in their season get more than the value of the berries in the influences of the scene. How wildly rich and beautiful hang on high there the blueberries which might so easily be poisonous, the cool blue clusters high in air. Choke-berries, fair to the eye but scarcely palatable, hang far above your head, weighing down the bushes. The wild holly berry, perhaps the most beautiful of berries, hanging by slender threads from its more light and open bushes and more delicate leaves. The bushes, eight feet high, are black with choke-berries, and there are no wild animals to eat them.

I cannot sufficiently admire the rhexia, one of the highest-colored purple flowers, but difficult to bring home, with its fugacious petals. The *Hieracium scabrum* is just opening. Large spotted polygonum by the river, with white flowers on a slender spike. *Lechea racemulosa* (?) of Bigelow, — not in Gray, — a fine, almost leafless, bushy, sometimes reddish, low plant in dry fields.



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
 August 6, Friday, 1852: The brig conveying [Alfred Russel Wallace](#) and his biological specimens, and some live animals, burned and sank at sea. The crew and human passengers were left stranded in two badly leaking lifeboats.

After [Henry Thoreau](#)'s death in 1862, Sophia Thoreau would allow [Waldo Emerson](#) to look back through Thoreau's journals and he would make a comment about an entry that mentioned [suicide](#), mis-attributing the quotation to this date rather than to the previous day, the 5th.




August 6. 5AM — I do not hear this morning the breathing of chip-birds [**Chipping Sparrow**  *Spizella passerina* (chip-bird or hair-bird)] nor the song of robins [**American Robin**  *Turdus migratorius*]. Are the mornings now thus ushered in? Are they as spring-like? Has not the year grown old? Methinks we do ourselves, at any rate, somewhat tire of the season and observe less attentively and with less interest the opening of new flowers and the song of the birds. It is the signs of the fall that affect us most. It is hard to live in the summer content with it.

To Cliffs.

How different the feeble twittering of the birds here at sunrise from the full quire of the spring! Only the wood thrush [**Catharus**  *mustelina*], a huckleberry-bird [**Field Sparrow**  *Spizella pusilla* (Rush Sparrow or *juncorum* or Huckleberry-bird)] or two, or chickadee [**Black-capped Chickadee**  *Parus atricapillus*], the scream of a flicker [**Yellow-shafted Flicker**  *Colaptes auratus* (~~Golden-winged Woodpecker~~ or ~~Pigeon Woodpecker~~)] or a jay [**Blue Jay**  *Cyanocitta cristata*], or the caw of a crow [**American Crow**  *Corvus brachyrhynchos*], and commonly only an alarmed note of a robin [**American Robin**  *Turdus migratorius*]. A solitary peewee [**Eastern Wood-Pewee**  *Contopus virens* (Wood-Pewee or Peewee or Peewai)] may be heard, perchance, or a red-eye [**Red-eyed Vireo**  *Vireo olivaceus* (red-eye)], and no thrashers [**Brown Thrasher**  *Toxostoma rufum* Red-mavis], or catbirds [**Gray Catbird**  *Dumetella carolinensis*], or oven-birds [**Ovenbird**  *Seiurus aurocapillus*], or the jingle of the chewink [**Rufous-sided Towhee**  *Pipilo erythrophthalmus* Ground-bird, Ground-robin¹⁰, Chewink]. I hear the ominous twittering of the goldfinch [**American Goldfinch**  *Carduelis tristis*] over all.

The village is seen through a thin veil of fog. I just distinguish the tree-tops beneath me in the southwest, and the light-colored river through the mist, which is gathering and preparing to retreat before the sun rise, a tree-top I see the surface of Walden, whose shores are laid bare, the sun being directly opposite, and therefore the surface of the lake is a bright sheen seen through some stately pines near the railroad. This bright, silvery sheen comes through the dispersing mists to me, its shores being still concealed by fog, and a low white scudding mist is seen against the more distant dark clouds, drifting westward over all the forests before the sun.

Gathered some of those large, sometimes pear-shaped, sweet blue huckleberries which grow amid the rubbish where woods have just been cut.

A farmer told me that he lost a good many doves [**Mourning Dove**  *Zenaida macroura* (~~Turtle Dove~~)] by their being trodden upon by oxen.

P.M. — To Saw Mill Brook and hill beyond.

I still remember how much bluer those early blueberries were that grew in the shade. Have just finished [Gilpin](#)'s "Lakes of Cumberland." An elegant writer of English prose. I wish he would look at scenery sometimes not with the eye of an artist. It is all side screens and fore screens and near distances and broken grounds with him. I remark that in his tour through Wales, and afterward through Cumberland and Westmoreland, he never ascends to the top of a mountain, and if he gets up higher than usual, he merely says that the view is grand and amusing, as if because it was not easy to paint, or *picturesque*, it was not worth beholding, or deserving of serious attention. However, his elegant moderation, his discrimination, and real interest in nature excuse many things.

Milkweeds and trumpet-flowers are important now, to contrast with the cool, dark, shaded sides and recesses of moist copses. I see their red under the willows and alders everywhere against a dark

10. Thoreau occasionally used this term for such ground-feeding birds as **Savannah Sparrow**  *Passerculus sandwichensis*, **Song Sparrow**  *Melospiza melodia*, and **Vesper Sparrow**  *Poocetes gramineus*.

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ground. Methinks that blue, next to red, attracts us in a flower. Blue vervain is now very attractive to me, and then there is that interesting progressive history in its rising ring of blossoms. It has a story. Next to our blood is our prospect of heaven. Does not the blood in fact show blue in the covered veins and arteries, when distance lends enchantment to the view? The sight of it is more affecting than I can describe or account for.

The rainbow, after all, does not attract an attention proportionate to its singularity and beauty. Moses (?) was the last to comment on it. It is a phenomenon more aside from the common course of nature. Too distinctly a sign or symbol of something to be disregarded. What form of beauty could be imagined more striking and conspicuous? An arch of the most brilliant and glorious colors completely spanning [the] heavens before the eyes of men! Children look at it. It is wonderful that all men do not take pains to behold it. At some waterfalls it is permanent, as long as the sun shines. Plainly thus the Maker of the universe sets the seal to his covenant with men. Many articles are thus clinched. Designed to impress man. All men beholding it begin to understand the significance of the Greek epithet applied to the world, — name for the world, — *Kosmos*, or beauty. It was designed to impress man. We live, as it were, within the calyx of a flower.

Methinks there are few new flowers of late. An abundance of small fruits takes their place. Summer gets to be an old story. Birds leave off singing, as flowers blossoming, *i.e.* perhaps in the same proportion. With the goldenrod comes the goldfinch [**American Goldfinch** █ *Carduelis tristis*]. About the time his cool twitter was heard, did not the bobolink [**Bobolink** █ *Dolichonyx oryzivorus* ~~Rice-bird~~], thrasher [**Brown Thrasher** █ *Toxostroma rufum* ~~Red-mavis~~], catbird [**Gray Catbird** █ *Dumetella carolinensis*], oven-bird [**Ovenbird** █ *Seiurus aurocapillus*], veery [**Veery** █ *Catharus fuscescens*], etc., cease?

I see some delicate ferns, in the low damp woods by the brook, which have turned whitish at the extremity. Cohush berries have just begun to be white, as if they contained a pearly venom, — wax white with a black spot (or very dark brown), imp-eyed. The leaves of one of the cornels (alternate-leaved or else round-leaved) are, some of them, turned lake-color.

The weeds are now very high and rank in moist wood-paths and along such streams as this. I love to follow up the course of the brook and see the cardinal flowers which stand in its midst above the rocks, their brilliant scarlet the more interesting in this open, but dark, cellar-like wood; the small purple fringed orchises with long dense spikes, all flower, — for that is often all that is seen above the leaves of other plants (is not this the last flower of this peculiar *flower* kind, — *i.e.* all flower and color, the leaves subordinated?); and the *Mimulus ringens*, abundant and handsome in these low and rather shady places. Many flowers, of course, like the last, are prominent, if you visit such scenes as this, though one who confines himself to the road may never see them.

From Smith's Hill beyond, there is as good a view of the mountains as from any place in our neighborhood, because you look across the broad valley in which Concord lies first of all. The foreground is on a larger scale and more proportionate. The Peterboro Hills are to us as good as mountains. Hence, too, I see that fair river-reach, in the north. I find a bumblebee asleep in a thistle blossom (a pasture thistle), the loiterer; having crowded himself in deep amid the dense florets, out of the reach of birds, while the sky was overcast. What a sweet couch!

As I always notice the tone of the bell when I go into a new town, so surely, methinks, I notice some peculiarity in the accent and manners of the inhabitants.

The bristly aralia berries are ripe; like the sarsaparilla, a blue black. The shorn fields are acquiring a late green or refresh [*sic*]. They are greener, much, than a month ago, before the grass was cut. For ten days the weather has been cool and the air full of moisture. Is it not because of the increase of vegetation, the leaves being multiplied, the weeds more rank, the shadows heavier? This is what is called dog-day weather. The water in the river and pond is quite cool, and it is the more bracing and invigorating to bathe, though less luxurious. Methinks the water cannot again be as warm as it has been. *Erechthites hieracifolia*, apparently a day or two. *Lespedeza capitata*, *Aralia racemosa*, how long? petty morel, spikenard, like a large sarsaparilla. *Hieracium paniculatum*. *Lycopus Virginicus* (with five calyx-teeth). Solidagos, *lanceolata* (?) and *puberula* (?). *Stellaria media* at R.W.E.'s. Is it the same, then, which I saw in Cheney's garden so early? That clammy, hairy-leaved cerastium (?) I still see, with a starry white flower. Was it the *Urtica gracilis* I examined, or the common nettle? What is that plant at the brook with hairy under sides now budded?

 August 7, Saturday, [1852](#): Mehmed Emin Ali Pasha replaced Mustafa Resid Pasha as Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire.

At St. Johns in New Brunswick, Canada, [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) visited with the Governor of New Brunswick in Fredericton. While there William Speiden, Jr. would attend church services. The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* was spending a number of days laying in supplies of coal and lumber, until Thursday the 12th.




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

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

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

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

 August 8, Sunday, [1852](#): Allegedly, in a dimly lit room at the house of Ward Cheney, a successful silk manufacturer, in South Manchester, Connecticut, [Daniel Dunglas Home](#) (pronounced *Hume*) was able in the presence of multiple witnesses to levitate himself twice and rise to up to the ceiling, with loud rappings and knockings and forceful table movements accompanied by the sounds of a ship at sea in a storm.

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote in his journal about the utter universality of the poetry of [Mosleh Od-Din Sa'di](#), who had succeeded in transcending all particulars of place and all particulars of period and all particulars of language and culture:



i *Aug. 8. 5 A.M.* —Awoke into a rosy fog. I was enveloped by the skirts of Aurora. To the Cliffs.

The small dewdrops rest on the *Asclepias pulchra* by the roadside like gems, and the flower has lost half its beauty when they are shaken off. What mean these orange-colored toadstools that cumber the ground, and the citron-colored (ice-cream-like) fungus? Is the earth in her monthly courses?

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The fog has risen up before the sun around the summit of Fair Haven. It does not make such perfect seas as formerly. It is too general and wandering. It must have a core over the river—as this has not—and be of sufficient density to keep down on the low lands in a clear white, not grayish, smoky mass, and there must be no wind to drift it about. However, the Bedford meeting-house, rising above it and dark toward the sun, looks like a ship far at sea with all sails set. Thus the clouds may be said to float low at this season, —rest on the ground in the morning, —so that you look down on them from the hills. The whole surface of the earth is now streaked with wreaths of fog over meadow and forest, alternating with the green. The sun, now working round the Cliffs, fires his rays into the battalions of fog which are collected over Fair Haven Pond and have taken refuge on the west side of the Hill; routs and disperses them. A dewy, cobwebbed morning. You observe the geometry of cobwebs, though most are of that gossamer character, close woven, as if a fairy had dropt her veil on the grass in the night.


Men have, perchance, detected every kind of flower that grows in this township, have pursued it with children's eyes into the thickest and darkest woods and swamps, where the painter's color has betrayed it. Have they with proportionate thoroughness plucked every flower of thought which it is possible for a man to entertain, proved every sentiment which it is possible for a man to experience, here? Men have circumnavigated this globe of land and water, but how few have sailed out of sight of common sense over the ocean of knowledge!

The entertaining a single thought of a certain elevation makes all men of one religion. It is always some base alloy that creates the distinction of sects. Thought greets thought over the widest gulfs of time with unerring freemasonry. I know, for instance, that [Sadi](#) entertained once identically the same thought that I do — and thereafter I can find no essential difference between Sadi and myself. He is not Persian — he is not ancient — he is not strange to me. By the identity of his thoughts with mine he still survives. It makes no odds what atoms serve us. Sadi possessed no greater privacy or individuality than is thrown open to me. He had no more interior & essential & sacred self than can come naked into my thought this moment. Truth and a true man is something essentially public not private. If Sadi were to come back to claim a *personal* identity with the historical Sadi he would find there were too many of us — he could not get a skin that would contain us all. The symbol of a personal identity preserved in this sense is a mummy from the catacombs, — a whole skin, it may [be], but no life within it. By living the life of a man is made common property. By sympathy with Sadi I have embowelled him. In his thoughts I have a sample of *him*, a slice from his core, which makes it unimportant where certain bones which the thinker once employed may lie; but I could not have got this without being equally entitled to it with himself. The difference between any man and that posterity amid whom he is famous is too insignificant to sanction that he should be set up again in any world as distinct from them. Methinks I can be as intimate with the essence of an ancient worthy as, so to speak, he was with himself.

I only know myself as a human entity, the scene, so to speak, of thoughts and affections, and am sensible of a certain doubleness by which I can stand as remote from myself as from another. However intense my experience, I am conscious of the presence and criticism of a part of me which, as it were, is not a part of me, but spectator, sharing no experience, but taking note of it, and that is no more I than it is you. When the play —it may be the tragedy of life— is over, the spectator goes his way. It was a kind of fiction, a work of the imagination only, so far as he was concerned. A man may be affected by a theatrical exhibition; on the other hand, he *may not* be affected by an actual event which appears to concern him never so much.

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 August 9, Monday, 1852: City property in [San Francisco](#) was sold by Theodore Payne & Company, by order and under the direction of the Commissioners of the Funded Debt of the city.

On this day and the following one [Bronson Alcott](#) was visiting Concord from Boston.




[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRIES IN HIS JOURNAL FOR AUGUST 9TH-10TH]

 August 10, Tuesday, 1852: French President [Charles Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte](#) conferred on Giuseppe Verdi the title of Chevalier of the Legion of Honor. He dispatched the publisher Leon Escudier to present the honor to Verdi, who was at the time in Italy.

After two weeks of “daily suffering” in Toulouse, Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka abandoned his intention to make a 2d trip to Spain and boarded a coach for Paris.

Hommage à Lesueur, a cantata by Ambroise Thomas to words of Praron, was performed for the initial time, in Abbeville.

Ogden Hoffman, Jr. delivered an oration during the celebration of the obsequies of [Henry Clay](#) of [Kentucky](#) by the citizens of [San Francisco](#), and proceedings of the United States Court on the reception of the mournful intelligence of his death.

 August 11, Wednesday, 1852: [Henry Thoreau](#) recorded [Ellery Channing](#) as having remarked as part of his conversation that he kept “a dog for society — to stir up the air of the room when it becomes dead — for he experiences awful solitudes. — Another time thinks we must cultivate the social qualities — perhaps had better keep 2 dogs apiece.” (Some of such conversation might be passed off as bantering, but in the case of Channing it seems an astute piece of observation to remark that his friend experienced “awful solitudes.” Perhaps, in analyzing Thoreau’s published comment about people who lead lives of confirmed desperation, we might note that within 2 months Ellery’s wife [Ellen Kilshaw Fuller Channing](#) would announce that she was intending to take their children Margaret Fuller Channing (born May 2d, 1844, age 8), Caroline Sturgis Channing (born April 15th, 1846, age 6), and Walter Channing (born April 14th, 1849, age 4) and live separately — and accept Henry’s Concord walking buddy as having been a type case of that sort of personality syndrome.)

DOG

Table 1:

SPLITSVILLE		
1851	Edwin Forrest	Catherine Sinclair
1852	Ellery Channing	Ellen Kilshaw Fuller Channing
1853	Lola Montez	Patrick Purdy Hull



Aug. 11. Wednesday. [Alcott](#) here the 9th and 10th. He, the spiritual philosopher, is, and has been for some months, devoted to the study of his own genealogy, — he whom only the genealogy

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of humanity, the descent of man from God, should concern! He has been to his native town of Wolcott, Connecticut, on this errand, has faithfully perused the records of some fifteen towns, has read the epitaphs in as many churchyards, and, wherever he found the name Alcock, excerpted it and all connected with it, — for he is delighted to discover that the original name was *All-cock* and meant something, that some grandfather or great-grandfather bore it, Philip Alcock (though his son wisely enough changed it to Alcott). He who wrote of Human Culture, he who conducted the Conversations on the Gospels, he who discoursed of Sleep, Health, Worship, Friendship, etc., last winter, now reading the wills and the epitaphs of the Alcocks with the zeal of a professed antiquarian and genealogist! He has discovered that one George Alcock (afterwards Deacon George) came over with Winthrop in 1630 and settled in Roxbury. Has read Eliot's account of him in the Church records and been caught by a passage in which [his] character is described by Eliot as being of "good savor." I think it is. But he has by no means made out his descent from him. Only knows that family owned lands in Woodstock, Connecticut. Nevertheless the similarity of name is enough, and he pursues the least trace of it. Has visited a crockery-dealer in Boston who trades with Alcocks of Staffordshire (?), England, *great* potters who took a prize at the world's fair. Has through him obtained a cup or so with the name of the maker Alcock on it. Has it at his house. Has got the dealer to describe the persons of those Staffordshire Alcocks, and finds them to be of the right type, even to their noses. He knew they must be so. Has visited the tomb of Dr. John Alcock in the Granary Burying-Ground, read, and copied it. Has visited also the only bearer of the name in Boston, a sail-maker perchance, — though there is no evidence of the slightest connection except. through Adam, — and communicated with him. He says I should survey Concord and put down every house exactly as it stands with the name. Admires the manuscript of the old records; more pleasing than print. Has some design to collect and print epitaphs. Thinks they should be collected and printed *rcrbatim et literatim*, every one in every yard, with a perfect index added, so that persons engaged in such pursuits as himself might be absolutely sure, when they turned to the name Alcock, for instance, to find it if it was there, and not have to look over the whole yard. Talks of going to England- says it would be in his way to visit the Alcocks of Staffordshire. Has gone now to find where lie the three thousand acres granted to the Roxbury family in 16— "on the Assabett," and has talked with a lawyer about the possibility of breaking the title, etc., etc., from time to time pulling out a long notebook from his bosom, with epitaphs and the like copied into it. Had copied into it the epitaph of my grandmother-in-law which he came across in some graveyard (in Charlestown), thinking "it would interest me!" C says he keeps a dog for society, to stir up the air of the room when it becomes dead, for he experiences awful solitudes. Another time thinks we must cultivate the social qualities, perhaps had better keep two dogs apiece.

P.M. — To Conantum.

The mountain-ash berries are turning. We had a ripe watermelon on the 7th. I see the great yellow flowers of the squash amid the potatoes in the garden, one of the largest yellow flowers we have. How fat and rich! Of course it is long since they blossomed. Green corn begins. The autumnal ring of the alder locust. White lilies are not very numerous now. The skunk-cabbage leaves are fallen and decaying and their fruit is black. Their fall is earlier than that of other plants. What is that tall plant now budded by the Corner Spring? [*Chelone glabra*] I am attracted by the clear dark-green leaves of the fever-bush. The rum cherry is ripe. The *Collinsonia Canadensis* just begun. The great trumpet-weeds now fairly out. Sumach berries now generally red. Some naked viburnum berries are red. The sweet viburnum turning. The larger skull-cap is quite an important and interesting flower. *Platanthera blephariglottis*, white fringed orchis. This side of Hubbard's Meadow Bridge, *Lespedeza hirta* (hairy), *Cannabis sativa*, apparently out. *Aster corymbosus*, path beyond Corner Spring and in Miles Swamp. *Cicuta bulbifera*, first seen July 21st and called *Sium lincare*. The true (?) *Sium lincare*, probably last month. [Vide July 8]

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August 12, Thursday, 1852: President Millard Fillmore pardoned Edward Sayres and Daniel Drayton – skipper and mate of the schooner *Pearl* who had been captured as they picked up slaves along the American coast to transport them to freedom– after 4 years and 4 months in a Southern prison.

Dense smoke could be viewed from San Francisco as vast fires blackened hills near Contra Costa.

Robert Schumann had been suffering from an ongoing nervous condition and daily bathing in the Rhine had not helped. He and Clara Schumann departed Düsseldorf for the spa of Scheveningen in the Netherlands.

Still at Lancy, Henri-Frédéric Amiel, who would be referred to as the “Swiss Thoreau,” continued in his JOURNAL INTIME: “Each sphere of being tends toward a higher sphere, and has already revelations and presentiments of it. The ideal under all its forms is the anticipation and the prophetic vision of that existence, higher than his own, toward which every being perpetually aspires. And this higher and more dignified existence is more inward in character, that is to say, more spiritual. Just as volcanoes reveal to us the secrets of the interior of the globe, so enthusiasm and ecstasy are the passing explosions of this inner world of the soul; and human life is but the preparation and the means of approach to this spiritual life. The degrees of initiation are innumerable. Watch, then, disciple of life, watch and labor toward the development of the angel within thee! For the divine Odyssey is but a series of more and more ethereal metamorphoses, in which each form, the result of what goes before, is the condition of those which follow. The divine life is a series of successive deaths, in which the mind throws off its imperfections and its symbols, and yields to the growing attraction of the ineffable center of gravitation, the sun of intelligence and love. Created spirits in the accomplishment of their destinies tend, so to speak, to form constellations and milky ways within the empyrean of the divinity; in becoming gods, they surround the throne of the sovereign with a sparkling court. In their greatness lies their homage. The divinity with which they are invested is the noblest glory of God. God is the father of spirits, and the constitution of the eternal kingdom rests on the vassalship of love.”

Henry Thoreau mentioned in his journal a German in Cincinnati named Stallo, which may have been Franz Joseph Stallo or his nephew John (Johann) Bernhard Stallo.



Aug. 12. Walked to Walden and Fair Haven Hill with Mrs. Wilson and son, of Cincinnati. They tell me that the only men of thought in that part of the world are one young Goddard and Stallo the German. The subjects that engage the mass are theological dogmas and European politics. The man of the West is not yet.
Solidago bicolor, white goldenrod, apparently in good season.



August 13, Friday, 1852: Herman Melville wrote to Nathaniel Hawthorne:

While visiting Nantucket some four weeks ago, I made the acquaintance of a gentleman from New Bedford, a lawyer, who gave me considerable information upon several matters concerning which I was curious. – One night we were talking, I think, of the great patience, & endurance, & resignedness of the women of the island in submitting so uncomplainingly to the long, long absences of their sailor husbands, when, by way of anecdote, this lawyer gave me a leaf from his professional experience. Altho' his memory was a little confused with regard to some of the items of the story, yet he told me enough to awaken the most lively interest in me; and I begged him to be sure and send me

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a more full account so soon as he arrived home - he having previously told me that at the time of the affair he had made a record in his books. - I heard nothing more, till a few days after arriving here at Pittsfield I received thro' the Post Office the enclosed document. - You will perceive by the gentleman's note to me that he assumed that I purposed making literary use of the story; but I had not hinted anything of the kind to him, & my first spontaneous interest in it arose from very different considerations. I confess, however, that since then I have a little turned the subject over in my mind with a view to a regular story to be founded on these striking incidents. But, thinking again, it has occurred to me that this thing lies very much in a vein, with which you are peculiarly familiar. To be plump, I think that in this matter you would make a better hand at it than I would. Besides the thing seems naturally to gravitate towards you (to spea[k] ... [half a line torn] should of right belong to you. I cou[ld] ... [half a line torn] the Steward to deliver it to you. - The very great interest I felt in this story while narrating to me, was heightened by the emotion of the gentleman who told it, who evinced the most unaffected sympathy in it, tho' now a matter of his past. - But perhaps this great interest of mine may have been largely helped by some accidental circumstance or other; so that, possibly, to you the story may not seem to possess so much of pathos, & so much of depth. But you will see how it is. - In estimating the character of Robinson Charity should be allowed a liberal play. I take exception to that passage from the Diary which says that "he must have received a portion of his punishment in this life"- thus hinting of a future supplemental castigation.- I do not at all suppose that his desertion of his wife was a premeditated thing. If it had been so, he would have changed his name, probably, after quitting her.- No: he was a weak man, & his temptations (tho' we know little of them) were strong. The whole sin stole upon him insensibly- so that it would perhaps have been hard for him to settle upon the exact day when he could say to himself, "Now I have deserted my wife["]; unless, indeed upon the day he wedded the Alexandran lady.- And here I am reminded of your London husband; tho' the cases so rudely contrast.- Many more things might be mentioned; but I forbear; you will find out the suggestiveness for yourself; & all the better perhaps, for my not intermeddling.- If you should be sufficiently interested, to engage upon a regular story founded on this narration; then I consider you but fairly entitled to the following tributary items, collected by me, by chance, during my strolls thro the islands; & which- as you will perceive- seem legitimately to belong to the story, in its rounded & beautified & thoroughly developed state;- but of all this you must of course be your own judge- I but submit matter to you- I dont decide. Supposing the story to open with the wreck then there must be a storm; & it were well if some faint shadow of the preceding calm were thrown forth to lead the whole.- Now imagine a high cliff overhanging the sea & crowned with a pasture for sheep; a little way off- higher up,- a light-house, where resides the father of the future Mrs Robinson the First. The afternoon is mild & warm. The sea with an air of solemn deliberation, with an elaborate deliberation, ceremoniously rolls upon the beach. The air is

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suppressedly charged with the sound of long lines of surf. There is no land over against this cliff short of Europe & the West Indies. Young Agatha (but you must give her some other name) comes wandering along the cliff. She marks how the continual assaults of the sea have undermined it; so that the fences fall over, & have need of many shiftings inland. The sea has encroached also upon that part where their dwelling-house stands near the light-house.— Filled with meditations, she reclines along the edge of the cliff & gazes out seaward. She marks a handful of cloud on the horizon, presaging a storm tho' all this quietude. (Of a maratime family & always dwelling on the coast, she is learned in these matters) This again gives food for thought. Suddenly she catches the long shadow of the cliff cast upon the beach 100 feet beneath her; and now she notes a shadow moving along the shadow. It is cast by a sheep from the pasture. It has advanced to the very edge of the cliff, & is sending a mild innocent glance far out upon the water. Here, in strange & beautiful contrast, we have the innocence of the land placidly eyeing the malignity of the sea. (All this having poetic reference to Agatha & her sea-lover, who is coming in the storm: the storm carries her lover to her; she catches a dim distant glimpse of his ship ere quitting the cliff)— P.S. It were well, if from her knowledge of the deep miseries produced to wives by marrying seafaring men, Agatha should have formed a young determination never to marry a sailor; which resolve in her, however, is afterwards overborne by the omnipotence of Love.— P.S. No 2. Agatha should be active during the wreck, & should, in some way, be made the saviour of young Robinson. He should be the only survivor. He should be ministered to by Agatha at the house during the illness ensuing upon his injuries from the wreck.— Now this wrecked ship was driven over the shoals, & driven upon the beach where she goes to pieces, all but her stem-part. This in course of time becomes embedded in the sand— after the lapse of some years showing nothing but the sturdy stem (or, prow-bone) projecting some two feet at low water. All the rest is filled & packed down with the sand.— So that after her husband has disappeared the sad Agatha every day sees this melancholy monument, with all its reminders.— After a sufficient lapse of time— when Agatha has become alarmed about the protracted absence of her young husband & is feverishly expecting a letter from him— then we must introduce the mail-post— no, that phrase wont' do, but here is the thing.— Owing to the remoteness of the lighthouse from any settled place no regular mail reaches it. But some mile or so distant there is a road leading between two post-towns. And at the junction of what we shall call the Light-House road with this Post Rode, there stands a post surmounted with a little rude wood box with a lid to it & a leather hinge. Into this box the Post boy drops all letters for the people of the light house & that vicinity of fishermen. To this post they must come for their letters. And, of course, daily young Agatha goes— for seventeen years she goes thither daily. As her hopes gradually decay in her, so does the post itself & the little box decay. The post rots in the ground at last. Owing to its being little used— hardly used at all— grass grows rankly about it. At last a little bird nests in it. At last the post falls. The father of Agatha must be an old widower— a man of the sea, but

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early driven away from it by repeated disasters. Hence, is he subdued & quiet & wise in his life. And now he tends a light house, to warn people from those very perils, from which he himself has suffered. Some few other items occur to me— but nothing material— and I fear to weary you, if not, make you smile at my strange impertinent officiousness.— And it would be so, were it not that these things do, in my mind, seem legitimately to belong to the story; for they were visably suggested to me by scenes I actually beheld while on the very coast where the story of Agatha occurred.— I do not therefore, My Dear Hawthorne, at all imagine that you will think that I am so silly as to flatter myself I am giving you anything of my own. I am but restoring to you your own property— which you would quickly enough have identified for yourself— had you but been on the spot as I happened to be. Let me conclude by saying that it seems to me that with your great power in these things, you can construct a story of remarkable interest out of this material furnished by the New Bedford lawyer.— You have a skeleton of actual reality to build about with fulness & veins & beauty. And if I thought I could do it as well as you, why, I should not let you have it.— The narrative from the Diary is instinct with significance.— Consider the mention of the shawls— & the inference derived from it. Ponder the conduct of this Robinson throughout.— Mark his trepidation & suspicion when any one called upon him.— But why prate so— you will mark it all & mark it deeper than I would, perhaps. I have written all this in a great hurry; so you must spell it out the best way you may. P.S. The business was settled in a few weeks afterwards, in a most amicable & honorable manner, by a division of the property. I think Mrs. Robinson & her family refused to claim or recieve anything that really belonged to Mrs. Irwin, or which Robinson had derived through her.— [Enclosure: the lawyer's story of Agatha] May 28th 1842 Saturday. I have just returned from a visit to Falmouth with a Mr Janney of Mo on one of the most interesting and romantic cases I ever expect to be engaged in.— The gentleman from Missouri Mr Janney came to my house last Sunday evening and related to myself and partner that he had married the daughter of a Mrs Irvin formerly of Pittsburgh Pa. and that Mrs Irvin had married a second husband by the name of Robertson. The latter deceased about two years since. He was appointed Admr to his Estate which amounted to \$20,000— about 15 months afterwards Mrs Robertson also died and in the meantime the Admr had been engaged in looking up heirs to the Estate— He learned that Robertson was an Englishman whose original name was Shinn— that he resided at Alexandria D.C. where he had two nephews— He also wrote to England and had ascertained the history and genealogy of the family with much accuracy, when on going to the Post Office one day he found a letter directed to James Robertson the deceased, post marked Falmouth Masstts— on opening it he found it from a person signing herself Rebecca A. Gifford and addressing him as "Father." The existence of this girl had been known before by Mrs Robertson and her husband had pronounced her to be illegitimate The Admr then addressed a letter to Mrs Gifford informing her of the decease of her father. He was surprized soon after by the appearance in St Louis of a shrewd Quaker from Falmouth named Dillingham with full powers and fortified by

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letters and affidavits shewing the existence of a wife in Falmouth whom Robertson married in 1807 at Pembroke Mass & the legitimacy of the daughter who had married a Mr Gifford and laying strong claims to the entire property. The Admr and heirs having strong doubts arising from the declarations of Robertson during his lifetime & the peculiar expressions contained in the letters exhibited, as to the validity of the marriage & the claim based upon it, determined to resist and legal proceedings were at once commenced. The object of the visit of Mr Janney was to attend the taking of depositions, upon a notice from the claimants— The Minister Town Clerk and Witnesses present at the ceremony established the fact of a legal marriage and the birth of a child in wedlock, beyond all cavil or controversy all of the witnesses were of the highest respectability and the widow and daughter interested me very much. It appeared that Robertson was wrecked on the coast of Pembroke where this girl, then Miss Agatha Hatch was living— that he was hospitably entertained and cared for, and that within a year after, he married her, in due form of law— that he went two short voyages to sea. About two years after the marriage, leaving his wife enciente he started off in search of employment and from thattime until Seventeen years afterwards she never heard from him in any way whatsoever, directly or indirectly, not even a word. Being poor she went out nursing for her daily bread and yet contrived out of her small earnings to give her daughter a first rate education. Having become connected with the Society of Friends she sent her to their most celebrated boarding school and when I saw her I found she had profited by all her advantages beyond most females. In the meantime Robertson had gone to Alexandria D.C. where he had entered into a successful and profitable business and married a second wife. At the expiration of this long period of 17 years which for the poor forsaken wife, had glided wearily away, while she was engaged away from home, her Father rode up in a gig and informed her that her husband had returned and wished to see her and her child— but if she would not see him, to see her child at all events— They all returned together and encountered him on the way coming to meet them about half a mile from her father's house. This meeting was described to me by the mother and daughter— Every incident seemed branded upon the memories of both. He excused himself as well as he could for his long absence and silence, appeared very affectionate refused to tell where he was living and persuaded them not to make any inquiries, gave them a handsome sum of money, promised to return for good and left the next day— He appeared again in about a year, just on the eve of his daughter's marriage & gave her a bridal present. It was not long after this that his wife in Alexandria died— He then wrote to his son-in-law to come there— He did so— remained 2 days and brought back a gold watch and three handsome shawls which had been previously worn by some person— They all admitted that they had suspicions then & from this circumstance that he had been a second time married. Soon after this he visited Falmouth again & as it proved for the last time— He announced his intention of removing to Missouri & urged the whole family to go with him, promising money land and other assistance to his son-in-law. The offer was not accepted He shed tears when he bade them farewell— From the time of his return



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to Missouri till the time of his death a constant correspondence was kept up money was remitted by him annually and he announced to them his marriage with Mrs Irvin— He had no children by either of his last two wives. Mr Janney was entirely disappointed in the character of the evidence and the character of the claimants. He considered them, when he first came, as parties to the imposition practised upon Mrs Irvin & her children. But I was satisfied and I think he was, that their motives in keeping silence were high and pure, creditable in every way to the true Mrs Robertson. She stated the causes with a simplicity & pathos which carried that conviction irresistibly to my mind. The only good(?) it could have done to expose him would have been to drive Robertson away and forever disgrace him & it would certainly have made Mrs Irvin & her children wretched for the rest of their days— “I had no wish” said the wife “to make either of them unhappy, notwithstanding all I had suffered on his account”— It was to me a most striking instance of long continued & uncomplaining submission to wrong and anguish on the part of a wife, wch made her in my eyes a heroine. Janney informed me that R. and his last wife did not live very happily together and particularly that he seemed to be a very jealous suspicious man— that when a person called at his house he would never enter the room till he knew who it was & “all about him.[”] He must have recieved a portion of his punishment in this life. The fact came out in the course of examination that they had agreed to give Dillingham one half of what he might obtain deducting the expenses from his half— After the strength of the evidence became known Mr Janney commenced the making of serious efforts to effect a compromise of the claim. What the result will be time will shew— This is, I suspect, the end of my connexion with the case—



Aug. 13. *Mikania scandens* well out; was not out July 18th. How long since, then? Perhaps not far from 1st August. The *Lactuca sanguinea* (var.) was perhaps as early as the other. Rhexia, very common on those bare places on the river meadows from which the soil has been moved by the ice. Saw the head and neck of a great bittern projecting above the meadow-grass, exactly like the point of a stump, only I knew there could be no stump there. There are green lice now on the birches, but I notice no cotton on them. Pennyroyal abundant, in bloom. I find it springing from the soil lodged on large rocks in sprout-lands, and gather a little bundle, which scents my pocket for many days. I hear that the *Corallorhiza odontorhiza*, coral-root, is out.



August 14, Saturday, 1852: Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka arrived back in Paris after a 4-day trip from Toulouse.

Wiener Jubel-Gruß-Marsch op.115 by [Johann Baptist Strauss II](#) was performed for the initial time, in the Stephansplatz, Vienna.



Aug. 14. *Viburnum dentatum* berries blue. Saw a rose still. There is such a haze that I cannot see the mountains.



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

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

A setting of the Mass for male chorus and organ by Franz Liszt was performed for the 1st time, in Weimar, conducted by the composer.

A setting of the Magnificat for soloists, chorus, orchestra and organ by Anton Bruckner was performed for the initial time, at St. Florian, on the first anniversary of his close friend, Franz Sailer.

There was an attempt by members of the sect of Babi to assassinate the [Iranian](#) shah [Naser al-Din Shah Qajar](#). This [attempt](#) was unsuccessful and would not immediately be reported in the West, but news of it would begin to arrive in London on October 1st and would appear then in the [Morning Chronicle](#).

The Erzerum post has brought letters to the 9th just (*i.e.* August 9th) from that city, and to the 28th of August from Tabreez. On the 15th of August an attempt to assassinate the Shah of Persia had taken place at Tehran. The shah, accompanied by his Prime Minister and by a numerous suite, had quitted that day Kasri-Millak on a hunting excursion, and had reached the skirt of a wood near Maveranda, when six ill-dressed Persians, with petitions, approached the Shah, who at once drew in the reins of his horse, and took the papers held out to him. It is usual in Persia on similar excursions for the Sovereign to proceed alone, and keep his Ministers and attendants at a distance of several hundred yards, and when he stops they do likewise. The petitioners were of the sect of Babi, and, after delivering their papers, two seized the bridle of the horse, and the other four surrounded the Shah, and loudly, and with menacing gesture, demanded redress for the insult done to their religion by having put their chief to death. The Shah courageously ordered them off, but before his suite came up, two of the fanatic ruffians drew their pistols and fired at him, two balls of which took effect; the first wounded him in the mouth, and the second slightly grazed his thigh. Immediately after this attempt they took to their heels, hotly pursued by the attendants. Three contrived to escape in the wood, one was cut down by the Multezim or Rikiab, and the other two were seized and conveyed to Tehran, for the purpose of obtaining a clue to the conspiracy. The Shah's wounds were so light that the next day he proceeded in grand pomp to the mosque, in order to offer his thanksgiving for his miraculous escape. On his return to the palace, the Ministers and the Russian and English Ambassadors, and the Chargé d'Affaires of the Porte, in full costume, congratulated him. Public rejoicing also took place, and the city of Tehran was illuminated at night. On the 16th of August

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intelligence had been received of the seizure of the three assassins who had effected their escape, and concealed themselves in the wood. They were discovered in a well, and were drawn out and cut to pieces, according to the orders given by the Prime Minister.



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

Elder-berry ripe. The river was lowest early in July. Some time past I have noticed meadow-grass floating on the river, reminding me that they were getting the hay up the stream. Some naked viburnum berries are quite dark purple amid the red, while other bunches are wholly green yet. The red choke-berry is small and green still. I plainly distinguish it, also, by its woolly under side. In E. Hubbard's swamp I gather some large and juicy and agreeable rum cherries. The birds make much account of them. They are much finer than the small ones on large trees; quite a good fruit. Some cranberries turned red on one cheek along the edges of the meadows. Now a sudden gust of wind blows from the northwest, cooled by a storm there, blowing the dust from roads far over the fields. The whole air, indeed, is suddenly filled with dust, and the outlines of the clouds are concealed. But it proves only the wind of the ball, which apparently passes north of us. That clear ring like an alder locust (is it a cricket?) for some time past is a sound which belongs to the season, — autumnal. Here is a second crop of clover almost as red as the first. The swamp blackberry begins. Saw a blue heron [**Great Blue Heron** █ *Ardea herodias*] on the meadow. *Aster amplexicaulis* of Bigelow, apparently; probably for a day or two. An orchis by the brook under the Cliffs with only three white flowers, only smaller than the fringed white; spurs half an inch long. May it be another species?

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August 16, Monday, [1852](#): The shipwrecked [Alfred Russel Wallace](#) was rescued but all his biological specimens had been lost at sea, and the cargo vessel that had rescued the contents of their 2 leaking lifeboats off the face of the ocean was itself in bad shape and very slow.

The 61-ton schooner *Zephyr*, Captain Tanner, was reported as having wrecked near Bream Creek, [Van Diemen's Land](#) with the loss of 8 lives.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) went rowing on the Concord River with [George Partridge Bradford](#).



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Aug. 16. Pm Down river in boat with Geo. Bradford

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"Downriver," "To Great Meadow," and "To Hill" signified a northward trip down the Concord River below the triple point of the confluence. After passing through a straight reach aligned by the local bedrock strike, arched by two bridges, and flanked by gravel bars of historic sediment that were repeatedly dredged, he entered the north side of Great Meadow. Bounded by the site of the Old North Bridge to the southwest and Ball's Hill to the northeast, it was two miles long and half a mile across. When in flood, the meadow was his favorite inland sea to sail upon because the wind was least impeded and the waves were highest.

– [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 11

Zizania aquatica Ind. or Canadian rice or Water oats – like slender corn. How long?

Hibiscus Moscheutos (?) Marsh Hibiscus ap. N Barrets. Perchance has been out a week. I think it must be the most conspicuous & showy and at the same time rich colored flower of this month– It is not so conspicuous as the sun flower but of a rarer color– "pale rose-purple" they call it – like a holly-hock. It is surprising for its amount of color – & seen unexpectedly amid the willows & button bushes – with the mikania twining around its stem you can hardly believe it is a flower So large & tender it looks like the greatest effort of the season to adorn the august days & reminded me of that great tender moth the *atticus luna* which I found on the water near where it grows. I think it must be allied to southern species– It suggests a more genial climate & luxuriant soil– It requires these vaporous dog days. *Galeopsis Tetrahit* common Hemp nettle – in road side by Keyes' – How long? flower like hedge nettle – *Apios tuberosa* Ground nut – a day or two. These are locust days. I hear them on the elms in the street – but cannot tell where they are – loud is their song – drowning many others – but men appear not to distinguish it – though it pervade their ears as the dust their eyes. The river was exceedingly fair this afternoon – and there are few handsomer reaches than that by the leaning oak – the deep place, where the willows make a perfect shore– At sunset the glow being confined to the north – it tinges the rails on the cause-way lake color, but behind they are a dead dark blue.

I must look for the *Rudbeckia* which Bradford says he found yesterday behind Joe Clarks.


JOHN S. KEYES

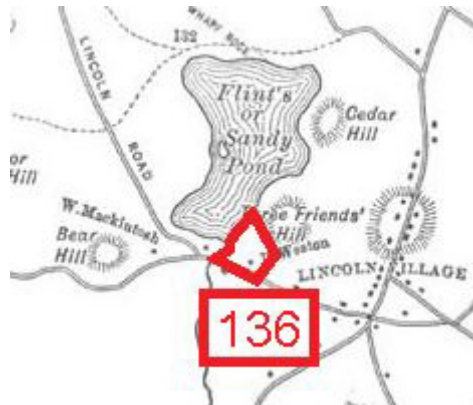
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 August 17, Tuesday, 1852: Henry Thoreau surveyed a woodlot near Flint's Pond in Lincoln for Daniel Weston. (He did not lecture,¹¹ as has been supposed, in Framingham, Massachusetts on this date in this year.)



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

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

(The official copy of this survey of course had become the property of the person or persons who had hired this Concord town surveyor to do their surveying work during the 19th Century. Such materials have yet to be recovered.)

View this particular personal working draft of a survey in fine detail:

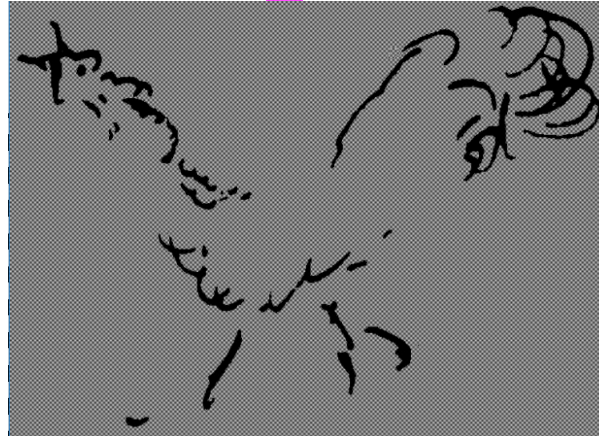
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









Aug. 17. 20 ms' before 5 Am to Cliffs & Walden
Dawn. No breathing of chip birds [**Chipping Sparrow**  *Spizella passerina* (~~chip bird~~ or ~~hair~~

11. Per Bradley P. Dean's and Ronald Wesley Hoag's "THOREAU'S LECTURES BEFORE WALDEN: An Annotated Calendar": James J. Buckley, a school superintendent and correspondent for the Middlesex News, wrote an article for the News on 30 July 1988 entitled "Framingham's 'August Firsts,' Statewide Abolitionist Festivals," in which he asserted that "Concord's Henry Thoreau was the main speaker during the oratorical segment of the [1 August 1852] festivities" at Harmony Grove in Framingham. Buckley's attribution is clearly an error, for we learn from Thoreau's journal that on the afternoon of the preceding day, 31 July 1852, he walked "To Assabet over Nawshawtuct" in Concord and that on the following afternoon he walked "To Conantum" (JOURNAL, 4:269, 271). He would not have had sufficient time the morning of 1 August 1852 to travel to Framingham, deliver a speech, and return to Concord. Buckley had no doubt confused the 1852 anti-slavery celebration of the anniversary of Emancipation in the British West Indies with the 1854 anti-slavery Fourth of July celebration at Harmony Grove, where Thoreau delivered "Slavery in Massachusetts" (see lecture 43 in the reference above).

bird) nor singing of robins [**American Robin**  *Turdus migratorius*] as in spring—but still the cock




crows lustily— The creak of the crickets sounds louder. As I go along the Back Road hear 2 or 3 song sparrows [**Song Sparrow**  *Melospiza melodia* (*melodia*)]. This mornings red, there being a misty cloud there—is equal to an evening red. The woods are very still— I hear only a faint peep or twitter from one bird—then the never failing wood-thrush [**Wood Thrush**  *Hylocichla mustelina*] —it being about sunrise and after on the Cliff—the phoebe note of a chickadee [**Chicadee, Black-capped**  *Parus atricapillus* Titmouse, Titmice] —a night warbler [**Ovenbird**  *Seiurus aurocapillus*, or **Common Yellowthroat**  *Geothlypis trichas?*] —a creeper [**Pine Warbler**  *Dendroica pinus* (**Pine Creeper**)?] and a pewee [**Eastern Wood-Pewee**  *Contopus virens*]—and later still the huckle-berry bird [**Field Sparrow**  *Spizella pusilla*] & red eye [**Red-eyed Vireo**  *Vireo olivaceus* (*red-eye*)] —but all few & faint. Cannot distinguish the steam of the engine toward waltham from one of the morning fogs over hollows in woods

Lespedeza violacea var ap. *angustifolia* (?) *sessiliora* of Big. Also another *L. violacea* or at least violet perhaps dif. from what I saw some time since. *Gerardia pedicularia*—bushy G. almost ready. The white cornel berries are dropping off before they are fairly white

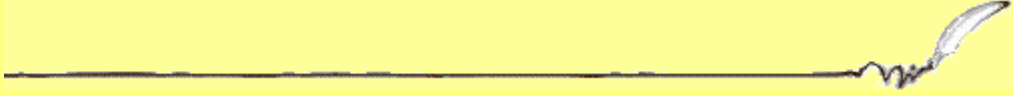
Is not the hibiscus a very bright pink or even flesh color—it is so delicate and peculiar— I do not think of any flower just like it—it reminds me of some of the wild geraniums most. It is a singular large delicate high colored flower with a tree-like leaf

Gaylussacia frondosa—blue-tangle dangle berry—ripe perhaps a week— Weston of Lincoln thought there were more grapes, both cultivated & wild, than usual this year—because the rosebugs had not done so much harm



 August 18, Wednesday, 1852: On about this date, having apparently learned that the sculptor **Horatio Greenough**, who had had the temerity to attack him, had been institutionalized and was dying of some sort of brain problem in Somerville, Massachusetts (site of **McLean's Asylum**), **Waldo Emerson** confided to his **JOURNAL** with evident satisfaction that:

Greenough called my contemplations, &c. "the masturbation of the brain."



(Well, Waldo, he who laughs last, laughs best, right?)

MASTURBATION



August 18: 3 Pm To Joe Clarks & Hibiscus bank.

I cannot conceive how a man can accomplish any thing worthy of him – unless his very breath is sweet to him. He must be particularly alive. As if a man were himself & could work well only at a certain rare crisis. The river is full of weeds The hypericum mutilum small flowered has in some places turned wholly red on the shore. There is indeed some thing royal about the month of august.

GOD IN CONCORD by Jane Langton © 1992

Viking Penguin

50

There is indeed something royal about the month of August.

Journal, August 18, 1852

Penguin Books USA Inc.

Roger Bland’s campaign letter was ready, but Jo-Jo Field knew better than to send it out. Too many Concord people

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It is a more ingrained & perhaps more tropical heat than that of July. Though hot it is not so suffocating & unveiled a blaze – the vapors in the air temper it somewhat– But we have had some pretty cool weather with a week or two–& the evenings generally are cooler. As I go over the hill behind Hunt’s The N river has a glassy stillness & smoothness – seen through the smoky haze that fills the air – and has the effect of a film on the water– So that it looks stagnant. No mts can be seen. The locust is heard –the fruits are ripening –ripe apples here & there scent the air. Huckleberries probably have begun to spoil. I see those minute yellow cocoons on the grass. Hazel nuts methinks it is time to gather them if you would anticipate the squirrels. The clematis & mikania belong to this month – filling the crevices and rounding the outline of leafy banks & hedges.

Perceived today & some weeks since Aug 3d the strong invigorating aroma of green walnuts – astringent & bracing to the spirits the fancy & imagination – suggesting a tree that has its roots well in amid the bowels of nature. Their shells are in fact & from associating exhilarating to smell – suggesting a strong nutty native vigor. A fruit which I am glad that our zone produces – looking like the nutmeg of the east. I acquire some of the hardness & elasticity of the hickory when I smell them. They are among our spices.– High scented aromatic as you bruise one against another in your hand almost like nutmegs – only more bracing – & northern – fragrant stones which the trees bear. The hibiscus flowers are seen 1/4 of a mile off over the water –I like large roses – now that these high colors are rather rare. Some are exceedingly delicate & pale almost white, just rose tinted – others a brighter pink or rose color – and all slightly plaited (the 5 large petals–) & turned toward the sun now in the west trembling in the wind. so much color looks very rich in these localities The flowers are some 4 inches in diameter as large as water lilies – rising amid & above the button bushes & willows – with a large light-green tree-like leaf – and a stem 1/2 inch in diameter, ap. dying down to a perennial ? root each year. A superb –flower –where it occurs it is, certainly next to the white lily–, if not equally with it, the most splendid ornament of the river. Looking up the gleaming river reflecting the august sun– The round topped silvery white maples, the glossy leaved swamp white



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oaks, the ethereal and buoyant salix purshiana – the first and last resting on the water & giving the river a full appearance – & the hibiscus flowers adorning the shores – contrasting with the green across the river – close to the water's edge – the meadows being just shorne – all make a perfect august scene. Here is the place where the hayers cross the river with their loads. as I made excursions on the river when the white lilies were in bloom so now I should make a hibiscus excursion – Rudbeckia laciniata Sunflower like Tall Cone-flower behind Joe Clark's Symphytum officinale common comfrey by Dakin pumpmaker's. The cerastium viscosum which I saw months ago still. And the ovate heads of the tall anemone gone to seed. Linum usitatissimum common flax with a pretty large & pretty blue flower in the yard. Rumex obtusifolius – for weeks ap.

Elizabeth Hoar shows me the following plants which she brought from the Wht Mts the 16th ult. Chiogenes hispidula?

creeping snow-berry also called Gaultheria & also vaccinium hispidula – in fruit. –with a partridge berry scent & taste. Taxus Canadensis Ground hemlock with red cup shaped berries very handsome & remarkably like wax or red marble.

Platanthera orbiculata remarkable for its watery shining leaves flat on the ground while its spike of flowers rises perpendicular – suggesting as she said repose & steadiness amid the prostrate trunks – & you could not avoid seeing it any more than a child in blossom. Oxalis acetosella in blossom Arenaria Groenlandica also in bloom in tufts like houstonia. Lonicera ciliata probably with a double red fruit. She also brought Lichens & mosses & convallaria berries which she gathered at the flume in Franconia – the latter red ripe hanging from the axils of the leaves – affected me – reminding me of the progress of autumn in the north – & the other two were a very fit importation still dripping with the moisture the water of the flume. It carries you indeed into the primitive wood. To think how in those wild woods now hang these wild berries in grim solitude as of yore – already scenting their autumn – A thousand years ago this convallaria growing there – its berries turning red as now & its leaves acquiring an autumnal tint. Lichens & mosses enough to cover a waiter still dripping with the water of the flume – is not that a true specimen of it? J Stacy says that 50 years ago his father used to blow his fire with onion stems – Thinks there have been great improvements. But then as I hear there was a bellows maker in the town. Is not that the aster umbellatus which I found by the lygodium?

FRANCONIA NOTCH

ELIZABETH SHERMAN HOAR



August 19, Thursday, 1852: The sidewheeler *Atlantic* had been constructed in 1848 or 1849 by the firm of J.L. Wolverton in Newport (an inland port since referred to as “Marine City,” Michigan). It was being operated on the Great Lakes in conjunction with the Michigan Central Railroad and was capable of carrying some 50-100 passengers in its staterooms and an unknown number, many of them of course immigrants, on its decks, from Buffalo, New York to Detroit, Michigan. On this afternoon, under Captain J. Byron Pettey, the ship left Buffalo on a regularly scheduled trip to Detroit, expected to require at least 16½ hours. The vessel stopped off at Erie, Pennsylvania to pick up additional passengers and, when it had been packed full, with some 500-600 passengers, it had needed to leave about 70 immigrants behind on the dock.

Meanwhile, coincidentally, the new propeller *Ogdensburg*, Captain Robert Richardson, was on its way in the opposite direction, carrying a load of wheat from Cleveland, Ohio to Ogdensburg, New York. Although the *Ogdensburg* had a steam whistle for signaling — it was broken.


TIMELINE OF ACCIDENTS



Aug. 19. 2 P.M. —To Corner Spring, Burnt Plain, and Brister Hill. Forget-me-not Brook, *Epilobium lineare* (Bigelow), *molle* (?) (Gray). The small fruits of most plants are now generally ripe or ripening, and this is coincident with the flying in flocks of such young birds now grown as feed on them. The twittering, tinkling *link* notes of the bobolinks

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[Bobolink  *Dolichonyx oryzivorus* Rice-bird] occasionally border on the old bobolink strain. The *Epilobium coloratum* is an interesting little flower for its contrasted white and pink; the bud is commonly pink. The *Viburnum dentatum*, berries are now blue. I still find the stitchwort (*Stellaria*). Many leaves of the mountain sumach are red. What are the checkerberry-scented plants? Checkerberry; black and yellow birch; polygala, caducous and cross-leaved and *verticillata*, at root; *Chiogenes hispidula*, creeping snow-berry. I perceive the fragrance of the clethra on the meadow gales. The checkerberries are in bloom, looking almost like snow-white berries. The dracaena berries, "amethystine blue," are almost all fallen. The dangle-berry is a very handsome tangled berry, but with a slightly astringent and to me not altogether agreeable flavor. What is that large many-flowered hieracium (I think I saw it at same time with the veiny), with radical leaves and one sheathing leaflet and a spreading panicle minutely downy? *Gronovii*? or *Kalmii*? The trillium berries, six-sided, one inch in diameter, like varnished and stained cherry wood, glossy red, crystalline and ingrained, concealed under its green leaves in shady swamps. It is already fall in some of these shady, springy swamps, as at the Corner Spring. The skunk-cabbages and the trilliums, both leaves and fruit, are many flat prostrate, the former decaying, and all looking as if early frosts had prevailed. Here, too, the bright scarlet berries of the arum, perhaps premature.

Here is a little brook of very cold spring-water, rising a few rods distant, with a gray sandy and pebbly bottom, flowing through this dense swampy thicket, where, nevertheless, the sun falls in here and there between the leaves and shines on its bottom, meandering exceedingly, and sometimes running underground. The trilliums on its brim have fallen into it and bathe their red berries in the water, waving in the stream. The water has the coldness it acquired in the bowels of the earth. Here is a recess apparently never frequented. Thus this rill flowed here a thousand years ago, and with exactly these environments. It is a few rods of primitive wood, such as the bear and the deer beheld. It has a singular charm for me, carrying me back in imagination to those days. Yet a fisherman has once found out this retreat, and here is his box in the brook to keep his minnows in, now gone to decay. I love the rank smells of the swamp, its decaying leaves. The clear dark-green leaves of the fever-bush overhang the stream.

I name the shore under Fair Haven Hill the Cardinal Shore from the abundance of cardinal-flowers there. The red-stemmed (?) cornel berries are mingled whitish and amethystine (?) blue. I see some bright red leaves on the tupelo contrasting with its glossy green ones. How sweet the fragrance where meadow-hay has been brushed off a load in narrow paths in low woods! The panicked (?) hedysarum apparently will blossom in a week. *Gerardia purpurea* at Forget-me-not Brook. *Eupatorium pubescens*, between this and the first of August.



August 20, Friday, 1852: The sidewheeler steamboat *Atlantic*, under Captain J. Byron Pettey, its decks jam-packed with passengers and their baggage, was on its way from Buffalo, New York via Erie, Pennsylvania to Detroit, Michigan. Meanwhile, coincidentally, the propeller steamboat *Ogdensburg*, Captain Robert Richardson, was on its way in the opposite direction, carrying a load of wheat from Cleveland, Ohio to Ogdensburg, New York. The *Ogdensburg* had a steam whistle for signaling — but it was broken. At 2AM in what may have been a light mist, or even a heavy fog (accounts differ), the *Ogdensburg* rammed the *Atlantic* on its port side forward of its sidewheel. The *Ogdensburg* backed away and continued on its journey, and the *Atlantic* also continued under full steam. No effort was made by the crew of the *Atlantic* to alert or mobilize the passengers. The boilers flooded, bringing the vessel to a standstill while many people threw objects overboard and attempted to jump and float away. The vessel carried 3 boats, but one capsized while the others contained mostly the crewmen. While the bow of the *Atlantic* began to sink, air trapped in the hull kept the stern temporarily above the water. The *Ogdensburg* turned around and managed to rescue a number of people before the stern also went under, taking these survivors to Erie. The vessel sank in Canadian waters and so would come to belong to Canada. That fall attempts began, to retrieve the ship's American Express safe, known to be in one of its cabins, and the sum of cash it contained, \$36,700.



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[Frederick Douglass](#) had ventured so far from the principle of nonviolence as to declare “The only way to make the fugitive slave law a dead letter is to make half a dozen or more dead kidnappers.”

Mt. Vernon, the home of George Washington, was under the care of its current owner, and yet was attracting tourists from the nearby national capitol, Washington DC. The [Daily American Telegraph](#) would mention that the tourists were disappointed at how dilapidated the place had become: “An individual proprietor ought not to be expected to keep it in repair for the public convenience.”

A letter from “A Traveller” appeared in the [Geneva Gazette](#) (eventually some of this would surface in Thoreau’s journal, and then in [WALDEN](#)):

I saw in a Geneva paper last year, some remarks respecting the Loon or great Northern Diver, being taken by hooks 80 or 90 feet under the surface of the water of Seneca Lake, as mentioned by Miss Cooper, in her “Rural Hours,” and expressing a belief in the correctness of the statement, but there was no assertion from any knowledge of the editor.

I lately met Mr. William Ormond, a boatman living at Geneva, on the northern shore of Seneca Lake, by the plank road, who says he lived here fifteen years, and has himself taken the Loon from hooks 80 feet under water, where they had been sunk for lake Trout.



[WALDEN](#): As I was paddling along the north shore one very calm October afternoon, for such days especially they settle on to the lakes, like the milkweed down, having looked in vain over the pond for a loon, suddenly one, sailing out from the shore toward the middle a few rods in front of me, set up his wild laugh and betrayed himself. I pursued with a paddle and he dived, but when he came up I was nearer than before. He dived again, but I miscalculated the direction he would take, and we were fifty rods apart when he came to the surface this time, for I had helped to widen the interval; and again he laughed long and loud, and with more reason than before. He manœuvred so cunningly that I could not get within half a dozen rods of him. Each time, when he came to the surface, turning his head this way and that, he coolly surveyed the water and the land, and apparently chose his course so that he might come up where there was the widest expanse of water and at the greatest distance from the boat. It was surprising how quickly he made up his mind and put his resolve into execution. He led me at once to the widest part of the pond, and could not be driven from it. While he was thinking one thing in his brain, I was endeavoring to divine his thought in mine. It was a pretty game, played on the smooth surface of the pond, a man against a loon. Suddenly your adversary’s checker disappears beneath the board, and the problem is to place yours nearest to where his will appear again. **[concluded on following screen]**



Aug. 20. That large galium still abundant and in blossom, filling crevices. The *Corallorhiza multiflora*, coral-root (not *odontorhiza*, I think, for it has twenty-four flowers, and its germ is not

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WALDEN: ...Sometimes he would come up unexpectedly on the opposite side of me, having apparently passed directly under the boat. So long-winded was he and so unweariable, that when he had swum farthest he would immediately divine where in the deep pond, beneath the smooth surface, he might be speeding his way like a fish, for he had time and ability to visit the bottom of the pond in its deepest part. It is said that loons have been caught in the New York lakes eighty feet beneath the surface, with hooks set for trout, -though Walden is deeper than that. How surprised must the fishes be to see this ungainly visitor from another sphere speeding his way amid their schools! Yet he appeared to know his course as surely under water as on the surface, and swam much faster there. Once or twice I saw a ripple where he approached the surface, just put his head out to reconnoitre, and instantly dived again. I found that it was as well for me to rest on my oars and wait his reappearing as to endeavor to calculate where he would rise; for again and again, when I was straining my eyes over the surface one way, I would suddenly be startled by his unearthly laugh behind me. But why, after displaying so much cunning, did he invariably betray himself the moment he came up by that loud laugh? Did not his white breast enough betray him? He was indeed a silly loon, I thought. I could commonly hear the splash of the water when he came up, and so also detected him. But after an hour he seemed as fresh as ever, dived as willingly and swam yet farther than at first. It was surprising to see how serenely he sailed off with unruffled breast when he came to the surface, doing all the work with his webbed feet beneath. His usual note was this demoniac laughter, yet somewhat like that of a water-fowl; but occasionally, when he had balked me most successfully and come up a long way off, he uttered a long-drawn unearthly howl, probably more like that of a wolf than any bird; as when a beast puts his muzzle to the ground and deliberately howls. This was his looning, -perhaps the wildest sound that is ever heard here, making the woods ring far and wide. I concluded that he laughed in derision of my efforts, confident of his own resources. Though the sky was by this time overcast, the pond was so smooth that I could see where he broke the surface when I did not hear him. His white breast, the stillness of the air, and the smoothness of the water were all against him. At length, having come up fifty rods off, he uttered one of those prolonged howls, as if calling on the god of loons to aid him, and immediately there came a wind from the east and rippled the surface, and filled the whole air with misty rain, and I was impressed as if it were the prayer of the loon answered, and his god was angry with me; and so I left him disappearing far away on the tumultuous surface.

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roundish oval, and its lip is three-lobed), by Brister's Spring. Found by [R.W.E.](#), [August 12](#); also *Goodyera pubescens* found at same date. The purple gerardia is very beautiful now in green grass, and the rhexia also, both difficult to get home. I find raspberries still. An aster with a smooth leaf narrowed below, somewhat like *A. amplexicaulis* or *patens*. Is it var. *phlogifolius*? Is that smooth, handsome-stemmed goldenrod in Brown's Sleepy Hollow meadow *Solidago serotina*? *Bidens*, either *connata* or *cernua*, by Moore's potato-field.



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

Since 1849 chemical fertilizers manufactured in the USA had been on the market. However, there was some 2,000,000 tons of guano—bird shit containing an estimated \$40,000,000 of agriculturally useful phosphates of ammonia, lime, and urate and oxalate of ammonia—accumulated over the centuries on the arid Lobos Islands belonging to Peru. Some of these undisturbed deposits, accumulating at the rate of roughly an inch each 5 centuries, may well have come to be 150 feet deep. A shipment of 20 casks had been taken to Europe in 1840 and found useful, and in 1841 more of the material had been taken to England, and to the United States. There was a chance of military confrontation between Peru and the United States of America during Summer/Fall 1852 because, although the nations were allegedly at peace, some 40 vessels were heading south with the objective of simply seizing this property without payment, and this expedition had been explicitly granted the protection of the United States Navy. President [Millard Fillmore](#) feared it would take “almost a miracle” to avert an armed clash. Secretary of State [Daniel Webster](#) wrote to his friend Hiram Ketchum that “All my concerns in this Department have never given me so much disturbance, as this Lobos business.” (The US would need to back off with an apology, and this material would come to make up about 60% of Peru's national income until the locale was stripped down to the bare rock.)



Aug. 21. Weeds in potato-fields are now very rank. What should we come to if the season were longer, and the reins were given to vegetation? Those savages that do not wither before the glance of civilization, that are waiting; their turn to be cultivated, preparing a granary for the birds. The air within a day or two is quite cool, almost too cool for a thin coat, yet the alternate days are by some reckoning among the warmest in the Year, *scalding* hot. That will apply very well to the greatest half of August. Young [turkeys](#) are straying in the grass, which is alive with grasshoppers.

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

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

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

The leaves of the dogbane are turning yellow. There are as few or fewer birds heard than flowers seen. The red-eye [[Red-eyed Vireo](#) [Vireo olivaceus](#) (red-eye)] still occasionally. Agrimony still.

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

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



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

At an antislavery meeting in the meetinghouse of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) in Salem, [Ohio](#), [Sojourner Truth](#) confronted [Frederick Douglass](#) with a demand to know, “Is God gone?” This is the event to which [Harriet Beecher Stowe](#) would be alluding, when she published an article on Truth more than a decade later in [The Atlantic Monthly](#), recounting again the fabrication (she had initiated this three years before, in the pages of the New-York [Independent](#)) she alleged that she had heard straight from the mouth of [Wendell Phillips](#) (who had not claimed to have been himself present), ascribing the confrontation to a meeting of undesignated date in Boston’s Faneuil Hall and positioning Truth in the front row of seats.¹² Mrs. Stowe was in the process of making “Frederick, is God dead?” such a famous repolished phrase that “Is God dead?” would eventually be inscribed on Truth’s tombstone in Battle Creek, Michigan. In Douglass’s own very much later version of what he had said at that meeting at the Friends’ meetinghouse in Salem, we note that he is not struck speechless. He reconstructed the incident, instead, as one in which it had been **him** who had had the last word: “‘No,’

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

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I answered, ‘and because God is not dead slavery can only end in blood.’” Douglass would then go on, in his memoirs, to prove himself right by pointing out that 1.) in fact slavery had then ended in blood, in the US Civil War of 1862-1865, and that 2.) Truth herself eventually had learned to agree with is “sanguinary doctrine,” and had become, as he had been earlier, “an advocate of the sword.” He had taken his “quaint old sister” to have been speaking in opposition to this at the time because this woman “was of the Garrison school of non-resistants, and was shocked at my sanguinary doctrine.”¹³



Debating Holding One’s God in One’s Fist

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



NON-RESISTANCE



Aug. 22. Sunday. The ways by which men express themselves are infinite, — the literary through their writings, and often they do not mind with what air they walk the streets, being sufficiently reported otherwise. But some express themselves chiefly by their gait and carriage, with

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swelling breasts or elephantine roll and elevated brows, making themselves moving and adequate signs of themselves, having no other outlet. If their greatness had signalized itself sufficiently in some other way, though it were only in picking locks, they could afford to dispense with the swagger.

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

Dodder by railroad bridge. I am attracted by the deep purple (?) of some polygalas standing amid dark-green grass. Some of the leaves of the choke-cherry are the brightest scarlet that I have seen, or, at least, the clearest. *Eupatorium purpureum* fully out everywhere. Potamogetons still in flower (small ones) in brooks. Heart-leaves in Walden and water-target leaves in the overflowed meadow. The elder bushes are weighed down with fruit partially turned, and are still in bloom at the extremities of their twigs. The low downy Guaphalium leaves are already prepared for winter and spring again on dry hills and sprout-lands. I am struck by the handsome and abundant clusters of yet green shrub oak acorns. Some are whitish. How much food for some creatures! The sprouts, apparently of the *Populus grandidentata*, run up very fast the first year where the wood has been cut, and make great leaves nearly a foot long and nine or ten inches wide, — unlike those of the parent tree, downy. Just smelled an apple which carried me forward to those days when they will be heaped in the orchards and about the cider mills. The fragrance of some fruits is not to be forgotten, along with that of flowers. Is not the high blackberry our finest berry? I gather very sweet ones which

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

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

no possible hope except in their own right arms.

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

FREDERICK! IS GOD DEAD?

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

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

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

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weigh down the vines in sprout-lands. The arum berries are mostly devoured, apparently by birds. The two-leaved Solomon's-seal berries begin to be red. *Rumex Hydrolapathum* (?) by Jenny's Brook. *Hieracium Canadense*, apparently — Bigelow's *Kalmiana*, which Gray says is not Linnæus's. Marlborough road. The oval maple-leaved viburnum berries have got to be yellowish. The paniced cornel berries now white. The bushy gerardia is abundant on the While Pond road, beyond pond. What is that thistle in Brown's and Tarbell's meadows with no stem, only radical leaves, very prickly and not pinnatifid? *Desmodium acuminatum* still in bloom, near the poplars on White Pond road. The *Smilacina racemosa* has a compound raceme of red-speckled berries now. *Polygonatum pubescens* berries are now green with a bluish bloom, and the leaves eaten up. Was not that which E. Hoar brought from the White Mountains *polygonatum canaliculatum* with auxiliary large red berries, though Gray says of this genus, its berries are black or blue?¹⁴ Perhaps fruits are colored like the trillium berry and the scarlet thorn to attract birds to them. Is that rather large lilac-purple aster by Jenny's Brook *A. puniceus*?¹⁵



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

The Dutch barque *Vice-Admiraal Rijk* had grounded off Egeria Point, the south-west point of Christmas Island in the Indian Ocean, on [June 28th, 1852](#). Of the 20 souls aboard, some had been able to cling to the roof of the floating deck-house until the wreckage drifted to rocks off the north-west point of the island. 1st Mate Pieter Graat, sailor Carel Kipping, and passenger Roelof Arnold Herman Tollius Bennet were rescued on this day by the passing Dutch ship *Amicitia*.



Aug. 23. 3 P.M. — To Assabet.

The river is eight and one twelfth feet below top of truss.¹⁶ Add eight and a half inches for its greatest height this year, and you have eight feet nine and a half inches for the difference. It is apparently as low now as the first week in July.¹⁷ That is, those are the limits of our river's expansibility; so much it may swell. Of course, the water now in it is but a small fraction of that which it contains in the highest freshets, for this additional eight and nine twelfths feet is much more than its present average depth, half as much again perhaps, beside averaging eight or ten times its present width.

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

About 8 P.M. — To Cliffs, moon half full.

As I go up the back road, I hear the loud ringing creak of crickets, louder singers on each apple tree by the roadside, with an intermittent pulsing creak. Not [lie sound of a 'bird all the. way to the woods. How dark the shadows of ill(, pines and oaks fall across the woodland path! There is a new tree, another forest in the shadow. It is pleasant walking in these forest paths, with heavy darkness on one

14. Probably the large convallaria.

15. *Longifolius*?

16. Horizontal part (probably).

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



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side and a silvery moonlight on the oak leaves on the other, and again, when the trees meet overhead, to tread the checkered floor of finely divided light and shade. I hear a faint metallic titter from a bird, so faint that if uttered at noonday it would not be heard, — not so loud as a cricket. I cannot remember the last moon.

Now that birds and flowers fall off, fruits take their places, and young birds in flocks. What a list of bright-colored, sometimes venomous-looking berries spot the swamps and copses amid changing leaves! For colors they will surpass the flowers, methinks. There is something rare, precious, and gem-like about them. Now is their time, and I must attend to them. Some, like grapes, we gather and eat, but the fairest are not edible.

Now I sit on the Cliffs and look abroad over the river and Conantum hills. I live so much in my habitual thoughts, a routine of thought, that I forget there is any outside to the globe, and am surprised when I behold it as now. — yonder hills and river in the moonlight, the monsters. Yet it is salutary to deal with the surface of things. What are these rivers and hills, these hieroglyphics which my eyes behold? There is something invigorating in this air, which I am peculiarly sensible is a real wind, blowing from over the surface of a planet. I look out at my eyes, I come to my window, and I feel and breathe the fresh air. It is a fact equally glorious with the most inward experience. Why have we ever slandered the outward? The perception of surfaces will always have the effect of miracle to a sane sense. I can see Nobscoot faintly.

Descend the rocks and return through woods to railroad. How picturesque the moonlight on rocks in the woods! To-night there are no fireflies, no nighthawks [**Common Nighthawk**  *Chordeiles minor*] nor whip-poor-wills [**Whip-poor-will**  *Caprimulgus vociferus*].



August 24, Tuesday, 1852: The 1st dramatization of [Harriet Beecher Stowe's UNCLE TOM'S CABIN, OR THE MAN THAT WAS A THING](#) was staged in New-York City.

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote something into his journal that informs us of his attitude in regard to eternity and changefulness and openness in regard to what has yet to come: “The year is but a succession of days, and I see that I could assign some office to each day which, summed up, would be the history of the year. Everything is done in season, and there is no time to spare.”

TIME AND ETERNITY



Aug. 24. How far we can be apart and yet attract each other! There is one who almost wholly misunderstands me and whom I too probably misunderstand, toward whom, nevertheless, I am distinctly drawn. I have the utmost human good-will toward that one, and yet I know not what mistrust keeps us asunder. I am so much and so exclusively the friend of my friend's virtue that I am compelled to be silent for the most part, because his vice is present. I am made dumb by this third party. I only desire *sincere* relations with the worthiest of my acquaintance, that they may give me an opportunity once in a year to speak the truth. They invite me to see them, and do not show themselves. Who *are* they, pray? I pine and starve near them. The hospitable man will invite me to an atmosphere where truth can be spoken, where a man can live and breathe. Think what crumbs we offer each other, — and think to make up the deficiency with our *roast meats*! Let us have a human creature's heart and let go the beeve's heart. How happens it that I find myself making such an enormous demand on men and so constantly disappointed? Are my friends aware how disappointed I am? Is it all my fault? Have I no heart? Am I incapable of expansion and generosity? I shall accuse myself of everything else sooner, I have never met with a friend who furnished me sea-room. I have only tacked a few times and come to anchor, — not sailed, — made no voyage, carried no venture. Do they think me eccentric because I refuse this chicken's meat, this babe's food? Would not men have something to communicate if they were sincere? Is not my silent expectation an invitation, an offer, an opportunity offered? My friend has complained of me, cursed me even, but it could not affect me; I did not know the persons he talked about. I have been disappointed from first to last in

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my friends, but I have never complained of them, nor to them. I would have them know me, guess at me. It is not petty and timid relations that I seek to establish with them. A world in which there is a demand for ice-creams but not for truth! I leave my friends early: I go away to cherish my idea of friendship. Is not friendship a great relation? My friend so treats me that I feel a thousand miles off; like the greatest possible stranger speaking a different language; as if it would be the fittest thing in the world for us to be introduced. Persists in thinking me the opposite of what [I am], and so shuts my mouth. Intercourse with men! How little it amounts to! How rarely we love them! Do we not meet very much as Yankees meet Arabs? It is remarkable if a man gives us a civil answer about the road. And how far from love still are even pretty intimate friends! How little it is that we can trust each other! It is the bravest thing we do for one moment to put so much confidence in our compassion as to treat him for what he aspires to be, a confidence which we retract instantly.

Like cuttlefish we conceal ourselves, we darken the atmosphere in which we move; we are not transparent. I pine for one to whom I can speak my *first thoughts*; thoughts which represent me truly, which are no better and no worse than I; thoughts which have the bloom on them, which alone can be sacred and divine. Our sin and shame prevent our expressing even the innocent thoughts we have. I know of no one to whom I can be transparent instinctively. I live the life of the cuttlefish; another appears, and the element in which I move is tinged and I am concealed. My first thoughts are azure; there is a bloom and a dew on them; they are papillaceous feelers which I put out, tender, innocent. Only to a friend can I expose them. To all parties, though they be youth and maiden, if they are transparent to each other, and their thoughts can be expressed, there can be no further nakedness. I cannot be surprised by an intimacy which reveals the outside, when it has shown me the inside. The result of a full communication of our thoughts would be the immediate neglect of those coverings which a false modesty wears.

P.M. — To Saw Mill Brook.

The *Viburnum dentatum* berries, which are, methinks, the earliest of the viburnums, are a dead light blue, small. The *Viburnum nudum* shows now rich, variegated clusters amid its handsome, firm leaves, — bright rosy-checked ones mingled with dark-purple. All do not appear to turn purple. The *Lentago* I have not seen ripe yet. The *acerifolium* is merely yellowish, oval, flattish. Of cornels, have not seen the dwarf nor the dogwood berries. The alternate-leaved with red cymes and round dull (?) blue berries appeared first; then the red osier began to turn bright, glass-beady, amethystine (?) blue, mixed with white, and is still for the most part green; then the white-berried. But the round-leaved I have not seen.

Autumnal dandelions are more common now. I see. I smooth red-skinned gall on oak twigs.



Surely the high blackberry is the finest berry, — not by dusty roadsides, but when now the season is rather late, and you find them in some rocky sprout-land, far from any road, fully ripe, having escaped the pickers, weighing down their stems and half hidden amid the green leaves of other plants, black and shiny, ready to drop, with a spirited juice. Who will pretend that, plucked and eaten there, they are the same with those offered at the tea table? These are among the berries that are eaten by men.

The *Neottia pubescens* is a rather interesting flower.

FLYING CHILDERS

The *ghost-horse* on a goldenrod, a real caricature of *Flying Childers*, like a light-green seed-vessel, three or four inches long and one tenth of an inch in diameter, with four slender legs more than an inch long, in two pairs, springing from within an inch of each other in the middle of his body, and an eye more than an inch behind its snout, — a caricature on the horse, one or more of its legs in the air as if arrested while taking a step. You can hardly believe it is an insect, and if you handle it, it is so sluggish in its motions that you might not discover it, if not bent on it. Thus I thought of it, till I disturbed it, took it into my hand; and then found it had six legs and no long snout at all but only two slender feelers, that it had laid its two fore legs and feelers together, so as exactly to resemble a long snout, and also a seed-vessel the more, with its eye far in the rear.

The year is but a succession of days, and I see that I could assign some office to each day which, summed up, would be the history of the year. Everything is done in season, and there is no time to spare. The bird gets its brood hatched in season and is off. I looked into the nest where I saw a vireo [x] feeding its young a few days ago, but it is empty; it is fledged and flown.

Smoke is very like but still different from cloud: first, from its rapid motion, from being nearer

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commonly; secondly, from a certain fuliginous or yellowish color in its hollows, as if it had fire in its entrails, a darkness not to be referred to shadow.

At Saw Mill Brook, *Solidago latifolia* budded. Saw Mill Brook path, *Desmodium paniculatum*, perhaps a week. By red house on Turnpike, *Polygonum Carey*. In R.W.E.'s garden, *Pilea pumila*, rich-weed, August, and *Sonchus oleraceus*, common sow-thistle with a small dandelion-like flower, and also *Amaranthus allbus*, the last Lily (?).



August 25, Wednesday, 1852: In [San Francisco](#), the [Daily Alta California](#) reported that Lilly C. Smith was sent before the Court of Sessions on the charge of "having been detected in the act of slyly relieving a darkey of his gold watch and chain during a friendly scuffle."

HISTORY OF RR

The railroad reaching out Cape Cod was completed from Redruth to a terminus at Higher Town near Penwithers on the western side of Truro, Massachusetts.

The [Daily Picayune](#) of New Orleans noted that it had received, from B.M. Norman of 14 Camp Street, courtesy copies of W.L.G. Smith's LIFE AT THE SOUTH; OR, UNCLE TOM'S CABIN AS IT IS, and SIR JOHN FRANKLIN AND THE ARCTIC REGIONS.











Aug. 25. Cape Wrath, the northwest cape of Scotland. What a good name for a cape lying far away, dark, over the water, under a lowering sky!

P.M. — To Conantum.

The dandelion blooms again.

One of the most noticeable wild fruits at present is the *Viburnum nudum* berries, their variegated cymes amid the green leaves in the swamps or low grounds, some whitish, some greenish, some red, some pink, some rose-purple and very beautiful, — not so beautiful, however, off the bush, — some dark purple or blue, and some black whose bloom is rubbed off, — a very rich sight. The silky cornel is the most common everywhere, bordering the river and the swamps, its drooping cymes of amethystine (?) china or glass beads mingled with whitish. The fruit of the *Viburnum Lentago* is now very handsome, with its sessile cymes of large, elliptical berries, green on one side and red with a purple bloom on the other or exposed side, not yet purple, blushing on one cheek. Many pyrus leaves are now red in the swamps, and some *Viburnum nudum*.

Yesterday was a hot day, but oft, this dull, cloudy, breezy, weather in which the creak of the cricket sounds louder, preparatory to a cheerful storm! How grateful to our feelings is the approach of autumn! We have had no serious storm since spring. What a salad to my spirits is this cooler, darker day! Of late we have had several cloudy days without rain.

I hear no birds sing these days, only the plaintive note of young [bluebirds](#) [[Eastern Bluebird](#)  [Sialia sialis](#)], or the peep of a robin [[American Robin](#)  [Turdus migratorius](#)], or the scream of a jay [[Blue Jay](#)  [Cyanocitta cristata](#)], to whom all seasons are indifferent, the mew of a catbird [[Gray Catbird](#)  [Dumetella carolinensis](#)], the *link link* of a bobolink [[Bobolink](#)  [Dolichonyx oryzivorus](#) ~~Rice-bird~~], or the twitter of a goldfinch [[American Goldfinch](#)  [Carduelis tristis](#)], all faint and rare. The great bittern [[American Bittern](#)  [Botaurus lentiginosus](#) (~~Great Bittern~~)] is still about, but silent and shy. I see where its roost on the pitch pines is betrayed at Tupelo Cliff by the lime-like ordure on the leaves of the bushes beneath. Or a hawk  is occasionally seen, etc., etc.

The linear lespedeza is out of bloom at Tupelo Cliff. *Euphorbia hypericifolia* there (July). *Spiranthes cernua* in the meadows. That earliest one I saw was either the *gracilis* or *repens*, probably the first. Again and several times I have found a low hieracium, not a foot high, with radical leaves only and not veined, few-flowered; may be one form of *Gronovii*. That white polygonum of the river is apparently *P. hydropiperoides*, but faintly perforate-spotted; but I cannot find described the smaller,



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rose-colored one, also perforate-dotted. Some thorn berries, to the eyes similar to the scarlet-fruited, are hard. How many kinds have we? Some are already cutting rowen, which is sweetest and best for milch cows.

At length, before sundown, it begins to rain. You can hardly say when it began, and now, after dark, the sound of it dripping and pattering without is quite cheering. It is long since I heard it. One of those serious and normal storms, not a shower which you can see through, something regular, a fall (?) rain, coincident with a different mood or season of the mind, not a transient cloud that drops rain. Methinks the truly weather-wise will know themselves and find the signs of rain in their own mood, the aspect of their own skies or thoughts, and not consult swallows and spiders. I incline always [to] questions about the weather without thinking. Does a mind in sympathy with nature need a hygrometer?



August 26, Thursday, [1852](#): The St. Mary's River connects with Lake Huron and thus allows access to all the lower Great Lakes, but at one point there is a series of rapids in which the level of the river drops fully 21 feet. On this day [President Millard Fillmore](#) signed legislation that would allow the construction of a [canal](#) and lock at Saulte Ste. Marie, between Ontario, Canada and Michigan, United States, to bypass these rapids and thus connect this St. Mary's River of Canada westward to Lake Superior and allow great ships full use of all the Great Lake waterways from New-York at the eastern end to the tip of Lake Superior at the western end.

There were surface seams of [coal](#) on Coal Island at Nanaimo, British Columbia, that were being mined by the local native tribes. On this day men of the Hudson's Bay Company landed near the principle coal seam and, according to a journal kept by [Joseph William McKay](#), had a conversation with these coal-mining natives, "who complained very much of the low price they received from the Hudson Bay Company's schooner *Cadboro* for their coal. The Company men traded with these locals for "some large mats, some salmon and potatoes."

Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts offered a motion to the federal Senate, to repeal the Fugitive Slave Bill on the grounds that whereas race slavery was merely a sectional and local phenomenon, freedom was by way of radical contrast an American national characteristic. Here is a portion of that speech:

Sir, I shall speak frankly. If there be an exception to this feeling, it will be found chiefly with a peculiar class. It is a sorry fact that the "mercantile interest," in its unpardonable selfishness, twice in English history, frowned upon the endeavors to suppress the atrocity of Algerine Slavery; that it sought to baffle Wilberforce's great effort for the abolition of the African slave trade; and that, by a sordid compromise, at the formation of our Constitution, it exempted the same detested, Heaven-defying traffic from American judgment. And now representatives of this "interest," forgetful that commerce is the child of Freedom, join in hunting the Slave. But the great heart of the people recoils from this enactment. It palpitates for the fugitive, and rejoices in his escape. Sir, I am telling you facts. The literature of the age is all on his side. The songs, more potent than laws, are for him. The poets, with voices of melody, are for Freedom. Who could sing for Slavery? They who make the permanent opinion of the country, who mould our youth, whose words, dropped into the soul, are the germs of character, supplicate for the Slave. And now, sir, behold a new and heavenly ally. A woman, inspired by Christian genius, enters the lists, like another Joan of Arc, and with marvellous power sweeps the

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chords of the popular heart. Now melting to tears, and now inspiring to rage, her work everywhere touches the conscience, and makes the Slave-Hunter more hateful. In a brief period, nearly 100,000 copies of Uncle Tom's Cabin have been already circulated. But this extraordinary and sudden success—surpassing all other instances in the records of literature—cannot be regarded merely as the triumph of genius. Higher far than this, it is the testimony of the people, by an unprecedented act, against the Fugitive Slave Bill.

These things I dwell upon as the incentives and tokens of an existing public sentiment, which renders this Act practically inoperative, except as a tremendous engine of terror. Sir, the sentiment is just. Even in the lands of slavery, the slave-trader is loathed as an ignoble character, from whom the countenance is turned away; and can the Slave-Hunter be more regarded while pursuing his prey in a land of Freedom?



Aug. 26. Rain. Rain.



August 27, Friday, [1852](#): The Hudson's Bay Company men at Nanaimo, British Columbia commenced construction of a 20X15 cabin, paying the local natives "11/2" (?) in tobacco for carrying in the materials for this cabin, raising the walls 4 feet. The Hudson's Bay Company clerk [Joseph William McKay](#), who was an amateur geologist, visited a seam of [coal](#) on Coal Island that had not before been known.

[Henry Thoreau](#) reminisced while he was out at [Walden Pond](#), about the various levels at which he had seen the water. He had seen it 4 or 5 feet higher than when he had done his 2 years, 2 months, and 2 days in the shanty — and he had also seen it 1 or 2 feet lower.

FLOWAGE



WALDEN: The pond rises and falls, but whether regularly or not, and within what period, nobody knows, though, as usual, many pretend to know. It is commonly higher in the winter and lower in the summer, though not corresponding to the general wet and dryness. I can remember when it was a foot or two lower, and also when it was at least five feet higher, than when I lived by it. There is a narrow sand-bar running into it, with very deep water on one side, on which I helped boil a kettle of chowder, some six rods from the main shore, about the year 1824, which it has not been possible to do for twenty-five years; and on the other hand, my friends used to listen with incredulity when I told them, that a few years later I was accustomed to fish from a secluded cove in the woods, fifteen rods from the only shore they knew, which place was long since converted into a meadow. But the pond has risen steadily for two years, and now, in the summer of '52, is just five feet higher than when I lived there, or as high as it was thirty years ago, and fishing goes on again in the meadow. This makes a difference of level, at the outside, of six or seven feet; and yet the water shed by the surrounding hills is insignificant in amount, and this overflow must be referred to causes which affect the deep springs. This same summer the pond has begun to fall again. It is remarkable that this fluctuation, whether periodical or not, appears thus to require many years for its accomplishment. I have observed one rise and a part of two falls, and I expect that a dozen or fifteen years hence the water will again be as low as I have ever known it. Flint's Pond, a mile eastward, allowing for the disturbance occasioned by its inlets and outlets, and the smaller intermediate ponds also, sympathize with Walden, and recently attained their greatest height at the same time with the latter. The same is true, as far as my observation goes, of White Pond. The rise and fall of Walden at long intervals serves this use at least; the water standing at this great height for a year or more, though it makes it difficult to walk round it, kills the shrubs and trees which have sprung up about its edge since the last rise, pitch-pines, birches, alders, aspens, and others, and, falling again, leaves an unobstructed shore; for, unlike many ponds and all waters which are subject to a daily tide, its shore is cleanest when the water is lowest. On the side of the pond next my house, a row of pitch pines fifteen feet high has been killed and tipped over as if by a lever, and thus a stop put to their encroachments; and their size indicates how many years have elapsed since the last rise to this height. By this fluctuation the pond asserts its title to a shore, and thus the *shore is shorn*, and the trees cannot hold it by right of possession. These are the lips of the lake on which no beard grows. It licks its chaps from time to time. When the water is at its height, the alders, willows, and maples send forth a mass of fibrous red roots several feet long from all sides of their stems in the water, and to the height of three or four feet from the ground, in the effort to maintain themselves; and I have known the high-blueberry bushes about the shore, which commonly produce no fruit, bear an abundant crop under these circumstances.





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That night, in the garret of the Thoreau boardinghouse, [Thoreau](#) referenced passages in WALDEN (pages 196, 198) and A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS (pages 276, 279-280), while he was reading in [Lieutenant Sherard Osborn's STRAY LEAVES FROM AN ARCTIC JOURNAL, OR, EIGHTEEN MONTHS IN THE POLAR REGIONS, IN SEARCH OF SIR JOHN FRANKLIN'S EXPEDITION, IN THE YEARS 1850-51 / BY LIEUT. SHERARD OSBORN, COMMANDING H. M. S. VESSEL, "PIONEER"](#) (this had just been published by George P. Putnam's in New-York and he had checked it out from the Concord Town Library). He wrote about being "struck by the ease and simplicity with which an Englishman expresses a sentiment of reverence for the author and ruler of the universe. It is very manly — and appears to some extent to characterize the nation. Osborn in his Arctic Journal prints with such simplicity a prayer which has been prepared for the Arctic expedition." Here is the full text of the prayer he was so admiring:

O Lord God, our Heavenly Father, who teachest man knowledge, and givest him skill and power to accomplish his designs, we desire continually to wait, and call, and depend upon Thee. Thy way is in the sea, and Thy paths in the great waters. Thou rulest and commandest all things. We therefore draw nigh unto Thee for help in the great work which we now have to do.

Leave us not, we beseech Thee, to our own counsel, nor to the imaginations of our own foolish and deceitful hearts: but lead us by the way wherein we should go, that discretion may preserve us, and understanding may keep us. Do Thou, O Lord, make our way prosperous, and give us Thy blessing and good success. Bring all needful things to our remembrance; and where we have not the presence of mind, nor the ability, to perform Thy will, magnify Thy power in our weakness. Let Thy good provenance be our aid and protection, and Thy Holy Spirit our Guide and Comforter, that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul. Endue us with such strength and patience as may carry us through every toil and danger, whether by sea or land; and, if it be Thy good pleasure, vouchsafe to us a safe return to our families and homes.

And, as Thy Holy Word teaches us to pray for others, as well as for ourselves, we most humbly beseech Thee, of Thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succour all those who are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity, especially such as may now be exposed to the dangers of the deep, or afflicted with cold and hunger. Bestow upon them Thy rich mercies, according to their several wants and necessities, and deliver them out of their distress. They are known to Thee by name, let them be known of Thee as the children of Thy grace and love. Bless us all with Thy favour, in which is life, and with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus; and grant us so to pass the waves of this troublesome world, that finally we may come unto Thy everlasting kingdom. Grant this, for Thy dear Son's sake, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.





Aug. 27. It still rains. I am struck by the ease and simplicity with which an Englishman expresses a sentiment of reverence for the Author and Ruler of the Universe. It is very manly, and appears to some extent to characterize the nation. [Osborn](#), in his [Arctic Journal](#), prints with much simplicity a prayer which had been prepared for the Arctic expedition.

P.M. — To Walden.

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Storm drawing to a close. Crickets sound much louder after the rain in this cloudy weather. They are beginning to dig potatoes in earnest. Hips of the early roses are reddening. I have not seen a rose for a week or two. Lower leaves of the smooth sumach are red. Hear *chic-a-day-day-day* and crows [American Crow  *Corvus Brachyrhynchos*]; but, for music, reduced almost, to the winter quire. Young partridges [Ruffed Grouse  *Bonasa umbellus* (Partridge)] two thirds grown burst away. Globular galls on young oaks, green on one side, red on the other. *Elatine Americana*, small crvpta [?], in Walden Pond.

Paddled *round* the pond. The shore is composed of a belt of smooth rounded white stones like paving-stones, a rod or two in width, excepting one or two short sand-beaches, and is so steep that much of the way a single leap will carry you into water over your head. It is nowhere muddy, and the bottom is not to be touched, scarcely even seen again, except for the transparency of the water, till it rises on the other side. A casual observer would say that there were no weeds at all in it, and of noticeable plants a closer scrutiny detects only a few small heart-leaves and potamogetons, and perchance a water-target or two, which yet even a bather might not perceive. Both fishes and plants are clean and bright, like the element they live in. Viewed from a hilltop, it is blue in the depths and green in the shallows, but from a boat it is seen to be a uniform dark green. I can remember when it was four or five feet higher, also a foot or two lower, than when I lived there. There is a narrow sand-bar running into it in one place, with very deep water on one side, on which I boiled a kettle of chowder, at least six rods from the main shore, more than twenty years ago, which it has not been possible to do since; and my friends used to listen with incredulity when I told them, that a year or two later I was accustomed to fish from a boat in a deep cove in the woods, long since converted into a meadow. But since I left it the pond has risen steadily for a year past, apparently unaffected by drouth or rain, and now, in the summer of '52, is as high as it was twenty years ago, and fishing goes on again in the meadow; and yet the water shed by the surrounding hills is insignificant in amount, and this overflow must be referred to causes which affect the deep springs. The surrounding hills are from fifty to a hundred, and in one place perhaps two hundred, feet high, covered with wood.

The bushy gerardia yellows the hilly side, where the wood is cut off on the north side of the pond. among the effects of the high water, I observe that the alders have thrown out innumerable roots, two feet or more in length, with red extremities, for three feet or more up their stems, or as high as the water stands, which do not seek the ground, but collect sustenance from the water, forming a dense mass. Also the willows and the meadow-sweet in their proportion; but the pitch pines and many other trees are killed. The high blueberries standing in the water bear more and larger berries than usual, and they are still quite fresh.

The berries of the red pyrus are now red in some places. Apparently *Mulgedium leucophæum* by the railroad. *Aster longifolius* (?), handsome, large, bushy, lilac-tinted, apparently the same found the 22d at Jenny's Brook. The leaves of some young maples in the water about the pond are now quite scarlet, running into dark purple-red.



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August 27, Friday, [1852](#): The [Brooklyn Eagle](#) printed a brief racist paragraph on the latest misadventures of [Frederick Douglass](#):

ALL WOOL.—Frederick Douglass seems “born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards.” His last adventure was in this wise. He paid his stage fare to Columbus, Ohio, and was then refused an inside seat. He has sued the Company for refusing to let him ride inside.

This news header “All Wool” cries out for some sort of explanation. There was a sort joke context for stories that were told by the white customers in barbershops of the period. In this context, black Americans, since they were not humans but animals, did not have hair on their heads, but wool, and sometimes if this wool grew inward rather than outward, the result would be a head packed full of wool, resulting in foolish behavior.¹⁸



August 27, Friday, [1852](#): The 2d attempt at peace talks between the whites and the Yuma began with a 10-day truce.

This would be extended and extended, as talks dragged on for several weeks while the whites became more and more impatient. It was all so simple, actually, all the warriors needed to do was surrender or die.

WHITE ON RED, RED ON WHITE

18. I can testify personally, that this racist context for jokes persisted well into my childhood in the 1940s at my Uncle Frosty’s barbershop in Cory, Indiana — which is amusing now for me to think about, since in the 1990s this uncle’s barbershop is still there although boarded up and quiet (and peeping through the windows, is still in the same condition), but he has fallen in love with and married a woman who isn’t entirely white, and they are living at his home in Cory.



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August 27, Friday, 1852: [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#) completed his campaign bio supporting his buddy General [Franklin Pierce](#)'s campaign for President of the United States of America:

Preface

THE AUTHOR of this memoir —being so little of a politician that he scarcely feels entitled to call himself a member of any party— would not voluntarily have undertaken the work here offered to the public. Neither can he flatter himself that he has been remarkably successful in the performance of his task, viewing it in the light of a political biography, and as a representation of the principles and acts of a public man, intended to operate upon the minds of multitudes, during a presidential canvass. This species of writing is too remote from his customary occupations —and, he may, add, from his tastes— to be very satisfactorily done, without more time and practice than he would be willing to expend for such a purpose. If this little biography have any value, it is probably of another kind — as the narrative of one who knew the individual of whom he treats, at a period of life when character could be read with undoubting accuracy, and who, consequently, in judging of the motives of his subsequent conduct has an advantage over much more competent observers, whose knowledge of the man may have commenced at a later date. Nor can it be considered improper, (at least the author will never feel it so, although some foolish delicacy be sacrificed in the undertaking,) that when a friend, dear to him almost from boyish days, stands up before his country, misrepresented by indiscriminate abuse, on the one hand, and by aimless praise, on the other, he should be sketched by one who has had opportunities of knowing him well, and who is certainly inclined to tell the truth.

It is perhaps right to say, that while this biography is so far sanctioned by General Pierce, as it comprises a generally correct narrative of the principal events of his life, the author does not understand him as thereby necessarily endorsing all the sentiments put forth by himself, in the progress of the work. These are the author's own speculations upon the facts before him, and may, or may not, be in accordance with the ideas of the individual whose life he writes. That individual's opinions, however, —so far as it is necessary to know them,— may be read, in his straightforward and consistent deeds, with more certainty than those of almost any other man now before the public.

The author, while collecting his materials, has received liberal aid from all manner of people —whigs and democrats, congressmen, astute lawyers, grim old generals of militia, and gallant young officers of the Mexican war— most of whom, however, he must needs say, have rather abounded in eulogy, of General Pierce, than in such anecdotal matter as is calculated for a biography. Among the gentlemen to whom he is substantially indebted, he would mention Hon. C.G. Atherton, Hon. S.H. Ayer, Hon. Joseph Hall, Chief Justice Gilchrist, Isaac O. Barnes, Esq., Col. T.J. Whipple, and Mr. C.J. Smith. He has likewise derived much assistance from an able and accurate sketch, that originally appeared in the Boston POST and was drawn up, as he believes, by the junior editor of that journal.

CONCORD, (Mass.) August 27, 1852.

BAWTHORNE'S BIO OF PIERCE

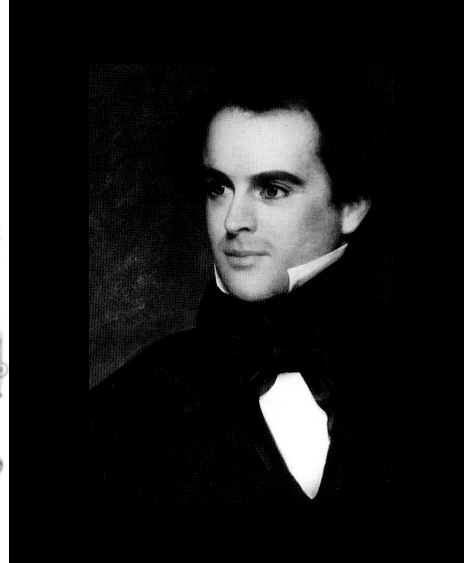
This piece of fraudulent misrepresentation would put its author in line to receive a political plum.

In this writing he did not egregiously name a cow after [Margaret Fuller](#)¹⁹ or suggest that she might commit [suicide](#), or vent any of his other pet peeves, but he did something far worse: this writing was utterly condemnatory of the sort of abolitionist anti-slavery activities of which his neighbor [Henry Thoreau](#), among

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others, had been guilty, and yet it was not an honest or sincere piece of writing.



Statesman Chum and Pretty Boy

President Pierce was in fact a proslavery drunkard whose qualifications to be President were that A.) he had been a totally undistinguished general in the war upon [Mexico](#), and that B.) although a northern politician, he was a safe one, which is to say, he was proslavery and therefore eminently acceptable to the South (Southern Democrats recognized that to get elected their party needed some semblance of a “balanced” ticket). [Horace Mann, Sr.](#) commented in regard to the writing of this campaign biography that if Hawthorne could make out Pierce to be a great man or a brave man, “it will be the greatest work of fiction he ever wrote.” Hawthorne handled the hot matter of slavery in this campaign biography by suggesting that, for the present, slavery seemed to be in accord with God’s great plan, and that if we simply let it be, eventually in God’s good time – if indeed it was his will that it should be vanquished– human slavery would “vanish like a dream.”

And, the creative writer insisted, this was not mere puffery, it was what he really believed, those “are my real sentiments.” The opportunistic careerism of [Franklin Pierce](#), it seemed, had been founded upon the highest moral principle, that of getting results, that of satisfying one’s lust to leave one’s mark upon the world which one has habited. So conveniently, these cronies had overseen the entire course of human history and had

19. Footnotes to history: [Hawthorne](#) had named a cow at [Brook Farm](#), who was forever kicking over her milk pail and tyrannizing the other cows, after Fuller — and this has led generations of historians, frankly irritated by a woman’s intrusion into history, to record she had joined that community whereas she had merely offered lessons there. Although it is not known that this fractious cow committed [suicide](#), historians also have speculated that Fuller drowned at age 40 because somehow her negative attitude drove the USS *Elizabeth* aground in that hurricane — or something like that (you read your own psychohistory as I haven’t the will to make such an effort).

HDT

WHAT?

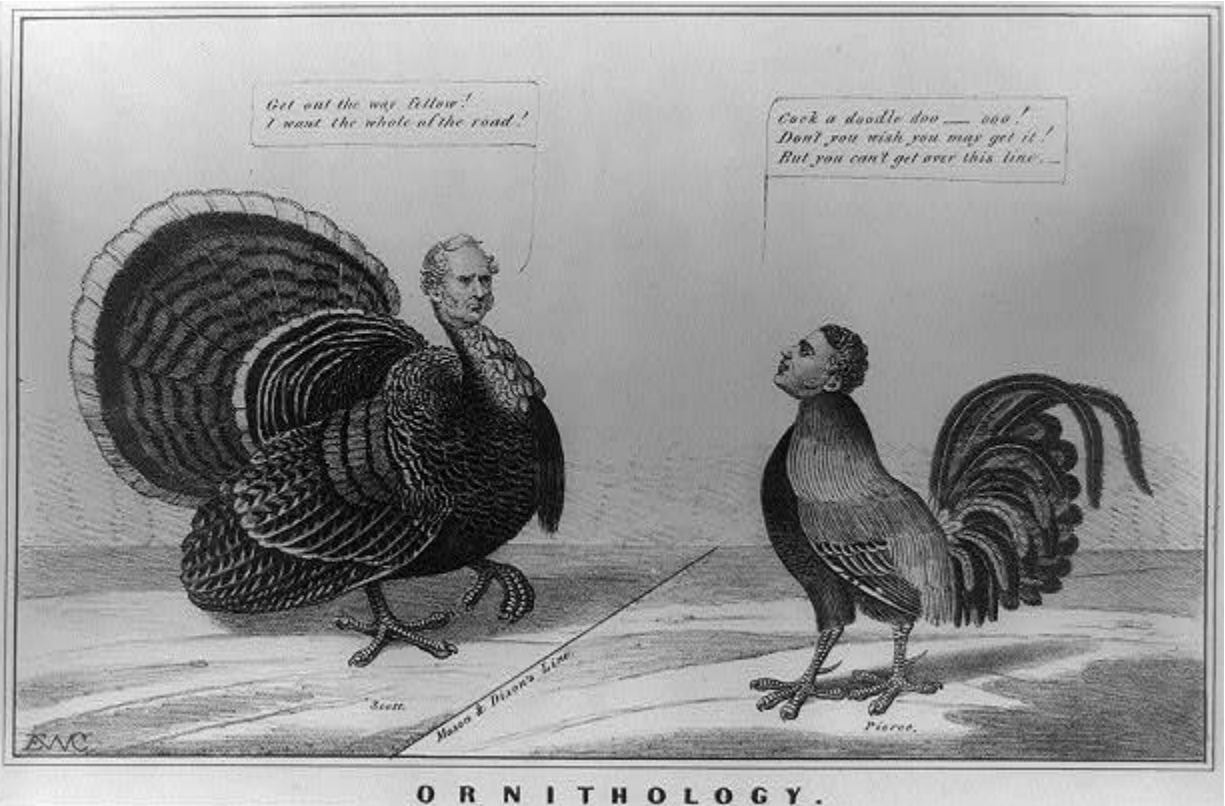
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observed globally the fact that:

There is no instance, in all history, of the human will and intellect having perfected any great moral reform by methods which it adopted to that end.



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August 28, Saturday, [1852](#): The Hudson's Bay Company men who were at Nanaimo, British Columbia in their quest for a local source of [coal](#) to fuel their forge completed the construction of their 20X15 cabin. They traded with the natives for needed foodstuffs — salmon and potatoes.

The doctrine of plural wives was officially announced by [Brigham Young](#) and by [Orson Pratt](#), one of the Twelve Apostles, in a special conference of the elders of the church at the [Salt Lake Tabernacle](#). This would appear in an extra edition of the [Deseret News](#) on September 14th, 1852: "Minutes of conference: a special conference of the elders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints assembled in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, August 28th, 1852, 10 o'clock, a.m., pursuant to public notice."²⁰

When [Henry Thoreau](#) wrote in his journal about one of the flowers in his Aunt's garden, he meant perhaps the garden of his [Aunt Maria Thoreau](#):



Aug. 28. *Sicyos angulatus*, one-seeded star-cucumber in Aunt's garden, probably in July. *Nepeta Glechoma*, ground ivy, or gill, probably may, now out of bloom. *Bidens chrysanthemoides*, perhaps a day, *Polygonum amphibium* var. *terrestre* with a small spike of large clear rose-colored flowers, flowers rare, probably August. What I called by this name before was not this. Now the red osier [River cornel] berries are very handsome along the river, overhanging the water, for the most part pale blue mixed with whitish, — part of the pendant jewelry of the season. The berries of the alternate-leaved cornel have dropped off mostly. The white-berried and red [Silky] osier are in their prime. The other three kinds I have not seen. The viburnums, *dentatum* and *nudum*, are in their prime. The sweet viburnum not yet purple, and the maple-leaved still yellowish. Hemp still in blossom.

20. It requires no pointing out, I suppose, that these progressive religious men were able to sustain a rather old-fashioned attitude in regard to plural husbands.



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August 29, Sunday, [1852](#): [Brigham Young](#) announced his revelation on “celestial marriage” — a revelation that would sanction a Mormon practice of polygamy.

On [March 7th, 1852](#) the 4-year-old [Oneida Community](#) had, unexpectedly, capitulated to internal and external pressures. The community had declared that although it still believed that its controversial complex-marriage system was vindicated “in reason and in conscience,” to avoid giving offense to the surrounding society, that of central New York state, they would temporarily withdraw from “the practical assertion of their views,” and “formally resum[e] the marriage morality of the world, submitting themselves to all ordinances and restrictions of society and law on this subject.” As of this date, however, the Oneida Community resumed that system of complex marriage (as of this date, however, the Community resumed their prior system of complex marriage and this would then persist for fully a quarter-century until, on [August 28th, 1879](#), it would revisit its capitulation of [March 7th, 1852](#)).




[Friedrich Engels](#) on the Utopian Socialists of the 19th Century: “We can leave it to the literary small fry to solemnly quibble over these phantasies, which today only make us smile....”



On this day [Henry Thoreau](#) was nourishing his own 19th-Century fantasy — that his home town of [Concord](#) would someday somehow be able to overcome the small-town pettiness and pettifoggery and self-satisfaction that (sorry, folks) pretty much have always characterized it.




Aug. 29. A warm rain-storm in the night, with wind, and to-day it continues. The first leaves begin to fall; a few yellow ones lie in the road this morning, loosened by the rain and blown off by the wind. The ground in orchards is covered with windfalls; imperfect fruits now fall. We boast that we belong to the Nineteenth Century, and are making the most rapid strides of any nation. But consider how little this village does for its own culture. We have a comparatively decent system of common schools, schools for infants only, as it were, but, excepting the half-starved Lyceum in the winter, no school for ourselves. It is time that we had uncommon schools, that we did not leave off our education when we begin to be men. Comparatively few of my townsmen evince any interest in their own culture, however much they may boast of the school tax they pay. It is time that villages were universities, and their elder inhabitants the fellows, with leisure — if they are indeed so well off — to pursue liberal studies as long as they live. In this country the village should in many respects take the place of the nobleman who has gone by the board. It should be the patron of the fine arts. It is rich enough; it only wants the refinement. It can spend money enough on such things as farmers value, but it is thought utopian to propose spending money for things which more intelligent men know to be of far more worth. If we live in the Nineteenth Century, why should we not enjoy the advantages which the Nineteenth Century has to offer? Why should our life be in any respect provincial? As the nobleman of cultivated taste surrounds himself with whatever conduces to his culture, — books, paintings, statuary, etc., — so let the village do. This town, — how much has it ever spent directly on its own culture? To act collectively is according to the spirit of our institutions, and I am confident that, as our circumstances are more flourishing, our means are greater. New England can hire all the wise men in the world to come and teach her, and board them round the while, and not be provincial at all. That is the uncommon school we want. The one hundred and twenty-five dollars which is subscribed in this town every winter for a Lyceum is better spent than any other equal sum. Instead of noblemen, let us have noble towns or villages of men. This town has just spent sixteen thousand dollars for a town-house. Suppose it had been proposed to spend an equal sum for Something which will tend far more to refine and cultivate its inhabitants, a library, for instance. We have sadly neglected our education. We leave it to Harper & Brothers and Redding & Co.

 August 30, Monday, [1852](#): Volkssänger op.119, a waltz by [Johann Baptist Strauss II](#), was performed for the initial time, in Ungers Casino, Vienna.

The Hudson's Bay Company men at Nanaimo, British Columbia put a temporary roof on their 20X15 cabin using cedar bark, and floored it with gravel. They traded with the natives for 8 deer. Some natives arrived from a bay known as Noo-moo-as on Vancouver Island about 10 miles away, and reported that there was also an exposed seam of [coal](#) at that location.



Aug. 30. A cold storm still, — this the third day, — and a fire to keep warm by. This, methinks, is the most serious storm since spring. *Polygonum amphibium* var. *aquaticum*, which is rather rare. I have not seen it in flower. It is floating. Its broad heart-shaped leaves are purplish beneath, like white lily pads, heart-leaves, and water-targets. What is there in the water that colors them? The other variety, which [is] rough and upright, is more common, and its flowers very beautiful.

 August 31, Tuesday, [1852](#): [Sir Charles Lyell](#)'s 3d visit to [Canada](#) included 10 days in New Brunswick, where he arrived on this day at Halifax. It would be during this visit that he would go to Joggins on September 2d-6th with Dawson, and there discover tetrapod fossils within the trunks of standing trees. During this journey he would set off for [Boston](#) on September 16th, 1852 and visit friends there on September 17th, 1852, to deliver the last of his [Lowell Institute](#) lectures at the [Odeon Hall](#). Sir Charles would depart for England on about November 29th, 1852.

Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka wrote to his sister that his increasing distaste for traveling was causing him to remain in Paris. His hypochondria was causing him to think that everyone traveling with him was going to infect him with dread disease.

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

The US passed a Postal Act of 1852 that would require private express companies to use envelopes created by the Post Office. Prior to the mid-1800s postage was usually based not only on the distance traveled but also on the number of sheets of paper; few letters had been sent in envelopes because an envelope would have counted

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



"Upriver," "To Fairhaven," and "To Clamshell" were other common opening phrases. This signified a southward trip up the lakelike Sudbury River, which zigzagged between rocky cliffs and lush meadows. Its current could be detected only at narrows and shallows. Parallel lines of sweet-scented lily pads, aquatic flowers rooted in shoreline mud, and buttonbush swamps flanked the river for much of its length. With a breeze from the north or east, he would usually sail. Otherwise he would row.

— Professor Robert M. Thorson, THE BOATMAN, page 11



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

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






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

I rigged my mast by putting a post across the boat, and putting the mast through it and into a piece of a post at the bottom, and lashing and bracing it, and so sailed most of the way. The water, methinks, has a little of the fall sparkle on it after the rain. It has run over the meadows considerably and drowned the flowers. I feel as if it was a month later than it was a week ago.



A few days ago some saw a circular rainbow about the sun at midday. Singular phenomenon. Is not this the season when conventions are held? Or do they not appoint conventions, temperance or political, at such times as the farmers are most at leisure? There is a silvery light on the washed willows this morning, and the shadows under the wood-sides appear deeper, perchance by contrast, in the brilliant air. Is not the air a little more bracing than it was? Looking up the sparkling river,

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whose waves are flashing in the sun, it appears to be giving off its pure silver from the amalgam. The sky is more beautiful, a clearer blue, methinks, than for some time past, with light and downy clouds sailing all round a quarter of the way up it. The fields of bulrushes are now conspicuous, being left alone above the water. The balls of the button-bush have lost their bloom. From the shore I hear only the creak of crickets. The winds of autumn begin to blow. Now I can sail. The cardinal-flowers, almost drowned in a foot or two of water, are still very brilliant. The wind is Septemberish. That rush, reed, or sedge with the handsome head rises above the water. I pass boats now far from the shore and full of water. I see and hear the kingfisher [**Belted Kingfisher**  *Ceryle alcyon*] with his disproportionate black [*sic*] head or crest. The pigeon woodpecker [**Yellow-shafted Flicker**  *Colaptes auratus* (~~Golden-winged Woodpecker~~ or ~~Pigeon Woodpecker~~)] darts across the valley; a catbird [**Gray Catbird**  *Dumetella carolinensis*] mews in the alders; a great bittern [**American Bittern**  *Botaurus lentiginosus* (~~Great Bittern~~)] flies sluggishly away from his pine tree perch on Tupelo Cliff, digging his way through the air. These and crows [**American Crow**  *Corvus brachyrhynchos*] at long intervals are all the birds seen or heard.

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

This is the most glorious part of this day, the serenest, warmest, brightest part, and the most suggestive. Evening is fairer than morning. It is chaste eve, for it has sustained the trials of the day, but to the morning such praise was inapplicable. It is incense-breathing. Morning is full of promise and vigor. Evening is pensive. The serenity is far more remarkable to those who are on the water. That part of the sky just above the horizon seen reflected, apparently, some rods off from the boat is

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as light a blue as the actual, but it goes on deepening as your eye draws nearer to the boat, until, when you look directly down at the reflection of the zenith, it is lost in the blackness of the water. It passes through all degrees of dark blue, and the threatening aspect of a cloud is very much enhanced in the reflection. As I wish to be on the water at sunset, I let the boat float. I enjoy now the warmth of summer with some of the water prospect of spring. Looking westward, the surface of the water on the meadows in the sun has a slight dusty appearance, with clear black lines, as if some water nymph had written "slut" with her finger there.


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

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




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

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 September 1852: This month's issue of [Harper's New Monthly Magazine](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE

 September 1852: The Snuneymuxw tribe of Nanaimo, British Columbia carried cedar baskets full of local [coal](#) to fill the white men's barrels, at the exchange rate of a two-and-a-half-point blanket for each 20 filled barrels, and the Hudson's Bay Company schooner *Cadboro* was loaded with 480 of these barrels of coal. The natives also sold this local coal to an American ship in the harbor.

 September 1852: According to the Albany [State Register](#), minstrels had become popular:



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"Old Folks at Home," the last negro melody, is on everybody's tongue, and consequently in everybody's mouth. Pianos and guitars groan with it, night and day; sentimental young ladies sing it; sentimental young gentlemen warble it in midnight serenades; volatile young "bucks" hum it in the midst of their business and their pleasures; boatmen roar it out stentorially at all times; all the bands play it; amateur flute players agonize over it at every spare moment; the street organs grind it out at every hour; the "singing stars" carol it on the theatrical boards, and at concerts; the chamber maid sweeps and dusts to the measured cadences of "Old Folks at Home"; the butcher's boy treats you to a strain or two of it as he hands in the steaks for dinner; the milk man mixes it up strangely with the harsh ding-dong accompaniment of his tireless bell; there is not a "live darkey," young or old, but can whistle, sing, dance, and play it ... indeed at every hour, at every turn, we are forcibly impressed with the interesting fact, that -

"Way down upon de Swanee ribber Far, far away,
Dere's whar my heart is turnin ever
Dere's whar de old folks stay;..."

THE MINSTREL SHOW



September 1852: [Richard Henry Horne](#) and [William Howitt](#) arrived in Melbourne, [Australia](#). Almost at once Mr. Horne secured a position as Commander of the Victorian Gold Escort. Mr. Howitt, however, a temporary visitor, was unhappy at the nasty surprise that greeted him in this port:

Melbourne, Port Phillip, September 26, 1852.
Be so good as to place the fact which I now state in a prominent part of your paper, that it may be copied as widely as possible. Up to the time of my quitting England for this place on the 10th of June last, I never saw it published anywhere, either in the newspaper correspondence from the Australian gold fields, or in any of the books or pamphlets on these gold fields, that Bank of England notes are held to be no legal tender in these colonies. Such, however, is the case. They are utterly refused here, even the bankers, except at a discount of 20 per cent. Numbers of persons are coming out daily. There are a thousand arriving at this port per diem, and not ten men out of each thousand are aware of this fact. In the ship in which I came, the "Kent," there were numbers struck with consternation at the news. Some lost from £40 to £100 by their Bank of England notes; almost every one something, more or less. If it be not therefore, well known, make it so without delay; if it be known at all, make it more so. Every journalist in town or country will do an important service to his countrymen intending to sail hither, by warning them not to take out a single Bank of England note, but only orders on the Australia banks, or gold. Whoever brings Bank of England paper will assuredly and inevitably be mulcted of one-fifth of his money. I speak from actual experience. It is in the interest of the bankers here to exclude Bank of England notes, that they may circulate their own, but there needs no addition to the terrific demands which are made here on the emigrants. Everything is charged at digging prices, that is, ten times its natural price; and the astonished arriver will have

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enough to do to escape through the town up to the gold-fields with the skin of his teeth. There is a fine bay, but no quay; all vessels are anchored out in the bay, and no soul can reach Melbourne by the steamers that go up the river, seven miles for less than 5s., without any luggage. That is 16s. every individual to the shore and back; and many such trips must be made before passengers can get their goods out of the ship. For the moment the vessel anchors every sailor runs away, and there are next to no men who can be hired to get out the luggage. Once out, the freight is 30s. per ton, half the amount that it has cost for the whole voyage of 13,000 miles. Some luggage which cost me 7s. 6d., carting from the City to the East India Docks, cost here for this seven miles by steamer, £3. In the town the same fiery furnace rate of charge exists for everything. It is impossible for any one to get lodgings at any price. Hundreds are camping out and the town council is about to erect temporary places of reception. Two and three pounds a week are given for little empty rooms at which a respectable English dog would turn up his nose. Houses, which in good parts of London would be held dear at £40 a year, let for £400, and all the articles of life are at a like rate. Bread 1s 6d. the 4lbs. loaf, butter 3s 6d. meat 6d., and is expected every day to be 1s per lb. If you want books such as in London you might buy for 18s., are £4. Folding bedsteads, which are 15s. 6d. in London, are £5 and so on. Freight up the country to the diggings has been £140 per ton, and is yet £70. Omnibus fare thither £10. Now it is needless to add to these inflections a direct deduction from your money of one-fifth. This can only be avoided by avoiding bringing Bank of England notes.



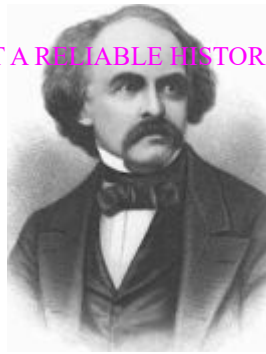
September 1852: In the party of James Richardson, [Heinrich Barth](#), and Adolf Overweg that had been tasked by the British Foreign Office to open up commercial relations with the states of the central and western Sudan, Richardson had already died leaving Barth and Overweg to carry on the mission, and at this point Overweg died — Barth would need to soldier on alone.

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 September 1852: An unsigned reviewer in the Christian Examiner in effect called Nathaniel Hawthorne not a fictioner but a liar. For Hawthorne, in the preface to his THE SCARLET LETTER, had adverted that he had in his possession “historical papers which authenticate the story,” a story which involved “the gross and slanderous imputation that the colleague pastor of the First Church in Boston, who preached the Election Sermon in the year after the death of Governor Winthrop, was a mean and hypocritical adulterer,” which is an “outrageous fiction ... utterly without foundation” that could easily “deceive a reader who had no exact knowledge of our history.”

NOT A RELIABLE HISTORIAN



Meanwhile, Ticknor & Co. of Boston was publishing THE LIFE OF FRANKLIN PIERCE, a Democratic candidate campaign biography. They were actually printing more copies of Hawthorne’s tendentious campaign materials than of any book they had previously issued. Most of the copies were paperback (that is, lacking hard covers) and were to retail at \$0.³⁷1/2 each.



Evidently in this timeframe (his cover note is undated), Henry Thoreau wrote to H.G.O. Blake, enclosing draft essays on “Love” and on “Chastity & Sensuality” in response to a letter which Blake had sent to him about his trepidations on his pending marriage. These were essays he had been working on since 1846. It would appear that part of what he sent was torn out of his manuscript notebooks during his writing process, rather than copied. Unfortunately, Thoreau also had evidently made the mistakes of asking advice in this regard from his married friend Waldo Emerson, and of allowing Waldo to see Blake’s letter, for we find the following caustic remark in Emerson’s journal:

H.D.T. read me a letter from Blake to himself, yesterday, by which it appears that Blake writes to ask his husband for leave to marry a wife.

To: H.G.O. Blake
From: HDT





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Date: [9/52]

Mr. Blake,

Here come the sentences — which I promised y[o]u[] You may keep them if you will regard & use them as the disconnected fragments of what I may find to be a completer essay, on looking over my journal at last, and may claim again. I send you the thoughts on chastity and sensuality with diffidence and shame, not knowing how far I speak to the condition of men generally, or how far I betray my peculiar defects. Pray enlighten me on this point if you can.

Henry D. Thoreau

LOVE

CHASTITY AND SENSUALITY

Professor Walter Roy Harding would comment on the above in his paper on Thoreau and homosexuality and homoeeroticism:

When his friend H.G.O. Blake married, Thoreau sent him as a wedding present admonitory essays on "Love" and "Chastity and Sensuality," telling Blake, "There can be nothing sensual in marriage,"²¹ though adding a note saying he was sending the essays "with diffidence and shame, not knowing how far I speak to the condition of men generally, or how far I betray my peculiar desires."²²

The sexual act he apparently thought of only with abhorrence and disgust. He complained, "We are begotten and our life has its source from what a trivial and sensual Pleasure."²³ He even found it difficult to imagine "what the essential difference between man and woman is that they should be thus attracted to one another."²⁴ Nor could he accept any jesting on the subject of sexual relations. He complained of indecent graffiti he saw on the walls of outhouses and even chastised Nature for creating the "obscenity" of the phallic fungus (JOURNAL IX:117). When the more earthy Ellery Channing tried to share off-color jokes with him, Thoreau was always repelled (JOURNAL III:33S, 406-7; IV:185). He chastised children in his school for using indecent language,²⁵ and thought little boys should be whipped for "impurity" (JOURNAL II:341), despite his well-known objections to the use of corporal punishment. He even went so far as to renounce sex completely, extolling the virtues of absolute chastity, speaking of it, ironically, as "the flowering of man"²⁶ and the "perpetual acquaintance with the All" (JOURNAL IX:246).

Thoreau's usual reaction to women was one of embarrassment or

21. Thoreau. EARLY ESSAYS, p. 274.

22. Henry D. Thoreau. CORRESPONDENCE. (New York, 1958), p. 288.

23. Henry D. Thoreau. JOURNAL. (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1981-), II, 324.

24. Thoreau. EARLY ESSAYS, p. 268.

25. Walter Harding. THE DAYS OF HENRY THOREAU. (New York, 1965), p. 80.


26. Henry D. Thoreau. WALDEN. (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1971), pp.219-20.



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annoyance. Emerson tells us Thoreau blushed at the presence of the maids whenever he walked through the Emerson kitchen.²⁷ Thoreau himself said, "I confess that I am lacking a sense, perchance, in this respect, and I derive no pleasure from talking with a young woman half an hour simply because she has regular features. The society of young women is the most unprofitable that I have ever tried" (JOURNAL III:116). He added, "It requires nothing less than a chivalric feeling to sustain a conversation with a lady" (JOURNAL III:168). He suspected his friends of attempting to foster his interest in marriageable young ladies and condemned them for it (JOURNAL III:116). We thought women "lacked brains" (JOURNAL III:258) and "scruples" (3 II:116), were "presumptuous" (PRINCETON JOURNAL I:247), "feeble" (PRINCETON JOURNAL XII:356), "trifling" (JOURNAL XIII:52), and "an army of non-producers" (JOURNAL XTI:342); their clothes were "too showy and gaudy" (JOURNAL IV:92), and the perfumes they used as bad as a "muskrat's odor" (JOURNAL V:82).²⁸

 September 1852: From this month until sometime in 1853, Henry Thoreau would be preparing Version E of WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS, which included for the first time chapter divisions and titles. Here is the Draft E version of a paragraph that would end up on page 94:

POST AND POSTAGE

For my part, I could easily ~~dispense with the Post Office, if it were necessary~~ ^{^do without the post-office.} I think that there are very few important communications made through it. To speak ~~deliberately and~~ critically, I never received ~~but~~ ^{^more than} one or two letters in my life ^{^-I wrote this some years ago-} that were worth ~~much more than~~ the postage, ~~much less the reading.~~ ^{^The penny-post is, commonly, an institution through which you seriously offer a man that penny for his thoughts which is so often safely offered in jest.}

TIMELINE OF WALDEN

27. Ralph Waldo Emerson. JOURNALS AND MISCELLANEOUS NOTEBOOKS. (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1960), VIII, 400.
28. Strangely, however, Thoreau was seemingly fascinated by women's ear drops and I do not know what to make of it. See PRINCETON JOURNAL, I, 304; JOURNAL, II, 18; JOURNAL, XII, 354.

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Thoreau's 1850 reading from [Rammohan Roy](#)'s book of excerpts, titled TRANSLATION OF SEVERAL PRINCIPAL BOOKS, PASSAGES, AND TEXTS OF THE VEDS, AND OF SOME CONTROVERSIAL WORKS ON BRAHMUNICAL THEOLOGY, was utilized in two paragraphs in draft E of the [WALDEN](#) manuscript:

Yet[^] for my ~~own~~ part, I was never unusually squeamish[^] ~~I assure you~~; I could sometimes eat a fried rat with good relish, if it were necessary. I am glad to have drunk water so long, for the same reason that I prefer the natural sky to an opium-eater's heaven. I would fain keep sober always; and there are infinite degrees of drunkenness. I believe that it[^] ~~water~~ is the only drink for a wise man; [^] ~~wine is not so noble a liquor~~; and think of dashing the hopes of a morning with a cup of warm coffee, or of an evening with a dish of tea! [^] ~~Ah, how low I fell~~ fall when I ~~was~~ am tempted by [^] ~~them~~! Even music may be intoxicating. Such apparently slight causes destroyed Greece and Rome, and will destroy England and America. Of all ebriosity, I[^] ~~who does not~~ prefer to be intoxicated on[^] ~~by~~ the air I[^] ~~breathes~~ he breathes? [^] ~~I have found it to be the most serious objection to coarse labors long continued, that they compelled me to eat and drink coarsely also.~~ But to tell the truth, I find myself at present somewhat less particular in these respects. I carry less religion to the table, ask no blessing; not because I am wiser than I was, but, I am obliged to confess, because, however much it is to be regretted, with years I have grown more coarse and indifferent. ~~However, I do not regard~~ [^] ~~Perhaps these questions are entertained only in youth, as most believe of poetry. My practice is "nowhere," my opinion is here. Nevertheless I am far from regarding~~ myself as one of those privileged ones to whom the Ved refers when it says, that "he who has true faith in the Omnipresent Supreme Being may eat all that exists," that is, is not bound to inquire what is his food, or who prepares it; and even in their case it is to be observed, as [Rammohun Roy](#) [^] ~~a Hindoo commentator~~ has remarked, that the Vedant limits this privilege to "the time of distress."

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Also:

~~I am conscious in myself of an animal nature which awakens when the spirit^{my} intellectual nature slumbers, but while the spirit^{this} is awake is inactive.~~ We are conscious in ourselves of an animal, which awakens in proportion as our intellectual nature slumbers. It is reptile and sensual, and perhaps cannot wholly be expelled; like the worms which, even in life and health, occupy our bodies. ~~It feeds and drinks, and reposes, and would fain gratify the most sensual appetite, in spite of the spirit^{intellect}.~~ ~~It would seem as if I might withdraw from it, but could~~ ^{^Possibly we may withdraw from it, but} never change its nature. I fear that it may ~~even~~ enjoy a certain health of its own; that we may be well, yet not pure. I picked up the other day the lower jaw of a hog, with white and sound teeth and tusks, which suggested that there was an animal health and vigor distinct from the spiritual ^{^as it is called}. This creature succeeded by other means than temperance and purity. "That in which men differ from brute beasts," says Mencius, "is a thing very inconsiderable; the common herd lose it very soon; superior men preserve it carefully." ~~^I do not know how it is with other men, but I find it very difficult to be chaste.~~ ~~^I think I can be chaste in my relation to persons, and yet I do not find myself clean. I have~~ ^{^frequent} ~~cause to be ashamed of myself. I am well, but I am not pure. What other sort of life would result if I were I cannot say.~~ ^{^Who knows what sort of life would result if we had attained to purity?} If I knew so wise a man as could teach me purity I would go to seek him forthwith. "A command over our passions, and over the external senses of the body, and good acts, are declared by the Ved to be indispensable in the mind's approximation to God." Yet ~~I have experienced that~~ the spirit can ^{^for the time} pervade and control every member and function of the body, and transmute what in form ~~may be the lowest and~~ ^{^is} the grossest sensuality into



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~~inspiration~~ ^{^purity} and devotion. The ~~divine liquors~~ ^{^vital}
~~energies~~ [G: ~~vital energies~~ ^{^generative energy}], which, when
we are loose ~~and debauched, defile and~~ make us unclean and
bestial, when we are continent ~~and chaste, inspire and invigorate~~
~~us~~ ^{^invigorates and inspires us} [G: loose ^{^dissipates and}
make^s us unclean ~~and bestial~~] [H: loose['] dissipates and
makes us unclean], when we are continent invigorates
and inspires us. A heroic and chaste man tastes his
vigor sweet in his mouth. Chastity which includes all
temperance and purity is the secret of genius] [E+:
Chastity ~~which includes all temperance and purity~~ is the secret of
genius] [G: ~~A heroic and chaste man tastes his vigor sweet in his mouth.~~
~~Chastity is the secret of genius~~ ^{^Chastity is the flowering of man;}
~~and what are called Genius, Heroism, Holiness, and the~~
~~like, are the~~ but various fruits which succeed it.] Man
flows at once to God ~~as soon as the channel of purity, physical and~~
~~moral~~ ^{^when the channel of purity} is open. By turns my
purity has inspired ^{^me} and my impurity cast me ^{^our}
~~purity inspires and our impurity casts us~~ down. He is a
~~happy man~~ ^{^blessed} who is assured that the animal is dying
out in him day by day, and the ~~spiritual man~~ ^{^divine} being
established.

[Thoreau](#) modified what would be the conclusion of paragraph 11 of the “Higher Laws” chapter:

Perhaps there is ~~no man~~ ^{^no human being} ^{^none} but has
cause for shame on account of the inferior and brutish
nature to which he is allied, though his superior
divine nature be not subjected to it ^{^Perhaps} ^{^I fear}
We are such gods or demigods only as fauns and satyrs,
the divine allied to beasts, the creatures of instinct
and appetite, and, to some extent, our very life is our
disgrace.-

“How happy’s he who hath due place assigned
To his beasts and disforested his mind!

* * *

Can use his horse, goat, wolf, and ev’ry beast,
And is not ass himself to all the rest!
Else man not only is the herd of swine,
But he’s those devils too which did incline
Them to a headlong rage, and made them worse.”

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September 1852: The periodic comet Biela, which had an orbital period of 6 years and 9 months but had appeared split apart into two pieces in January 1846, made another appearance. By this time the two halves had moved apart, one part slightly ahead of the other. (It would go quite to pieces during its whip around the sun in this month and this particular comet would not be again detected, upon its anticipated orbital periods in 1859 and 1866.)

ASTRONOMY

While visiting the Reverend Theodore Hamberg in Hong Kong, Issachar J. Roberts 罗孝全 came across some documents about the Taiping Rebellion that had broken out in Kwangsi and for the first time learned that its leader was a person he had met and instructed, Hung Hsiu Ch'üan 洪秀全. Well aware that, back home, his Baptist missionary board was ready to dismiss him with "his usefulness to the Christian cause ... seriously questioned," this opportunistic missionary began to dream a grand redemption:


I have hitherto taken little or no interest in the matter, but henceforward it will be otherwise.... The chief, having been already taught by the missionary, will, I presume, be accessible and teachable, however high his position in the state, which has not been the case hitherto with other high functionaries in China. In this way ... he will learn the truth fully as it is in Jesus, and then co-operating with the missionary in communicating the same to his people....



I will have millions of stars in my crown!

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 September 1852: Alpheus Marshall Merrifield was instructed to “prepare a plan for a dwelling for the President of Antioch College, not to exceed \$3,000, to be begun when funds will permit.” Horace Mann, Sr. requested that his library be so positioned as to look out over his campus.


Nathaniel Hawthorne was invited to Brunswick, Maine for the 50th anniversary of the foundation of his alma mater, Bowdoin College. Afterward he vacationed at the tourist hotel on the Isle of Shoals.

This was probably the month that Herman Melville visited the Hawthornes in Concord.

Daniel Foster and Deborah “Dora” Swift Foster moved from Concord, Massachusetts to Cambridge, where Dora’s parents lived.

Read Henry Thoreau’s Journal for September 1852 (æf. 35)

 September 1, Wednesday, 1852: Heinrich August Marschner’s *Natur und Kunst, allegorisches Festspiel zur Einweihung des neuen hannoverschen Hoftheaters 1852* to words of Waterford-Perglass was performed for the initial time, in Hanover. It was staged as an intermezzo with Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s *Tasso*.

 \$29,195,965 worth of gold dust had been shipped toward the East from the port of San Francisco so far this year.

Headman WunWunShun of the Nanaimo tribe and declared that the whites were not paying enough for this black “rock that burned,” which was worth not a two-and-a-half-point blanket for each 20 filled barrels but one for every 5 filled barrels. The white men would not themselves be allowed to work the coal outcropping.

Henry Thoreau extrapolated material from the Reverend William Gilpin’s 1808 edition of *OBSERVATIONS ON SEVERAL PARTS OF GREAT BRITAIN, PARTICULARLY THE HIGH-LANDS OF SCOTLAND, RELATIVE CHIEFLY TO PICTURESQUE BEAUTY, MADE IN THE YEAR 1776*, that he would use in WALDEN.

WALDEN: William Gilpin, who is so admirable in all that relates to landscapes, and usually so correct, standing at the head of Loch Fyne, in Scotland, which he describes as “a bay of salt water, sixty or seventy fathoms deep, four miles in breadth,” and about fifty miles long, surrounded by mountains, observes, “If we could have seen it immediately after the diluvian crash, or whatever convulsion of Nature occasioned it, before the waters gushed in, what a horrid chasm it must have appeared!”

PEOPLE OF
WALDEN

WILLIAM GILPIN



Sep. 1. Some tragedy, at least some dwelling on, or even exaggeration of, the tragic side of life is necessary for contrast or relief to the picture. The genius of the writer may be such a colored glass as Gilpin describes, the use of which is “to give a greater depth to the shades; by which the effect is shown with more force.” The whole of life is seen by some through this darker medium, — partakes of the tragic, — and its bright and splendid lights become thus lurid.

4 P.M. — To Walden.

Paddling over it, I see large schools of perch only an inch long, yet easily distinguished by their



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transverse bars. Great is the beauty of a wooded shore seen from the water, for the trees have ample room to expand on that side, and each puts forth its most vigorous bough to fringe and adorn the pond. It is rare that you see so natural an edge to the forest. Hence a pond like this, surrounded by hills wooded down to the edge of the water, is the best place to observe the tints of the autumnal foliage. Moreover, such as stand in or near to the water change earlier than elsewhere.

This is a very warm and serene evening, and the surface of the pond is perfectly smooth except where the skaters dimple it, for at equal intervals they are scattered over its whole extent, and, looking west, they make a fine sparkle in the sun. Here and there is a thistle(?)—down floating on its surface, which the fishes dart at, and dimple the water, — delicate hint of approaching autumn, when the first thistle-down descends on some smooth lake's surface, full of reflections, in the woods, sign to the fishes of the ripening year. These white fairy vessels are annually wafted over the cope of their sky. Bethink thyself, O man, when the first thistle-down is in the air. Buoyantly it floated high in air over hills and fields all day, and now, weighed down with evening dews, perchance, it sinks gently to the surface of the lake. Nothing can stay the thistle-down, but with September winds it unflinchingly sets sail. The irresistible revolution of time. It but comes down upon the sea in its ship, and is still perchance wafted to the shore with its delicate sails. The thistle-down is in the air. Tell me, is thy fruit also there? Dost thou approach maturity? Do gales shake windfalls from thy tree? But I see no dust here as on the river.

Some of the leaves of the rough hawkweed are purple now, especially beneath.

I see a yet smoother, darker water, separated from this abruptly, as if by an invisible cobweb resting on the surface. I view it from Heywood's Peak. How rich and autumnal the haze which blues the distant hills and fills the valleys. The lakes look better in this haze, which confines our view more to their reflected heavens and makes the shore-line more indistinct. Viewed from the hilltop, it reflects the color of the sky. Some have referred the vivid greenness next the shores to the reflection of the verdure, but it is equally green there against the railroad sand-bank and in the spring before the leaves are expanded. Beyond the deep reflecting surface, near the shore, where the bottom is seen, it is a vivid green. I see two or three small maples already scarlet, across the pond, beneath where the white stems of three birches diverge, at the point of a promontory next the water, a distinct scarlet tint a quarter of a mile off. Ah, many a tale their color tells of Indian times — and autumn wells [?] — primeval dells. The beautifully varied shores of Walden, — the western indented with deep bays, the bold northern shore, the gracefully sweeping curve of the eastern, and above all the beautifully scalloped southern shore, where successive capes overlap each other and suggest unexplored coves between. Its shore is just irregular enough not to be monotonous. From this peak I can see a fish leap in almost any part of the pond, for not a pickerel or shiner picks an insect from this smooth surface but it manifestly disturbs the equilibrium of the lake. It is wonderful with what elaborateness this simple fact is advertised. This piscine murder will out, and from my distant perch I distinguish the circling undulations when they are now half a dozen rods in diameter. Methinks I distinguish Fair Haven Pond from this point, elevated by a mirage in its seething valley, like a coin in a basin. [At this point Thoreau put a "?" in the margin.] They cannot fatally injure Walden with an axe, for they have done their worst and failed. We see things in the reflection which we do not see in the substance. In the reflected woods of Pine Hill there is a vista through which I see the sky, but I am indebted to the water for this advantage, for from this point the actual wood affords no such vista.

Bidens connata (?) not quite out. I see the *Hieracium venosum* still, but, slightly veined. Have I not made another species of this variety? *Aster undulatus* (?), like a many-flowered *amplexicaulis*, with leaves narrowed below, a few days. *Amphicarpæa monoica*, like the ground-nut, but ternate, out of July or August. Pods just forming. *Desmodium rotundifolium* just going out of bloom. Last two, side of Heywood's Peak.

Gilpin, who is usually so correct, standing at the head of Loch Fyne in Scotland, which he describes as "a bay of salt water, sixty or seventy fathoms deep, four miles in breadth," and about fifty miles long, surrounded by mountains, observes: "If we could have seen it immediately, after the diluvian crash, or whatever convulsion of nature occasioned it, before the waters gushed in, what a horrid chasm must it have appeared!

"So high as heaved the tumid hills, so low
Down sunk a hollow bottom, broad, and deep,
Capacious bed of waters——."

But if we apply these proportions to Walden, which, as we have seen, appears already in a *transverse* section like a shallow plate, it will appear four times as shallow. So much for the increased horrors of the emptied chasm of Loch Fyne. No doubt many a smiling valley with its extended fields of corn occupies exactly such a “horrid chasm,” from which the waters have receded, though it requires the insight of the geologist to convince the unsuspecting inhabitants of the fact. Most ponds, being emptied, would leave a meadow no more hollow than we frequently see. I have seen many a village situated in the midst of a plain which the geologist has at length affirmed must have been levelled by water, where the observing eye might still detect the shores of a lake in the horizon, and no subsequent elevation of the plain was necessary to conceal the fact.

Thus it is only by emphasis and exaggeration that real effects are described. What [Gilpin](#) says in other place is perfectly applicable to this case; though he says that that which he is about to disclose is so bold a truth, “that it ought only, perhaps, to be opened to the initiated.” “In the exhibition of distant mountains on paper, or canvas,” says he, “unless you make them exceed their *real* or *proportional* size, they have no effect. It is inconceivable how objects lessen by distance. Examine any distance, closed by mountains, in a camera, and you will easily see what a poor, diminutive appearance the mountains make. By the power of perspective they are lessened to nothing. Should you represent them in your landscape in so (diminutive a. form, all dignity, and grandeur of idea would be lost.”



September 2, Thursday, [1852](#): The [Times](#) of London professed itself pleased, to see the Duke of Wellington’s reputation and experience added to the Cabinet — but truth be told, there were other British newspapers such as [The Globe](#) that would disagree, pointing out that the man was yet a Tory, and [The Morning Advertiser](#), that would point out that he was an old man and a reactionary, and [The Weekly Dispatch](#), that would praise him as a soldier but condemn him as a politician.

[Sir Charles Lyell](#)’s 3d visit to [Canada](#) included a visit to Joggins with Dawson and he would discover there, within the trunks of standing trees, tetrapod fossils.



Sept. 2. P.M. — To Walden.

The seringo, [[Savannah Sparrow](#) [Passerculus sandwichensis](#) (*passerina* or seringo or seringo-bird)] too, has long been silent like other birds. The red prinon berries ripe in sunny places. Rose hips begin to be handsome. Small flocks of pigeons [[American Passenger Pigeon](#) [Ectopistes migratorius](#) ([Pigeon, Wild](#))] are seen these days. Distinguished from doves by their sharper wings and bodies. August has been a month of berries and melons, small fruits. First in the descent from summer’s culminating-point. There is a stillness in nature for want of singing birds, commenced a month or more ago; only the crickets’ louder creak to supply their place. I have not heard a bullfrog this long time. The small cornet, or bunch-berry, is in bloom now (!) near the pond. What great tuft-like masses the cow-wheat makes now in sprout-lands!

As I look over the pond now from the eastern shore, I am obliged to employ both my hands to defend my eyes against the reflected as well as the true sun, for they appear equally bright; and between my hands I look over the smooth and glassy surface of the lake. The skaters make the finest imaginable sparkle. Otherwise it is literally as smooth as glass, except where a fish leaps into the air or a swallow [clips](#) beneath its surface. Sometimes a fish describes an arc of three or four feet in the air, and there is a bright flash where it emerges and another where it strikes the water. A slight haze at this season makes the shore-line so much the more indistinct. Looking across the pond from the Peak toward Fair Haven, which I seem to see, all the earth beyond appears insulated and floated, by this small sheet of water, the heavens being reflected, as it were beneath it, so that it looks thin.

The scenery of this small pond is humble though very beautiful, and does not approach to grandeur, not, can it much concern one who has not long frequented it, or lived by its shore.

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

The Hudson Bay Company’s schooner *Cadboro* arrived at Nanaimo, British Columbia with coal miners and a blacksmith.

The 462-ton barque *Eglinton* was on its 1st voyage to Western Australia from London with a much-awaited cargo for the merchants of the Swan River Colony (later to become Perth), and specie and government supplies for the convict establishment, when on this night as it approached landfall, it struck a series of reefs off the coast of Wanneroo. Two lives were lost but a dog swept from the deck by a wave managed to make its way alive to the shore and, lucky dog, get itself adopted by a family in Fremantle (many goods would be salvaged from the wreck on the reef at the time, including £15,000 in coinage; more artifacts such as plows and iron bars for the manufacture of nails would be recovered when the hull would be re-identified in 1971).

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

The 14th anniversary of Frederick Douglass’s freedom, which we may well elect to celebrate in lieu of **an unknown slave birthday**.



“It has been a source of great annoyance to me, never to have a birthday.”



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

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

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

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



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September 4, Saturday, [1852](#): The Hudson Bay Company's *Recovery* arrived at Nanaimo from Victoria, British Columbia.

The [Chambers' Edinburgh Journal](#) carried a synopsis of the introduction to [Harriet Beecher Stowe's UNCLE TOM'S CABIN](#):

READ THE FULL TEXT

[Edmund James Banfield](#), the "beachcomber of Dunk Island," was born in Liverpool, England. He would be taken by his family to [Australia](#) during the years of gold fever.

[William MacGillivray](#) had been working on a natural history of Deeside and Braemar in Scotland which he would not himself be able to get published, and in the process had fallen ill (also, his wife Marion Askill MacGillivray, mother of the couple's 13 children, had recently succumbed). On this day he died at the age of 56 in Aberdeen. The body would be placed in Edinburgh's New Calton cemetery.

Testament of Dr William MacGillivray
At Aberdeen the Thirteenth day of December, in the Year one thousand Eight hundred and fifty two.
In presence of Archibald Davidson Esquire Advocate, Commissary of the Commissariat of Aberdeen Compeared John Clark Advocate in Aberdeen as procurator, and gave in the Testament underwritten, of the after designed now deceased Doctor William MacGillivray, and craved that the Same might (along with the Inventory of the said deceased's personal Estate) be insert and registered in the Commissary Court Books of Aberdeen, in terms of the Acts of Parliament 44 Geo[rge] III C[h]ap[ter] 98, and 48 Geo: III Cap: 149. Which request the Commissary foresaid finding reasonable, ordained the same to be done accordingly, and of which Testament the tenor follows, vi[delicet]z:- I William MacGillivray Doctor of Laws, Professor of Natural and Civil History in Marischal College, Aberdeen, being desirous to provide for the Management and disposal of my personal Estate after my death, do hereby make, Constitute and Appoint Mrs Marion MacCaskill or MacGillivray, my spouse, William Jamieson Writer in Airdrie, my son in law, Miss Isabella MacGillivray my eldest daughter, Alexander Thomson Esquire of Banchory, the Reverend David MacTaggart Minister of Greyfriars Parish in Aberdeen and John Clark Advocate in Aberdeen and the acceptors or acceptor, survivors or survivor of them to be my sole Executors and Administrators, with full power to them to intromit with my whole moveable Estate and Executry of every description, to give up Inventories thereof to confirm the same, and Generally to do everything in the premises competent to Executors. And I do hereby direct and appoint my said Executors after making payment of my whole just and lawful debts and death bed and funeral expenses and the necessary expenses Annexed with my Executry affairs, to lend out or invest, on sufficient securities, the residue of my said Estate and to pay the whole free yearly interest and profits arising form the same to my said spouse for the support and maintenance of herself and of such of our Children as may necessarily remain in family with her, and that during all the days of her life, and after her decease, to distribute and divide my said Estate between and



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among all my Children equally, share and share alike. But declaring that the shares of such of my said Children as may not then have attained majority and, if females, may be unmarried, shall not be eligible by them until their marriage or majority, whichever of these events shall first happen, until which time my said Executors shall apply the interest of their respective shares towards their support and education. But declaring that it shall be lawful to, and in the power of my said Executors if they shall see cause, to advance, from time to time, for the maintenance education or advancement in life of any of my said children in minority, out of their respective provisions, such sums as they may judge proper for these purposes, and that before the said provisions became eligible. Declaring that the provisions to my said children shall not be held to have rested in them until after the death both of me and my said spouse. Further declaring that if any of my said Children shall repudiate this Settlement and claim their legal provisions in place of the provisions hereby made for them or shall by any means prevent this Settlement from taking effect in whole or in part, then such of my said Children as shall so act, shall thereby forfeit all right to any share or shares of that part of my Executry which I may freely dispose of by law and shall have right only to their respective legal provisions, exclusive of those portions which I am by law entitled to dispose of, which shall in that event accresce and belong equally to my other Children who shall abide by these presents and accept of the provisions herein contained. And it is hereby declared that my said Executors (a majority of whom accepting and acting at the time shall be a quorum) shall not be liable for omissions, errors or neglect of management nor singuli in solidum but each for himself or herself and his or her actual intromissions only. Reserving always to myself my own liferent of the premises with full power to me to alter, innovate or revoke these presents I Whole or in part at any time in my life or even on deathbed But declaring that in so far as these presents shall not be altered or revoked the same shall be valid and effectual though found lying in my own custody or in the custody of any other person for my behoof, undelivered at the time of my death. And I Consent to the Registration hereof in the Books of Council and Session or other Competent therein to remain for preservation and for that purpose Constitute My Procurators &c

WRITTEN IN MARGIN:
^majority or if
females until their

In Witness Whereof I have subscribed these presents (written on this and the two preceding pages by John Clark Advocate in Aberdeen above mentioned) At Aberdeen the fifteenth day of December Eighteen hundred and fifty one before these Witnesses James Farquharson Student of Divinity in Aberdeen and Thomas Milne Clerk to the said John Clark, Witness also to my subscription of the marginal note, written as the body.

(signed) W. MacGillivray.

James Farquharson Witness.

Thomas Milne Witness.

— Enacted on this and the eight preceding pages by me Commissary Clerk of Aberdeenshire C. Warrack

Written & Collated by Charles Warrack



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR SEPTEMBER 4TH]



September 5, Sunday, 1852: Early in the morning the inmates of the [lazaretto at Tracadie](#) on the Acadian peninsula of New Brunswick, [Canada](#) under the care of [Dr. Charles-Marie LaBillois](#), sealed off from the world by a newly erected 12-foot fence and prevented from access to family visitors and treated as if their leprosy were a criminal offense or similar to syphilis, reacted by razing and burning this facility to the ground. During the following winter the authorities would hold the 38 inmates in a structure that previously had been a jail and 8 of them would die, presumably of exposure and lack of care.



Sept. 5. P.M. —To Cliffs.



The petals of the purple gerardia strew the brooks. The oval spikes of somewhat pear-shaped berries of the arum perhaps vermilion-color now; its scapes bent to the ground. These by their color must have caught an Indian's eye. The brooks are full of red rootlets of the alder, etc. The country begins to have a dry and *flavid* look, — corn-fields, grass-fields, etc., — and when winds blow, a slight rustling is heard. I observed minute red maples, on the shore near water, only an inch high, completely turned red. I have noticed the thistle-down now for some days in the air, not yet the milkweed, though some flowers of the thistle are still seen. Some galls on the oak an inch in diameter like Castile soap balls quite handsome.



Some smaller and redder, with watered zones. Interesting kind of parasitic fruits, not so handsome, perchance, as the pincushion galls of the spring. What is that bidens now just blossomed, rough-stemmed or bristly, with undivided, lanceolate, serrate, and strongly connate leaves, short but conspicuous rays, achenia four-awned and downwardly barbed? [*B. cernua*]




September 6, Monday, 1852: At Nanaimo, British Columbia, the trade goods of the Hudson Bay Company's schooner *Cadboro* were transferred to the *Recovery*.

[Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *DETSTVO* (CHILDHOOD) appeared in the Saint Petersburg literary journal [Sovremennik](#), signed with the initials "L.N."



Sept. 6. Monday. To Peterboro. Railroad to Mason Village.

Observed from cars at 7:30 A.M. the dew, or fog rather, on the fine grass in meadows, — a dirty white, which, one of these mornings, will be frozen to a white frost. A woman who wished to go to Nashua was left behind at Groton Junction, — to which she said, "Why. I was *he-ar*." Girls picking hops in Townsend. Some fields are completely yellow — one mass of yellow — from the solidago. It is the prevailing flower the traveller sees. Walked from Mason Village over the mountain-tops to Peterboro. Saw, sailing over Mason Village about 10 A.M., a white-headed and *white-tailed* eagle [**Bald Eagle**  *Haliaeetus leucocephalus* (~~White-headed Eagle~~)] with black wings, — a grand sight. The "doubly compound racemed panicles" of the spikenard berries, varnish-colored berries,



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or color of varnished mahogany. Met a crazy man, probably being carried to a hospital, who must take us both by the hand and tell us how the spirit of God had descended on him and given him all the world, and he was going to make every man a present of half a million, etc., etc. High blackberries by the roadside abundant still, the long, sweet, mulberry-shaped ones, mostly confined to the road, and very grateful to the walker. A stone by the roadside in Temple, whitewashed, with an inscription in black, evincing the vulgarity of the Yankees, "Here Jesse Spofford was killed," etc., etc., not telling how. Thus we record only the trivial, not the important event, as the advent of a thought. Who cares whether Jesse Spofford was killed or not, if he does not know whether he was worthy to live?

The tavern-keeper at Temple said the summit just south of the Peterboro road, covered with wood, was the highest (probably a mistake), — 980 feet above Temple Common, which is itself very high. Went across lots from here toward this. When part way up, or on a lower part of the ridge, discovered it was not the highest, and turned northward across the road to what is apparently the highest, first having looked south to Kidder's mountain, between New Ipswich and Temple and further west and quite near to Boundary Mountain between Sharon and Temple. Already we had had experience of a mountain-side covered with bare rocks, as if successive thunder [*sic*] spouts had burst over it, and bleached timber lying across the rocks, the woodbine red as blood about a tall stump, and the strong, sweet, bracing scent of ferns between the rocks, the raspberry bushes still retaining a few berries. They usually tell you how many mountain-houses you can see from a mountain, but they are interesting to me in proportion to the number you cannot see. We went down the west side of this first mountain, from whose summit we could not see west on account of another ridge; descended far, and across the road, and up the southernmost of what I have called the Peterboro Hills. The raw edge of a forest of canoe birches on the side of this hill was remarkable on account of the wonderful contrast of the white stems with the green leaves; the former glaringly white, as if whitewashed and varnished or polished. You now hear that grating, creaking flight of the grasshopper. There is something in the aspect of the evergreens, the dwarfed forests and the bare rocks of mountain-tops, and the scent of the ferns, stern yet sweet to man. Hazy. Monadnock would probably look better toward evening. It was now 2 or 3 P.M. In the woods near the top, the [*Viburnum lantanoides*](#), [hobble-bush](#), American wayfaring-tree, in fruit, mostly large and red, but the ripe dark blue or black like the *V. nudum*, — what I have formerly falsely called moose-berry. Probably it does not grow in Concord. Went, still across lots, to Peterboro village, which we could not see from the mountain. But first we had seen the Lyndeboro Mountain, north of these two, — partly in Greenfield, — and further Crooked Mountain, and in the northeast Uncannunuc. Descended where, as usual, the forest had been burned formerly, — tall bleached masts still standing, making a very wild and agreeably [*sic*] scenery, — keeping on a westward spur or side, that we might see north and south. Saw the pond on the "embenchement" between the two mountains. Some sheep ran from us in great fear. Others put their heads down and together, and stood *perfectly still*, resembling rocks, so that I did not notice them at first. Did they not do it for concealment? After we got down, the prevailing trees were hemlock, spruce, black and yellow birch, and beech, the ground very cleanly and smoothly carpeted with the old leaves of the last two especially, without weeds. Saw some ground-hemlock with some fruit still. Had seen on the hill *Polygonum cilinode*, running polygonum, but no flower, — alias fringe-jointed false-buckwheat. A man in Peterboro told me that his father told him that Monadnock used to be covered with forest, that fires ran through it and killed the turf; then the trees were blown down, and their roots turned up and formed a dense and impenetrable thicket in which the wolves abounded. They came down at night, killed sheep, etc., and returned to their dens, whither they could not be pursued, before morning; till finally they set fire to this thicket, and it made the greatest fire they had ever had in the county, and drove out all the wolves, which have not troubled them since. He himself had seen one wolf killed there when he was a boy. They kill now raccoons, hedgehogs, and wildcats there. I thought that I did not see so great a proportion of forest from their hilltops as about Concord, to which they agreed. I should say their hills were uncommonly rocky, — more stone than soil.



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September 7, Tuesday, 1852: Whites attack the Modoc capital at Natural Bridge, California, killing the chief and 40 others.

At Nanaimo, British Columbia, the local natives commenced working the exposed coal face and loading coal aboard the Hudson Bay Company's schooner *Cadboro*. The white people were paying for the digging and transporting of this black mineral at the rate of a two-and-a-half-point blanket for each 20 filled barrels. The miners disembarked from the Hudson Bay Company's *Recovery*.

Joseph Eveleth and Seba Barnes Eveleth's red house stood near Thorndike Pond at the junction of Mountain Road with Dublin Road below Mount Monadnock:



Sept. 7. Tuesday. Went, across lots still, to Monadnock, the base some half-dozen miles in a straight line from Peterboro, — six or seven miles. (It had been eleven miles (*by road*) from Mason Village to Peterboro.) My clothes sprinkled with ambrosia pollen. Saw near the mountain a field of turnips whose leaves, all but the midribs, were eaten up by grasshoppers and looked white over the field, and sometimes the turnips were eaten also. Joe Eaveley's, the house nearest the top, that we saw under the east side, a small red house a little way up. The summit hardly more than a mile distant in a straight line, but about two miles as they go. Bunch-berries everywhere now. *Acer Pennsylvanicum*, striped maple or moosewood or striped dogwood, but no keys to be seen, — a very large-leaved, three-lobed maple with a handsome striped bark. This, I believe, the Indians smoke. Also *Acer spicatum*, mountain maple, with upright racemes in fruit. Between the rocks on the summit, an abundance of large and fresh blueberries still, apparently *Vaccinium Pennsylvanicum*, very large, fresh and cooling to eat, supplying the place of water. They said they did not get ripe so early as below, but at any rate they last much longer; both, perhaps, because of the greater coolness of the atmosphere. Though this vegetation was very humble, yet it was very productive of fruit. In one little hollow between the rocks grew blueberries, choke-berries, bunch-berries, red cherries, wild currants (*Ribes prostratum*, with the berry the odor of skunk-cabbage, but a not quite disagreeable wild flavor), a few raspberries still, holly berries, mountain cranberries (*Vaccinium Vitis-Idæa*), all close together. The little soil on the summit between the rocks was covered with the *Potentilla tridentata*, now out of bloom, the prevailing plant at the extreme summit. Mountain-ash berries also.




Descending toward Troy, a little after 1 P.M., plucked the *Trillium erythrocarpum* with the large red berry, painted trillium. The *Aster acuminatus*, with its leaves in a whorl, white; methinks we may have it. When we had got down, we could see that the mountain had spurs or buttresses on every side, by whose ridge you might ascend. It is an interesting feature in a mountain. I have noticed that they will send out these buttresses every way from their centre.

Were on the top of the mountain at 1 P.M. The cars left Troy, four or five miles off, at three. We reached the depot, by running at last, at the same instant the cars did, and reached Concord at a quarter after five, *i.e.* four hours from the time we were picking blueberries on the mountain, with the plants of the mountain fresh in my hat.

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 September 8, Wednesday, 1852: Loreley, an unfinished opera by Felix Mendelssohn to words of Geibel, was performed for the initial time, in Birmingham.

At Nanaimo, British Columbia, the Hudson Bay Company's schooner *Cadboro* was fully loaded with 45 tons of coal. The Hudson Bay Company miners commenced boring 10 yards beyond the 1st outcropping of the 5-foot seam of coal. The blacksmith went to work at the forge. They discovered a salt-water spring. A packet arrived from Honolulu, Captain Webster.


During a visit to the Boston area, Spencer Fullerton Baird met Waldo Emerson (an author some of whose essays he had perused), and was taken out to Concord:

Saw R.W. Emerson and with him to Henry Thoreau's. Visited battleground at Concord. Then to Lexington where dined. Home by Waltham, Weston, and Wayland.

Baird's biographer confidently asserts that there are no further references to Henry Thoreau to be found in this man's notes. One would like to know how he reacted to Thoreau's sending him a copy of WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS in 1855 — whether he ever perused the book — and if so what he thought.



*Sept. 8. Grapes ripe on the Assabet for some days. *Gentiana saponaria* out. Carrion-flower berries ripe for some days. *Polygala verticillata* still, on left side of road beyond Lee place. I put it with the other polygalas in July. Do I perceive the shadows lengthen already?*

 September 9, Thursday, 1852: At Scheveningen, a spa near The Hague, Clara Schumann suffered a miscarriage.

At Nanaimo, British Columbia, the Hudson Bay Company's schooner *Cadboro* got underway with its 45 tons of coal, but was stopped at the mouth of the harbor as there was no wind. The Hudson Bay Company miners reached coal at their new digging, at a depth of 7 feet. They began to evaporate salt from the salt-water spring that they had discovered on the previous day, and were able to produce a quart of salt from 7 quarts of the spring's water.

Caesar Robbins had lived across from Concord's old Manse, in the Great Meadow and the Great Fields:



*Sept. 9. There are enough who will flatter me with sweet words, and anon use bitter ones to balance them, but they are not my friends. Simple sincerity and truth are rare indeed. One acquaintance criticises me to my face, expecting every moment that I will become his friend to pay for it. I hear my acquaintance thinking his criticism aloud. We love to talk with those who can make a good guess at us, not with those who talk to us as if we were somebody else all the while. Our neighbors invite us to be amiable toward their vices. How simple is the law of love! One who loves us acts accordingly, and anon we come together and succeed together without let or hindrance. Yesterday and to-day have felt about as hot as any weather this year. The potato-balls lie ripe in the fields. The groundsel down is in the air. The last day of August I saw a sharp-nosed green grasshopper. The goldenrods resound with the hum of bees and other insects. Methinks the little leaves now, springing, which I have called mullein, must be fragrant everlasting (?). I believe that I occasionally hear a hylodes within a day or two. In front of Caesar's, the *Crotalaria sagittalis*, rattle-pod, still in bloom, though the seeds are ripe; probably began in July. Also by Caesar's well,*

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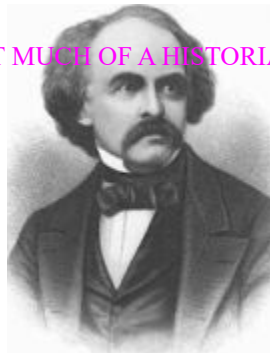
Liatris scariosa, handsome rose-purple, with the aspect of a Canada thistle at a distance, or a single vernonia. Referred to August. Ah! the beauty of the liatris bud just bursting into bloom, the rich fiery rose-purple, like that of the sun at his rising. Some call it button snakeroot. Those *crotalaria pods* would make pretty playthings for children.

September 10, Friday, 1852: Mrs. [Sophia Peabody Hawthorne](#) spent the day in reading the BIOGRAPHY OF GENERAL PIERCE by her husband,

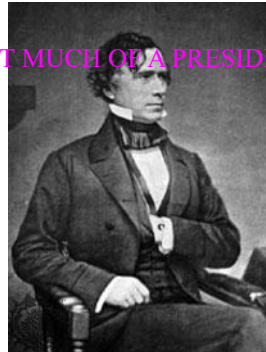


James Ticknor of [Ticknor, Reed, and Fields](#) having sent a dozen copies of the book hot off his press, which she received at breakfast time.

NOT MUCH OF A HISTORIAN



NOT MUCH OF A PRESIDENT



Early during the morning of [July 19th, 1852](#) there had been a dreadful event in a residential neighborhood on the northern extremity of 7th Street near the City Spring in Richmond, Virginia: Jane Williams had attacked 27-year-old Joseph Pendleton Winston of the firm of Nance and Wilson, 29-year-old Mrs. Virginia Bell Pankey Winston, and their 9-month-old Virginia Bell Winston with a kindling hatchet as they slept in their beds and cradle in their home. Jane Williams was as “a yellow woman of ordinary size, apparently 35 or 40 years of age, hair nearly strait, and with features indicative of great firmness” despite somehow having lost one of her eyes. The [slave](#) father John Williams had been being contracted out to work on the docks under John Enders during the day, but had been residing in the Winston home with his [slave](#) wife and their small [slave](#) child. The white family had recently threatened to sell the [slave](#) wife Jane without also selling her child; this had apparently planted “the germ of rebellion” in their minds. She was [hanged](#) on this day before a crowd of some 6,000 citizens, on a gallows erected a short distance southeast of the Poor House on the side of the hill

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near the powder magazine, appropriate to the purpose of a graveyard for blacks. Her pastor the [Reverend Robert Ryland of the local African Baptist Church](#) explained to the assembled multitude that in accordance with the promises of the gospel he needed to administer to the condemned person the consolation of religion — but had Jane 3 lives she would need to be hanged 3 times to make adequate payment for such a wicked and bloody deed as she had committed. He offered up a fervent prayer to Deity on her behalf and then, Jane’s “drop” being but 20 inches, she for some time kicked and strangled. The memorial sermon of the Reverend Ryland at the African Baptist Church would include the information that Jane had explained that on the morning of her act the devil had taken possession of her.

At Nanaimo, British Columbia, the Hudson Bay Company’s *Recovery* began to take on [coal](#).



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR SEPTEMBER 10TH]



September 11, Saturday, [1852](#): The [Chinese Christian Army](#) besieged Changsha, the capital of Hunan province.



As part of the Argentine civil wars, the [Battle of Caseros on February 3d](#), the government of [Justo José de Urquiza](#) had defeated the forces of Juan Manuel de Rosas. [Early during this morning](#) General José Miguel Galán’s Correntinas troops and most of the military forces of the city of Buenos Aires grouped in its Plaza de Mayo, conducted by general José María Pirán, while lawyer Miguel Esteves Saguí sounded the bell in the Cabildo to alert the citizens. The coup was tense but not particularly violent. Militia formations arrested General Benjamín Virasoro and General Manuel Urdinarrain at their homes. At close to noon, while the troops were being paid an extra sum plus wages in advance, the House of Representatives that had been dismissed by Governor Justo José de Urquiza reconstituted itself and elected General Manuel Pinto as temporary Governor. General José Miguel Galán, who had only a few soldiers in Entre Ríos, withdrew to Santos Lugares and toward the north of the province and alerted Governor Justo José de Urquiza, who was getting ready to preside over the beginning sessions of the Constituent Congress.

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Sept. 11. Genius is like the snapping-turtle born with a great developed bead. They say our brain at birth is one sixth the weight of the body.

Cranberries are being raked for fear of frosts. These fall rains are a peculiarity of the season. How much fresher some flowers look in rainy weather! When I thought they were about done, they appear to revive, and moreover their beauty is enhanced, as if by the contrast of the louring atmosphere with their bright colors. Such are the purple gerardia and the *Bidens cernua*. The purple gerardia and blue-curls are interesting for their petals strewn about, beaten down by the rain. Many a brook I look into is strewn with the purple petals of the gerardia, whose stalk is not obvious in the bank. Again the *Potentilla Canadensis* var. *pumila*, and dandelions occasionally.



September 12, Sunday, [1852](#): Edmund Frederick Ducane wrote back to England from Guildford, Australia, giving the news of the wreck of the *Eglinton* and the recovery of £15,000. He related that he had been appointed a Visiting Magistrate of Convict Stations. He wrote of his investments in the Swan River Colony.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR SEPTEMBER 12TH]



September 13, Monday, [1852](#): At Nanaimo, British Columbia, the Hudson Bay Company's *Recovery* departed with its cargo of [coal](#). The Honolulu packet became completely loaded with 35 tons of coal. The original 5-foot seam of coal had by this point been excavated down to well below high-water mark.

Modest Musorgsky was enrolled in the Company of the Guards Sub-Ensigns, otherwise known as the Cadet School.

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote a remark in his journal, "Nature never lost a day, nor a moment," that [Dr. Alfred I. Tauber](#) would consider relevant to a proper appreciation of time and eternity.

TIME AND ETERNITY



To Sydney Rosen this journal entry sounds, as much as anything could possibly sound, like the *wu-wei* that predates Chuang-tzu and Lao-tzu, *wu-wei* meaning literally "to do nothing," "to remain passive," "non-interference," "quietism," "the doctrine of inaction." This slogan quotes without quoting an ancient 7-word aphorism *Wu wei wu suo bu wei ye* that means "As long as you resolutely do nothing, there's literally nothing that can't be done":



Sept. 13. Yesterday it rained all day, with considerable wind, which has strewn the ground with apples and peaches, and, all the country over, people are busy picking up the windfalls. More leaves also have fallen. Rain has as much to do with it as wind. Rode round through Lincoln and a part of Weston and Wayland. The barberries, now red and reddening, begin to show. Asters, various shades of blue, and especially the smaller kinds of *dense-flowering white ones*, are more thin ever by the roadsides. The great bidens in the sun in brooks affects me as the rose of the fall, the most *flavid* product of the water and the sun. They are low suns in the brook. The golden glow of autumn concentrated, more golden than the sun. How surely this yellow comes out along the brooks when you have applied the chemical test of autumn air to it! It yellows along the brook. The earth wears different colors or liveries at different seasons. If I come by at this season, a golden blaze will salute me here from a thousand suns.

How earnestly and rapidly each creature, each flower, is fulfilling its part while its day lasts!

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Nature never lost a day, nor a moment. As the planet in its orbit and around its axis, so do the seasons, so does time, revolve, with a rapidity inconceivable. In the moment, in the æon, well employed, time ever advances with this rapidity. To an idler the man employed is terribly rapid. He that is not behind his time is swift. The immortals are swift. Clear the track! The plant that waited a whole year, and then blossomed the instant it was ready and the earth was ready for it, without the conception of delay, was rapid. To the conscience of the idle man, the stillness of a placid September day sounds like the din and whirl of a factory. Only employment can still this din in the air.



In in my ride I experienced the pleasure of coming into a landscape where there was more distance and a bluish tinge in the horizon. I am not contented long with such narrow valleys that all is greenness in them. I wish to see the earth translated, the green passing into blue. How this heaven intervenes and tinges our more distant prospects! The farther off the mountain which is the goal of our enterprise, the more of heaven's tint it wears. This is the chief value of a distance in landscapes I must walk more with free senses. It is as bad to *study* stars and clouds as flowers and stones. I must let my senses wander as my thoughts, my eyes see without looking. Carlyle said that how to observe was to look, but I say that it is rather to see, and the more you look the less you will observe. I have the habit of attention to such excess that my senses get no rest, but suffer from a constant strain. Be not preoccupied with looking. Go not to the object; let it come to you. When I have found myself ever looking down and confining my gaze to the flowers, I have thought it might be well to get into the habit of observing the clouds as a corrective; but no! that study would be just as bad. What I need is not to look at all, but a true sauntering of the eye.



September 14, Tuesday, 1852: [Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington](#) died at Walmer Castle in Deal at the age of 83.

Due perhaps to the poor understanding that physicians had of the phenomenon known as the coma, it occasionally was happening during the 19th Century that a newspaper report would appear, that a corpse had miraculously revived during a funeral service. In consequence, many 19th-Century Americans and Europeans suffered from a somewhat justified fear of being buried alive. There actually arose a Society for the Prevention of People Being Buried Alive, and the body of a deceased person might be left to cure for days or weeks before the actual interment in the ground. With the death the [Duke of Wellington](#), this macabre postponement ritual reached an extreme. Two months would be allowed to elapse after the Duke's death, before his body would be interred.

At Nanaimo, British Columbia, new sources of [coal](#) were explored, and the local natives began to work at these locations. It was estimated that the native laborers might well be able to recover at least 700 tons of the local mineral for the white people, and that at the insignificant cost of a few trade blankets!

The doctrine of plural wives that had been officially promulgated by [Brigham Young](#) and by [Orson Pratt](#), one of the Twelve Apostles, in a special conference of the elders of the church at the [Salt Lake Tabernacle](#) appeared in an extra edition of the [Deseret News](#): "Minutes of conference: a special conference of the elders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints assembled in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, August 28th, 1852, 10 o'clock, a.m., pursuant to public notice."²⁹



Sept. 14. This morning the first frost. Yet the 10th was one of the warmest days in the year. Methinks it is the *Amaranthus hypochondriacus*, prince's-feather, with "bright red-purple flowers" and sanguine stem, on Emerson's muck-heap in the Turnpike, and the *Polygonum orientale*,

29. It requires no pointing out, I suppose, that these progressive religious men were able to sustain a rather old-fashioned attitude in regard to plural husbands.

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prince's-feather, in E. Hosmer's grounds. Blue vervain still. The grass is very green fter the rains, like a second spring, and, in my ride yesterday, the under sides of the willows, etc., in the wind, the leaves of the fall growth perhaps, reminded me of June. Is not the colder and frosty weather thus introduced by a rain? *i.e.* it clears up cold.



September 15, Wednesday (and September 18, Saturday), 1852: Henry Thoreau made a blueprint for a "pistern"³⁰ lead pipe manufacturing machine for George Loring, of the Loring family that made lead pipe in Concord.



http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_surveys/84/84-a.jpg

His opposition to the Compromise of 1850 having cost him the support of the Whig party, Representative Horace Mann, Sr. accepted nomination as the Free Soil Party's candidate for governor of Massachusetts. The deal was, he was simultaneously appointed by the "Christian Connexion" as the president of Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio (he would lose the gubernatorial election and accept the fall-back position prepared in advance for him, presidency of Antioch College).



Sarah Alice Nott died in Alabama at the age of 3 (or, in the depiction on the tombstone along with 3 siblings who also died within the week, as one of 4 cherubs), in the yellow fever epidemic of this year.



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

30. I don't know what a "pistern" is and, anyway, my eyesight makes out the inscription on Thoreau's drawing as "piston" rather than "pistern." My imagination is that this may have been part of an apparatus that took in a flat strip of lead and by the application of brute extrusion force produced a pipe shape, by bending the left edge and the right edge of this strip upward and around — until the two edges met at the top and could be joined with pressure or a solder.

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September 16, Thursday, [1852](#): On this day in [Boston](#), [Lewis Hayden](#) took into his home a William and Mary Brown and children who were escaping from slavery. He paid passage fees to [Canada](#) for 2 other such persons.



[Sir Charles Lyell](#)'s 3d visit to [Canada](#) was complete and he set off for [Boston](#) (he would visit friends there on September 17th, to deliver the last of his [Lowell Institute](#) lectures at the [Odeon Hall](#)).




Sept. 16: 8 A.M. – To Fair Haven Pond.

Since the rains and the sun, great fungi, six inches in diameter, stand in the woods, warped upward on their edges, showing their gills, so as to hold half a gill of water.


The two-leaved convallaria berries are now decidedly red. The sweet-fern has a russet look. The jay screams; the goldfinch twitters; the barberries are red. I heard a warbling vireo in the village, which I have not heard for long, and the common *che-wink* note in the woods. Some birds, like some flowers, begin to sing again in the fall. The corn is topped.

The rippled blue surface of Fair Haven from the Cliffs, with its smooth white border where weeds preserve the surface smooth, a placid silver-plated rim. The pond is like the sky with a border of whitish clouds in the horizon. Yesterday it rained all day.

What makes this such a day for hawks?  There are eight or ten in sight from the Cliffs, large and small, one or more with a white rump. I detected the transit of the first by his shadow on the rock, and I look toward the sun for him. Though he is made light beneath to conceal him, his shadow betrays him. A hawk must get out of the wood, must get above it, where he can sail. It is narrow dodging for him amid the boughs. He cannot be a hawk there, but only perch gloomily. Now I see a large one – perchance an eagle, I say to myself! – down in the valley, circling and circling, higher and wider. This way he comes. How beautiful does he repose on the air, in the moment when he is directly over you, and you see the form and texture of his wings! How light he must make himself, how much earthy heaviness expel, before he can thus soar and sail! He carries no useless clogs there with him. They are out by families; while one is circling this way, another circles that. Kites without strings. Where is the boy that flies them? Are not the hawks most observed at this season?

Before this, probably no leaves have been affected by frost. The puffballs (?), five to eight fingered, now. Tobacco-pipe still, and the water parsnip. Discovered an excellent lively wild red grape. Why not propagate from it and call it the *Musketaquid*? Gathered some sound blueberries still. Mitchella berries ripe. Dogsbane still. What I have called the *Cornus circinata* is that of Emerson, if you call the fruit white tinged with blue (in Laurel Glen), but its cyme is not flat, as Gray says. Its berries to-day. I suspect that my *C. stolonifera* is the *sericea*. Maple-leaved viburnum berries, dark-bluish.


The Norwegians, the Normen [*sic*], were such inveterate mariners that they called the summit of the mountain chain which separates Norway from Sweden the Keel Ridge of the country, as if it were a vessel turned up.

 September 17, Friday, 1852: [Sir Charles Lyell](#) visited friends in [Boston](#) to deliver the last of his [Lowell Institute](#) lectures at the [Odeon Hall](#) (he would depart for England on about November 29th).

[U.S. Marines](#) were again landed and maintained in Buenos Aires, Argentina (until April 1853) to protect American interests during a revolution.

US MILITARY INTERVENTIONS



Sept. 17. What produces this flashing air of autumn? — a brightness as if there were not green enough to absorb the light, now that the first frosts wither the herbs. The corn-stalks are stacked like muskets along the fields. The pontederia leaves are sere and brown along the river. The fall is further advanced in the water, as the spring was earlier there. I should say that the vegetation of the river was a month further advanced in its decay than of the land generally. The yellow lily pads are apparently decayed generally; as I wade, I tread on their great roots only; and the white lily pads are thinned. Now, before any effects of the frost are obvious on the leaves, I observe two black rows of dead pontederia in the river. Is it the alder locust that rings so loud in low land now? The umbel-shaped smilax berry clusters are now ripe. Still the oxalis blows, and yellow butterflies are on the flowers. I hear the downy woodpecker [**Downy Woodpecker**  *Picoides pubescens*] whistle, and see him looking about the apple trees as if to bore him a hole. Are they returning south? Abundance of wild grapes. I laid down some wild red grapes in front of the Cliffs, three united to a two-thirds-inch stock, many feet from the root, under an alder marked with two or three small sticks atop, and, ten feet north, two more of different stocks, one-half inch diameter, directly on the edge of the brook, their tops over the water, the shell of a five-inch log across them.

 September 18, Saturday, 1852: [Marietta Alboni](#) gave a recital in Manhattan.







[Emma Margaret Nott](#) died in Alabama at the age of 10 (or, in the depiction on the tombstone along with 3 siblings who also died within the week, as one of 4 cherubs), in the [yellow fever](#) epidemic of this year.



Sept. 18. I think it must be the *Cornus sericea* which I have called the *stolonifera*. Vide that red stem on the Bean Hill road. The poor student begins now to seek the sun. In the forenoons I move into a chamber on the east side of the house, and so follow the sun round. It is agreeable to stand in a new relation to the sun. They begin to have a fire occasionally below-stairs.


3.30 P.M. — A-barberrying to Flint's Pond.

The goldenrods have generally lost their brightness. Methinks the asters were in their prime four or five days ago. Came upon a nighthawk [**Common Nighthawk**  *Chordeiles minor* (Booming Nighthawk)] on the ground in Thrush Alley. There are many large toadstools, pecked apparently by birds. I find the Castile soap gall still under the oaks. The robins [**American Robin**  *Turdus migratorius*] of late fly in flocks, and I hear them oftener. The partridges, [**Ruffed Grouse**  *Bonasa umbellus* (Partridge)] grown up, oftener burst away. Pennyroyal still in bloom. The crows [**American Crow**  *Corvus brachyrhynchos*] congregate and pursue me through the half-covered woodland path, cawing loud and angrily above me, and when they cease, I hear the winnowing sound of their wings. What ragged ones! Water lobelia still in blossom. Gratiola, horned utricularia, and the white globose flower by Flint's still. Is that the *Cirsium muticum*, four feet high, in the blue-stemmed goldenrod path, with a glutinous involucre, but I should say spinous? The prinus berries now quite red. How densely they cover the bushes! Very handsome, contrasting with



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the leaves. The barberries are not wholly reddened yet. How much handsomer in fruit for being bent down in wreaths by the weight! The increasing weight of the fruits adds gracefulness to the form of the bush. I get my hands full of thorns, but my basket full of berries. How productive a barberry bush! On each the berries seem more abundant and plumper than on the last. They stand amid the cedars. Coming home by the pond road, I see and smell the grapes on trees, under the dense bowers made by their leaves in trees, three feet above the water or the road. The purple clusters hang at that height and scent the air. They impart a sense of tropical richness to our zone. I hear little warbling sparrows [**Song Sparrow**  *Melospiza melodia* (*melodia*)] in the garden, which apparently have come from the north. Now-a-nights there are fogs pretty extensive in the evening. Sophia has come from Bangor and brought the *Dalibarda repens*, white dalibarda, a little crenate-rounded-heart-shaped-leafed flower of damp woods; the small-leaved *Geranium Carolinianum*; etc.



September 19, Sunday, 1852: [Allen Huger Nott](#) died in Alabama still an infant (or, in the depiction on the tombstone along with 3 siblings who also died within the week, as one of 4 cherubs), in the [yellow fever](#) epidemic of this year.



On the north dome of the Astronomical Observatory of Capodimonte in Naples, Annibale De Gasparis sighted through his [telescope](#) the asteroid Massalia.



Sept. 19. P.M. — To Great, Meadows.

The red capsules of the sarothra. Many large crickets about on the sand. Observe the effects of frost in particular places. Some blackberry vines are very red. I see the oxalis and the tree primrose and the Norway cinquefoil and the prenanthes and the *Epilobium coloratum* and the cardinal-flower and the small hypericum and yarrow, and I think it is the *Ranunculus repens*, between Ripley Hill and river, with spotted leaves lingering still. The soapwort gentian [[Gentiana saponaria](#)] cheers and surprises, — solid bulbs of blue from the shade, the stale [*sic*, style?] grown purplish. It abounds along the river, after so much has been motion. The polygala and the purple gerardia are still common and attract by their high color. The small-flowering *Bidens cernua* (?) and the fall dandelion and the fragrant everlasting abound. The *Viola lanceolata* has blossomed again, and the lambkill. What pretty six-fingered leaves the three oxalis leaflets make! I see the effects of frost on the *Salix Purshiana*, imbrovning their masses; and in the distance is a maple or two by the water, beginning to blush.

That small, slender-leaved, rose-tinted (white petals, red calyx) polygonum by the river is perhaps in its prime now; slender spikes and slender lanceolate sessile leaves, with rent hairy and ciliate sheaths, eight stamens, and three styles united in middle. Not biting. I cannot find it described. And what is that white flower which I should call *Cicuta maculata*, except that the veins do not terminate in the sinuses?



September 20, Monday, 1852: [Edward Fisher Nott](#) died in Alabama at the age of 19 (or, in the depiction on the tombstone along with 3 siblings who also died within the week, as one of 4 cherubs), in the [yellow fever](#) epidemic of this year.




Sept. 20. The smooth sumachs are turning conspicuously and generally red, apparently from frost, and here and there is a whole maple tree red, about water. In some hollows in sprout-lands, the grass and ferns are crisp and brown from frost. I suppose it is the *Aster undulatus*, or variable aster,

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with a large head of middle-sized blue flowers. The *Viola sagittata* has blossomed again. The *Galium circæzans* (?) still, and narrow-leaved johnswort.

On Heywood's Peak by Walden. — The surface is not perfectly smooth, on account of the zephyr, and the reflections of the woods are a little indistinct and blurred. How soothing to sit on a stump on this height, overlooking the pond, and study the dimpling circles which are incessantly inscribed and again erased on the smooth and otherwise invisible surface, amid the reflected skies! The reflected sky is of a deeper blue. How beautiful that over this vast expanse there can be no disturbance, but it is thus at once gently smoothed away and assuaged, as, when a vase of water is jarred, the trembling circles seek the shore and all is smooth again! Not a fish can leap or an insect fall on it but it is reported in lines of beauty, in circling dimples, as it were the constant swelling up of its fountain, the gentle pulsing of its life, the heaving of its breast. The thrills of joy and those of pain are indistinguishable. How sweet the phenomena of the lake! Everything that moves on its surface produces a sparkle. The peaceful pond! The works of men shine as in the spring. The motion of an oar or an insect produces a flash of light; and if an oar falls, how sweet the echo!

The groundsel and hieracium down is in the air. The golden plover [**American Golden Plover**  *Pluvialis dominica*], they say, has been more than usually plenty here this year. Drovers of cattle have for some time been coming down from up-country. How distinctly each thing in nature is marked! as the day by a little yellow sunlight, so that the sluggard cannot mistake it.



September 21, Tuesday, [1852](#): Francis Thomas Green had murdered John Jones with a pistol at Buckley's Creek on March 10th, 1852. On this day he was [hanged](#) in the street outside the main gate of Darlinghurst Gaol on Forbes Street in Sydney, New South Wales — this would be the last such hanging to be conducted in public (there being also a private gallows inside this jail's walls).

[The last private [hanging](#) in New South Wales would occur on [August 24th, 1939](#) at Long Bay Gaol near Sydney.]



Sept. 21. P.M. — To Conantum.

The small skull-cap and cress and the mullein still in bloom. I see pigeon woodpeckers oftener now, with their light rears. Birches and elms begin to turn yellow, and ferns are quite yellow or brown in many places. I see many tall clustered bluish asters by the brooks, like the *A. undulatus*. The blue-stemmed goldenrod is abundant, bright and in its prime. The maples begin to be ripe. How beautiful when a whole maple on the edge of a swamp is like one great scarlet fruit, full of ripe juices! A sign of the ripening. Every leaf, from lowest limb to topmost spire, is aglow. The woodbine is red, too, and its berries are bluing. The flattened black berries of the cucumber-root, with the triangular bases of its leaves tinged red beneath, as a sort of cup for them. My red ball fungus *blossoms* in the path in the midst of its jelly.

As I was walking through the maple swamp by the Corner Spring, I was surprised to see apples on the ground, and at first supposed that somebody had dropped them, but, looking up, I detected a wild apple tree, as tall and slender as the young maples and not more than five inches in diameter at the ground. This had blossomed and borne fruit this year. The apples were quite mellow and of a very agreeable flavor, though they had a rusty-scraperish look, and I filled my pockets with them. The squirrels had found them out before me. It is an agreeable surprise to find in the midst of a swamp so large and edible a fruit as an apple.

Of late we have much cloudy weather without rain. Are not liable to showers, as in summer, but may have a storm. The *Lentago* berries appear to drop off before, or as soon as, they turn. There are few left on the bushes. Many that I bring home will turn in a single night. The sassafras leaves are red. The huckleberry bushes begin to redden. The white actæa berries still hang on, or their red pedicels remain.

My friend is he who can make a good guess at me, — hit me on the wing.



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September 22, Wednesday, 1852: [Henry Watkins](#) went up, on this afternoon, with a party of ladies, into the steeple of Trinity Church, to view New-York and its harbor. Afterward they visited “castle-garden” and promenaded up Manhattan’s Broadway Avenue. “What a charm there is in female society, I dont know when I have enjoyed myself so much.”



Sept. 22. Sophia has in her herbarium and found in Concord these which I have not seen this summer:—

Pogonia verticillata, Hubbard's Second Wood. Bigelow says July.

Trillium erythrocarpum, Bigelow says May and June.

Uvularia perfoliata, Bigelow says May.

P.M. — On river.

The *Polygonum amphibium* var. *terrestre* is a late flower, and now more common and the spikes larger quite handsome and conspicuous, and more like a prince’s-feather than any. Large woolly aphides are now clustered close together on the alder stems. Some of those I see are probably the sharp-shinned hawk [[Sharp-shinned Hawk](#) [Accipiter striatus](#)]. When was it I heard the upland plover [[Upland sandpiper](#) [Bartramia longicauda](#)]? Has been a great flight of blue-winged teal [this season](#). The soapwort gentian the flower of the river-banks now.

In love we impart, each to each — in subtlest immaterial form of thought or atmosphere the best of ourselves — such as commonly vanishes or evaporates in aspirations — & mutually enrich each other— The lover alone perceives & dwells in a certain human fragrance. To him humanity is not only a flower — but an aroma and a flavor also.



September 23, Thursday, 1852: [William Stewart Halsted](#) was born.

[Friedrich Engels](#) wrote from Manchester, England to [Karl Marx](#):

Dear Marx,

The day before yesterday I sent you the translation [of the first chapter of Marx’s 18TH BRUMAIRE OF LOUIS BONAPARTE] and a post office order for a pound. A few more pounds will follow at the beginning of October — *i.e.* in 9-10 days. I should like to send you more at a time because, then even though the total amount is the same in the end, it has the advantage of enabling you to plan your expenditure more methodically, but my own pecuniary circumstances are in such a muddle just now that I never know exactly how much I shall need for the month, and hence pounds only become available singly, so it seems best to send them to you straight away. Next month I shall put things on a business-like footing, after which I shall soon be able to make some rough estimates.

From the enclosed memorandum you will see that Pieper has made a number of fairly bad howlers — I haven’t, of course, enumerated his transgressions against grammar and Donatus, *cela n’aurait jamais fini*. You may give it to him if you think it would do any good; otherwise, if it might lead him to abandon the translation, you had better keep it. Should he grumble over this or that correction, you can always use it as an opportunity to point out his imperfections.

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Individual bits are, by the way, almost untranslatable. Incidentally, it might also be advisable for the bookseller to see the last chapter in particular; he would then be vastly more impressed; I suggest that Pieper might translate it and you send it straight on to me; having already looked at it with this in mind, I am not wholly unprepared and progress would therefore be rapid. Even if it can't be published now, the translation must be completed; the chap will soon become Emperor, and that would provide another splendid opportunity for adding a postscript.

I am going straight home to finish the article for the Tribune so that it catches the 2nd post and you can send it off by tomorrow's steamer. What prospect is there of a new English article for Dana?

I trust the brandy has set your wife on her feet again — warm regards to her and your children, also Dronke and Lupus.

Your
F.E.




Sept. 23. P.M. — Round by Clernatis Brook.

The forget-me-not still. I observe the rounded tops of the dogwood bushwens, scarlet in the distance, on the edge of the meadow (Hubbard's), more full and bright than any flower. The maples are mostly darker. The very few boughs that are turned, and the tupelo, which is reddening. The ash is just beginning to turn. The scarlet dogwood is the striking bush to-day. I find huckleberries on Conantum still sound and blackening the bushes.

How much longer a mile appears between two blue mountain peaks thirty or more miles off in the horizon than one would expect!

Some acorns and hickory nuts on the ground, but they have not begun to shell. Is it the nut of the *Carya amara*, with raised seams, but not bitter, that I perceive? I suppose that is the *Carya tomentosa*, or mockernut hickory, with large rounded nuts on Lee's land. The bitternuts (?), rubbed together, smell like varnish.

The sarothra in bloom. The wind from the north has turned the white lily pads wrong side up, so that they look red, and their stems are slanted up-stream. Almost all the yellow ones have disappeared. A bluestemmed goldenrod, its stem and leaves red. The woodbine high on trees in the shade a delicate pink. I gathered some haws very good to eat to-day. I think they must be the senelles of the Canadians. *Hamamelis Virginiana* out, before its leaves fall. A woodchuck out. The waxwork not opened. The "feathery tails" of the clematis fruit conspicuous and interesting now. Yellow lily out (again?) in the pond-holes.

Passing a corn-field the other day, close by a hat and coat on a stake, I recognized the owner of the farm. Any of his acquaintances would. He was only a trifle more weather[-beaten] than when I saw him last. His back being toward me, I missed nothing, and I thought to myself if I were a crow [American Crow  *Corvus brachyrhynchos*] I should not fear the balance of him, at any rate.

In northern latitudes, where other edible fruits are scarce, they make an account of haws and bunchberries.

The barberry bushes in Clematis Hollow are very beautiful now, with their wreaths of red or scarlet fruit drooping over a rock.



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September 24, Friday, 1852: [Baptiste Jules Henri Jacques Giffard](#) piloted a controllable steam-engine powered dirigible from Paris to Élancourt, a distance of 24 kilometers and the 1st such flight. This was in his [coal-gas-filled airship with a 3-horsepower steam engine driving its propeller](#). The device was fitted with a downward-pointing funnel and exhaust steam was mixed in with the combustion gases in the expectation that by such means sparks would be prevented from rising up and igniting the gas in the bag; the inventor had also installed a vertical rudder. The wind proving to be too strong to allow him to make way against it, he was unable to return to his starting point; however, he was able to achieve turns and circles, demonstrating that a powered airship could indeed be steered and controlled.

Nocturne-Quadrille op.120 by [Johann Baptist Strauss II](#) was performed for the initial time, in the Volksgarten, Vienna.



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Originally the Mountain of Light “Koh-i-noor” diamond had been cut in a manner similar to other Mughal-era diamonds (such as the Darya-i-Noor of the Iranian crown jewels). However, when put on display in 1851 at the Great Exhibition in London, it had failed to impress viewers. It looked to them like a lump of glass. Prince Albert had therefore ordered Coster Diamonds to re-cut it as an oval brilliant. To power this cutting, a Maudslay, Sons and Field engine had been necessary. By today’s standards the culet had been made unusually broad, so that when the stone is viewed head-on it gives the impression of a black hole. The New-York [Semi-Weekly Tribune](#) proclaimed the new brilliant cut as “unsurpassed by any diamond above the ground in shape, lustre and beauty.” To avoid the curse on the [Indian](#) stone (which supposedly affected only males) Queen Victoria would have it mounted, with more than 2,000 less spectacular diamonds, in a form of adornment worn

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only by women, a tiara.



WALDEN: White Pond and Walden are great crystals on the surface of the earth, Lakes of Light. If they were permanently congealed, and small enough to be clutched, they would, perchance, be carried off by slaves, like precious stones, to adorn the heads of emperors; but being liquid, and ample, and secured to us and our successors forever, we disregard them, and run after the diamond of Kohinoor. They are too pure to have a market value; they contain no muck. How much more beautiful than our lives, how much more transparent than our characters, are they! We never learned meanness of them. How much fairer than the pool before the farmer's door, in which his ducks swim! Hither the clean wild ducks come. Nature has no human inhabitant who appreciates her. The birds with their plumage and their notes are in harmony with the flowers, but what youth or maiden conspires with the wild luxuriant beauty of Nature? She flourishes most alone, far from the towns where they reside. Talk of heaven! ye disgrace earth.

[LAKES OF LIGHT](#)

A newspaper article explained the mackerel fisheries:

THE MACKEREL FISHERIES

Probably but few are aware of the great extent of the mackerel and other fisheries – It has been estimated that during the summer months, or rather between June



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and November, more than twenty-thousand vessels are constantly engaged in the different kinds of fisheries, employing no less than 250,000 men. By a treaty with Great Britain, American vessels are allowed the privilege of fishing within certain limits of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and the quantity of fish taken from this place alone, is truly astonishing. The coast of Newfoundland yields its codfish to the hardy sailor from May to December, while the better class of mackerel are taken from August to October. Many mackerel, however, of a proper class, are taken along the Southern Shore of the United States, prior to this, but as a general thing, they are deemed worthy of little notice. The bay of Chaleur, along the coast of Prince Edward Island, the Magdalene Islands and Northumberland Straits, are considered the choicest mackerel grounds. Here the fleet of vessels congregated at one time will often amount to two thousand sail, although as a general thing not more than two to four hundred vessels sail in company. At night when the fleet is safely anchored, the lanterns lighted on each vessel and hanging from the shrouds, one may fancy himself looking upon some huge city lying in repose, with its lamps all trimmed and burning.

The bait alone, which is ground up and thrown to the fish to keep them around the vessel, is a very large item in expense (of) carrying on the trade. This is either herring, porgies, or clams, well salted and cleansed, put up expressly for the purpose. The average cost of it is about three and a half dollars per barrel, at least two barrels are thrown away per day in good fishing. You then have \$16,000 per day, thrown away to the fishes, or say \$100 per vessel for each trip, which is below the actual amount, and we thus have the enormous sum of \$200,000.

The method of taking the mackerel is very simple. The vessel is "hove to," and the men arranged on the "windward" side as many as can conveniently stand from bow to stern. Each man is provided with four lines, only two can be used in fast fishing. On each line is attached the hook which is sunk into an oblong bit of lead called a jig.

A barrel is placed behind each man, into which the fish are "snapped" as caught, the jaw tearing out as easily as though made of paper. Owing to this tenderness of the jaw, the fish must be hauled very carefully, though with great rapidity. One man stands amidships, throwing the bait which has been carefully ground, to keep the fish about the vessel, while the hooks are baited with any tough substance, either pork rind, a bit of liver or a piece of the mackerel itself. When the fish bite rapidly, no sport is more exciting - a dozen men will often catch from thirty to fifty barrels in an hour. When caught they are split, gibbed, washed in three waters and then salted - the whole being done with astonishing celerity.

- ST. JOHN PAPER.

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Sept. 24. According to [Emerson](#), *Lonicera hirsuta*, hairy honeysuckle, grows in Sudbury. Some hickories are yellow. Hazel bushes a brownish red. Most grapes are shrivelled. Pasture thistle still. The zizania ripe, shining black, cylindrical kernels, five eighths of an inch long. The fruit of the thorn trees on Lee's Hill is large, globular, and gray-dotted, but I cannot identify it certainly.



September 25, Saturday, [1852](#): The crew of the brig *Arthur Leary* while on a voyage from Saint Domingo to Boston was rescued by the *Clara*, and the *Arthur Leary* was abandoned in the Atlantic.

The American whaler *Citizen* had been lying-to in an Arctic gale for 4 days when it grounded on a sand bank. The sea being too rough for its boats, 5 crewmen drowned while attempting to use spars to get ashore (others would survive on the hospitality of indigenous people: during February-April 1853 some survivors would attempt a 225-mile journey across the ice to Cape Dezhnev while others would wait and eventually be rescued on July 2d, 1853, by the *Joseph Haydon*, which having heard of their misfortune had been searching for them).



Sept. 25. *Polygonum dumetorum*, climbing false-buckwheat, still; also dodder. The fall dandelions are a prevailing flower on low turfy grounds, especially near the river. *Ranunculus reptans* still. The small galium (*trifidum*). A rose again, apparently *lucida* (?) This is always unexpected. The scarlet of the dogwood is the most conspicuous and interesting of the autumnal colors at present. You can now easily detect them at a distance; every one in the swamps you overlook is revealed. The smooth sumach and the mountain is a darker, deeper, bloodier red. Found the *Bidens Beckii* (?) September 1st, and the fringed gentian November 7th, last year.



September 26, Sunday, [1852](#): In Charleston, South Carolina, The Mercury provided as full and accurate a review as possible of an important new book, urging its subscribers to purchase and read it for themselves:

We have before us an interesting and instructive little work, of 53 pages, 12mo. entitled, "Slavery in the Southern States; by a Carolinian." It was originally addressed to a friend of the author in Boston, in answer to a question, what do you think of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" at the South? At the request of the Gentleman who received it, it is now published, says the Preface, with the consent of the author, "in the hope of inducing calmer thought on the subject of slavery than is likely to be the result of pictorial writing." The publisher is John Bartlett, Cambridge, Mass. We have read this work with very great pleasure, as a dispassionate and Christian review of a subject which is full of difficulties, cannot be ultimately disposed of by fiction or fictitious coloring. We make as large an extract as the copyright will authorize us to do, at the same time expressing a hope that many will procure and read the entire publication. It is seldom indeed that anything so calm, and apparently so reliable, is presented to the public on the subject of Slavery. Certainly it is from a source which is both intelligent and well

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informed. — Journal of Commerce.

SLAVERY IN THE SOUTHERN STATES,
 being a reply to "Uncle Tom's Cabin," by a Caro-
 linian. Just received by JOHN RUSSELL,
 256 King-street.

"Uncle Tom's Cabin" is the latest attack upon slavery. The book contains all the arguments against the institution, vivified in dramatic scenes of great power, and made attractive by highly-wrought sketches, imaginative chiefly, though, we are assured, not extravagant. We may not doubt what we hear of its unprecedented sale, nor that its authoress has refused ten thousand dollars for the copyright. We confess to have read the book with much excitement, under the influence of which we wrote many passages in its refutation. But we soon felt that we had fallen into a too common error, and we tore up our pages at the suggestion of the preceding train of thought. We shall not make any question of love or hate with this book, but shall content ourselves with an effort to derive such profit from it as may be suggested even from the midst of its extravagance and injustice.

The "moral end" of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" is to bring out in strong light the evils of the complete dependence of one man upon the arbitrary will of another. We have a variety of vivid scenes to illustrate the power of the master in separating the families of slaves, in destroying their moral character, and in scourging them even to death. In these sketches her zeal has got the better of the authoress, and she has drawn a most wild and unreal picture of slavery. The consequence is, that the book, with its vast circulation, will do infinite injury. Its dramatic power will have no other effect upon the country than to excite the fanaticism of one portion, and to arouse the indignation of the other. It will carry an erroneous picture of slavery to those who are only too eager to misunderstand, and will serve to confirm that increasing Southern opinion which sees only hatred and misconception of us at the North. Its well seasoned horrors will give new birth to Abolition apostles in factories and farmyards, and its descriptions will furnish the materials of many an extravagant discourse, and be the household talk of many a family circle. At the South it will hardly be read with toleration, and there is danger that the bitterness it engenders will make it of no service to the negro.

Mrs. Stowe proceeds, after her manner, to denounce slavery because of this irresponsible power of the master. Her argument is a description of scenes such as we have never seen or heard of, but which, of course, we cannot undertake to deny. It is always easy to attack an institution by dwelling with emphasis upon its abuses. The error of fanatical reformers has been admirably illustrated by the remark, that they hold the abuses of a system so close to their eyes that they can see nothing beyond. Now we can allow Mrs. Stowe no monopoly of feeling, or even of sentiment, (though the word is growing disreputable,) when we hear of brutal wrongs committed by one man against another; nay, we shall perhaps go beyond her in reprobation of



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all abuse of that authority which God has given to the white man at the South over the African. But we know more of slavery than she does, though she has undertaken to tell all the world about it, and we refuse to take these things as a picture of an institution. We refuse to judge any system by extravagant pictures of the crimes that disfigure it.

We are not ready at the bidding of Mrs. Stowe, in this great question of slavery, to see only its occasional horrors, because we have seen Christianity always revered in the world, though many stain of bigotry, and though the torture and the stake have more than once obscured it; because children still look up with love and honor to their parents, though crime has come of the parents' power; because the marriage tie has brought untold happiness to men and women in spite of many seasons and places in which it has been mere mockery; because the laws of property are respected still, tho' the oppression has wrung from the poor the bitter cry that "property is robbery," because we believe the mission of woman to be for peace and good-will though we have read of the siege of Troy, and have known many modern Helens of the agitation-school because we see nothing without its evils, no Divine institution that man has not defaced, no human institution without its errors. It is in view of all this that we say that Mrs. Stowe has been unjust. In dwelling with great skill and dramatic power upon the abuses of the system, and upon nothing beyond, she has given a most false and wrong impression of what slavery is. She has filled her northern readers with a delusion.

She is concerned if we reject her deformed image of slavery, making answer to it as we have done, that these horrors are abuses, and are only occasional. Her defence, strongly and eagerly urged, is, that these abuses are "inherent" in the system - She says, "There is actually nothing to protect the slave's life but the character of the master. Facts too shocking to be contemplated occasionally force their way to the public ear, and the comment that one often hears made on them is more shocking than the thing itself. It is said 'Very likely such cases may now and then occur, but they are no sample of general practice.' If the laws of New England were so arranged that a master could now and then torture an apprentice to death, without a possibility of being brought to justice, would it be received with equal composure? Would it be said, 'These cases are no sample of general practice'? This injustice is an inherent one in the slave system; it cannot exist without it." It will be observed that this leads to quite another question than the infrequency of these abuses. We have insisted only upon their rare occurrence, and for that reason have refused to allow her descriptions of them to pass for a picture of slavery - What she says about their being "inherent in the system" does not make her picture the less a misrepresentation. Is it a defence of the book?

Meanwhile, appropriately, on the previous night [Henry Thoreau](#) had had a dangerous dream of purity:

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Sept. 26. Dreamed of purity last night. The thoughts seemed not to originate with me, but I was invested, my thought was tinged, by another's thought. It was not I that originated, but I that *entertained* the thought.

The river is getting to be too cold for bathing. There are comparatively few weeds left in it.



It is not in vain perhaps that every winter the forest is brought to our doors shaggy with lichens— Even in so humble a shape as a wood-pile it contains sermons for us.

P.M. —To Ministerial Swamp.

The small cottony leaves of the fragrant everlasting in the fields for some time, protected, as it were, by a little web of cotton against frost and snow, — a little dense web of cotton spun over it, — entangled in it, — as if to restrain it from rising higher.

The increasing scarlet and yellow tints around the meadows and river remind me of the opening of a vast flower-bud; they are the petals of its corolla, which is of the width of the valleys. It is the flower of autumn, whose expanding bud just begins to blush. As yet, however, in the forest there are very few changes of foliage.

The *Polygonum articulatum*, giving a rosy tinge to Jenny's Desert and elsewhere, is very interesting now, with its slender dense racemes of rose-tinted flowers, apparently without leaves, rising cleanly out of the sand. It looks warm and brave; a foot or more high, and mingled with deciduous blue-curls. It is much divided, into many spreading slender-racemed branches, with inconspicuous linear leaves, reminding me, both by its form and its color, of a peach orchard in blossom, especially when the sunlight falls on it. Minute rose-tinted flowers that brave the frosts and advance the summer into fall, warming with their color sandy hillsides and deserts, like the glow of evening reflected on the sand. Apparently all flower and no leaf. A warm blush on the sands, after frosty nights have come. Perhaps it may be called the "evening red." Rising, apparently, with clean bare stems from the sand, it spreads out into this graceful head of slender rosy racemes, wisp-like. This little desert of less than [an] acre blushes with it.

I see now ripe, large (three-inch), very dark chocolate(?)-colored puffballs. Are then my five-fingers puffballs? The tree fern is in fruit now, with its delicate, tendril-like fruit climbing three or four feet over the asters, goldenrods, etc., on the edge of the swamp. The large ferns are yellow or brown now. Larks [**Eastern Meadowlark**  *Sturnella magna*], like robins [**American Robin**  *Turdus migratorius*], fly in flocks. Dogsbane leaves a clear yellow. Succory in bloom at the Tommy Wheeler house. It bears the frost well, though we have not had much. Set out for use. The *Gnaphalium plantaginifolium* leaves, green above, downy beneath.



September 27, Monday, 1852: Still at Lancy, **Henri-Frédéric Amiel**, who would be referred to as the "Swiss **Thoreau**," continued in his *JOURNAL INTIME*: "To-day I complete my thirty-first year..."

The most beautiful poem there is, is life — life which discerns its own story in the making, in which inspiration and self-consciousness go together and help each other, life which knows itself to be the world in little, a repetition in miniature of the divine universal poem. Yes, be man; that is to say, be nature, be spirit, be the image of God, be what is greatest, most beautiful, most lofty in all the spheres of being, be infinite will and idea, a reproduction of the great whole. And be everything while being nothing, effacing thyself, letting God enter into thee as the air enters an empty space, reducing the ego to the mere vessel which contains the divine essence. Be humble, devout, silent, that so thou mayest hear within the depths of thyself the subtle and profound voice; be spiritual and pure, that so thou mayest have communion with the pure spirit. Withdraw thyself often into the sanctuary of thy inmost consciousness; become once more point and atom, that so thou mayest free thyself from space, time, matter, temptation, dispersion, that thou mayest escape thy very organs themselves and thine own life. That is to say, die often, and examine thyself in the presence of this death, as a preparation for the last death. He who can without shuddering confront blindness, deafness, paralysis, disease, betrayal, poverty; he who can without terror appear before the sovereign justice, he alone can call himself prepared for partial or total death. How far am I from anything of the sort, how far is my heart from any such **stoicism**! But at least we can try to detach ourselves from all that can be taken away from us, to accept

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everything as a loan and a gift, and to cling only to the imperishable — this at any rate we can attempt. To believe in a good and fatherly God, who educates us, who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, who punishes only when he must, and takes away only with regret; this thought, or rather this conviction, gives courage and security. Oh, what need we have of love, of tenderness, of affection, of kindness, and how vulnerable we are, we the sons of God, we, immortal and sovereign beings! Strong as the universe or feeble as the worm, according as we represent God or only ourselves, as we lean upon infinite being, or as we stand alone.

The point of view of religion, of a religion at once active and moral, spiritual and profound, alone gives to life all the dignity and all the energy of which it is capable. Religion makes invulnerable and invincible. Earth can only be conquered in the name of heaven. All good things are given over and above to him who desires but righteousness. To be disinterested is to be strong, and the world is at the feet of him whom it cannot tempt. Why? Because spirit is lord of matter, and the world belongs to God. “Be of good cheer,” saith a heavenly voice, “I have overcome the world.”

Lord, lend thy strength to those who are weak in the flesh, but willing in the spirit!”

In Troy, New York, actor-playwright George L. Aiken premiered an unauthorized dramatization of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.



The book and/or the play would inspire sheet music:

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ELIZA'S FLIGHT.

And having thus crossed the river in her flight, she was seen to enter the woods, and was never seen again.

A SCENE FROM
UNCLE TOM'S CABIN.
 WRITTEN BY
MISS M.A. COLLIER Music by **E.J. LODER.**
 BOSTON

Published by **OLIVER DITSON** 215 Washington St

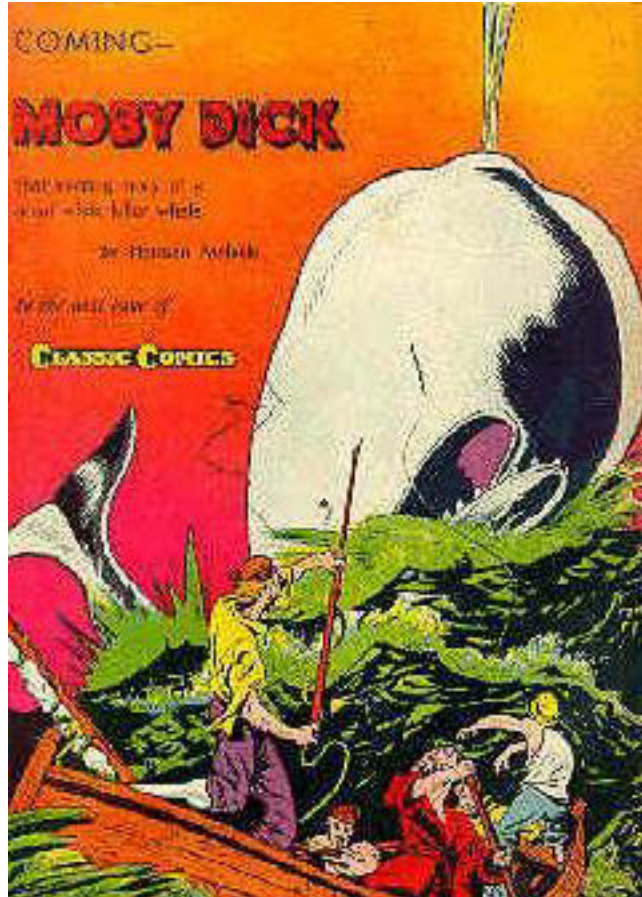
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Although Stowe's book was a wild best-seller (120 editions would be published in the US in 1852 alone), [Herman Melville](#)'s novel [MOBY-DICK](#) of the previous year would sell only about 50 copies during the author's entire lifetime.

**However,
eventually
it would
sell quite
well as a
comic book:**





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In the "Afterword" to [UNCLE TOM'S CABIN](#) [Harriet Beecher Stowe](#) defended her work:

The writer has often been inquired of, by correspondents from different parts of the country, whether this narrative is a true one; and to these inquiries she will give one general answer. The separate incidents that compose the narrative are, to a very great extent, authentic, occurring, many of them, either under her own observation, or that of her personal friends. She or her friends have observed characters the counterpart of almost all that are here introduced; and many of the sayings are word for word as heard herself, or reported to her.

The personal appearance of Eliza, the character ascribed to her, are sketches drawn from life. The incorruptible fidelity, piety and honesty, of Uncle Tom, had more than one development, to her personal knowledge.

Some of the most deeply tragic and romantic, some of the most terrible incidents, have also their parallel in reality. The incident of the mother's crossing the Ohio river on the ice is a well-known fact.

The story of "old Prue," in the second volume, was an incident that fell under the personal observation of a brother of the writer, then collecting-clerk to a large mercantile house, in [New Orleans](#).

From the same source was derived the character of the planter Legree. Of him her brother thus wrote, speaking of visiting his plantation, on a collecting tour; "He actually made me feel of his fist, which was like a blacksmith's hammer, or a nodule of iron, telling me that it was 'calloused with knocking down niggers.' When I left the plantation, I drew a long breath, and felt as if I had escaped from an ogre's den."

That the tragical fate of Tom, also, has too many times had its parallel, there are living witnesses, all over our land, to testify.

Let it be remembered that in all southern states it is a principle of jurisprudence that no person of colored lineage can testify in a suit against a white, and it will be easy to see that such a case may occur, wherever there is a man whose passions outweigh his interests, and a slave who has manhood or principle enough to resist his will.

There is, actually, nothing to protect the slave's life, but the character of the master. Facts too shocking to be contemplated occasionally force their way to the public ear, and the comment that one often hears made on them is more shocking than the thing itself. It is said, "Very likely such cases may now and then occur, but they are no sample of general practice."

If the laws of New England were so arranged that a master could now and then torture an apprentice to death, would it be received with equal composure?

Would it be said, "These cases are rare, and no samples of general practice"? This injustice is an inherent one in the slave system, - it cannot exist without it.

The public and shameless sale of beautiful mulatto and quadroon girls has acquired a notoriety, from the incidents following the capture of the Pearl.

We extract the following from the speech of Hon. [Horace Mann, Sr.](#), one of the legal counsel for the defendants in that case. He says: "In that company of seventy-six persons, who attempted,

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in 1848, to escape from the District of Columbia in the schooner Pearl, and whose officers I assisted in defending, there were several young and healthy girls, who had those peculiar attractions of form and feature which connoisseurs prize so highly. Elizabeth Russel was one of them. She immediately fell into the slave-trader's fangs, and was doomed for the [New Orleans](#) market. The hearts of those that saw her were touched with pity for her fate. They offered eighteen hundred dollars to redeem her; and some there were who offered to give, that would not have much left after the gift; but the fiend of a slave-trader was inexorable. She was despatched to [New Orleans](#); but, when about half way there, God had mercy on her, and smote her with death. There were two girls named Edmundson in the same company. When about to be sent to the same market, an older sister went to the shambles, to plead with the wretch who owned them, for the love of God, to spare his victims. He bantered her, telling what fine dresses and fine furniture they would have. 'Yes,' she said, 'that may do very well in this life, but what will become of them in the next?' They too were sent to [New Orleans](#); but were afterwards redeemed, at an enormous ransom, and brought back." Is it not plain, from this, that the histories of Emmeline and Cassy may have many counterparts?

Justice, too, obliges the author to state that the fairness of mind and generosity attributed to St. Clare are not without a parallel, as the following anecdote will show.

A few years since, a young southern gentleman was in Cincinnati, with a favorite servant, who had been his personal attendant from a boy. The young man took advantage of this opportunity to secure his own freedom, and fled to the protection of a Quaker, who was quite noted in affairs of this kind. The owner was exceedingly indignant. He had always treated the slave with such indulgence, and his confidence in his affection was such, that he believed he must have been practised upon to induce him to revolt from him. He visited the Quaker, in high anger; but, being possessed of uncommon candor and fairness, was soon quieted by his arguments and representations. It was a side of the subject which he never had heard, - never had thought on; and he immediately told the Quaker that, if his slave would, to his own face, say that it was his desire to be free, he would liberate him. An interview was forthwith procured, and Nathan was asked by his young master whether he had ever had any reason to complain of his treatment, in any respect.

"No, Mas'r," said Nathan; "you've always been good to me."

"Well, then, why do you want to leave me?"

"Mas'r may die, and then who get me? -I'd rather be a free man."

After some deliberation, the young master replied, "Nathan, in your place, I think I should feel very much so, myself. You are free."

He immediately made him out free papers; deposited a sum of money in the hands of the Quaker, to be judiciously used in assisting him to start in life, and left a very sensible and kind letter of advice to the young man. That letter was for some time in the writer's hands.

The author hopes she has done justice to that nobility, generosity, and humanity, which in many cases characterize individuals at the, South. Such instances save us from utter

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despair of our kind. But, she asks any person, who knows the world, are such characters common, anywhere?

For many years of her life, the author avoided all reading upon or allusion to the subject of slavery, considering it as too painful to be inquired into, and one which advancing light and civilization would certainly live down.

But, since the legislative act of 1850, when she heard, with perfect surprise and consternation, Christian and humane people actually recommending the remanding escaped fugitives into slavery, as a duty binding on good citizens, —when she heard, on all hands, from kind, compassionate and estimable people, in the free states of the North, deliberations and discussions as to what Christian duty could be on this head, —she could only think, These men and Christians cannot know what slavery is; if they did, such a question could never be open for discussion. And from this arose a desire to exhibit it in a living dramatic reality. She has endeavored to show it fairly, in its best and its worst phases. In its best aspect, she has, perhaps, been successful; but, oh! who shall say what yet remains untold in that valley and shadow of death, that lies the other side?

To you, generous, noble-minded men and women, of the South, — you, whose virtue, and magnanimity and purity of character, are the greater for the severer trial it has encountered, —to you is her appeal. Have you not, in your own secret souls, in your own private conversings, felt that there are woes and evils, in this accursed system, far beyond what are here shadowed, or can be shadowed? Can it be otherwise? Is man ever a creature to be trusted with wholly irresponsible power? And does not the slave system, by denying the slave all legal right of testimony, make every individual owner an irresponsible despot? Can anybody fall to make the inference what the practical result will be? If there is, as we admit, a public sentiment among you, men of honor, justice and humanity, is there not also another kind of public sentiment among the ruffian, the brutal and debased? And cannot the ruffian, the brutal, the debased, by slave law, own just as many slaves as the best and purest? Are the honorable, the just, the high-minded and compassionate, the majority anywhere in this world?

The slave-trade is now, by American law, considered as piracy. But a slave-trade, as systematic as ever was carried on on the coast of Africa, is an inevitable attendant and result of American slavery. And its heart-break and its horrors, can they be told?

The writer has given only a faint shadow, a dim picture, of the anguish and despair that are, at this very moment, riving thousands of hearts, shattering thousands of families, and driving a helpless and sensitive race to frenzy and despair. There are those living who know the mothers whom this accursed traffic has driven to the murder of their children; and themselves seeking in death a shelter from woes more dreaded than death. Nothing of tragedy can be written, can be spoken, can be conceived, that equals the frightful reality of scenes daily and hourly acting on our shores, beneath the shadow of American law, and the shadow of the cross of Christ.

And now, men and women of America, is this a thing to be trifled with, apologized for, and passed over in silence? [she addressed



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residents of various free states one by one, and then addressed mothers ...] By the sick hour of your child; by those dying eyes, which you can never forget; by those last cries, that wrung your heart when you could neither help nor save; by the desolation of that empty cradle, that silent nursery, – I beseech you, pity those mothers that are constantly made childless by the American slave-trade!

And say, mothers of America, is this a thing to be defended, sympathized with, passed over in silence?

Do you say that the people of the free state have nothing to do with it, and can do nothing? Would to God this were true! But it is not true. The people of the free states have defended, encouraged, and participated; and are more guilty for it, before God, than the South, in that they have not the apology of education or custom.

If the mothers of the free states had all felt as they should, in times past, the sons of the free states would not have been the holders, and, proverbially, the hardest masters of slaves; the sons of the free states would not have connived at the extension of slavery, in our national body; the sons of the free states would not, as they do, trade the souls and bodies of men as an equivalent to money, in their mercantile dealings.

There are multitudes of slaves temporarily owned, and sold again, by merchants in northern cities; and shall the whole guilt or obloquy of slavery fall only on the South?

Northern men, northern mothers, northern Christians, have something more to do than denounce their brethren at the South; they have to look to the evil among themselves.

But, what can any individual do? Of that, every individual can judge. There is one thing that every individual can do, – they can see to it that they feel right. An atmosphere of sympathetic influence encircles every human being; and the man or woman who feels strongly, healthily and justly, on the great interests of humanity, is a constant benefactor to the human race. See, then, to your sympathies in this matter! Are they in harmony with the sympathies of Christ? or are they swayed and perverted by the sophistries of worldly policy?

Christian men and women of the North! still further, – you have another power; you can pray! Do you believe in prayer? or has it become an indistinct apostolic tradition? You pray for the heathen abroad; pray also for the heathen at home. And pray for those distressed Christians whose whole chance of religious improvement is an accident of trade and sale; from whom any adherence to the morals of Christianity is, in many cases, an impossibility, unless they have given them, from above, the courage and grace of martyrdom.

But, still more. On the shores of our free states are emerging the poor, shattered, broken remnants of families, –men and women, escaped, by miraculous providences from the surges of slavery, –feeble in knowledge, and, in many cases, infirm in moral constitution, from a system which confounds and confuses every principle of Christianity and morality. They come to seek a refuge among you; they come to seek education, knowledge, Christianity.

What do you owe to these poor unfortunates, oh Christians? Does not every American Christian owe to the African race some effort

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at reparation for the wrongs that the American nation has brought upon them? Shall the doors of churches and school-houses be shut upon them? Shall states arise and shake them out? Shall the church of Christ hear in silence the taunt that is thrown at them, and shrink away from the helpless hand that they stretch out; and, by her silence, encourage the cruelty that would chase them from our borders? If it must be so, it will be a mournful spectacle. If it must be so, the country will have reason to tremble, when it remembers that the fate of nations is in the hands of One who is very pitiful, and of tender compassion.

Do you say, "We don't want them here; let them go to Africa"? That the providence of God has provided a refuge in Africa, is, indeed, a great and noticeable fact; but that is no reason why the church of Christ should throw off that responsibility to this outcast race which her profession demands of her.

To fill up [Liberia](#) with an ignorant, inexperienced, half-barbarized race, just escaped from the chains of slavery, would be only to prolong, for ages, the period of struggle and conflict which attends the inception of new enterprises. Let the church of the north receive these poor sufferers in the spirit of Christ; receive them to the educating advantages of Christian republican society and schools, until they have attained to somewhat of a moral and intellectual maturity, and then assist them in their passage to those shores, where they may put in practice the lessons they have learned in America.

There is a body of men at the north, comparatively small, who have been doing this; and, as the result, this country has already seen examples of men, formerly slaves, who have rapidly acquired property, reputation, and education. Talent has been developed, which, considering the circumstances, is certainly remarkable; and, for moral traits of honesty, kindness, tenderness of feeling, -for heroic efforts and self-denials, endured for the ransom of brethren and friends yet in slavery, -they have been remarkable to a degree that, considering the influence under which they were born, is surprising.

The writer has lived, for many years, on the frontier-line of slave states, and has had great opportunities of observation among those who formerly were slaves. They have been in her family as servants; and, in default of any other school to receive them, she has, in many cases, had them instructed in a family school, with her own children. She has also the testimony of missionaries, among the fugitives in Canada, in coincidence with her own experience; and her deductions, with regard to the capabilities of the race, are encouraging in the highest degree. The first desire of the emancipated slave, generally, is for education. There is nothing that they are not willing to give or do to have their children instructed, and, so far as the writer has observed herself, or taken the testimony of teachers among them, they are remarkably intelligent and quick to learn. The results of schools, founded for them by benevolent individuals in Cincinnati, fully establish this.

The author gives the following statement of facts, on the authority of Professor C.E. Stowe, then of Lane Seminary, Ohio, with regard to emancipated slaves, now resident in Cincinnati; given to show the capability of the race, even without any very particular assistance or encouragement.



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The initial letters alone are given. They are all residents of Cincinnati.

B—. Furniture maker; twenty years in the city; worth ten thousand dollars, all his own earnings; a Baptist.

[she described several other freed slaves, their industry and accomplishments, then suggested that the judgment of God insists on justice, ending with the following paragraph]

A day of grace is yet held out to us. Both North and South have been guilty before God; and the Christian church has a heavy account to answer. Not by combining together, to protect injustice and cruelty, and making a common capital of sin, is this Union to be saved, — but by repentance, justice and mercy; for, not surer is the eternal law by which the millstone sinks in the ocean, than that stronger law, by which injustice and cruelty shall bring on nations the wrath of Almighty God!




Sept. 27. Monday. P.M. — To C. Smith's Hill.

The flashing clearness of the atmosphere. More light appears to be reflected from the earth, less absorbed. Green lice are still on the birches.

At Saw Mill Brook many finely cut and flat ferns are faded whitish and very handsome, as if pressed — very delicate. White oak acorns edible. Everywhere the squirrels are trying the nuts in good season. The touch-me-not seed-vessels go off like pistols, — shoot their seeds off like bullets. They explode in my hat.


The arum berries are now in perfection, cone-shaped spikes an inch and a half long, of scarlet or vermilion-colored, irregular, somewhat pear-shaped berries springing from a purplish core. They are exactly the color of bright sealing-wax, or, I believe, the painted tortoise's shell; on club-shaped peduncles. The changed leaves of this are delicately white, especially beneath. Here and there lies prostrate on the damp leaves or ground this conspicuous red spike. The medeola berries are common now, and the large red berries of the panicked Solomon's-seal.

It must have been a turtle dove [**Mourning Dove**  **Zenaida macroura**] that eyed me so near, turned its head sideways to me for a fair view, looking with a St. Vitus twitching of its neck, as if to recover its balance on an unstable perch, — that is their way.

From Smith's Hill I looked toward the mountain line. Who can believe that the mountain peak which he beholds fifty miles off in the horizon, rising far and faintly blue above an intermediate range, while he stands on his trivial native hills or in the dusty highway, can be the same with that which he looked up at once near at hand from a gorge in the midst of primitive woods? For a part of two days I travelled across lots once, loitering by the way, through primitive wood and swamps over the highest peak of the Peterboro hills to Monadnock, by ways from which all landlords and stage-drivers endeavored to dissuade us. It was not a month ago. But now that I look across the globe in an instant to the dim Monadnock peak, and these familiar fields and copsewoods appear to occupy the greater part of the interval, I cannot realize that Joe Eavely's house still stands there at the base of the mountain, and all that long tramp through wild woods with invigorating scents before I got to it. I cannot realize that on the tops of those cool blue ridges are in abundance berries still, bluer than themselves, as if they borrowed their blueness from their locality. From the mountains we do not discern our native hills; but from our native hills we look out easily to the far blue mountains, which seem to preside over them. As I look northwestward to that summit from a Concord cornfield, how little can I realize all the life that is passing between me and it, — the retired up-country farmhouses, the lonely mills, wooded vales, wild rocky pastures, and new clearings on stark mountain-sides, and rivers murmuring through primitive woods! All these, and how much more, I *overlook*. I see the very peak, — there can be no mistake, — but how much I do not see, that is between me and it! How much I overlook! In this way we see stars. What is it but a faint blue cloud, a mist that may vanish? But what is it, on the other hand, to one who has travelled to it day after day, has threaded the forest and climbed the hills that are between this and that, has tasted the raspberries or the blueberries that grow on it, and the springs that gush from it, has been wearied with climbing its rocky sides, felt the





coolness of its summit, and been lost in the clouds there?
 When I could sit in a cold chamber muffled in a cloak each evening till Thanksgiving time —
 warmed by my own thoughts — the world was not so much with me.

 September 28, Tuesday, 1852: Heil Vater! Dir zum hohen Feste, a cantata by Anton Bruckner to words of Marinelli, was performed for the initial time, at St. Florian.

On account of the new media culture, [Alfred, Lord Tennyson](#) had become more visible to the general public than any previous [Poet Laureate](#). Many wannabe writers in the tradition of Stephen Duck, Ann Yearsley, John Clare, and Robert Burns —seeking understandably to lay down their shovels and pick up their pens— were soliciting Poet Laureate Tennyson’s attention as each struggled to establish their own career trajectory in this new print era that had derived from the abolition of the newspaper tax and the abundant changes this had wrought —an enormous increase in periodicals and local newspapers —the eased rise of popular political movements such as Chartism —the opportunities offered in the new industrial-labor centers for the formation of Mechanics’ Institutes and working-men’s clubs. On this day the hard-pressed Laureate reacted to such pressure, writing from Twickenham to his aunt Elizabeth Russell: “I have had so much trouble and anxiety for these many days and such heaps of correspondence to go through. As for myself I am full of trouble and shall be for a long time and by way of helping me out of it the 200,000,000 poets of Great Britain deluge me daily with volumes of poems — truly the Laureatship is no sinecure. If any good soul would just by way of diversion send me a tome of prose. O the shoals of trash!” (As Lord Tennyson famously neglected to write on another frustrating occasion, “Life’s a bitch then you die.”)



Sept. 28. P.M. — To the Boulder Field.

I find the hood-leaved violet quite abundant in a meadow, and the *pedata* in the Boulder Field. I have now seen all but the *blanda*, *palmata*, and *pubescens* blooming again, and [bluebirds](#) [[Eastern Bluebird](#)  [Sialia sialis](#)] and robins [[American Robin](#)  [Turdus migratorius](#)], etc., are heard again in the air. This is the commencement, then, of the second spring. Violets, *Potentilla Canadensis*, lambkill, wild rose, yellow lily, etc., etc., begin again.

Children are now gathering barberries, — just the right time. Speaking of the great fall flower which the valleys are at present, its brightest petal is still the scarlet one of dogwood, and in some places the redder red maple one is equally bright; then there is the yellow walnut one, and the broad dull red one of the huckleberry, and the hazel, high blueberry, and *Viburnum nudum* of various similar tints.

It has been too cold for the thinnest coat since the middle of September.

Grapes are still abundant. I have only to shake the birches to bring down a shower of plums. But the flavor of none is quite equal to their fragrance. Some soils, like this rocky one on the old Carlisle road, are so suited to the apple that they spring up wild and bear well in the midst of pines, birches, maples, and oaks, their red and yellow fruit harmonizing with the autumnal tints of the forest in which they grow. I am surprised to see rising amid the maples and birches in a swamp the rounded tops of apple trees rosy with fair fruit.


A windy day. What have these high and roaring winds to do with the fall? No doubt they speak plainly enough to the sap that is in these trees, and perchance they check its upward flow.

A very handsome *gray dotted* thorn near the black birch grove, six inches in diameter, with a top large in proportion, as large as a small apple tree, bristling with many thorns from suckers about its trunk. This is a very handsome object, and the largest thorn I have seen in Concord, almost bare of leaves and one mass of red fruit, five eighths of an inch in diameter, causing its slender branches to spread and droop gracefully. It reminds me of a wisp of straws tied together, or a dust-brush upright on its handle. It must be the same I leave seen in Canada. The same with that on Nawshawtuct. Probably most beautiful in fruit, not only on account of its color, but because this causes the branches to spread and curve outward gracefully.

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Ah if I could put into words that music that I hear—that music which can bring tears to the eyes of marble statues! to which the very muscles of men are obedient—

 September 29, Wednesday, [1852](#): White soldiers under Major H.P. Heintzelman surprised a band of Yumas near Blythe, California, who managed to escape without a fight.

WHITE ON RED, RED ON WHITE



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR SEPTEMBER 29TH]

 September 30, Thursday, [1852](#): [Charles Villiers Stanford](#) was born in Dublin, the only child of John James Stanford, a lawyer, and Mary Henn, daughter of a lawyer.

In [Concord](#), [Henry Thoreau](#) was spending this day hunting for a honey tree.



Sept. 30. Thursday. 10 A.M. —To Fair Haven Pond, bee-hunting, — Pratt, Rice, Hastings, and myself, in a wagon.

A fine, clear day after the coolest night and severest frost we have had. The apparatus was, first a simple round tin box about four and a half inches in diameter and one and a half inches deep, containing a piece of empty honeycomb of its own size and form, filling it within a third of an inch of the top; also another, wooden box about two and a half inches square every way, with a glass window occupying two thirds the upper side under a slide, with a couple of narrow slits in the wood, each side of the glass, to admit air, but too narrow for the bees to pass; the whole resting on a circular bottom a little larger than the lid of the tin box, with a sliding door in it. We were earnest to go this week, before the flowers were gone, and we feared the frosty night might make the bees slow to come forth.

After we got to the Baker Farm, to one of the open fields nearest to the tree I had marked, the first thing was to find some flowers and catch some honey-bees. We followed up the bank of the brook for some distance, but the goldenrods were all dried up there, and the asters on which we expected to find them were very scarce. By the pond-side we had no better luck, the frosts perhaps having made flowers still more scarce there. We then took the path to Clematis Brook on the north of Mt. Misery, where we found a few of the *Diplopappus linariifolius* (savory-leaved aster) and one or two small white (bushy?) asters, also *A. undulatus* and *Solidago nemoralis* rarely, on which they work in a sunny place; but there were only two or three bumblebees, wasps, and butterflies, yellow and small red, on them. We had no better luck at Clematis Brook. Not a honey-bee could we find, and we concluded that we were too late, — that the weather was too cold, and so repaired at once to the tree I had found, a hemlock two feet and a half in diameter on a side-hill a rod from the pond. I had cut my initials in the bark in the winter, for custom gives the first finder of the nest a right to the honey and to cut down the tree to get it and pay the damages, and if he cuts his initials on it no other hunter will interfere. Not seeing any signs of bees from the ground, one of the party climbed the tree to where the leading stem had formerly been broken off, leaving a crotch at about eighteen feet from the ground, and there he found a small hole into which he thrust a stick two or three feet down the tree, and dropped it to the bottom; and, putting in his hand, he took out some old comb. The bees had probably died.

After eating our lunch, we set out on our return. By the roadside at Walden, on the sunny hillside sloping to the pond, we saw a large mass of goldenrod and aster several rods square and comparatively fresh. Getting out of our wagon, we found it to be resounding with the hum of bees.

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(It was about 1 o'clock.) There were far more flowers than we had seen elsewhere. Here were bees in great numbers, both bumblebees and honey-bees, as well as butterflies and wasps and flies. So, pouring a mixture of honey and water into the empty comb in the tin box, and holding the lid of the tin box in one hand and the wooden box with the slides shut in the other, we proceeded to catch the honey-bees by shutting them in suddenly between the lid of the tin box and the large circular bottom of the wooden one, cutting off the flower-stem with the edge of the lid at the same time. Then, holding the lid still against the wooden box, we drew the slide in the bottom and also the slide covering the window at the top, that the light might attract the bee to pass up into the wooden box. As soon as he had done so and was buzzing against the glass, the lower slide was closed and the lid with the flower removed, and more bees were caught in the same way. Then, placing the other, tin, box containing the comb filled with honeyed water close under the wooden one, the slide was drawn again, and the upper slide closed, making it dark; and in about a minute they went to feeding, as was ascertained by raising slightly the wooden box. Then the latter was wholly removed, and they were left feeding or sucking up the honey in broad daylight. In from two to three minutes one had loaded himself and commenced leaving the box. He would buzz round it back and forth a foot or more, and then, sometimes, finding that he was too heavily loaded, alight to empty himself or clean his feet. Then, starting once more, he would begin to circle round irregularly, at first in a small circle only a



foot or two in diameter, as if to examine the premises that he might know them again, till, at length, rising higher and higher and circling wider and wider and swifter and swifter, till his orbit was ten or twelve feet in diameter and as much from the ground, — though its centre might be moved to one side, — so that it was very difficult to follow him, especially if you looked against a wood or the hill, and you had to lie low to fetch him against the sky (you must operate in an open space, not in a wood); all this as if to ascertain the course to his nest; then, in a minute or less from his first starting, he darts off in a bee-line, that is, as far as I could see him, which might be eight or ten rods, looking against the sky (and you had to follow his whole career very attentively indeed to see when and where he went off at a tangent), in a waving or sinuous (right and left) line, toward his nest.

We sent forth as many as a dozen bees, which flew in about three directions, but all toward the village, or where we knew there were hives. They did not fly so almost absolutely straight as I had heard, but within three or four feet of the same course for half a dozen rods, or as far as we could see. Those belonging to one hive all had to digress to get round an apple tree. As none flew in the right direction for us, we did not attempt to line them. In less than half an hour the first returned to the box still lying on the wood-pile, — for not one of the bees on the surrounding flowers discovered it, — and so they came back, one after another, loaded themselves and departed; but now they went off with very little preliminary circling, as if assured of their course. We were furnished with little boxes of red, blue, green, yellow, and white paint, in dry powder, and with a stick we sprinkled a little of the red powder on the back of one while he was feeding, — gave him a little dab, — and it settled down amid the fuzz of his back and gave him a distinct red jacket. He went off like most of them toward some hives about three quarters of a mile distant, and we observed by the watch the time of his departure. In just twenty-two minutes red jacket came back, with enough of the powder still on his back to mark him plainly. He may have gone more than three quarters of a mile. At any rate, he had a head wind to contend with while laden. They fly swiftly and surely to their nests, never resting by the way, and I was surprised — though I had been informed of it — at the distance to which the village bees go for flowers.


The rambler in the most remote woods and pastures little thinks that the bees which are humming so industriously on the rare wild flowers he is plucking for his herbarium, in some out-of-the-way nook, are, like himself, ramblers from the village, perhaps from his own yard, come to get their honey for his hives. All the honey-bees we saw were on the blue-stemmed goldenrod (*Solidago caesia*), which is late, lasts long, which emitted a sweet agreeable fragrance, not on the asters. I feel the richer for this experience. It taught me that even the insects in my path are not loafers, but have their special errands. Not merely and vaguely in this world, but in this hour, each is about its business. If, then, there are any sweet flowers still lingering on the hillside, it is known to the bees both of the forest and the village. The botanist should make interest with the bees if he would know when the flowers open and when they close. Those I have named were the only common and prevailing flowers at this



1852-1853

1852-1853

time to look for them on.

Our red jacket had performed the voyage in safety; no bird had picked him up. Are the kingbirds [Eastern Kingbird  *Tyrannus tyrannus*] gone? Now is the time to hunt bees and take them up, when the combs are full of honey and before the flowers are so scarce that they begin to consume the honey they have stored.

The common milkweed down has begun to fly; the desmodium, tick-trefoil, adheres now to my clothes. Saw by Clematis Brook extensive rootings of moles.

Forty pounds of honey was the most our company had got hereabouts.

We also caught and sent forth a bumblebee, who maneuvered like the others, though we thought he took time to eat some before he loaded himself, and then he was so overloaded and bedaubed that he had to alight after he had started, and it took him several minutes to clean himself.

It is not in vain that the flowers bloom, and bloom late too, in favored spots. To us they are a culture and a luxury, but to bees meat and drink. The tiny bee which we thought lived far away there in a flower-bell in that remote vale, he is a great voyager, and anon he rises up over the top of the wood and sets sail with his sweet cargo straight for his distant haven. How well they know the woods and fields and the haunt of every flower! The flowers, perchance, are widely dispersed, because the sweet which they collect from the atmosphere is rare but also widely dispersed, and the bees are enabled to travel far to find it. A precious burthen, like their color and fragrance, a crop which the heavens bear and deposit on the earth.

[Rees's Cyclopædia](#) says that "[Philliscus](#) retired into a desert wood, that he might have the opportunity of observing them [the word "bees" is supplied here by Thoreau] to better advantage."

[Paul Dudley](#) wrote the [Royal Society](#) about 1723 that the Indians had no word for bee; called it "Englishman's fly."



September 30, Thursday, 1852: [Frederick Douglass](#) attended the convention of the [Liberty Party](#) at Syracuse NY and was selected as that party's Vice-President (do not be confused, he would not run as its public VP candidate, rather he would be a functioning party official).

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September 30, Thursday, [1852](#): According to the [Brooklyn Eagle](#), some of the abolitionist antics of [William Lloyd Garrison](#), [Abby Kelley Foster](#), and [Frederick Douglass](#) had been “nipped in the bud” due to a prompt response by the Syracuse city government:

NIPPED IN THE BUD.—For some time past calls for a meeting to be held in Syracuse have been advertised in the papers published in that vicinity, and in handbills scattered over the country, for the purpose of celebrating the anniversary of the rescue of the fugitive slave Jerry, which event created such an excitement a year ago. Wm. Lloyd Garrison, Abby Kelly, Frederick Douglass, and others of similar opinions, were expected to take part in the proceedings, and great preparations were made. The Common Council of Syracuse, however, upset their calculations by the adoption of the following preamble and resolution, which were offered on the 27th inst. by Ald. Pope, in behalf of Mayor Woodruff:—

The paper was being, actually, a bit overoptimistic. The opposition of the authorities would not be sufficient to prevent this celebration of the freedom of [Jerry McHenry](#).

FALL 1852



Fall [1852](#): As he had done with his brother John Thoreau at the beginning of fall in 1839, at the beginning of this fall season [Henry Thoreau](#) went river-sailing. This time he went with [Ellery Channing](#) to Peterboro and Mount Monadnock and returned from Troy, New Hampshire by train (when Ellery would return to Concord he would find his wife preparing to take their children and separate from him).



[Lysander Spooner](#)'s TRIAL BY JURY attempted to make it the duty of the juror to produce justice. What justice these legal professionals, the judges and lawyers, are unwilling to provide, the people must produce on their own behalf — an argument in favor of that ever-proscribed and always-punished behavior, juror nullification.

[John Adams](#) went up into the mountains of [California](#) in an old wagon pulled by two oxen, armed with a pistol



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and two rifles, plus bowie knives. Despite his maimed condition after having been mauled by a Bengal tiger, he would be able to catch bears in log traps and construct cages in which to transport them for sale. He would venture eventually as far as eastern Washington. He would contribute mightily to the extinction of the grizzly, so that the only bear that now remains in this mountain range is the smaller brown bear.

[Kate Fox](#) left for school and [Maggie Fox](#), in the company of her mother, traveled to Philadelphia and set up shop in the bridal suite of Webb's Union Hotel. It was there that the young and handsome [Dr. Elisha Kent Kane](#), still grieving from the recent death of his youngest brother Willie, would come one November morning to investigate the "Spiritual Manifestations" that enthralled the nation (whether this is properly to be described as "love at first sight" as Margaret would later assert is a matter for speculation).

SPIRITUALISM

 Fall [1852](#): [Brownson's Quarterly Review](#), No. 3


CATHOLICISM

- I. *Morris on the Incarnation*
- II. *"The Reformation" in Ireland*
- III. *The Works of Daniel Webster*
- IV. *Gury's Moral Theology*
- V. *Literary Notices and Criticisms*


MAGAZINES

ORESTES AUGUSTUS BROWNSON

OCTOBER 1852

 October [1852](#): This month's issue of [Harper's New Monthly Magazine](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE


 October [1852](#): The [Irish potato](#) harvest this year was virtually free of the late blight. England had disbursed a grand sum total of less than 1/2 of 1% of one year's annual Gross National Product in relief to sustain the Irish during this entire panicky [Irish Potato Famine](#) period of like 8 years, and had begrudged even that level of assistance.³¹

31. Which is to say, making a comparison with the past, that over a period of 8 years they had been willing to spend to fight this famine only 10% of what they had felt required to spend every year in order to neutralize the armies of Napoleon. Or, looking at this thing compared to England's glorious future, the Treasury had with the greatest of reluctance disbursed only £8,000,000 for all the Irish, when in a few years it would be disbursing over £69,000,000 in order to fund a pointless and disastrous military foray into the [Crimea](#).



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 October 1852: The Reverend Moncure Daniel Conway attended, in Baltimore, simultaneously, a Quaker convention and a Unitarian convention. The upshot was, he determined to attend Harvard Divinity School and become a Unitarian minister. He would record much later that a respected Quaker adviser had counseled him against becoming a Quaker.³² What is much more likely is that this Friend informed him that in the Quaker realm the ministers were totally unsalaried, working at trades to earn their living and paying all their own expenses, and that Conway in the manner quite typical of him later legitimated his decision not to become a Quaker under such ridiculous circumstances by translating this information, ex post facto, into counsel that he should not become a Quaker. (All his life Conway would be adept at putting –mincing no words here!– an appropriately righteous “spin” on such matters.)

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

VOLUME II

32. It seems possible that the spiritual counselor might have been Friend Roger Brooke from the Sandy Spring monthly meeting, or might have been Friend William Henry Farquhar from that same meeting.

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October 1852: At about this point Waldo Emerson recorded in his journal a remark that Henry Thoreau had made:


Thoreau remarks that the cause of Freedom advances, for all the able debaters now are freesoilers.


He also recorded that:


Last Sunday I was at Plymouth on the beach, & looked across the hazy water –whose spray was blowing on to the hills & orchards– to Marshfield. I supposed, Webster must have passed, as indeed he had died at 3 in the morning. The sea, the rocks, the woods, gave no sign that America & the world had lost the completest man. Nature had not in our days, or, not since Napoleon, cut out such a masterpiece. He brought the strength of a savage into the height of culture. He was a a man in equilibrio. A man within & without, the strong & perfect body of the first ages, with the civility & thought of the last. "Os, oculosque Jovi par." ["A mouth and eyes equal to Jove."] And, what he brought, he kept. Cities have not hurt him, he held undiminished the power & terror of his strength, the majesty of his demeanour. He had a counsel in his breast. He was a statesman, & not the semblance of one. Most of our statesmen are in their places by luck & vulpine skill, not by any fitness. Webster was there for cause: the reality; the final person, who had to answer the questions of all the faineants, & who had an answer. But alas! he was the victim of his ambition; to please the South betrayed the North, and was thrown out by both.

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 October 1852: [Charles Darwin](#), who had been suffering from terrible toothaches for months, visited his dentist, and Mr. Waite gave him chloroform and extracted 5 teeth. Darwin had been administering [chloroform](#) to his wife during her labors, but had not yet tried it himself. He recorded it as “this wonderful Substance.”

 October 1852: After a year and a half of detention as a person with experience of the outside world, and after considerable interrogation, [John Manjiro](#) was given permission to travel to the village of Nakanohama in southern [Japan](#) (a village now known as Tosashimizu) in order to spend 4 days with his mother — whom he had not seen since, 12 years earlier, he had been 14 years old.



 Early October 1852: [Ellen Kilshaw Fuller Channing](#) advised [Ellery Channing](#) that she had decided to take their children Margaret Fuller Channing (born May 2d, 1844, age 8), Caroline Sturgis Channing (born April 15th, 1846, age 6), and Walter Channing (born April 14th, 1849, age 4) and live separately. When he begged for another chance, however, they did not immediately depart.

SPLITSVILLE		
1851	Edwin Forrest	Catherine Sinclair
1852	Ellery Channing	Ellen Kilshaw Fuller Channing
1853	Lola Montez	Patrick Purdy Hull

Read  [Henry Thoreau's Journal for October 1852 \(æt. 35\)](#)

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 October 1, Friday, 1852: In Syracuse, New York, the 1st annual “Jerry Celebration” honoring the freeing of Jerry McHenry from the federal marshals seeking to “return” him to his “owner” on October 1, 1851.  Although the assembly was denied the use of all public facilities, some 5,000 people were able to hear orations by Frederick Douglass, William Lloyd Garrison, Friend Lucretia Mott, Gerrit Smith, and Lucy Stone in the engine rotunda of the Syracuse Railroad, 150 feet from side to side, made available by John Wilkinson.³³



The Reverend Samuel Joseph May’s annual “Jerry Celebrations” would continue undaunted until, finally, civil war would break out in America.


RESISTING THE FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW

The old, slow cargo vessel that had rescued Alfred Russel Wallace from off the face of the waters had finally docked in England –after a passage of some 80 days and after several times nearly foundering in a series of storms– and so he made his way back to London without his specimens. From this point until March 1854 he would work primarily out of the metropolis.

Henry Thoreau surveyed, for James F. Chafrin, a couple of pieces of Lincoln woodlot being sold for taxes to Frances Westhall (the 1st piece belonged to the heirs of K. Rice of Lincoln, the 2d, of 2 acres, to Charles Bartlett).



Oct. 1. Friday. Surveying in Lincoln. A severer frost last night. The young and tender trees begin to assume the autumnal tints more generally, plainly in consequence of the frost the last two mornings. The sides of the bushy hills present a rich variety of colors like rug work, but the forest generally is not yet changed.

 October 2, Saturday, 1852: The Yuma finally agreed to permanent peace terms.

WHITE ON RED, RED ON WHITE

33. Not the same John Wilkinson who was buried in a cast-iron coffin of his own design.

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"...The conflicts of Europeans with American-Indians, Maoris and other aborigines in temperate regions ... if we judge by the results we cannot regret that such wars have taken place ... the process by which the American continent has been acquired for European civilization [was entirely justified because] there is a very great and undeniable difference between the civilization of the colonizers and that of the dispossessed natives...."

— [Bertrand Russell](#),
THE ETHICS OF WAR, January 1915

WHITE ON RED, RED ON WHITE

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Oct. 2. P.M. — To Cliffs.

The beggar-ticks (*Bidens*) now adhere to my clothes. I also find the desmodium sooner thus — as a magnet discovers the steel filings in a heap of ashes — than if I used my eyes alone. The river is as low, within an inch or two, as when I made my mark. A very warm day after the frosts, so that I wish — though I am afraid to wear — a thin coat. From Cliffs the shrub oak plain has now a bright-red ground, perhaps of maples. How much more beautiful the lakes now, like Fair Haven, surrounded by the autumn-tinted woods and hills, as in an ornamented frame! Some maples in sprout-lands are of a delicate, pure, clear, unspotted red, inclined to crimson, surpassing most flowers. I would fain pluck the whole tree and carry it home for a nosegay. The veiny-leaved hawkweed in blossom (again?)

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 October 3, Sunday, 1852: [Brigham Young](#) entered into a “celestial marriage” with Eliza Burgess.



While [Henry Thoreau](#) was at the Society of Natural History Library in Boston on this day, he borrowed Volume I of [William Kirby](#)'s and [William Spence](#)'s AN INTRODUCTION TO ENTOMOLOGY: OR ELEMENTS OF THE NATURAL HISTORY OF INSECTS: WITH PLATES (1815), and purchased his own copy of a book he had frequently been consulting, FAUNA AMERICANA; BEING A DESCRIPTION OF THE MAMMIFEROUS ANIMALS INHABITING NORTH AMERICA, by [Richard Harlan, M.D.](#) (published in 1825 in Philadelphia by the firm of A. Finley). Notes from this source would be placed in the Fact Book and in the Indian Notebook #6.

FAUNA AMERICANA

BIOLOGY



Oct. 3. P.M. — To Flint's Pond.

I hear a hylodes (?) from time to time. Shrub oaks are red, some of them. Hear the loud laughing of a loon on Flint's, apparently alone in the middle. A wild sound, heard far and suited to the wildest lake. Many acorns strew the ground, and have fallen into the water.

Collected a parcel of grass (?) balls, some washed up high and dry, — part of the shore-line consists of the same material, — from a half-inch to four inches diameter. The sand indicates that they are formed on the sandy shore. The partly decomposed rushes composed of similar fibres. [A *Scirpus*?] From Heywood's Peak at Walden, the shore is now more beautifully painted. The most prominent are the red maples and the yellowish aspens. The *Aster undulatus* is common and fresh, also the *Solidago nemoralis* of Gray.

The pine fall, i.e. change, is commenced, and the trees are mottled green and yellowish.



 October 4, Monday, 1852: Damad Mehmed Ali Pasha replaced Mehmed Emin Ali Pasha as Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 4TH]

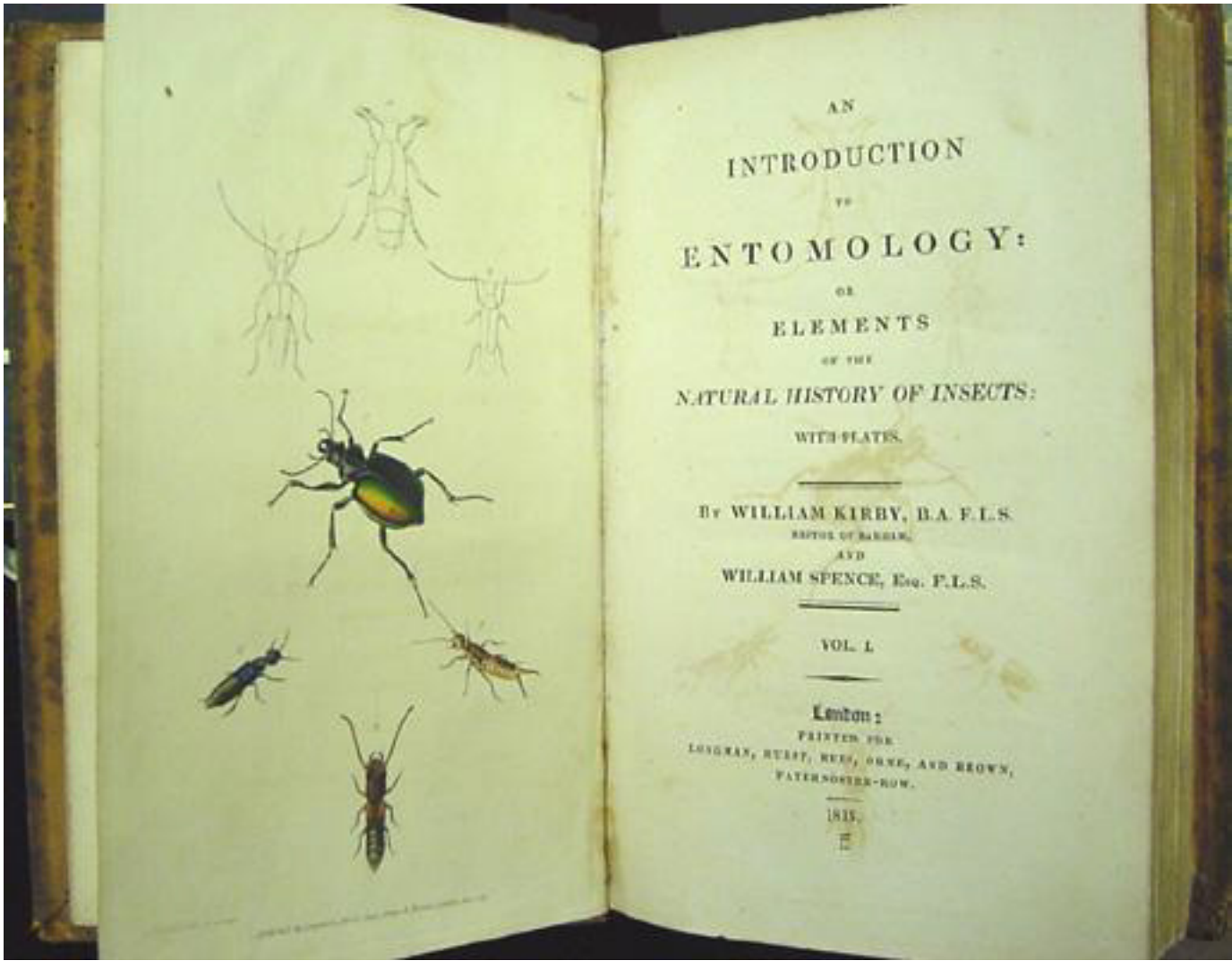
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October 5, Tuesday, [1852](#): Since Summer 1851, the [Reverend Lorenzo Lorraine Langstroth](#) of Philadelphia had been experimenting with leaving an even, approximately bee-sized space between the top of the frames in his beehives, holding the honeycombs, and the flat coverboard above, in order to be able quite easily to remove that coverboard, which had usually been well cemented to the frames with propolis by the bees, making such a separation difficult to achieve. He would be using this discovery about bee behavior to make the frames themselves more easily removable. When he left only a small space (less than a quarter-inch) the bees would cement this space with propolis, but when he left a larger space (more than 3/8 of an inch) the bees would instead fill it with comb. On this day he received US patent #9300A for the 1st movable-frame beehive. He had discovered “bee space” and his hive would revolutionize the industry (this is the design we still use).

[Henry Thoreau](#) checked out, from [Harvard Library](#), the [Reverend William Gilpin](#)'s OBSERVATIONS ON THE WESTERN PARTS OF ENGLAND, RELATING CHIEFLY TO PICTURESQUE BEAUTY; TO WHICH ARE ADDED, A FEW REMARKS ON THE PICTURESQUE BEAUTIES OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1798; London: Printed for T. Cadell and W. Davies, Strant, 1808).



(Some material from this would wind up in [THE MAINE WOODS](#).)

[THE MAINE WOODS](#): Those Maine woods differ essentially from ours. There you are never reminded that the wilderness which you are threading is, after all, some villager's familiar wood-lot, some widow's thirds, from which her ancestors have sledded fuel for generations, minutely described in some old deed which is recorded, of which the owner has got a plan too, and old bound-marks may be found every forty rods, if you will search. 'T is true, the map may inform you that you stand on land granted by the State to some academy, or on Bingham's purchase; but these names do not impose on you, for you see nothing to remind you of the academy or of Bingham. What were the "forests" of England to these? One writer relates of the Isle of Wight, that in Charles the Second's time "there were woods in the island so complete and extensive, that it is said a squirrel might have travelled in several parts many leagues together on the top of the trees." If it were not for the rivers, (and he might go round their heads,) a squirrel could here travel thus the whole breadth of the country.



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OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
WESTERN PARTS OF ENGLAND,
RELATIVE CHIEFLY TO
PICTURESQUE BEAUTY;
TO WHICH ARE ADDED,
A FEW REMARKS
ON THE
PICTURESQUE BEAUTIES OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

By WILLIAM GILPIN, A.M.
PREBENDARY OF SALISBURY; AND VICAR OF BOLDRE IN
NEW-FOREST, NEAR LYMINGTON.

THE SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR T. CADELL AND W. DAVIES, STRAND.

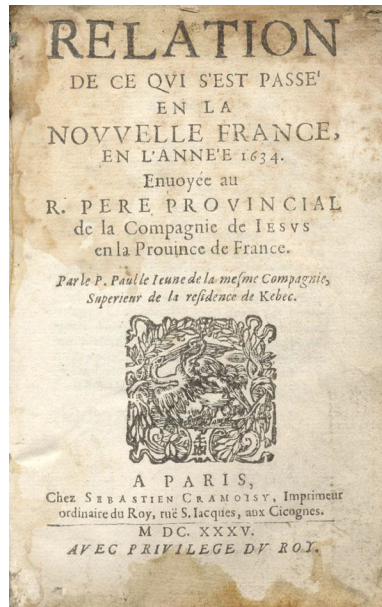
1808.

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He also checked out the JESUIT RELATION volumes for the years 1633 and 1634.³⁴


<http://www.canadiana.org>



Caroline Rounseville Alger was born at [Roxbury](#).



Oct. 5. Was told at [Bunker Hill Monument](#) to-day that Mr. Savage saw the White Mountains several times while working on the monument. It required very clear weather in the northwest and a storm clearing up here.

34.  Cramoisy, Sebastian (ed.). *RELATION DE CE QUI S'EST PASSÉ EN LA NOUVELLE FRANCE IN L'ANNÉE 1636: ENVOYÉE AU R. PERE PROVINCIAL DE LA COMPAGNIE DE JESUS EN LA PROVINCE DE FRANCE, PAR LE P. PAUL LE JEUNE DE LA MESME COMPAGNIE, SUPERIEUR DE LA RESIDENCE DE KÉBEC. A Paris: Chez Sebastian Cramoisy..., 1637*

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RELATION

DE CE QVI S'EST PASSE'
EN LA
NOVVELLE FRANCE,
EN L'ANNE'E 1634.

Enuoyée au
R. PERE PROVINCIAL
de la Compagnie de IESVS
en la Prouince de France.

*Par le P. Paulle Icune de la mesme Compagnie,
Superieur de la residence de Kebec.*




A PARIS,
Chez SEBASTIEN CRAMOISY, Imprimeur
ordinaire du Roy, rue S. Jacques, aux Cicognes.

M DC. XXXV.
AVEC PRIVILEGE DV ROY.

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 October 6, Wednesday, 1852: Queen Victoria and her Lady of the Bedchamber, Charlotte, Viscountess Canning went on a hike out of their lodgings at Balmoral, Scotland. The ladies sketched for nearly an hour and a half, producing a watercolor of the Allt-an-Dubh Loch flowing through the Highland hills around Loch Muick looking towards the Dhu [sic] Loch, also known as the Shiel of the Glas-allt. Back at the castle, the monarch of Great Britain then made a journal entry about this adventurous expedition and its artistic product.



Meanwhile, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on this day, a group of 20 including William Procter, Jr. founded the American Pharmaceutical Association. The thinking, as it would be expressed in this year by a court, was:

Purchasers have to trust their druggists. It is upon his skill and prudence that they most rely. It is his duty to know the properties of his drugs and be able to distinguish them from each other. It is his duty to qualify himself so that, when a prescription is presented to be made up, the proper medicines, and none other, be used in mixing and compounding.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 6TH]

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

October 7, Thursday, 1852: The [Brooklyn Eagle](#) made a comment about the sexual identity of [Jenny Lind](#). We can only imagine that there must have been good humor lurking in here somewhere — even if now we are quite unable to reconstruct it:

“THE UNIT” is the title of a monthly sheet, the first number of which has just come to hand, published in New York, and “devoted to spiritual and natural education, by the dissemination of a knowledge of the Law of Universal Unity.” The *Unit* contains a description of Jenny Lind, “as manifested by her material organization,” in which it is asserted of that fascinating creature that “*she is both a man and a woman!*” Good gracious!— Well, we always thought that a *mere woman* could never kick up such a fuss in the world as Jenny has effected.

After being apprised that [President Millard Fillmore](#) has sent [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) to open [Japan](#) to foreign trade, Tsar Nicholas I of [Russia](#) dispatched the *Pallada* under Rear Admiral Yevfimiy Putyatin on a competing mission (the *Pallada* would arrive in Japanese waters on August 21st, 1853, a month after the American flotilla).






Oct. 7. P.M. — To Great Meadows.

I find no fringed gentian. Perhaps the autumnal tints are as bright and interesting now as they will be. Now is the time to behold the maple swamps, one mass of red and yellow, all on fire, as it were; these and the blood-red huckleberries are the most conspicuous; and then, in the village, the warm brownish-yellow elms, gild there and elsewhere the dark-red ashes. The green pines springing out of huckleberries on the hillsides look as if surrounded by red or vermilion paint. I notice the *Viola ovata*, houstonia, *Ranunculus repens*, caducous polygala, small scratch-grass polygonum, autumnal dandelion (very abundant, yellowing the low turfy grounds and hills), small bushy white aster, a few goldenrods, *Polygonum hydropiperoides* and the unknown flowerless bidens, soapwort gentian (now turned dark purple), yarrow, the white erigeron, red clover, hedge-mustard. The muskrats have begun to erect their cabins. They begin soon after the pontederias are dead (?). Saw one done. Do they build them in the night? Hear and see larks [[Eastern Meadowlark](#)  [Sturnella magna](#)], [bluebirds](#) [[Eastern Bluebird](#)  [Sialia sialis](#)], robins [[American Robin](#)  [Turdus migratorius](#)], song sparrows [[Melospiza](#)  [melodia](#)]. Also see painted tortoises and shad frogs. There must be in abundance of mast this year. I could gather up nearly a bushel of acorns under one white oak, out of their cups, and, I think, quite good to eat. They are earlier to fall than the walnuts. It is encouraging, to see a large crop of acorns, though we do not use them. The white maples turn yellowish, though some boughs are red.

I sit on Poplar Hill. It is a warm Indian-summerish afternoon. The sun comes out of clouds, and lights up and warms the whole scene. It is perfect autumn. I see a hundred smokes arising through the yellow elm-tops in the village, where the villagers are preparing for tea. It is the mellowing year. The sunshine harmonizes with the imbruned and fiery foliage.

Did Russell call my red globular fungus geiropodium[?], etc.?

 October 8, Friday, 1852: The Geneva Gazette of August 20, 1852 had referred to a loon that had been caught far beneath the surface of Seneca Lake, and had referred also to Miss Susan Fenimore Cooper as having mentioned this sort of thing in her book RURAL HOURS, BY A LADY. This was something about either the **Red-throated Loon**  *Gavia stellata* or the **Common Loon**  *Gavia immer* which Henry Thoreau would see fit to include in WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS, but does not constitute evidence that Thoreau ever read Miss Cooper's book — since it is clear that he derived the information instead from a newspaper report:³⁵





WALDEN: As I was paddling along the north shore one very calm October afternoon, for such days especially they settle on to the lakes, like the milkweed down, having looked in vain over the pond for a loon, suddenly one, sailing out from the shore toward the middle a few rods in front of me, set up his wild laugh and betrayed himself. I pursued with a paddle and he dived, but when he came up I was nearer than before. He dived again, but I miscalculated the direction he would take, and we were fifty rods apart when he came to the surface this time, for I had helped to widen the interval; and again he laughed long and loud, and with more reason than before. He manœuvred so cunningly that I could not get within half a dozen rods of him. Each time, when he came to the surface, turning his head this way and that, he coolly surveyed the water and the land, and apparently chose his course so that he might come up where there was the widest expanse of water and at the greatest distance from the boat. It was surprising how quickly he made up his mind and put his resolve into execution. He led me at once to the widest part of the pond, and could not be driven from it. While he was thinking one thing in his brain, I was endeavoring to divine his thought in mine. It was a pretty game, played on the smooth surface of the pond, a man against a loon. Suddenly your adversary's checker disappears beneath the board, and the problem is to place yours nearest to where his will appear again. **[concluded on following screen]**



Oct. 8. P.M. — Walden.

Canada snapdragon, a few flowers at top. Everlastings, field trefoil, shepherd's-purse, door-grass, white goldenrod, fresh tansy, veiny-leaved hawkweed, also that which seems to run from this into *Gronovii* (probably the former). *Aster undulatus* (?), with delicate purplish or lilac-tinted flowers, has those heart-shaped, crenate leaves with a claret under surface. Bushy gerardia budded still.

The autumnal tints about the pond are now perfect. Nothing can exceed the brilliancy of some of the maples which stand by the shore and extend their red banners over the water. Why should so many be yellow? I see the browner yellow of the chestnuts on Pine Hill. The maples and hickories are a clearer yellow. Some white oaks are red. The shrub oaks are bloody enough for a ground. The red and black oaks are yet green.

As I was paddling along the north shore, after having looked in vain over the pond for a loon [**Red-throated Loon**  *Gavia stellata* or **Common Loon**  *Gavia immer*], suddenly a loon, sailing toward the middle, a few rods in front, set up his wild laugh and betrayed himself. I pursued with a paddle and he dived, but when he came up I was nearer than before. He dived again, but I

35. A previous writeup of an encounter can be dated, unfortunately, only to something like 1845 or 1846.

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WALDEN: ...Sometimes he would come up unexpectedly on the opposite side of me, having apparently passed directly under the boat. So long-winded was he and so unweariable, that when he had swum farthest he would immediately divine where in the deep pond, beneath the smooth surface, he might be speeding his way like a fish, for he had time and ability to visit the bottom of the pond in its deepest part. It is said that loons have been caught in the New York lakes eighty feet beneath the surface, with hooks set for trout, -though Walden is deeper than that. How surprised must the fishes be to see this ungainly visitor from another sphere speeding his way amid their schools! Yet he appeared to know his course as surely under water as on the surface, and swam much faster there. Once or twice I saw a ripple where he approached the surface, just put his head out to reconnoitre, and instantly dived again. I found that it was as well for me to rest on my oars and wait his reappearing as to endeavor to calculate where he would rise; for again and again, when I was straining my eyes over the surface one way, I would suddenly be startled by his unearthly laugh behind me. But why, after displaying so much cunning, did he invariably betray himself the moment he came up by that loud laugh? Did not his white breast enough betray him? He was indeed a silly loon, I thought. I could commonly hear the splash of the water when he came up, and so also detected him. But after an hour he seemed as fresh as ever, dived as willingly and swam yet farther than at first. It was surprising to see how serenely he sailed off with unruffled breast when he came to the surface, doing all the work with his webbed feet beneath. His usual note was this demoniac laughter, yet somewhat like that of a water-fowl; but occasionally, when he had balked me most successfully and come up a long way off, he uttered a long-drawn unearthly howl, probably more like that of a wolf than any bird; as when a beast puts his muzzle to the ground and deliberately howls. This was his looning, -perhaps the wildest sound that is ever heard here, making the woods ring far and wide. I concluded that he laughed in derision of my efforts, confident of his own resources. Though the sky was by this time overcast, the pond was so smooth that I could see where he broke the surface when I did not hear him. His white breast, the stillness of the air, and the smoothness of the water were all against him. At length, having come up fifty rods off, he uttered one of those prolonged howls, as if calling on the god of loons to aid him, and immediately there came a wind from the east and rippled the surface, and filled the whole air with misty rain, and I was impressed as if it were the prayer of the loon answered, and his god was angry with me; and so I left him disappearing far away on the tumultuous surface.

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miscalculated the direction he would take, and we were fifty rods apart when he came up, and again he laughed long and loud. He managed very cunningly, and I could not get within half a dozen rods of him. Some times he would come up unexpectedly on the opposite side of me, as if he had passed directly under the boat. So long-winded was he, so unweariable, that he would immediately plunge again, and then no wit could divine where in the deep pond, beneath the smooth surface, he might be speeding his way like a fish, perchance passing under the boat. He had time and ability to visit the bottom of the pond in its deepest part. A newspaper authority says a fisherman — giving his name — has caught loon in Seneca Lake, N.Y., eighty feet beneath the surface, with hooks set for trout. Miss Cooper has said the same. Yet he appeared to know his course as surely under water as on the surface, and swam much faster there than he sailed on the surface. It was surprising how serenely he sailed off with unruffled bosom, when he came to the surface. It was as well for me to rest on my oars and await his reappearing as to endeavor to calculate where he would come up. When I was straining my eyes over the surface, I would suddenly be startled by his unearthly laugh behind me. But why, after displaying so much cunning, did he betray himself the moment he came to the surface with that loud laugh— His white breast enough betrayed him. He was indeed a silly loon, I thought. Though he took all this pains to avoid me, he never failed to give notice of his whereabouts the moment he came to the surface. After an hour he seemed as fresh as ever, dived as willingly, and swam yet farther than at first. Once or twice I saw a ripple where he approached the surface, just put his head out to reconnoitre, and instantly dived again. I could commonly hear the splash of the water when he came up, and so also detected him. It was commonly a demoniac laughter, yet somewhat like a water-bird, but occasionally, when he had balked me most successfully and come up a long way off, he uttered a long-drawn unearthly howl, probably more like a wolf than any other bird. This was his looning. As when a beast puts his muzzle to the ground and deliberately howls; perhaps the wildest sound I ever heard, making the woods ring; and I concluded that he laughed in derision of my efforts, confident of his own resources. Though the sky was overcast, the pond was so smooth that I could see where he broke the surface if I did not hear him. His white breast, the stillness of the air, the smoothness of the water, were all against [him]. At length, having come up fifty rods off, he uttered one of those prolonged unearthly howls, as if calling on the god of loons to aid him, and immediately there came a wind from the east and rippled the surface, and filled the whole air with misty rain. I was impressed as if it were the prayer of the loon and his god was angry with me. How surprised must be the fishes to see this ungainly visitant from another sphere speeding his way amid their schools!

I have never seen more than one at a time in our pond, and I believe that that is always a male. [*Vide* Oct. 11.]



October 9, Saturday, 1852: As the Chamber of Commerce of Bordeaux fêted [Charles Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte](#) after his *coup d'état*, he explained that “*L’empire, c’est la paix.*”



Oct. 9. Touch-me-not, self-heal, *Bidens cernua*, ladies’-tresses, cerastium, dwarf tree-primrose, butter-and-eggs (abundant), prenanthes, sium, silvery Cinquefoil, mayweed. My rainbow rush must be the *Juncus militaris*, not vet colored.



October 10, Sunday, 1852: [John Taylor](#), back from missionary work in France, Germany, and Great Britain, preached on “Intelligence and the Gospel” in 5-year-old [Salt Lake City](#).

It is with peculiar pleasure that I arise this morning to address the congregation of Saints who are thus assembled. I have had many peculiar reflections while attending this conference.



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I have listened with delight to the intelligence and wisdom which has been poured before this people. [It] embraces intelligence of all kinds: principles that relate to this world and principles also that relate to the world to come, and I know from my experience among men and the associations I have had with [the] human family in different nations that you could not find among any other class of people the same wisdom, the same intelligence, the same knowledge of things that are calculated to promote either the temporal, spiritual, or eternal happiness of the human family.

It is something that draws us to God. It is something that brings blessings from God, that puts us in [the] way of following after Him. And these very principles that we possess—the first principles [of the] gospel, namely baptism [and the] laying on [of] hands [for the] gift [of the] Holy Spirit—are some of the first leading causes of that intelligence which governs us in other matters.

Conversation with a French Communist

I remember talking with [the] editor of [a] newspaper in [the] city of Paris that came to visit me, and after laying before him the first principles [of the] gospel and telling him the order of our church, after I had got through, says he, "Mr. Taylor, do you perhaps know [of any] other way than baptism to save and redeem the world, to renovate the human family?"

"No, sir, I know of [no] other plan and principle; it is [what] God revealed to us. [It] has been one of [the] first steps building up His kingdom. And [God has revealed that] if men adhere to these first principles and obey them that they shall receive the gift of Holy Ghost, that there shall be a communion, a union and communion, between them and Heavenly Father, and that then they shall be prepared through the intelligence which will flow from Him to [them] and understand other principles." "Well," says he, "I wish you success, Mr. Taylor, but I am afraid you won't succeed."

"Well," says I, "you will try to establish a system in the earth"—he was associated with a body of people called the communist[s], spread extensively in France—said I, "You have been trying without God to ameliorate the condition of [the] human family. You have been trying to regenerate mankind to produce a better state of things among the world, but what have you done with all your efforts? You have been striving to raise up a political dynasty that will benefit and bless the human family and be better [than] anything heretofore. [But] where are the fruits of your labors? Can you point them out?"

No. For scattered here and there, when political reformation [has] taken place, things [are] as bad now as they were before their efforts.

"But sir," says I, "we have commenced to fear God, to keep His commandments and obey His laws. We have obeyed this thing that we call the gospel and been baptized in [the] name of Jesus in remission of sins and received the gift of Holy Ghost. And we have got at present time a territorial government of our own legislature [to] make our own laws, have built up a large city—this was some time ago—made several other similar ones, produced a great change in the desert, and provided for [our] wants. And



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[a] great people are now sending out means to gather the people to that place we are from. [We are] prospered, independent, and happy.

"We have done the thing you have been seeking to do and have not been able to. We have accomplished the very thing you have tried to do but could not qualify [to do], not by seeking to do it.

"God has done it. We give Him the glory. [But] you have [been] seeking to do it without Him and have failed and will fail."

"Well," says he. "I can't deny what you say," says he. "They are living facts before me; I can't deny your assertions. You [have] got independent territory, [the] means to gather the poor, possess the spirit of philanthropy, but your baptism, etc., is [a] mystery to me."

Give the World Something to See

A French gentleman with whom I traveled from New Orleans to St. Louis—says he, "Mr. Taylor, [a] great many associations [of] communist parties and others have drawn up very nice plans on paper [of] what [they are] going to do, but you have done something.... All [the] time, [I] told them I wanted something to look at. You have presented a spectacle for people to gaze [upon]. If I had time, nothing [would] give me more pleasure [than] to visit Salt Lake City."

And [there is] nothing that produces a greater influence upon [the] mind of [a] reflecting man than to know the position that we keep in a temporal point of view. Nothing abroad that I know of produced a greater effect, [as I was] preaching all over yonder.

The world have been preached to death. Missionaries [are] all over, but there has been so many of them spreading abroad, circulating every kind of information, [that] people got sick of it. [It] appears nonsense [to them]. The world are desirous to see certain principles of intelligence and wisdom, [but] they have sought it in vain in [the] religious world. They see [the] same point of view as we do: folly and nonsense, nothing in it to satisfy the capacious desires of [the] intelligent mind—and they want to see something else.

If an Alien Came to Earth

Let a man arrive in this world ignorant ... [of the] grand prejudices of man as they are taught and [of] customs and usages. What [would he] think of it?

Suppose [he] wanted to know anything about God. Where [should he] go to get his intelligence?

Could you point him out to any place in [the] world [to] go [for] it?

Suppose he arrive here from some other planets of God somewhere. What information [is there] concerning Him [here]?

He would have to read over whole volumes of divinity, ... wade through the masses [of] Presbytery, Universalism, Catholicism, Jumperism, Quakerism, and all other -isms....

And if he [had] been accustomed to [a] world of order where he came from, if things [were] governed upon correct principles there, and he came here—saw nations confused, churches in array against each other, men in [conflict] with [their] fellow [men]





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and each one trying to tread upon [the] neck of another—what [would] be his feelings?

[He would] say [there was] not much of [the] order of God. If he had been accustomed to correct government, ... I think he would want to go back to his own planet.

Reflections on War and Power

The world presents before us a scene of confusion, and I may well ask why it is. Why has there been war after war and calamity after calamity? Why [does] nation rush against nation in mad confusion and sweep off and destroy a human family from the earth? Why is it that there [have] been groans and misery and ruin? Why [have] these things overspread the earth?

It is because man has forsaken God. He has trusted to his own intelligence, in his own regency, has forgotten God and has set to rule himself....

Men have tried governments, have tried kings, have tried emperors, have tried philosophers, statesmen, politicians, and every sort of man has tried to ameliorate the condition of mankind—and what have they done? They have tried republic[an] government[s], monarchical governments, despotic governments; they have tried every sort and division of governments compounded of those three different kinds—but what have they done? Have [they] done anything? Certain[ly] [they] have not.

If you notice the position of [the] world as it now exists, what is it you see? The world divided up nationally into [a] variety of nations, and each nation has its own peculiar interest to maintain without any respect for the general good of others.... The governments of [the] earth—to use the mildest terms—watch each other like bandit[s] ... going abroad plundering each other like robbers. I am not speaking without understanding, using these terms. I will witness, for instance, the dealing of England with China.

What [did] they do?

Gave a great company certain power to trade, put them in possession of exclusive privilege. [This company] could furnish an army assisted by England, conquered regions over, brought them into bondage, [and] made slaves of them.

What then?

[They] set them to work to raise poison instead of bread: opium.

What then?

They went to sell this to the Chinese [in exchange] for tea. And because the Chinese were not long[ing] to be poisoned, [they] passed a law that none of this should come into their land and destroyed it the same as Bostonians did the tea. They destroyed it and [were] not willing to have any contraband enter there.

What did [the British do] then?

They sent [an] immense army over to kill them—and after [having] killed them, made them pay an immense amount for doing it. This is the end of all that monopoly [and] trade.

[And] what good [was] accomplished by it? That the people in England might be blessed with that article: tea. [The] great end of that whole matter, of all this distress and misery, [was] that the few, or [one] land, might have tea.

Now I come to the United States. In America here, some little time ago, one of our presidents wanted to make a name of himself.



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"I presumed now," says General [Zachary] Taylor, "[if] you go and enter into certain disputed territory"—Texas—"they won't stand it and ... they will fight, [but] we are able to wipe them out, and we will get the Californias of it." This is [the] way things [were] done, in plain language. [It is now] talked of in other ways, [a] nice gloss [put] over it and [the] injuries received....

Suppose half [a] dozen large men go into a man's house [with] big sticks and take out pork, cheese, and butter and sit down in that house and eat. What [do you] think of them? You must call them honorable because [they've] got big sticks.

What is the reason of all these changes of states and states falling into other hands, to [other] powers possessing different governments, [that has] taken place from time to time? The reason is because the men have had the power of it.

Like [the] pious men [of the] West that were [driven] from England because of its piety oath, [who] wanted to get a pitch of land [in the] western valleys [but] didn't know how [to] accomplish it without making a kind of vote of it.

One of them gets up [and] says, "I move the earth [is] the Lord's [and] the fullness thereof."

"I second the motion," says the other.

"All agreed to this, signify for [it] by holding up right hands!" All hands went up.

Another made a motion. Says he, "I move the earth be given to the saints of [the] Most High." It was carried immediately.

Another got up. "I move that we are the saints of Most High."

"I second the motion," says [an]other.

And it was moved and carried that they were saints [of the] Most High.

"So turn out, you Indians!"—and let them possess your valleys. We need not enter into all of the Indian interactions here. [They are] nothing more than the interactions going on among all the nations.

I mention these things to show the position of [the] human family. Kings are making conquest to grasp possessions and wading up to the neck [in] blood to do it—and they die and are damned and don't possess it.

[There is] no possession that a man can have that he doesn't receive from God that can benefit him at all in [the] world to come.

God's Work in Embryo

You can see here among this people a specimen in embryo, the state of what things [shall] be hereafter. Here is a spirit of union, peace, [and] order — a spirit of intelligence, such intelligence [you] meet with nowhere else, because in their passions [they] reject and despise God [and] seek not for His wisdom. And if we have any, either [as it] relates to this world or [the] world to come,... it is that [which has] been communicated to us by the Great Elohim....

If any people [are] blessed, we are blessed—and if we are, let's be careful how we use or abuse them. We have [the] oracles of God in [our] midst. [A] prophet, seer, [and] revelator stands between God and us. [The] organization of [the] Church [is] complete according to [a] pattern [which] exists in [the]

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heavens. And when it is carried out, as it [has] commenced and spreads and spreads and spreads until it fills the world – “thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

Brethren, God bless you. In [the] name of Jesus, amen.



Oct. 10. Burdock, *Ranunculus acris*, rough hawkweed. A drizzling rain to-day. The air is full of falling leaves. The streets are strewn with elm leaves. The trees begin to look thin. The butternut is perhaps the first on the street to lose its leaves. Rain, more than wind, makes the leaves fall. Glow-worms in the evening.



October 11, Monday, [1852](#): In Sydney, Australia, formation of that subcontinent’s 1st university. Principal and Professor of Classics [John Woolley](#) delivered the inaugural address. The initial class consisted of 24 pupils whose preparation had admittedly been inadequate.

The 1st locomotive to be manufactured in the new William Mason shops in Taunton, Massachusetts was named the *James Guthrie*.

HISTORY OF RR



Oct. 11. Monday. Most leaves are already somewhat faded and withered. Their tints are not so bright. The chestnut leaves already rustle with a great noise as you walk through the woods, as they lie light, firm, and crisp. Now the chestnuts are rattling out. The burs are gaping and showing the plump nuts. They fill the ruts in the road, and are abundant amid the fallen leaves in the midst of the wood. The jays scream, and the red squirrels scold, while you are clubbing and shaking the trees. Now it is true autumn; all things are crisp and ripe. I observed the other day (October 8) that those insects whose ripple I could see from the Peak were water-bugs. I could detect the progress of a water-bug over the smooth surface in almost any part of the pond, for they furrow the water slightly, making a conspicuous ripple bounded by two diverging lines, but the skaters slide over it without producing a perceptible ripple. In this clear air and with this glassy surface the motion of every water-bug, ceaselessly progressing over the pond, was perceptible. Here and there amid the skaters.



October 12, Tuesday, [1852](#): As [Queen Victoria](#) and her family traveled by train from Balmoral to Edinburgh, while passing through Stirling along the way she attended to the Highland Hills skylines, producing sketches nothing short of unremarkable.

The theater at Regensburg on the Danube in Bavaria had burned down on July 18th, 1849, and a new theatre, *Neues Haus*, in a neo-Baroque style, had been erected by Karl Kein to plans by d’Hérigoyen. With 4 tiers of seats, it opened on this night with a performance of [Giacomo Meyerbeer](#)’s “[Les Huguenots](#).”





Oct. 12. I am struck by the superfluity of light in the atmosphere in the autumn, as if the earth absorbed none, and out of this profusion of dazzling light came the autumnal tints. Can it be because there is less vapor? The delicacy of the stratification in the white sand by the railroad, where they have been getting out sand for the brick-yards, the delicate stratification of this great globe like the leaves of the choicest volume just shut on a lady’s table. The piled-up history! I am struck by the

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slow and delicate process by which the globe was formed.

Paddled on Walden. A rippled surface. Scared up ducks. Saw them first far over the surface, just risen, — two smaller, white-bellied , one large, black [Black Duck  *Anas rubripes* (~~Dusky Duck~~)]. They circled round as usual, and the first went off, but the black one went round and round and over the pond five or six times at a considerable height and distance, when I thought several times he had gone to the river, and at length settled down by a slanting flight of a quarter of a mile into a distant part of the pond which I had left free; but what beside safety these ducks get by sailing in the middle of Walden I don't know. That black rolling-pin with wings, circling round you half a mile off for a quarter of an hour, at that height from which he sees the river and Fair Haven all the while, from which he sees so many things, while I see almost him alone. Their wings set so far back. They are not handsome, but wild.

“What, in ample share of the light of heaven each pond and lake on the surface of the globe enjoys! No woods are so dark and deep but it is light above the pond. Its window or skylight is as broad as its surface. It lies out patent to the sky. From the mountain-top you may not be able to see out because of the woods, but on the lake you are bathed in light.

I can discern no skaters nor water-bugs on the surface of the pond, which is now rippled. Do they, then, glide forth to the middle in calm days only, by short impulses, till they have completely covered it?

A new carpet of pine leaves is forming in the woods. The forest is laying down her carpet for the winter. The elms in the village, losing their leaves, reveal the birds' nests.

I dug some [ground-nuts](#) in the railroad bank with my hands this afternoon, the vine being now dead. They were nearly as large as hen's eggs, six inches or a foot beneath the surface, on the end of a root or strung along on it. I had them roasted and boiled at supper time. The skin came readily off like a potato. Roasted, they have an agreeable taste very much like a potato, though somewhat fibrous in texture. With my eyes shut, I should not know but I was eating a rather soggy potato. Boiled, they were unexpectedly quite dry, and though in this instance a little strong, a more nutty flavor. With a little salt, a hungry man would make a very palatable meal on them. It would not be easy to find them, especially now that the vines are dead, unless you knew beforehand where they grew.




October 13, Wednesday, [1852](#): [Marietta Alboni](#) gave a recital in Manhattan.

[John Lloyd Stephens](#), who had helped rediscover the ancient Maya civilization of Middle America, died at the age of 46 of the severe injuries he had sustained in a fall from a mule near Bogotá in 1849 and of malaria he had contracted in Panama during Spring 1852.



Oct. 13. P.M. — To Cliffs.

Many maples have lost all their leaves and are shrunk all at once to handsome clean gray wisps on the edge of the meadows, where, crowded together, at a distance they look like smoke. This is a sudden and important change, produced mainly, I suppose, by the rain of Sunday, 10th. The autumnal tints have commonly already lost their brightness. It lasts but a day or two. Corn-spurry and spotted polygonum and polygala.

Fair Haven Pond, methinks, never looks so handsome as at this season. It is a sufficiently clear and warm, rather Indian-summer day, and they are gathering the apples in the orchard. The warmth is more required, and we welcome and appreciate it all. The shrub oak plain is now a deep red, with grayish, withered, apparently white oak leaves intermixed. The chickadees [**Black-capped Chickadee**  *Parus atricapillus*] take heart, too, and sing above these warm rocks. Birches, hickories, aspens, etc., in the distance, are like innumerable small flames on the hillsides about the pond. The pond is now most beautifully framed with the autumn-tinted woods and hills. The water or lake, from however distant a point seen, is always the centre of the landscape. Fair Haven lies more open and can be seen from more distant points than any of our ponds. The air is singularly fine-grained; the sward looks short and firm. The mountains are more distinct from the rest of the earth



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and slightly impurpled. Seeming to lie up more. How peaceful great nature! There is no disturbing sound, but far amid the western hills there rises a pure white smoke in constant volumes. That handsome kind of sedge (?) which lasts through the winter must be the *Scirpus Eriophorum*, red cotton-grass of Bigelow, and wool-grass (under bulrush and club-rush) of Gray.

 October 14, Thursday, 1852: [Washington Hoppin](#) got married with Louise Claire Vinton (1832-1891).

[Frederick Douglass](#) spoke at the mass free democratic convention at Ithaca, New York.³⁶

Mr. Chairman:—

I esteem it a very great privilege to address this Convention. I take you to represent the spirit of freedom and progress in Tompkins.

Sir, I am not sensible of possessing any special aptitude or qualification, to instruct you in minute political questions, which may affect your material interests. I know little of banks or tariffs, of commerce or currency. Yet, I have one great political idea, and so far as that can bear upon your political relations and duties, I am willing to present it this evening. That idea is an old one. It is widely and generally assented to; nevertheless, it is very generally trampled upon and disregarded. — The best expression of it, I have found in the Bible. It is in substance, RIGHTEOUSNESS EXALTETH A NATION—SIN IS A REPROACH TO ANY PEOPLE.

Sir, this constitutes my politics, the negative and positive of my politics, and the whole of my politics.

I hold that nations, no more than individuals, may hope for peace and prosperity while they trample upon the sacred principles of justice, liberty, and humanity; and as a member of society, under the laws and institutions of this country, I feel it my duty to do all in my power to infuse this idea into the public mind, that it may speedily be recognized and practiced upon by our people.

Fellow-citizens, I am not an old man, nor have I had great opportunities for studying the history of this country. My sphere of observation and experience was, for more than twenty years, limited to the slave plantation.

I have been a slave, and could learn but little, when a slave, of what was going on in this country and world about me. A slave prison is worse than a States prison. In the States prison a man may know something and think something of the past; but the inmates of the slave prison know nothing of the past, present or future. Clouds and darkness overshadow them, and facts familiar to others are unknown to them.

Humble, however, as I am, and limited as is my knowledge, I must be allowed to say that, never has there been a time when the great principles of justice, liberty and humanity were put in more imminent peril than at the present moment. Never was there a time when the friends of these great principles were more loudly and imperatively called upon to stand by these principles

36. Frederick Douglass' Paper, October 22, 1852



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than now.

The ruling parties of the country have now flung off all disguises, and have openly and shamelessly declared war upon the only saving principles known to nations. Their platforms, adopted at [Baltimore](#), embrace the whole slave system, as worthy of their regard and support. To expose those platforms, and to rebuke those parties, becomes the duty of every intelligent and patriotic voter in this republic.

These parties, fellow-citizens, are now soliciting you for your votes. They want the reins of government to enable them to accomplish certain objects.

What these objects are, you are to learn from their platforms. They want power, and want you to give it to them; and in their platforms they tell you what they mean to do with power when they get it.

There is quite a gain here; for in whatever else these parties are to be condemned, they are certainly to be commended for their frankness. I repeat, they want power, and ask you to give it to them; and they have boldly and plainly told you just what use they mean to make of it when they get it. - No man who votes for General Scott or for General Pierce can so vote without knowing precisely the use to which his vote is to be put.

You all know, gentlemen, that there was an attempt, both in the Whig and in the Democratic Convention at [Baltimore](#), to nominate candidates before adopting their platform. - The motive for this was to leave candidates room for double dealing, and to make them independent of the platforms. But the South scouted this as a cowardly policy, and it failed. They cried out principles, not men; and that cry prevailed.

The candidates are, therefore, subject, not superior to the platforms. The candidates are after, not before the platforms. The whole matter is here in a nut shell. The candidates who have stepped upon these platforms, pledge themselves, before God and the world, to carry out the policy set forth in the platforms. There is no escape from this common sense view of the case. There is no back door here. There is no other way which men can climb. The way of entrance and the way of exit are the same.

The efforts of certain Whigs and Democrats to escape from this dilemma are very miserable. They tell us they mean to vote for the candidates of their parties, but that they repudiate the platforms. They hold the platforms to be simply the opinions of the men who voted for them in the Convention matter, it strikes a death blow at all political integrity and destroys confidence in all political creeds, and in all the men who adopt them. Honesty is the best policy even in dealing with slaveholders. Carry out this dodging doctrine, and no man voting would know to what use his vote is to be put - what measures his vote will support, and what measures his vote will defeat. Upon this theory, the Whig slaveholders may vote for Scott, because he is on the platform, and the Whig abolitionists may vote for him because he is too good to be on the platform, and because he will cheat the South if he shall be elected. Now I hold this to be a desperate piece of political dishonesty; eating the devil, while piously repudiating his broth is no thing to this.

There is something really amusing in the evolutions of the anti-slavery Whigs who have brought themselves to vote for the Whig



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candidates. When we tell them that by voting for General Scott they vote for the [Baltimore](#) platform, they say not at all. We vote for the candidate, not the platform.

Now it would be quite as sensible to say we vote for the men, not their principles. – These candidates were selected to carry out the platforms upon which they secured their nominations, and this everybody knows.

The authorship of this pro-candidates, anti-platform theory, must go to the credit of Mr. Greeley of the N. Y. Tribune – a man whose moral convictions are always kept beyond hearing distance behind his political action. He tells us that he defies, repudiates and spits upon the [Baltimore](#) platform; that he is not bound by it, and don't mean to be. Yet he claims to be a Whig, and gives his support to the Whig candidates.

Gentlemen, I fight no shadow. Mr. Greeley is keeping back from our cause in this county thousands whose hearts are with us. Almost every man with whom I have met in your country who avows his intention to vote for Scott and Graham, does so, with a kick at the [Baltimore](#) platforms. – They shield their inconsistency under this Greeley sophistry.

It is true, sir – this is a very shallow sophistry – a very miserable covering; but you know a drowning man will catch at a straw. Like almost all sophistry, its effect is produced by a skilful substitution of a false for the real issue. It calls attention from the vote to the state of mind of the voter, from his pro-slavery vote to his anti-slavery character, from his actions to his professions.

Now, we who call ourselves of the Free Democracy do not deny that the Whig platform ought to be defied and spit upon. That is our doctrine exactly. We not only think so, believe so, and feel so, but we are prepared to act so.

We do not deny that Mr. Greeley and other anti-slavery Whigs, think, believe and feel as we do. They spit, repudiate and defy; but that does not meet the case. The question is not whether they thus spit and defy; but does this spit and defiance go along with their vote, or does it, like spit to the windward, come straight back in their faces?

We know you hate your platform in your hearts; but we complain that you do not in your votes. You love liberty and vote against it. You hate slavery and the fugitive slave act, and then vote for the twin abominations. When we condemn your votes, you vindicate your opinions; when we assail your deeds, you defend your motives. Is this honest? Is it manly?

What matter is it to the man in chains, whether his chains are voted on by an anti-slavery or by a pro-slavery man, by a Christian or by an infidel? It is not the motives nor the opinions of the voter, but it is the vote that either rivets or breaks his fetters.

It does seem strange that men can be found who can act so inconsistently.

The candidates of the two great parties have accepted their nominations, understandingly and distinctly. And these nominations have not been more distinctly and understandingly accepted than have the platforms; both came from the same bodies, and were presented at the same time, and accepted at the same time. There can be no mistake about it.



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Now, for these candidates to allow themselves to be voted for while on these platforms, and then turn round after getting into power and violate the principles and measures set forth in them, would be nothing less than political treachery of the basest kind.

General Scott might well say of that class, save me from my friends; for just in proportion to the success of Mr. Greeley at the North, must be General Scott's unpopularity at the South. Sir, I leave this miserable paper castle to be disposed of by that Hale storm which is beginning to show itself in the political firmament. With the remark, that considering how much the Whig party North has had to complain of in the way of treachery, bad luck and the like; how much Mr. Greeley belabored the unfortunate accidental President eleven years ago, for treachery to Whig principles and Whig measures; it does seem that this spit and repudiation theory should have emanated from another quarter than the Whig party, and from another pen than that of [Horace Greeley](#). Whig principles and obligations were quite loose enough before this shock. Whiggery cannot stand much more. I apprehend that this one will kill it, at least in the South, where it has heretofore had little better than a name to live.

But we are asked by the Whig and Democratic parties to give them power. What they want with power they have frankly told us.

The question is, can we innocently and wisely give them our votes, and secure to them the reins of government which they crave? Ought we to vote for them, or ought we to vote against them, is the question? — Let us see. There is, in this country, a system of injustice and cruelty, shocking to every sentiment of humanity — a crime and scandal, making this country a hissing and a bye-word to the world, and liable to the judgements of a righteous God.

This stupendous iniquity, this giant crime, this murderous system is, Slavery.

There is nothing to which we can liken it. It is barbarous, monstrous, and bloody. — Crushed beneath this most horrible institution, are three millions of our countrymen. These are subject to the terrible inflictions of the fetter, the lash, and the chain. These suffering men and women have been held, and are now held, to gratify the pride, to indulge the indolence, to minister to the lust and pleasure of three hundred thousand slaveholders.

For a long time, these slaveholders have, with greater or less completeness, ruled this nation. They have had the lion's share in all the honors and emoluments of office. — They govern the state in which they live. — They monopolize all state offices, unless it be the office of negro-whipper. This they are willing to have Northern ruffians to do for them. It is next to impossible for any man in the Southern States, not a slaveholder, to get into any respectable office above that of a constable or a negro-driver.

In South Carolina, a man who is not able to own ten slaves cannot be a member of the Legislature. He may be, in every respect, qualified as a legislator, a sober, honest, intelligent and patriotic man; but if the blood of his brother man be not in his skirts, he is, by law, disqualified to legislate in South



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Carolina.

What is law in South Carolina, is custom in nearly all the slave states of this Union.

The slaveholders gather up the reins of the government, and pocket the rewards of office, to the exclusion and degradation of the honest and industrious free white man of the South. The thirst of the slaveholder for power is insatiable. The more they get, the more they want. Every concession is followed by a new and still more unreasonable demand. To comply with one demand, is only to pave the way to a new exaction. - The history of this country shows that between freedom and slavery there has been a constant systematic effort on the part of the latter to extinguish and destroy the former. The struggle has been long and fierce, and the combatants are still in the field.

It may be well, in this connection, to call to mind a few facts in the history of this struggle, and to take a general view of the different phases of the slave power.

Daniel Webster said at [Springfield MA](#), that nations, not less than individuals, do well to pause at certain periods, and survey the past, examine the present, and, in the light of these, contemplate the future. This is but one of many sage suggestions from the same quarter. What of the right? - Whether are we tending? Is the ship of State sound, tight and free? or is she leaky and liable to sink? Are we out of danger? or are we in the midst of sharp and flinty rocks? Are we advancing? or are we retrograding? These questions concern every American citizen.

The Slavery power has aimed at two objects from the beginning. First, to acquire a wide and fertile territory; second, to control the government. It needs endless, limitless fields over which to pour its poisonous and blasting influence. Its province is not to replenish, but to wear out the earth. Its course is like that of the locusts of Egypt; ruin and desolation are in its track.

The virgin soil of Virginia, once the most fertile, inviting and beautiful, is now spread out like a withered branch on the Republic, cursed and blighted by slavery. Whole villages, once thronged with people are now deserted, and crumbling in ruins. North Carolina is rapidly going to decay; and all the older slave states are witnesses to the ruinous influence of slavery. The contrast between Kentucky and Ohio is familiar to you all; and the causes of that contrast are known to every intelligent American. - Cassius M. Clay, himself a Kentuckian, has unfolded these causes, and demonstrated, beyond all question that emancipation tomorrow, so far from making his native state poorer, would on the very instant make that State richer. Yet, there she lies, in the ruinous embrace of Slavery, venting her curses and repinings over the prosperity, progress and intelligence of her neighboring sister. Her children, instead of remaining with her, making all her hills, valleys, and plains cheerful, are straying away into the limitless Southwest, to plant, only to poison the virgin soil, with slavery. As with the slaveholders of [Kentucky](#), so with the slaveholders of all the older slave states.

When I was a boy, the most dreaded doom to which a slave could be subjected, was that of being sold to Georgia. That was our Southern slave market thirty years ago. Since then, the surplus

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increase of human stock has demanded new outlets and new markets. Virginia has asked for fresh markets for her human produce; and the North has consented and conceded the request. — We are starving, said Virginia. Our negroes are swarming around us, and are literally eating us out of house and home. We must have relief. We must have a market for human flesh, or we are ruined. We have sometimes been told that Virginia was moving for the abolition of slavery; but that the injudicious course of Northern abolitionists has put back the cause in that State, and defeated the benevolent designs of Virginia in this matter.

I am persuaded that this statement is far from the truth. The real cause for the defeat of the anti-slavery movement in Virginia is found in the fact that Northern pro-slavery men have, whenever slave property has decreased in value, opened new markets for human flesh, and raised its price. Thus, when slavery was dying from its utter unprofitableness, new life and vigor have been imparted to its expiring frame by Northern men and by Northern votes.

The purchase of Louisiana, the annexation of Texas, the war with the Seminoles, and the war with [Mexico](#), were all measures commenced and carried on for the purpose of giving prosperity and perpetuity to slavery, and for maintaining the sway of the slave power over the republic. Any man who doubts this, has only to read "Jay's view of the action of the federal government," and his "Review of the Mexican war," to have his doubts entirely removed.

Gentlemen, let us inquire, What was the state of the anti-slavery question four years ago? I mean in its political aspects. Fourteen legislatures had solemnly instructed their representatives in Congress to vote for the Wilmot Proviso. Innumerable political conventions throughout the North had declared in favor of excluding slavery from the newly acquired territories from Mexico. This policy had the support of leading men of the North. Daniel Webster had declared his unalterable determination to oppose the farther extension of slavery. Whigs and Democrats vied with each other in professions of hostility to the slavery propagandism of the ultra-slave holding politicians of the South. This sentiment became so strong that a powerful party was organized, solemnly pledging itself to "fight on and fight ever" against slavery, and the ascendancy of the slave power in the councils of the nation. The agitation in this direction was general and wide spread. The North was in flame. The eloquence of the Stantons, the Van Burens, the Butlers, the Kings, roused the Northern feeling, and excited intense and burning enthusiasm among the people. No more Slave States, No more Slave Territory, Free States, Free Men, and Free Territory, leaped joyously from Northern lips, of all parties and creeds. The movement appeared formidable. The South became alarmed, and it was evident that leading men at the South felt that their crafty wisdom was about to be confounded, and their counsels brought to nought. They changed their aggressive tactics for a defensive attitude. They declared that Congress had no right to decide what should be the character of the institutions established in the territories, and that that question should be left to the territories themselves.

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Such, gentlemen, was the state of this question four years ago. The cause of freedom looked auspicious. For the first time in the political history of this nation there did appear a strong likelihood that the people and the politicians in the North would remain firm and unyielding; that they would withstand the shock of Southern aggression with manly courage; and that freedom would come off victorious.

But, alas! Northern integrity and spirit were no match for the dogged persistence, seductive blandishments, and bribery of the South. The slaveholders entirely outgeneralled the men of the North at the very outset of the winter of '49, with a boldness creditable to their sagacity. The slaveholding members of Congress, under the lead of Mr. Calhoun, organized themselves into a sort of Congress of their own, and marked out the kind of legislation which the legitimate Congress should adopt, and threatened that direful consequences would ensue if Congress should, in its wisdom, disregard the views and opinions held by them, the slaveholders. We all remember how this movement operated. The cry of Danger to the Union was raised. FOOTE, the fire-eater and hangman, led the American Senate in this cry. He was followed by the late Mr. Clay, who boldly assailed the policy of Gen. Taylor, and drew vivid pictures of "dismal terror and dire confusion," of "disunion," and civil war. Cass followed in the same course. Douglas, with characteristic wariness, encouraged the idea that something really terrible was at hand. He, of course, was for concession; everything was to be done to save the Union.

Gentlemen, the trick worked admirably. — Man after man gave in his adhesion, to the cry of Danger to the Union. Papers of all parties flamed with it; and the land was filled with dread and apprehension.

Still, gentlemen, there was hope. The great Expounder had not spoken. He stood before the country openly and strongly committed to the principles of the Free Soil Party; and he was known in private to have encouraged the young Whigs of New England to stand by the principle of the ordinance of '87. But to the disappointment and mortification of all who had confidence in him, Daniel Webster fell; and "what a fall was there, my countrymen!"

"Then I, and you, and all of us fell down, And bloody
treason flourished o'er us."

The North stood appalled and paralyzed, deserted, abandoned, and betrayed — cowed and bowed down under the proud domination and impudence of the lords of the lash. Such was the state of this question after the seventh of March, '50. The slaveholders waxed bolder every hour; and the men of the North humbler. There was now no doubt that the South could get its most extravagant demands complied with.

Texas, that most powerful and warlike State, wanted ten millions of money. She only had to threaten that she would whip the United States, to get every dollar of it. I am only surprised that she did not ask for twenty millions, instead of ten. She might have got it easily. I drop this glance at the past. It is a sickening theme. I have alluded to it with a view to refresh your memories,



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and to awaken that indignation which it is fitted to inspire. I come now to the more immediate question before us. I presume I speak to some men who have not made up their minds as to who they shall vote for in the coming election; and that they are candidly considering that question. To them I would speak.

There are now three parties in the field—the Whig, the Democratic and the Free Democratic party.

The two large parties are now, if they were not before, united on the only great question which really and seriously divided the country.

Old differences have subsided; old issues have been laid aside. The only question about which there seems a division of opinion, respects the matter of river and harbor improvements; and here the difference is seeming, rather than real.

The Whigs are in favor of making constitutional appropriations for this purpose; and the Democrats are opposed to unconstitutional appropriations. So that there is, after all, no direct issue — no great principle in the matter of public policy which divides them.

The struggle seems purely one of men, which men shall have the dispensing of power and place the next four years. Here, there is a strong division, and the contrast is warm. But what are the measures, sentiments, and principles which both parties ask you to support?

This question is important. I will answer it in my homely way. They ask you to give them power to make the compromise measures of 1850 a final settlement of the slavery question. The resolutions on this point stand at the head of many of their papers, as the corner-stone of those parties.

The first objection, and a very important one to these platforms, is the idea that human enactments may be “final” in this country; that one generation may tie the hands of another; that the darkness of the past shall be preferred to the light of the present; that like the laws of the Medes and Persians, the laws of the Republic shall remain unchanged. I say that this is an idea that every American citizen is bound to oppose. It strikes a deadly blow at the spirit and the hope of progress; and reduces the growing limbs of the Republic to cramping cast-iron moulds. The thing is unnatural, and no more to be countenanced in this country, than iron shoes for the feet of American women.

Besides, if one law can be put beyond the reach of future generations, all laws may; and one generation may not only enjoy the right of making laws for themselves, but do up the legislation for all generations to come.

Now, I think that one legislature ought to be satisfied with making such laws as it in its wisdom or its folly may determine, without reaching its death fingers into the living future and controlling future legislatures.

The next thing they ask you to do, is to authorize them to admit unnumbered States into the Union, with slavery. You are to bind yourselves, that when one of these States ask admission into this Union, you will not raise the question of the wisdom or the wickedness of admitting another slave-cursed member into this Republic. There is no fiction here. Those States are to be admitted with or without slavery. But everybody knows that the

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"without" means nothing, and meant nothing at the time. Hon. [Horace Mann, Sr.](#), in a speech of surpassing power and eloquence, has shown that slavery already exists in New Mexico. It has been long known that slaveholders design to force the slave system upon Utah. — In this they may not succeed; but the question of success or failure depends upon you. The votes of the North are to decide the case. Should there be a strong vote for Hale and Julian, slavery will be checked. — Northern men will be made to feel there is a North. Otherwise, slavery may run rampant. Again; the Whig Party and the Democratic Party ask you for power; the one to discountenance, and the other to resist agitation; or in other words, to discountenance and resist the exercise of the right of speech. These parties express themselves with great emphasis on this point, leaving no doubt of the importance which they attach to this particular item of their creed. The Whigs mean to discountenance, and the Democrats mean to resist agitation. — They are going to do so whenever and wherever the evil may appear, whether in Congress or out of Congress, they will discountenance and resist. Here, then, is a deliberate, open, and decided attempt to discourage and fetter the constitutional and natural right of speech. — Whigs and Democrats, in their party and organized capacity, have resolved to discourage and resist agitation at all times, in all places, in Congress or out of Congress. We are bound to regard this declaration on their part, not merely as a vague sentiment, but one which may be incorporated into the legislation of this country. It appears in their political platforms, and is presented with other objects to be accomplished by the parties adopting them. If these parties mean anything more than mere bravado, they mean to make their discountenance and resistance a reality, even to the extent of suppressing agitation by law, making it penal to discuss the question of slavery. This right of speech is very dear to the hearts of intelligent lovers of liberty. It is the delight of the lovers of liberty, as it is the dread and terror of tyrants. Why, then, have these two great parties arrayed themselves against its exercise? — Why have they imitated the crowned heads of the old world in warring upon it? The answer is, we have got in this country a system of wickedness which cannot bear the light of free discussion. We have here 3,000,000 of God's children bound in chains, and who are murderously robbed of all their dearest rights; and to save their atrocious system from the execration of the American people, these parties have openly declared it to be their purpose to abridge the right of speech. The purpose, and the means to accomplish it, are alike worthy of each other. To chain the slave, these parties have said we must fetter the free! To make tyranny safe, we must endanger the liberties of the nation, by destroying the paladium of all liberty and progress — the freedom of speech. It is idle and short-sighted to regard this question as merely relating to the liberties of the colored people of this country. The wrong proposed to be done touches every man. If, to-day, these parties can put down the right of speech on

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one subject, to-morrow they may do so on another. If they can prohibit the discussion of the rights of black men, they may also, bye and bye, prohibit the discussion of the rights of white men. – "Liberty for all, or chains for all."

Daniel Webster said, in his earlier and better days:

"Important as I deem it, to discuss on all proper occasions the policy of the measures at present pursued it is still more important to maintain the right of such discussion in its full and just extent. Sentiments lately sprung up, and now growing fashionable, make it necessary to be explicit on this point. The more I perceive a disposition to check the freedom of inquiry, by extravagant and unconstitutional pretenses the firmer shall be the tone, and the freer the manner in which I shall exercise it. – It is the ancient and the undoubted prerogative of the people to canvass public measures, and the merits of public men. It is "a home-bred right," a fire-side privilege. It hath ever been enjoyed in every house, cottage, and hamlet in the nation. It is not to be drawn into the controversy. It is as undoubted as the right of breathing the air, or walking on the earth. Belonging to private life as a right, it belongs to public life as a duty; and it is the last duty which those whose representative I am shall find me to abandon. Aiming at all times to be courteous and temperate in its use, except when the right itself shall be questioned, I shall then carry it to its extent. I shall place myself on the extreme boundary of my rights, and bid defiance to any arm that would move me from my ground. – This high constitutional privilege I shall defend and exercise within this house, and without this house, in all places, in time of peace, in time of war, and at all times. Living, I shall assert it; dying, I shall assert it, and should I leave no other inheritance to my children, by the blessing of God I will still leave them the inheritance of free principles, and the example of a manly, independent, and conscientious discharge of them." Now it is just this "high constitutional right" which you are called upon by the Whig and Democratic parties to crush. Slavery is so false, unnatural, brutal, and shocking, that it won't bear the light of discussion; and, therefore, discussion must be put down. The system is like Lord Grandy's character: it can only "pass without censure, as it passeth without observation;" and, therefore, the nation must be blindfolded. – Its lips must be padlocked; and you, fellow-citizens, are called upon to aid by your votes this blindfolding and padlocking system.

And this is to be done, fellow-citizens, to give peace to slaveholders. These parties have attempted to do what God has declared impossible to be done. "There can be no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."

Suppose it were possible to put down the free speech, what would it avail the guilty slaveholder? Pillowed as he is upon the bosoms of ruined souls, he would still be troubled. If the tongue of every abolitionist were cut out, and every pamphlet and periodical treating of slavery were carried to Washington and burnt in the presence of the assembled nation, and the whole history of the abolition movement were blotted out, still the guilty slaveholder could have "no peace;" bubbling up from the depths of his sin-darkened soul, would come the terrible accusation, "Thou art verily guilty concerning thy brother."



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It would be easy to enlarge on this point, but I must pass on. They ask you to give them power to violate the constitution and to make that violation "final." The constitution of the United States declares that, in suits where the amount in controversy exceeds twenty dollars in value, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved; and that no person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law."

Now, the Fugitive Slave Act notoriously violates both these provisions at once. It scouts the idea of a trial by jury. Instead of "due process," it gives a summary process, and that most scandalously destitute of all show of justice. The judge is bound to hear only one side of the case. The oath of any two villains may consign an American citizen to the hell of slavery for life under this Fugitive Slave Act.

A man may not throw the noose of a rope over the horns of an ox without having his right to do so submitted to a jury; but he may seize, bind and chain a man – a being whose value is beyond all computation, and doom him to life-long bondage by a summary process. Thus, the beast of burden is more sacred in the eye of the law, than is the image of God! Thus, the right of man to himself is deemed of less consequence than the right of man to a brute. Man's dearest interests may be passed upon by a single judge; but the ownership to an ASS must be determined by a jury of twelve impartial men!

Just this monstrous anomaly the Whig and the Democratic parties ask the aid of your votes to make final.

Once more. It has ever been deemed a thing of immense importance among free governments, that the judicial power be placed above every temptation to make corrupt and unjust decisions. The founders of this government had this point distinctly and constantly in view.

To place the judicial officers of this government beyond the possibility of corruption, they inserted these plain and wisely arranged words in the federal constitution: "The judges, both of the supreme and inferior courts, shall receive for their service a compensation which shall not be diminished during their continuance in office." The Fugitive Slave Act violates both in spirit and letter. The judges created under it are supported by, not by a regular salary, but are supported by their fees. Their support depends upon the number of cases which they can get before them. They are not only to try cases; but to get cases to try. They are made to feel a direct and personal interest in getting cases before them. They are tempted to engage in setting nets for the feet of their fellow-men; and when they have caught one, they try him, and get the coveted fee. Let it not be said that honorable men would not do this mean thing. An honorable man would not hold such an office. The work to be done is a work for scoundrels; and scoundrels will be found to do it.

But a still darker shade. This "slave act," and slave-acting judges, are paid ten dollars for every man they decide to be a slave; and only five dollars when they fail to do so. An honorable man would have his right hand cut off before he would sit as a judge under such a disgusting bribe. Yet this horrid law is "final!" Fellow-citizens, there was a time when it was quite common to hear it asked, "what have we to do with slavery?"



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It was affirmed that slavery is a local institution, with which we of the North have nothing to do.

The Fugitive Slave Law has taken away this excuse. Slavery is no longer "sectional," (if it ever were,) but "national" – no longer a mere State institution, but a United States institution. If it never was before, it is now an American institution, to be maintained by all the powers of the American government.

Within the limits of the American government, slavery knows no limits. Wherever the star-spangled banner waves, there may men hold men as slaves.

There is not one spot in the Republic sacred to freedom; but every inch of soil is given up to slavery, slave-hunting, slave-catching, and slaveholding.

Our citizens are compelled to fly from a Republic to a Monarchy for liberty. They fly to the paw of the British Lion for protection from the devouring talons and bloody beak of the American Eagle. "Hail Columbia! Happy land!"

The Israelites had their cities of refuge, to which even the guilty might escape; but our model Republic, under the corrupt and debasing policy of our two parties, has not even a refuge for innocent men. The murderer is better protected than the man without crime. The robber is better protected than the robbed. And this is to be "final."

Gentlemen, I call attention to a matter of still deeper concern. You, yourselves; you – fathers, sons, and brothers, freemen of the North – are compelled, by this "final" act, to throw off the dignity of manhood, and become bloodhounds; to scent out, and hunt down your fellow-men!

This is the Whig and Democratic entertainment, to which you are invited. You are to leave off your honest and honorable employment when you are called upon by the blood-thirsty man-hunters to join in the chase. You are commanded, as good citizens, to do this; and subjected to pains and penalties if you do it not. You are commanded to bound forth at the sound of the hunter's horn.

Are you prepared for this dignified avocation? I will not believe it; yet this constitutes a part of the "finality" which the Whig and Democratic party stand pledged to maintain, and to maintain which they ask your votes in November.

In conclusion, I will present what I deem to be the greatest objection to voting for the candidates of the old parties. It is this:– The system of measures which they have pledged themselves to regard as a "final settlement" of the slavery question, aim a death-blow to Christian, religious liberty. A more deliberate or skillfully aimed blow was never given against Christianity, than is found in this fugitive slave act. I have shown that the law is opposed to the Constitution. It would be quite as easy to show that it is contrary to the gospel, and to the spirit and aim of Christianity. It is true that this law does not interfere with the forms and ceremonies of the Christian religion. It is, however, much worse; in that it is directed against the fundamental principles of Christianity. It strikes at the weightier matters of the law, judgement, mercy and faith.

Christianity commands us, as we would inherit eternal life, to "feed the hungry," clothe the naked, and take in the stranger. This law makes it penal to obey Christ. In the language of Wm. Lloyd Garrison, "we are asked by these political parties to damn our own souls."

Again; it would be impossible to point out a more glaring contempt of the religious sentiment of the religious people of this country, than is furnished in these two platforms. They virtually say to the Christian people of this country, we regard your conscience as mere convenience; your religion as a sham; your faith in God, and love of Christ as things having no connection with your daily practice; and, therefore, not to be considered in connection with your political duties.

Now, I think, Mr. Chairman, and gentlemen, that it becomes the Christian duty of the people of this country to rebuke the contemptuous disregard of Christianity by our political organizations. Whether they will do so or not, remains to be seen. But, in any event, sir, I trust that this Convention has thoroughly made up its mind to go in and come out of the contest with clean hands.



Oct. 14. That coarse yellowish fungus is very common in the paths in woods of late, for a month, often picked by birds, often decayed, often mashed by the foot like a piece of pumpkin, defiling and yellowing the grass, as if a liquor (or dust) distilled from them. The pines are now two-colored, green and yellow, — the latter just below the ends of the boughs. The woods have lost so many leaves they begin to look bare, — maples, poplars, etc., chestnuts. Flowers are fast disappearing. Winter may be anticipated. But few crickets are heard. Jays [Blue Jay] [Cyanocitta cristata] and chickadees [Chicadee, Black-capped] [Parus atricapillus] are oftener heard in the fall than in summer. It is apparently the *Eriophorum Virginicum*, Virginian cotton-grass, now nodding or waving with its white woolly heads over the greenish andromeda and amid the red isolated blueberry bushes in Beck Stow's Swamp. A thousand white woolly heads, one to two inches in diameter, suggesting winter. The lower or older leaves of the andromeda begin to redden. This plant forms extensive solid beds with a definite surface, level or undulating, like a moss bed. Not, like the blueberry, irregular and independent each of the other, but regular and in community, as if covered by a film.

CONTINGENCY


ALTHOUGH VERY MANY OUTCOMES ARE OVERDETERMINED, WE TRUST THAT SOMETIMES WE ACTUALLY MAKE REAL CHOICES. "THIS IS THE ONLY WAY, WE SAY, BUT THERE ARE AS MANY WAYS AS THERE CAN BE



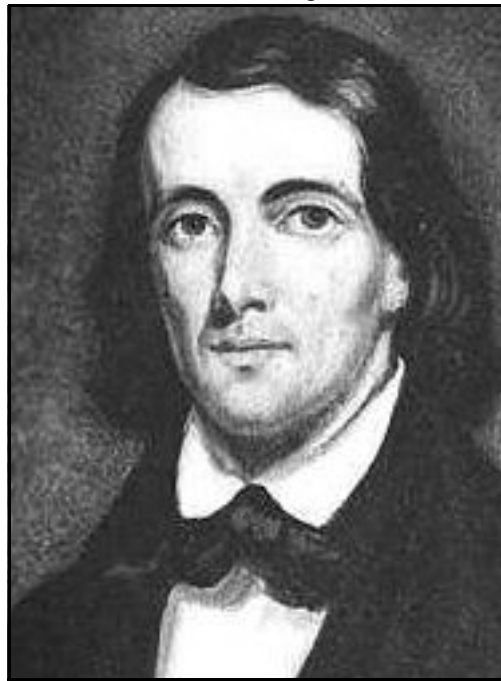
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DRAWN RADII FROM ONE CENTRE.”

 October 15, Friday, 1852: Marietta Alboni gave a recital in Manhattan.

One day in mid-October, perhaps this day and perhaps not, Ellery Channing threw a fit at his dinner table and declared that from that time forward he would be taking his meals in the kitchen.



His wife Ellen Fuller Channing would seek advice from her relatives, such as legal advice from her brother Richard Fuller, and from Ellery's own relatives, such as spiritual advice from the Reverend William Henry Channing, and also from the Reverend Thomas Wentworth Higginson and Mrs. Higginson. She would be barricading the door to her bedroom.




Oct. 15. 9 A.M. — The first snow is falling (after not very cool weather), in large flakes, filling the air and obscuring the distant woods and houses, as if the inhabitants above were emptying their pillow-cases. Like a mist it divides the uneven landscape at a little distance into ridges and vales. The ground begins to whiten, and our thoughts begin to prepare for winter. Whiteweed. The Canada snapdragon is one of the latest flowers noticed, a few buds being still left to blossom at the tops of its spike or raceme. The snow lasted but half an hour. Ice a week or two ago.

P.M. — Walden.

The water of Walden is a light green next the shore, apparently because of the light rays reflected from the sandy bottom mingling with the rays which the water reflects. Just this portion it is which in the spring, being warmed by the heat reflected from the bottom and transmitted through the earth, melts first and forms a narrow canal about the still frozen pond. The water appears blue when the

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surface is much disturbed, also in a single cake of ice; that is, perhaps, when enough light is mixed with it.

The flight of a partridge [**Ruffed Grouse**  *Bonasa umbellus* (Partridge)], leaving her lair (?) on the hillside only a few rods distant, with a gentle whirring sound, is like the blowing of rocks at a great distance.

Perhaps it produces the same kind of undulations in the air.


The rain of the, night and morning, together with the wind, had strewn the ground with chestnuts. The burrs, generally empty, come down with a loud sound, while I am picking the nuts in the woods. I have come out before the rain is fairly over, before there are any fresh tracks oil the Lincoln road by Britton's shanty, and I find the nuts abundant in the road itself.

It. is a pleasure to detect them in the woods amid the firm, crispy, crackling chestnut leaves. There is somewhat singularly refreshing in the color of this nut, the chestnut color. No wonder it gives a name to a color. One man tells me he has bought a wood-lot in Hollis to cut, and has let out the picking of the chestnuts to women at the halves. As the trees will probably be cut for them, they will make rapid work of it.

flow Father Le Jeune pestered the poor Indians with his God at every turn (they must have thought it his one idea), only getting their attention when they required some external aid to save them from starving! Then, indeed, they were good Christians.

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 October 16, Saturday, 1852: George Osgood was born in Cohasset, Massachusetts to Mrs. Ellen Devereux Sewall Osgood and the Reverend Joseph Osgood.



At the Château d'Amboise prison, Louis Napoleon, prince-president of France, released Abd el-Kader, who had been at the head of the Algerian resistance to French occupation until his surrender during December 1847. In this painting by Ange Tissier, the prisoner's mother Lalla Zohra is thanking the French leader for the benevolent care their guard, Captain Boissonet, provided for her son, and for being allowed while imprisoned to live according to their customs:



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
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The minister of foreign affairs of the government of the Netherlands signed the final document allowing the Catholics to re-create an ecclesiastical hierarchy in Holland under [Pope Pius IX](#). Eventually, after the dust of this compact had settled, there would come to be an archbishopric at Utrecht and 4 bishoprics, at Haarlem, Bois-le-Duc, Roermond, and Breda — then there would follow a hot reaction from Dutch Protestants, when the appointment of Catholic bishops was 1st publicly announced—a hot reaction known as the April Movement (*Aprilbeweging*)— and [King Willem III](#) would need to find ways to appease the ire of his Protestants (not an easy thing for him to accomplish as most who had contact with this 6-foot-5 royal person, whose actual name was Willem Alexander Paul Frederik Lodewijk but was familiarly known among his subjects as “King Gorilla,” considered him only notionally sane — he humiliated and terrorized his courtiers, kicked and struck his servants, displayed his genitals to passers-by from a balcony in Montreux, Switzerland, fathered dozens of bastards upon dozens of mistresses, attempted without success to take control of military operations — and was, it has been reported, in addition to everything else, cruel to animals).

Thomas Cholmondeley	6' 4" (?)	
William Buckley	6' 4-7"	
Franklin Benjamin Sanborn	6' 5"	
King William III “King Gorilla” of Netherlands	6' 5"	
Peter the Great of Russia	6' 7"	



Oct. 16. Saturday. The sidewalks are covered with the impressions of leaves which fell yesterday and were pressed into the soil by the feet of the passers, leaving myriad dark spots — like bird-tracks or hieroglyphics to a casual observer.

When are the sparrow -like birds with striped breasts and two triangular chestnut-colored spots on the breasts which I have seen some time, picking the seeds of the weeds in the garden?

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

On this date Lyman A. Ranney of Van Buren, Arkansas sent inside a letter to his brother Henry Sears Ranney of Ashfield, Massachusetts a \$5 bill on the New Orleans Bank, "which I think will go there without much if any discount, it goes at par here." This calls for some explanation as at the time there was no such thing as a \$5 "greenback" in United States currency — that would originate only during the Civil War. At this point banks chartered by States were still issuing their own notes of currency, pieces of bond paper capable of earning interest. What Lyman was saying to his brother Henry was that when he took this bank note of this New Orleans bank to his local bank, they would presumably exchange it for cash coins at its face value rather than refuse to accept it except at some discounted number of cents. Such a banknote might have looked something like the following bill issued a few years later:



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



October 18, Monday, 1852: [William Makepeace Thackeray's HISTORY OF HENRY ESMOND, ESO. A COLONEL IN THE SERVICE OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN ANNE WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.](#)

This historical novel tells the story of the early life of a colonel in the service of Queen Anne of England. Thackeray tells his tale against the backdrop of late 17th- and early 18th-century England -specifically, major events surrounding the English Restoration- and utilizes characters both real (but dramatized) and imagined. It weaves its central character into a number of events such as the Glorious Revolution, the War of the Spanish Succession, the Hamilton/Mohun Duel, and the Hanoverian Succession.

Gold rushes had in the previous year radically changed Australia. The population of the Victoria colony had suddenly doubled as unexpectedly between £7,000,000 and £7,000,000 in precious metal had been put into circulation. When Edward Khull, who described himself as a "Stock and Share Broker," listed on this day in the Commercial Intelligence section of the [Argus](#) newspaper of Melbourne, Australia companies in which investors could purchase shares, he was in effect creating a stock listing, and his stock listing was the 1st one to be created in the down-under subcontinent:

- 5 banks: Union Bank, the Bank of Victoria, Bank of New South Wales, Commercial Banking Company of Sydney, and Bank of Australasia
- 3 railway companies: Melbourne and Hobson's Bay Railway Company (Australia's 1st railway), Melbourne and Geelong Railway Company, and Melbourne and Mount Alexander Railway Company
- 5 other companies: City of Melbourne Gas and Coke Company, Melbourne Water Company, Victoria Insurance Company, Victorian Gold Escort Company, and Australasian Steam Navigation Company

Khull's initiative would lead to the formation of a "Melbourne Brokers Association" that would rent space in the Hall of Commerce on Collins Street as Australia's initial stock exchange.






Oct. 18. Up river to Bittern Cliff.

A mild, still, but cloudy, or rather misty, afternoon. The water is at present perfectly smooth and calm, but covered with a kind of smoky or hazy film. Nevertheless, the reflections of distant woods, though less distinct, are softer, seen through this smoky and darkened atmosphere. I speak only of the reflections as seen in the broader bays and longer reaches of the river, as at the Willow End. The general impression made by the river landscape now is that of bareness and bleakness, the black willow (not yet the golden) and the button-bush having lost almost all their leaves (the latter perhaps all), and the last is covered with the fuzzy mikania blossoms gone to seed, a dirty white. There are a very few polygonums, *hydropiperoides* and perhaps the unknown rose-tinted one, but most have withered before the frosts. The vegetation of the immediate shore and the water is for the most part black and withered. A few muskrat-houses are going up, abrupt and precipitous on one side, sloped on the other. I distinguish the dark moist layer of weeds deposited last night on what had dried in the sun. The tall bulrush and the wool-grass are dry and yellow, except a few in deep water, but the rainbow rush (*Juncus militaris*) is still green. The autumnal tints, though less brilliant and striking, are perhaps quite as agreeable, now that the frosts have somewhat dulled and softened [them]. Now



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that the forest is universally imbrowned, they make a more harmonious impression. Wooded hillsides reflected in the water are particularly agreeable. The undulation which the boat creates gives them the appearance of being terraced. Chickadees [**Black-capped Chickadee**  **Parus atricapillus**] and jays [**Blue Jay**  **Cyanocitta cristata**] are heard from the shore as in winter. Saw two or three ducks  , which fly up before and alight far behind.



October 19, Tuesday, 1852: In San Francisco, Herman C. Leonard sold the brig *Emma Preston* to J. Truman Rufus and H.B. Tichinor.

Henry Thoreau surveyed for John Raynolds some land between the homes of Abel Brooks and Deacon David Wheeler on Sudbury Road that Raynolds had bought from Cyrus Stow.



When he sighted *Gentiana crinita* he made reference to the poem "To the Fringed Gentian" by William Cullen Bryant:



Oct. 19. I see the dandelion blossoms in the path. The buds of the skunk-cabbage already show themselves in the meadow, the pointed involucre (?).

At 5 P.M. I found the fringed gentian now somewhat stale and touched by frost, being in the meadow toward Peter's. (*Gentiana crinita* in September, Bigelow and Gray.) Probably on high, moist ground it is fresher. It may have been in bloom a month. It has been cut off by the mower, and apparently has put out in consequence a mass of short branches full of flowers. This may make it later. I doubt if I can find one naturally grown. At this hour the blossoms are tightly rolled and twisted, and I see that the bees have gnawed round holes in their sides to come at the nectar. They have found them, though I had not. "Full many a flower is born to blush unseen" by man. An hour ago I doubted if fringed gentians were in Concord now, but, having found these, they as it were surrender, and I hear of them at the bottom of N. Barrett's orchard toward the river, and by Tuttle's (?). They are now, at 8 P.M., opening a little in a pitcher. It is too remarkable a flower not to be sought out and admired each year, however rare. It is one of the errands of the walker, as well as of the bees, for it yields him a more celestial nectar still. It is a very singular and agreeable surprise come upon this conspicuous and handsome and withal blue flower at this season, when flowers have passed out of our minds and memories; the latest of all to begin to bloom, unless it be the witch-hazel, when, excepting the latter, flowers are reduced to that small Spartan cohort, hardy, but for the most part unobserved, which linger till the snow buries them, and those interesting reappearing flowers which, though fair and fresh and tender, hardly delude us with the prospect of a new spring, and which we pass by indifferent, as if they only bloomed to die. *Vide* Bryant's verses on the Fringed Gentian.

There are a few bulrushes, lances of the pigmies or the cranes, still green in the brooks. I brought home one big as my finger and almost six feet high. Most are now yellowed and dry.

It is remarkable how tightly the gentians roll and twist up at night, as if that were their constant state. Probably those bees were working late that found it necessary to perforate the flower.

To the Fringed Gentian

Thou blossom bright with autumn dew,
And colored with the heaven's own blue,
That openest when the quiet light
Succeeds the keen and frosty night,

Thou comest not when violets lean
O'er wandering brooks and springs unseen,
Or columbines, in purple dressed,
Nod o'er the ground-bird's hidden nest.

Thou waitest late and com'st alone,

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When woods are bare and birds are flown,
And frost and shortening days portend
The aged year is near his end.

Then doth thy sweet and quiet eye
Look through its fringes to the sky,
Blue—blue—as if that sky let fall
A flower from its cerulean wall.

I would that thus, when I shall see
The hour of death draw near to me,
Hope, blossoming within my heart,
May look to heaven as I depart.

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*Wildflowers Series
Fringed Gentian*



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October 20, Wednesday, 1852: The [San Francisco](#) Town Council purchased the Jenny Lind Theatre for use as its city hall.

[Henry Yesler](#) arrived on this day in *Duwamps* (which is to say, the population center that would be known in some strange future as “Seattle”) from Ohio *via* California and Portland, seeking a suitable site for a mill that he wanted to power by a steam engine. It turned out that the land on the Elliott Bay waterfront of *Duwamps* had already been claimed by Carson Boren (1824?-1912) and Dr. David Maynard (1808-1873), but it turned out that they would be willing to adjust their claims (hmmm, claims that had yet to be filed at the land office) to enable him to locate his mill as well on this waterfront. He would 1st build a cookhouse, and then in early 1853 his milling machinery would arrive by ship from California and in short while his mill would be a-thumping. For awhile Yesler’s Mill would be Seattle’s main industry — for a while its sole industry. By late Summer 1853 Seattle would consist of 20 buildings made of lumber cut at Yesler’s Mill. Yesler’s main business would consist of shipping lumber to California (at first, piles, then planks). His mill would need to go to two 12-hour shifts to supply that market. He would be the 1st to hire natives as well as whites and would treat his workers fairly. In mid-July 1858 his wife [Sarah Burgert Yesler](#) would arrive. Expecting to return from the Northwest soon, Sarah left their 12-year-old [Henry George Yesler](#) behind with relatives in Ohio; however, this lad would fall ill and die during June 1859. Some time later the Yeslers would receive this sad news by steamer. And so it goes.



Oct. 20. Canada snapdragon, tansy, white goldenrod, blue-stemmed ditto. *Aster undulatus*, autumnal dandelion, tall buttercup, yarrow, mayweed. Picking chestnuts on Pine Hill. A rather cold and windy, somewhat wintry afternoon, the heavens overcast. The clouds have lifted in the northwest, and I see the mountains in sunshine, all the more attractive from the cold I feel here, with a tinge of purple on them, a cold but memorable and glorious outline. This is an advantage of mountains in the horizon: they show you fair weather from the midst of foul. The small red Solomon’s-seal berries spot the ground here and there amid the dry leaves. The witch-hazel is bare of all but flowers.

Many a man, when I tell him that I have been on to a mountain, asks if I took a glass with me. No doubt, I could have seen further with a glass, and particular objects more distinctly, — could have counted more meeting-houses; but this has nothing to do with the peculiar beauty and grandeur of the view which an elevated position affords. It was not to see a few particular objects, as if they were near at hand, as I had been accustomed to see them, that I ascended the mountain, but to see an infinite variety far and near in their relation to each other, thus reduced to a single picture. The facts of science, in comparison with poetry, are wont to be as vulgar as looking from the mountain with a telescope. It is a counting of meeting-houses. At the public house, the mountain-house, they keep a glass to let, and think the journey to the mountain-top is lost, that you have got but half the view, if you have not taken a glass with you.



October 21, Thursday, 1852: [Henry Thoreau](#) made some notes that would go into [THE MAINE WOODS](#).

Unsigned material appeared under the heading “Literary Intelligence” in [The Independent](#) of New-York:

ANTI-TOM. — “Uncle Tom’s Cabin contrasted with Buckingham Hall, the Planter’s Home; or, a Fair View of both sides of the Slavery Question.” By Robert Criswell. Published by D. Fanshaw, 106 Nassau-street, 12mo, pp. 152. With Illustrative Pictures. Surely, the “contrast” is very great between the Planter’s House and the Slave’s Cabin. No book or picture is needed to prove this. Nor is it a new idea, that the prospect of marrying a plantation and negroes should make either New Yorkers or



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Englishmen confess a change in their views of slavery.

NORTHWOOD. — Another of the attempts to "head off" Uncle Tom, is a reprint of the work entitled "Northwood; or Life North and South," by Mrs. S.J. Hale. 12mo, pp. 408, stitched. H. Long & Brother, publishers, 48 Ann-street. The title on the cover is headed "Mrs. Hale's Great National Work," which should commend it to the Castle Garden Coalition. In the preface the author informs us that the work was written 25 years ago, as a means of support for her orphan children, and "was written literally with my baby in my arms, the youngling of the flock, whose eyes did not open on the world till its father's were closed in death."

ILLUSTRATED UNCLE TOM. — Messrs. Jewett & Co., Boston, the publishers of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," inform us that they are preparing to issue for the holidays a gift edition of the work entire, in one 8vo volume, with one hundred superb engravings, from designs by Billings, engraved by Bohn & Smith, of Boston, in connection with other eminent engravers. They intend to make it one of the most splendid books ever published in America. One of the engravings will be an elegant steel-plate portrait of Mrs. Stowe. Mr. Jewett adds:—

I take pleasure in informing you that we shall soon publish Uncle Tom in the German language, translated by one of the best German scholars in the country. We hope to get it up to retail for thirty cents, thus placing it within the reach of every German in the country.

An unsigned article appeared in The National Era of Washington DC:

Slavery and its Abuses — Mrs. Stowe and the N. York Courier And Enquirer.

The New York Courier and Enquirer of the 8th instant, contains a well-written editorial, reviewing briefly the controversy between Mrs. Stowe and Dr. Parker, and severely censuring both parties. That a journal so thoroughly pro-slavery in its sympathies should feel constrained to condemn Dr. Parker and his associates, with whom it affiliates, as equally blame-worthy with Mrs. Stowe and her brother, towards whom it occupies, on almost all questions of reform, an antagonistic position, is a plain intimation to the reverend gentleman that his cause is desperate.

But, we refer to the article, not for the benefit of the opinion it advances in relation to this controversy, but for the purpose of commenting upon the judgment it pronounces against Uncle Tom's Cabin. It charges Mrs. Stowe with slandering hundreds of thousands of her own countrymen.

"She has done it, (it says,) by attaching to them as slaveholders, in the eyes of the world, the guilt of the abuses of an institution of which they are absolutely guiltless. Her story is so devised as to present slavery in three dark aspects: first, the cruel treatment of the slaves; second, the separation of families; and, third, their want of religious instruction.

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"To show the first, she causes a reward to be offered for the recovery of a runaway slave, 'dead or alive,' when no reward with such an alternative was ever heard of or dreamed of south of Mason and Dixon's line, and, it has been decided over and over again, in Southern courts, that 'a slave who is merely flying away cannot be killed.' She puts such language as this into the mouth of one of her speakers: 'The master who goes furthest and does the worst, only uses within limits the power that the law gives him;' when in fact the Civil Code of the very State where it is represented the language was uttered, Louisiana, declares that—

"'The slave is entirely subject to the will of his master, who may correct and chastise him, though not with unusual rigor, nor so as to maim or mutilate him, or to expose him to the danger of loss of life, or to cause his death.'

"And provides for a compulsory sale—

"'When the master shall be convicted of cruel treatment of his slaves, and the judge shall deem proper to pronounce, besides the penalty established for such cases, that the slave be sold at public auction, in order to place him out of the reach of the power which the master has abused.'

"'If any person whatsoever shall wilfully kill his slave, or the slave of another person, the said person, being convicted thereof, shall be tried and condemned agreeably to the laws.'

"In the General Court of Virginia, last year, in the case of Southern vs. the Commonwealth, it was held that the killing of a slave by his master and owner, by wilful and excessive whipping, is murder in the first degree, though it may not have been the purpose of the master and owner to kill the slave! And it is not six months since Governor Johnston of Virginia pardoned a slave who killed his master, who was beating him with brutal severity.

"And yet, in the face of such laws and decisions as these, Mrs. Stowe winds up a long series of cruelties upon her other black personages, by causing his faultless hero, Tom, to be literally whipped to death in Louisiana, by his master Legree; and these acts, which the laws make criminal, and punish as such, she sets forth in the most repulsive colors, to illustrate the institution of slavery!

"So, too, in reference to the separation of children from their parents. A considerable part of the plot is made to hinge upon the selling, in Louisiana, of the child Eliza, 'eight or nine years old,' away from her mother; when, had its inventor looked in the statute-book of Louisiana, she would have found the following language: "'Every person is expressly prohibited from selling, separately from their mothers, the children who shall not have attained the full age of ten years.'

"'Be it further enacted, That if any person or persons shall sell the mother of any slave child or children under the age of ten years, separate from said child or children, or shall, the mother living, sell any slave child or children of ten years of age, or under, separate from said mother, said person or persons



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shall be fined not less than one thousand or more than two thousand dollars, and be imprisoned in the public jail for a period of not less than six months nor more than one year.'

"The privation of religious instruction, as represented by Mrs. Stowe, is utterly unfounded in fact. The largest churches in the Union consist entirely of slaves. The first African church in Louisville, which numbers 1,500, and the first African church in Augusta, which numbers 1,300, are specimens. On multitudes of the large plantations in the different parts of the South, the ordinances of the Gospel are as regularly maintained by competent ministers, as in any other communities, North or South. A larger proportion of the slave population are in communion with some Christian church, than of the white population in any part of the country. A very considerable portion of every Southern congregation, either in city or country, is sure to consist of blacks; whereas of our Northern churches, not a colored person is to be seen in one out of fifty.

"The peculiar falsity of this whole book consists in making exceptional or impossible cases the representatives of the system. By the same process which she has used, it would not be difficult to frame a fatal argument against the relation of husband and wife, or parent and child, or of guardian and ward; for thousands of wives and children and wards have been maltreated and even murdered. It is wrong, unpardonably wrong, to impute to any relation of life those enormities which spring only out of the worst depravity of human nature. A ridiculously extravagant spirit of generalization pervades this fiction from beginning to end. The Uncle Tom of the authoress is a perfect angel, and her blacks generally are half angels; her Simon Legree is a perfect demon, and her whites generally are half-demons. She has quite a peculiar spite against the clergy; and, of the many she introduces at different times into the scenes, all save as insignificant exception, are Pharisees or hypocrites. One who could know nothing of the United States and its people, except by what he might gather from this book, would judge that it was some region just on the confines of the infernal world. We do not say that Mrs. Stowe was actuated by wrong motives in the preparation of this work, but we do say that she has done a wrong which no ignorance can excuse and no penance can expiate."

The criticism on "the ridiculously extravagant spirit of generalization" which it is assumed pervades the work, is groundless and unjust. Either the editor never read the book, or his judgment is warped by prejudice. Uncle Tom is neither a perfect nor an imperfect angel, but a singularly good man; and certainly this should not appear strange to one who discourses so eloquently on the extraordinary religious advantages of the slaves. Even supposing that they are not so highly blessed as he fondly imagines, there is nothing unnatural or improbable in such a creation as Uncle Tom. Is it not specially to the poor that the gospel is preached? Did not Christ select his first evangelists from the poor and degraded? Eminent goodness is often the only portion of the lowly. It would seem, indeed, at times, as if the death of all earthly hope were the birth of angelic life. But Uncle Tom is not generalized. He stands all



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alone. Nor are "her blacks generally half angels." There is not one among them all, except Uncle Tom, approaching the angel. They are all human beings, and just such human beings as we may expect to find under a system which, while it crushes the mass of its victims to the earth, furnishes occasions for the display of rare heroism and self-devotion. Of the "blacks" introduced to notice, beside Uncle Tom, three characters are represented as having risen above the degradation of slavery; all the rest illustrate, in painful contrast, its baleful effects.

Nor are "her whites generally half demons." The slaveholder, and Legree, the Yankee apostate, are whole demons; but as for the rest of the whites, they are all human. Shelby is one of a class of people, everywhere abounding, kind enough as the world goes, reluctant to do harm or hurt anybody's feelings, but unwilling to sacrifice self-interest to a Sentiment, generally taking their notions of right and wrong from the laws and usages of the society in which they live. His wife, amiable, kind-hearted, conscientious, but submissive, tries to make the best of a bad system. St. Clair, neither demon nor angel, is invested with attributes which compel our love, despite his failings, and divert the reproach, at first designed for him, against the institution in which he is entangled. His father and brother are fair specimens of Northern business men, retaining in a Southern latitude the rigor of their Northern clime, sagacious, cold, stern, not cruel or wanton, but never suffering themselves to be diverted from the pursuit of their interest, by gentle impulses or dreams of philanthropy. And Eva!—if there be an angel in the book, it is Eva, brightest and loveliest of the creations of Fiction.

In a word, the criticism of the Courier is a gross piece of misrepresentation.

But all this has nothing to do with our main purpose, which is, to review the opinions and statements of the editor of the Courier and Enquirer in relation to Slavery.

First, as to his statements, which are intended to discredit the representations of Slavery in Uncle Tom's Cabin.

Mrs. Stowe "causes a reward to be offered for a runaway slave, dead or alive." She does not pretend, and no reader would infer, that such advertisements are common. They are exceptions, and her object is to show to what the system of Slavery may lead, what spirit it may engender, what enormities it may allow. The Courier and Enquirer takes issue with her, and flatly asserts that no such "alternative was ever heard of or dreamed of south of Mason and Dixon's line, and it has been decided, over and over again, by Southern courts, that 'a slave who is merely flying away cannot be killed.'" We must confess our reluctance to disprove this assertion; it is painful for us to be obliged to deal with examples of savage barbarity; but the truth must be told.

In a book, entitled "American Slavery as it is," the spirit of which we do not always like, but whose statements of facts are sustained by overwhelming evidence, we find six advertisements of this kind, in which rewards are offered for the runaways,



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"dead or alive," – the terms used at times being so shocking that we dislike to reprint them here. We give the papers containing these advertisements, with the dates, so that if there be any error it may be exposed.

Wilmington (N.C.) Advertiser, July 13, 1838 – advertised, "a certain negro man, named Alfred" – same reward offered, "if satisfactory evidence is given of his having been killed."

Same paper, same date. – "My negro man Richard" – "dead or alive."

Macon (Ga.) Telegraph, May 28. "The negro man Ransom" – "dead or alive" – advertised in Crawford county, Georgia, by Bryant Johnson.

Newbern (N.C.) Spectator, June 5th, 1838. – "Negro man, named Samson" – advertised in Jones county, N.C., by Enoch Fay.

Charleston (S.C.) Courier, Feb. 20, 1836. – Billy, twenty-five years old – "\$50 for head," if he resist.

Newbern (N.C.) Spectator, Dec. 2, 1836. – \$100 each for two runaways, Rigdon, and Ben Fox – "or for the killing of them, so that I can see them" – signed, W.D.Cobb.

In the same number of the Spectator is the following advertisement, for the same negroes, by two justices of the Peace:

"And we do hereby, by virtue of an act of Assembly of this State, concerning servants and slaves, intimate and declare, if the said slaves do not surrender themselves and return to their masters immediately after the publication of these presents, that any person may kill and destroy said slaves, by such means as he or they think fit, without accusation or impeachment of any crime or offence for so doing, or without incurring any penalty or forfeiture thereby.

B. COLEMAN, J.P., (Seal.)

JAMES JONES, J.P., (Seal.)"

This is enough, and too much. We cannot bear to dwell upon such atrocities; but when Northern men undertake to dogmatize about Slavery, they should first make themselves acquainted with the facts.

The last advertisement proceeds under a statute of North Carolina, which is certainly in the face of the judicial decision quoted by the Courier and Enquirer. That decision must have been rendered in another State. It is found in Wheeler's Law of Slavery, page 203; but the compiler, writing we suppose for lawyers alone, gives us no information of the State in which the opinion was delivered. The Courier and Enquirer erroneously assumes, it will be seen, that the Slave Code is the same in all the States.

In regard to the power given by Slavery over the slave, Mrs. Stowe puts the following language in the mouth of one of her characters – St. Clare, we believe: "the master who goes

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furthest and does the worst, only uses within limits the power that the law gives him." The Courier and Enquirer takes exception to this, and quotes in refutation of it, certain provisions from the Civil Code of Louisiana, and a decision of the General Court of Virginia. We know that there are laws in the slaveholding States designed to prevent cruelty in masters, and to guard the life of the slaves; but unfortunately, they evidence rather the will than the power to restrain the terrible prerogatives of the master. What do they amount to? The slave, by the essential nature of the relation which binds him to his master, is "entirely subject to his will." The law forbids cruelty, but who is to prove the fact of illegal treatment? On the isolated plantation, inhumanity may be habitually practiced, punishment may be carried to extent of maiming, or loss of life, and how is the criminal to be convicted? Does not the Courier know that the testimony of a thousand colored men, though they be eye-witnesses to the same atrocity, could not be admitted in evidence? The universal incapacity of slaves in all the States of the South, to bear testimony in any case where a white person is concerned, is enough to render almost null and void all laws designed for their protection. Take the case, for example, of Legree. Admit that such a monster may exist. Rome had its Neros—why should not America have its Legrees? He is master of hundreds of slaves, on a solitary plantation, far removed from the observation of white men. He regards the negro as a brute, and only uses him for gain. A being of ferocious passion, he fears not God, regards not man. Suppose he overwork or underfeed his slaves, subject offenders to cruel or unusual punishments, or under the influence of demoniac passion cause the death of one of his hands, how is the law to reach him? The laws forbid cruelty— forbid the taking of life unnecessarily — but they exclude the only testimony on which the man guilty of cruelty or murder can be convicted! Mrs. Stowe concedes the merciful intent of the laws for the protection of slaves, but in view of this exclusion of negro testimony, the sentiment put in the mouth of St. Clare is true — "the master who goes furthest, and does the worst, only uses within limits the power that the law gives him."

Again: suppose the slave resist correction. There is not a Southern State in which the law does not authorize the master to kill him. We challenge the Courier and Enquirer to produce a single case from the judicial records of the South, in which a white man has been convicted of the murder of a slave and hung. If any Southern friend will furnish us with an authentic account of any such case, we will promptly publish it. The truth is, without this dread power of life and death held in reserve, to be used to enforce submission when other means fail, slavery could not exist.

Let us repeat, for it is important to guard against misrepresentation on this subject, Mrs. Stowe does not give these extreme cases to show how masters commonly manage their slaves but to exhibit the fearfully irresponsible power with which the system of slavery clothes them.

The Courier and Enquirer rashly presumes to question what Mrs. Stowe has to say of another incident of slavery — "the separation

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of families!" This is too bad. Every Southern man knows that this is one of the most lamentable adjuncts of the Slave system, and every kind-hearted slaveholder freely admits its cruelty. Our own experience in this District would furnish a most painful record of cases of this kind. It was but the other day that a distracted father applied to us for aid, to rescue from the slave pen his only daughter, a good-looking girl of seventeen, who had been sold by a citizen of Georgetown, to the trader, for transportation to the South. This is one of a score of similar cases which have come under our observation. And by what a miserable quibble the Courier and Enquirer attempts to discredit Mrs. Stowe's representations on this subject! A part of the story "hinges upon the sale in Louisiana of the child of Eliza, eight or nine years old," when the truth is, exclaims the Courier triumphantly, the law there expressly prohibits "the sale of children who shall not have attained the full age of ten years." And because Mrs. Stowe was not aware of the important fact that a child cannot be sold in one State of this Union from its mother till it is over ten years of age, the Courier would have the world believe that Slavery never leads to the separation of families!

Now, let us inform this astute critic that in several Legislatures of the South, so prevalent is this evil, and so painful even to slaveholders, the proposition has been made to prohibit by law the sale of slaves, except in families; and at onetime it was seriously contemplated by some of the most distinguished statesmen of the South, to propose this measure, as one of a series designed to mitigate the severity of the slave system!

What the Courier says of the religious privileges of slaves is simply exaggerated. The laws of the slave States prohibit them being taught to read, or discountenance their education. The religious instruction they receive is oral; and on the insufficiency of such teaching, Protestantism has long since passed its judgment. As to the attendance of slaves in Southern congregations being more common than the attendance of free colored persons in Northern congregations, the reason is that it is the policy of the slave States to discourage the separate assemblies of the negroes, except under the most rigorous supervision. The simple fact that, as a class, slaves cannot read, and know nothing of the Bible except from oral teaching, and that, nearly always above their comprehension when in attendance on the churches of the whites, shows that they must be sadly deficient in religious education. To say that many of them are regular communicants, is little to the purpose, so long as their religion consists rather in animal fervor and social excitement, than in any intelligent understanding of their moral responsibilities, and in consistent, well-regulated principle.

But we take great pleasure in expressing the belief that the Christian people of the South are more alive now than formerly to the spiritual wants of the slave population, and that means for their instruction have of late greatly multiplied. One might infer from the flattering picture in the Courier, that there was little necessity for this; but the religious bodies of the South differ on this point from that journal.



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Having disposed of the statements of the Courier and Enquirer, let us examine its views in relation to the nature of slavery and its responsibilities.

"The peculiar falsity of this book," says that paper, "consists in making exceptional or impossible cases the representatives of the system. By the same process which she has used, it would not be difficult to frame a fatal argument against the relation of husband and wife, or of parent and child, or of guardian and ward; for thousands of wives and children and wards have been maltreated, and even murdered. It is wrong, unpardonably wrong, to impute to any relation of life those enormities which spring only out of the worst depravity of human nature."

Again: he says Mrs. Stowe has slandered slaveholders, "by attaching to them, as slaveholders, in the eye of the world, the guilt of the abuses of an institution of which they are absolutely guiltless."

We are compelled to infer, from these expressions of opinion, that the editor of the Courier and Enquirer regards the relation of slavery as a legitimate relation, in the same sense in which the relations of parent and child, husband and wife, guardian and ward, are legitimate; and that the evils of Slavery are not necessary or natural incidents.

The relation of parent and child is a natural and necessary relation, indispensable to the preservation of the individual, the perpetuation of the species, and the order of society. It is an institution of Nature, recognised and guarded by human laws, and the first object of it is, the welfare of the child, and the first duty of the parent is, to train the child and develop his powers, so that he may be able to assume and exercise all the responsibilities of independent manhood.

The relation of husband and wife is a natural and necessary relation—indispensable to the perpetuation of the race, and to the order of society. Its object is, the equal welfare of both parties.

The relation of guardian and ward is one of dependence, defined and regulated by law, the object being, not the benefit of the guardian, but the good of the ward.

The relations of parent and child, guardian and ward, so far as they involve dependence and subjection, on the side of the child or ward, terminate at maturity, or adult age, as fixed by law.

The wife is not the property of the husband, the child, the property of the parent, the ward the property of the guardian. They sustain none of the relations or uses of property.

The relation of master and slave is not natural, not necessary, not indispensable to the preservation of the individual, to the perpetuation of the race, to the order of society.

Its first object is, not the welfare of the slave, but the interest of the master. The interest of the superior is its supreme idea, while in the cases of wardship and parentship, the interest of the inferior is the supreme idea. The development of the slave, so that at maturity he may assume the responsibilities of manhood — the design of the relations of

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childship and wardship – is no part of the design of Slavery. The master who harbors such a purpose is an exception to his class. The relations just named, so far as they involve dependence and subjection, terminate when the subject parties are twenty-one years of age: the slave relation is perpetual.

The three legitimate relations noticed, involve the possession of great power by the husband, parent, guardian – but the powerful instinct of parental affection restrains generally the abuse of parental power, even where law and public opinion are silent, as the Love that consecrates matrimony is generally sufficient, even were no safeguards provided by law and public opinion, to make the headship of the husband safe and beneficent: while in the case of guardianship, the law surrounds the ward with abundant protection.

To class with the parental and filial relations, natural, necessary, divine, with their wise and good objects, and powerful restraints imposed by holy, ever-watchful, all-forbearing Love, the relation of master and slave, unnatural, unnecessary, at war with the progress of the race and of society, selfish in its origin and aim, securing perpetual supremacy on one side, perpetual degradation on the other, with powers over the inferior party, stimulated into activity by the hope of gain, and unrestrained by natural affection, argues gross misconception or gross heartlessness. Light and darkness, Heaven and Hell, the service of God and the service of the devil, do not differ more in nature, aim, and spirit, than the holy relations of parent and child, husband and wife, differ from the unholy relation of slave and master.

The evils of Slavery, that is, cruel treatment, privation of education, separation of families, &c., the Courier and Enquirer regards as abuses of a legitimate relation. The contrast we have just drawn exposes the fallacy of the assumption that the relation is legitimate. It is itself an abuse, a monstrous abuse—and what are styled by that paper abuses, are the natural consequences of the relation itself.

What is a slave? Under the slave code he is property – in some of the States, personal, in others, real property – but always, property. He can own nothing, inherit nothing, devise nothing; being himself the subject of ownership, of sale, of transfer or transmission, like other property. He is incapable of sustaining the civil relations of husband or parent. "He is entirely subject to the will of his master." He cannot move without the consent of his master. He cannot live with the woman whom he calls his wife, he cannot take care of, or exact obedience from, the offspring of his loins, without the consent of his master. He cannot learn to read, he cannot teach his child, he cannot become the communicant of a church, he cannot attend public worship, without the consent of his master. He has no control whatsoever over his own powers, no right to fruit of his own earnings, except at the will of his master. In a word, he belongs not to himself, not to another, to whose interests he is made completely subservient.

This is Slavery—this is the innocent relation, recognised and protected by the Law of Slavery! The man who, on this brief

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statement of the nature of it, does not admit at once that itself is an abuse, greater than all the evils which are styled its incidents—because they are but its legitimate effects—is not a fit subject for argument.

Now, as to the question of responsibility. The slaveholders are pronounced by the Courier and Enquirer, absolutely guiltless of the abuses of the system. Are they guiltless or the relation itself? Do they not sustain before God and man the awful responsibility of the ownership of human beings as property? Suppose the law should allow Horace Greeley to seize Colonel Webb, appropriate him as property, use him as property, compel him to go and come, work and sleep, eat and drink, at the discretion of said Greeley. Greeley might be a very kind, considerate sort of master. He might feed the Colonel well — give him the fat of the land — keep him at work no longer than a clerk in one of our Departments — give him a hair mattress to sleep on — allow him to go and see his so-called wife once or twice a week — and even encourage him to improve his mind. In fact, the Colonel would experience not one of what he now calls the evils of Slavery: but would he then see and feel nothing in Slavery beyond its incidents, as he styles them, savoring of an abuse? Ah! the fact that he was a piece of property, subject of ownership, incapable of owning anything, the appendage of a man, not a man himself, material for sale and barter, not capable of buying or selling—in a word, entirely subject to the will of another — he would cry out against, as an abuse more monstrous and horrible than all the incidents he now thinks separable from Slavery.

And what would he then think of responsibility? Would he hold the law-makers of the State of New York, and Horace Greeley, who availed himself of what the law allowed, guiltless of this foul abuse?

They are responsible for the laws, who pass them, aid in their passage, or consent to their passage; and also, for whatever powers are conferred, acts enjoining, or evils allowed by them—and he is responsible for the laws and their effects, who avails himself of those powers, or complies with their requisitions. If I support by my act, my example, my influence, my apologies, a system which vests irresponsible power in the hands of fallible man, I share the responsibility of that abuse, and of whatever other evils naturally or legitimately flow from it.



Oct. 21. Thursday, P.M. — To Second Division Brook and Ministerial Swamp.

Cerastium. Apparently some flowers yield to the frosts; others linger here and there till the snow buries them. Saw that the side-flowering skull-cap was killed in the frost. If they grow in some nook out of the way of frosts, they last so much longer. Methinks the frost puts a period to a large class. The goldenrods, being dead, are now a dingy white along the brooks (white fuzz, dark-brown leaves), together with rusty, fuzzy trumpet-weeds and asters in the same condition. This is a remarkable feature in the landscape now, the abundance of dead weeds. The frosts have done it. Winter comes on gradually. The red maples have lost their leaves before the rock maple, which is now losing its leaves at top first. All the country over, the frosts have come and seared the tenderer herbs along all brooksides. How unobserved this change until it has taken place! The birds that fly at the approach of winter are come from the north. Some time since I might have said some birds are leaving us, others, like ducks █, are just arriving from the north, the herbs are withering along the

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brooks, the humming insects are going into winter quarters.

The deciduous trees are green but about four months in the year, — from June 1st to October 1st, perhaps.

Polygonum articulatum lingers still. [At this point Thoreau has placed a question mark in the margin.] Silvery cinquefoil, hedge-mustard, and clover. I find caddis-cases with worms in Second Division Brook. And what mean those little piles of yellow sand on dark-colored stones at the bottom of the swift-running water, kept together and in place by some kind of gluten and looking as if sprinkled on the stones, one eighteenth of an inch in diameter? These caddis-worms just build a little case around themselves, and sometimes attach a few dead leaves to disguise it, and then fasten it (?) slightly to some swaying grass stem or blade at the bottom in swift water, and these are their quarters till next spring. This reminds me that winter does not put his rude fingers in the bottom of the brooks. When you look into the brooks you see various dead leaves floating or resting on the bottom, and you do not suspect that some are the disguises which the caddis-worms have borrowed. Fresh *Bæmyces roseus* near Tommy Wheeler's. The cotton-woolly aphides on the alders.

[Gilpin](#) speaks of "floats of timber" on the river Wey, in 1775, as picturesque objects. Thus in the oldest settled and civilized country there is a resemblance or reminiscence still of the primitive new country, and more or less timber never ceases to grow on the head waters of its streams, and perchance the wild muskrat still perforates its banks. England may endure as long as she grows oaks for her navy. [*Vide* London on the extent of oak forest there.] Timber rafts still (?) annually come down the Rhine, like the Mississippi and St. Lawrence. But the forests of England are thin, for [Gilpin](#) says of the Isle of Wight in Charles II's time, "There were woods in the island so complete and extensive, that it is said a squirrel might have travelled in several parts, many leagues together, on the tops of the trees."

THE MAINE WOODS: Those Maine woods differ essentially from ours. There you are never reminded that the wilderness which you are threading is, after all, some villager's familiar wood-lot, some widow's thirds, from which her ancestors have sledded fuel for generations, minutely described in some old deed which is recorded, of which the owner has got a plan too, and old bound-marks may be found every forty rods, if you will search. 'T is true, the map may inform you that you stand on land granted by the State to some academy, or on Bingham's purchase; but these names do not impose on you, for you see nothing to remind you of the academy or of Bingham. What were the "forests" of England to these? One writer relates of the Isle of Wight, that in Charles the Second's time "there were woods in the island so complete and extensive, that it is said a squirrel might have travelled in several parts many leagues together on the top of the trees." If it were not for the rivers, (and he might go round their heads,) a squirrel could here travel thus the whole breadth of the country.





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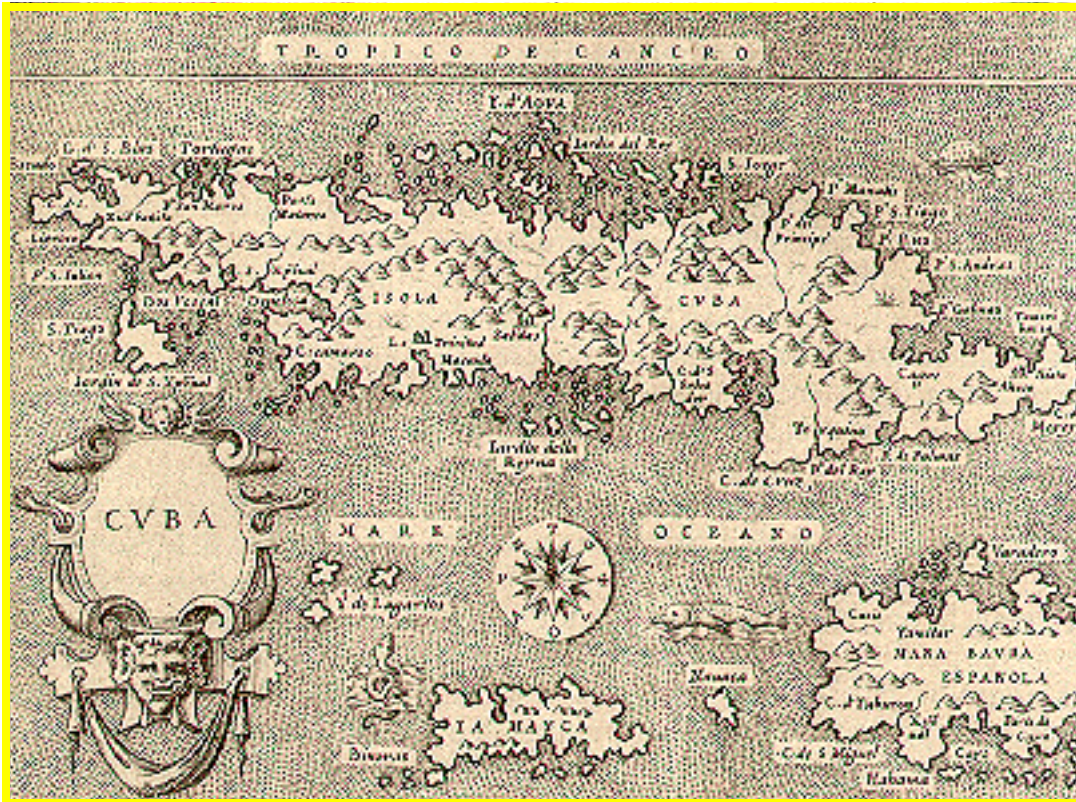
THE MAINE WOODS: Those Maine woods differ essentially from ours. There you are never reminded that the wilderness which you are threading is, after all, some villager's familiar wood-lot, some widow's thirds, from which her ancestors have sledded fuel for generations, minutely described in some old deed which is recorded, of which the owner has got a plan too, and old bound-marks may be found every forty rods, if you will search. 'T is true, the map may inform you that you stand on land granted by the State to some academy, or on Bingham's purchase; but these names do not impose on you, for you see nothing to remind you of the academy or of Bingham. What were the "forests" of England to these? One writer relates of the Isle of Wight, that in Charles the Second's time "there were woods in the island so complete and extensive, that it is said a squirrel might have travelled in several parts many leagues together on the top of the trees." If it were not for the rivers, (and he might go round their heads,) a squirrel could here travel thus the whole breadth of the country.

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October 22, Friday, 1852: When Spain refused for a 2d time to sell Cuba to the USA, the New-York Times declared that “The Cuban question is now the leading one of the time.”



What part of “don’t make us get nasty” was it that these Spaniards were so incapable of understanding?

Early during the morning of July 19th, 1852 there had been a dreadful event in a residential neighborhood on the northern extremity of 7th Street near the City Spring in Richmond, Virginia: Jane Williams had attacked 27-year-old Joseph Pendleton Winston of the firm of Nance and Wilson, 29-year-old Mrs. Virginia Bell Pankey Winston, and their 9-month-old Virginia Bell Winston with a kindling hatchet as they slept in their beds and cradle in their home. Jane Williams was as “a yellow woman of ordinary size, apparently 35 or 40 years of age, hair nearly strait, and with features indicative of great firmness” despite somehow having lost one of her eyes. The slave father John Williams had been being contracted out to work on the docks under John Enders during the day, but had been residing in the Winston home with his slave wife and their small slave child. The white family had recently threatened to sell the slave wife Jane without also selling her child; this had apparently planted “the germ of rebellion” in their minds. On September 10th, 1852 this female culprit had been hanged before a crowd of some 6,000 citizens, on a gallows erected a short distance southeast of the Poor House on the side of the hill near the powder magazine, appropriate to the purpose of a graveyard for blacks. Her pastor the Reverend Robert Ryland of the local African Baptist Church had explained to the assembled multitude, that in accordance with the promises of the gospel he needed to administer to the condemned person the consolation of religion — but had Jane 3 lives she would need to be hanged 3 times to make adequate payment for such a wicked and bloody deed as she had committed. He offered up a fervent

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
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prayer to Deity on her behalf and then, Jane's "drop" being but 20 inches, she had for some time kicked and strangled. The memorial sermon of the Reverend Ryland at the African Baptist Church had included the information that Jane had explained that on the morning of her act the devil had taken possession of her. The [slave](#) husband John Williams was [hanged](#) on this day despite an attempt to persuade the court that he had not, until afterward, had any awareness of his wife's action (there is no record available, of what would then happen to their orphaned child, or even a record of its age or its gender or its name). The badly injured white slavemaster Joseph P. Winston would survive with "deep brain-cuts" and a sense of "swimming" in his head and be compensated by the Commonwealth of Virginia with \$500 for the execution of his property Jane, and \$850 for the execution of his property John — eventually he would succumb to an epileptic fit perhaps occasioned by such a severe brain injury. Per a period pamphlet:

It is notorious with all who were acquainted with Mr. Winston and his wife, that John and Jane Williams, and all the negroes of the family of Mr. W., were the most indulged in the city of Richmond. To promote the happiness of John and his wife, he bought him in South Carolina, where he had been sold to traders, and brought him back to Virginia. How the kindness of Mr. W. was returned, the murderous conduct of Jane and John testifies, inhumanly butchering those who had been kind and forgiving to them, and crushing the skull of their innocent child, so that the Physician said, that when he pressed the head to discover its injuries, he heard the broken pieces of bone grating against each other.



Oct. 22. To Walden.

Ebby Hubbard's oaks, now turned a sober and warm red and yellow, have a very rich crisp and curled look, especially against the green pines. This is when the ripe, high-colored leaves have begun to curl and wither. Then they have a warm and harmonious tint. First they are ripened by the progress of the year, and the character of each appears in distinct colors. Then come the severe frosts and, dulling the brilliancy of most, produce a harmony of warm brown or red and yellow tinges throughout the forest, something like marbling and painting over it, making one shade run into another. The forest is the more rug-like. When I approached the pond over Heywood's Peak, I disturbed a hawk (a fish hawk?) [**Osprey**  *Pandion haliaetus*] on a white pine by the water watching for his prey, with long, narrow, sharp wings and a white belly. He flew slowly across the pond somewhat like a gull [**Herring Gull**  *Larus argentatus*]. He is the more picturesque object against the woods or water for being white beneath.

Now and for some time past, northwest winds prevail, wafting the air cooled by the snows that way, perhaps. This being the direction of the wind, I see again the clouds lifted in the northwest horizon. And methinks this phenomenon is very often repeated during the winter. The blue-stemmed goldenrod. *Aster undulatus* with a pinkish or lilac tinge, and bumblebees on it. *Solidago altissima*. The bushy gerardia still with sticky stem and wrinkled radical leaves. Scarcely a skater insect to be seen. I see no water-bugs. It is getting too cool for them.

In consequence of the above winds and clouds, we have to-night a bright warm sunset (to me on the water) after a cool gray afternoon, lighting up the green pines at the northeast end of the pond; every yellow leaf of birch or aspen or hickory is doubly bright, and, looking over the forest on Pine Hill, I can hardly tell which trees are lit up by the sunshine and which are the yellow chestnut-tops. Thus both the spring and autumn tints or aspect of the woods reminds me of the sunshine. The forest has never so good a setting and foreground as seen from the middle of a lake, rising from the water's edge. The water's edge makes the best frame for the picture and natural boundary to the forest.



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October 23, Saturday, 1852: [Henry Thoreau](#) checked out a volume by or on [Giacomo Costantino Beltrami](#) from the [Boston Society of Natural History](#) (this was long before the Society came to be located in its magnificent building at the intersection of Berkeley and Boylston and Newbury streets in Boston “Open from 9 A.M. to 1 P.M. and from 2 P.M. to 5 P.M.”). In all probability what Thoreau checked out would have been one or another publication evaluating the work of this author, since he was able to read French about as well as he could read Italian and English — and since presumably he already had purchased the copy of *LA DÉCOUVERTE DES SOURCES DU MISSISSIPPI ET DE LA RIVIÈRE SANGLANTE* that we find, annotated in pencil, in his personal library.


Francis Guthrie, a student at University College in London, conjectured that in order to provide separate colors to bordering areas on any map, no more than 4 colors would ever be required (his conjecture, known as the 4-color theorem, would be mathematically derived almost 123 years later, in 1976).

These would be the proceedings, for this year, of the [Boston Society of Natural History](#):

PROCEEDINGS, FOR 1852



Oct. 23. P.M. — To Conantum.

This may be called an Indian-summer day. It is quite hazy withal, and the mountains invisible. I see a horehound turned lake or steel-claret color. The yellow lily pads in Hubbard's ditch are fresh, as if recently expanded. There are some white lily pads in river still, but very few indeed of the yellow lily. A pasture thistle on Conantum just budded, but flat with the ground. The fields generally wear a russet hue. A striped snake out. The milkweed (*Syrriaca*) now rapidly discounting. The lanceolate pods having opened, the seeds spring out on the least jar, or when dried by the sun, and form a little fluctuating white silky mass or tuft, each held by the extremities of the fine threads, until a stronger puff of wind sets them free. It is a pleasant sight to see it dispersing its seeds. The bass has lost its leaves. I see where boys have gathered the mockernut, though it has not fallen out of its shells. The red squirrel chirrup in the walnut grove. The chickadees [**Black-capped Chickadee**  *Parus atricapillus*] flit along, following me inquisitively a few rods with lispings, tinkling note, — flit within a few feet of me from curiosity, head downward on the pines. The white pines have shed their leaves, making a yellow carpet on the grass, but the pitch pines are yet parti-colored. Is it the procumbent speedwell (*Veronica agrestis*) still in flower on Lee's Cliff? But its leaves are neither heart-ovate nor shorter than the peduncles. The sprays of the witch-hazel are sprinkled on the air, and recurved. The pennyroyal stands brown and sere, though fragrant still, on the shelves of the Cliff. The elms in the street have nearly lost their leaves.


October has been the month of autumnal tints. The first of the month the tints began to be more general, at which time the frosts began, though there were scattered bright tints long before; but not till then did the forest begin to be painted. By the end of the month the leaves will either have fallen or be sere and turned brown by the frosts for the most part. Also the month of barberries and chestnuts.

My friend is one whom I meet, who takes me for what I am. A stranger takes me for something else than I am. We do not speak, we cannot communicate, till we find that we are recognized. The stranger supposes in our stead a third person whom we do not know, and we leave him to converse with that one. It is suicide for us to become abettors in misapprehending ourselves. Suspicion creates the stranger and substitutes him for the friend. I cannot abet any man in misapprehending myself.

What men call social virtues, good fellowship, is commonly but the virtue of pigs in a litter, which lie close together to keep each other warm. It brings men together in crowds and mobs in barrooms and elsewhere, but it does not deserve the name of virtue.

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 October 23/24, nighttime, 1852: [Daniel Webster](#) died.

Famous Last Words:



“What school is more profitably instructive than the death-bed of the righteous, impressing the understanding with a convincing evidence, that they have not followed cunningly devised fables, but solid substantial truth.”



— A COLLECTION OF MEMORIALS CONCERNING DIVERS DECEASED MINISTERS, Philadelphia, 1787

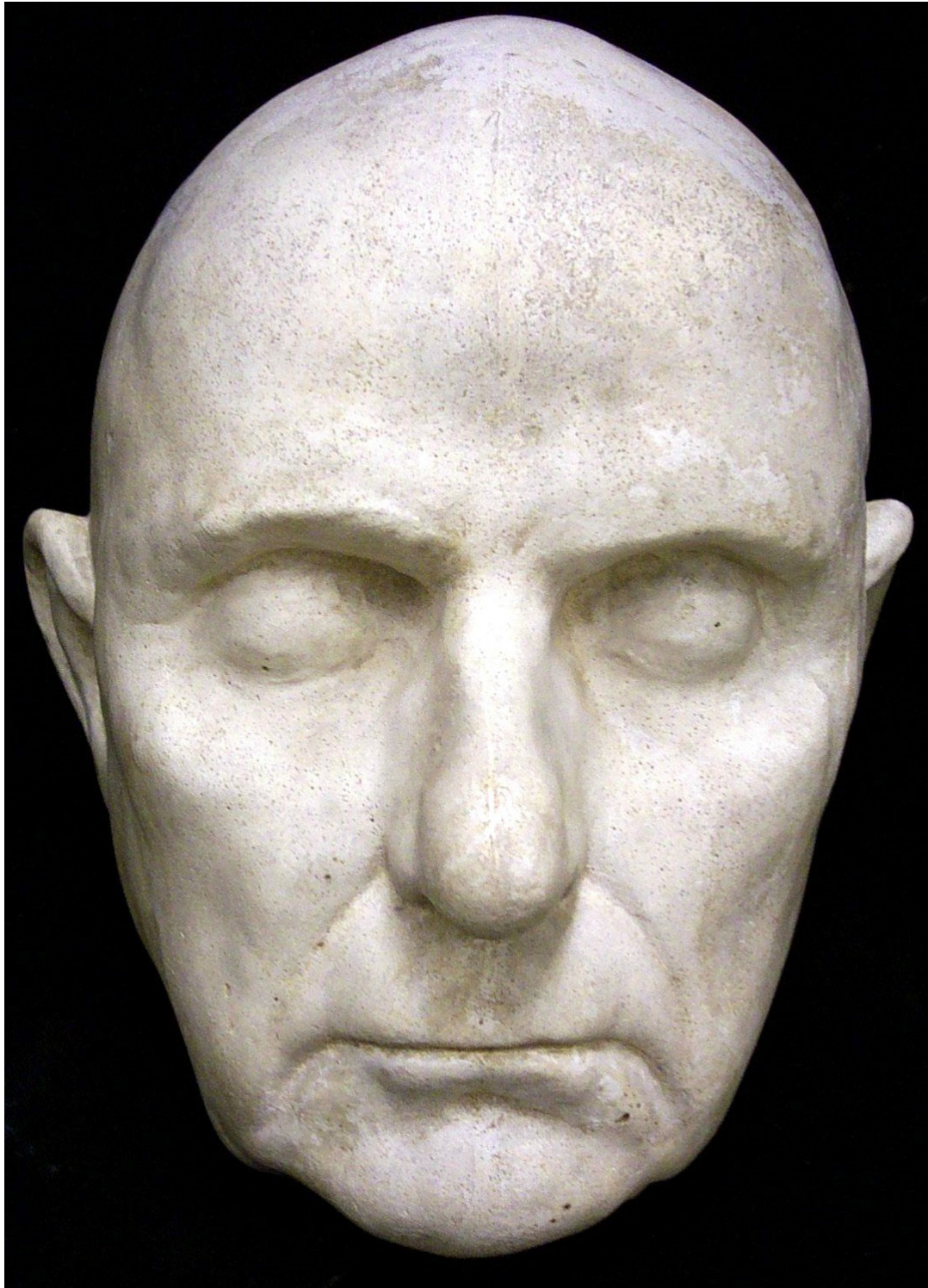
“The death bed scenes & observations even of the best & wisest afford but a sorry picture of our humanity. Some men endeavor to live a constrained life — to subject their whole lives to their will as he who said he might give a sign if he were conscious after his head was cut off — but he gave no sign Dwell as near as possible to the channel in which your life flows.”

—Thoreau’s JOURNAL, March 12, 1853

1851	John James Audubon	shooting at sitting ducks on his estate, at age 66 despite stroke and senility	<i>“You go down that side of Long Pond and I’ll go down this side and we’ll get the ducks!”</i>
1852	Daniel Webster	his attendant was tardy in administering some brandy	<i>“I still live!”</i> 
1852	Thomas Merton	<i>“M... ..”</i>
1857	Auguste Comte	he had been making himself the pope of a religion of science, “Positivism”	<i>“What an irreparable loss!”</i>
1859	John Brown	request	<i>“I am ready at any time — do not keep me waiting.”</i>
1862	Henry David Thoreau	he was editing manuscript	<i>“moose ... Indian”</i>
1864	General John Sedgwick	Battle of Spotsylvania	<i>“They couldn’t hit an elephant at this distance.”</i>
1865	Abraham Lincoln	on stage, an actor ad-libbed a reference to the presence of the President	The President laughed
<i>... other famous last words ...</i>			

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October 24, Sunday, 1852: As an example of the British sense of humor, on this day the fictitious person John Doe was officially put to death — this was they way of putting an end in British courts to the use of that name to hide the names of real or imagined witnesses.

The newspapers had been reporting Daniel Webster's illness, and Waldo Emerson stood on the beach at



Plymouth and looked across the bay at the shore of Marshfield, where he knew Webster's country estate to be located. The thought entered Emerson's mind that the great man was dead — and in fact he had died during the previous night, though they had not yet had an opportunity to put the biggie stone over him to make certain he stayed dead.

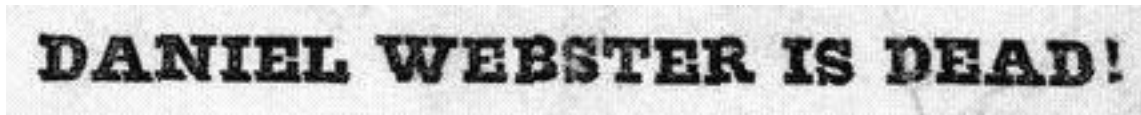




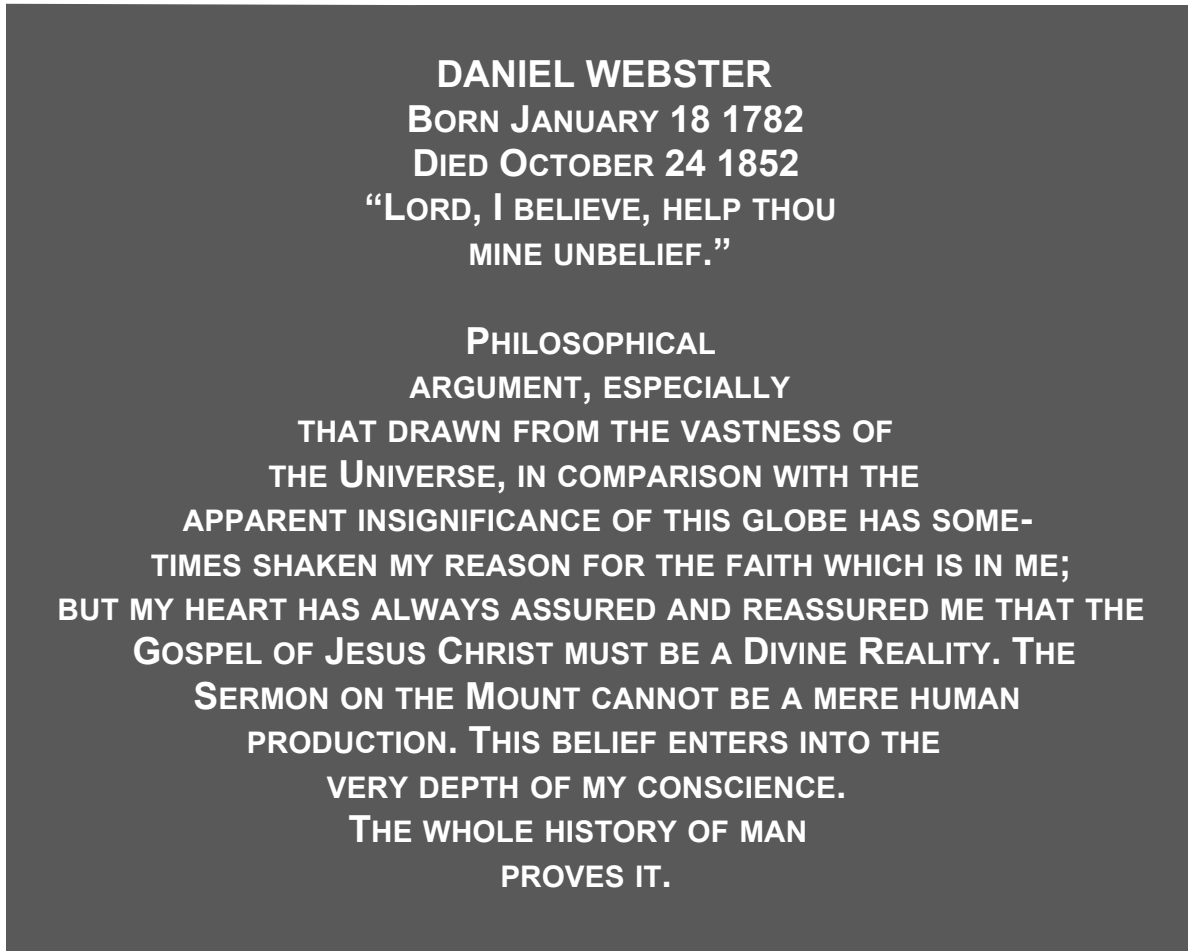
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On the following day, the banner headline would indeed read:



The monument would read:



Oct. 24. Another Indian-summer day.

P.M. — Rode to Stow via powder-mills with W.E.C., returning *via* the fir tree house, Vose’s Hill, and Corner.

The road through the woods this side the powder-mills was very gorgeous with the sun shining endwise through it, and the red tints of the deciduous trees, now somewhat imbrowned, mingled with the liquid green of the pines. The andromeda is already browned, has a grayish-brown speckled look. I see, far over the river, boys gathering walnuts. At the fall on the river at Parker’s paper-mill, there is a bright sparkle on the water long before we get to it.

I saw in Stow some trees fuller of apples still than I remember to have ever seen. Small yellow apples hanging over the road. The branches were gracefully drooping with the weight of the fruit like a barberry bush, so that the whole tree acquired a new character. The topmost branches, instead of standing erect, spread and drooped in all directions.

The larches in the swamps are now conspicuously yellow and ready for their fall. They can now be distinguished at a distance. There is an agreeable prospect from near the post-office in the northwest of Sudbury. The southeast (?) horizon is very distant, — but what perhaps makes it more agreeable,



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it is a low distance, — extending to the Weston elm in the horizon. You are more impressed with the extent of earth overlooked than if the view were bounded by mountains.



October 25, Monday, 1852: Herman Melville wrote Nathaniel Hawthorne:

My Dear Hawthorne—

If you thought it worth while to write the story of Agatha, and should you be engaged upon it; then I have a little idea touching it, which however trifling, may not be entirely out of place. Perhaps, tho', the idea has occurred to yourself.— The probable facility with which Robinson first leaves his wife & then takes another, may, possibly, be ascribed to the peculiarly latitudinarian notions, which most sailors have of all tender obligations of that sort. In his previous sailor life Robinson had found a wife (for a night) in every port. The sense of the obligation of the marriage-vow to Agatha had little weight with him at first. It was only when some years of life ashore had passed that his moral sense on that point became developed. And hence his subsequent conduct— Remorse &c. Turn this over in your mind & see if it is right. If not— make it so yourself. If you come across a little book called "Taughconic"— look into it and divert yourself with it. Among others, you figure in it, & I also. But you are the most honored, being the most abused, and having the greatest space allotted you.— It is a "Guide Book" to Berkshire. I dont know when I shall see you. I shall lay eyes on you one of these days however. Keep some Champagne or Gin for me.

My respects and best remembrances to Mrs: Hawthorne & a reminder to the children.

H Melville

If you find any sand in this letter, regard it as so many sands of my life, which run out as I was writing it.



Oct. 25. Monday. P.M. — Down river to Ball's Hill in boat.

Another perfect Indian-summer day. One of my oars makes a creaking sound like a block in a harbor, such a sound as would bring tears into an old sailor's eyes. It suggests to me adventure and seeking one's fortune. Turtles are still seen dropping into the water (*Emys picta*). The white maples have mostly shed their leaves, but those which are beneath the level of the bank, protected by it, still hold on. This leafy stratum rises exactly to a level with the bank. The water for some time has been clear of weeds mostly, but looks cool for fishes. We get into the lee of the hill near Abner Buttrick's (?), where is smooth water, and here it is very warm and sunny under the pitch pines, and some small bushy white asters still survive.

The autumnal tints grow gradually darker and duller, but not less rich to my eye. And now a hillside near the river exhibits the darkest, crispy reds and browns of every hue, all agreeably blended. At the foot, next the meadow, stands a front rank of smoke-like maples bare of leaves, intermixed with yellow birches. Higher up, red oaks of various shades of dull red, with yellowish, perhaps black oaks intermixed, and walnuts, now brown, and near the hilltop, or rising above the rest, perhaps, a still yellowish oak, and here and there amid the rest or in the foreground on the meadow, dull ashy salmon-colored white oaks large and small, all these contrasting with the clear liquid, sempiternal green of pines.



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

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

FAUNA AMERICANA



Oct. 26. P.M. — Walden and Cliffs.

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

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

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

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

Harlan says the vesperetilio catch insects during the crepusculum.

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

DOG

ABOUT THIS SOURCE



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October 27, Wednesday, [1852](#): Anton Rubinstein suggested a reorganization of the Imperial Academy of Arts to include a music section, as had been done in Berlin. This would allow musicians to attain a respectability in Russian society similar to that of painters and sculptors.

At the age of 36, the widower and single parent [H.G.O. Blake](#) remarried, with one of his longtime students in the [Unitarian](#) church of Sterling, Massachusetts, Nancy Pope Howe Conant (November 30, 1828-April 16, 1872), 23-year-old daughter of Jacob Conant and Betsy Pope Conant (although the record is silent, we may readily presume that the flower-girl for this ceremony would have been motherless 11-year-old Sarah Chandler Blake). The bride would bring with her such considerable assets that several years later this family's taxable holdings would amount to \$20,590 (a penny then having been worth roughly what a dollar is worth now, millionaire Blake would be able to reconfigure himself as a gentleman of leisure, disposing of an annual family income from her holdings considerably in excess of whatever he might have been able to net were he to have continued his trade as a school principal: not nearly in the same league as [Waldo Emerson](#), but comfortably far beyond [Henry Thoreau](#)).

[Edward Emerson Simmons](#) was born in [Concord, Massachusetts](#), a son of the Unitarian Reverend George Frederick Simmons and Mary Emerson Ripley Simmons (thus, a great-grandson of the [Reverend Ezra Ripley](#)).



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 27TH]

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October 28, Thursday, 1852: Robert Schumann missed the initial concert of his 3d year in Düsseldorf due to a “nervous disorder” (his place was filled by his young deputy, Julius Tausch).

William M. White's of a portion of Henry Thoreau's journal entry is:

*How incredible to be described are these bright points
Which appear in the blue sky as the darkness increases,
Said to be other worlds,
Like the berries on the hills when the summer is ripe!*

*Even the ocean of birds,
Even the regions of the ether,
Are studded with isles.*

*Far in this ethereal sea lie the Hesperian isles,
Unseen by day,
But when the darkness comes
Their fires are seen from this shore,
As Columbus saw the fires of San Salvador.*

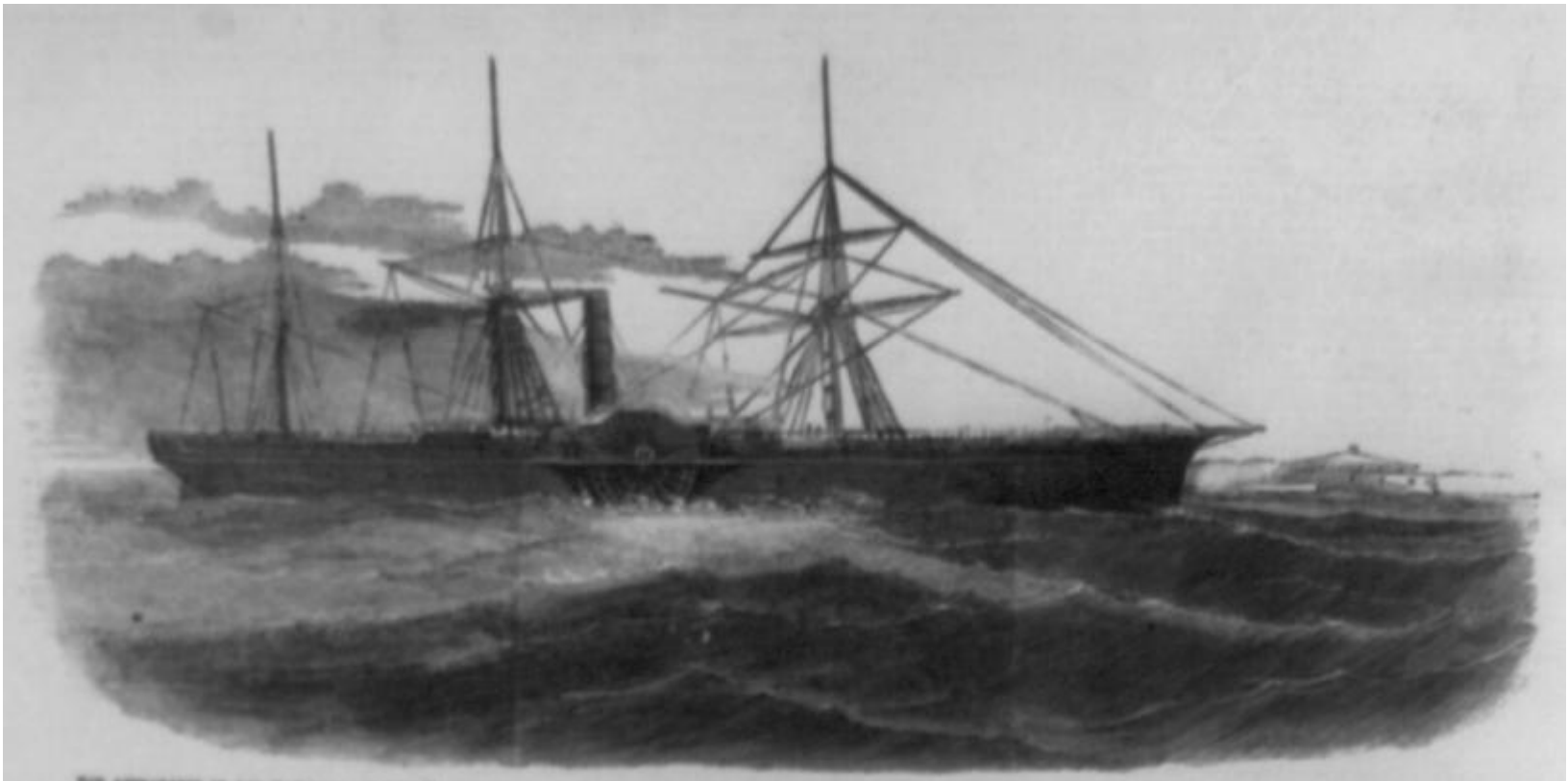
Thoreau surveyed for Mrs. (W.P.L.?) Badger. The Concord Free Public Library owns no survey, but a note in the Field Notes book indicates that he surveyed land around the Chapin cottage for her. She lived on the south side of Main Street opposite where Elm Street leaves Main.



The SS *George Law*, a 3-masted 272-foot sidewheel steamboat, was repurposed as the SS Central America for the United States Mail Steamship Company. This vessel would be transporting an estimated 1/3d of the entire California gold rush output, that amount of the metal being valued at the time at approximately \$150,000,000. It would achieve 43 round trips between New-York and Panama before sinking in 1857 in a hurricane (to sail between these two ports at this level of technology involved being under way at sea for between 19 and 24 days).

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Oct. 28. Sunset from the Poplar Hill. A warm, moist afternoon. The clouds lift in the west, — indeed the horizon is now clear all around, — and suddenly the light of the setting sun yellows and warms all the landscape. The air is filled with a remarkably vaporous haze. The shadows of the trees on the river's edge stretch straight a quarter of a pule into the level russet Great Meadows. The boys are gathering walnuts. Their leaves are a yellowish brown.

8 P.M. — To Cliffs.

The moon beginning to wane. It is a quite warm but moist night. As I cross the railroad I hear the telegraph harp again, the undecayed oracle. Its vibrations are communicated through the tall pole to the surrounding earth for a considerable distance, so that I feel them when I stand near. And when I put my ear to a fence-rail, it is all alive with them, though the post with which it is connected is planted two feet from the telegraph-post; yet the rail resounded with the harp music so that a deaf man might have heard it. I hear no sound of a bird as I go up the back road; only a few faint crickets to be heard, — these the birds we are reduced to. What a puny sound this for the great globe to make! After whatever revolutions in my moods and experiences, when I come forth at evening, as if from years of confinement to the house, I see the few stars which make the constellation of the Lesser Bear in the same relative position, — the everlasting geometry of the stars. How incredible to be described are these bright points which appear in the blue sky as the darkness increases, said to be other worlds, like the berries on the hills when the summer is ripe! Even the ocean of birds, even the regions of the ether, are studded with isles. Far in this ethereal sea lie the Hesperian isles, unseen by day, but when the darkness comes their fires are seen from this shore, as Columbus saw the fires of San Salvador (?). The dew in the withered grass reflects the moonlight like glow-worms. That star which accompanies the moon will not be her companion tomorrow.

The forest has lost so many leaves that its floor and paths are much more checkered with light. I hear no sound but the rustling of the withered leaves, which lulls the few and silent birds to sleep, and,

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on the wooded hilltops, the roar of the wind. Each tree is a harp which resounds all night, though some have but a few leaves left to flutter and hum. From the Cliffs, the river and pond are exactly the color of the sky. Though the latter is slightly veiled with a thin mist, the outline of the peninsula in it is quite distinct. Even the distant fields across the river are seen to be russet by moonlight as by day, and the young pines near by are green. The ground in the woods is light with fallen leaves. There is a certain tameness or civilization in the rounded lobe of the white oak leaf, very different from the wild, pointed black and red oak leaves, and in its uses and qualities the former is nearer to man. Those trees are comparatively wild whose bark alone is extensively used by man. Returning through Abiel Wheeler's hillside field toward the railroad, I see the springing mullein leaves more distinct than by day. Their leaves are remarkably warm to my hand, compared with the earth or a stone. I should be glad to make my bed of them some time.

Four months of the green leaf make all our summer, if I reckon from June 1st to October 1st, the growing season, and methinks there are about four months when the ground is white with snow. That would leave two months for spring and two for autumn. October the month of ripe or painted leaves; November the month of withered leaves and bare twigs and limbs.

As I was eating my dinner of rice to-day, with an open window, a small species of wild bee, with many yellow rings about the abdomen, came in and alighted on the molasses pitcher. It took up the molasses quite fast, and soon made quite bare and white a considerable space on the nose of the pitcher which was smeared with molasses; then, having loaded itself, it circled round the pitcher a few times, while I was helping myself to some molasses, and flew against a closed window, but ere long, finding the open one by which it had entered, it winged its way to its nest. Probably if I had been willing to leave the window open and wait awhile, it would have returned.

I heard one boy say to another in the street to-day, "You don't know much more than a piece of putty."




October 29, Friday, 1852: The 1,021-ton 180x36-foot clipper ship *Northern Light* left Boston Bay bound for San Francisco Bay with Captain Freeman Hatch of Eastham, Massachusetts at its helm.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRIES IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 29TH-31ST]

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 October 30, Saturday, 1852: Someone, unknown, whose initials appear to be C.A.B., wrote a letter to [Orra White Hitchcock](#) describing how he had trekked as part of a company in the mountain woodlands of upstate New York. He contemplated whether or not he should continue in the field of engineering and described his experience in the forest. Interestingly, he contrasted his experience with some descriptions he had read about in the former minister [Joel Tyler Headley](#)'s [THE ADIRONDACK: OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#).



(Edgar Allen Poe characterized this former minister as “the autocrat of all quacks.”)



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRIES IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 29TH-31ST]

 October 31, Sunday, 1852: Henri Ghislain de Brouckère replaced Charles Latour Rogier as head of government for Belgium.

Still at Lancy, [Henri-Frédéric Amiel](#), who would be referred to as the “Swiss [Thoreau](#),” continued in his [JOURNAL INTIME](#): “IWalked for half an hour in the garden. A fine rain was falling, and the landscape was that of autumn. The sky was hung with various shades of gray, and mists hovered about the distant mountains, a melancholy nature. The leaves were falling on all sides like the last illusions of youth under the tears of irremediable grief. A brood of chattering birds were chasing each other through the Shrubberies, and playing games among the branches, like a knot of hiding schoolboys. The ground strewn with leaves, brown, yellow, and reddish; the trees half-stripped, some more, some less, and decked in ragged splendors of dark-red, scarlet, and yellow; the reddening shrubs and plantations; a few flowers still lingering behind, roses, nasturtiums, dahlias, shedding their petals round them; the bare fields, the thinned hedges; and the fir, the only green thing left, vigorous and stoical, like eternal youth braving decay; all these innumerable and marvelous symbols



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which forms colors, plants, and living beings, the earth and the sky, yield at all times to the eye which has learned to look for them, charmed and enthralled me. I wielded a poetic wand, and had but to touch a phenomenon to make it render up to me its moral significance. Every landscape is, as it were, a state of the soul, and whoever penetrates into both is astonished to find how much likeness there is in each detail. True poetry is truer than science, because it is synthetic, and seizes at once what the combination of all the sciences is able at most to attain as a final result. The soul of nature is divined by the poet; the man of science, only serves to accumulate materials for its demonstration.”

General Joaquin Solares of Guatemala led an invasion of neighboring Honduras, beginning a war that would endure until February 13, 1856.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRIES IN HIS JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 29TH-31ST]

NOVEMBER 1852

➡ November 1852: This month's issue of [Harper's New Monthly Magazine](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE

➡ November?? 1852: [Waldo Emerson](#) to his journal, about having observed Professor [Louis Agassiz](#) on the train:

The Democrats carry the country, because they have more virility: just as certain of my neighbors rule our little town, quite legitimately, by having more courage & animal force than those whom they overbear. It is a kind of victory like that of gravitation over all upraised bodies, sure, though it lie in wait for ages for them. I saw in the cars a broad featured unctuous man, fat & plenteous as some successful politician, & pretty soon divined it must be the foreign Professor, who has had so marked a success in all our scientific & social circles, having established unquestionable leadership in them all – and it was Agassiz.

During this month the Western Railroad was chartered to build a railroad from Fayetteville, [North Carolina](#) all the way to the coal fields of Egypt (a tiny place in the mountains north of Asheville).

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November 1852: [Harriet "Hattie" Goodhue Hosmer](#) arrived with her father Dr. Hiram Hosmer at the American artists colony in Roma. She would become a pupil of the sculptor John Gibson and a friend of notables such as the Brownings.



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November 1852: At the [Hopedale](#) community, the Reverend John Murray Spear (medium) was seized by the spirit of [Thomas Jefferson](#), which had become an antislavery spirit.



In Oregon and then [California](#), white settlers led by a former Indiana [Quaker](#), Captain Ben Wright (who while on the way by wagon train from [Kansas](#) to the West Coast in 1847 had transformed himself into a notorious Indian hunter, complete with explanatory narrative that he had fallen for a pretty young thing who had then been killed by Indians), after calling for a “peace parley” massacred 41 Modoc natives who had thus been ensnared (Dan L Thrapp, *ENCYCLOPEDIA OF FRONTIER BIOGRAPHY*, U of Nebraska P, 1991; Jeff C. Davis Riddle, *THE INDIAN HISTORY OF THE MODOC WAR AND THE CAUSES THAT LED TO IT*, Marnell and Company, 1914).



An Indiana native named Benjamin Wright had been born on October 10, 1770, so would that have been the father? Ben himself had been born in about 1827 and would die on February 23, 1856. Whatever he had acquired of the spirit, of the light, during his childhood in a Friends meeting, he quickly forgot. Reaching Oregon, Wright enlisted in a militia to put down the Cayuse tribe. After being discharged, he settled along Cottonwood Creek in California, 20 miles north of Yreka, where he continued to kill native Americans, the local Modocs, for the government bounty money. He affected a frontier appearance: buckskins, long hair, a soul patch on his chin. As a serial killer, Wright was



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of the trophy-collecting type: scalps, fingers, ears, noses, removed from still-living victims. He was fond of alcohol, and kept native women as his sexual slaves. When Yreka's gold prospectors raised a militia of 65 men, Ben Wright again enlisted. Peter Burnett, California's 1st civilian governor, had declared that "a war of extermination will continue ... until the Indian race becomes extinct," and the state legislature appropriated \$500,000 to pay for these militia raids. After receiving his bounty money, Wright recruited 20 men for a return to Modoc territory. In a dawn raid on the principal Lost River village of the Modocs, their guns killed more than 12 of these natives who had only bows and spears with which to defend themselves and their families. Then they attacked an island village, where Lost River flowed into Tule Lake, and killed 15 more. When the survivors of the two attacks took shelter in a large cave on the far side of Tule Lake. Wright and his posse piled brush at the cave's mouth and set it afire. After 24 hours of smoke and flames, Wright and his men rode back to Yreka, presuming that they had cooked or smothered the people inside the cave. The following summer Wright took another party into the Tule Lake country and attacked a group of Modocs, killing 30 to 35. When Wright and some other mounted militiamen spotted a couple of Indian women running away, they rode them down, killing one by gunshot. The other, shot only in an arm, Wright finished off with his knife. He then raised a white flag to let it be understood that he sought to negotiate. A large group of Modocs camped nearby to talk. All remained peaceful until on the dawn of the 6th day, the white men encircled the camp. Wright walked into the camp with two revolvers under his serape, and when he came to the native leader, began to shoot and run zigzag through the Indians. His men opened fire with rifles from the periphery. Not a single white was killed, and the number of native fatalities has been variously estimated at 30 to 90, most likely about 50. The California legislature was paying these militiamen at the rate of \$4 a day, which was about 8 times more than the pay of a private in the Army. Captain Wright himself received \$744. His success against the Modocs was rewarded with appointment as Indian agent along Oregon's southern coast, but then in the muddy main street of Port Orford, while drunk, he stripped naked the government interpreter who was his mistress of the moment, Chetcoe Jennie, and whipped her through the town. After being treated in such manner, Jennie formed an alliance with a group of natives under Enos, a Shoshone guide and scout who had previously worked for Wright. In the early hours of February 23, 1856, close to the mouth of the Rogue River, Enos killed Wright with an axe. Several months later when Enos would be hanged by a lynch party, Chetcoe Jennie would be nowhere to be found.

WHITE ON RED, RED ON WHITE



November/December 1852: Henry Thoreau began the work that would become "The Dispersion of Seeds."



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Read  Henry Thoreau's Journal for November 1852 (æf. 35)



November 1, Monday, 1852: The New-York Times noted that a Mr. Beekman, the London publisher of UNCLE TOM'S CABIN, being at the moment in Boston, was reporting that the number of copies already issued in England was 400,000. Meanwhile the American publishers confessed to having published merely 200,000, although Messrs. Jewett were preparing, for the holidays, an elaborately illustrated edition. An edition has been published by the celebrated Tauchnitz of Leipsig and, for that edition, Mrs. Stowe has written a preface. It was reported that autograph letters, highly complimentary, had been received by the authoress from Prince Albert and the late Duke of Wellington. "Probably no literary work ever published has had such remarkable success as this."

There had been an attempt by members of the sect of Babi to assassinate the Iranian shah Naser al-Din Shah Qajar. This attempt had been unsuccessful but at this point news of it had begun to arrive in London, and surfaced in the Morning Chronicle:

The Erzerroom post has brought letters to the 9th just (*i.e.* August 9th) from that city, and to the 28th of August from Tabreez. On the 15th of August an attempt to assassinate the Shah of Persia had taken place at Tehran. The shah, accompanied by his Prime Minister and by a numerous suite, had quitted that day Kasri-Millak on a hunting excursion, and had reached the skirt of a wood near Maveranda, when six ill-dressed Persians, with petitions, approached the Shah, who at once drew in the reins of his horse, and took the papers held out to him. It is usual in Persia on similar excursions for the Sovereign to proceed alone, and keep his Ministers and attendants at a distance of several hundred yards, and when he stops they do likewise. The petitioners were of the sect of Babi, and, after delivering their papers, two seized the bridle of the horse, and the other four surrounded the Shah, and loudly, and with menacing gesture, demanded redress for the insult done to their religion by having put their chief to death. The Shah courageously ordered them off, but before his suite came up, two of the fanatic ruffians drew their pistols and fired at him, two balls of which took effect; the first wounded him in the mouth, and the second slightly grazed his thigh. Immediately after this attempt they took to their heels, hotly pursued by the attendants. Three contrived to escape in the wood, one was cut down by the Multezim or Rikiab, and the other two were seized and conveyed to Tehran, for the purpose of obtaining a clue to the conspiracy. The Shah's wounds were so light that the next day he proceeded in grand pomp to the mosque, in order to offer his thanksgiving for his miraculous escape. On his return to the palace, the Ministers and the Russian and English Ambassadors, and the Chargé d'Affaires of the Porte, in full costume, congratulated him. Public rejoicing also took place, and the city of Tehran was illuminated at night. On the 16th of August intelligence had been received of the seizure of the three assassins who had effected their escape, and concealed themselves in the wood. They were discovered in a well, and were drawn out and cut to pieces, according to the orders given by the Prime Minister.









Nov. 1. A warm, mizzling kind of rain for two days past and still. *Stellaria media* in

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Cheney's garden, as last spring, butter-and-eggs, that small white aster (*A. dumosus?*), the small white fleabane, hedge-mustard.

Day before yesterday to the Cliffs in the rain, misty rain. As I approached their edge, I saw the woods beneath Fair Haven Pond, and the hills across the river, — which, owing to the mist, was as far as I could see, and seemed much further in consequence. I saw these between the converging boughs of two white pines a rod or two from me on the edge of the rock; and I thought that there was no frame to a landscape equal to this, — to see, between two near pine boughs, whose lichens are distinct, a distant forest and lake, the one frame, the other picture. In November, a man will eat his heart, if in any month. The birches have almost all lost their leaves. On the river this afternoon, the leaves, now crisp and curled, when the wind blows them on to the water become rude boats which float and sail about awhile conspicuously before they go to the bottom, — oaks, walnuts, etc.

It is remarkable how native man proves himself to the earth, after all, and the completeness of his life in all its appurtenances. His alliances, how wide! He has domesticated not only beasts but fowl, not only hens and geese and ducks and turkeys, but his doves , winging their way to their dovecots over street and village and field, enhance the picturesqueness of his sky, to say nothing of his trained falcons, his beautiful scouts in the upper air. He is lord of the fowl and the brute. His allies are not only on the land, but in the air and water. The dove, the martin [**Purple Martin**  *Progne subis*], the bluebird [**Eastern Bluebird**  *Sialia sialis*], the swallow , and, in some countries, the hawk  have attached themselves to his fortunes. The doves  that wing their way so near the clouds, they too are man's retainers.





November 2, Tuesday, 1852: **Dr. John Aitken Carlyle** got married with Phoebe Elizabeth Hough Fowler Watts (1814?-1854), a daughter of John Fowler of Horton Hall in north Staffordshire — who was a widow with 4 sons, and also happened to be rich.

The Democratic candidate, **Franklin Pierce** of New Hampshire, was elected as the 14th United States president over the **Whig** candidate, **General Winfield Scott of Virginia** (William R. King was elected vice-president).

Robert G. Crozier was again appointed City Marshal of **San Francisco**, replacing David W. Thompson.



Nov. 2. Tall buttercups, red clover, houstonias, *Polygonum aviculare*, still.

Those handsome red buds on often red-barked twigs, with some red leaves still left, appear to be blueberry buds. The prinus berries also now attract me in the scarcity of leaves, its own all gone; its berries are apparently a brighter red for it. The month of chickadees [**Black-capped Chickadee**  *Parus atricapillus*] and new-swollen buds. At long intervals I see or hear a robin [**American Robin**  *Turdus migratorius*] still.

To Walden.

In the latter part of October the skaters and water-bugs entirely disappear from the surface of the pond, and then and in November, when the weather is perfectly calm, it is almost absolutely as smooth as glass. This afternoon a three-day rain-storm is drawing to an end, though still overcast. The air is quite still but misty, and from time to time mizzling, and the pond is very smooth, and its surface difficult to distinguish, though it no longer reflects the *bright* tints of autumn but sombre colors only, — calm at the end of a storm, except here and there a slight glimmer or dimple, as if a few skaters which had escaped the frosts were still collected there, or a faint breeze there struck, or a few rain-drops fell there, or perchance the surface, being remarkably smooth, betrayed by circling dimples where a spring welled up from below. I paddled gently toward one of these places and was surprised to find myriads of small perch about five inches long sporting there, one after another rising to the surface and dimpling it, leaving bubbles on it. They were very handsome as they surrounded the boat, with their distinct transverse stripes, a rich brown color. There were many such

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schools in the pond, as it were improving the short season before the ice would close their window. When I approached them suddenly with noise, they made a sudden splash and rippling with their tails in fright, and then took refuge in the depths. Suddenly the wind rose, the mist increased, and the waves rose, and still the perch leaped, but much higher, half out of water, a hundred black points, three inches long, at once above the surface. The pond, dark before, was now a glorious and indescribable blue, mixed with dark, perhaps the opposite side of the wave, a sort of changeable or watered-silk blue, more cerulean if possible than the sky itself, which was now seen overhead. It required a certain division of the sight, however, to discern this. Like the colors on a steel sword-blade.

Slate-colored snowbirds [~~Dark-eyed Junco~~  *Junco hyemalis* (~~Slate-colored Sparrow or Snow-bird~~)] (?) with a faint note.

The leaves which are not withered, whose tints are still fresh and bright, are now remarked in sheltered places. Plucked quite a handsome nosegay from the side of Heywood's Peak, — white and blue-stemmed goldenrods, asters (*undulatus* and ?).

I do not know whether the perch amuse themselves thus more in the fall than at any other time. In such transparent and apparently bottomless water their swimming impresses the beholder as a kind of flight or hovering, like a compact flock of birds passing below one, just beneath his level on the right or left. What a singular experience must be theirs in their winter quarters, their long night, expecting when the sun will open their shutters!

If you look discerningly, so as to see the reflection only, you see a most glorious light blue, in comparison with which the original dark green of the opposite side of the waves is but muddy.



November 3, Wednesday, 1852: [Charles Villiers Stanford](#) was christened in St. Stephen's parish church, Dublin.

[Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed for John Reynolds a house lot on the Lowell Road.


[Meiji](#) (personal name *Mutsuhito*), who from February 3d, 1867 to July 30th, 1912 would be the 122d emperor of [Japan](#) (assuming that one trusts the traditional calculation of successions, a tradition that is debatable), was born in *Kyōto*.



Nov. 3. Shepherd's-purse abundant still in gardens.

3 P.M. — To Cliffs and Andromeda Ponds.

In the Heywood Brooks, many young pollywogs two inches long and more; also snails on the bottom. I find these water-bugs, large and small, not on the surface, but apparently sheltered amid the weeds, going into winter quarters. While collecting caddis-worms, of which there are many, whose cases are made of little pieces of weeds piled about them like well-stones, I disturbed a good-sized fish, either a pout or a sucker, near the path. It swam rapidly down this shallow stream, creating a wave which reached from side to side and betrayed it. I followed it down till it concealed itself under some frog-spittle, and when I had dislodged it thence, it went down further, till, coming to where the stream was dammed, it buried itself in the mud above the dam in an instant, and I could not dig it out.

The landscape from Fair Haven Hill looks Novembery, bare gray limbs and twigs in the swamps; and where many young (or shrub) oaks have lost their leaves, you hear the rustling of oak and walnut leaves in the air. There is a ripple on the river from the cool northerly wind. The plants are sere. It is the month of withered oak leaves. The shrub oak plain is all withered. Only one or two butter-and-eggs left. At Andromeda Pond, started nine black (?) ducks  just at sunset, as usual they circling far round to look at me. The andromeda is a dull brown like the shrub oak leaves now.


Or I was startled by the cracking of the ground in the coldest nights, which sounded as if it were my house that cracked, and in the morning I would find a crack in the earth a quarter of an inch wide



and a quarter of a mile long.
The sunsets begin to be interestingly warm.



WALDEN: I also heard the whooping of ice in the pond, my great bed-fellow in that part of Concord, as if it were restless in its bed and would fain turn over, were troubled with flatulency and bad dreams; or I was waked by the cracking of the ground by the frost, as if some one had driven a team against my door, and in the morning would find a crack in the earth a quarter of a mile long and a third of an inch wide.

 November 4, Thursday, 1852: [Camillo Benso, Count of Cavour](#) became the prime minister of Piedmont-Sardinia (which would soon expand and, with [Giuseppe Garibaldi](#) handing over southern Italy and Sicily to King Victor Emmanuel II in Naples in 1861, would become [Italy](#)).

Having arrived at the wise old age of 17, [Samuel Langhorne Clemens](#) confided to his Hannibal journal the sentiment “What a world of trouble those who never marry escape! There are many happy matches, it is true, and sometimes “my dear,” and “my love” come from the heart; but what sensible bachelor, rejoicing in his freedom and years of discretion, will run the tremendous risk?”



In [San Francisco](#), Crescent Engine Co. No. 10, Columbian Engine Co. No. 11, and Pennsylvania Engine Co. No. 12 were organized.

TELEGRAPHY

In Vermont the Reverend Alpheus Bigelow confided to his diary that “Election returns already received by telegraph in Burlington render it almost certain that the State of New York has gone Democratic by a large majority, and that the Pierce-King electoral ticket prevails nearly without exception.”



Nov. 4. Autumnal dandelion and yarrow.

Must be out-of-doors enough to get experience of wholesome reality, as a ballast to thought and sentiment. Health requires this relaxation, this aimless life. This life in the present. Let a man have thought what he will of Nature in the house, she will still be novel outdoors. I keep out of doors for the sake of the mineral, vegetable, and animal in me.

How precious a fine day early in the spring! — less so in the fall; less still in the summer and winter. Chimaphila sheds its pollen now. Saw witch-hazels out of bloom, some still fresh.

The winds of autumn draw a few strains from the telegraph, after all. At this post it is only a musical hum, but at the next it attains to clearness and reminds me of the isles of Greece. I put my ear to the post. Every fibre responded with the increasing inflatus, but when it rose into a more melodious and



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tenser tone it seemed to retire and concentrate itself in the pith of the wood.



There was also Thorer of Steige, in Magnus Barefoot's reign, who was "old and heavy." He gained some victories, but when it went against him could not run. He told his foe, "I am well in hands, but ill on my feet." He "was a man exceedingly stout, both high of stature and thick." So that, when he was hung, his neck gave way and his body fell to the ground. The poet sings: —

"How the king's thralls hung on the gallows
Old Thorer and his traitor-fellows."

My thought is a part of the meaning of the world, and hence I use a part of the world as a symbol to express my thought.³⁷


 November 5, Friday, 1852: Under the direction of President Millard Fillmore, the US State Department conveyed instructions to the US Navy Department for Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry's expedition to Japan.

At Clark's Point in San Francisco, a couple of days of heavy waves carried away 60 feet of Law's Wharf.

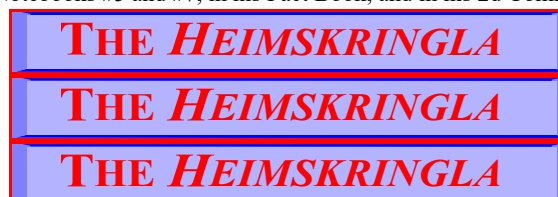
The American Society of Civil Engineers was founded in New York, led by Alfred W. Craven, Chief Engineer of the Croton Aqueduct, with a constitution based upon the 1848 constitution of the Boston Society of Civil Engineers.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRIES IN HIS JOURNAL FOR NOVEMBER 5TH-8TH]

 November 6, Saturday, 1852: Frederick Douglass wrote to Gerrit Smith, who was newly elected to Congress:
My Dear Sir. The Cup of my joy is full. If my humble labors have

37. Clearly, Thoreau had been continuing to study in Samuel Laing's CHRONICLE OF THE KINGS OF NORWAY. He was placing the bulk of his notes in his Indian Notebooks #5 and #7, in his Fact Book, and in his 2d Commonplace Book.



in any measure contributed (as you kindly say they have) to your election, I am most amply rewarded. You are now, thank heaven, within Sight and hearing of this guilty nation – for the rest I fear nothing. You will do the work of an apostle of Liberty. May God give you Strength. Your election forms an era in the history of the great Anti Slavery Struggle. For the first time, a man will appear in the American Congress completely imbued with the Spirit of freedom. Here to fore, vertue has had to ask pardon of vice. Our friends who have nobly spoken great truths in Congress, on the Subject of Slavery, have all of them found themselves in Straits where they have been compelled, to disavow or qualify their abolitionism so as to seriously damage the beauty and force of their testimony. Not so will it be with you. Should your life and health be spared (which blessings are devoutly prayed for) you will go into Congress with the “Jerry Level” in your hand – regarding Slavery as “Naked Piracy” – You go to Congress, not by the grace of a party caucus, bestowed as a reward for party services; not by concealment, bargain, or Compromise, but by the unbought suffrages of your fellow citizens, acting independently of, and in defiance of party!... You go to Congress, not from quiet nor seclusion – Shut out from the eye of the world – where your thoughts and feelings had to be imagined – but you go from the very whirlwind of agitation, from “rescue trials,” from Womans’ rights Conventions, and from “Jerry Celebrations,” where your lightest words were caught up and perverted to your hurt. You go to Congress a Free Man.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRIES IN HIS JOURNAL FOR NOVEMBER 5TH-8TH]



November 7, Sunday, 1852: The San Francisco Bible Society celebrated its 3d anniversary in the First Baptist Church on Washington Street.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRIES IN HIS JOURNAL FOR NOVEMBER 5TH-8TH]



November 8, Monday, 1852: President Millard Fillmore visited the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* with Secretary of the Navy John P. Kennedy (1745-1870), governor of Maryland Enoch L. Low (1820-1892) of Frederick, Maryland, and other dignitaries. The vessel offered the President a 21-gun salute: Bang! (Low would support the Confederacy during the American Civil War; Fillmore would serve as president until March 1853; his successor would be Franklin Pierce (1804-1869) who would serve from 1853 to 1857; a more patriotic bunch of fellows could never be conceptualized).



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRIES IN HIS JOURNAL FOR NOVEMBER 5TH-8TH]

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November 9, Tuesday, 1852: The Knickerbocker Engine house on Merchant Street in [San Francisco](#) was destroyed by fire.



[Henri-Frédéric Amiel](#), who would be referred to as the “Swiss [Thoreau](#),” wrote in his *JOURNAL INTIME*: “A few pages of the Chrestomathie Française and Vinet’s remarkable letter at the head of the volume, have given me one or two delightful hours. As a thinker, as a Christian, and as a man, Vinet occupies a typical place. His philosophy, his theology, his esthetics, in short, his work, will be, or has been already surpassed at all points. His was a great soul and a fine talent. But neither were well enough served by circumstances. We see in him a personality worthy of all veneration, a man of singular goodness and a writer of distinction, but not quite a great man, nor yet a great writer. Profundity and purity, these are what he possesses in a high degree, but not greatness, properly speaking. For that, he is a little too subtle and analytical, too ingenious and fine-spun; his thought is overladen with detail, and has not enough flow, eloquence, imagination, warmth, and largeness. Essentially and constantly meditative, he has not strength enough left to deal with what is outside him. The casuistries of conscience and of language, eternal self-suspicion, and self-examination, his talent lies in these things, and is limited by them. Vinet wants passion, abundance, entraînement, and therefore popularity. The individualism which is his title to glory is also the cause of his weakness.

We find in him always the solitary and the ascetic. His thought is, as it were, perpetually at church; it is perpetually devising trials and penances for itself. Hence the air of scruple and anxiety which characterizes it even in its bolder flights. Moral energy, balanced by a disquieting delicacy of fibre; a fine organization marred, so to speak, by low health, such is the impression it makes upon us. Is it reproach or praise to say of Vinet’s mind that it seems to one a force perpetually reacting upon itself? A warmer and more self-forgetful manner; more muscles, as it were, around the nerves, more circles of intellectual and historical life around the individual circle, these are what Vinet, of all writers perhaps the one who makes us think most, is still lacking in. Less reflexivity and more plasticity, the eye more on the object, would raise the style of Vinet, so rich in substance, so nervous, so full of ideas, and variety, into a grand style. Vinet, to sum up, is conscience personified, as man and as writer. Happy the literature and the society which is able to count at one time two or three like him, if not equal to him!”



Nov. 9. Tuesday. *Ranunculus repens*, *Bidens connata* (flat in a brook), yarrow, dandelion, autumnal dandelion, tansy, *Aster undulatus*, etc. A late three-ribbed goldenrod, with large serratures in middle of the narrow leaves, ten or twelve rays. *Potentilla argentea*. Fore part of November time for walnutting.

All around Walden, both in the thickest wood and where the wood has been cut off, there can be traced a meandering narrow shelf on the steep hillside, the footpath worn by the feet of Indian hunters, and still occasionally trodden by the white man, probably as old as the race of man here. And the same trail may be found encircling all our ponds. Near the sandy eastern shore, where the water is eight or ten feet deep, I have seen from a boat, in calm weather, broad circular heaps of small stones oil the bottom, half a, dozen feet in diameter by a foot or more in height, where it]] around was bare sand,-probably the work of some kind of fish.

The French call dragon-flies “demoiselles.”



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November 10, Wednesday, [1852](#): [Henri-Frédéric Amiel](#), who would be referred to as the “Swiss [Thoreau](#),” wrote in his *JOURNAL INTIME*: “How much have we not to learn from the Greeks, those immortal ancestors of ours! And how much better they solved their problem than we have solved ours. Their ideal man is not ours, but they understood infinitely better than we how to reverence, cultivate and ennoble the man whom they knew. In a thousand respects we are still barbarians beside them, as Béranger said to me with a sigh in 1843: barbarians in education, in eloquence, in public life, in poetry, in matters of art, etc. We must have millions of men in order to produce a few elect spirits: a thousand was enough in Greece. If the measure of a civilization is to be the number of perfected men that it produces, we are still far from this model people. The slaves are no longer below us, but they are among us. Barbarism is no longer at our frontiers; it lives side by side with us. We carry within us much greater things than they, but we ourselves are smaller. It is a strange result. Objective civilization produced great men while making no conscious effort toward such a result; subjective civilization produces a miserable and imperfect race, contrary to its mission and its earnest desire. The world grows more majestic but man diminishes. Why is this?”

We have too much barbarian blood in our veins, and we lack measure, harmony and grace. Christianity, in breaking man up into outer and inner, the world into earth and heaven, hell and paradise, has decomposed the human unity, in order, it is true, to reconstruct it more profoundly and more truly. But Christianity has not yet digested this powerful leaven. She has not yet conquered the true humanity; she is still living under the antimony of sin and grace, of here below and there above. She has not penetrated into the whole heart of Jesus. She is still in the narthex of penitence; she is not reconciled, and even the churches still wear the livery of service, and have none of the joy of the daughters of God, baptized of the Holy Spirit.

Then, again, there is our excessive division of labor; our bad and foolish education which does not develop the whole man; and the problem of poverty. We have abolished slavery, but without having solved the question of labor. In law there are no more slaves, in fact, there are many. And while the majority of men are not free, the free man, in the true sense of the term can neither be conceived nor realized. Here are enough causes for our inferiority.”

Although the sappers of the [Chinese Christian Army](#) detonated a petard under the city wall of Changsha, capital of Hunan province, hand-to-hand combat by footsoldiers of the true God failed to capture the resulting breach in the wall.

When [Dr. Gideon Algernon Mantell](#), who suffered from the same sort of spinal problem from which I (Austin Meredith) suffer, took an overdose of the opium he was relying upon as a painkiller after his 1841 carriage accident, and lapsed into a coma and died in London, [Professor Richard Owen](#), who claimed some of Mantell's scientific discoveries as his own, pickled and preserved in a jar at the Royal College of Surgeons the injured section of his enemy's spine.

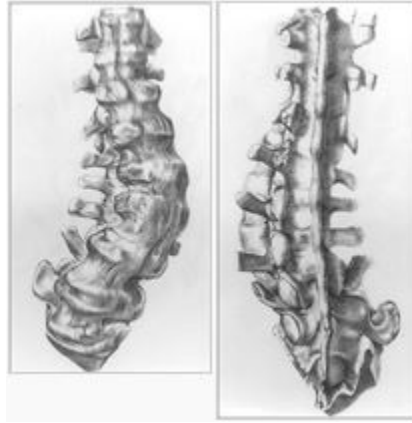
[It is] a pity a man so talented should be so dastardly and envious.

– Dr. Gideon Mantell, speaking at some point during

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his life of his bitter opponent Richard Owen



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR NOVEMBER 10TH]



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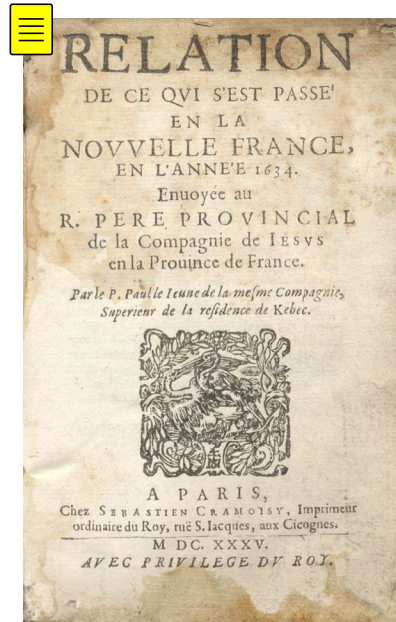
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 November 11, Thursday, 1852: Rejecting the new constitution, the city of Buenos Aires seceded from Argentina. The capital was moved to Paraná.

The new Palace of Westminster opened in London.

Having already perused the volumes for the years 1633 and 1634, Henry Thoreau checked out, from Harvard Library, the JESUIT RELATION volumes for the years 1635 and 1636.³⁸

<http://www.canadiana.org>




He also checked out Volume II of William Kirby's and William Spence's AN INTRODUCTION TO ENTOMOLOGY: OR ELEMENTS OF THE NATURAL HISTORY OF INSECTS: WITH PLATES.

BIOLOGY



Nov. 11. Did Harris call the water-bug *Gyrinus* to-day?

38. Thoreau presumably read each and every volume of the JESUIT RELATIONS that was available in the stacks at the Harvard Library. We know due to extensive extracts in his Indian Notebooks #7 and #8 that between 1852 and 1857 he did withdraw or consult all the volumes for the years between 1633 and 1672. Thoreau took notes in particular in regard to the reports by Father Jean de Brébeuf, Father Jacques Buteux, Father Claude Dablon, Father Jérôme Lalemant, Father Paul Le Jeune, Father François Le Mercier, Father Julien Perrault, Father Jean de Quens, Father Paul Ragueneau, and Father Barthélemy Vimont.

 Cramoisy, Sebastian (ed.). *RELATION DE CE QUI S'EST PASSÉ EN LA NOUVELLE FRANCE EN L'ANNÉE 1636: ENVOYÉE AU R. PERE PROVINCIAL DE LA COMPAGNIE DE JESUS EN LA PROVINCE DE FRANCE, PAR LE P. PAUL LE JEUNE DE LA MESME COMPAGNIE, SUPERIEUR DE LA RESIDENCE DE KÉBEC. A Paris: Chez Sebastian Cramoisy...*, 1637



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November 12, Friday, 1852: [Arthur Hugh Clough](#), [James Russell Lowell](#), and [William Makepeace Thackeray](#) arrived in Boston on the steamship *Canada*.

[John Wedderburn Halkett](#) died in London at the age of 84. The body would be interred at Petersham.

[Henri-Frédéric Amiel](#), who would be referred to as the “Swiss [Thoreau](#),” wrote in his *JOURNAL INTIME*: “St. Martin’s summer is still lingering, and the days all begin in mist. I ran for a quarter of an hour round the garden to get some warmth and suppleness. Nothing could be lovelier than the last rosebuds, or than the delicate gaufred edges of the strawberry leaves embroidered with hoar-frost, while above them Arachne’s delicate webs hung swaying in the green branches of the pines, little ball-rooms for the fairies carpeted with powdered pearls and kept in place by a thousand dewy strands hanging from above like the chains of a lamp and supporting them from below like the anchors of a vessel. These little airy edifices had all the fantastic lightness of the elf-world and all the vaporous freshness of dawn. They recalled to me the poetry of the north, wafting to me a breath from Caledonia or Iceland or Sweden, Frithiof and the Edda, Ossian and the Hebrides. All that world of cold and mist, of genius and of reverie, where warmth comes not from the sun but from the heart where man is more noticeable than nature — that chaste and vigorous world in which will plays a greater part than sensation and thought has more power than instinct — in short the whole romantic cycle of German and northern poetry, awoke little by little in my memory and laid claim upon my sympathy. It is a poetry of bracing quality, and acts upon one like a moral tonic. Strange charm of imagination! A twig of pine wood and a few spider-webs are enough to make countries, epochs, and nations live again before her.”

Poles for the 1st electric telegraph service were installed at Montgomery and Merchant streets in [San Francisco](#). This device would connect the metropolis with [San Jose](#), [Stockton](#), [Sacramento](#), and [Marysville](#).

[Francis Parkman, Jr.](#)’s father, the [Reverend Francis Parkman, Sr.](#), committed [suicide](#) by hanging himself in a bathroom at the age of 64 in Boston, according to the gazettes on account of an alleged conspiracy on the part of certain abandoned women, and others, to extort money from him — whereupon the clinically depressed son would have a multi-story fair-season home “Sunnyside” built on a 3-acre lot on the northwest shore of Jamaica Pond near Boston. During winters he would reside with his widowed mother and unmarried sister Eliza at 8 Walnut Street in Boston, if not at his own home at 50 Chestnut Street.

Parkman’s accomplishments are all the more impressive in light of the fact that he suffered from a debilitating neurological illness, which plagued him his entire life, and which was never properly diagnosed. He was often unable to walk, and for long periods he was effectively blind, being unable to see but the slightest amount of light. Much of his research involved having people read documents to him, and much of his writing was written in the dark, or dictated to others.




Nov. 12. 4 P.M. — To Cliffs.

It clears up. A very bright rainbow. Three reds and greens. I see its foot within half a mile in the southeast, heightening the green of the pines. From Fair Haven Hill, I see a very distant, long, low dark-blue cloud, still left, in the northwest horizon beyond the mountains, and against this I see, apparently, a narrow white cloud resting on every mountain and conforming exactly to its outline, — as if the white frilled edge of the main cloud were turned up over them. In fact, the massive dark-blue cloud beyond revealed these distinct white caps resting on the mountains this side, for twenty miles along the horizon.

The sun having set, my long dark cloud has assumed the form of an alligator, and where the sun has just disappeared it is split into two tremendous jaws, between which glows the eternal city, its crenate lips all coppery golden, its serrate fiery teeth. Its body lies a slumbering mass along the horizon.

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
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 November 13, Saturday, 1852: Secretary of the Navy John P. Kennedy (1745-1870) instructed Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry that as soon as the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* was ready for sea, he should aim it in the direction of Macau, or Hong Kong, there to rendezvous with other vessels that would be sent there to be under his command in a Far Eastern flotilla. Acting Secretary of State Edward Everett (1794-1865) drafted a letter from President Millard Fillmore to the Emperor of Japan, to be hand-carried by the Commodore.

Although the sappers of the Chinese Christian Army detonated a 2d petard beneath the wall of Changsha, hand-to-hand combat by the foot-soldiers of the true God again failed to capture the resulting breach and therefore capture the city.

The Consistory of Mohilow overturned a previous judgement and declared the marriage of Princess Carolyne Sayn-Wittgenstein to be void (this would not be upheld by the Archbishop of St. Petersburg).



*Nov. 13. Saturday. To Andromeda Ponds. Andromeda is a dull reddish brown, like oak leaves. Saw a flock of little passenger birds [*Fringilla linaria* [now called *Acanthis linaria*, the redpoll.] by Walden, busily pecking at the white birch catkins; about the size of a chickadee; *distinct* white bar on wings, most with dark pencilled breast, some with whitish; forked tail; bright chestnut or crimson (?) frontlet; yellowish shoulders or sack. When startled, they went off with a jingling sound somewhat like emptying a bag of coin. Is it the yellow redpoll? [*linaria* or *Fringilla* (or *F-*) *linaria* (Common Redpoll Carduelis flammea*) (or Lesser Redpoll or Red-crown)]

 November 14, Sunday, 1852: Hector Berlioz and Marie Recio arrived in Weimar, the toast of the Romantics there, led by Franz Liszt.


The Higginsons urged Ellen Fuller Channing to leave her husband Ellery Channing.



Nov. 14. Still yarrow, tall buttercup, and tansy.

1852-1853

1852-1853


 November 15, Sunday, [1852](#): The Reverend [Moncure Daniel Conway](#) attempted something which should have been quite noncontroversial, and failed miserably. A young black woman named Becky, who had been a servant in a house in which he had resided, had died, and he attempted to preach a quiet and low-key funeral sermon over her casket in the parlor. Incidentally, however, during his sermon, he commented upon what he had seen as her natural innocence and goodness. All hell broke loose among the [Methodists](#). Did the right reverend not understand that Death is God's Punishment for Sin? Becky could have been neither innocent or good, or God could not, would not, thus have put her to death. Shortly afterward a woman commented that in a sermon Conway appeared to be "speaking to us from the moon," that is, that he was a lunatic in need of asylum.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

VOLUME II



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

 November 16, Monday, [1852](#): [Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [George William Curtis](#).


To: George William Curtis
From: HDT
Date: 16 November 1852

*Concord Nov 16th
1852*

Dear Sir,

I send you herewith 100 pages of "Cape Cod." It is not yet half the whole. The remainder of the narrative is more personal, as I reach the scene of my adventures. I am a little in doubt about the extracts from the old ministers. If you prefer to, you may omit from the middle of the 86th page to the end of this parcel; (the rest being respected); or perhaps a smaller type will use it up fast enough.

As for the conditions of sale; if you accept the paper, it is to be mine to reprint, if I think it worth the while, after it has appeared in your journal.

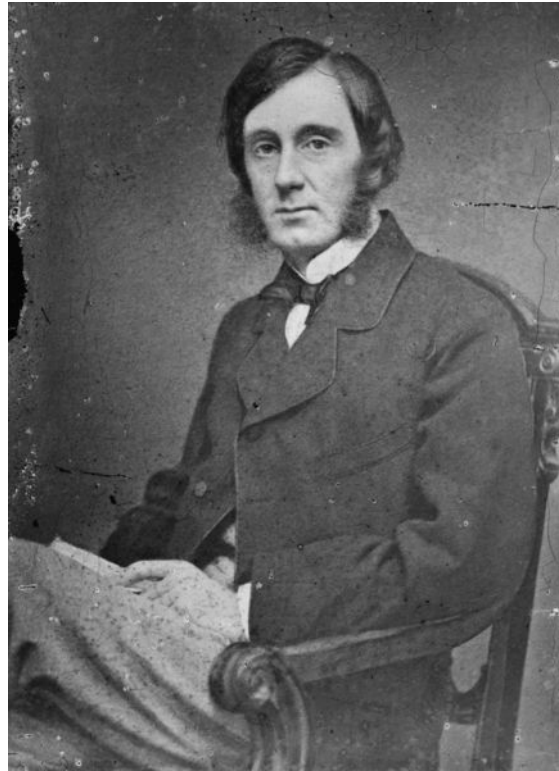
I shall expect to be paid as fast as the paper is printed, and if it is likely to lie on hand long, to receive reasonable warning of it.

I have collected this under several heads for your convenience. The next subject is "The Beach" which I will copy out & forward as soon as you desire it.

Yrs Henry D. Thoreau.

1852-1853

1852-1853



Chapters one through four of [CAPE COD](#) were serialized in [Putnam's Monthly Magazine](#), with "The Beach" (Chapter 4) to follow — this 100 pages was "not yet half the whole," with "The Beach" (Chapter 4) to follow.

ROSS/ADAMS COMMENTARY

TIMELINE OF CAPE COD

Bradley Ray King, who teaches American and African American literatures at the University of Texas in Austin, has attempted to parse Thoreau's agenda in writing [CAPE COD](#) as a reaction against the sort of Whiggish hegemonic imperialistic nationalism of the self-privileging of the descendants of the white English passengers aboard the *Mayflower*, which he had encountered in [Daniel Webster's](#) fulminations at [Plymouth Rock](#), and in [George Bancroft's](#) historicizing:

Like his cynical description of the humane house, Thoreau's portrayal of early New England history is critical and iconoclastic. He represents the Pilgrims as ignorant cartographers and unjust land grabbers — far from the paragons of democratic virtue that his contemporary George Bancroft (whom Thoreau explicitly attacks) had recently represented in his widely read HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES FROM THE DISCOVERY OF THE AMERICAN CONTINENT (first published in 1834). Bancroft depicted the

BANCROFT'S US, I

Pilgrims as initiating a teleological narrative of democratic progress in the New World. According to HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES,



1852-1853

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the early English settlers "scattered the seminal principles of republican freedom and national independence," seeds that would grow into Bancroft's beloved Jacksonian democracy (323). The Pilgrims' "germ" finds fruition in the 1840s and 50s, in the expansion of American Christianity and democracy across the "uncivilized" continent. (As President Polk's Secretary of the Navy, Bancroft had advocated in 1835 and 1846 for the invasion of [Mexico](#), which had precipitated the Mexican War.) Thoreau's outrage at the Mexican War, expressed by his famous refusal to pay his poll tax, probably led to his portrayal in [CAPE COD](#) of the Pilgrims and Puritans as imperialistic. He began working on this book in 1849, one year after the U.S. sacked Mexico City and acquired 1.2 million square miles of Mexico's territory, including most of what we now think of as the American West. Given his direct attack on Bancroft, Thoreau's revisionist history should be read as a critique not only of the Pilgrims, but also of the politics of expansionism in Thoreau's own day.... Bancroft writes as blissful inheritor of the Pilgrims' errand for God and democracy, representing both his facts and myths as transcendent truths; and Thoreau writes as disaffected outsider to this narrative, undercutting his facts and myths by emphasizing their instability.... The narrator of [CAPE COD](#) emerges as a historian and cultural critic who exposes the contingency and instability of his own histories and criticisms. While evoking a rhetoric of historical objectivity, he also undercuts this rhetoric by critiquing the very possibility of reliable historical narratives. Thoreau's narrator in [CAPE COD](#) thus avoids the unattractive extremes of absolute optimism or cynicism. Like his portrayal of the charity house, his account of America's forefathers (and their progeny) is harsh and sceptical, yet he remains unwilling to pronounce his critique in absolute terms.



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

— [Russel Blaine Nye](#)



Nov. 16. 9 A.M. — Sail up river to Lee's Bridge.

Colder weather and very windy, but still no snow. A very little ice along the edges of the river, which does not all melt before night. Muskrat-houses completed. Interesting objects looking down a river-reach at this season, and our river should not be represented without one or two of these cones. They are quite conspicuous half a mile distant, and are of too much importance to be omitted in the river landscape. I still see the drowned white lily pads showing their red sides. On the meadow side the water is very much soiled by the dashing of the waves. I see one duck █. The pines on shore look very cold, reflecting a silvery light. The waves run high, with white caps, and communicate a pleasant motion to the boat. At Lee's Cliff the *Cerastium viscosum*. We sailed up Well Meadow Brook. The water is singularly grayey, clear and cold. The bottom of the brook showing great nuphar roots, like its ribs, with some budding leaves. Returning, landed at Holden's Spruce Swamp. The water is frozen in the pitcher-plant leaf. The swamp-pink and blueberry buds attract.

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CAPE COD: This "charity house," as the wrecker called it, this "humane house," as some call it, that is, the one to which we first came, had neither window nor sliding shutter, nor clap-boards, nor paint. As we have said, there was a rusty nail put through the staple. However, as we wished to get an idea of a humane house, and we hoped that we should never have a better opportunity, we put our eyes, by turns, to a knot-hole in the door, and, after long looking, without seeing, into the dark -not knowing how many shipwrecked men's bones we might see at last, looking with the eye of faith, knowing that, though to him that knocketh it may not always be opened, yet to him that looketh long enough through a knot-hole the inside shall be visible, -for we had had some practice at looking inward, -by steadily keeping our other ball covered from the light meanwhile, putting the outward world behind us, ocean and land, and the beach -till the pupil became enlarged and collected the rays of light that were wandering in that dark, (for the pupil shall be enlarged by looking; there never was so dark a night but a faithful and patient eye, however small, might at last prevail over it,) -after all this, I say, things began to take shape to our vision, -if we may use this expression where there was nothing but emptiness,- and we obtained the long wished for insight. Though we thought at first that it was a hopeless case, after several minutes' steady exercise of the divine faculty, our prospects began decidedly to brighten, and we were ready to exclaim with the blind bard of "Paradise Lost and Regained,"-

"Hail! Holy Light, offspring of Heaven, first born.
Or of the eternal coeternal beam
May I express thee unblamed?"

A little longer, and a chimney rushed red on our sight. In short, when our vision had grown familiar with the darkness, we discovered that there were some stones and some loose wads of wool on the floor, and an empty fire-place at the further end; but it was not supplied with matches, or straw, or hay, that we could see, nor "accommodated with a bench." Indeed, it was the wreck of all cosmical beauty there within.


Turning our backs on the outward world, we thus looked through the knot-hole into the humane house, into the very bowels of mercy; and for bread we found a stone. It was literally a great cry (of sea-mews outside), and a little wool. However, we were glad to sit outside, under the lee of the humane house, to escape the piercing wind; and there we thought how cold is charity! how inhumane humanity! This, then, is what charity hides! Virtues antique and far away with ever a rusty nail over the latch; and very difficult to keep in repair, withal, it is so uncertain whether any will ever gain the beach near you. So we shivered round about, not being able to get into it, ever and anon looking through the knot-hole into that night without a star, until we concluded that it was not a humane house at all, but a sea-side box, now shut up, belonging to some of the family of night or chaos, where they spent their summers by the sea, for the sake of the sea-breeze, and that it was not proper for us to be prying into their concerns.

My companion had declared before this that I had not a particle of sentiment, in rather absolute terms, to my astonishment; but I suspect he meant that my legs did not ache just then, though I am not wholly a stranger to that sentiment. But I did not intend this for a sentimental journey.

 November 17, Tuesday, [1852](#): William Draper Swan of [Chicago](#) (1809-1864) wrote to Frank Moore offering comments on life back in Boston, and selling horses. He discussed Franklin Pierce being chosen for President over Senator [Daniel Webster](#), and the nomination of Scoto.



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

 November 18, Wednesday, [1852](#): To finance railroads and related industries, *Crédit mobilier* was created in France by the Pereire brothers.

Due perhaps to the poor understanding that physicians had of the phenomenon known as the coma, it occasionally was happening during the 19th Century that a newspaper report would appear, that a corpse had miraculously revived during a funeral service. In consequence, many 19th-Century Americans and Europeans suffered from a somewhat justified fear of being buried alive. There actually arose a Society for the Prevention of People Being Buried Alive, and the body of a deceased person might be left to cure for days or weeks before the actual interment in the ground. With the death the [Duke of Wellington](#), this macabre postponement ritual had reached an extreme. Two months had been allowed to elapse after the Duke's demise, before his body was committed on this day to a sarcophagus of luxulyanite in St Paul's Cathedral, next to [Horatio Nelson](#).

The Reverend [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#) brought a carriage to the door, and [Ellery Channing](#)'s family left him. He remained in his room and gave no sign of awareness of what was happening. After the carriage had departed, he took up a pen and wrote a single-sentence letter to the Reverend Higginson:

*I will consider it a great favor,
if you will never call on me again.*

At some point [Reverend Higginson](#) came to Concord and took depositions from [Ellery](#)'s neighbors, including [Cynthia Dunbar Thoreau](#). To this collection, [Ellery](#)'s mother-in-law added a deposition to the effect that she considered this father as unsuitable to have charge of anyone's children — as unsuitable anyone she had ever known.

[Rose Philippine "Quahkahanumad" Duchesne](#) died blind and feeble at the age of 83 in St. Charles, Missouri (she would be beatified on May 12th, 1940 by Pope Pius XII and canonized on July 3d, 1988 by Pope John Paul II).



Nov. 18. Measured a stick of round timber, probably white pine, on the cars this afternoon, — ninety-five feet long, nine and ten twelfths in circumference at butt, and six and two twelfths in circumference at small end, quite straight. From Vermont. Yarrow and tansy still. These are cold, gray days.

1852-1853

1852-1853



November 19, Friday, [1852](#): Le Carnaval de Venise for piano was performed for the 1st time, in the Royal Palace of Madrid, Spain, by its composer Louis Moreau Gottschalk (here is a piano advertisement dating to this year):



In the evening [Mrs. Barzillai Frost](#), the preacher's wife, walking on the street in front of the Channing home, shepherding the morals of her [Concord](#) community, overheard what seemed to her to be [Ellery Channing](#) and [Henry Thoreau](#) having "a jubilee in the front parlor." She would of course report this unseemly jubilation to [Ellen Fuller Channing](#)'s mother. Whatever attempt was being made by friends and neighbors to cheer Channing up, this effort also included going boating regularly with Thoreau, being invited by [Cynthia Dunbar Thoreau](#) to dinner at the Thoreau home on at least one occasion, and regular dining at the [Waldo Emerson](#) home. However, the forlorn husband was not only being helped, he was also being most carefully watched, for instance by the railroad agent at the depot down the street.

And in fact Ellery was on his best behavior and was detected being polite to certain persons to whom he had previously behaved somewhat rudely.



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

1852-1853

1852-1853



November 20, Saturday, 1852: After a successful performance of his music in Weimar, in which several movements were repeated, Hector Berlioz was granted the order of the White Falcon of Saxe-Weimar.

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



Father Isaac Hecker, C.S.S.R. wrote to Orestes Augustus Brownson, Esq.

Waldo Emerson gave a literary dinner for Arthur Hugh Clough in Boston.

Charles Reade/Tom Taylor's "Masks & Faces" premiered in London.



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



November 21, Sunday, 1852: A plebiscite held in France was reported to favor the establishment of a "2d Empire," by 96.9% of the electorate. The French army lay siege to Laghouat in Algeria.

After dining with the Grand Duke of Saxe-Weimar, Hector Berlioz witnessed a 2d performance of his Benvenuto Cellini.

Robert Schumann, in Düsseldorf, reported new symptoms which he calls "unusual aural disturbances."



Nov. 21. I was surprised this afternoon to find the river skimmed over in some places, and Fair Haven Pond one-third frozen or skimmed over, though commonly there is scarcely any ice to be observed along the shores. The commonest bird I see and hear nowadays is that little red crowned or fronted bird I described the 13th. I hear now more music from them. They have a mewling note which reminds me of a canary-bird. They make very good forerunners of winter. Is it not the ruby-crowned wren? [Lesser redpoll.] [~~tinaria~~ or ~~Fringilla~~ (or ~~F-~~) ~~tinaria~~ (Common Redpoll ~~Carduelis flammea~~) (or Lesser Redpoll or Red-crown)]

1852-1853

1852-1853

➡ November 22, Monday, 1852: On his last night in Weimar, Hector Berlioz was feted with a glittering dinner and ball at the town hall.

August Alexander Klengel died at the age of 69 in Dresden.

At approximately 11PM a severe earthquake created a fissure a half-mile wide and 300 yards long in a sand bank, through which the top 30 feet of the waters of Lake Merced just south of San Francisco began to plunge toward the Pacific Ocean.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR NOVEMBER 22D]

➡ November 23, Tuesday, 1852: Massachusetts Governor George Sewall Boutwell dedicated a monument in Sudbury to "King Phillip's War" or, at least, to the memory of Captain Joseph Wadsworth, and in so doing he would opinion that:

The human family has ever been subject to one great law. It is this. Inferior races disappear in the presence of their superiors, or become dependent upon them. Now, while this law shall not stand as a defense for our fathers, it is satisfactory to feel that no policy could have civilized or even saved the Indian tribes of Massachusetts. The remnants that linger in our midst are not the representatives of the native nobility of the forest of two centuries ago.

There were a total of 28 Pequot tribespeople still alive. By the 1970s there would be but 2, Elizabeth George Plouffe still living on the reservation, and her sister, living off the reservation. -This, plus financing from a mogul in Indonesia, would eventuate in the world's most profitable casino, "Foxwoods" near Ledyard, Connecticut.

At the suggestion of Anthony Trollope, an official of the British General Post Office, in Saint Helier on the Isle of Jersey, the 1st roadside pillar boxes in Britain were brought into service on this day.



He went postal

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

To: HDT
From: Horace Greeley
Date: 23 November 1852

New-York,
Nov. 23, 1852.





1852-1853

1852-1853

*My Dear Thoreau,
I have made no bargain –none whatever– with Putnam, concerning your MS. I have indicated no price to him. I handed over the MS. because I wish it published, and presumed that was in accordance both with your interest and your wishes.
And I now say to you that if he will pay you \$3 per printed page, I think that will be very well. I have promised to write something for him myself, and shall be well satisfied with that price. Your “Canada” is not so fresh and acceptable as if it had just been written on the strength of a last summer’s trip, and I hope you will have it printed in Putnam’s Monthly. But I have said nothing to his folks, as to price, and will not till I hear from you again.
Very probably, there was some misapprehension on the part of Geo. Curtis. I presume the price now offered you is that paid to writers generally for the Monthly.
As to Sartain, I know his Magazine has broken down, but I guess he will pay you. I have not seen but one of your articles printed by him, and I think the other may be reclaimed. Please address him at once. I have been very busy the past season, and had to let every thing wait that could till after Nov. 2d.
Yours,
Horace Greeley.
H. D. Thoreau Esq.*



Nov. 23. This morning the ground is white with snow, and it still snows. This is the first time it has been fairly white this season, though once before, many weeks ago, it was slightly whitened for ten or fifteen minutes. It was so warm and still last night at sundown that I remarked to a neighbor that it was moderating to snow. It is, in some degree, also, warmer after the first snow has come and banked up the houses and filled the crevices in the roof. Already the landscape impresses me with a greater sense of fertility. I have not worn gloves yet, though it has been finger-cold. There is something genial even in the first snow, and Nature seems to relent a little of her November harshness. Men, too, are disposed to give thanks for the bounties of the year all over the land, and the sound of the mortar is heard in all houses, and the odor of summer savory reaches even to poets’ garrets.

This, then, may be considered the end of the flower season for this year, though this snow will probably soon melt again.

Among the flowers which may be put down as lasting thus far, as I remember, in the order of their hardiness; yarrow, tansy (these very fresh and common), cerastium, autumnal dandelion, dandelion, and perhaps tall buttercup, etc., the last four scarce. The following seen within a fortnight: a late three-ribbed goldenrod of some kind, blue-stemmed goldenrod (these two perhaps within a week), *Potentilla argentea*, *Aster undulatus*, *Ranunculus repens*, *Bidens connata*, shepherd’s-purse, etc., etc. N.B.: I have not looked for witch-hazel nor *Stellaria media* lately.


I had a thought in a dream last night which surprised me by its strangeness, as if it were based on an experience in a previous state of existence, and could not be entertained by my waking self. Both the thought and the language were equally novel to me, but I at once perceived it to be true and to coincide with my experience in this state.

1852-1853

1852-1853

3 P.M. — To Cliffs and Walden.

You must go forth early to see the snow on the twigs. The twigs and leaves are all bare now, and the snow half melted on the ground; where the trees are thick it has not reached the ground at all, except in the shape of water in the course of the day. But early this morning the woods presented a very different scene. The beauty and purity of new-fallen snow, lying just as it fell, on the twigs and leaves all the country over, afforded endless delight to the walker. It was a delicate and fairy-like scene. But a few hours later the woods were comparatively lumpish and dirty. So, too, you must go forth very early to see a hoar frost, which is rare here; these crisped curls adorn only the forehead of the day. The air is full of low, heavy mist, almost rain. The pines, in this atmosphere and contrasted with the snow, are suddenly many degrees darker, and the oaks redder. But still the tops of the dead grass rise above the snow in the fields, and give the country a yellow or russet look. The wetter meadows are quite russet. I am surprised to see Fair Haven entirely skimmed over.

Having descended the Cliff, I go along to the Andromeda Ponds. Sportsmen have already been out with their dogs, improving this first snow to track their game. The andromeda looks somewhat redder than before, a warm reddish brown, with an edging of yellowish sedge or coarse grass about the swamp, and red rustling shrub oak hills with a white ground rising around. These swamps, resorted to by the muskrat and ducks , most remind me of the Indian.

The mist so low is clouds close to the ground, and the steam of the engine also hugs the earth in the Cut, concealing all objects for a great distance.

Though the parents cannot determine whether the child shall be male or female, yet, methinks, it depends on them whether he shall be a worthy addition to the human family.



November 24, Wednesday, [1852](#): The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi* set to sea from Norfolk, Virginia with 4 other vessels, and began the crossing of the Atlantic Ocean, the 1st leg of its voyage to the [China](#) Seas and [Japan](#) — the flotilla was expected to arrive in the Far East sometime in April.

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

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

Zehner-Polka op.121 by [Johann Baptist Strauss II](#) was performed for the initial time, in the Sperl Ballroom, Vienna.



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



November 25, Thursday, [1852](#): [Herman Melville](#) wrote [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#):

My dear Hawthorne,—

The other day, at Concord, you expressed uncertainty concerning your undertaking the story of Agatha, and, in the end, you urged me to write it. I have decided to do so, and shall begin it immediately upon reaching home; and so far as in me lies, I shall endeavor to do justice to so interesting a story of reality. Will you therefore enclose the whole affair to me; and if anything of your own has occurred to you in your random thinking,

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
1852-1853

won't you note it down for me on the same page with my memorandum? I wish I had come to this determination at Concord, for then we might have more fully and closely talked over the story, and so struck out new light. Make amends for this, though, as much as you conveniently can. With your permission I shall make use of the "Isle of Shoals," as far as the name goes at least. I shall also introduce the old Nantucket seaman, in the way I spoke to you about. I invoke your blessing upon my endeavors; and breathe a fair wind upon me. I greatly enjoyed my visit to you, and hope that you reaped some corresponding pleasure.

H. Melville Julian, Una, and Rose, my salutations to them.

In agony and despair [Ellery Channing](#) wrote to [Ellen Channing](#) (as depicted on a subsequent screen).



Nov. 25. At Walden. — I hear at sundown what I mistake for the squawking of a hen, — for they are firing at chickens hereabouts, — but it proved to be a flock of wild geese [**Canada Goose**  *Branta canadensis* (~~Wild Goose~~)] going south. This proves how much the voices of all fowls are alike.



November 26, Friday, 1852: A series of earthquakes in the lower part of [California](#) shook the ground for several days.

The [Daily Times](#) of Troy, New York commented that [Waldo Emerson](#) had recently provided (an all-white audience there with) a lecture on the traits and genius of the Anglo-Saxon race — a lecture which had “exhibited deep thought” although the lecturer had neglected to take “sufficient care in its arrangement.”



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR NOVEMBER 26TH]



November 27, Saturday, 1852: [Augusta Ada Byron King, Countess of Lovelace](#), only child of [Lord and Lady Byron](#), died of uterine cancer at the age of 36 — possibly augmented by bloodletting administered by her physicians.

[Edmund Quincy Sewall, Jr.](#) got married with [Louisa “Louise” Kilham Lovett](#) in Beverly, Massachusetts, daughter of Samuel Porter Lovett and Lucy Chatham Lovett. The marriage was conducted by the Reverend Edmund Quincy Sewall, Sr. of [Cohasset](#), with the assistance of the Reverend Christopher T. Thayer.



Nov. 27. Almost an Indian-summer day. The shrub oaks and the sprouts make woods you can look down on. They are now our rustling gardens. The leaves of the former are now a very handsome leather-color, whiter on the under side, clear and firm; smooth, and not shrivelled nor dimmed. It is a new color for a garden; something foreign and Oriental, even, it suggests. I find acorns which have sent a shoot down into the earth this fall.

Like many of my contemporaries I had rarely for many years used animal food, or tea or coffee, etc., etc., not so much because of any ill effects which I had traced to them in my own case, though I could

1852-1853

1852-1853

To Mrs Ellen K F. Channing, Concord Nov. 25, 1853

I command you as your husband, as you have left my bed & board without provocation to return forthwith with my children. I make this order absolutely & for the last time. I have never & shall never consent to a separation between us, and in no case will I relinquish my rights to and in my children. I am & have always been willing to do anything to make your life more agreeable to you here, & shall continue in that mind. Should you not accede to this perfectly reasonable & right request, I must then proceed to take those other steps which will be so painful to my children to yourself & to me. I advise you to leave your children for a day & to come here, & talk over this matter. Any day you may appoint I shall be here to see you.

W E Channing

It seems to me so totally out of your character to deliberately sit down to destroy a man, who has never done you an injury in his life, that I cannot believe it. I have never & in the presence of God I would say the same, done you an injury. I have never even so much as faintly dreamed of a separation from you up to the moment last spring I believe, you first spoke of it. But if I had done you all the injuries ever inflicted by the worst man who ever lived, what could they be compared with the injury, the living death you propose to me. To endeavor to deprive me of the only beings on earth for whom I have any fondness, or who are in any manner connected with me, to propose seriously to seize from a father his children, all his children, because you may think I have done you injuries, but great God! what has this to do with my children, beings who owe their life to me, who are mine as much as they are yours, to become the deliberate murder of your husband's peace of mind, to make the earth a living grave to him, a man who has done all on earth that he could do, for you, & to set yourself up in judgment over me. Why did you not poison me, or stab me, or kill me outright, or do you think that I can live here and die by inches? And to think that you can have advised with strangers over this, with your mother or brothers, over my death, over this cruel, horrible unnatural murder of a man who has never consciously injured you in his life, & you a woman, one who values herself upon her heart. There must be a God, there must be justice, there must be for horrible crimes a horrible end. I do not wish to bring upon my children the awful recollection of their father's violent death, I do not wish to bring them into Courts of Justice, but I am innocent man, & to have my whole heart and mind destroyed without fault is too horrible to contemplate.



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theorize extensively in that direction, as because it was not agreeable to my imagination. It appeared more beautiful to live low and fare hard in many respects; and though I never did so, I went just far enough to please my imagination. But now I find myself somewhat less particular in these respects. I carry less religion to the table, ask no blessing, not because I am wiser than I was, but, I am obliged to confess, because, however much it is to be regretted, with years I have grown more coarse and indifferent. The repugnance to animal food and the rest is not the result of experience, but is an instinct.



November 28, Sunday, 1852: An unsigned article appeared in the New Orleans Daily Picayune, about a bad book, Mrs. Stowe's UNCLE TOM'S CABIN, OR THE MAN THAT WAS A THING, a produce of her fertile fancy, and the damage its publication had done to the cause of truth. The anonymous author of this article contrasts that with an excellent and truthful book published half a year later in the South, THE CABIN AND PARLOR; OR, SLAVES AND MASTERS, written under the pseudonym J. Thornton Randolph by Charles Jacobs Peterson and published by that author's brother Theophilus B. Peterson Ltd. The gist of this alternative truth, if I may be so bold, is that the wicked rich industrialists of the North are abusing their immigrant workers, who amount to "white slaves," neglect to provide proper care for them, and care less whether they live or die — because they can be so readily replaced by cannon fodder of poor white trash fresh off the boat. Meanwhile these hypocrites are derogating the decent white folks of the slaveholding agricultural Southlands!

The Cabin and Parlor.

Since the publication of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" the interest excited by that bad book has brought forth many works of fiction intended to counteract its influence; negro literature has become quite abundant; but, lucklessly for the cause of truth, the power of intellect was with its opponents. Most of the Southern stories were put forth with more zeal than skill, more ambition than knowledge, and have accordingly made but poor and flat responses to the artful calumnies of Mrs. Stowe. Drawing, as she did, upon a fertile fancy, and embellishing her inventions, the unjust generalities, which were no better than inventions, with the gloss of lively narrative, sprightly dialogue and amusing incident, prosaic fact, told in a dull style, had the effect of exalting her powers by contrast, and weakening the better side by the feebleness of a tedious and awkward advocate. We have, therefore, shunned the entire class; and should not have ventured upon trying another had not friends, in whose confidence we have confidence, assured us that the "Cabin and the Parlor" is really a well-conceived, well-executed and spirited book. On this advice we have read it through, and are glad to bear testimony to the truth of the praise. It is not a sketch of the unreal, colored for a partisan purpose so as to distort all the features of social life which it represents, and to blacken a whole country and people in order to pamper unholy prejudiced; but a plain-spoken narrative of life, as it is, among Southern planters, described so as to illustrate its essential tone and characteristics, not as it might be made by exceptional cases which suggests themselves to malicious imaginations as possible. The book has not only a good motive and an honorable cause, but is composed with a remarkable power of expressing in a very agreeable style. The story, which we will not take the space to analyze, is well contrived and



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skilfully developed, and for delineations of character it cannot be easily surpassed. In vindicating his native South the writer is not content to act only on the defensive, but by interweaving with his story traits too well known of the slavish treatment and bitter fate of the laboring poor in some conditions, and in various parts of the free States, contrives to exhibit a very powerful plea for Southern abstinence from officious philanthropy in behalf of those at a distance of whom they know nothing, by showing how wide a field of distress, want and suffering lies at their own doors unrevealed, by exhibiting the miseries of the white slavery at the South, for the relief of which no great struggles are provoked or efforts made; sermons are not preached, nor books written to make the authors rich out of the bubblings over of humbugged sentimentalism. The author has done a good service in this book, while he has proved himself to be a most vigorous writer; and has made, if this be his first published work, the commencement of what must prove a brilliant literary career.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR NOVEMBER 28TH]



November 29, Monday, 1852: After an entirely successful tour of Spain over the previous year and a half, Louis Moreau Gottschalk boarded ship at Cadiz and sailed toward Marseilles via Gibraltar.

Having delivered the last of his [Lowell Institute](#) lectures at the [Odeon Hall](#) in [Boston](#), [Sir Charles Lyell](#) departed for England.

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


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




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



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beautifully distinct. You see distinctly the form of the various clumps of maples and birches. Geese [**Canada Goose**  *Branta canadensis* (~~Wild Goose~~)] in river swam as fast as I walked. Many broken but apparently rather recent turtles' eggs on the bank.

 November 30, Tuesday, 1852: The **Chinese Christian Army** abandoned its siege of Changsha and, heading down the Yangtse river valley, instead captured Yoh-chow.



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Nov. 30. To Pine Hill. The buds of the *Populus tremuloides* show their down as in early spring, and the early willows. Wood-choppers have commenced some time since. This is another pleasant day. From Pine Hill, Wachusett is seen over Walden. The country seems to slope up from the west end of Walden to the mountain. Already, a little after -1 o'clock, the sparkling windows and vanes of the village, seen under and against the faintly purple-tinged, slate-colored mountains, remind me of a village in a mountainous country at twilight, where each- lights appear. I think that this peculiar sparkle without redness, a cold glitter, is peculiar to this season.

WINTER 1852/1853

→ Winter 1852/1853: Henry Thoreau began to subscribe to Horace Greeley's Weekly Tribune. Since his inclusion of the term "Waldenses" in the manuscript was originally on the back of one of the newspaper receipts for this subscription that were being recycled as jotting paper for fresh ideas, although this particular use of the word was definitely earlier than the Draft F into which it was first interlined in 1853-1854, this use of the word in regard to Walden Pond's pickerel is unlikely to originate earlier than Winter 1852-1853.

Saffron Walden

Ah, the pickerel of Walden! when I see them lying on the ice, or in the well which the fisherman cuts in the ice, making a little hole to admit the water, ^{^golden} and ^{^emerald} I am always surprised by their rare beauty, as if they were fabulous fishes—~~fresh water dolphins dauphins~~ ~~eldest sons of Walden~~, they are so foreign to the streets, even to the woods, foreign as Arabia to our Concord life. They possess a ^{^quite} dazzling and transcendent beauty which separates them ~~far~~ ^{^by a wide interval} from the cadaverous cod and haddock ~~at least two days old~~ whose fame is trumpeted in our streets. ~~handsome artlovers~~ [ILLEGIBLE WORD?] ~~& gems~~ ~~they~~ ^{^They} are not green like the pines, nor gray like the stones nor blue like ^{^the} sky; but they have, to my ^{^eye} ^{^eyes}, if possible, yet rarer colors, like ^{^flowers} and ^{^precious} stones, as if they were the pearls, ~~of this great shell~~ ^{^some} ~~solid opied &~~ ^{^the} animalized ^{^nuclei} or crystals of the Walden water. They, of course, are ~~composed of Walden wholly~~ ^{^Walden all} over and all through; are ^{^themselves} small Waldens in the animal kingdom, ^{^Waldenses} ~~perhaps dolphins~~ ~~dauphins~~ ~~eldest sons of Walden~~, for whose behalf this whole world is but a ~~dauphin edition~~ ^{^fish} ^{^they} to study—It is surprising that ~~these fishes~~ ^{^fish} ^{^they} are caught here, -that in this deep and capacious spring, far beneath the rattling teams and chaises and tinkling sleighs that travel the Walden road, this great gold and emerald fish swims. I never chanced to see its kind in any market; it would be the cynosure of all eyes there. ^{^Easily}, with a few convulsive quirks, they give up their ~~diluted~~ ^{^watery} ghosts, like a mortal translated before his time to the ~~subtile~~ ^{^thin} air of heaven.


[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)**1852-1853****1852-1853**Winter [1852/1853](#): In this timeframe, [Waldo Emerson](#) was musing to his journal:

'Tis said that the age ends with the poet or successful man, who knots up into himself the genius or idea of his nation; and, that, when the Jews have at last flowered perfectly into Jesus, there is the end of the nation. When Greece is complete in Plato, Phidias, Pericles, the race is spent & rapidly takes itself away. When Rome has arrived at Caesar & Cicero, it has no more that it can do & retreats. When Italy has got out dante, all the rest will be rubbish. So that we ought rather to be thankful that our hero or poet does not hasten to be born in America, but still allows us others to live a little, & warm ourselves at the fire of the sun, for, when he comes, we others must pack our petty trunks, & begone. But I say that Saxendom is tough & manyheaded, & does not so readily admit of absorption & being sucked & vampyrized by a Representative as fluid races. For have not the English stood [Chaucer](#)? stood [Shakspeare](#)? & [Milton](#), & [Newton](#)? & survived unto this day with more diffusion of ability, with a larger number of able gentlemen in all departments of work than any nation ever had?

[GEOFFREY CHAUCER](#)[WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE](#)[JOHN MILTON](#)[ISAAC NEWTON](#)

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 Winter [1852/1853](#): I have a note to the effect that one morning Bill Wheeler, the Concord town drunk, was found frozen. (I am, however, unable to find anything about anything like this in any Wheeler family genealogy, so perhaps this report is entirely without substance.)

The lecture season of '52/53, in the [Odeon Hall](#) of Boston, amounted to the following:

14th Season of The Lowell Institute	
Sir Charles Lyell , F.R.S. <i>Geology, etc.</i>	12 lectures
Charles Bishop Goodrich , Esq. <i>Science of Government, etc.</i>	12 lectures
Right Reverend Alonzo Potter , D.D. <i>Natural Religion</i>	12 lectures
Professor C.C. Felton . <i>Life of Greece</i>	12 lectures
Doctor O.W. Holmes . <i>English Poetry of the 19th Century</i>	12 lectures

At the [Concord Lyceum](#), [Elizabeth Oakes Smith](#) delivered "Womanhood."

At the [Concord Lyceum](#), [Ellery Channing](#) lectured on "Society."

 Winter [1852/1853](#): [Brownson's Quarterly Review](#), No. 4

- I. *Bancroft's History of the United States*
- II. *The Christian Register's Objections*
- III. *Politics and Political Parties*
- IV. *Rights and Duties*
- V. *Literary Notices and Criticisms*

CATHOLICISM

MAGAZINES

ORESTES AUGUSTUS BROWNSON

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Winter [1852/1853](#): A coastal vessel again stopped by San Nicolàs Island off the coast of *Alta California*, at the request of the padre of the mission on the mainland, to look for the native American isolate known as the "[Lone Woman](#)" left over from a massacre of the 1820s by the Inuit crew of a Russian whaling vessel. She hid from them but they did find evidence of her continued presence.

[HERMITS](#)

During this period, and continuing into the spring, the contralto [Marietta Alboni](#) would be appearing in nearly a dozen operas in various cities of America.



There was snow on the ground from October through March in the San Luis Valley of Colorado, while temperatures plunged to 12 below zero. "The men were overworked," wrote Post Surgeon Edmund Barry. "I have known [Major Blake](#) to refuse passes frequently to deserving men, which I conceived to be owing to partial spite and spleen.... The company in general hated Major Blake, and I suppose the reason was because he kept them all the time at work and allowed very few privileges." [Major George Alexander Hamilton Blake](#), who reportedly absented himself for frequent unofficial trips into Taos, New Mexico, rarely allowed any enlisted man of the [1st US Regiment of Dragoons](#) a pass without abusing him verbally.

DECEMBER 1852



December [1852](#): This month's issue of [Harper's New Monthly Magazine](#).

[CONSULT THIS ISSUE](#)

December [1852](#): Letter from [Lydia Maria Child](#) to [Ellis Gray Loring](#): Charles Sumner; Catherine Beecher; Garrison; Lord Henry Stuart.

[LETTERS FROM NEW YORK](#)



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December 1852: Frederick Law Olmsted had met the editor of a new New-York newspaper, the Times, and had determined to make himself over as a foreign correspondent. the foreign country which he would explore would be the American South. He would spend four months touring the states of Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, South and North Carolina, and Virginia. The controlling idea of society at that time was that slavery, by enabling the existence of a leisure class, was creating human culture and cultivation. What Olmsted would report was the precise opposite of this: “The whole South is maintained in a frontier condition by the system which is apologized for on the ground that it favours good breeding.... The child born today on the Northern frontier, in most cases, before it is ten years old, will be living in a well organized and tolerably well provided community; schools, churches, libraries, lecture and concert halls, daily mails and printing presses, shops and machines in variety, having arrived within at least a day’s journey of it; being always within an influencing distance of it. There are improvements, and communities loosely and gradually cohering in various parts of the South, but so slowly, so feebly, so irregularly, that men’s minds and habits are knit firm quite independently of this class of social influences.” Olmsted observed that “In a Northern community a man who is not greatly occupied with private business is sure to become interested in social enterprises.... School, road, cemetery, asylum, and church corporations; bridge, ferry, and water companies; literary, scientific, art, mechanical, agricultural, and benevolent societies; all these things are managed chiefly by the unpaid services of gentlemen during hours which they can spare from their private interests. [Our young men] are members and managers of reading rooms, public libraries, gymnasiums, game clubs, boat clubs, ball clubs, and all sorts of clubs, Bible classes, debating societies, military companies; they are planting road-side trees, or damming streams for skating ponds, or rigging diving-boards, or getting up fireworks displays, or private theatricals; they are always doing something.” In this “The South” series of articles for the New-York Daily Times, which he would be signing “Yeoman,” Olmsted would denounce Harriet Beecher Stowe for uncritically accepting as hard

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information stories that had come to her “in a very inexact, or in a very suspicious form, as in novels and narratives of fugitive slaves.” Fugitive lawbreakers he considered to be, as sources, by their very nature “suspicious.” Men who supposed that they owned other human beings were, on the other hand, not only not delusional, they were not as sources in any similar manner suspicious.

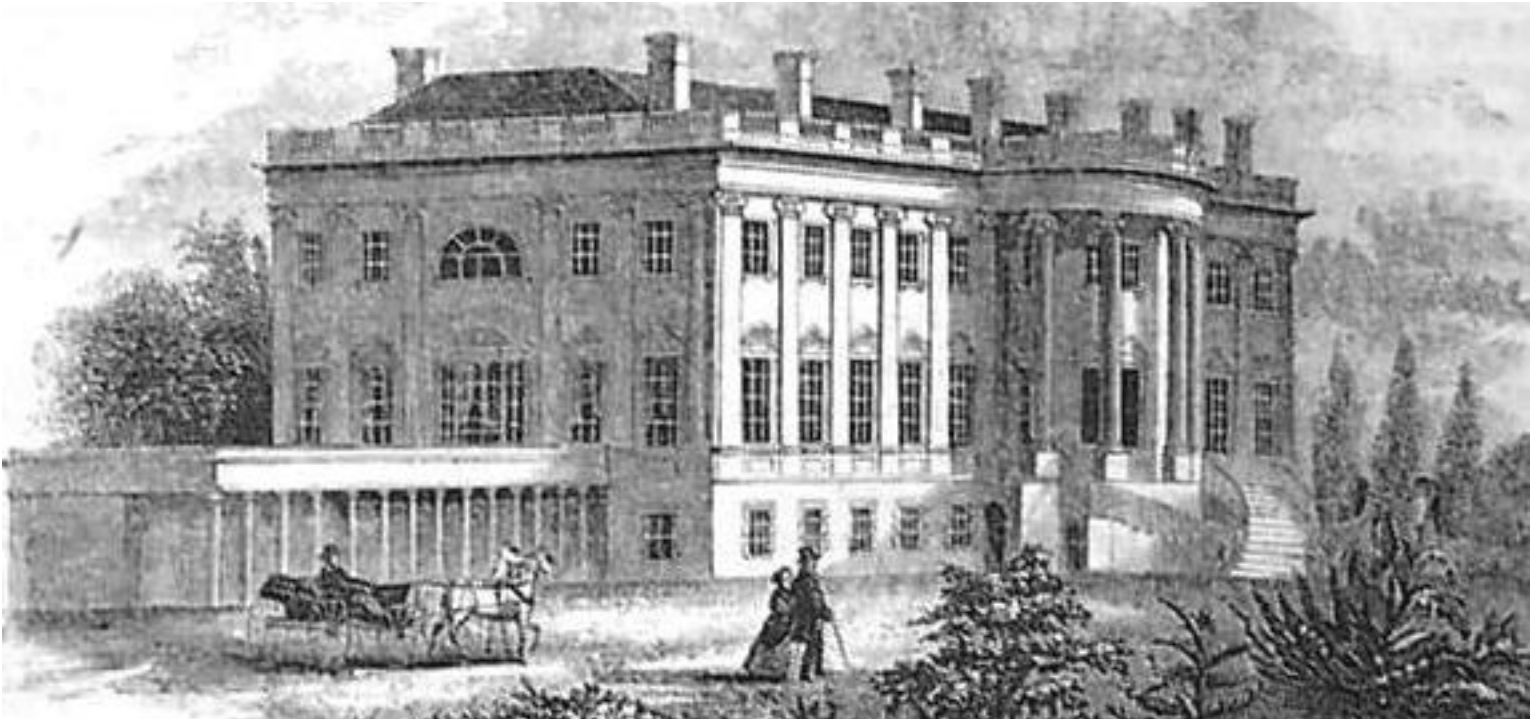
This is what the capital building looked like in this season, in [Washington DC](#):

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(That’s actual smoke you can see ascending from the dome: the building was being heated during the winter, you know, heated by wood fuel.)

This is what the White House, or Executive Mansion, was looking like:






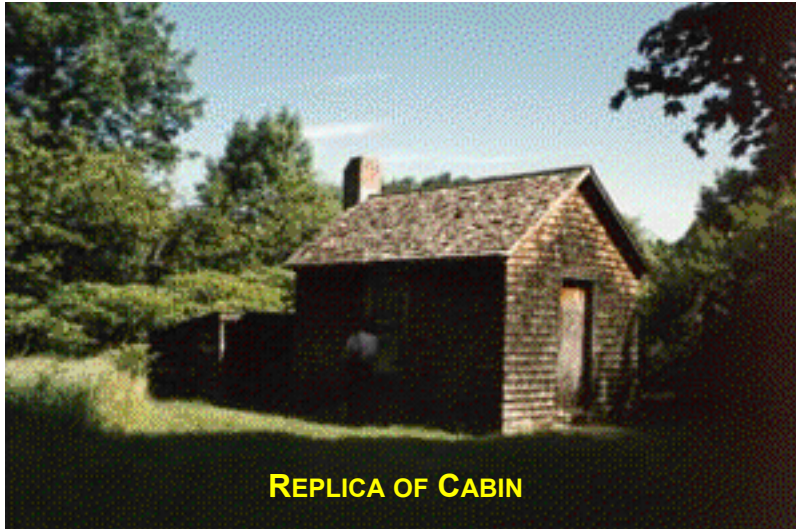
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 December 1852: According to [Julian Hawthorne](#), “Thoreau’s hut was still standing on a level, pine-circled spot, near the margin.”



REPLICA OF CABIN

EMERSON'S SHANTY

Here was the actual location in this year of Thoreau’s shanty, nowhere near the margin of Walden Pond:



(Since Julian was but 6 year of age at this time, hardly more than a rugrat, and since for more than 3 years already the structure actually had been standing in a field of the Brooks Clark farm on what is now Estabrook Road considerably to the north of the Concord town center, the above is clearly a flat lie, [Fake News](#) based upon no personal knowledge whatever. This “pine-circled” near the margin of Walden Pond crap gives us a clear message that we cannot credit anything Julian tells us and must base our accounts exclusively on other



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and more reliably historical sources. –The guy would do hard time for some of his lies, ones that had direct financial consequences for people whom managed to impress by means of name-dropping.)

FAKELORE

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

Read  [Henry Thoreau’s Journal for December 1852 \(æf. 35\)](#)



December 1, Wednesday, [1852](#): Louis Moreau Gottschalk reached Paris from Spain.

The United States informed Great Britain and France that it would not join in an agreement to preserved the status quo in [Cuba](#).

[Harriet “Hattie” Goodhue Hosmer](#) wrote from Rome to [Wayman Crow](#), her “second father”:

Rome, Dec. 1, 1852.

Dear Mr. Crow:

Can you believe that this is indeed Rome, and more than all that I am in it? I wrote you from Liverpool, and after that delayed sending you any word till I could say I was in this delightful place which I now consider my home. I will say nothing of Italy or of what you already know, but tell you at once of the arrangements I have made for the present in the way of art. Of course you know that Mr. Gibson, the English sculptor, is the acknowledged head of artists here. He is my master, and I love him more every day. I work under his very eye, and nothing could be better for me in every way. He gives me engravings, books, casts, everything he thinks necessary for my studies, and in so kindly, so fatherly a manner that I am convinced Heaven smiled most benignantly upon me when it sent me to him.

I saw Mr. Terry last night. There was quite an assembly of artists, Mr. Gibson, Crawford, Mosier, Spence, and others.... I was a little disappointed in Rome when I first came, but now I feel how beautiful and grand the city is, and already look upon it with loving eyes. We are a jolly party in ourselves. Miss Cushman, Miss Hayes, Miss Smith (an English lady), Grace Greenwood, Dr. Hosmer, and myself. I am away all day, but try to make up for that at other hours, and doubly enjoy myself. We see Mrs. Sartoris [Adelaide, sister of Fanny Kemble] frequently, and already I love her dearly. She is very like Mrs. Kemble, who, by the way, is to be here in January. She (Mrs. Kemble) went with us in London to the British Museum and various other places.

Remember me to the beloved old professor [Dr. McDowell], whose instructions I value more highly every day, as I see how invaluable they are.



Yours, H.

“Stack of the Artist of Kouroo” Project

Spiritualism

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Nov. 29, 30, and Dec. 1. The snow which fell the 23d whitened the ground but a day or two. These have been the mildest and pleasantest days since November came in. November 29th, walked in P.M. to old stone bridge and down bank of river by Sam Barrett's house. When I stood on the caving swallow [**Bank Swallow**  *Riparia riparia*] banks by the bridge about 4 o'clock, the sun sank below some clouds, or they rose above it, and it shone out with that bright, calm, memorable light which I have elsewhere described, lighting up the pitch pines and everything. The patches of winter rye, at this season so green by contrast, are an interesting feature in the landscape. When I got out of the wood, going toward Barrett's, the softness of the sunlight on the russet landscape, the smooth russet grassy fields and meadows, was very soothing, the sun now getting low in a November day. The stems and twigs of the maples, etc., looking down the river, were beautifully distinct. You see distinctly the form of the various clumps of maples and birches. Geese [**Canada Goose**  *Branta canadensis* (~~Wild Goose~~)] in river swam as fast as I walked. Many broken but apparently rather recent turtles' eggs on the bank.



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December 2, Thursday, 1852: On the 48th anniversary of the coronation of Napoléon I, the 47th anniversary of the Battle of Austerlitz, and the 1st anniversary of his coup d'état, Charles-Louis Napoléon Bonaparte, 1st President of France, who had obtained by popular referendum a mandate to amend the constitution, became by *coup d'état* the Emperor Napoleon III of the French, entitled to serve as many successive 10-year terms as he chose, with sole authority to declare war, sign treaties, form alliances, and initiate laws (his regnal name treated Napoleon II, who had had only a couple of weeks of influence, as if he had been a real Emperor).

The 343-ton barque *Rebecca*, Captain George Sheppard (or Shepherd), sailed from London for Sydney, Australia with a cargo of wines and beers and 20 souls, including the captain's wife.

In Concord, New Hampshire, the Countess Sarah, Benjamin Thompson's one legitimate child, died and willed what remained of the Von Rumford estates to the New Hampshire Asylum for the Indigent Insane and to a home for bastard children. Father's version of the Golden Rule, in his "An Account of an Establishment for the Poor at München," had been –and as a first approximation I suppose this isn't so bad–



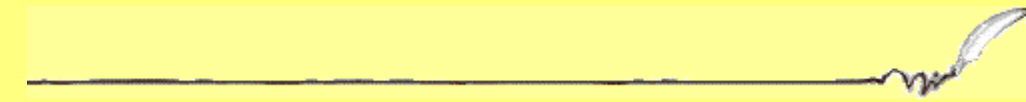
To make vicious and abandoned people happy, it has been generally supposed necessary **first** to make them virtuous. But why not reverse this order? **Why not make them first happy, and then virtuous?** If happiness and virtue be **inseparable**, the end will be as certainly obtained by one method as by the other; and it is most undoubtedly much easier to contribute to the happiness and comfort of persons in a state of poverty and misery, than, by admonitions and punishments, to reform their morals.



December 2. The pleasantest day of all. Started in boat before 9 A.M. down river to Billerica with W.E.C.

"Downriver," "To Great Meadow," and "To Hill" signified a northward trip down the Concord River below the triple point of the confluence. After passing through a straight reach aligned by the local bedrock strike, arched by two bridges, and flanked by gravel bars of historic sediment that were repeatedly dredged, he entered the north side of Great Meadow. Bounded by the site of the Old North Bridge to the southwest and Ball's Hill to the northeast, it was two miles long and half a mile across. When in flood, the meadow was his favorite inland sea to sail upon because the wind was least impeded and the waves were highest.

– Professor Robert M. Thorson, THE BOATMAN, page 11



Not wind enough for a sail. I do not remember when I have taken a sail or a row on the river in December before. We had to break the ice about the boat-house for some distance. Still no snow. The banks are white with frost. The air is calm, and the water smooth. The distant sounds of cars, cocks, hounds, etc., as we glide past N. Barrett's farm, remind me of spring. It is an anticipation, a looking through winter to spring. There is a certain resonance and elasticity in the air that makes

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the least sound melodious as in spring. The old unpainted houses under their trees (Joel Barrett's?) look as if winter had come and gone. There is one side of Abner (?) Buttrick's, painted as if with the pumpkin pies left over after Thanksgiving, it is so singular a yellow. The river has risen since the last rain a few feet, and partially floods the meadow. See still two ducks on the meadow. Hear the jay [Blue Jay *Cyanocitta cristata*] in distant copses, and the ruby-crowned wren [Common Redpoll *Carduelis flammea*](?) flies and mews over. Some parts of the meadow are covered with thin ice, through which we row, — which yet lasts all day, — and the waves we make in the river nibble and crumble its edge, and produce a rustling of the grass and reeds, as if a muskrat were stirring.

We land behind Tarbell's and walk inland. How warm in the hollows! The outline of the hills is very agreeable there; ridgy hills, with backs to them, and a perfect cow-path winds along the side of one. They have such weight to carry that they select the easiest course.

Again embark. It is remarkably calm and warm in the sun, now that we have brought a hill between us and the wind. There goes a muskrat. He leaves so long a ripple behind that in this light you cannot tell where his body ends, and think him longer than he is. This is a glorious river-reach. At length we pass the bridge. Everywhere the muskrat-houses line the shores, — or what was the shore, — some three feet high and regularly sharp as the Peak of Teneriffe.

C. says, "Let us land" (in an orchard by Atkins's (?) boathouse). "The angle of incidents should be equal to the angle of reflection." We did so. By the island where I formerly camped, half a mile or more above the bridge on the road from Chelmsford to Bedford, we saw a mink, a slender black (at ten rods' distance; Emmons says they are a "dark glossy brown"), very like a weasel in form. He alternately ran along on the ice and swam in the water, now and then holding up his head and long neck and looking at us. Not so shy as a muskrat, but I should say very black. The muskrats would curl up into a ball on the ice, decidedly reddish brown. The ice made no show, being thin and dark. Mink's head is larger in proportion to body than the muskrat's, not so sharp and ratlike.

Left our boat just above the last-named bridge on west side. A bright dazzling sheen for miles on the river as you looked up it. Crossed the bridge, turned into a path on the left, and ascended a hill a mile and a half off, between us and Billerica, somewhat off from the river. The Concord affords the water prospects of a larger river, like the Connecticut even. Hereabouts I found a spear-head, by a mysterious little building. Dined on the hill, from which we saw Billerica centre, a mile and a half northerly. We had crossed what by the map must be the brook from Nutting's Pond. On the west side of the river in Billerica here, is a grand range of hills, somewhat cliffy, covered with young oaks, whose leaves give it a red appearance, even when seen from Ball's hill. It is one of the most interesting and novel features in the river scenery.

Men commonly talk as if genius were something proper to an individual. I esteem it but a common privilege, and if one does not enjoy it now, he may congratulate his neighbor that *he* does. There is no place for man-worship. We understand very well a man's relation, not to *his* genius, but to the genius.

Returning, the water is smoother and more beautiful than ever. The ripples we make produce ribbed reflections or shadows on the dense but leafless bushes on shore, thirty or forty rods distant, very regular, and so far that they may seem motionless and permanent. Again we see the mink, plainer than ever. The smooth river-reaches, so calm and glorious in this light, "I see, not feel, how beautiful they are." All the water behind us as we row (and even on the right and left at a distance) is perfectly unrippled, we move so fast; but before us, down-stream, it is all in commotion from shore to shore. There are some fine shadows on those grand red oaken hills in the north. What a fine color to last through summer!


We look at Atkins's boathouse, ugly, like a barn carried off and lodged in the river. A muskrat had made his cabin in the bathing-apartment. Man's boathouse is a deformity, but the muskrats' cabins are an ornament to the river. The squareness of the former building, roof and all, offend. Could not the architect take a hint from the pyramidal or conical form of the muskrat's house? Something of this form and color, like a large haycock in the meadow, would be in harmony with the scenery. The muskrat's house is made in the midst of weeds or bushes commonly, which protect it from the waves. When a muskrat comes to the surface too near you, how quickly and with what force he turns and plunges again, making a sound in the calm water as if you had thrown into it a large stone with violence!

Long did it take to sink the Carlisle Bridge. The reflections after sunset were distinct and glorious,

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— the heaven into which we unceasingly rowed. I thought now that the angle of reflection was greater than the angle of *incidents*. It cooler grew. The stars came out soon after we turned Ball's Hill, and it became difficult to distinguish our course. The boatman knows a river by reaches. We ran part way into several holts, or *poke-logans*. Got home in the dark, our feet and legs numb and cold with sitting and inactivity, having been about eight miles by river, etc. It was some time before we recovered the full use of our cramped legs. I forgot to speak of the afterglows. The twilight, in fact, had several stages to it, and several times after it had grown dusky the twilight acquired a new transparency, and the trees on the hillsides were lit up again.

 December 3, Friday, [1852](#): Vom Pagen und der Königstöchter for solo voices, chorus and orchestra to words of Geibel was performed for the initial time, in Düsseldorf, directed by its composer Robert Schumann (since his doctor had instructed him to avoid exertion, this was his 1st conducting since August).



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRIES IN HIS JOURNAL FOR DECEMBER 3D OR 4TH]

 December 4, Saturday, [1852](#): The French stormed and captured [Laghouat in Algeria](#) by the use of chemical artillery shells, after having besieged the city since November 21st, and began a general massacre of its civilians.




Reverend [Moncure Daniel Conway](#) preached his last sermon as a [Methodist](#).

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[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRIES IN HIS JOURNAL FOR DECEMBER 3D OR 4TH]

 December 5, Sunday, [1852](#): After the *coup d'état* by [Charles-Louis Napoléon Bonaparte](#), 1st President of [France](#), who had obtained by popular referendum a mandate to amend the constitution, the maneuver that had made him into [Emperor Napoleon III](#) of the French, “Committees of Resistance” were set up in various districts in the southwest of France. Within a few days such protests would be quelled — some 26,000 would be arrested, with some confined in the prison of Cayenne and many others obligated to reside in the future in Algeria. Victor Hugo would find himself fleeing with his family to the Channel Island of Guernsey by way of Brussels, and then the Channel Island of Jersey, living in exile until 1870.



Dec. 5. P.M. — Rowed over Walden!

A dark, but warm, misty day, completely overcast. This great rise of the pond after an interval of many years, and the water standing at this great height for a year or more, kills the shrubs and trees about its edge, — pitch pines, birches, alders, aspens, etc., — and, falling again, leaves an unobstructed shore. The rise and fall of the pond serves this use at least. This fluctuation, though it makes it difficult to walk round it when the water is highest, by killing the trees makes it so much the easier and more agreeable when the water is low. By this fluctuation, this rise of its waters after long intervals, it asserts its title to a shore, and the trees cannot hold it by right of possession.

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But unlike those waters which are subject to a daily tide, its shore is cleanest when the water is lowest. I have been surprised to observe how surely the water standing for a few months about such trees would kill them. On the side of the pond next my house a row of pitch pines fifteen feet high was killed and tipped over as if by a lever, and thus a stop put to their encroachments; and their size may indicate how many years had elapsed since the last rise. I have been surprised to see what a rampart has been formed about many ponds, — in one place at Walden, but especially at Flint's Pond, where it occurs between the pond and a swamp, as if it were the remains of an Indian swamp fort, — apparently by the action of the waves and the ice, several feet in height and containing large stones and trees. These lips of the lake, on which no beard grows. It licks its chaps from time to time. I saw some dimples on the surface, and, thinking it was going to rain hard immediately, the air being full of mist, I made haste to take my place at the oars to row homeward. Already the rain seemed rapidly increasing, though I felt none on my cheek, and I anticipated a thorough soaking; but suddenly the dimples ceased, for they were produced by the perch which the noise of my oars had scared into the depths. I saw their schools dimly disappearing.

I have said that Walden has no visible inlet nor outlet, but it is on the one hand distantly and indirectly related to Flint's Pond, which is more elevated, by a chain of small ponds coming from that quarter, and on the other hand directly and manifestly related to Concord River, which is lower, by a similar chain of ponds, through which in some other geological period it may have flowed thither, and by a little digging, which God forbid, could probably be made to flow thither again. If, by living thus "reserved and austere" like a hermit in the woods so long, it has acquired such wonderful depth and purity, who would not regret that the impure waters of Flint's Pond should be mingled with it, or itself should go waste its sweetness in the ocean wave?

 December 6, Monday, 1852: In [San Francisco, California](#), Fire Chief Engineer Hossefross was re-elected.

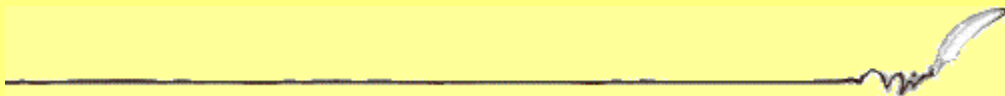
A law was enacted to forbid as of July 1st, 1853 the construction of any further wood-frame structures within the more densely built sections of town.



December 6. Though foul weather yesterday, this is the warmest and pleasantest day yet. Cows are turned out to pasture again. On the Corner causeway fine cobwebs glimmer in the air, covering the willow twigs and the road, and sometimes stretching from side to side above my head. I see many little gnat-like insects in the air there. Tansy still fresh, and I saw autumnal dandelion a few days since. In the evening I see the spearer's light on the river. Saw a great slate-colored hawk [Sharp-shinned Hawk  *Accipter striatus* (slate-colored hawk, including subspecies *perobscurus*, *velox*, *suttoni*, *madrensis*, *fringilloides*, and *venator*)] sail away from the Cliffs.

During the last decade of his life, Thoreau visited his rivers more than twice as often as the upland woods and lakes that he is far better known for writing about.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 3





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December 7, Tuesday, 1852. Waldo Emerson delivered his lecture “The Anglo-American” before the Young Men’s Association in Cincinnati, Ohio, although for this occasion the title with which he chose to entice his all-white audience was “The Anglo-Saxon” (sometimes the title of this racist lecture –in that innocent and unproblematic world before our Civil War in which there was simply nothing to be suspicious of in regard to one’s racism so long as it wasn’t racism of some problematic flavor– would be provided by him to his all-us-white-people-here-politely-assembled audiences as “Anglo-Saxon Race,” and sometimes he would provide his title as “Traits and Genius of the Anglo-Saxon Race”). This was the lecture that would become the 3d lecture of this racist’s “Conduct of Life” series.

(When you are a racist pandering to racists, you will find, no degree of racist pandering will ever be remarked on as over-fulsome — when Emerson had provided this lecture in Troy, New York, that city’s Daily Times remarked on November 26th that this lecturer’s offering had “exhibited deep thought” although he had neglected to take “sufficient care in its arrangement.”)

[THE LIST OF LECTURES](#)



Dec. 7. P.M. — Perhaps the warmest day yet. True Indian summer. The walker perspires. The shepherd’s-purse is in full bloom; the andromeda not turned red. Saw a pile of snow-fleas in a rut in the wood-path, six or seven inches long and three quarters of an inch high, to the eye exactly like powder, as if a sportsman had spilled it from his flask; and when a stick was passed through the living and skipping mass, each side of the furrow preserved its edge as in powder.



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December 8, Wednesday, 1852: The Reverend [Moncure Daniel Conway](#) was back at the Friends monthly meeting in [Sandy Spring](#), getting his *coeur* enheartened again by the [Quakers](#).

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(Nice of them to do that for a [Methodist](#) on his way to becoming a [Unitarian](#), don't you think?) Meanwhile [Henry Thoreau](#) was at the pond also getting his *coeur* enheartened:




WALDEN: But, as I was looking over the surface, I saw here and there at a distance a faint glimmer, as if some skater insects which had escaped the frosts might be collected there, or, perchance, the surface, being so smooth, betrayed where a spring welled up from the bottom. Paddling gently to one of these places, I was surprised to find myself surrounded by myriads of small perch, about five inches long, of a rich bronze color in the green water, sporting there and constantly rising to the surface and dimpling it, sometimes leaving bubbles on it. In such transparent and seemingly bottomless water, reflecting the clouds, I seemed to be floating through the air as in a balloon, and their swimming impressed me as a kind of flight or hovering, as if they were a compact flock of birds passing just beneath my level on the right or left, their fins, like sails, set all around them. There were many such schools in the pond, apparently improving the short season before winter would draw an icy shutter over their broad sky-light, sometimes giving to the surface an appearance as if a slight breeze struck it, or a few rain-drops fell there. When I approached carelessly and alarmed them, they made a sudden splash and rippling with their tails, as if one had struck the water with a brushy bough, and instantly took refuge in the depths. At length the wind rose, the mist increased, and the waves began to run, and the perch leaped much higher than before, half out of water, a hundred black points, three inches long, at once above the surface. Even as late as the fifth of December, one year, I saw some dimples on the surface, and thinking it was going to rain hard immediately, the air being full of mist, I made haste to take my place at the oars and row homeward; already the rain seemed rapidly increasing, though I felt none on my cheek, and I anticipated a thorough soaking. But suddenly the dimples ceased, for they were produced by the perch, which the noise of my oars had scared into the depths, and I saw their schools dimly disappearing; so I spent a dry afternoon after all.



December 8. Another Indian-summer day. Saw some puffballs in the woods, wonderfully full of sulphur-like dust, which yellowed my shoes, greenish-yellow. The recent water-line at Walden is quite distinct, though like the limit of a shadow, on the alders about eighteen inches above the present level. One cannot burn or bury even his old shoes without a feeling of sadness and compassion; much more [*sic*] his old body, without a slight sense of guilt.

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 December 9, Thursday, 1852: Thoreau wrote in his journal about a coffee-table book that was forthcoming from a New-York trade press, [George William Curtis's HOMES OF AMERICAN AUTHORS](#):



December 9: To C. Smith's Hill.



Those little ruby-crowned wrens (?) [**Common Redpoll**  *Carduelis flammea*] still about. They suddenly dash away from this side to that in flocks, with a tumultuous note, half jingle, half rattle, like nuts shaken in a bag, or a bushel of nutshells, soon returning to the tree they had forsaken on some alarm. They are oftenest seen on the white birch, apparently feeding on its seeds, scattering the scales about.



A fresh dandelion.

The chestnuts are almost as plenty as ever, both in the fallen burs and out of them. There are more this year than the squirrels can consume. I picked three pints this afternoon, and though some bought at a store the other day were more than half mouldy, I did not find one mouldy one among these which I picked from under the wet and mouldy leaves, where they have been snowed on once. Probably they do not heat, though wet. These are also still plump and tender. I love to gather them, if only for the sense of the bountifulness of nature they give me.

A few petals of the witch-hazel still hold on.

In the "[Homes of American Authors](#)" it is said of most that at one time they wrote for the [North American Review](#). It is one of my qualifications that I have not written an article for the [North American Review](#).


A man tells me he saw a violet to-day.

Very nice; as the old lady said when she had got a gravestone for her husband.

[Ellen Kilshaw Fuller Channing](#) was formally notified by [George Merrick Brooks](#), a [Concord](#) attorney, that it would be necessary to take legal action unless she returned Margaret Fuller Channing (born May 2d, 1844, age 8), Caroline Sturgis Channing (born April 15th, 1846, age 6), and Walter Channing (born April 14th, 1849, age 4) to the custody of their father [Ellery Channing](#) within one week.³⁹

SPLITSVILLE		
1851	Edwin Forrest	Catherine Sinclair
1852	Ellery Channing	Ellen Kilshaw Fuller Channing
1853	Lola Montez	Patrick Purdy Hull

At some point the attorney [Charles Allen](#) of Worcester, Massachusetts, council for the husband [Ellery Channing](#), entered into negotiations with the attorney [George Merrick Brooks](#) of [Concord](#), Massachusetts, council for the wife [Ellen Kilshaw Fuller Channing](#), in regard to their marital separation and pending divorce, and custody of their children Margaret Fuller Channing (born May 2d, 1844, age 8), Caroline Sturgis Channing (born April 15th, 1846, age 6), and Walter Channing (born April 14th, 1849, age 4).

 December 10, Friday, [1852](#): The death penalty was abolished in Portugal (but, abolished only for **political** crimes).

10,000 citizens turned out to watch Jose Forni (AKA Jose Forner y Brugada) get hanged from a gallows that had been erected on the slope of Russian Hill. He had confessed to the stabbing murder of Jose Rodriguez and the confession had been printed on a lettersheet for sale by Bonestell & Williston, Clay Street, San Francisco along with a drawing of Forni sitting in his cell. Sheriff John C. Hays, who officiated at this hanging, “cut the rope which held up the ‘drop’” (this wouldn’t by any stretch of the imagination be the 1st [hanging](#) in [San Francisco](#), but it would be something to watch since it was going to be the original **legal** one).




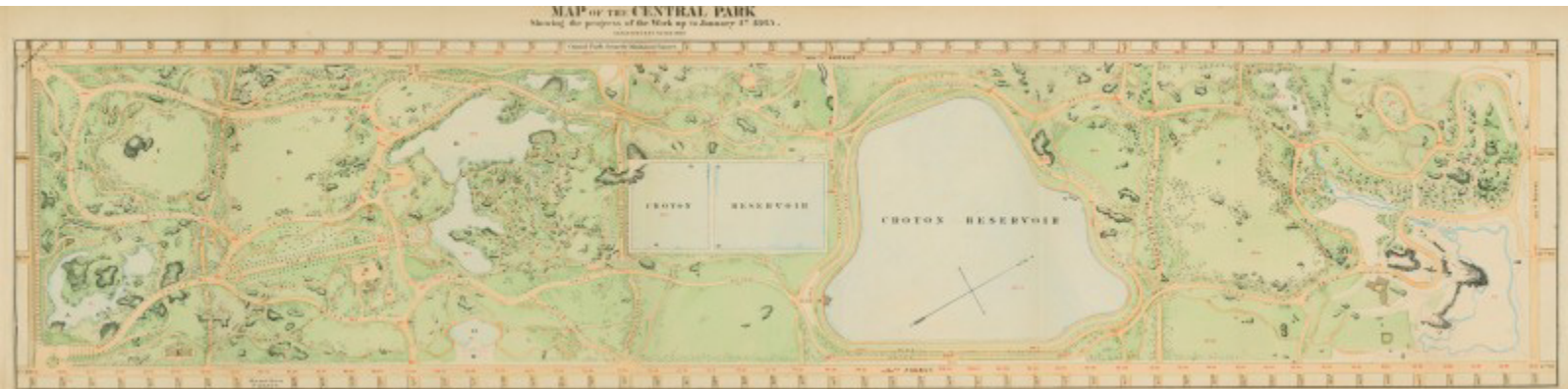
[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRIES IN HIS JOURNAL FOR DECEMBER 10TH OR 11TH]

39. At the time American judges were simplistically presuming that all children always belonged like slaves with their father (they would transit from that wickedness into the equally simplistic but opposite wicked presumption that all children always belong with their mother). The reason why we have thus transited from a wicked simplicitude into an opposite wicked simplicitude is clear: our judges truly don’t have the slightest concern for what happens to other people’s children, and thus settle upon one or another simplifying presumptiveness — in order to be spared the frustration and annoyance of trying to figure anything out in the mysterious realm of “what’s in the best interests of the child” (there is a nasty reason why we aver such great concern for our children: it is that this avowal is a necessary mask obscuring our persistent and very real refusal to allow this to be an actual priority in our lives). Thoreau put the nastiness of our attitude most succinctly in his journal entry for this day: “Very nice; as the old lady said when she had got a gravestone for her husband.”


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 December 11, Saturday, 1852: [Frederick Law Olmsted](#) set out on a 14-month tour from Virginia down through the Deep South into Texas. He had already decided that slavery was wrong before beginning this journalistic assignment of touring the slave states extended to him by a fellow Free-Soiler, Henry Raymond, editor of the New-York [Daily Times](#). A Hartford-born scientific farmer and the son of a prosperous merchant, he had studied agricultural science and engineering at [Yale College](#). Having put a large part of his 130-acre farm on [Staten Island](#) into fruit trees, by the time he came to the plantation system of the South he was not inclined to make the usual sort of “city boy” idealistic mistakes about farming. He would send off his newspaper articles as he went along and subsequently rework these into 3 books, A JOURNEY IN THE SEABOARD SLAVE STATES in 1856, A JOURNEY THROUGH TEXAS in 1857, and A JOURNEY IN THE BACK COUNTRY in 1860. Then he would condense and considerably revise the initial 3 books and issue the material again in 1861 as THE COTTON KINGDOM. He hoped to persuade the white planters that the enslavement of others wasn't paying off for them – a mission not unlike that the indignant North Carolinian, [Hinton Rowan Helper](#), intended for his polemical THE IMPENDING CRISIS OF THE SOUTH which would appear shortly after Olmsted's 1st book, but carried out by Olmsted in a considerably more subtle and indirect manner. Then in later years Olmsted would become a landscape architect, and design New York's [Central Park](#) and the White City of the [Chicago's](#) World Fair.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRIES IN HIS JOURNAL FOR DECEMBER 10TH OR 11TH]

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

Georges Bizet was presented with the First Prize in Piano at the Paris Conservatoire.



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

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**FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED's report:**

I think the slaves generally (no one denies that there are exceptions) have plenty to eat; probably are fed better than the proletarian class of any other part of the world. I think that they generally save from their ration of meal. My informant said that commonly as much as five bushels of meal was sent to town by his hands every week, to be sold for them. Upon inquiry, he almost always found that it belonged to only two or three individuals, who had traded for it with the rest; he added, that too often the exchange was for whisky, which, against his rules, they obtained of some rascally white people in the neighborhood, and kept concealed. They were very fond of whisky, and sometimes much injured themselves with it.

To show me how well they were supplied with eggs, he said that once a vessel came to anchor, becalmed, off his place, and the captain came to him and asked leave to purchase some eggs of his people. He gave him permission, and called the cook to collect them for him. The cook asked how many she should bring. "Oh, all you can get," he answered – and she returned after a time, with several boys assisting her, bringing nearly two bushels, all the property of the slaves, and which they were willing to sell at four cents a dozen.

One of the smokers explained to me that it is very bad economy, not to allow an abundant supply of food to "a man's force." The negroes are fond of good living, and, if not well provided for, know how to provide for themselves. It is, also, but simple policy to have them well lodged and clothed. If they do not have comfortable cabins and sufficient clothing, they will take cold, and be laid up. He lost a very valuable negro, once, from having neglected to provide him with shoes.

Lodgings

The houses of the slaves are usually log-cabins, of various degrees of comfort and commodiousness. At one end there is a great open fire-place, which is exterior to the wall of the house, being made of clay in an inclosure, about eight feet square and high, of logs. The chimney is sometimes of brick, but more commonly of lath or split sticks, laid up like log-work and plastered with mud. They enjoy great roaring fires, and, as the common fuel is pitch pine, the cabin, at night when the door is open, seen from a distance, appears like a fierce furnace. The chimneys often catch fire, and the cabin is destroyed. Very little precaution can be taken against this danger. Several cabins are placed near together, and they are called "the quarters." On a plantation of moderate size there will be but one "quarters." The situation chosen for it has reference to convenience of obtaining water from springs and fuel from the woods. On some of the James River plantations there are larger houses, boarded and made ornamental. In these, eight families, each having a distinct sleeping-room and lock-up closets, and every two having a common kitchen or living-room, are accommodated.

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**FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED's report:**

Half an hour after this I arrived at the negro-quarter – a little hamlet of ten or twelve small and dilapidated cabins. Just beyond them was a plain farm-gate, at which several negroes were standing; one of them, a well-made man, with an intelligent countenance and prompt manner, directed me how to find my way to his owner's house. It was still nearly a mile distant; and yet, until I arrived in its immediate vicinity, I saw no cultivated field, and but one clearing. On the edge of this clearing, a number of negroes, male and female, lay stretched out upon the ground near a small smoking charcoal pit. Their master afterwards informed me that they were burning charcoal for the plantation blacksmith, using the time allowed them for holidays – from Christmas to New Year' – to earn a little money for themselves in this way. He paid them by the bushel for it. When I said that I supposed he allowed them to take what wood they chose for this purpose, he replied that he had five hundred acres covered with wood, which he would be very glad to have any one burn, or clear off in any way. Cannot some Yankee contrive a method of concentrating some of the valuable properties of this old field pine, so that they may be profitably brought into use in more cultivated regions? Charcoal is now brought to New York from Virginia; but when made from pine it is not very valuable, and will only bear transportation from the banks of the navigable rivers, whence it can be shipped, at one movement, to New York. Turpentine does not flow in sufficient quantity from this variety of the pine to be profitably collected, and for lumber it is of very small value.

Mr. W.'s house was an old family mansion, which he had himself remodeled in the Grecian style, and furnished with a large wooden portico. An oak forest had originally occupied the ground where it stood; but this having been cleared and the soil worn out in cultivation by the previous proprietors, pine woods now surrounded it in every direction, a square of a few acres only being kept clear immediately about it. A number of the old oaks still stood in the rear of the house, and, until Mr. W. commenced his improvements, there had been some in its front. These, however, he had cut away, as interfering with the symmetry of his grounds, and in place of them had planted ailanthus trees in parallel rows.

On three sides of the outer part of the cleared square there was a row of large and comfortable-looking negro-quarters, stables, tobaccohouses, and other offices, built of logs.

Mr. W. was one of the few large planters, of his vicinity, who still made the culture of tobacco their principal business. He said there was a general prejudice against tobacco, in all the tide-water region of the State, because it was through the culture of tobacco that the once fertile soils had been impoverished; but he did not believe that, at the present value of negroes, their labor could be applied to the culture of grain, with any profit, except under peculiarly favorable circumstances. Possibly, the use of guano might make wheat a paying crop, but he still doubted. He had not used it, himself. Tobacco required fresh land, and was rapidly exhausting, but it returned more money, for the labor used upon it, than anything else; enough more, in his opinion, to pay for the wearing out of the land. If he was well-paid for it, he did not know why he should not wear out his land.

His tobacco-fields were nearly all in a distant and lower part of his plantation; land which had been neglected before his time, in a great measure, because it had been sometimes flooded, and was, much of the year, too wet for cultivation. He was draining and clearing it, and it now brought good crops.

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**FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED's report:**

He had had an Irish gang draining for him, by contract. He thought a negro could do twice as much work, in a day, as an Irishman. He had not stood over them and seen them at work, but judged entirely from the amount they accomplished: he thought a good gang of negroes would have got on twice as fast. He was sure they must have "trifled" a great deal, or they would have accomplished more than they had. He complained much, also, of their sprees and quarrels. I asked why he should employ Irishmen, in preference to doing the work with his own hands. "It's dangerous work (unhealthy?), and a negro's life is too valuable to be risked at it. If a negro dies, it's a considerable loss, you know."

He afterwards said that his negroes never worked so hard as to tire themselves--always were lively, and ready to go off on a frolic at night. He did not think they ever did half a fair day's work. They could not be made to work hard: they never would lay out their strength freely, and it was impossible to make them do it.

This is just what I have thought when I have seen slaves at work--they seem to go through the motions of labor without putting strength into them. They keep their powers in reserve for their own use at night, perhaps.

Mr. W. also said that he cultivated only the coarser and lower-priced sorts of tobacco, because the finer sorts required more painstaking and discretion than it was possible to make a large gang of negroes use. "You can make a nigger work," he said, "but you cannot make him think."

Although Mr. W. was very wealthy (or, at least, would be considered so anywhere at the North), and was a gentleman of education, his style of living was very farmer-like, and thoroughly Southern. On their plantations, generally, the Virginia gentlemen seem to drop their full-dress and constrained town-habits, and to live a free, rustic, shooting-jacket life. We dined in a room that extended out, rearwardly, from the house, and which, in a Northern establishment, would have been the kitchen. The cooking was done in a detached log-cabin, and the dishes brought some distance, through the open air, by the servants. The outer door was left constantly open though there was a fire in an enormous old fire-place, large enough, if it could have been distributed sufficiently, to have lasted a New York seamstress the best part of the winter. By the door, there was indiscriminate admittance to negro children and fox-hounds, and, on an average, there were four of these, grinning or licking their chops, on either side of my chair, all the time I was at the table. A stout woman acted as head waitress, employing two handsome little mulatto boys as her aids in communicating with the kitchen, from which relays of hot corn-bread, of an excellence quite new to me, were brought at frequent intervals. There was no other bread, and but one vegetable served--sweet potato, roasted in ashes, and this, I thought, was the best sweet potato, also, that I ever had eaten; but there were four preparations of swine's flesh, besides fried fowls, fried eggs, cold roast turkey, and opossum, cooked I know not how, but it somewhat resembled baked sucking-pig. The only beverages on the table were milk and whisky.

I was pressed to stay several days with Mr. W., and should have been glad to have accepted such hospitality, had not another engagement prevented. When I was about to leave, an old servant was directed to get a horse, and go with me, as guide, to the rail-road station at Col. Gillin's. He followed behind me, and I had great difficulty in inducing him to ride near enough to converse with me.



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FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED's report:

I wished to ascertain from him how old the different stages of the old-field forest-growth, by the side of our road, might be; but, for a long time, he was, or pretended to be, unable to comprehend my questions. When he did so, the most accurate information he could give me was, that he reckoned such a field (in which the pines were now some sixty feet high) had been planted with tobacco the year his old master bought him. He thought he was about twenty years old then, and that now he was forty. He had every appearance of being seventy.

He frequently told me there was no need for him to go any further, and that it was a dead, straight road to the station, without any forks. As he appeared very eager to return, I was at length foolish enough to allow myself to be prevailed upon to dispense with his guidance; gave him a quarter of a dollar for his time that I had employed, and went on alone. The road, which for a short distance further was plain enough, soon began to ramify, and, in half an hour, we were stumbling along a dark wood-path, looking eagerly for a house. At length, seeing one across a large clearing, we went through a long lane, opening gates and letting down bars, until we met two negroes, riding a mule, who were going to the plantation near the school-house, which we had seen the day before. Following them thither, we knew the rest of the way (Jane gave a bound and neighed, when we struck the old road, showing that she had beef lost, as well as I, up to the moment).

It was twenty minutes after the hour given in the time-table for the passage of the train, when I reached the station, but it had not arrived; nor did it make its appearance for a quarter of an hour longer; so I had plenty of time to deliver Tom's wife's message and take leave of Jane. I am sorry to say she appeared very indifferent, and seemed to think a good deal more of Tom than of me. Mr. W. had told me that the train would, probably, be half an hour behind its advertised time, and that I had no need to ride with haste, to reach it. I asked Col. Gillin if it would be safe to always calculate on the train being half an hour late: he said it would not; for, although usually that much behind the time-table, it was sometimes half an hour ahead of it. So those, who would be safe, had commonly to wait an hour. People, therefore, who wished to go not more than twenty miles from home, would find it more convenient, and equally expeditious, taking all things into account, to go in their own conveyance—there being but few who lived so near the station that they would not have to employ a horse and servant to get to it.

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 **FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED's report:****Free-labor Farm in Virginia**

I have been visiting a farm, cultivated entirely by free-labor. The proprietor told me that he was first led to disuse slave-labor, not from any economical considerations, but because he had become convinced that there was an essential wrong in holding men in forced servitude with any other purpose than to benefit them alone, and because he was not willing to allow his own children to be educated as slave-masters. His father had been a large slaveholder, and he felt very strongly the bad influence it had had on his own character. He wished me to be satisfied that Jefferson uttered a great truth when he asserted that slavery was more pernicious to the white race than the black. Although, therefore, a chief part of his inheritance had been in slaves, he had liberated them all.

Most of them had, by his advice, gone to Africa. These he had frequently heard from. Except a child that had been drowned, they were, at his last account, all alive, in general good health, and satisfactorily prospering. He had lately received a letter from one of them, who told him that he was "trying to preach the Gospel," and who had evidently greatly improved, both intellectually and morally, since he left here. With regard to those going North, and the common opinion that they encountered much misery, and would be much better off here, he said that it entirely depended on the general character and habits of the individual: it was true of those who were badly brought up, and who had acquired indolent and vicious habits, especially if they were drunkards, but, if of some intelligence and well-trained, they generally represented themselves to be successful and contented.

He mentioned two remarkable cases, that had come under his own observation, of this kind. One was that of a man who had been free, but, by some fraud and informality of his papers, was re-enslaved. He ran away, and afterwards negotiated, by correspondence, with his master, and purchased his freedom. This man he had accidentally met fifteen years afterwards, in a Northern city; he was engaged in profitable and increasing business, and showed him, by his looks, that he was possessed of property to the amount of ten thousand dollars. He was living a great deal more comfortably and wisely than ever his old master had done. The other case was that of a colored woman, who had obtained her freedom, and who became apprehensive that she also was about to be fraudulently made a slave again. She fled to Philadelphia, where she was nearly starved, at first. A little girl, who heard her begging in the streets to be allowed to work for bread, told her that her mother was wanting some washing done, and she followed her home. The mother, not knowing her, was afraid to trust her with the articles to be washed. She prayed so earnestly for the job, however-suggesting that she might be locked into a room until she had completed it - that it was given her.

So she commenced life in Philadelphia. Ten years afterwards he had accidentally met her there; she recognized him immediately, recalled herself to his recollection, manifested the greatest joy at seeing him, and asked him to come to her house, which he found a handsome three-story building, furnished really with elegance; and she pointed out to him, from the window, three houses in the vicinity that she owned and rented. She showed great anxiety to have her children well educated, and was employing the best instructors for them which she could procure in Philadelphia.

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**FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED's report:**

This gentleman, notwithstanding his anti-slavery sentiments, by no means favors the running away of slaves, and thinks the Abolitionists have done immense harm to the cause they have at heart. He wishes Northerners would mind their business, and leave Slavery alone, say but little about it—nothing in the present condition of affairs at the South—and never speak of it but in a kind and calm manner. He would not think it right to return a fugitive slave; but he would never assist one to escape. He has several times purchased slaves, generally such as his neighbors were obliged to sell, and who would otherwise have been taken South. This he had been led to do by the solicitation of some of their relatives. He had retained them in his possession until their labor had in some degree returned their cost to him, and he could afford to provide them with the means of going to Africa or the North, and a small means of support after their arrival. Having received some suitable training in his family, they had, without exception, been successful, and had frequently sent him money to purchase the freedom of relatives or friends they had left in slavery.

He considered the condition of slaves to have much improved since the Revolution, and very perceptibly during the last twenty years. The original stock of slaves, the imported Africans, he observed, probably required to be governed with much greater severity, and very little humanity was exercised or thought of with regard to them. The slaves of the present day are of a higher character; in fact, he did not think more than half of them were full-blooded Africans. Public sentiment condemned the man who treated his slaves with cruelty. The owners were mainly men of some cultivation, and felt a family attachment to their slaves, many of whom had been the playmates of their boyhood. Nevertheless, they were frequently punished severely, under the impulse of temporary passion, often without deliberation, and on unfounded suspicion. This was especially the case where they were left to overseers, who, though sometimes men of intelligence and piety, were more often coarse, brutal, and licentious; drinking men, wholly unfitted for the responsibility imposed on them.

He had read UNCLE TOM'S CABIN; mentioned several points in which he thought it wrong—that Uncle Tom was too highly painted, for instance; that such a character could not exist in, or spring out of Slavery, and that no gentleman of Kentucky or Virginia would have allowed himself to be in the position with a slave-dealer in which Mr. Shelby is represented—but he acknowledged that cases of cruelty and suffering, equal to any described in it, might be found. In his own neighborhood, some time ago, a man had been whipped to death; and he recollected several that had been maimed for life, by harsh and hasty punishment; but the whole community were indignant when such things occurred, and any man guilty of them would be without associates, except of similar character.

The opinions of this gentleman must not, of course, be considered as representative of those of the South in general, by any means; but as to facts, he is a competent, and, I believe, a wholly candid and unprejudiced witness. He is much respected, and on terms of friendship with all his neighbors, though they do not like his views on this subject. He told me, however, that one of them, becoming convinced of their correctness some time ago, freed his slaves, and moved to Ohio. As to UNCLE TOM, it is generally criticised very severely, and its representations of Slavery indignantly denied. I observe that it is not placarded outside the booksellers' stores, though the whole fleet of gunboats that have been launched after it show their colors bravely.

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FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED's report:

It [UNCLE TOM'S CABIN] must, however, be a good deal read here, as I judge from the frequent allusions I hear made to it. With regard to the value of slave-labor, this gentleman is confident that, at present, he has the advantage in employing freemen instead of it. It has not been so until of late, the price of slaves having much advanced within ten years, while immigration has made free white laborers more easy to be procured.

He has heretofore had some difficulty in obtaining hands when he needed them, and has suffered a good deal from the demoralizing influence of adjacent slave-labor, the men, after a few months' residence, inclining to follow the customs of the slaves with regard to the amount of work they should do in a day, or their careless mode of operation. He has had white and black Virginians, sometimes Germans, and latterly Irish. Of all these, he has found the Irish on the whole the best. The poorest have been the native white Virginians; next, the free blacks: and though there have been exceptions, he has not generally paid these as high as one hundred dollars a year, and has thought them less worth their wages than any he has had. At present, he has two white natives and two free colored men, but both the latter were brought up in his family, and are worth twenty dollars a year more than the average. The free black, he thinks, is generally worse than the slave, and so is the poor white man. He also employs, at present, four Irish hands, and is expecting two more to arrive, who have been recommended to him, and sent for by those he has. He pays the Irishmen \$120 a year, and boards them. He has had them for \$100; but these are all excellent men, and well worth their price. They are less given to drinking than any men he has ever had; and one of them first suggested improvements to him in his farm, that he is now carrying out with prospects of considerable advantage. House-maids, Irish girls, he pays \$3 and \$6 a month.

He does not apprehend that in future he shall have any difficulty in obtaining steady and reliable men, that will accomplish much more work than any slaves. There are some operations, such as carting and spreading dung, and all work with the fork, spade, or shovel, at which his Irishmen will do, he thinks, over fifty per cent more in a day than any negroes he has ever known. On the whole, he is satisfied that at present free-labor is more profitable than slave-labor, though his success is not so evident that he would be willing to have attention particularly called to it. His farm, moreover, is now in a transition state from one system of husbandry to another, and appearances are temporarily more unfavorable on that account.

The wages paid for slaves, when they are hired for agricultural labor, do not differ at present, he says, from those which he pays for his free laborers. In both cases the hiring party boards the laborer, but, in addition to money and board, the slave-employer has to furnish clothing, and is subject, without redress, to any losses which may result from the carelessness or malevolence of the slave. He also has to lose his time if he is unwell, or when from any cause he is absent or unable to work.

The slave, if he is indisposed to work, and especially if he is not treated well, or does not like the master who has hired him, will sham sickness – even make himself sick or lame – that he need not work. But a more serious loss frequently arises, when the slave, thinking he is worked too hard, or being angered by punishment or unkind treatment, “getting the sulks,” takes to “the swamp,” and comes back when he has a mind to. Often this will not be till the year is up for which he is engaged, when he will return to his owner, who, glad to find his property safe, and that it has not died in the Swamp, or gone to Canada, forgets to punish him, and immediately sends him for another year to a new master.



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FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED's report:

"But, meanwhile, how does the negro support life in the swamp?" I asked.

"Oh, he gets sheep and pigs and calves, and fowls and turkeys; sometimes they will kill a small cow. We have often seen the fires, where they were cooking them, through the woods, in the swamp yonder. If it is cold, he will crawl under a fodder-stack, or go into the cabins with some of the other negroes, and in the same way, you see, he can get all the corn, or almost anything else he wants."

"He steals them from his master?"

"From any one; frequently from me. I have had many a sheep taken by them."

"It is a common thing, then?"

"Certainly, it is, very common, and the loss is sometimes exceedingly provoking. One of my neighbors here was going to build, and hired two mechanics for a year. Just as he was ready to put his house up, the two men, taking offense at something, both ran away, and did not come back at all, till their year was out, and then their owner immediately hired them out again to another man."

These negroes "in the swamp," he said, were often hunted after, but it was very difficult to find them, and, if caught, they would run again, and the other negroes would hide and assist them. Dogs to track them he had never known to be used in Virginia.



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FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED's report:

Recreation and Luxury among the Slaves

Saturday, Dec. 25. From Christmas to New-Year's Day, most of the slaves, except house servants, enjoy a freedom from labor; and Christmas is especially holiday, or Saturnalia, with them. The young ones began last night firing crackers, and I do not observe that they are engaged in any other amusement to-day; the older ones are generally getting drunk, and making business for the police. I have seen large gangs coming in from the country, and these contrast much in their general appearance with the town negroes. The latter are dressed expensively, and frequently more elegantly than the whites. They seem to be spending money freely, and I observe that they, and even the slaves that wait upon me at the hotel, often have watches, and other articles of value.

The slaves have a good many ways of obtaining "spending money," which, though in law belonging to their owner, as the property of a son under age does to his father, they are never dispossessed of, and use for their own gratification, with even less restraint than a wholesome regard for their health and moral condition may be thought to require. A Richmond paper, complaining of the liberty allowed to slaves in this respect, as calculated to foster an insubordinate spirit, speaks of their "champagne suppers." The police broke into a gambling cellar a few nights since, and found about twenty negroes at "high play," with all the usual accessories of a first-class "Hell." It is mentioned that, among the number taken to the watch-house, and treated with lashes the next morning, there were some who had previously enjoyed a high reputation for piety, and others of a very elegant or foppish appearance. Passing two negroes in the street, I heard the following:

"Workin' in a tobacco factory all de year roun', an' come Christmas, only twenty dollars! Workin' mighty hard, too-up to 12 o'clock o' night very often - an' then to hab a nigger oberseah!" "A nigger!"

"Yes - dat's it, yer see. Wouldn't care if 'twarnt for dat. Nothin' but a dirty nigger! orderin' 'round, jes' as if he was a wite man!"

It is the custom of tobacco manufacturers to hire slaves and free negroes at a certain rate of wages per year. A task of 45 lbs. per day is given them to work up, and all that they choose to do more than this they are paid for - payment being made once a fortnight; and invariably this over-wages is used by the slave for himself, and is usually spent in drinking, licentiousness and gambling. The man was grumbling that he had saved but \$20 to spend at the holidays. One of the manufacturers offered to show me, by his books, that nearly all gained by overwork \$5 a month, many \$20, and some as much as \$28.



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FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED's report:

Ingenuity Of The Negro

Sitting with a company of smokers last night, one of them, to show me the manner in which a slave of any ingenuity or cunning would manage to avoid working for his master's profit, narrated the following anecdote. He was executor of an estate in which, among other negroes, there was one very smart man, who, he knew perfectly well, ought to be earning for the estate \$150 a year, and who could do it if he chose, yet whose wages for a year, being let out by the day or job, had amounted to but \$18, while he had paid for medical attendance upon him \$45. Having failed in every other way to make him earn anything, he proposed to him that he should purchase his freedom and go to Philadelphia, where he had a brother. He told him if he would earn a certain sum (\$400 I believe), and pay it over to the estate for himself, he would give him his free papers. The man agreed to the arrangement, and by his overwork in a tobacco factory, and some assistance from his free brother, soon paid the sum agreed upon, and was sent to Philadelphia. A few weeks afterwards he met him in the street, and asked him why he had returned. "Oh, I don't like dat Philadelphy, massa; ant no chance for colored folks dere; spec' if I'd been a runaway, de wite folks dere take care o' me; but I couldn't git anythin' to do, so I jis borrow ten dollar of my broder, and cum back to old Virginny."

"But you know the law forbids your return. I wonder that you are not afraid to be seen here; I should think Mr. _____ (an officer of police) would take you up."

"Oh! I look out for dat, Massa, I juss hire myself out to Mr. _____ himself, ha! ha! He tink I your boy."

And so it proved, the officer, thinking that he was permitted to hire himself out, and tempted by the low wages at which he offered himself, had neglected to ask for his written permission, and had engaged him for a year. He still lived with the officer, and was an active, healthy, good servant to him.

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**FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED's report:****Qualities as a Laborer**

A well-informed capitalist and slave-holder remarked, that negroes could not be employed in cotton factories. I said that I understood they were so in Charleston, and some other places at the South. "It may be so, yet," he answered, "but they will have to give it up."

The reason was, he said, that the negro could never be trained to exercise judgment; he cannot be made to use his mind; he always depends on machinery doing its own work, and cannot be made to watch it. He neglects it until something is broken or there is great waste. "We have tried reward and punishments, but it makes no difference. It's his nature and you cannot change it. All men are indolent and have a disinclination to labor, but this is a great deal stronger in the African race than in any other. In working niggers, we just always calculate that they will not labor at all except to avoid punishment, and they will never do more than just enough to save themselves from being punished, and no amount of punishment will prevent their working carelessly and indifferently. It always seems on the plantation as if they took pains to break all the tools and spoil all the cattle that they possibly can, even when they know they'll be directly punished for it."

As to rewards, he said, "They only want to support life, they will not work for anything more; and in this country it would be hard to prevent their getting that." I thought this opinion of the power of rewards was not exactly confirmed by the narrative we had just heard, but I said nothing. "If you could move," he continued, "all the white people from the whole seaboard district of Virginia and give it up to the negroes that are on it now, just leave them to themselves, in ten years time there would not be an acre of land cultivated, and nothing would be produced, except what grew spontaneously."

The Hon. Willoughby Newton, by the way, seems to think that if it had not been for the introduction of guano, a similar desolation would have soon occurred without the Africanization of the country. He is reported to have said:

I look upon the introduction of guano, and the success attending its application to our barren lands, in the light of a special interposition of Divine Providence, to save the northern neck of Virginia from reverting entirely into its former state of wilderness and utter desolation. Until the discovery of guano—more valuable to us than the mines of California—I looked upon the possibility of renovating our soil, of ever bringing it to a point capable of producing remunerating crops, as utterly hopeless. Our up-lands were all worn out, and our bottom-lands fast failing, and if it had not been for guano, to revive our last hope, a few years more and the whole country must have been deserted by all who desired to increase their own wealth, or advance the cause of civilization by a proper cultivation of the earth.

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FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED's report:

Improvement of the Negro in Slavery

"But are they not improving?" said I; "that is a point in which I am much interested, and I should be glad to know what is your observation? Have they not, as a race, improved during the last hundred years, do you not think?"

"Oh, yes indeed, very greatly. During my time -I can remember how they were forty years ago- they have improved two thousand per cent.! Don't you think so?" he asked another gentleman. "Yes; certainly."

"And you may find them now, on the isolated old plantations in the back country, just as I recollect them when I was a boy, stupid and moping, and with no more intelligence than when they first came from Africa. But all about where the country is much settled their condition is vastly ameliorated. They are treated much better, they are fed better, and they have much greater educational privileges."

Educational Privileges

"Educational privileges?" I asked, in surprise.

"I mean by preaching and religious instruction. They have the Bible read to them a great deal, and there is preaching for them all over the country. They have preachers of their own; right smart ones they are, too, some of them."

"Do they?" said I. "I thought that was not allowed by law."

"Well, it is not - that is, they are not allowed to have meetings without some white man, is present. They must not preach unless a white man hears what they say. However, they do. On my plantation, they always have a meeting on Sundays, and I have sometimes, when I have been there, told my overseer, - 'You must go up there to the meeting, you know the law requires it;' and he would start as if he was going, but would just look in and go by; he wasn't going to wait for them."

A Distinguished Divine

He then spoke of a minister, whom he owned, and described him as a very intelligent man. He knew almost the whole of the Bible by heart. He was a fine-looking man - a fine head and a very large frame. He had been a sailor, and had been in New Orleans and New York, and many foreign ports. "He could have left me at any time for twenty years, if he had wished to," he said. "I asked him once how he would like to live in New York? Oh, he did not like New York at all! niggers were not treated well there - there was more distinction made between them and white folks than there was here. 'Oh, dey ain't no place in de worl like Ole Virginny for niggers, massa,' says he."

Another gentleman gave similar testimony.

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**FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED's report:****How they are Fed**

I said I supposed that they were much better off, more improved intellectually, and more kindly treated in Virginia than further South. He said I was mistaken in both respects – that in Louisiana, especially, they were more intelligent, because the amalgamation of the races was much greater, and they were treated with more familiarity by the whites; besides which, the laws of Louisiana were much more favorable to them. For instance, they required the planter to give slaves 200 pounds of pork a year: and he gave a very apt anecdote, showing the effect of this law, but which, at the same time, made it evident that a Virginian may be accustomed to neglect providing sufficient food for his force, and that they sometimes suffer greatly for want of it. I was assured, however, that this was very rare –that, generally, the slaves were well provided for –always allowed a sufficient quantity of meal, and, generally, of pork –were permitted to raise pigs and poultry, and in summer could always grow as many vegetables as they wanted. It was observed, however, that they frequently neglected to provide for themselves in this way, and live mainly on meal and bacon. If a man does not provide well for his slaves, it soon becomes known, he gets the name of a “nigger killer,” and loses the respect of the community.

The general allowance of food was thought to be a peck and a half of meal, and three pounds of bacon a week. This, it was observed, is as much meal as they can eat, but they would be glad to have more bacon; sometimes they receive four pounds, but it is oftener that they get less than three. It is distributed to them on Saturday nights; or, on the better managed plantations, sometimes, on Wednesday, to prevent their using it extravagantly, or selling it for whisky on Sunday. This distribution is called the “drawing,” and is made by the overseer to all the heads of families or single negroes. Except on the smallest plantations, where the cooking is done in the house of the proprietor, there is a cook-house, furnished with a large copper for boiling, and an oven. Every night the negroes take their “mess,” for the next day's breakfast and dinner, to the cook, to be prepared for the next day. Custom varies as to the time it is served out to them; sometimes at morning and noon, at other times at noon and night. Each negro marks his meat by cuts, so that he shall know it from the rest, and they observe each other's rights with regard to this, punctiliously.

After breakfast has been eaten early in the cabins, at sunrise or a little before in winter, and perhaps a little later in summer, they go to the field. At noon dinner is brought to them, and, unless the work presses, they are allowed two hours' rest. Very punctually at sunset they stop work and are at liberty, except that a squad is detached once a week for shelling corn, to go to the mill for the next week's drawing of meal. Thus they work in the field about eleven hours a day on an average. Returning to the cabins, wood “ought to have been” carted for them; but if it has not been, they then go to the woods and “tote” it home for themselves. They then make a fire –a big, blazing fire at this season, for the supply of fuel is unlimited– and cook their own supper, which will be a bit of bacon fried, often with eggs, corn-bread baked in the spider after the bacon, to absorb the fat, and perhaps some sweet potatoes roasted in the ashes. Immediately after supper they go to sleep, often lying on the floor or a bench in preference to a bed. About two o'clock they very generally rouse up and cook and eat, or eat cold, what they call their “mornin' bit;” then sleep again till breakfast.



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FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED's report:

Clothing

As to the clothing of the slaves on the plantations, they are said to be usually furnished by their owners or masters, every year, each with a coat and trousers, of a coarse woolen or woolen and cotton stuff (mostly made, especially for this purpose, in Providence, R. I.), for Winter, trousers of cotton osnaburghs for Summer, sometimes with a jacket also of the same; two pairs of strong shoes, or one pair of strong boots and one of lighter shoes for harvest; three shirts; one blanket, and one felt hat.

The women have two dresses of striped cotton, three shifts, two pairs of shoes, etc. The women lying-in are kept at knitting short sacks, from cotton which, in Southern Virginia, is usually raised, for this purpose, on the farm, and these are also given to the negroes. They also purchase clothing for themselves, and, I notice especially, are well supplied with handkerchiefs which the men frequently, and the women nearly always, wear on their heads. On Sundays and holidays they usually look very smart, but when at work, very ragged and slovenly.

At the conclusion of our bar-room session, some time after midnight, as we were retiring to our rooms, our progress up stairs and along the corridors was several times impeded, by negroes lying fast asleep, in their usual clothes only, upon the floor. I asked why they were not abed, and was answered by a gentleman, that negroes never wanted to go to bed; they always preferred to sleep upon the floor.

Fraternity

As I was walking in the outskirts of the town this morning, I saw squads of negro and white boys together, pitching pennies and firing crackers in complete fraternization. The white boys manifested no superiority, or assumption of it, over the dark ones.

An old, palsied negro-woman, very thinly and very raggedly clad, met me and spoke to me. I could not, from the trembling incoherency of her voice, understand what she said, but she was evidently begging, and I never saw a more pitiable object of charity at the North. She was, perhaps, a free person, with no master and no system to provide for her.

I saw, for the first time in my life, two or three young white women smoking tobacco in clay pipes. From their manner it was evidently a well-formed habit, and one which they did not suspect there was occasion for them to practice clandestinely, or be ashamed of.

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FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED's report:

Religious Condition

With regard to the moral and religious condition of the slaves, I cannot, either from what I observe, or from what is told me, consider it in any way gratifying. They are forbidden by law to meet together for worship, or for the purpose of mutual improvement. In the cities, there are churches especially for them, in which the exercises are conducted by white clergymen. In the country, there is usually a service, after that for the whites especially, in all the churches which, by the way, are not very thickly scattered. In one parish, about twenty miles from Richmond, I was told that the colored congregation in the afternoon is much smaller than that of the whites in the morning; and it was thought not more than one-fifth of the negroes living within a convenient distance were in the habit of attending it; and of these many came late, and many more slept through the greater part of the service.

A goodly proportion of them, I am told, "profess religion," and are received into the fellowship of the churches; but it is evident, of the greater part even of these, that their idea of religion, and the standard of morality which they deem consistent with a "profession" of it, is very degraded. That they are subject to intense excitements, often really maniacal, which they consider to be religious, is true; but as these are described, I cannot see that they indicate anything but a miserable system of superstition, the more painful that it employs some forms and words ordinarily connected with true Christianity.

A Virginia correspondent of the N. Y. Times, writing upon the general religious condition of the State, and of the comparative strength and usefulness of the different churches, says:

The Baptists also number (in Eastern Virginia) 44,000 colored members. This makes a great difference. Negroes join the church —perhaps in a great majority of cases— with no ideas of religion. I have but little confidence in their religious professions. Many of them I hope are very pious; but many of them are great scoundrels —perhaps the great majority of them— regardless of their church profession as a rule of conduct. They are often baptized in great numbers, and the Baptist Church (so exemplary in so much) is to blame, I fear, in the ready admission it gives to the negroes.

The Baptist Church generally gets the negroes — where there are no Baptists, the Methodist. Immersion strikes their fancy. It is a palpable, overt act, that their imagination can take hold of. The ceremony mystically impresses them, as the ceremonies of Romanism affect the devotees of that connection. They come up out of the water, and believe they see "the Lord." In their religion, negroes are excessively superstitious. They have all sorts of "experiences," and enjoy the most wonderful revelations. Visions of the supernatural are of nightly occurrence, and the most absurd circumstances are invested with some marvelous significance. I have heard that the great ordeal, in their estimation, a "seeker" had to pass, was being held over the infernal flames by a thread or a hair. If the thread does not break, the suspendee is "in the Lord."

It is proper, therefore, I think, to consider this circumstance, in estimating the strength of a Church, whose communicants embrace such a number of negroes. Of the Methodists, in Eastern Virginia, some six or seven thousand are colored.

This condition of the slaves is not necessarily a reproach to those whose duty it more particularly is to instruct and preach the true Gospel to them. It is, in a great degree, a necessary result of the circumstances of their existence. The possession of arbitrary power has always, the world over, tended irresistibly to destroy humane sensibility, magnanimity, and truth....

1852-1853

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December 13, Monday, 1852: [Edward Dickinson](#) was elected to represent Hampshire County in the US House of Representatives.

After breaking her hip in a fall, [Fanny Wright](#) died in [Cincinnati, Ohio](#).



The West was hospitable to every new creed or social experiment, while its practical necessities furnished the severest test of values. One after another the pilgrims had come, — French colonists of the Scioto and the Miami when the nation was founded; George Rapp, the shoemaker of Württemberg, with his company of "Harmonists"; Robert Owen and his New Harmonists in 1823; and Fanny Wright (1825), who colonized free negroes on two thousand acres in Tennessee to prove them capable of civilization. The only experiment that failed through persecution was that of Fanny Wright to help the victim race. The others failed by reason of the actual conditions of the West. But remnants of all of them had found some nest in Cincinnati.... I there read for the first time Fanny Wright's book, A FEW DAYS IN ATHENS, and some of the addresses which charmed large audiences in Cincinnati. Many a time have I joined in the pilgrimage to her tomb in the cemetery near Cincinnati.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

VOLUME II

[Henry Thoreau](#) completed a survey alongside Flint's Pond for Daniel Weston, that he had begun on the 10th.



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

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

(The official copy of this survey of course had become the property of the person or persons who had hired this Concord town surveyor to do their surveying work during the 19th Century. Such materials have yet to be recovered.)

View this particular personal working draft of a survey in fine detail:


http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_Surveys/137.htm

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Dec. 13. Walk early through the woods to Lincoln to survey. Winter weather may be said to have begun yesterday. River and ponds all open. Goose Pond skimmed over. Why have I ever omitted early rising and a morning walk?

As we walked over the Cedar Hill, Mr. Weston asked me if I had ever noticed how the frost formed around a particular weed in the grass, and no other. It was a clear cold morning. We stooped to examine, and I observed, about the base of the *Lechea major* (?), or larger pinweed, ["*Lechea*...pinweed" crossed out in pencil and "cistus" substituted] the frost formed into little flattened trumpets or bells, an inch or more long, with the mouth down about the base of the stem. They were very conspicuous, dotting the grass white. But what was most remarkable was that, though there were plenty of other dead weeds and grasses about, no other species exhibited this phenomenon. I think it can hardly be because of the form of its top, and that therefore the moisture is collected and condensed and flows down its stem particularly. It may have something to do with the life of the root, which I noticed was putting forth shoots *beneath*. Perhaps this growth generates heat and so steam. He said that his cows never touched that weed. I judge from his account of the rise and fall of Flint's Pond that, allowing for the disturbance occasioned by its inlets and outlet, it sympathizes with Walden.

I observed a mouse run down a bush by the pond-side. I approached and found that he had neatly covered over a thrasher [Brown Thrasher  *Toxostoma rufum* Red-mavis] or other bird's nest (it was made partly of sticks like a thrasher's), about four or five feet from the ground, and lined it warmly with that common kind of green moss (?) which grows about the base of oaks, but chiefly with a kind [of] vegetable wool, perhaps from the wool-grass. He appeared to be a reddish brown above and cream-colored beneath, and ran swiftly down the stems. I think it must be the *Gerbillus Canadensis*, or perhaps the *Arvicola Emmonsii*, or maybe the *Arvicola hirsutus*, meadow mouse. [Vide forward to Dec. 30th.]

Began to snow at noon. This the third snow; the first lasted half an hour on ground; the second, two or three days.



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

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

Federico Roncali replaced Juan Bravo Murillo as Prime Minister of Spain (Queen Isabella had sacked Bravo Murillo because of his plan to return the country to absolutism).

[Robert Schumann](#) received a letter from Deputy-Mayor of Düsseldorf Wilhelm Wortmann, a ranking member of the Allgemeiner Musikverein, requesting that the composer limit his conducting activities.



Dec. 14. Tuesday. P.M. — To Assabet Stone Bridge.

We have now the scenery of winter, though the snow is but an inch or two deep. The dried chalice of the *Rhexia Virginica* stand above the snow, and the cups of the blue-curls and the long sharp red capsules of the small (?) hypericum, etc., etc., johnswort; and a new era commences with the dried herbs.

Ah, who can tell the serenity and clarity of a New England winter sunset? This could not be till the cold and the snow came. Ah, what isles those western clouds! in what a sea! Just after sunset there is a broad pillar of light for many minutes in the west.

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


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

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



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

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

 December 16, Thursday, 1852: When [Brigham Young](#) "got married with" Mary Oldfield, that was his 2d "celestial marriage" for the year.



[Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed, for Virgil Fuller, the farm of [Henry L. Shattuck](#) in the north part of [Concord](#) on Monument Street near Liberty Street, showing N. Munroe's and [Minot Pratt](#)'s land. [Perez Blood](#) had previously surveyed this land and Thoreau noted that he should have followed Blood's marks as they were correct. General [Joshua Buttrick](#) once lived on this land.



December 16. Observed the reflection of the snow on Pine Hill from Walden, extending far beyond the true limits of a reflection, quite across the pond; also, less obviously, of pines. The sky



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overcast with thick scud, which, in the reflection, the snow ran into.



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

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

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



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

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

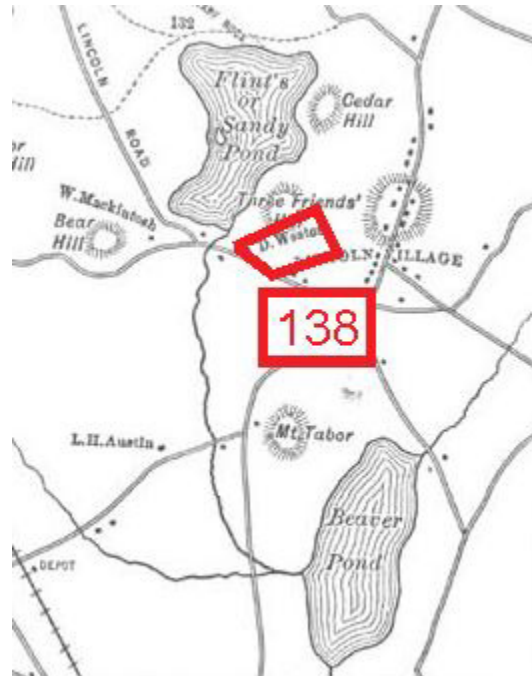
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1852-1853

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http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_Surveys/138.htm

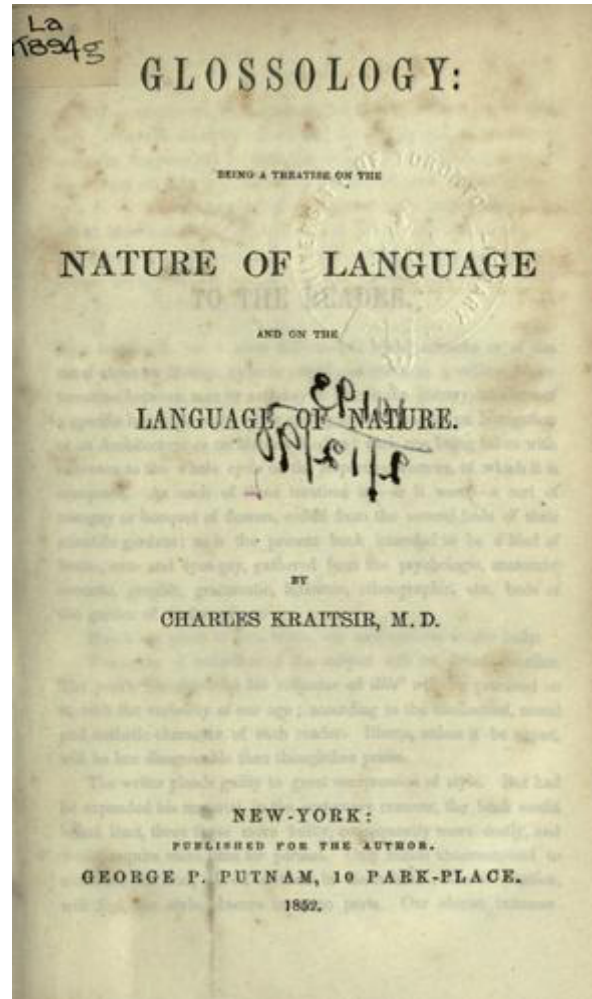


[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR DECEMBER 17TH]

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→ Late December 1852: Henry Thoreau began to study Charles V. Kraitsir's just-published GLOSSOLOGY: BEING A TREATISE ON THE NATURE OF LANGUAGE AND ON THE LANGUAGE OF NATURE (New-York: Published for the Author. George P. Putnam, 10 Park-Place), perhaps Waldo Emerson's copy, and make notations in his Fact Book.



GLOSSOLOGY: A TREATISE



By the 1850s he had furthered his knowledge of Kraitsir's philology by reading his GLOSSOLOGY: BEING A TREATISE ON THE NATURE OF LANGUAGE AND THE LANGUAGE OF NATURE, from which Thoreau copied pages into his commonplace book. Kraitsir's GLOSSOLOGY was an expanded version of the system on which he had lectured in Boston and which Peabody had assembled in a pamphlet from notes taken at those performances. In Kraitsir's preface to his longer work Thoreau read the assertion that any man who professed to believe in the spiritual life had to "consider it blasphemy to except the human mind and its manifestations in speech from the universal harmony of the world." Kraitsir's purpose in presenting his larger study was to further his assumption of how at the roots of all languages was a unity of meaning and symbol stemming from the fact that all men, "however diverse they might become by conflicting passions and interests, have yet the same

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reason, and the same organs of speech. "There was only a limited number of sounds man could make through his vocal organs, and the reason for the underlying unity of all tongues was a physiological one: the relationship between a man's consciousness and his organs of speech was language. Kraitsir also stressed the higher purpose of language study. For example, he boldly declared his book not to consist of mere etymology, but to be a tool designed for people who "wish to employ language for its divine ends, as a pole, so to say, whereon the tendrils of clear reason, benign humanity, and of chaste taste, climb up, in the direction of man's posture, towards the Source of Light." Still caught in the webs of religious controversy which dictated that anyone investigating language had to square his discoveries with biblical revelation, he assured the reader his study tended towards "an approximation of the various races and nations to that union into **one mankind**, which is admitted to have existed, by all earnest inquirers into language, and which is attested to by GEN., XI.1." Kraitsir, then, was chasing nothing other than the phantom of uniformity for which the nineteenth century yearned, a unity demonstrating how, beneath their temperamental differences, men were one in the Oversoul. In a passage critical to the distinction between Emerson's and Thoreau's philosophical positions, Kraitsir elaborated on his contention, seemingly conventional enough for the age, that words originated with a perception of the exterior world. Language, he explained,

was a symbol, a paradigm, an index, a finger-board, pointing in one direction to what is brought in and how it is brought within us; in another direction, to what is uttered and how it is to strike the mind of our fellow men. Man is a mirror of, but also a mediator between, all objects felt without and within himself, as well as between these objects and his own spirit on the one side, and between his spirit and that of his neighbors on the other.

Some impression, then, strikes a man; as important as what it does to him internally is what he does to make it external again, how through verbal forms he reflects or expresses it to other beings. The complexity of this process of "reflection," as well as the mediation which occurs when a piece of language is formed, fascinated Kraitsir and Thoreau, and remained a point about which Emerson did not offer any particular speculation. To explicate further this idea of "reflection," Kraitsir distinguished between "speech" and "languages." The former was a "necessary function of man's sensations" and arose "instinctively, involuntarily, yet in keeping with the divine harmony of the universe"; while the latter, in their multiplicity, were what eventually happened to speech when it was brought under the influence of local and personal circumstance. But the essentials of human speech, the way outer impressions were reflected back to the world, were always and everywhere the same. "Each people's genetic powers of speech, peculiar in each, amalgamates the phonetic (sound) elements with the feelings and mental conceptions into an organic unity." Speech became, in Kraitsir's felicitous phrase, "the explosion

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of reason," and the word itself -that is, the series of sounds of which it was composed- became a "new outward object, linking the world with man and man with man." The sounds men uttered were conditioned as much by how they were made -by the vocal organs- as by what caused them; and the complex physiological and psychological relation which occurred when reason sought to explode into articulation was what provided an underlying unity to all human utterance. To Kraitsir's mind, then, there was a law as to why "spirit" broke into the atmosphere the way it did. He believed that, while languages appear so different, in reality there was only one way words originally could be formed, "according to the triad" of the interaction of mind, thing, organ. The "germs" of all languages were the same, a fact arguing for the unity of man's spirit with the Oversoul. Continuing the discussion in his earlier pamphlet, he elaborated the relationship among the gutturals, labials, and dentals he had discovered in his research. These various types of sounds were the "strings" upon which the voice "performed" language:

To excite in other men something to be guarded and cherished like our heart, we gutturalize; to indicate wind, wool, wood, water, or any other moving object, we lap with our lips; to denote fleeting, flea-like, free lively butter (flutter)-flies on a level prairie, we combine labials with linguals; when speaking about steady, staring, stiff, dead, still, stony stereotypes, or about dim, dull, dreary, dense, starving, indurated, enduring objects, we make a din at our teeth.

One has to have a tin ear not to realize the seductive flavor of this kind of poetic argument; but Kraitsir knew that, while he could be convincing in such concentrated examples, his contemporaries would have difficulty discriminating such concepts in groups of sentences. "The symbolism of sounds" had, he noted, decreased by degrees "in consequence of the fading of the primordial poetry of the human mind." Sounds themselves were no longer symbols with readily apparent meanings, and the loss of "intuitiveness and liveliness" in language had been balanced only by a "greater compenetration of sound and thought." Communication had moved to a more abstract level; and if, before the word had "painted vividly the idea man had of the nature of the object," now it was more likely to bring to mind "the total of its characters and relations, not unlike a spiritual tableau." Kraitsir thought men had forgotten how a sound itself might symbolize something greater than the word in which it was contained. If knowing what sounds symbolized made a man more able to write an authentic sentence, could not the glossological principle be extended outward to an entire work of art, one embodying truth as far as man could know it? Thoreau became deeply interested in the science of glossology not only because of its "practical" application in making the assimilation of foreign languages easier, but also because its concepts suggested how the enterprise on which he had once set his mind, of returning "to the primitive analogical and derivative sources of words," was philosophically important.



1852-1853

1852-1853



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

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

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

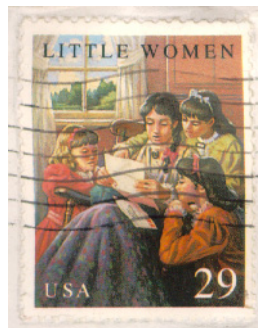
[Louisa May Alcott](#)'s 3d publication of which we presently have any knowledge, titled “The Masked Marriage,” appeared in [Dodge's Literary Museum](#), Volume VI, #2. View, below, how it would be represented as part of the March girls' publication “The Pickwick Portfolio” that would be enfolded into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

THE MASKED MARRIAGE

(A Tale Of Venice)

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

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




Dec. 18. P.M. — To Annursnack.


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



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

 December 19, Sunday, 1852: The establishment of a literary weekly in [California](#), Golden Era.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR DECEMBER 19TH]

 December 20, Monday, 1852: Great Britain annexed Pegu, Lower Burma.



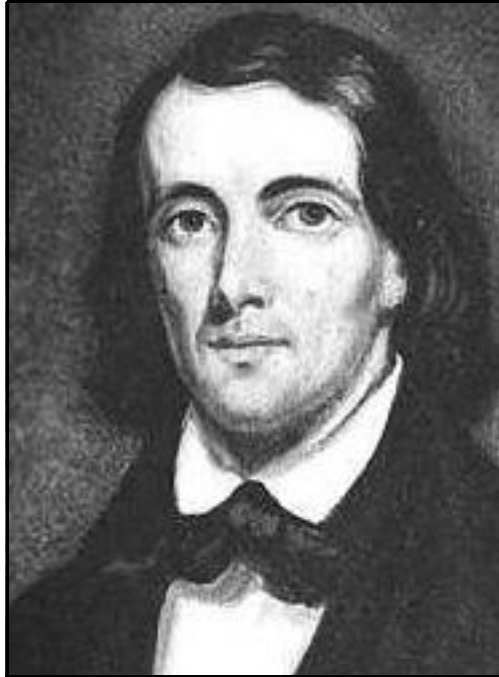
[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR DECEMBER 20TH]

1852-1853

1852-1853



December 21, Tuesday, 1852: When [Ellery Channing](#) took the 9AM train to Boston, the station agent, Mr. Wild, telegraphed ahead to the Reverend [Thomas Wentworth Higginson](#) as he had promised, warning of this. There was to be no attempt to kidnap the Channing children. (Since the despairing Channing in fact did nothing, the security arrangements and the surveillance placed on him by this conspiracy of friends and neighbors would gradually become more relaxed.)



At some point [Ellery](#)'s father [Doctor Walter Channing](#) cut his son's allowance in half and notified attorney [George Merrick Brooks](#) of [Concord](#), Massachusetts that this husband and father no longer had any visible means of supporting a family.

Marco Spada, an opéra comique by Daniel-François-Esprit Auber to words of Scribe and Delavigne, was performed for the initial time, at the Théâtre Favart, Paris. Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka was in the audience and, except for the beginning of the overture, found the music "very unsatisfactory." [Giacomo Meyerbeer](#) also was in attendance.

Huge wind and rain storm did immense damage to shipping at [San Francisco](#) wharves. A mercantile house in Boston would eventually receive from St. Petersburg, Russia, and pass along to the American press, information about a plague in Russia, and the government's reaction to this medical event:

The Plague in Russia. — The Boston Traveller is indebted to a mercantile house of that city for the following extract from a letter just received from St. Petersburg, and dated the 21st of December:
 "There is a report that the plague has entered Russia, and is prevalent at Astrachan and another place. The emperor has ordered a military cordon of sixty or seventy thousand men to prevent its advancing further into the interior of the country. Some alarm is felt at St. Petersburg, though in former times, as in the reign



1852-1853

1852-1853

of Catherine, it stopped at Moscow.”



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR DECEMBER 21ST]

1852-1853

1852-1853



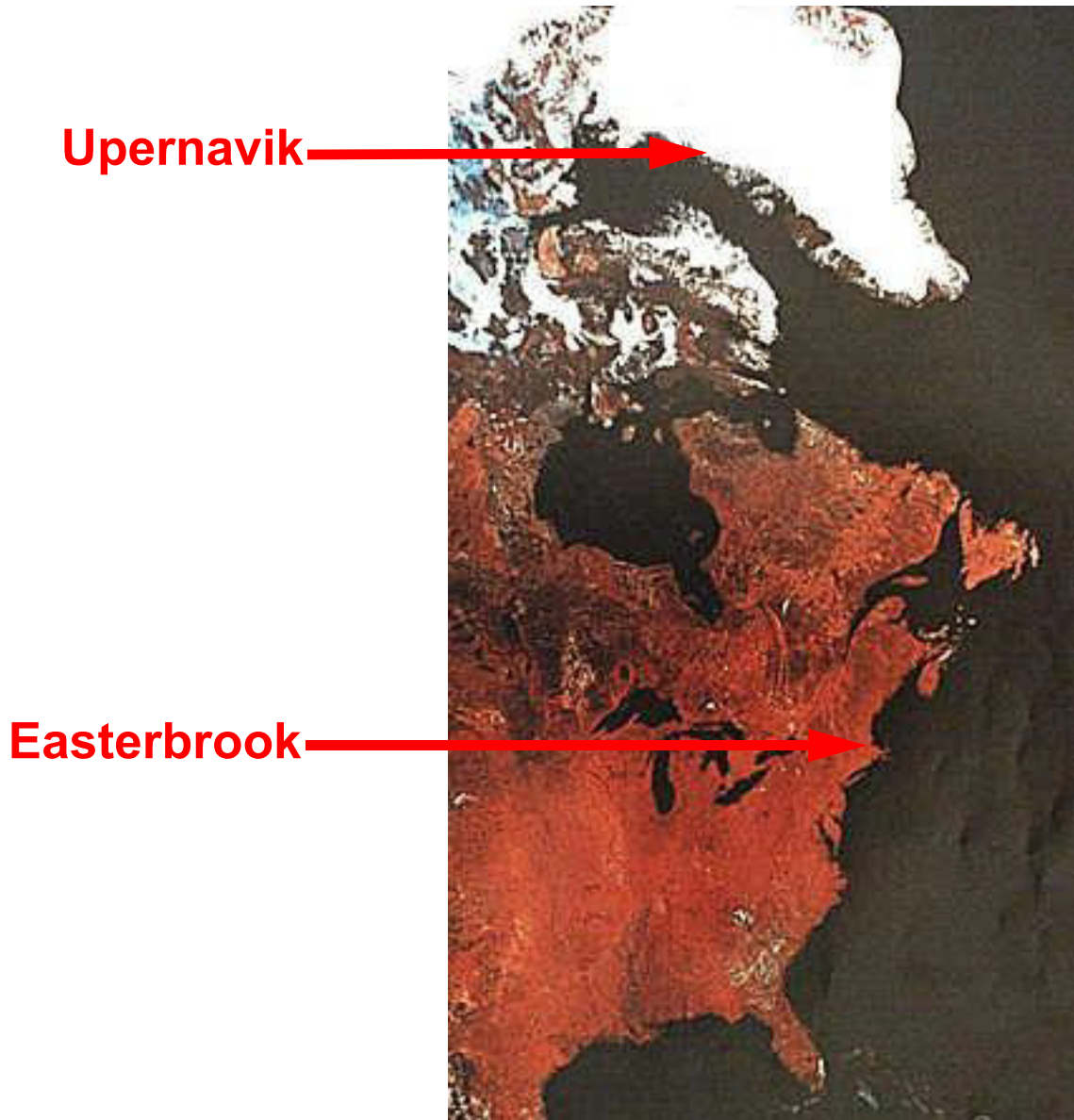
December 21, 23, 24, [1852](#): [Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed Humphrey Hunt's woodlot and pasture near Easterbrook Woods for Barzillai Hudson and others, who paid him \$14.²⁵. [Abner Buttrick](#) had 8 acres and [Jonas Melvin](#) 11 acres nearby. The survey identifies the yellow birch cellar hole that was begun by old Henry Flint but abandoned before the house was finished, the Old Carlisle Road (called the New One), the Bridle Road (called the Old One), Brooks Clark's birch pasture near the [lime kiln](#) (Gleason 79/C6), and the mill site that may have been part of the Thoreau family's pencil business. The Hunt survey document does not indicate that Thoreau's Walden Pond shanty, which that family had relocated, was standing at the time just 300 yards off the lower left edge of the paper. However, if you take a look at the original survey paper, now on file at the Concord Free Public Library (below), you can see that the bottom left edge bears a Thoreau penciling which had apparently nothing to do with the survey: "Upernavik, the most northerly inhabited spot upon the globe."




Perhaps this was a temporary jotting which Thoreau later forgot to erase. ENCYCLOPEDIA AMERICANA, a source which we know Thoreau consulted, listed that "Upernamick [is] the most northern settlement." It was after leaving Upernavik in 1845 that the expedition of [Sir John Franklin](#) had sailed west across Baffin Bay in search of the Northwest Passage and disappeared up Lancaster Sound, becoming the occasion for no fewer than 40 rescue expeditions.

1852-1853

1852-1853



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

In Oregon, Island, Jefferson, King, and Pierce Counties were created from Thurston County. Island County included the disputed San Juan Islands, claimed by both the United States of America and Great Britain.

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

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



1852-18



1852-1853

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

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



December 24, Friday, 1852: The [San Francisco](#) Hall opened, at Washington Street between Kearny Street and Montgomery Street.

The Daily Union gazette reported:

THE MINES. — We are fully convinced, from all the information we can obtain, that the present is the most highly favored season for the dry diggings, of any since the discovery of gold in California. The amounts taken out to the hand do not average so largely as during the first winter, but there is a far greater yield in the aggregate, and every industrious laborer is enabled to make what is considered fair wages. Among the cause contributing to these desirable results, the principal are the abundance of water and the improved labor-saving machinery now in use. The pan, rocker and long-tom have, in the dry diggings, had their day, and at present, sluice washing is the favorite mode in vogue with the experienced miner. It is found that earth yielding one cent and a half to the bucket will pay, to the single hand, as much as three cent earth to the tom worker, or ten cents to the rocker. The construction of the ground sluice is exceedingly simple, involving the outlay of no capital, and but a trifling degree of labor. Even the lumber sluice, which is a sort of long tom continued, can be built very cheaply, and is preferable to the earth sluice, as it does not permit the finest particles of gold to escape.

The sluice are peculiarly adapted for claims on large flats, where auriferous earth can be obtained easily and in abundance, and also for washing ravine dirt, which has heretofore passed through the ordeal of the rocker and long tom.

In the older dry diggings settlements very handsome, wages are now being made in leads which have been worked for the last three winters and we know of several instances where miners have returned and retaken claims abandoned the previous season, on the supposition that they have extracted from them all their treasures.

An innumerable number of claims were given up during the last and previous winter, in consequence of the extreme scarcity of

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water; and in others a vast amount of gold was lost, owing to the poor quality of that fluid. Many miners on rich ravines (which are always thickly settled) have been hitherto compelled to use water which has run the gauntlet of a hundred machines, and by the time that it has reached them, becomes of the consistency of liquid mud. The natural consequence was, of course, the loss of the finer particles of gold both from the machine and in "panning out." This state of things is now entirely obviated. We venture to say that there is not a ravine or gulch in the country, which does not contain a sufficiency of water to meet all drought upon it. The bulk of gold taken out in the diggings the present winter is still lying there for the dry digger is not as migratory in his habits as the river miner; but even if he was so disposed, the difficulty of traveling, and in some cases, utter impossibility of reaching the lower settlements, have kept them in *statu quo*. The exorbitant rates at which provisions are held in all mining localities, and the certainty of a still further material advance, will have the tendency to transfer the pile of the digger to the till of the merchant, so that we doubt not when spring opens, the latter will have been the most successful in their pursuit after the glittering ore.



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



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


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



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

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 December 27, Monday, 1852: During this holiday season the Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Reverend Heinrich Christian Schwan in Cleveland, Ohio had a lighted and decorated Christmas tree display and –unlike the previous year– no-one denounced the display as heathen idolatry.

The President-elect, Franklin Pierce, had recently paid a visit to his uncle Amos Lawrence in Boston,⁴⁰ taking along his wife and their 10-year-old son Benjamin Pierce. Old Amos had given little Ben a pencil.⁴¹



MORE


The Pierce family was back in Andover, and on this day little Ben wrote his rich great-uncle a note of thanks for “the beautiful pencil,” saying that he thought he should “find it very useful.” The boy promised to “keep it very carefully for your sake,” and he hoped “that I may learn to write all the better with it.” But this was not to be.

HISTORY OF RR



December 27. Not a particle of ice in Walden to-day. Paddled across it. I took my new boat out. A black and white duck [Bufflehead Bucephala albeola (~~Spirit Duck or Buffle-head Duck~~)] on it, Flint’s and Fair Haven being frozen up. Ground bare. River open. Countless birches, white pines, etc., have been killed within a year or two about Goose Pond by the high water. The dead birches have broken in two in the middle and fallen over. In some coves where the water is shallow, their wrecks make quite a dense thicket. Found chestnuts quite plenty to-day.

During the last decade of his life, Thoreau visited his rivers more than twice as often as the upland woods and lakes that he is far better known for writing about.
 – Professor Robert M. Thorson, THE BOATMAN, page 3



40. Amos Lawrence’s brother Abbott Lawrence, manufacturer of locomotives, had once been a candidate for the vice-presidency, but Millard Fillmore had achieved the nomination. In the presidential election Abbott had refused to support Franklin Pierce in his quest for high office because of his nephew’s indifference to the evil and cruelty of slavery.

41. Given the date, could this have been a Christmas present? Also, could it have been a Thoreau pencil?



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 December 28, Tuesday, 1852: George Hamilton-Gordon, Earl of Aberdeen replaced Edward Geoffrey Stanley, Earl of Derby as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.



Dec. 28. Brought my boat from Walden in rain. No snow on ground. Grass in the churchyard and elsewhere green as in the spring.

I omitted some observations apparently between the 18th and 22d, to the effect that the berries that hold on into winter are to be remarked, —the winterberry, alder and birch fruit, smilax, pyrus, hips, etc.

Both for bodily and mental health, court the present. Embrace health wherever you find her. A clump of birches raying out from one centre make a more agreeable object than a single tree. The rosettes in the ice, as Channing calls them, now and for some time have attracted me.

It is worth the while to apply what wisdom one has to the conduct of his life, surely. I find myself oftenest wise in little things and foolish in great ones. That I may accomplish some particular petty affair well, I may live my whole life coarsely. A broad margin of leisure is as beautiful in a man's life as in a book. Haste makes waste, no less in life than in housekeeping. Keep the time, observe the hours of the universe, not of the cars. What are threescore and ten hurriedly and coarsely lived to moments of divine leisure in which your life is coincident with the life of the universe? We live our lives too coarsely, just as we eat too fast, and do not know the true savor of our food. We consult our will and understanding and the expectation of men, not our genius. I can impose upon myself tasks which will crush me for life and prevent all expansion, and this am but too inclined to do.


One moment of life costs many hours, hours not of business but of preparation and invitation. Yet the man who does not betake himself at once and desperately to sawing is called a loafer, though he may be knocking at the doors of heaven all the while, which shall surely be opened to him. That aim in life is highest which requires the highest and finest discipline. How much, what infinite, leisure it requires, as of a lifetime, to appreciate a single phenomenon! You must camp down beside it as for life, having reached your land of promise, and give yourself wholly to it. It must stand for the whole world to you, symbolical of all things. The least partialness is your own defect of sight and cheapens the experience fatally. Unless the humming of a gnat is as the music of the spheres, and the music of the spheres as the humming of a gnat, they are naught to me. It is not communications to serve for a history, — which are science, — but the great story itself, that cheers and satisfies us.

As I have not observed the rainbow on the *Juncus militaris* nor the andromeda red the past fall, it suggests a great difference in seasons.



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



THADDEUS A. CULBERTSON

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

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

Advancing along the Yan Tse Kiang (Yangtze) River of [China](#), the Taiping Chinese Christian army reached Hankow.

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



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

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





1852-1853

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 December 30, Thursday, 1852: Pierre Jules Baroche was named Minister President of the Council of State for France.

The revised version of Symphony no.4 by Robert Schumann was performed for the initial time, in Düsseldorf. This was the 1st complete concert he has conducted since the end of the previous season.

Having already perused the volumes for the years 1633-1636, Henry Thoreau checked out, from Harvard Library, the JESUIT RELATION volumes for the years 1637 and 1638.⁴²

<http://www.canadiana.org>

42. Thoreau presumably read each and every volume of the JESUIT RELATIONS that was available in the stacks at the Harvard Library. We know due to extensive extracts in his Indian Notebooks #7 and #8 that between 1852 and 1857 he did withdraw or consult all the volumes for the years between 1633 and 1672. Thoreau took notes in particular in regard to the reports by Father Jean de Brébeuf, Father Jacques Buteux, Father Claude Dablon, Father Jérôme Lallemant, Father Paul Le Jeune, Father François Le Mercier, Father Julien Perrault, Father Jean de Quens, Father Paul Ragueneau, and Father Barthélemy Vimont.

 Cramoisy, Sebastian (ed.). *RELATION DE CE QUI S'EST PASSÉ EN LA NOUVELLE FRANCE IN L'ANNÉE 1636: ENVOYÉE AU R. PERE PROVINCIAL DE LA COMPAGNIE DE JESUS EN LA PROVINCE DE FRANCE, PAR LE P. PAUL LE JEUNE DE LA MESME COMPAGNIE, SUPERIEUR DE LA RESIDENCE DE KÉBEC. A Paris: Chez Sebastian Cramoisy...*, 1637

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Dec. 30. In Audubon's Animals:—
Sigmodon hispidum, Say and Ord.
Marsh-Rat of Lawson's Carolina.
Wood-Rat, Bartram's Travels in Florida.
Arvicola hispidus, Godman.
Arvicola hortensis of Griffith and of Cuvier.
The plate of this *resembles* my mouse of December 13th.

JOHN JAMES AUDUBON



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 December 31, Friday, 1852: Amos Lawrence died in Boston, Massachusetts.

A notice appeared in Frederick Douglass' Paper:

Mrs. Stowe Going to England

Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of Uncle Tom's Cabin, is about to visit Great Britain, with her husband. She has lately received a letter from Dr. Wardlaw, tendering her, in behalf of a number of ladies and gentlemen of Glasgow, an invitation to visit England at their expense. The invitation she has accepted, and she will soon leave for Liverpool.

Henry Thoreau wrote to Benjamin Marston Watson.

To: B.M. Watson

From: HDT

Date: 12/31/52

*Concord Dec. 31st '52
Dear Sir,
I should be glad to visit
Plymouth again, but at
present I have nothing
to read which is not
too merely heathenish, or
at least secular,—which
the dictionary defines
—“relating to affairs
of the present world, not
holy;”—though not ne-
cessarily unholy[,] nor
have I any leisure to
prepare it. My writing
at present is prophane,
yet in a good sense,
and as it were sacredly,
I may say; for finding
the air of the temple
too close, I sat outside.*

Page 2

*Dont think that
I say this to get off.
No, no,—it will never
do to read such things
to hungry ears. If they
ask for bread will
ye give them a stone.*



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*When I have some-
thing of the right
kind depend upon it
I will let you know.
Yrs
Henry D. Thoreau*

Page 3
Postage: PAID [3]
Address: B. M. Watson Esq
Plymouth
Mass.
Postmark: CONCORD
DEC
31
MS



Dec. 31. I was this afternoon gathering chestnuts at Saw Mill Brook. I have within a few weeks spent some hours thus, scraping away the leaves with my hands and feet over some square rods, and have at least learned how chestnuts are planted and new forests raised. First fall the chestnuts with the severe frosts, the greater part of them at least, and then, at length, the rains and winds bring down the leaves which cover them with a thick coat. I have wondered sometimes how the nuts got planted which merely fell on to the surface of the earth, but already I find the nuts of the present year partially mixed with the mould, as it were, under the decaying and mouldy leaves, where is all the moisture and manure they want. A large proportion of this year's nuts are now covered loosely an inch deep under mouldy leaves, though they are themselves sound, and are moreover concealed from squirrels thus.

It is a sort of frozen rain this afternoon, which does not wet one, but makes the still bare ground slippery with a coating of ice, and stiffens your umbrella so that it cannot be shut. Will not the trees look finely in the morning?




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



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

- Read  [Henry Thoreau's Journal for January 1853 \(æf. 35\)](#)
 Read  [Henry Thoreau's Journal for February 1853 \(æf. 35\)](#)
 Read  [Henry Thoreau's Journal for March 1853 \(æf. 35\)](#)
 Read  [Henry Thoreau's Journal for April 1853 \(æf. 35\)](#)
 Read  [Henry Thoreau's Journal for May 1853 \(æf. 35\)](#)
 Read  [Henry Thoreau's Journal for June 1853 \(æf. 35\)](#)
 Read  [Henry Thoreau's Journal for July 1853 \(æf. 35-36\)](#)
 Read  [Henry Thoreau's Journal for August 1853 \(æf. 36\)](#)
 Read  [Henry Thoreau's Journal for September 1853 \(æf. 36\)](#)
 Read  [Henry Thoreau's Journal for October 1853 \(æf. 36\)](#)
 Read  [Henry Thoreau's Journal for November 1853 \(æf. 36\)](#)
 Read  [Henry Thoreau's Journal for December 1853 \(æf. 36\)](#)

(According to [William L. Howarth](#), “between 1853 and 1860 the Journal volumes and the Indian notebooks are identical in paper and format.”⁴³)

43. [William L. Howarth](#), THE LITERARY MANUSCRIPTS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU. Columbus OH, 1974, page 294. Thoreau's Indian notebooks, 11 in number, are at the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York City.

JANUARY 1853

➡ January 1853: This month's issue of [Harper's New Monthly Magazine](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE

The initial issue of [Putnam's Monthly Magazine of American Literature, Science, and Art](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE



Early in this year, in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Bethlehem, a dispute would arise over possession of some keys, and over the placing of a silver star in the sanctuary. The **immediate** result was 1.) a brawl between Greek Orthodox monks and Roman Catholic monks while which the Turkish police, Muslims and considering themselves unable to effectively intervene, stood aside in baffled amusement. Several of the Greek Orthodox monks were killed in this brawl, and the **intermediate** result would be 2.) that Tsar Nicholas I would have an incident which he could utilize as an excuse to secure the strategic advantage of year-round ice-free ports for Russia, by an invasion of the Ottoman Empire, thus provoking an invasion into the southern territories of Russia (the [Crimea](#)) by Great Britain, France, Turkey, and Sardinia, and the **eventual** result would be 3.) that during the American Civil War, Russian spies would steal the engineering details for a huge rifled cannon from their British enemy and then secretly assist the Union in the construction of models of this advanced rifled cannon for use in the long-range firebombing of Sesesh port cities. (Hey, one two three, what goes around comes around in this crazy world even when it's the Star of Bethlehem!)


➡ January 1853: From this point until sometime in May, [Louisa May Alcott](#) would be offering home school in her parlor in Concord, for about a dozen pupils.



[William Whiting](#) became the president of the New-England Historic, Genealogical Society.

1852-1853

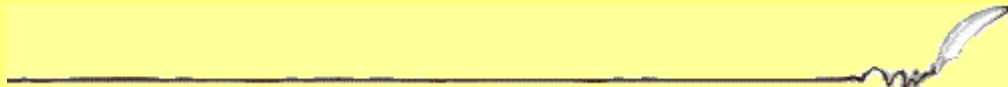
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 January 1853: [Dr. Elisha Kent Kane](#) proposed to [Maggie Fox](#), and for the next 4 months their relationship was to swing back and forth between statements of everlasting unions and tragic farewells. Much of this psychodrama has been preserved for us in letters, because Kane was traveling giving lectures and preparing for his voyage while Fox was relocating from Philadelphia to Washington DC and then back to New-York setting up seances. Karen Lystra's *SEARCHING THE HEART: WOMEN, MEN, AND ROMANTIC LOVE IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICA* (1989) has it that Fox and Kane's on-again off-again relationship was typical for the times, because arranged marriages were giving way to marriages of romance. One of the consequences of a young woman being able to chose her own mate was that she needed to make very sure that the suitor was serious — if she lost her reputation without gaining a husband, she would destined herself to a lifetime of poverty and neglect. Lystra's take on the situation is that it was this that “resulted in the dominant motif of nineteenth-century American courtship: women setting and men passing tests of love.”

[Francis Galton](#) met Louisa Jane Butler (1822-1897) at a neighbour's home.

 January 1853: [Waldo Emerson](#) to his journal:

*At Alton, we took the train for Springfield, 72 miles. Senator Breese & Mr Young of U.S. Congress, Gov. Edwards, & other railroad men were in the train, & made an agreeable party **in the baggage car**, where they had a box of brandy, a box of buffalo tongues, & a box of soda biscuit. They showed me eight or ten deer flying across the prairie, with their white tails erect, disturbed by the train; then, presently, one who stood & looked at us; then a fire on the prairie. The corn was not yet gathered, & a farmer told us, that they had not yet been able to get upon the land to gather it — too much mud for horse & wagon. It does not usually get all gathered until March.*



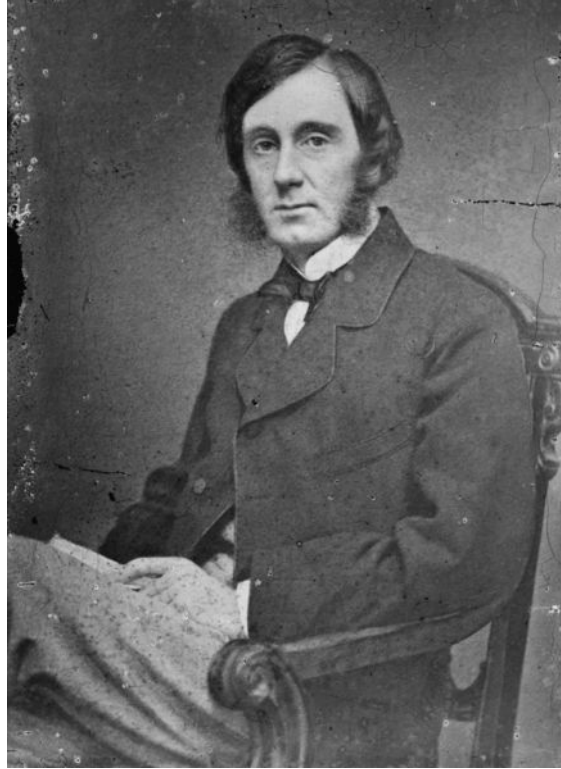
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January-March 1853: Much of [Henry Thoreau's "A YANKEE IN CANADA"](#) was being printed in [Putnam's Monthly Magazine of American Literature, Science and Art](#), until the remainder of the manuscript needed to be withdrawn due to editor [George William Curtis's](#) censorship of comments about religious institutions.

[TIMELINE OF CANADA](#)

1852-1853

1852-1853

 January/March 1853: [Waldo Emerson](#) to his journal:

Dr Kirkland & Professor Brazer mutually resolved one day to break off smoking for six months. Soon after, they met at a dinner party at Col. P.'s, where all appointments were excellent. Segars were offered, & Brazer declined them. Dr Kirkland lighted one, & after smoking with much content for a time, he said to nobody in particular, as he puffed away the smoke – It is doubtful, whether we show more want of self control in breaking good resolutions, or self-conceit in keeping them.

CIGARS

Walk with Ellery to Lincoln. Benzoin lauris, rich beautiful shrub in this dried up country. Particolored warbler. E. laughed at Nuttall's description of birds: "on the top of a high tree the bird pours all day the lays of affection," &c. Affection! Why what is it? a few feathers, with a hole at one end, & a point at the other, & with a pair of wings: affection! Why just as much affection as there is in that lump of peat.

Thoreau is at home; why he has got to maximize the minimum; that will take him some days.

We went to Bear Hill & had a fine outlook. Descending E. got sight of some labourers in the field below. Look at them, he said, those four! for daemoniacs scratching in their cell of pain! Live for the hour. Just as much as any man has done, or laid up, in any way, unfits him for conversation. He has done something, makes him good for boys, but spoils him for the hour. That's the good of Thoreau, that he puts his whole sublunary stock into the last quarter of an hour; carries his whole stock under his arm.

At home, I found H.T. himself who complained of [A.H.] Clough [a poet] or somebody that he or they recited to every one at table the paragraph just read by him & then by them in the latest newspaper & studiously avoided every thing private. I should think he was complaining of one H.D.T.

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



1852-1853

1852-1853



January 1, Saturday, 1853: Prohibition went into effect in New Brunswick but would soon be repealed.

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

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

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

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



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

BLACK VOMIT
YELLOW FEVER

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



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

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

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

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

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


After talking with uncle Charles the other night about the worthies of this country Webster & the rest as usual considering who were geniuses & who not – I showed him up to bed & when I had got into bed myself I heard his chamber door opened – after 11 'oclock – and he called out in an earnest stenterian voice loud enough to wake the whole house— “Henry! Was John Quincy Adams a genius”?

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– No, I think not” was my reply– Well I did n’t think he was answered he.



 January 2, Sunday, 1853: A moderate earthquake was experienced in [San Francisco](#).

A US Land Commission began hearings in [San Francisco](#) to decide on the validity of claims of those holding, or attempting to hold, land under the old “Spanish grants.”

[Henry Thoreau](#) was written to by [Horace Greeley](#) in [New-York](#).

To: HDT
From: Horace Greeley
Date: 1/2/53

*New York,
 [J]an. 2, 1853.
 Friend Thoreau,
 I have yours of
 the 29th, and credit you
 \$20[.] Pay me when and in
 such sums as may be conve-
 nient.
 I am sorry you and
 Curtis cannot agree so
 as to have your whole Ms.
 printed. It will be worth
 nothing elsewhere after
 having partly appeared in*



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Putnam. I think it is a mistake to conceal the authorship of the several articles, making them all (so to speak) Editorial; [] but if that is done, don't you see that the el[i]mination of very flagrant here-sies (like your defiant Pantheism) becomes a necessity?-- If you had ~~refused~~ withdrawn ^ your M[S]. on account of the abominable misp[r]ints in the first number, your ground would have been far more tenable.

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However, do what you will. Yours, Horace Greeley. (unwell) H. D. Thoreau, Esq.

[Thoreau](#) for the 5th time deployed in his journal a weather term that had been originated by [Luke Howard](#): "A clear day – a pure sky with **cirrho** ..."

[Ellery Channing](#) wrote in his journal "Again walked this morning to see the coats of ice ... Fire on cliffs of fat pine."



January 2nd: 9 Am Down RR to Cliffs.

A clear day – a pure sky with cirrho In this clear air & bright sunlight the ice-covered trees have a new beauty. Especially the birches along under the edge of Warren's wood on each side of the railroad – bent quite to the ground in every kind of curve. At a distance as you are approaching them





end-wise they look like white tents of Indians under the edge of the wood. The birch is thus remarkable perhaps because from the feathery form of the tree whose numerous small branches sustain so great a weight bending it to the ground – and moreover because from the color of the bark the core is less observable. The oaks not only are less pliant in the trunk but have fewer & stiffer twigs & branches. The birches droop over in all directions like ostrich feathers. Most wood paths are impassible now to a carriage almost to a foot traveller from the number of saplings & boughs bent over even to the ground in them. Both sides of the deep cut now shine in the sun as if silver plated – & the fine spray of a myriad brushes on the edge of the bank – sparkle like like silver. The telegraph wire is coated to ten times its size – & looks like a slight fence scalloping along at a distance. Is

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merged in nature. When we climb the bank at Stows wood lot and come upon the piles of freshly split white pine wood – (for he is ruthlessly laying it waste) the transparent ice like a thick varnish beautifully exhibits the color of the clear tender yellowish wood – pumpkin-pine? – and its grain and we pick our way over a bed of pine boughs & twigs a foot or two deep covering the ground, each twig & needle thickly coated with ice – into one vast gelid mass – which our feet crunch as if as if we were walking through the laboratory of some confectioner to the gods. The invigorating scent of the recently cut pines refreshes us – if that is any atonement for this devastation. The beauty of the oak tops all silvered o'er. Especially now do I notice the hips – barberries & winter berries – for their red.

The red or purplish catkins of the alders are interesting as a winter-fruit. & also of the birch. But few birds about, apparently their granaries are locked up in ice – with which the grasses & buds are coated.

Even far in the horizon the pine tops are turned to firs or spruce by the weight of the ice bending them down – so that they look like a spruce swamp. No two trees wear the ice alike. The short plumes & needles of the spruce make a very pretty & peculiar figure. I see some oaks in the distance which by their branches being curved or arched downward & massed are turned into perfect elms, which suggests that that is the peculiarity of the elm – Few if any other trees are this wisp-like – the branches gracefully drooping. I mean some slender red & white oaks which have recently been left in a clearing – Just apply a weight to the ends of the boughs which will cause them to droop on all sides – & to each particular twig which will mass them together & you have perfect elms. Seen at the right angle each ice incrustated stubble shines like a prism with some color of the rainbow – intense blue or violet & red. The smooth field clad the other day with a low wiry grass – is now converted into rough-stubble land – where you walk with crunching feet. It is remarkable that the trees ever recover from this burden which bends them to the ground. I should like to weigh a limb of this pitch-pine. The character of the tree is changed. I have now passed the bass and am approaching the cliffs. The forms & variety of the ice are particularly rich here – there are so many low bushes & weeds before me as I ascend toward the sun – especially very small white pines almost merged in the ice-incrustated ground. All objects – even the apple trees, & rails are to the eye polished silver. It is a perfect land of faery. As if the world were a great frosted cake with its ornaments – The boughs gleam like silver candlesticks. [Le Jeune](#) describes the same in Canada in 1636 as “nos grands bois ne paroissent qu'une forest de cristal.” The silvery ice stands out an inch by 3/4 an inch in width on the N side of every twig of these apple trees – with rich irregularities of its own in its edge. When I stoop and examine some fat icy stubbly in my path, I find for all core a ridiculous wiry russet thread scarce visible not a hundredth part its size, which breaks with the ice under my feet, yet where this has a minute stub of a branch only a particle of an inch in length – there is a corresponding clumsy icy protuberance on the surface 1/8 of an inch off. Nature works with such luxuriance & fury that she follows the least hint. And on the twigs of bushes for each bud there is a corresponding icy swelling. The bells are particularly sweet this morning. I hear more methinks than ever before. How much more religion in their sound, than they ever call men together to – men obey their call & go to the stove-warmed church – though God exhibits himself to the walker in a frosted bush today as much as in a burning one to Moses of old. We build a fire on the cliffs. When kicking to pieces a pine stump for the fat knots which alone would burn in this icy day – at the risk of spoiling my boots having looked in vain for a stone I thought how convenient would be and Indian stone axe to batter it with. The bark of white birch though covered with ice burned well. We soon had a rousing fire of fat pine on a shelf of rock from which we overlooked the icy landscape. The sun too was melting the ice on the rocks & the water was bubbling & pulsing downward – in dark bubbles – exactly like pollywogs. What a good word is flame expressing the form & soul of fire – lambent with forked tongue – We lit a fire to see it rather than to feel it, it is so rare a sight these days. To have our eyes ache once more with smoke What a peculiar perhaps indescrivable color has this flame – a reddish or lurid yellow – not so splendid or full of light as of life & heat. These fat roots made much flame and a very black smoke commencing where the flame left off which cast fine flickering shadows on the rocks – There was some bluish white smoke from the rotten part of the wood – Then there was the fine white ashes which farmer's wives sometimes use for pearlash. Fire is the most tolerable 3d party. I hear the wiry phoebe note of the chickadee [**Black-capped Chickadee**  **Parus atricapillus**] as if the spring were coming in. Brown thinks my ruby-wren may be the lesser red pole linnet .

Walden begins to freeze in the coves or shallower water on the N side where it was slightly skimmed



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over several weeks ago



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

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

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

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

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

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

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



January 3d: Down RR to Lincoln Bridge.


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



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

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

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

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

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



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 January 4, Tuesday, 1853: [Solomon Northup](#) regained his freedom.

A schooner of the United Kingdom, the *Effort*, was driven ashore at Holme's Hole on the island of [Martha's Vineyard](#).

The [Daily Dispatch](#) of Richmond, Virginia railed against "Negrophilite Dutchesses":

We commence, to-day, the publication of a powerful leader from the [Boston Post](#), designed as a reply to the impertinent resolution and address of these aristocratic dames, to the ladies of America. It is the best and most thoroughly comprehensive we have yet seen, embracing the whole subject, and literally sweeping the ground clear of everything like a structure of argument that had been raised upon it. The very class to which these ladies belong inflicts more suffering upon the human race, than all the rest of the world put together.

"Man's inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn."

Never was the truth of these lines more amply exemplified, than it was in the case of the Duke of Sutherland, the husband of this very duchess who has so kindly volunteered to teach the women of America their duty. According to the statement made in the article under consideration, he at one time turned off the Stafford estates more than twenty thousand human beings, and filled their places with a few hundred. Who can imagine the suffering, the privation, the deaths that this conduct, all strictly justified by law, occasioned? We do not learn that this duchess interfered in a single instance, to avert the execution of this horrible mandate, or alleviate the misery of a single one of those victims, the sweat of whose brow supported the splendor from the midst of which she speaks to America.

It is remarked by the [Washington Republic](#) as something extraordinary, that the English press in general, the influential portion of it at least, has taken decided ground against "Uncle Tomitude" in all its shapes, phases and degrees. Especially has that ground been taken by the [London Times](#), and by the [Army Despatch](#), a paper supposed to represent the sentiments of the Army and Navy of Great Britain. That paper reprobates the extravagancies into which this wild spirit is hurrying the whole nation, and confidently predicts that it can lead to no other result than war. - The extreme folly of engaging in a way with this country, which he represents as the best Ally that England could possibly have, and the almost certainty that it would lead to hostilities with her dangerous and enterprising neighbor, are insisted upon with a warmth perfectly justifiable in the organ of those branches of the service which, being bound to do all the *fighting*, wish to get on the right side before they fight at all. That the continual irritation which is excited and kept up by the press is untrammelled, cannot be doubted. It sows the seeds of hatred broadcast through the land, and cultivates them so effectually, that what was at first only the opinion of an editor, becomes, in the course of time, a national sentiment. While the popular mind is in this

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combustible state, the slightest spark will kindle a flame, which the wisdom of the government may find it impossible to extinguish. The great question for the English people, not the government, for the evil is beyond its reach, is, the gratification of a propensity to malign our neighbors worth the hostility of one of the most powerful nations on earth, that nation being, at present, our best customer and largest debtor, besides holding in her hands the very staff upon which an enormous proportion of us leans for existence? It may be very agreeable to John Bull to see our manners libelled at the Adelphi Theatre, or in the columns of abolition newspapers. – The sound of the loud huzzas when the negro of the drama escapes into Canada, may be very refreshing to his ears. He may indulge his taste for discovering horrible crimes in America, by inspecting all the abolition in print-shops, that sell pictures of negroes in chains, or under the lash. But will this give his millions of operatives their daily bread, when the cotton mills shall have been stopped for want of the raw material, the supply having been cut off by a war? Will "Uncle Tom" satisfy the cravings of hunger, or buy clothes, and covering for the naked and destitute? Can they depend on these aristocratic ladies for a crumb of bread, or a rag of clothing? This is the view which the organ of the British Army and Navy seems to have taken of the subject, and it well becomes the gallant and enlightened officers whom it represents. They have seen war, and they know what it is. – They are not afraid of the danger which it may bring to themselves. But they feel no inclination to go to war with the only free country in the world, their own excepted, and above all they are opposed to fighting in a cause repugnant to their sense of right. If such is the general sentiment among them, as we are led to infer from the tone of their organ, we honor them for it. Removed, as they are, from the influences that are tending to produce this result, they see it in the distance with perfect distinctness. It is vain to say that the idle vamping of the newspapers cannot produce such a momentous result. We know better. It has produced it before, and it will produce it again. And will it not be a hard case that two great nations shall be goaded into shedding each other's blood by such causes?



January 4th 53: To what I will call Yellow Birch Swamp E [Hubbard](#)'s in N part of town. Still ice is left on the trees—but today is a windy & blustering day. The quantity of ice on the birches being reduced they are still more wand or faerylike Tall ones with no limbs for half their height are gracefully bent over & are now swaying from side to side in the wind exactly like waving ostrich plumes—as delicate as the spray on frosted windows. The color of these ice-clad trees at a distance is not white; but rather slightly greyish or hoary which the better merges them in the landscape.

This is the 4th day of the ice The landscape is white not only from the ice on the ground & trees but from the snow which fell yesterday though it is not an inch deep.

In respect to snow the winter appears to be just beginning. I must call that Swamp of E Hubbards W of the Hunt Pasture—Yellow Birch Swamp. There are more of those trees than anywhere else in the town that I know. How pleasing to stand beside a new or rare tree. & few are so handsome as this. Singularly allied to the black birch in its sweet checkerberry scent & its form & to the canoe birch in its peeling or fringed & tasselled bark. The top is brush-like as the black birch. The bark an exquisite fine or delicate gold color—curled off partly from the trunk with vertical clear or smooth spaces as if a plane had been passed up the tree. The sight of these trees affects me more than


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California gold. I measured one 5 & 2/12 feet in circ. at 6 feet from the ground. We have the silver & the golden birch. This is like a fair flaxen haired sister of the dark complexioned black birch—with golden ringlets— How lustily it takes hold of the swampy soil & braces itself. And here flows a dark cherry wood or wine colored brook over the iron red sands in the sombre swamp. swampy wine In an undress this tree. Ah, time will come when these will be all gone. Among the primitive trees. What sort of dryiads haunt these. Blond Nymphs. Near by the great pasture oaks with horizontal boughs— At Pratts—the stupendous boughy branching elm—like vast thunder-bolts stereotyped upon the sky. Heaven defying—sending back dark vegetable bolts—as if flowing back in the channel of the lightning The white oaks have a few leaves about the crown of the trunk in the lowest part of the tree like a tree within a tree. The tree is thus less wracked by the wind & ice. In the twilight I went through the swamp—and the Yellow birches sent forth a dull yellow gleam which each time made my heart beat faster— Occasionally you come to a dead & leaning white birch—beset with large fungi like ears or little shelves—with a rounded edge—above. I walked with the Yellow birch. The prinosis is green within.

If there were Druids whose temple were the oak groves—my temple is the swamp.

Sometimes I was in doubt about a birch whose vest was buttoned smooth & dark—till I came nearer & saw the yellow gleaming through as where a button was off. The animals do not use fire—man does. At first there was a pile of cold fat pine roots on the icy rock— A match was rubbed—fire elicited and now this pine is the most emphatic & significant fact hereabouts— Fire slumbers never far off. and the friction of a match can awaken it.

 January 5, Wednesday, 1853: The news from California was that all rivers and creeks were running at the very highest experienced since 1848 and could not be crossed, with road travel virtually impossible from the mountains into Sacramento, there having been only a few clear days since November.

From WALDEN, we know that Walden Pond froze:

WALDEN: In 1845 Walden froze entirely over for the first time on the night of the 22nd of December, Flint's and other shallower ponds and the river having been frozen ten days or more; in '46, the 16th; in '49, about the 31st; and in '50, about the 27th of December; in '52, the 5th of January; in '53, the 31st of December. The snow had already covered the ground since the 25th of November, and surrounded me suddenly with the scenery of winter. I withdrew yet farther into my shell, and endeavored to keep a bright fire both within my house and within my breast. My employment out of doors now was to collect the dead wood in the forest, bringing it in my hands or on my shoulders, or sometimes trailing a dead pine tree under each arm to my shed. An old forest fence which had seen its best days was a great haul for me. I sacrificed it to Vulcan, for it was past serving the god Terminus.

FLINT'S POND



Winter 1845-1846	December	22
Winter 1846-1847	December	16
Winter 1847-1848		
Winter 1848-1849		

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Winter 1849-1850	December	31
Winter 1850-1851	December	27
Winter 1851-1852		
Winter 1852-1853	January	5
Winter 1853-1854	December	31
Winter 1854-1855		
Winter 1855-1856		

TIMELINE OF WALDEN



January 5. To Kibbe Place swamp.

I see where probably a red squirrel has scratched along over the snow, and in one place a very perfect & delicate print of his feet. His 5 toes in separate sharp triangles distinctly raying off— or often only 4 visible.



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In one place I find a beaten track from a hole in the **ground** to [a] walnut a rod distant up which they have gone for nuts, which still hang on it. The whole print of the foot &c is about 1 3/4 inches long a part of the leg being impressed.



2 of the tracks when they are running apparently the 2 foremost are wider apart and perhaps with one pair they often make 5 marks with the other 4.



Where there is a deep furrow in a chestnut tree between two swelling muscles, in 2 instances the squirrels knowing it to be hollow have gnawed a hole enlarging the crack between 2 cheeks and so made themselves a retreat. In one instance they have commenced to gnaw between the cheeks though no cavity appears, but I have no doubt the tree is hollow.

A large yellow birch or black—has the main stem very short & branches very long nearly from one centre—



There was a fine rosy sky in the west after sunset. And later an amber colored horizon in which a single tree top showed finely

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January 6, Thursday, 1853: To the north, in the State of New Hampshire, the honored family of President-elect Franklin Pierce –husband, wife, and 10-year-old Benjy– were boarding the train for their move from Andover to Washington DC. (Life was going to be pretty good at the White House, since in that residence, beginning in this year, to get hot water in the first family’s 2d floor bath room, all one needed to do was turn a tap — the mansion had just been plumbed for, of all modern luxuries, **hot running water**. Also, the White House orangery was being transformed into a greenhouse.) A few minutes out of the Andover station the train plunged down an embankment and Benjamin was killed.⁴⁴ There is no notice of what became of the boy’s new pencil.

MORE



Juan Bautista Ceballos replaced Mariano Arista Luna as interim President of Mexico.

44. Was the train pulled by one of their relative Abbott Lawrence’s locomotives constructed in the mill shops at Manchester, New Hampshire, which Thoreau visited after January 1849?



After January 1849: Manchester, Warrington & Liverpool



Cylinder	15 inch diam.	£ 1.950-0-0	\$9.750
	16	2.113-10	10.566
	18	2.500	12.500

An engine went through a fourteen inch wall on starting.
 Most of their locomotives can draw 600 tons 12 miles an hour. with coke & water in weigh 50 tons apiece.
 Inspected after every journey by several persons in succession.
 A luggage truck lasts about 12 years.
 As soon as the luggage train is unloaded the wheels “are gauged to see that there are no bent axles, and that none of the ‘journals’ or working ends of the axles have been heated, for they sometimes get red-hot; squeezing wheels on to their axles, or wrenching them off.”
 The land & receive letters while going 40 miles an hour in the flying post office –with a landing net made of iron which catches them up.
 The northern division of the L & N W R. with its branches is 360 miles At their work shop in Crewe there are for this division 220 engines –100 being at work every day– They have “here turned out a new engine & tender on every monday morning” for the last year 1848
 Keep a record of casualties which is examined every fortnight by a special committee of directors.
 “A boiler of copper inside & iron outside.”
 Crewe is a rail way town of 8000 inhabitants
 Engine composed of 5416 pieces.
 Robert Stephenson said “A locomotive engine must be put together as carefully as a watch.”
 The total number of carriages maintained at Crewe is 670 –number of work men 260
 “half & inch thick of hair felt” then deal then tarpaulin, secured by iron hoops.
 The panels of all the carriages even luggage vans “invariably made of mahogany; ‘the bottom sides’ of English oak; the rest of the framing of ash. The break blocks are made of willow, and usually last about ten weeks work.”
 They employ in all over 10,000 persons

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

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Injured, and overcome with grief, Mrs. Pierce would return home and sit out her husband's presidency.

[HISTORY OF RR](#)[TIMELINE OF ACCIDENTS](#)

She would meet with the Spiritualist [Maggie Fox](#) in an attempt to summon up the spirit of her dead son.

[SPIRITUALISM](#)

[Henri-Frédéric Amiel](#), who would be referred to as the “Swiss [Thoreau](#),” wrote in his *JOURNAL INTIME*: “Self-government with tenderness — here you have the condition of all authority over children. The child must discover in us no passion, no weakness of which he can make use; he must feel himself powerless to deceive or to trouble us; then he will recognize in us his natural superiors, and he will attach a special value to our kindness, because he will respect it. The child who can rouse in us anger, or impatience, or excitement, feels himself stronger than we, and a child only respects strength. The mother should consider herself as her child's sun, a changeless and ever radiant world, whither the small restless creature, quick at tears and laughter, light, fickle, passionate, full of storms, may come for fresh stores of light, warmth, and electricity, of calm and of courage. The mother represents goodness, providence, law; that is to say, the divinity, under that form of it

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which is accessible to childhood. If she is herself passionate, she will inculcate on her child a capricious and despotic God, or even several discordant gods. The religion of a child depends on what its mother and its father are, and not on what they say. The inner and unconscious ideal which guides their life is precisely what touches the child; their words, their remonstrances, their punishments, their bursts of feeling even, are for him merely thunder and comedy; what they worship, this it is which his instinct divines and reflects.

The child sees what we are, behind what we wish to be. Hence his reputation as a physiognomist. He extends his power as far as he can with each of us; he is the most subtle of diplomatists. Unconsciously he passes under the influence of each person about him, and reflects it while transforming it after his own nature. He is a magnifying mirror. This is why the first principle of education is: train yourself; and the first rule to follow if you wish to possess yourself of a child's will is: master your own."



January 6th: Walden froze over apparently last night. It is but little more than an inch thick— & 2 or 3 square rods by [Hubbard's](#) shore are still open. A dark transparent ice— It would not have frozen entirely over as it were in one night or may be a little more and yet have been so thin next the shore as well as in the middle, if it had not been so late in the winter, & so ready to freeze. It is a dark transparent ice. But will not bear me without much cracking. As I walked along the edge I started out 3 little pickerel no bigger than my finger from **close** to the shore which went wiggling into deeper water like bloodsuckers or pollywogs. When I lie down on it and examine it closely, I find that the greater part of the bubbles which I had thought were within its own substance are against its under surface, and that they are continually rising up from the bottom. perfect spheres apparently & very beautiful & clear in which I see my face through this thin ice (perhaps 1 & 1/8 inch) from 1/80 of an inch in diameter or a mere point up to 1/8 of an inch. There are 30 or 40 of these at least to every square inch— These probably when heated by the sun make it crack & whoop— There are also within the substance of the ice oblong perpendicular bubbles 1/2 inch long more or less by about 1/30 of an inch & these are commonly widest at the bottom? —or oftener separate minute spherical bubbles of equal or smaller diameter one directly above another like a string of beads — perhaps the first stage of the former— But these internal bubbles are not nearly so numerous as those in the water beneath. It may be 24 hours since the ice began to form decidedly.

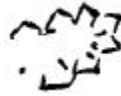
I see on the sandy bottom a few inches beneath — the white cases of Cadis worms made of the white quartz sand or pebbles— And the bottom is very much creased or furrowed where some creature has travelled about and doubled on its tracks — perhaps the cadis worm, for I find one or two of the same



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in the furrows – though the latter are deep & broad for them to make.
This morning the weeds & twigs & fences were covered with what I may call a leaf frost – the leaves 1/3 of an inch long shaped somewhat like this



with triangular points but very thin. Another morning there will be no frost. I forgot to say yesterday that I picked up 4 pignuts by the squirrel's hole from which he had picked the meat – having gnawed a hole about half the diameter of the nut in width on each side. After I got home I observed that in each case the holes were on the sides of the nut & not on the edges – and I cut into a couple with my knife in order to see certainly which was the best way to get at the meat. Cutting into the edge I came upon the thick partition which runs the whole length of the nut, and then came upon the edges of the meats & finally was obliged to cut away a good part of the nut on both edges before I could extract the meat because it was held by the **neck** in the middle– But when I cut holes on the sides not only the partitions I met with were thin & partial but I struck the meats broad side & extracted them with less trouble. It may be that it is most convenient for the squirrel to hold the nut thus, but I think there is a deeper reason than that. I observe that out of six whole pig nuts which I picked from a tree 3 are so cracked transversely to the division of the meat that I can easily pry them open with my knife. They hang on as food for animals.



January 7, Friday, 1853: [Henry C. Wright](#) reported in [The Liberator](#) that a medium had informed him, in a seance at an Ohio farmhouse, that his brother Chester had died of apoplexy on a certain date in a certain town.

SPIRITUALISM

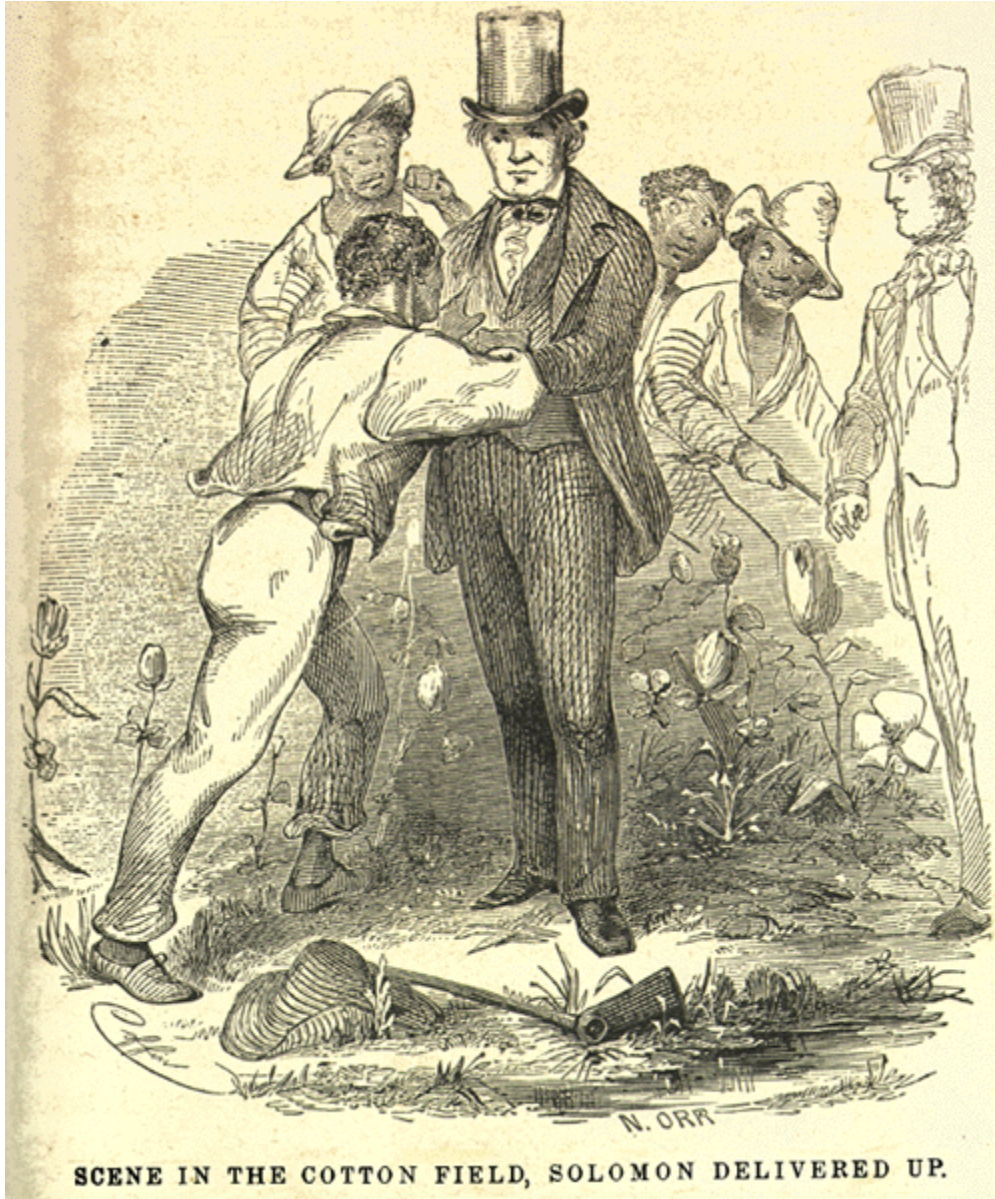
On this day in [New Orleans](#), the rescuer of [Solomon Northup](#) was obtaining a pass by which the man could travel back into his Northern freedom:

*State of Louisiana - City of New-Orleans:
Recorder's Office, Second District.
To all to whom these presents shall come: -
This is to certify that Henry B. Northup, Esquire, of the county of Washington, New-York, has produced before me due evidence of the freedom of Solomon, a mulatto man, aged about forty-two years, five feet, seven inches and six lines, woolly hair, and chestnut eyes, who is a native born of the State of New-York. That the said Northup, being about bringing the said Solomon to his native place, through the southern routes, the civil authorities are requested to let the aforesaid colored man Solomon pass unmolested, he demeaning well and properly.
Given under my hand and the seal of the city of New-Orleans this 7th January, 1853.
[L.S.] "TH. GENOIS, Recorder.*

REVERSE UNDERGROUND RR

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January 7, Friday, 1853: [Henry Thoreau](#) for the 6th time deployed in his journal a weather term that had been originated by [Luke Howard](#): “This is one of those pleasant winter mornings—when you find the river firmly frozen in the night, but still the air is serene & the sun feels gratefully warm—an hour after sunrise – though so fair a healthy whitish vapor fills the lower stratum of the air concealing the mts – the smokes go up from the village you hear the cocks with immortal vigor & the children shout on their way to school – & the sound made by the RR. men hammering a rail is uncommonly musical. This promises a perfect winter day. In the heavens, except the altitude of the sun, you have as it were the conditions of summer. Perfect serenity & clarity—& sonorousness in the earth— All nature is but braced by the cold. It gives tension to both body & mind. About 10 minutes before 10 Am I heard a very loud sound & felt a violent jar which made the house rock and the loose articles on my table rattle – which I knew must be either a powdermill blown up or an earth quake— Not

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knowing but another & more violent might take place I immediately ran down stairs, but I saw from the door a vast expanding column of whitish smoke rising in the west directly over the Powder mills 4 miles distant. It was unfolding its volumes above which made it widest there.... In 3 or 4 minutes it had all risen & spread it self into a lengthening somewhat copper colored cloud parallel with the horizon from N to S—and in about 10 minutes after the explosion it passed over my head being several miles long from north to south & distinctly dark & smoky toward the north not nearly so high as the few **cirrhi** in the sky.”

At 9:50AM 3 workmen were apparently in the kernel mill of the Acton gunpowder works, near Concord, turning a roller with a chisel, and the building blew up. There was a secondary explosion 3 seconds later in one of the mixing houses, apparently unoccupied at the time. “Are there not two powers?”⁴⁵

TIMELINE OF ACCIDENTS

POWDER MILL



Jan 7th 53: To Nawshawtuct–

This is one of those pleasant winter mornings—when you find the river firmly frozen in the night, but still the air is serene & the sun feels gratefully warm—an hour after sunrise—though so fair a healthy whitish vapor fills the lower stratum of the air concealing the **mts**—the smokes go up from the village you hear the cocks with immortal vigor & the children shout on their way to school— & the sound made by the RR. men hammering a rail is uncommonly musical. This promises a perfect winter day. In the heavens, except the altitude of the sun, you have as it were the conditions of summer. Perfect serenity & clarity—& sonorousness in the earth— All nature is but braced by the cold. It gives tension to both body & mind.

Still the snow is strewn with the seeds of the birch—the small winged seeds or samarae & the larger scales or bracts shaped like a bird in flight a hawk or dove—the least touch or jar shakes them off— & it is difficult to bring the female catkins home in your pocket. They cover the snow like coarse bran.

On breaking the male catkins I am surprised to see the yellow anthers so distinct promising spring. I did not suspect that there was so true a promise or prophesy of spring. These are frozen in december or earlier—the anthers of spring—filled with their fertilizing dust.

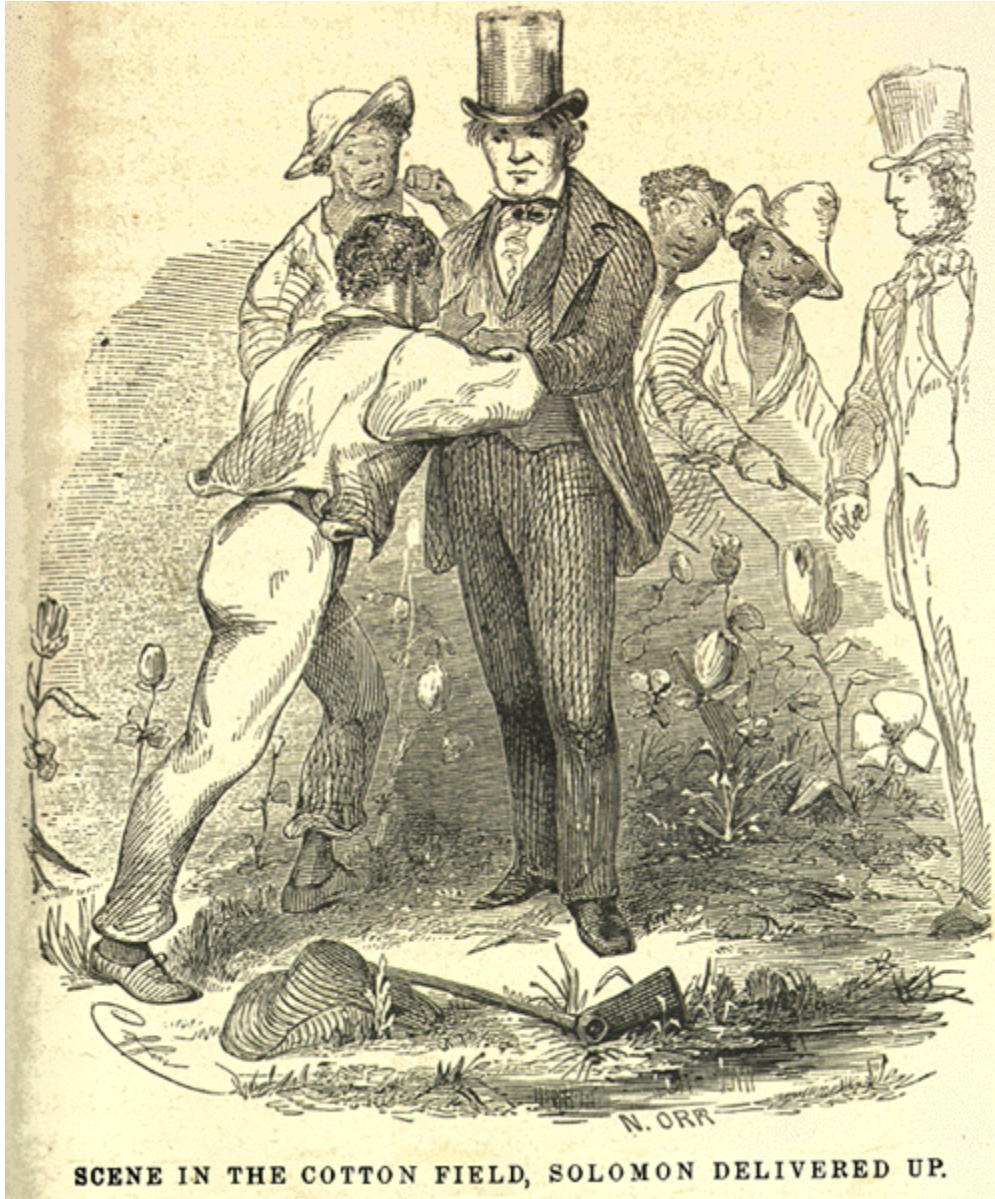
About 10 minutes before 10 Am I heard a very loud sound & felt a violent jar which made the house rock and the loose articles on my table rattle—which I knew must be either a powdermill blown up or an earth quake— Not knowing but another & more violent might take place I immediately ran down stairs, but I saw from the door a vast expanding column of whitish smoke rising in the west directly over the Powder mills 4 miles distant. It was unfolding its volumes above which made it widest there.

In 3 or 4 minutes it had all risen & spread it self into a lengthening somewhat copper colored cloud parallel with the horizon from N to S—and in about 10 minutes after the explosion it passed over my head being several miles long from north to south & distinctly dark & smoky toward the north not nearly so high as the few **cirrhi** in the sky. I jumped into a man’s wagon & road toward the mills. In a few minutes more I saw behind me far in the east a faint salmon colored cloud carrying the news of the explosion to the sea—& perchance over head of the absent proprietor. Arrived probably before

45. Randall Conrad’s “‘I Heard a Very Loud Sound’ Thoreau Processes the Spectacle of Sudden, Violent Death.” (ATQ, June 2005, Volume 19 Issue 2, pages 81-94) would examine Thoreau’s 1853 analysis of a powder-mill explosion: “Thoreau was in fact a professional when it came to the powder-milling industry, now that he had become manager of the graphite-grinding that was the lifeline of the family business. Apart from the need for safety precautions, milling gunpowder is akin to milling graphite. Professionalism notwithstanding, Thoreau’s journal for January 7 presents internal clues that invite a more complex interpretation of its narrative voice. Consider first the immediate context of this passage — the whole journal entry for this date. Thoreau’s account of the disaster occurs, like the explosion itself, as a disruption of broader and more peaceful reflections on nature and the seasons’ cycle which comprise the overall entry for the day. The disruption dispels a morning mood of oneness and rightness induced by the promise of a perfect winter day. Visiting Nawshawtuct Hill very early that morning, Thoreau had been cheered by the serene air and sky, and by the sounds of everyday activities in the village below. Taking a closer look at vocabulary, we read that pieces of timber are strewn over the hills and meadows, as if sown. The simile as if sown continues, faintly, Thoreau’s preceding imagery of birch seeds scattered on the ground: even upon this field of death, a theme of regeneration in spite of winter persists. (And the snow is for the most part melted around.) ...”

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half past 10. There were perhaps 30 or 40 wagons there. The Kernel mill had blown up first & killed 3 men who were in it said to be turning a roller with a chisel—in 3 seconds after one of the mixing houses exploded. The Kernel house was swept away & fragments mostly but a foot or 2 in length were strewn over the hills & meadows as if sown for 30 rods—and the slight snow then on the ground was for the most part melted around. The mixing house about 10 rods W was not so completely dispersed for most of the machinery remained a total wreck— The press house about 12 rods east had 2/3 its boards off. & a mixing house next westward from that which blew up had lost some boards on the E side. The boards fell out—(ie of those buildings which did not blow up) the air within apparently rushing out to fill up the vacuum occasioned by the explosions—and so the powder being bared to the fiery particles in the air another building explodes. The powder on the floor of the bared Press house was 6 inches deep in some places—and the crowd were thoughtlessly going into it. A few windows were broken 30 or 40 rods off. Timber 6 inches square & 18 feet long was thrown over a hill 80 feet high at least—a dozen rods—30 rods was about the limit of fragments— The Drying house

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in which was a fire was perhaps 25 rods dist. & escaped. Every timber & piece of wood which was blown up was as black as if it had been dyed except where it had broken on falling other breakages were completely concealed by the color— I mistook what had been iron hoops in the woods—for leather straps. Some of the clothes of the men were in the tops of the trees where undoubtedly their bodies had been & left them. The bodies were naked & black— Some limbs & bowels here & there & a head at a distance from its trunk. The feet were bare—the hair singed to a crisp. I smelt the powder half a mile before I got there. Put the diff. buildings 30 rods apart and then but one will blow up—at a time.

Brown thinks my red headed bird of the winter the lesser red-poll [Red-crown or linaria or Fringilla (or F.) linaria Common Redpoll ■ *Carduelis flammea*]. He has that Fall snow bird he thinks the young of the Purple Finch [**Purple Finch** ■ *Carpodacus purpureus* (American Linnet)]. What is my Pine knot of the sea Knot or Ash colored Sandpiper [**Spotted Sandpiper** ■ *Actitis macularia*]? or Pharoep? Brown's Pine knot looks too large & clumsy. He shows me the Spirit Duck [Bufflehead ■ *Bucephala albeola* (Spirit Duck or Buffle-head Duck or Butterball or Spirit Dipper or Woolhead)] of the Indians—of which Peabody says the Indians call it by a word meaning spirit “because of the wonderful quickness with which it disappears at the twang of a bow.”

I perceive? the increased length of the day on returning from my afternoon walk. Can it be? The sun sets only about 5 minutes later & the day is about 10 minutes longer.

Le Jeune thus describes the trees covered with ice in Canada in the winter of '35-&6 — He **appears** to be at Quebec. “There was a great wind from the NE accompanied by a rain which lasted a very long time, and by a cold great enough to freeze these waters as soon as they touched anything, so that as this rain fell on the trees from the summit to the foot, there was formed (il s'y fit) a crystal of ice which enchased both trunk (tige) & branches, so that for a very long time all our great woods appeared only a forest of crystal; for in truth the ice which clothed them universally par tout every where was thicker than a testoon (epaisse de plus d'un teston); in a word all the bushes & all that was above the snow was environed on all sides and enchased in ice: the Savages have told me that it does not happen often so. “(de meme).”



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“I HEARD A VERY LOUD SOUND”:

**THOREAU PROCESSES THE SPECTACLE
OF SUDDEN, VIOLENT DEATH.**

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Author: Conrad, Randall

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This essay originates in a presentation given at the 2002 convention of the American Literature Association, just nine months after the fall of the World Trade Center Towers. Thoreau Society panelists had been asked to consider how (or whether) the Transcendentalists' philosophy can help twenty-first-century citizens cope with a disaster of the magnitude of September 11, 2001. Seeking some equivalent in Thoreau's experience, I decided to examine the following journal passage for 7 January 1853, in which the thirty-five-year-old philosopher writes of viewing burnt, scattered human remains, the fresh result of a powdermill explosion.



About 10 minutes before 10 Am I heard a very loud sound & felt a violent jar which made the house rock and the loose articles on my table rattle — which I knew must be either a powdermill blown up or an earth quake — Not knowing but another & more violent might take place I immediately ran down stairs, but I saw from the door a vast expanding column of whitish smoke rising in the west directly over the Powder mills 4 miles distant. It was unfolding its volumes above which made it widest there. In 3 or 4 minutes it had all risen & spread it self into a lengthening somewhat copper colored cloud parallel with the horizon from N to S — and in about 10 minutes after the explosion it passed over my head being several miles long from north to south & distinctly dark & smoky toward the north not nearly so high as the few cirrhi in the sky. I jumped into a man's wagon & road [sic] toward the mills. In a few minutes more I saw behind me far in the east a faint salmon colored cloud carrying the news of the explosion to the sea — & perchance over [the] head of the absent proprietor. Arrived probably before half past 10. There were perhaps 30 or 40 wagons there. The Kernel mill had blown up first & killed 3 men who were in it said to be turning a roller with a chisel — in 3 seconds after one of the mixing houses exploded. The Kernel house was swept away & fragments mostly but a foot or 2 in length were strewn over the hills & meadows as if sown for 30 rods — & the slight snow then on the ground was for the most part melted around. The mixing house about 10 rods W was not so completely dispersed for most of the machinery remained a total [w]reck — The press house about 12 rods east had 2/3 [of] its boards off. & a mixing house next westward from that which blew up had lost some boards on the E side. The boards fell out — (ie of those buildings which did not blow up) the air within apparently rushing out to fill up the vacuum occasioned by the explosions — & so the powder being bared to the fiery particles in the air another building explodes, The powder on the floor of the bared Press house was 6 inches deep in some places — and the crowd were thoughtlessly going into it. A few windows were broken 30 or 40 rods off. Timber 6 inches square & 18 feet long was thrown over a hill 80 feet high at least — a dozen rods — 30 rods was about the limit of fragments — The Drying house in which was a fire was perhaps 25 rods dist. & escaped. Every timber & piece of wood which was blown up was as black as if it had been dyed except where it had broken on falling other breakages were completely concealed by the

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color — I mistook what had been iron hoops in the woods — for leather straps. Some of the clothes of the men were in the tops of the trees where undof[u]btedly their bodies had been & lefte them. The bodies were naked & black — Some limbs & bowels here & and there & a head at a distance from its trunk. The feet were bare — the hair singed to a crisp. I smelt the powder half a mile before I got there. Put the diff. buildings 30 rods apart and then but one will blow up — at a time.⁴⁶

Thoreau depicts the scene unsentimentally and apparently mean-mindedly. In a detached style highlighted with flashes of irony, he marshals observed details, some horrid, in order to deduce the sequential phases of the conflagration — and then, wasting no breath lamenting the tragedy, suggests a better design for future factories. To any reader with an animus against the hermit of Walden, these six hundred words can only confirm the stereotypical curmudgeon and misanthrope (Bridgeman xii). Any champion of Thoreau, on the other hand, will assume that the acid social satirist who wrote Walden's "Economy" chapter had to be aware of the irony in a gunpowder worker's death by explosion — the ultimate wage of "driving for Squire Make-a-Stir." Thus Laura Dassow Walls, in a rich discussion of chance and necessity in Thoreau's philosophy, stretches toward social consciousness by interpreting Thoreau's punch line ("Put the different buildings ...") as a criticism of the reification introduced into society by "the factory system" (250). Actually Thoreau's narrative does not primarily express either misanthropy or progressive social criticism. In this essay I examine its themes and imagery in relation to several related journal entries during 1853 as well as related lectures, essays, and correspondence by Thoreau around this time. I establish that the horrifying vision continued to haunt Thoreau's imagination for months, perturbing his dreams and waking meditations, and unsettling his vital sense of oneness with nature — a state which brought him to the brink of despair. Consciously or not, Thoreau set himself the project of "working through" (as we now say) this emotionally painful experience: he would mediate the intolerable horror through his writing, finally

46. J5:428-29 (bracketed interpolations are mine). The Assabet Manufacturing Company, situated along two miles of the Assabet River forming part of the Acton and Concord town line, produced gunpowder through various changes of name and ownership until 1940. See Jane G. Austin for a highly readable tour of this company's mills, virtually unchanged seventeen years after Thoreau's experience (apart from introducing steam-heat instead of fire). The "absent proprietor" was Nathan Pratt, who founded the company in 1835 and owned it until 1864.

The reason Thoreau can narrow the possibilities immediately upon first hearing the noise is that explosions at the Assabet mill happened at least every several years. "Explosions that shattered a few window panes as far away as Acton Centre while not common were by no means unheard of. Anyone who had lived in the vicinity for twenty five years had almost certainly experienced two or three" (Phalen 140).

Some acquaintance with the industrial process itself may be helpful here. Kernelling, also called corning, graining and granulating, consists of feeding the processed powder into sets of rollers to achieve a given fineness of grain. If the three mill-hands were "turning a roller with a chisel," the scrape of iron against iron ignited the fatal spark.

Powdermill structures were built on solid foundations and frames, but their boarding and roof were intentionally light so that an explosion would blow them off easily. This, it was hoped, would minimize damage to the framework and machinery (Austin 535). As Thoreau deduces, four buildings exploded in this order: kernel house, one mixing house, press house, and another mixing house. In the manufacturing process, of course, the order is otherwise. The mixing houses were used first, followed by the press house, kernel mill, glazing house (not observed by Thoreau), and drying house (Conant 5-6). One rod being equal to 5.5 yards or somewhat greater than five meters, the debris was flung nearly one-tenth of a mile distant.



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employing the rich resources of his art to resolve the alarming philosophic contradictions he had discovered. Until recently, few scholars took notice of this journal entry, even though its traumatizing content fairly leaps off the page. Among the pioneer modern writers, only Richard Lebeaux (1984) discusses this episode as one of the stressors which, evincing the inevitable finality of death, seriously shook Thoreau's comforting vision of a unified, cyclical Nature during the winter of 1853. Two twenty-first-century interpreters, Michael West and Michael Sperber, apply aesthetic and psychoanalytic criteria, respectively. West, analyzing the richly symbolic "sand foliage" passage in Walden's "Spring" chapter, describes Thoreau's image of the divine Artist's laboratory as a "charnel house" in which body parts are "indiscriminately strewn about" and infers a strong influence of the 1853 powdermill explosion (464-65). West offers absorbing discussions of Walden's sand-bank passage in terms of Thoreau's glossology (185-89; cf. 196-200), his "homespun fecal cosmology," and ultimately his anticipation of death (450, 465). Sperber, writing from a psychiatrist's standpoint, presents Thoreau's experience of the fatal explosion as one of several triggers which, that year, coincided to catalyze the recurring depression he had experienced every January since his brother's sudden, traumatizing death in January 1842 (17).⁴⁷ Sperber argues persuasively that Thoreau's narrative voice in this journal entry is expressive of the "psychic numbing" that is a symptom of post-traumatic stress disorder, one facet of Thoreau's lifelong, complex depression.

The present essay considers the image-making in several interrelated pieces of Thoreau's writing not merely as biographical data – evidence of mental depression – but as cohesive fragments of an ongoing, self-healing therapeutic process which Thoreau undertook between January and November 1853. During these months, Thoreau realized that his very sanity was at risk, exerted his creative powers to recover stability, and in the end re-imagined himself as a seer in the presence of the divine.

Let us begin by accounting for the dispassionate tone Thoreau affects in his narrative, which alienates so many readers. A simple explanation, of course, is that Thoreau is merely expressing a certain professionalism. Only months before, the Boston surveyor and cartographer H.F. Walling had credited Thoreau with the title "Civ. Engr" (civil engineer) for the latter's contribution of his pond survey to a new, authoritative map of Concord Village (Stowell 11). Why should Thoreau not presume to propose, from an engineer's standpoint,

47. I showed an early version of this paper to Dr. Sperber in 2003 while assisting with research for his book. Reciprocally, this version is indebted to his key concept of Thoreau's "self-therapeutic successes" in discussing Thoreau's "processing" of emotional experience.



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a more efficient design idea for the powdermill campus? Thoreau was in fact a professional when it came to the powder-milling industry, now that he had become manager of the graphite-grinding that was the lifeline of the family business. Apart from the need for safety precautions, milling gunpowder is akin to milling graphite. For example, Thoreau's contemporary Addison G. Fay, initially a minister, easily made the transition from operating a graphite mill to part ownership of the very gunpowder mill under discussion here, only to perish when the mill exploded in 1873 (Conant 7). Among Thoreau's engineering innovations in his own field, he designed and built with his father a seven-foot-tall mill-extension in 1838 that allowed finer grades of pencil-lead. He increased the efficiency of a lead mill in Acton by replacing iron grinding balls with a stone in 1859 (Harding 56-57, 397, 409). (Did he have the accident of 1853 in mind?)

Professionalism notwithstanding, Thoreau's journal for 7 January presents internal clues that invite a more complex interpretation of its narrative voice. Consider first the immediate context of this passage – the whole journal entry for this date. Thoreau's account of the disaster occurs, like the explosion itself, as a disruption of broader and more peaceful reflections on nature and the seasons' cycle which comprise the overall entry for the day. The disruption dispels a morning mood of oneness and rightness induced by the promise of "a perfect winter day." Visiting Nawshawtuct Hill very early that morning, Thoreau had been cheered by the "serene" air and sky, and by the sounds of everyday activities in the village below. Examining birch seeds in the snow, he had just written: "I am surprised to see the yellow anthers so distinct, promising spring. I did not suspect that there was so sure a promise or prophecy of spring. These are frozen in December or earlier, – the anthers of spring, tilled with their fertilizing dust" (J5: 428). At exactly this point, Thoreau's warmly affecting vision of the season's immanent regeneration yields to the explosion narrative. At the end of it, Thoreau concludes the day's entry by returning to nature observation: he believes he detects the lengthening of daylight, another promise of the spring that will recur (J5: 429).

Taking a closer look at vocabulary, we read that pieces of timber are "strewn over the hills and meadows ... as if sown." The simile "as if sown" continues, faintly, Thoreau's preceding imagery of birch seeds scattered on the ground: even upon this field of death, a theme of regeneration in spite of winter persists. (And the snow is "for the most part melted around.") Coincidentally or not, the double meaning of some plant-derived vocabulary adds to the effect. The fatal blast was ignited in the "kernel" house; Thoreau finds "limbs" and a "trunk" among the body parts. It is therefore conceivable that Thoreau in composing this passage was



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by no means being callous but in fact was already stirred by emotion, indeed conflicting emotions. Thoreau's biographers agree that he was in a generally grim mood during this winter of 1853. Sensitive to the approach of midlife, Thoreau saw mortality everywhere, a state strongly reinforced by the spectacle at the mills. According to Lebeaux in *Thoreau's Seasons*, the cyclical vision of life that usually sustained Thoreau yielded, for a time, to "the dreaded prospects of life's finite linearity and uncontrollability and of personal annihilation" (174).

If Thoreau was having a mid-thirties crisis of this tenor, it is not hard to identify circumstances that would aggravate it. First of all, as noted, the January anniversary of John Thoreau, Jr.'s, horrific death in his brother's arms surely stimulated feelings of guilt, as Lebeaux suggests, along with a pronounced longing for forgiveness and redemption. Second, Thoreau's sustaining friendship with Ralph Waldo Emerson, shaky in recent years, was nearing its nadir. Thoreau would complain to his journal on 25 May 1853: "Talked or tried to talk with R.W.E. Lost my time — nay almost my identity — he assuming a false op-position where there was no difference of opinion — talked to the wind — told me what I knew & I lost my time trying to imagine myself somebody else to oppose him" (J6: 149, Thoreau's italics and hyphen.). Third, compounding the grief and sense of loss, January also brought the anniversary of little Waldo Emerson's demise. Sympathy over the child's sudden death from scarlet fever in 1842 had once brought Thoreau as close to his friend and mentor as they were now distant. The five-year-old's passing had prompted Thoreau to console Emerson with his most eloquent statement of the reason for contemplating death with indifference.



How plain that death is only the phenomenon of the individual or class. Nature does not recognize it, she finds her own again under new forms without loss. Yet death is beautiful when seen to be a law, and not an accident — It is as common as life. (To R. W. Emerson, 11 March 1842. Correspondence 63)

Thoreau of course does not mean to seem indifferent to the dead child individually. As Emerson well knew, Thoreau had "come to love the boy" while living in the Emerson household in 1841 (Harding 129). It is simply that Thoreau cannot summon the customary sympathy-card sentiments, the conventional language of what Emerson would call "habitual" grief.⁴⁸ Thoreau will not employ, nor would Emerson accept, a conventional rhetoric of mourning prescribed by the prevailing culture. Eleven years later, he is all the less likely to do so in recording the deaths of total strangers at the explosion

48. In contrast to "trivial or 'habitual' grief," Jennifer Gurley ("Goodness and Grief ...") considers whether genuine grief, for Emerson, is to be verbalized at all. How Emerson coped with Waldo's loss emotionally and philosophically — absent the traditional consolations of Christianity — is summarized by David Lytle (66-72).



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site. Thus we gain additional insight into Thoreau's narrative of 7 January: its very terseness may signal a deliberate refusal to mourn which is prompted by integrity rather than cynicism.

For comparison, the historical record furnishes a fortuitous and rich example of such a conventional rhetoric, lavished upon an identical event at the same powder mill at a time when several dangerous processes "usually carried on in separate buildings" had been grouped under one roof. On 16 November 1836 – the first year of the company's operation – three men were blown to pieces when more than half a ton of powder exploded. A fourth worker lingered for hours before succumbing to acute burns and fractures.

Like Thoreau, the unnamed writer for the weekly Concord Freeman witnesses a panorama of horror and writes it up with comparable realism: "his mangled limbs, his tattered flesh, and parts of his body, were found in a neighboring field, twenty or thirty rods distant, and on a hill at least fifty feet higher than the mill." Quite differently from Thoreau, the reporter goes on to solicit pity. "There the miserable fragments of humanity were scattered, and the pieces hanging like rags on the bushes and trees about showed how effectual was the work of destruction." The writer laments the deaths as untimely (the mill-hands were in their 20s and 30s) and strikes chords of quasi-tragic irony:



It was heart rending to behold these poor relics of man, so torn, so mangled, so burned, and blackened, and so suddenly changed from the beauty and vigor of confident manhood to the shattered form of loathe-some death.... the swift death of these four men, only showed how sooner than was expected the powder had effected its intended purpose of destruction. ("Powder Mill Explosion")

In an era when the local newspaper in America increasingly served to codify middle-class values and to model appropriate sentimental responses to events, the bare prose of Thoreau's journal entry raises the standard of non-conformism.

Fourth and finally, we must consider one more depressive factor in 1853, possibly the most serious of all, involving Thoreau's life as an author. At this time, Thoreau was one year into his last and deepest revision of the manuscript that would be the masterwork of his lifetime, *Walden*. Undoubtedly, this periodic creative exertion obliged Thoreau on the one hand to relive the disturbing doubts and uncertainties of his quest in the woods, while on the other hand feeling pressed to present his experiences positively for posterity. If Thoreau was pouring his creative energy into composing a sustained affirmation of nature's life-cycles for publication, it is not surprising that his emotional reserves were depleted when it came to managing everyday mood changes. No wonder his unifying concept of life "wavered" upon viewing hair-raising evidence of life's "linearity and uncontrollability," feeling the finality of death, and conceiving mortality as divine



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punishment.

How natural then that Thoreau, drawing upon his creative abilities as a writer, would use his journal to process his intolerable feelings. In a number of instances, we will find Thoreau recalling the mill-yard scene, re-experiencing the deeply unsettling emotions it has roused, and finally weaving multiple memories and associated fantasies into a unifying vision. We may now consider this related material in the journal of 1853. Thoreau harks back to his experience of 7 January in three separate entries that he composed two days, two weeks, and five months after that date. In these passages there is no trace of the cold, factual narrating voice he initially assumed. Instead, Thoreau is demonstrably haunted by what he made himself see.

Perhaps surprisingly, Thoreau's response as he begins to process the experience is to moralize – to preach and scold almost as severely as if Calvinism were still alive and flourishing in Concord. Thoreau's reactions to intimations of mortality are colored by a stark dualism. As Lebeaux notes in *Thoreau's Seasons* (177), Thoreau admits only extreme alternatives, and these in the most judgmental terms – innocence or sin – redemption or damnation – nature ("infinite and pure") or man ("the source of all evil").

On 9 January, after two days of internalizing the experience, Thoreau writes: "Day before yesterday I looked at the mangled & blackened bodies of men which had been blown up by powder, and felt that the lives of men were not innocent, and that there was an avenging power in nature ..." (J5: 437). Then on 21 January Thoreau records a nightmare in which he feels defiled after unearthing and touching rotten corpses. He interprets the "moral" of the dream: "Death is with me and life far away" (J5: 448). It should be noted that Thoreau gets away with significant sleight of hand in the entry for 9 January. He attributes the destructive power of the gunpowder to nature, which he depicts as the divine agency of judgment and retribution, an "avenging" dispenser of a death deserved. Can this mean that Thoreau believes these three specific millworkers were "not innocent" – that they deserved their fate? Not literally. In the world of transcendental analogy, actual realities, mere details, and variable circumstances take a back seat to the (presumed) universal symbolism of an experience. These three men, who in reality were blown to pieces because they neglected procedure and mishandled equipment, have become symbolic stand-ins for the sinful human race. "Nature" stands in for a punishing God, while the blackened, smoking mill yard makes a picture-perfect Hell.

In fact, it is Thoreau's rhetorical strategy of treating the explosion no differently from a force of nature that enables him to sermonize with such idealizing abstraction. His transcendentalist perspective gives



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him the privilege of glossing over workaday details that might undermine the universal truth of his meditation on mortality. After all, by most reckonings, a fatal industrial accident is to be reported differently from an accidental death caused, for example, by a lightning strike or a shipwreck.

The key towards unlocking the nature of what is haunting Thoreau lies in the third of his subsequent journal entries, written amid the bloom of late spring. On 1 June, Thoreau reports seeing pieces of the mill buildings “[s]till black with powder” reappearing along the bank of the Concord. He exclaims: “How slowly the ruins are being dispersed!” – expressing perhaps a note of wonder at the persistence of his own morbid recollections (J6: 169). (Ironically, the Assabet mill would explode again in June, without fatalities and without comment from Thoreau [Conant 7].) Thoreau proceeds to imagine these pieces of wood pursuing their journey downriver and across the Atlantic, “[s]till capable of telling how & where they were launched to those who can read their signs.” He draws a parallel with the cloud-as-sign that he saw in January: “The news of the explosion of the Powder Mills – was not only carried seaward by the cloud which its smoke made – but more effectually – though more slowly by the fragments which were floated thither by the river –” (J6: 169).⁴⁹

At this point in the journal, quite unexpectedly, the idea of the Atlantic Ocean unlocks an entirely different level of memory and image, as Thoreau vividly evokes the sight of a drowned man: “To see a man lying all bare lank & tender on the rocks like a skinned frog – or lizzard – we did not suspect that he was made of such cold tender clammy substance before” (J6: 169). Whence this drowned man? Until now, Thoreau had been remembering explosion victims. Following the association with the Atlantic takes us to the answer. Three years earlier, Thoreau had obliged himself to face the mangled, swollen bodies of shipwreck victims on two occasions – at [Cohasset](#), Cape Cod, in 1849 and also during his fruitless mission to retrieve the effects of Margaret Fuller, who had drowned in a wreck on the shore of Fire Island, New York, in 1850.

In his journal at that time, Thoreau uses the image of parallel streams to depict the two worlds that we simultaneously inhabit, that of reality and that of the spirit – the latter alone having substance and value:



This stream of events which we consent to call actual & that other mightier stream which alone carries us with it — what makes the difference — On the one our bodies float, and we have

49. At the core of the drowned-man image is Thoreau’s memory of his brother’s horrid death. Forever unable to accept John’s loss, Henry invested enormous emotional energy in seeing his dead brother as proof of the eternal reciprocity between death and life. In the concluding pages of *Young Man Thoreau*, Richard Lebeaux sensitively detects wide-ranging aspects of “private grief and guilt” underpinning the opening chapters of *Cape Cod* (199-204). “Can anyone doubt that the ‘funeral’ and ‘corpse’ that Thoreau had in mind were John’s?” (201).



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sympathy with it through them; on the other, our spirits. We are ever dying to one world and being born into another — and possibly no man knows whether he is at any time dead ... or not. (after 29 July 1850 [J3: 95])

In Thoreau's metaphysics, we are all, at any given instant, so many corpses in the wash of tides. Death is our birth into another world (or, as Thoreau more often conceived it, our continuity in nature). "Who knows but you are dead already?" he repeats (J3: 96).

In a public version of these reflections — "The Shipwreck," composed and delivered as a public lecture as early as 1850 — Thoreau helps his audience visualize this birth into another world by playing upon the conventional idea of an afterlife in a parallel dimension.



Why care for these dead bodies? They really have no friends but the worms or fishes. Their owners were coming to the New World, as Columbus and the Pilgrims did, they were within a mile of its shores; but, before they could reach it, they emigrated to a newer world than ever Columbus dreamed of, yet one of whose existence we believe that there is far more universal and convincing evidence — though it has not yet been discovered by science ... I saw their empty hulks that came to land; but they themselves, meanwhile, were cast upon some shore yet further west, toward which we are all tending, and which we shall reach at last, it may be through storm and darkness, as they did. ("Cape Cod" 635)

"The Shipwreck" was polished for publication as the introductory section of "Cape Cod" by 1852, when Thoreau offered it to G. W. Curtis for Putnam's Monthly Magazine. By that time, Thoreau must have all but memorized his text, considering that he delivered his Cape Cod lecture before several audiences in 1850-51. (Putnam's ran "Cape Cod" — the opening four chapters of the posthumous book we now know — serially and unsigned in June, July, and August 1855.)

So fully does Thoreau in "The Shipwreck" conceive death as integral to life that the idea of an untimely, unfair, or undeserved death is meaningless. A psychological analyst of Thoreau's statement — noting in particular the abstract and universal voice adopted here by the writer — might well suspect that this highly rational denial of death is constructed as a defense against an intolerably painful affect, including sheer physical revulsion. John Thoreau, Jr., we recall, died in the arms of his adoring younger brother, who could only watch as the ghastly death-sneer (*risus sardonius*) of lockjaw froze his brother's facial muscles into a mocking mask in the final moments of respiratory muscular paralysis and suffocation (Sperber 9-10). (Almost from the instant it took place, this death-scene became romanticized by friends and family as an exchange of beatific smiles, although Thoreau would later use the words "ugly pain" in a memorial poem.) As Lebeaux has well established in *Young Man Thoreau*, the unbearable pain of experiencing this extraordinarily wrenching loss "froze" the normal grieving process in Thoreau, initiating instead a chronic depressive cycling (167-68, 172).

Only substitute the 1853 explosion instead of death by drowning – and extend “the law of Nature” to include industrial fatalities – and Thoreau’s comment in “The Shipwreck” could be read as a justification of his seemingly emotionless description of the fatalities at the Acton mill:



On the whole, it was not so impressive a scene as I might have expected. If I had found one body cast upon the beach in some lonely place, it would have affected me more. I sympathized rather with the winds and waves, as if to toss and mangle these poor human bodies was the order of the day. If this was the law of Nature, why waste any time in awe or pity? ... Take all the grave-yards together, they are always the majority. It is the individual and private that demands our sympathy. A man can attend but one funeral in the course of his life, can behold but one corpse. (635, my emphases)

Thoreau’s grief-work on the first of June required him to dig down to the earlier recollection of the “bare, lank and tender” body on the beach. (He sensed soon after visiting the explosion site that this work of exhumation, though repugnant, would be necessary to bring resolution. His nightmare of 21 January, mentioned above, expresses this idea [J5: 448].) Writing his June entry, Thoreau succeeds in substituting a memory of a death-encounter that is “tender” (he uses the word repeatedly) for one that is limb-wrenching and bloody – a vision of birth/death cradled by the eternal rhythm of the salt-water tides instead of sudden, hideous dismemberment amid apocalyptic fire. He has recovered that “one body ... in some lonely place” that he wished to see on Cape Cod, and has allowed it to “affect” him. The figure of the drowned man embodies the eternal interchange of death and life. No sooner has Thoreau substituted the drowned man for the burnt men than he is free to begin reclaiming the redeeming vision that sustains him. That one affecting corpse holds the key to life.⁵⁰

The process traced above guided Thoreau out of his dualistic dead end. It recaptured his vanished closeness with Ralph Waldo Emerson. Most important for literature, it helped to shape one of the most inspired symbolic visions in Walden. Late in the stressful year of 1853, as J. Lyndon Shanley’s work documents, Thoreau proceeded with final revisions to Walden, amplifying many passages and relocating some to better artistic advantage. One of these was the description of the thawing sand bank along the “deep cut” that had been dug southwest of the pond for the new railroad. As

50. Fragments embedded in a hillside by the force of the January 1853 explosion (and others) remained visible 6 years afterward, as Thoreau noted during some [Assabet River](#) excursions. In a supreme use of irony, he now declares the victims’ body parts expunged from this exhibit:



As you draw near the powder-mills, you see the hill behind bestrewn with the fragments of mills which have been blown up in past years, — the fragments of the millers having been removed, — and the canal is cluttered with the larger ruins. The very river makes haste past the dry-house, as it were for fear of accidents. (21 July 1859; Journal XII: 248)

This is, to my knowledge, the last reference to the blast in Thoreau’s journal.



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published, these enthusiastic lines in the climactic "Spring" chapter form one of the book's cardinal passages, the symbolic revelation of the earth as nature's infinite matrix of life.

In Thoreau's initial draft of 1846-47, the shapes assumed by the rivulets of sand as they flow down the embankment are limited to those of "vegetation, of vines and stout pulpy leaves" (Shanley 204). The expanded revision, which Thoreau worked up in October or November of 1853, adds a multitude of details and colors, bringing the tumbling cascade to life and deepening its symbolic meaning – while restating in a positive mode the theme of scattered organs and limbs. As revised, the shifting forms recall not only vegetal and coral shapes but also animal parts – "leopard's paws or birds' feet" – and finally "brains or lungs or bowels, and excrements of all kinds" (Walden 305). Thoreau sees in the thawing sand and clay "the different iron colors, brown, gray, yellowish, and reddish" (305). This is the same palette he uses to color his initial journal entry of 7 January describing the sky and earth at the explosion site.

Michael West finds it ironic that Thoreau's vision of life should be grounded in a mineral mixture "destined to sandy sterility" (465). However, this deficit is outweighed by the resonant personal – even heroic – meaning that clay held for Thoreau. By introducing the use of clay to create an improved pencil-lead after 1838, Thoreau brought an enormous boon to American artists, engineers, and writers – and he knew it. (Thoreau's intuitive research has been nicely reconstructed by Henry Petroski [110-12].) Quite conceivably, then, the idea of "the Artist' – God or Nature – working in a matrix of sand and clay contains some admixture of Thoreau the writer-inventor, bringer of benefit to scholars, poets, and scribes for all time. By his art Thoreau manages to redeem and purify the horrifying image of the millhands' torn corpses ("some limbs & bowels here & there"). Evoking the "laboratory of the Artist who made the world and me," he transfigures the lifeless organs of dead men into the material of birth, renewal, and creation.

Of course, the gruesome festoons in the Assabet millyard were not the sole inspiration for Thoreau's elaboration of the sand-bank passage. Well before the 1853 explosion, Thoreau was in the habit of visualizing all creatures' vital organs in the sand bank's spring-like, if "somewhat foecal and stercoral," outpouring. By playing upon the classic connotation of "bowels" (seat of the affections – sympathy or "heart"), he endows his complex image with poetic ambiguity in the journal. "There is no end to the fine bowels here exhibited – heaps of liver – lights & bowels. Have you no bowels? Nature has some bowels, and there again she is mother of humanity" (31 Dec. 1851 [J4: 231]. Cf. Walden 305). Much as the archetypal leaf, Goethe's famous Urpflanze, became Thoreau's template for every life form, so the



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dynamic “motion in the earth” that pushes it to the surface is Thoreau’s Urstuhl, an archetypal flux that partakes of both unclean excretion and raw creativity. In the journal passage cited above, Thoreau incorporated this grand peristalsis into his symbol for poesis.

As this essay has sought to establish, selections from Thoreau’s journalizing during 1853 present a continuing introspective process that is deliberate, yet is guided in part by unconscious association toward a goal of resolution of conflict and liberation from depression. This decidedly modern mode of journal-keeping offers a particularly rich illustration of the self-therapeutic practice that Sperber identifies as “writing it out,” and which he sees as “a crucial part of the treatment program that Thoreau unconsciously devised to deal with his severe stress, mood and personality disorders” (119).

With myth-making force, Thoreau the seer celebrates in Walden the return of spring that he glimpsed even in the scorched millyard. Perhaps echoing the Psalmist as much as Genesis, Thoreau now asks, “What is man but a mass of thawing clay?” (307). He proclaims the oneness of plant and animal life-forms, a unity visible in the common clay from which they are pouring in profusion. Far from “soiling” his fingers in the putrid bodies of dead men as he did in his nightmare, the seer stands in the presence of the divine creative force, in the place where nature perpetually “finds her own again under new forms without loss.”

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January 8, Saturday, [1853](#): On the 38th anniversary of the Battle of [New Orleans](#), before a crowd of some 20,000 persons according to a reporter for the [Washington Union](#), the 1st equestrian statue in the United States of America was unveiled. In fact this art was guesswork as its American sculptor [Clark Mills](#) had not so much as ever glimpsed any equestrian statue at all. This was intended as a depiction of [General Andrew Jackson](#) inspecting his troops prior to the battle (but after the [War of 1812](#) had been over for a number of weeks), allegedly astride his favorite mount “Duke” (the sculptor Clark Mills had used his own horse “Olympus” as the model for “Duke”). The base of the statue featured 4 Spanish cannon that the general had captured in Pensacola, Florida –named “Aristeo,” “Apolo,” “Witiza,” and “Egica”– cannon that had been forged in 1748 and 1773 in the royal foundry in Barcelona, Spain. [Senator Stephen A. Douglass](#) was keynote speaker for the event. The bronze for this equestrian enormity had been cast on the spot, Lafayette Park in [Washington DC](#) on the north portico side of the [White House](#), as 10 chunks of bronze that together weighed in excess of 15 tons. Replicas of this thingie would eventually grace the cities of Nashville, Tennessee, Jacksonville, Florida, and [New Orleans, Louisiana](#).

According to the Placer, [California Herald](#), the miners at Rattlesnake Bar on the lower North Fork of the American River had since the flooding become raftsmen and lumber dealers, finding that this got them a better reward than panning for gold due to the immense quantities of driftwood they could have advantage of at remunerative prices. However, at some point during this month there would be a landslide at the town of Forest Hill at the head of Jenny Lind Canyon, just above the claim of Snyder, Brown & Co., caused by the numerous tunnels which had since pierced the ridge upon which the town had been raised. After this landslide, upon investigating the new surface of the ground, chunks of gold would be plainly visible in the loose dirt that had buried the tools of the miners. There had been an ancient river in that location, which had been loaded with gold, which had since been concealed from view by cap rock. It would become possible to wash out from the gravels of this ancient river channel some \$2,000 to \$2,500 of gold per day. Following this pay-gravel into the hill would lead the miners to an outcropping of an extensive deposit in the hard rock beneath the claim of the Deidesheimer Company, from which it would be possible to take out some \$300,000 in the next year. Then the Independence Company, burrowing into rock so solid that it would cost as much as \$40 per foot to excavate, would likewise strike it extremely rich.



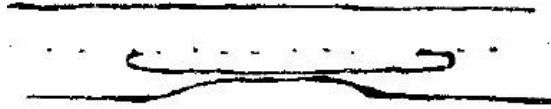
January 8th '53: I see what are probably the anther cells distinctly in the large buds of the poplar—which for a long time have shown their wool 1/6 of an inch long. Also similar cells in the alder catkins but greener & less spring-like— The birch ones are the yellowest. **At Walden.** The bubbles which I made under the ice by casting on stones here night before last. or 48 hours ago – nearly 1/2 foot in diameter, still remain. The last 2 days have been very warm like an Ind. summer or very early spring— Yet about an inch more of ice has formed—making about 2 inches in all, & you can see the line of juncture distinctly. The ice is not now transparent revealing the bottom distinctly & the dark green color of the water but whitish or gray, & though twice as thick is hardly stronger than before. The air bubbles within it have greatly expanded in the heat & run together & lost their regularity. I do not see that they are regularly super- imposed, *i.e.* perpendicularly—but they have expanded off & run together at different angles like silver coins poured from a bag & overlapping each other. –and even form thin but wide flakes occasionally. It is too late to study the bottom. The beauty of the ice is gone. With a stone I broke the ice above one of my bubbles & let the air out & water took its place. I then took out a cake of ice including 2 old bubbles, each about 4 inches in diameter—and was surprised to find that they were included between the 2 ices. I actually took the bubbles out between the ices & turned them bottom-upwards. These bubbles were 1/4 of an inch thick & shaped like this  rounded on the edge. They appeared to be wholly within the new or lower ice –though the under surface of the upper was made rough– and I was surprise to find beneath them on the under surface of the lower ice, which, like the upper was as I have said about 1 inch thick, regular circular saucer like depressions in this case 5/8 of an inch



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deep, leaving the lower ice little more than 1/8 of an inch thick directly above their middle. Thus



And this thin part of the lower ice was almost perforated by large bubbles almost 1/4 inch in diameter which had burst out below. Probably there was no ice directly under my largest bubbles. I inferred therefore that all those infinite minute bubbles I had seen first on the under-side of the ice were now frozen in with it, and that each in its proportion or degree like the large ones had operated like a burning glass on the ice beneath it to rot it— And probably it is the expanding & shrinking of the air in them as well as in the water which cracks the ice & makes the whooping sound. Perhaps those minute bubbles that are seen one above another in the freshest ice have been frozen in like the largest as they successively rose from the bottom while the ice was freezing. It has been supposed that Walden ice does not keep so well because it has more air in it—their being no outlet or stream to carry it off— There may be something in this— Let me look at the fresh ice of a pond that has a stream & see if there are fewer bubbles under it. Of course large bubbles would be very obvious under transparent or black ice.



January 9, Sunday, 1853: [Ellery Channing](#) jotted in his journal: “Beautiful gray shade of trees on Thoreau pond over gray ice.... The best possible summer by Thoreau’s pond. Pools of melted water on T’s pond.”

Gazing up in horror and shock into the trees, the day before yesterday, at the mangled and blackened body fragments of employees who had just been torn to shreds by the gunpowder they were in the process of manufacturing for a wage, [Henry Thoreau](#) had been feeling that the lives of men were other than innocent, and that there was in nature an avenging power. However, on this day he found himself musing less about the non-innocence of the human — than about the innocence of the inhuman: “How innocent are Nature’s purposes! How unambitious! Her elections are not Presidential. The springing & blossoming of this flower do not depend on the votes of men.” The score he was calculating was working out to be: the inhuman, 1, the human, 0.

The convict ship *Pyrenees* was on its way from England to Fremantle in Western Australia conveying 55 convicts from the *Warrior Hulk*, 35 convicts from the *Woolwich Defence* hulk, 2 convicts from the *Stirling Castle* hulk, 50 convicts out of Portsmouth Prison, 88 convicts out of Portland Prison, and 66 convicts out of Dartmoor Prison, the total headcount being 296 prisoners. The Surgeon-Superintendent of the *Pyrenees*, John Bower, noted that several of the children of the guard aboard were ill qualified for so long a voyage, but had been received on board for reasons of the cost of caring for them ashore. He remarked on a continued fever amongst the prisoners and the ship’s company on board, attributing this fever to the combined influence of a sudden change of temperature and the moist close atmosphere in the ship, coupled with a disagreeable odor from the airholds. Per the ship’s medical journal: “Patrick Archer, aged 10 Months, Infant; taken ill off Deal; sick or hurt, diarrhoea, the mother stated that he was ill with looseness for the last two months; put on sick list 9 January 1853, died 10 January 1853.”



January 9th 53: 3 Pm to Walden & Cliffs

The Telegraph Harp again. Always the same unrememberable revelation it is to me. It is something as enduring as the worm that never dies—befor thee it was & will be after. I never hear it without thinking of Greece. How the Greeks **harped** upon the words immortal—ambrosial, They are what it says. It stings my ear with everlasting truth. It allies Concord to Athens & both to Elysium. It always intoxicates me —makes me sane —reverses my views of things— I am pledged to it. I get down the RR till I hear that which makes all the world a lie. When the zephyr or west wind sweeps this wire

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I rise to the height of my being— A period—a semicolon at least is put to my previous & habitual ways of viewing things. This wire is my redeemer— It always brings a special & a general message to me from the highest. Day before yesterday I looked at the mangled & blackened bodies of men which had been blown up by powder, and felt that the lives of men were not innocent, and that there was an avenging power in nature.— To-day I hear this immortal melody, while the West wind is blowing balmily on my cheek—and methinks a roseate sunset is preparing. Are there not two powers? Where the brickmakers got their sand I measured the tap root of a pitch pine 5 inches in diameter at the surface, which extend straight downward into pure sand—excepting the usual thickness of soil—9 feet visibly—and undoubtedly 3 feet further than I could see.

This is the 3d warm day—the warmest of all. The andromeda ponds methinks look redder— I walked through one— The lowest growth is spagnum (?) fresh large & handsome—some green—some red into which occasionally I slumped nearly a foot—some lambkill is mixed with the andromeada—a few islands of grey high blueberry bushes with round red buds rise here & there—mixed with the panicked andromeda—large cotton grass now prostrate &c— The Pitcher plant leaves is still for the most part green & uninjured here, though full of ice. Many have holes in their sides through which insects appear to have eaten out. However, the external ear or handle is also eaten through—so the agent may have been without.

I see a dogsbane sickle shaped seed vessel which has not discounted. I open it & let the seeds fly. As I walked the RR this spring-like day I heard from time to time the sound of stones & earth falling & rolling down the bank in the cuts. The earth is almost entirely bare— We have not yet had snow more than 1 inch deep!!!


As I climbed the Cliff I paused in the sun & sat on a dry rock—dreaming. I thought of those summery hours when time is tinged with eternity—runs into it—& becomes of one stuff with it. How much—how perhaps all that is best in our experience in middle life may be resolved into the memory of our youth! I remember how I expanded. If the Genius visits me now I am not quite taken off my feet—but I remember how this experience is like but less than that I had long since. Pulling up the Johnswort on the face of the Cliff I am surprised to see the signs of unceasing growth about the roots—fresh shoots 2 inches long white with red leaflets—and all the radical part quite green. The leaves of the crowfoot also are quite green & carry me forward to spring. I dig one up with a stick, and pulling it to pieces I find deep in the centre of the plant just beneath the ground—surrounded by all the tender leaves that are to precede it—the blossom bud about half as big as the head of a pin—perfectly white— There it patiently sits—or slumbers how full of faith—informed of a spring which the world has never seen—the promise & prophesy of it shaped some-what like some eastern temples in which a bud shaped dome o'er tops the whole—it affected me this tender dome like bud, within the bosom of the earth—like a temple upon the earth—resounding with the worship of votaries—Methought I saw the priests in yellow robes within it. The crowfoot buds—And how many beside!—lie unexpanded just beneath the surface. May I lead my life the following year as innocently as they—May it be as fair and smell as sweet. I anticipate nature. Destined to become a fair yellow flower above the surface to delight the eyes of children & its maker. It offered to my mind a little temple into which to enter & worship— It will go forth in April this vestal now cherishing here fire to be married to the sun— How innocent are Nature's purposes! How unambitious! Her elections are not Presidential. The springing & blossoming of this flower do not depend on the votes of men

That first day of ice—when my coat & cap were glazed with a thick coat—the fine rain freezing as it fell—was not a cold day— I am pretty sure I have known it rain without freezing when colder. Had the fineness of the rain anything to do with it?

I saw today the reflected sunset sky in the river—but the colors in the reflection were different from those in the sky. The sky was dark clouds with coppery or dun colored undersides— — In the water were dun colored clouds with bluish green patches or bars.

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

Charles Reade's "Gold" premiered in London.


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

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

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




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

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

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

On this day and the following one, Henry Thoreau would be surveying an Acton woodlot, on Westford Road, then called the Road to Groton, that Elijah Davis was selling to John LeGrosse. Three plots were made of the 2 farms and woodlot near the Acton line. D.H. Wetherbee lived nearby:⁵¹




January 11th & 12: Surveying for John Le Grosse. He says that he saw blackbirds about a week ago. He says that the most snow we have had this winter–(it has not been more than 1 inch deep) has been only a "robin snow" as it is called. *i.e.* a snow which does not drive off the robins [American Robin  Turdus migratorius]. By a bound of

51. I wonder who this "Captain Hutchinson" was, who could be dunned for a drink. Would he have been the Peter Hutchinson whom Thoreau would mention on February 2d and on July 7th, 1859 in his journal, or would Peter have been the Captain's son?

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his woodlot in Carlisle observed a peculiar oak—very smooth & light colored bark — which his brother who knows them in Wayland calls a chestnut oak— I am not quite sure I did not see a chestnut oak leaf at any rate— V. again. Says they will split like chestnut & are easy to cut. J. says they have both red & white huckleberries near his house. Described an “Old Fort” about the size & shape of a cellar which he saw in 1816 perhaps across the river near Heywood’s sawmill. This man is continually drinking cider —thinks it corrects some mistake in him —wishes he had a barrel of it in the woods — if he had known he was to be out so long would have brought a jug-full — will dun Capt. Hutchinson for a drink on his way home. This or rum runs in his head if not in his throat all the time. Is interested in Juniper berries —gooseberries currants &c— whether they will make wine — has recipes for this — eats the juniper berries raw as he walks. Tobacco is another staff of life with him. Thinks with others that he has metals on his farm which the divining rod might find but is convertible on this point.

 January 12, Wednesday, 1853: When the Chinese Christian Army, the Taiping, fought its way into Wuchang, they killed all remaining Imperial soldiers there — because, you understand, they’re Christians.

CHINESE CIVIL WAR

(Thoreau’s journal entry for this day was folded in with the entry for the previous day because he was out on a surveying job.)

 January 13, Thursday, 1853: When the 180x38 foot, 1,100-ton sailing packet *Cornelius Grinnell* (named after an owner) approached the continent in a storm during a voyage from London to New-York harbor, it was driven ashore and wrecked on the unforgiving sandy coast of New Jersey at Squan or Squam Beach between Manasquan Inlet and Cranberry Inlet. A surf car was able to bring all 234 persons on board safely onto the sand (Thoreau would comment dryly in WALDEN, “often the richest freight will be discharged upon a Jersey shore”).

At 9PM California time in a rainy mist that did not interfere with visibility, the steamer *J. Bragdon* rammed at full headway into the steamer *Camanche*, in the channel off Point Edith about 5 miles above Benicia. No one had become particularly alarmed until the bow of the *Camanche* passed the *Bragdon* on its port side. The 1st officer of the *Bragdon* in the wheelhouse, Mr. Coffin, perceiving that the boats were about to collide, clapped his helm hard apart, but too late. The boat obeyed this direction from the helm and yawed to starboard, presenting its broadside to the *Camanche*’s port bow, which struck in the forward part of the *Bragdon*’s larboard wheel house, demolishing its cookhouse and a part of its pantry. The iron rods about this portion of the boat, driven into the wheelhouse, prevented continued revolution of the port wheel. The bow of the *Camanche* was stove flat in starting at its butt ends, and tearing away its stem post and apron. It sank in 10 minutes coming to lie in about 28 feet of water with its stern in 12 feet of water. When they backed the *Bragdon* up as well as they could onto the wreck of the *Camanche*, some of its passengers were able to slide down the inclined plane presented by the position of her decks onto the deck of the wreck of the *Bragdon*, but then the concussion of this drove the wreck away so that the remainder of the passengers slid into the water. A portion of the *Camanche*’s stern lay out of water and its cabin floated off and eventually came onto the shore at Benicia. Among the lives lost the newspapers would be able to obtain only the names of Mrs. Sarah Winters

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with one of her 2 children, a daughter of about 2 years of age, and Mrs. Barker. Mrs. Winters was the lady of a merchant of that name, Theodore Winters, at Snake Bar on the Yuba River, who had just arrived on the *S.S. Lewis*, and this husband and father was at Marysville awaiting his family's arrival. The other Winters child was rescued aboard the *Bragdon*. Mrs. Barker was the wife of Alderman Barker of Sacramento. One fireman of the *Camanche*, name not ascertained, was lost; also, a couple of other young men who were sick on board at the time of the catastrophe. Several others observed on board previous to the collision have not since been seen. The death toll thus seems to have been in the vicinity of 10. The other of the Winters children was a son about 4 years of age, who would wind up at the Rasette House in Benicia. Mrs. Winters had just arrived on the *S.S. Lewis* and was on her way to join her husband. Mrs. Barker, formerly of Wisconsin, was the wife of a gentleman who had just arrived on the *S.S. Lewis*, and this father would be able to reunite with his children.



January 13: A drifting snowstorm last night & today – the first of consequence & the first sleighing this winter.



January 14, Friday, 1853: The Nevada Journal reported a killing of a desperate character that had occurred at Little York the previous Wednesday evening. Richard "Big Dick" Fisher, born of Irish parents at Albany, New York whence he had emigrated to Sydney, had been shot and killed by a young man named Matthias Ault. From the description of him that had reached this gazette through many sources, he was one of the most powerfully framed, murderous and abandoned villains that ever disgraced and afflicted a community. He had at various times shot at and brutally beaten a great many men in Little York, and the citizens had been going armed in terror of him. On Tuesday evening last, the night before his death, he had accosted E.E. Hill, formerly constable of that township and a peaceable and estimable man, asking him who he was? On being told, he said "you insulted me long ago" and knocked him down with his fist and kicked him and injured him fearfully. Many such acts had been related of him. He would ask a stranger to treat him, the gazette reported, and on his declining, would shoot at him or brutally beat him, and so terrified had the citizens become by his outrages, that they dared not interfere. A favorite amusement with him was tearing down the shops of Jews and destroying their goods. On Wednesday evening Matthias Ault had been standing in the door of a Jew's shop with its owner when Fisher had approached and accosted the keeper of the shop, asking him to drink. The Jew declined and on some offensive movement of Fisher retreated inside his shop. Fisher then asked Ault if the citizens were going to hang him that night. Ault replied he did not know they were. Fisher then said he knew they were, and that Ault was at the head of the matter, saying that if he thought he was he would shoot him. At that moment somebody called Fisher into Dr. Lively's store next door, and Ault went and got a pistol. Fisher probably had a grudge against Ault because the latter had been on several juries which had decided claims, &c. adverse to him. Ault presently returned and went into Dr. Lively's store. After awhile Fisher came in and insulted a stranger, who moved away. He then came up to Ault and made the same remark as before, adding, "you think you are a smart man, but *I* think I can whip you." Ault said, "*I* don't think I am a smart man, and I know you can whip me." Fisher then called Ault an opprobrious name. Ault replied calmly that if he was such he could not help it. The matter here ended for the time. Half an hour after, Ault was in Fisher's boarding house where Fisher was in the barroom. Fisher presently told Ault he wished to speak to him outside. Ault walked toward the door with him, when as they were about to step out Fisher said "D——n you, I mean to lick you." Ault then said he would not go out with him, when Fisher grasped him by the throat and felt for his pistol.

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Ault had both his hands free and, grasping his pistol, placed it quickly before him, pointed towards the pit of his adversary's stomach, and bending his body forward against him, pressed the pistol hard into him. With his other hand he caught Fisher's arm containing his pistol, and so turned it that it discharged under his arm. The pistols discharged at the same moment. Fisher relinquished his hold of Ault's throat, but did not fall. Ault fired again hitting him in the breast, upon which Fisher turned and ran. Ault, stimulated according to this account almost to insanity, pursued him firing 3 more times, which shots took effect, the last striking the center of the spine, whereupon Fisher fell. On the advice of friends Ault departed immediately for Nevada. He was to undergo an examination before justice Endicott when the witnesses from Little York arrived, which would probably be on this day. The Nevada Journal summed up by observing "If any circumstance at variance with this account appears on the examination, we shall give it in our next."



January 14th 53: Snows all day.

Pm to Walden & Andromeda Ponds. The place of the sun appears through the storm about 3 o'clock—a sign that it is near its end,— though it still snows as hard as ever— An intenser whiter light is reflected from the west sides of drifts and hills like another day—in comparison with which the level snow is dark. There is this recognition of fair weather. The W side of abrupt drifts toward the lit clouds reflects quite a glow of light many shades brighter than the levels. It is a very light snow lying like down—or feathery scales. Examined closely the flakes are beautifully regular six rayed stars or wheels with a centre disk—perfect geometrical figures in thin scales like this:



far more perfect than I can draw. These thin crystals are piled about about a foot deep all over the country—but as light as bran. And now the snow has quite ceased—blue sky appears—& the sun goes down in clouds— The surface of fields, as I look toward the western light appears waved or watered on a large scale as if different kind of flakes drifted together some glistening scales, others darker, or perhaps the same reflected the light differently from different sides of slight drifts or undulations on the surface. Thus beautiful the snow—these starry crystals descending profusely have woven a pure garment—as of white watered satin over all the fields. Snow freshly fallen is one thing—Tomorrow it will be another. It is now pure & trackless—walking 3 or 4 miles in the woods, I saw but one track of any kind, that of a rabbit—which was very large & indistinct necessarily—and scared one partridge from a scrub oak. Most animals—almost all quadrupeds at least are now buried deep & still beneath it. Methinks it would not upbear a meadow mouse but it would sink out of sight in it— There is not a trace of one of these—nor of a muskrat on the Andromeda ponds— Yet by tomorrow morning—there will be countless tracks of all sizes—all over the country—which makes me think these creatures even in the deepest woods & in winter are far the most active by night. In the midst of the storm I saw the little chestnut or red frontleted bird on the birches. It is warm & the snow fleas are about. White walls of snow rest on the boughs of trees, in height 2 or 3 times their thickness— These white irregular arms give the forest a wintry & picturesque look at a distance— The evergreens especially the pitch- pine often bear large irregular white burdens, agreeably diversified and loop-holed by the interstices of the plumes. But it is only when fresh that this snow on the trees is beautiful. Already before the storm is over, the surface of the snow in the high woods is full of indentations & hollows where some of this burden has fallen.


I am often reminded that the farmer living far inland has not thought of ploughs & carts alone— Here when getting his fuel he cuts the roots or limbs of some sturdier with reference to the uses it may serve in the construction of a ship. The farmer not only gets out wood to burn but ship timber. It was he who decided the destiny some mighty oak—that it should become the keel of a famous ship. It is he who says Ye shall become ships to plow the sea—when he says ye shall become money to me. It is in the woods & in the farmer's yard that the vessel is first put upon the stocks. He burns the hewings in his ample fire- place—he teams the rest to med-ford with the same yokes that plow his fields. With bars & chains he clutches & binds to wheels—& with numerous yokes drags it over the hills to the nearest port. He learns as well as the engineer what hills are steep—what ground ascends—By repeated strains & restings on the terraces he at length surmounts every difficulty. Think of the

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difficulties which the farmer silently overcomes, who conveys the keel or mast of a man of war from his woods to the nearest port – which would have defied the skill of a tribe of savages to overcome! Men’s ignorance is made as useful as their knowledge. If one knew more, he would admire less. In the winter how many farmers help build ships – where men grow up who never saw the ocean. I suppose that the meadow mouse can still pick up chestnuts under the snow. The nuts commonly lie as they fell from the burr 2 or 3 together.
The bones of children soon turn to dust again.

 Second half of January [1853](#): During the 2d half of January [Henry Thoreau](#) would be studying the Reverend [Richard Chenevix Trench](#)’s 1851 book ON THE STUDY OF WORDS.

 January 15, Saturday, [1853](#): The magazine [Scientific American](#), [The Advocate of Industry](#), and [Journal of Scientific, Mechanical and other Improvements](#) reported an event at the brewery of Mr. Sietz in Easton, Pennsylvania. A hand, Phillip Winner, fell into an ale vat left open for gas to escape, “and when removed life was extinct.”

Although [Henry Thoreau](#) made a journal entry about a lichenist named “Russell” known to [Mrs. Sarah Alden Bradford Ripley](#), we cannot be certain that this reference was to the lichenist [Reverend John Lewis Russell](#) who would in a later timeframe go boating with Thoreau.

BOTANY



January 15th: 9 Am to woods. The starry flakes or crystals, like everything that falls from heaven to earth – have – partially melted–, coalesced & lost their regularity and beauty. A good part of the snow has fallen from the trees. See one or two short trails of meadow mice – apparently they work now under the snow – but when the sun has melted & settled & the cold somewhat consolidated the snow they come out on the surface? As you walk in the woods you hear the rustling sound of limbs & leaves that are relieved of their burden and of the falling snow. Young ever- greens look like statues partially covered with white veils.

Saw near Le Grosse’s the 12 ult a shrike. He told me about seeing Uncle Charles once come to Barrett’s mill with logs – leap over the yoke that drew them – and back again– It amused the boys. True words are those – as Trench says – transport – rapture ravishment, ecstasy – these are the words I want. This is the effect of music– I am rapt away by it –out of myself– These are truly poetical words. I am inspired – elevated – expanded– I am on the mount.

[Mrs Ripley](#) told me this Pm that Russell had decided that that green (& sometimes yellow dust) on the underside of stones in walls was a decaying state of *Lepraria chlorina* a lichen – the yellow another species of *Lepraria*.

Science suggests the value of mutual intelligence. I have long known this dust – but as I did not know the name of it, i.e. what others called & therefore could not conveniently speak of it– It has suggested less to me & I have made less use of it. I now first feel as if I had got hold of it

In Carlisle & Boxboro they go to Church as of old – they are still pagans *Pagani* – or villagers

RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH

CHARLES JONES DUNBAR

[Dr. Alfred I. Tauber](#) would feel it possible to extrapolate from the above in arriving at an understanding of Thoreau’s appreciation of the relationship between time and eternity.

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 January 16, Sunday, 1853: [André Jules Michelin](#) was born in Paris.

J.L.L. Warren began an agricultural paper, the Weekly California Farmer.

In the Tabernacle of Great Salt Lake City, [Brigham Young](#) discoursed on Salvation:



The plan of salvation, or, in other words, the redemption of fallen beings, is a subject that should occupy the attention of all intelligence that pertains to fallen beings. I do not like the term fallen beings, but I will say, subjected intelligence, which term suits me better – subjected to law, order, rule, and government. All intelligences are deeply engaged in this grand object; not, however, having a correct understanding of the true principle thereof, they wander to and fro, some to the right, and some to the left. There is not a person in this world, who is endowed with a common share of intellect, but is laboring with all his power for salvation. Men vary in their efforts to obtain that object, still their individual conclusions are, that they will ultimately secure it. The merchant, for instance, seeks with unwearied diligence, by night and by day, facing misfortunes with a determined and persevering resistance, enduring losses by sea and by land, with an unshaken patience, to amass a sufficient amount of wealth to enable him to settle calmly down in the midst of plenty in some opulent city, walk in the higher classes of society, and perchance receive a worldly title, or worldly honor, and enjoy a freedom from all anxiety of business, and constraint by poverty, throughout the remainder of his life. He then supposes he has obtained salvation.

Descend from the busy, wealth-seeking middle classes, to the humbler grade of society, and follow them in their various occupations and pursuits, and each one of them is seeking earnestly that which he imagines to be salvation. The poor, ragged, trembling mendicant, who is forced by hunger and cold to drag his feeble body from under some temporary shelter, to seek a bit of bread, or a coin from his more fortunate fellow mortal, if he can only obtain a few crusts of bread to satisfy the hunger-worm that gnaws his vitals, and a few coppers to pay his lodgings, he has attained to the summit of his expectations, to what he sought for salvation, and he is comparatively happy, but his happiness vanishes with the shades of night, and his misery comes with the morning light. From the matchmaker up to



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the tradesman, all have an end in view, which they suppose will bring to them salvation. King, courtier, commanders, officers, and common soldiers, the commodore, and sailor before the mast, the fair-skinned Christian, and the dark-skinned savage, all, in their respective grades and spheres of action, have a certain point in view, which, if they can obtain, they suppose will put them in possession of salvation.

The Latter-day Saint, who is far from the bosom of the Church, whose home is in distant climes, sighs, and earnestly prays each day of his life for the Lord to open his way, that he may mingle with his brethren in Zion, for he supposes that his happiness would then be complete, but in this his expectations will be in a measure vain, for happiness that is real and lasting in its nature cannot be enjoyed by mortals, for it is altogether out of keeping with this transitory state.

If a man's capacity be limited to the things of this world, if he reach no further than he can see with his eyes, feel with his hands, and understand with the ability of the natural man, still he is as earnestly engaged in securing his salvation, as others are, who possess a superior intellect, and are also pursuing the path of salvation, in their estimation, though it result in nothing more than a good name, or the honors of this world. Each, according to his capacity – to the natural organization of the human system, which is liable to be operated upon by the circumstances and influences by which it is surrounded, is as eager to obtain that which he supposes is salvation, as I am to obtain salvation in the Eternal world.

The object of a true salvation, correctly and minutely understood, changes the course of mankind. Persons who are taught by their teachers, friends, and acquaintances, are traditionated, from their youth up, into the belief that there is no God, or intelligent beings, other than those that they see with the natural eye, or naturally comprehend; that there is no hereafter; that at death, all life and intelligence are annihilated. Such persons are as firm in their belief, and as strenuous in argument, in support of those doctrines, as others are in the belief of the existence of an Eternal God. The early customs and teachings of parents and friends, to a greater or less degree, influence the minds of children, but when they are disposed to inquire at the hands of Him who has eternal intelligence to impart to them, when their understandings are enlarged, when their minds are enlightened by the Spirit of truth, so that they can see things that are unseen by the natural eye, they may then be corrected in their doctrine and belief, and in their manner of life, but not until then.

How difficult it is to teach the natural man, who comprehends nothing more than that which he sees with the natural eye! How hard it is for him to believe! How difficult would be the task to make the philosopher, who, for many years, has argued himself into the belief that his spirit is no more after his body sleeps in the grave, believe that his intelligence came from eternity, and is as eternal, in its nature, as the elements, or as the Gods. Such doctrine by him would be considered vanity and foolishness, it would be entirely beyond his comprehension. It is difficult, indeed, to remove an opinion or belief into which he has argued himself from the mind of the natural man. Talk to

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him about angels, heavens, God, immortality, and eternal lives, and it is like sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal to his ears; it has no music to him; there is nothing in it that charms his senses, soothes his feelings, attracts his attention, or engages his affections, in the least; to him it is all vanity. To say that the human family are not seeking salvation, is contrary to my experience, and to the experience of every other person with whom I have any acquaintance. They are all for salvation, some in one way, and some in another; but all is darkness and confusion. If the Lord does not speak from heaven, and touch the eyes of their understanding by His Spirit, who can instruct or guide them to good? Who can give them words of eternal life? It is not in the power of man to do it; but when the Lord gives His Spirit to a person, or to a people, they can then hear, believe, and be instructed. An Elder of Israel may preach the principles of the Gospel, from first to last, as they were taught to him, to a congregation ignorant of them; but if he does not do it under the influence of the Spirit of the Lord, he cannot enlighten that congregation on those principles, it is impossible. Job said that, "There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." Unless we enjoy that understanding in this probation, we cannot grow or increase, we cannot be made acquainted with the principles of truth and righteousness so as to become exalted. Admit that the Spirit of the Lord should give us understanding, what would it prove to us? It would prove to me, at least, and what I may safely say to this congregation, that Zion is here. Whenever we are disposed to give ourselves perfectly to righteousness, to yield all the powers and faculties of the soul (which is the spirit and the body, and it is there where righteousness dwells); when we are swallowed up in the will of Him who has called us; when we enjoy the peace and the smiles of our Father in Heaven, the things of His Spirit, and all the blessings we are capacitated to receive and improve upon, then are we in Zion, that is Zion. What will produce the opposite? Harkening and giving way to evil, nothing else will.

If a community of people are perfectly devoted to the cause of righteousness, truth, light, virtue, and every principle and attribute of the holy Gospel, we may say of that people, as the ancient Apostle said to his brethren, "Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates;" there is a throne for the Lord Almighty to sit and reign upon, there is a resting place for the Holy Ghost, there is a habitation of the Father and the Son. We are the temples of God, but when we are overcome of evil by yielding to temptation, we deprive ourselves of the privilege of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, taking up their abode and dwelling with us. We are the people, by our calling and profession, and ought to be by our daily works, of whom it should be truly said, "Ye are the temples of our God." Let me ask, what is there to prevent any person in this congregation from being so blessed, and becoming a holy temple fit for the indwelling of the Holy Ghost? Has any being in heaven or on earth done aught to prevent you from becoming so blessed? No, but why the people are not so privileged I will leave you to judge. I would to God that every soul who professes to be a Latter-day Saint was of that



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character, a holy temple for the indwelling of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, but it is not so. Is there any individual within the sound of my voice today, that has received the Holy Ghost through the principles of the Gospel, and at the same time has not received a love for them? I will answer that question. Wait and see who it is that falls out by the way; who it is in whom the seed of truth has been sown, but has not taken root; and then you will know the individuals who have received the truth, but have never received a love of it – they do not love it for itself. What a delightful aspect would this community present if all men and women, old and young, were disposed to leave off their own sins and follies, and overlook those of their neighbors; if they would cease watching their neighbors for iniquity, and watch that they themselves might be free from it! If they were trying with all their powers to sanctify the Lord in their hearts, and would prove, by their actions, that they had received the truth and the love of it! If all individuals would watch themselves, that they do not speak against the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost, nor in short against any being in heaven or on earth. Strange as this may appear, there have been men in this Church that have done it, and probably will be again! If this people would be careful not to do anything to displease the spirits of those who have lived on the earth, and have been justified, and have gone to rest, and would so conduct themselves, that no reasonable being upon the face of the earth could find fault with them, what kind of society should we have? Why every man's mouth would be filled with blessings, every man's hand would be put forth to do good, and every woman and child in all their intercourse would be praising God, and blessing each other. Would not Zion be here? It would. What hinders you from doing this? What is the Lord or the people doing to cause this one and that one to commit sin with a high hand, in secret and in the open streets?

If Elders of Israel use language which is not proper for the lips of a Saint, such Elders are under condemnation, and the wrath of God abides upon them, those who do it have not the love of truth in their hearts, they do not love and honor the truth because it is the truth, but because it is powerful, and they wish to join with the strongest party. Do they love light because it is light? Virtue because it is virtue? Righteousness because it is righteousness? No. But these principles are almighty in their influence, and like the tornado in the forest, they sweep all before them, no argument can weigh against them, all the philosophy, knowledge, and wisdom of men may be set in array against them, but they are like chaff before a mighty wind, or like the morning dew before the sun in its strength such Elders embrace truth because it is all-powerful. When a man of God preaches the principles of the Gospel, all things give way before it, and some embrace it because it is so mighty. But by and by those characters will fall out by the way, because the soil has not depth to nourish the seeds of truth. They receive it, but not the love of it; it dies, and they turn away. If every person who has embraced the Gospel would love it as he loves his life, would not society wear a different aspect from that of the present?

I do not intend to enter into a detailed account of the acts of

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the people, they are themselves acquainted with them; people know how they themselves talk, and how their neighbors talk; how husband and wife agree in their own houses, and with their neighbors; and how parents and children dwell together. I need not tell these things, but if every heart were set upon doing right, we then should have Zion here. I will give you my reason for thinking so. It is because I have had it with me ever since I was baptized into this kingdom. I have not been without it from that day to this. I have, therefore, a good reason for the assertion I have made. I live and walk in Zion every day, and so do thousands of others in this Church and kingdom, they carry Zion with them, they have one of their own, and it is increasing, growing, and spreading continually. Suppose it spreads from heart to heart, from neighborhood to neighborhood, from city to city, and from nation to nation, how long would it be before the earth would become revolutionized, and the wheat gathered from among the tares? The wheat and tares, however, must grow together until harvest. I am not, therefore, disposed to separate them yet, for if we pluck up the tares before the harvest, we may destroy some of the good seed, therefore let them grow together, and by and by the harvest will come.

There is another thing, brethren, which I wish you to keep constantly before your minds, that is with regard to your travels in life. You have read, in the Scriptures, that the children of men will be judged according to their works, whether they be good or bad. If a man's days be filled up with good works, he will be rewarded accordingly. On the other hand, if his days be filled up with evil actions, he will receive according to those acts. This proves that we are in a state of exaltation, it proves that we can add to our knowledge, wisdom, and strength, and that we can add power to every attribute that God has given us. When will the people realize that this is the period of time in which they should commence to lay the foundation of their exaltation for time and eternity, that this is the time to conceive, and bring forth from the heart fruit to the honor and glory of God, as Jesus did – grow as he did from the child, become perfect, and be prepared to be raised to salvation? You will find that this probation is the place to increase upon every little we receive, for the Lord gives line upon line to the children of men. When He reveals the plan of salvation, then is the time to fill up our days with good works. Let us fill up our days with usefulness, do good to each other, and cease from all evil. Let every evil person forsake his wickedness. If he be wicked in his words, or in his dealings, let him forsake those practices, and pursue a course of righteousness. Let every man and woman do this, and peace and joy will be the result.

A few words more upon the subject of the eternal existence of the soul. It is hard for mankind to comprehend that principle. The philosophers of the world will concede that the elements of which you and I are composed are eternal, yet they believe that there was a time when there was no God. They cannot comprehend how it is that God can be eternal. Let me ask this congregation, Can you realize the eternity of your own existence? Can you realize that the intelligence which you receive is eternal? I can comprehend this, just as well as I can that I am now in

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possession of it. It is as easy for me to comprehend that it will exist eternally, as that anything else will. I wish to impress upon your minds the reality that when the body which is organized for intelligence to dwell in, dies, and returns to its mother earth, all the feelings, sensibilities, faculties, and powers of the spirit are still alive, they never die, but in the absence of the body are more acute. They are organized for an eternal existence. If this congregation could comprehend that the intelligence that is in them is eternal in its nature and existence; if they could realize that when Saints pass through the veil, they are not dead, but have been laying the foundation in these tabernacles for exaltation, laying the foundation to become Gods, even the sons of God, and for crowns which they will yet receive – they would receive the truth in the love of it, live by it, and continue in it, until they receive all knowledge and wisdom, until they grow into eternity, and have the veil taken from before their eyes, to behold the handiworks of God among all people, His goings forth among the nations of the earth, and to discover the rule and law by which He governs. Then could they say of a truth, We acknowledge the hand of God in all things, all is right, Zion is here, in our own possession. I have thus summed up, in a broken manner, that which I desired to speak. We are not able to comprehend all things, but we can continue to learn and grow, until all will be perfectly clear to our minds, which is a great privilege to enjoy – the blessing of an eternal increase. And the man or woman who lives worthily is now in a state of salvation.

Now, brethren, love the truth, and put a stop to every species of folly. How many there are who come to me to find fault with, and enter complaints against, their brethren, for some trifling thing, when I can see, in a moment, that they have received no intentional injury! They have no compassion on their brethren, but, having passed their judgment, insist that the criminal shall be punished. And why? Because he does not exactly come up to their standard of right and wrong! They feel to measure him by the "Iron Bedstead principle" – "if you are too long, you must be cut off; if too short, you must be stretched." Now this is the height of folly. I find that I have enough to do to watch myself. It is as much as I can do to get right, deal right, and act right. If we all should do this, there would be no difficulty, but in every man's mouth would be "May the Lord bless you." I feel happy, as I always told you. Brother Kimball has known me thirty years, twenty one of which I have been in this Church; others have known me twenty years; and there are some here who knew me in England; I had Zion with me then, and I brought it with me to America again, and I now appeal to every man and woman if I have not had Zion with me from first entering into the Church, to the present time! Light cleaves to light, and truth to truth. May God bless you. Amen.



January 16th 53: Cold with blustering winds drifting the snow. Yesterday the hounds were heard– It was a hunters day– All tracks were fresh– The snow deep & light– I met Melvin with his bag full.

Trench says that "‘Rivals,’ in the primary sense of the word, are those who dwell on the banks of the same stream" or "on opposite banks" but as he says, in many words, since the use of water rights is



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a fruitful source of contention between such neighbors, the word has acquired this secondary sense. My friends are my **rivals** on the Concord – in the primitive sense of the word– There is no strife between us respecting the use of the stream. The Concord offers many privileges but none to quarrel about. It is a peaceful not a brawling stream– It has not made **Rivals** out of neighbors **that lived on its banks** – but friends. My friends are my **Rivals** we dwell on opposite banks of the stream – but that stream is the Concord – which flows without a ripple or a murmur – without a fall or a brawl & offers no petty priveleges to quarrel about.⁵²

BAILEY'S DICTIONARY


52. Bailey I find has it “Rival (**Rivalis** L.q.d. qui juxta eundem rivum pascit.)” my friends my rivals are.

NATHAN BAILEY

RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH

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 January 17, Monday, 1853: The 630-ton *St. Vincent*, Captain John Young, Surgeon Thomas Sommerville, sailed from Spithead in Hampshire, England with 212 male convicts, 5 of whom would perish enroute to Van Diemen's Land.

Phönix-Schwingen op.125, a waltz by Johann Baptist Strauss II, was performed for the initial time, in the Sophiensaal of Vienna (also premiered was Strauss' Freuden-Gruß-Polka op.127).

Solomon Northup arrived back in Washington DC at the end of a kidnapping amounting to 12 years.⁵³

REVERSE UNDERGROUND RR

RESISTING THE FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW



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"The capacity to get free is nothing;
the capacity to be free, that is the task."
— [André Gide](#), [THE IMMORALIST](#)
translation Richard Howard
NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970, page 7

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[Solomon Northup](#). TWELVE YEARS A SLAVE. NARRATIVE OF SOLOMON NORTHUP, A CITIZEN OF NEW-YORK, KIDNAPPED IN WASHINGTON CITY IN 1841 AND RESCUED IN 1853, FROM A COTTON PLANTATION NEAR THE RED RIVER IN LOUISIANA. Auburn: Derby And Miller. Buffalo: Derby, Orton And Mulligan. London: Sampson Low, Son & Company, 47 Ludgate Hill, 1853. (Osofsky, Gilbert, comp. PUTTIN' ON OLE MASSA; THE SLAVE NARRATIVES OF HENRY BIBB, WILLIAM WELLS BROWN, AND [SOLOMON NORTHUP](#). NY: Harper & Row, 1969)

TWELVE YEARS A SLAVE



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

January 18, Tuesday, 1853: [Henry Thoreau](#) was surveying Turner Bryant's woodlot in Stow, Massachusetts and made no entry in his journal. He made this survey for a Mr. Hale, whose family owned land on the Concord-Carlisle Road in 1852 according to the survey of Humphrey Hunt's land. (In his journal for August 26, 1856, Thoreau would mention that Ai Hale of Carlisle had the right kind of dog for keeping pigs.)



Solon-Sprüche op.128, a waltz by [Johann Baptist Strauss II](#), was performed for the initial time, in the Sophiensaal of Vienna.

The barque *Rebecca*, Captain George Sheppard (or Shepherd), having needed to put in at Fowley in Cornwall to repair storm damage, set out again for Sydney, [Australia](#) with a cargo of wines and beers and 20 souls, including the captain's wife. They would pick up fresh provisions in the Cape Verde Islands.

[Sam Houston](#) was elected to his 3d and final term as a US Senator, as a Democrat.



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

53. There would be over fifty slave escape narratives such as this one published between 1815 and 1865. ([Waldo Emerson](#) would term such the 1st truly American literary genre.)



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January 19, Wednesday, [1853](#): In Rome, the premiere of the opera *Il Trovatore*, a drama to words of Cammarano and Bardare after Garcia Gutiérrez, was directed by its composer [Giuseppe Verdi](#) (the work was so extremely successful that the audience demanded that the 4th act be repeated).

The [Wabash Express](#) of Terre Haute, Vigo County, Indiana offered to its readership an anecdote in regard to the death of [Mr. Webster](#) during the previous year. When a physician asked how he felt, he had responded “I feel like the Jackdaw in the Church Steeple.” The physician presumed the dying man’s mind to be wandering but one of the ladies present, who knew Webster better, then stepped to the bedside and asked what the dying man had meant, by saying he felt like the jackdaw in the church steeple. The response obtained had been “Why [Cowper](#) don’t you remember?”

CORNICULA⁵⁴

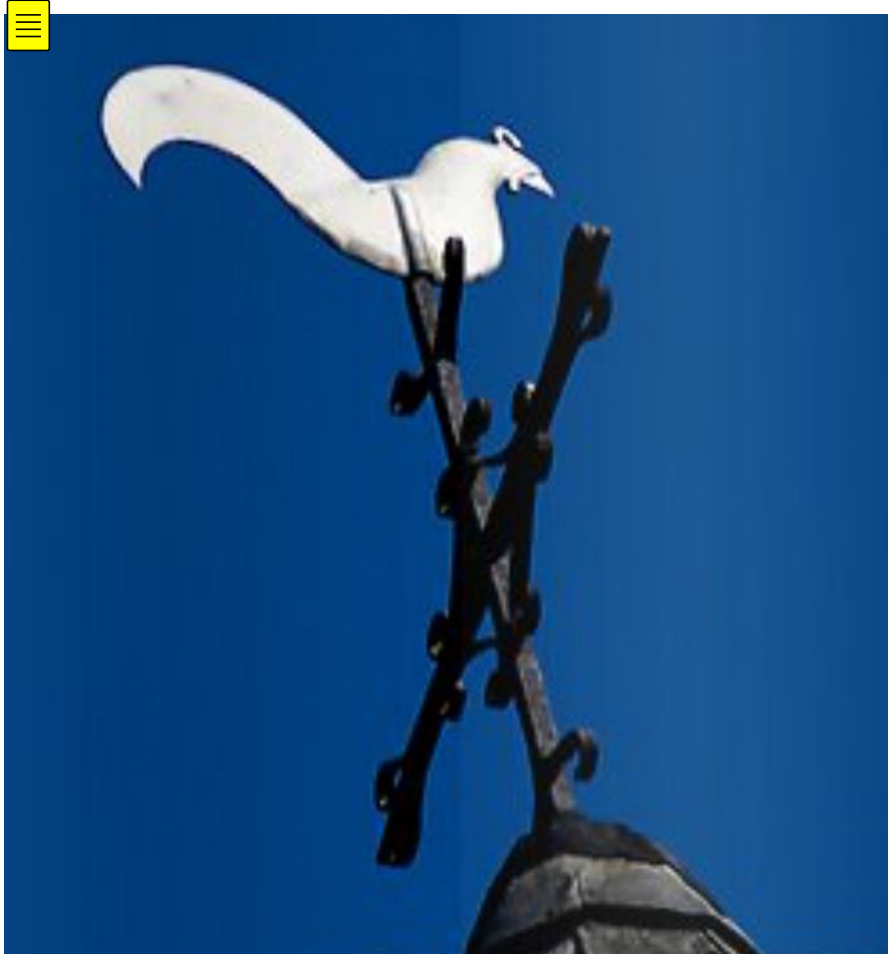
NIGRAS inter aves avis est, quæ plurima turres,
Antiquas ædes, celsaque fana colit.
Nil tam sublime est, quod non audace volatu,
Aëriis spernens inferiora, petit.
Quo nemo ascendat, cui non vertigo cerebrum
Corripiat, certe hunc seligit ilia locum.
Quo vix a terra tu suspicis absque tremore,
Illa metus expers incolumisque sedet.
Lamina delubri supra fastigia, ventus
Qua caeli spiret de regione, docet;
Hanc ea prae reliquis mavult, secura peric’li,
Nee curat, nedum cogitat, unde cadat.
Res inde humanas, sed summa per otia, spectat,
Et nihil ad sese, quas videt, esse videt.
Concursus spectat, plateaque negotia in onini,
Omnia pro nugis at sapienter habet.
Clamores, quos infra audit, si forsitan audit,
Pro rebus nihili negligit, et crocitat.
Ille tibi invidet, felix cornicula, pennas,
Qui sic humanis rebus abesse velit.

54. The weather-vane tradition of the cockerel had been originated by Pope Gregory the Great in architectural reference to *MARK* 14:27-72. Pope Nicholas I had decreed that such a cockerel weather-vane be positioned atop each church. The Bayeux Tapestry of 1066 records one atop Westminster Abbey. However, it is much more common to view some actual [jackdaw](#) atop an actual church roof, than to view a chicken up there, because its so really really hard for a chicken to make its way up and back down.

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The Jackdaw



There is a bird who, by his coat,
 And by the hoarseness of his note,
 Might be supposed a crow;
 A great frequenter of the church,
 Where, bishop-like, he finds a perch,
 And dormitory too.

Above the steeple shines a plate,
 That turns and turns, to indicate
 From what point blows the weather.
 Look up — your brains begin to swim,
 'Tis in the clouds — that pleases him,
 He chooses it the rather.

Fond of the speculative height,
 Thither he wings his airy flight,
 And thence securely sees
 The bustle and the [rare-show](#),
 That occupy mankind below,
 Secure and at his ease.

You think, no doubt, he sits and muses
 On future broken bones and bruises,
 If he should chance to fall.
 No; not a single thought like that



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Employs his philosophic pate,
Or troubles it at all.



He sees that this great roundabout,
The world, with all its motley rout,
Church, army, physic, law,
Its customs and its businesses,
Is no concern at all of his,
And says — what says he? — Caw.

Thrice happy bird! I too have seen
Much of the vanities of men;
And, sick of having seen 'em,
Would cheerfully these limbs resign
For such a pair of wings as thine
And such a head between 'em.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR JANUARY 19th]



January 20, Thursday, [1853](#): [Henry Thoreau](#) went to [Walden Pond](#), which had at this point frozen over thick enough to bear the weight of fishermen.

The New-York Times reported on the [Solomon Northup](#) (“NORTHROP”) case:

We have obtained from Washington the subjoined statement of the circumstances attending the seizure and recovery of the negro man SOLOMON NORTHROP, whose case has excited so high a degree of interest. The material facts in the history of the transaction have already been given, but this narrative will be found a more complete and authentic record than has yet appeared:

SOLOMON NORTHROP, the subject of the following narrative, is a free colored citizen of the United States; was born in Essex County, New York, about the year 1803; became early a resident of Washington County, and married there in 1829. His father and mother resided in the County of Washington about fifty years, till their decease, and were both free. With his wife and children he resided at Saratoga Springs in the Winter of 1841, and while there was employed by two gentlemen to drive a team South, at the rate of a dollar a day. In fulfilment of his employment he preceeded to New-York, and having taken out free papers, to show that he was a citizen, he went on to Washington City, where he arrived the second day of April, the same year, and put up at GADSBY'S Hotel. Soon after he arrived, he felt unwell and went to bed.

While suffering with severe pain some persons came in, and, seeing the condition he was in, proposed to give him some medicine and did so. That is the last thing of which he had any recollection until he found himself chained to the floor of WILLIAMS' slave pen in this City, and handcuffed. In the course of a few hours,



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JAMES H. BURCH, a slave dealer, came in, and the colored man asked him to take the irons off from him, and wanted to know why they were put on. BURCH told him it was none of his business. The colored man said he was free and told where he was born. BURCH called in a man by the name of EBENEZER RODBURY, and they two stripped the man and laid him across a bench, RODBURY holding him down by his wrists. BURCH whipped him with a paddle until he broke that, and then with a cat-o'-nine tails, giving him a hundred lashes, and he swore he would kill him if he ever stated to anyone that he was a free man. From that time forward the man says he did not communicate the fact from fear, either the fact that he was a free man, or what his name was, until the last summer. He was kept in the slave pen about ten days, when he, with others was taken out of the pen in the night, by BURCH, handcuffed and shackled, and taken down the river by a steamboat, and then to Richmond, where he with forty-eight others was put on board the brig Orleans. There BURCH left them. The brig sailed for New-Orleans, and on arriving there, before she was fastened to the wharf, THEOPHILUS FREEMAN, another slave dealer, belonging in the city of New-Orleans, and who in 1838 had been a partner with BURCH in the slave trade, came to the wharf and received the slaves as they were landed, under his direction. This man was immediately taken by FREEMAN and shut up in his pen in that city. He was taken sick with the small pox immediately after getting there, and was sent to a Hospital where he lay two or three weeks. When he had sufficiently recovered to leave the hospital, FREEMAN declined to sell him to any person in that vicinity, and sold him to a Mr. FORD, who resided in Rapides parish, Louisiana, where he was taken and lived a little more than a year, and worked as a carpenter, working with FORD at that business.

FORD became involved and had to sell him. A Mr. TIBAUT became the purchaser. He in a short time sold him to EDWIN EPPES in Bayou Beouf, about one hundred and thirty miles from the mouth of Red River, where EPPES has retained him on a Cotton plantation since the year 1843.

To go back a step in the narrative, the man wrote a letter in June 1841 to HENRY B. NORTHROP, of the State of New-York, dated and post marked at New-Orleans, stating that he had been kidnapped and was on board a vessel, but was unable to state what his destination was; but requesting Mr. N. to aid him in recovering his freedom, if possible. Mr. N. was unable to do anything in his behalf in consequence of not knowing where he had gone, and not being able to find any trace of him. His place of residence remained unknown, until the month of September last, when the following letter was received by his friends:

BAYOU BEOUF,
August, 1852

Mr. WM. PENY, or Mr. LEWIS PARKER:



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GENTLEMEN: It having been a long time since I have seen or heard from you, and not knowing that you are living, it is with uncertainty that I write to you; but the necessity of the case must be my excuse. Having been born free just across the river from you, I am certain you must know me; and I am here now a slave. I wish you to obtain free papers for me, and forward them to me at Marksville, La., Parish of Avovelles, and oblige Yours,

SOLOMON NORTHROP

On receiving the above letter, Mr. N. applied to Governor HUNT, of New-York, for such authority as was necessary for him to proceed to Louisiana, as an agent to procure the liberation of SOLOMON. Proof of his freedom was furnished to Governor HUNT, by affidavits of several gentlemen, General CLARKE among others. Accordingly, in pursuance of the laws of New-York, HENRY B. NORTHROP was constituted an agent to take such steps, by procuring evidence, retaining counsel, &c., as were necessary to procure the freedom of SOLOMON, and to execute all the duties of his agency. He left Sandy Hill, in New-York, on the 14th of December last, and came to the city of Washington, and stated the facts of the case to Hon, PIERRE SOULE, of Louisiana; Hon, Mr. CONRAD, Secretary of War, from New-Orleans, and Judge NELSON, of the Supreme Court of the United States, and other gentlemen. They furnished Mr. N, with strong letters to gentlemen residing in Louisiana, urging their assistance in accomplishing the object of restoring the man to freedom.

From Washington, Mr. N. went, by the way of Pittsburg and the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, to the mouth of the Red River, and thence up that river to Marksville, in the parish of Avovelles, where he employed Hon, JOHN P. WADDILL, an eminent lawyer of that place, and consulted with him as to the best means of finding and obtaining possession of the man. He soon ascertained that there was no such man at Marksville, nor in that vicinity. Bayou Beouf, the place where the letter was dated, was twenty-three miles distant, at its nearest point, and is seventy miles in length. For reasons which it is unnecessary to give, the very providential manner in which the residence of the man was ascertained, cannot now be given, although the circumstances would add much to the interest of the narrative. But he was found without great difficulty, and legal proceedings commenced. A process was placed in the hands of a Sheriff, directing him to proceed to Bayou Beouf and take the colored man into his possession, and wait the order of the Court in regard to freedom. The next day, the owner, with his counsel, came to Marksville and called upon Mr. N., who exhibited to them the commission which he had received from the Governor of New-York, and the evidence in his possession relating to the man's being a free citizen of New-York.

EPPE'S counsel, after examining it, stated to his



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client, that the evidence was ample and satisfactory; that it was perfectly useless to litigate the question further, and advised him by all means to deliver the colored man up, in order that he might be carried back to the State of New-York, in pursuance with the Governor's requisition. An article was drawn up between the claimant and Mr. NORTHRUP, the counsel for the colored man, and recorded in accordance with the laws of the place, showing that the colored man was free. Having settled everything satisfactorily, the agent and the rescued man started for New-Orleans on the 4th of January instant, and on arriving there, traced the titles of the colored man from TIBAUT to EPPES, from LORD to TIBAUT, and from FREEMAN to FORD--all the titles being recorded in the proper books kept for that purpose.

Having traced the titles back as far as possible in New-Orleans, the party then proceeded to the City of Washington, where BIRCH lived; and on making inquiry, found who was the keeper of the slave pen in 1841; and also ascertained from the keeper, upon the colored man (SOLOMON N.) being pointed out to him--that he was placed in that pen in the Spring of 1841, and then kept for a short period by BURCH.

Immediately upon the receipt of this information, complaint was made before the Police of Washington against BURCH, for kidnapping and selling into slavery a free colored man. The warrant for his arrest was issued on the 17th instant by Justice GODDARD, and returned before Justice MANSELL. BURCH was arrested and held to bail in the sum of \$3,000, SHEKELS, a slave-trader of seventeen years standing, going his bail.

It is but justice to say that the authorities of Avovelles, and indeed at New-Orleans, rendered all the assistance in their power to secure the establishment of the freedom of this unfortunate man, who had been snatched so villainously from the land of freedom, and compelled to undergo sufferings almost inconceivable in this land of heathenism, where slavery exists with features more revolting than those described in "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

On the 18th instant, at 10 o'clock, both parties appeared before the magistrate. Senator CHASE from Ohio, Gen. CLARK, and HENRY B. NORTHRUP, being counsel for the plaintiff, and J.H. BRADLEY for the defendant. Gen. CLARK and E.H. NORTHRUP, who were sworn as witnesses on the part of the prosecution, and established the foregoing facts. On the part of the defendant, BENJAMIN SHEKELS and B.A. THORN were sworn. The prosecution offered the colored man who had been kidnapped, as a witness on the part of the prosecution, but it was objected to, and the Court decided that it was inadmissible. The evidence of this colored man was absolutely necessary to prove some facts on the part of the prosecution, as he alone was cognizant of them. Mr. SHEKELS, who had been, as before stated a slave



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trader in the City of Washington seventeen years, testified that some ten or twelve years ago he was keeping public house in this city; that BURCH boarded at the house and carried on the business of buying and selling slaves; that in that year, two white men came into his barroom and stated that they had a slave for sale. Mr. BURCH immediately entered into a negotiation for his purchase. The white men stated that they were from Georgia; had brought the negro with them from that State, and wished to sell him to be carried back to that State; that the negro expressed a willingness to be sold in order to return to Georgia; SHEKELS, however, was unable to state the names of either of the white men, or the name of the colored man; was unacquainted with either of them previous to that time, and had never seen either since that transaction; that he saw them execute a bill of sale to BURCH, saw BURCH pay him \$625 and take the bill of sale, and that he read that bill, but could not tell who was the vendor nor who was the person sold, as appeared by the bill of sale.

Mr. THORN was next called upon the stand, and testified that he was in this tavern in the Spring of the year 1841, and saw a white man negotiating a trade with BURCH for a colored man; but whether this was the colored man or not, he could not tell - for he never saw either white man or colored man but that once, and did not know whether or not BURCH bought and paid for him.

BURCH himself was next offered as a witness in his own behalf, to prove the loss of the bill of sale. His evidence was objected to by the prosecution, but was allowed by the Court. He testified that he had the bill of sale and had lost it, and did not know what had become of it. The counsel for the prosecution requested the Court to send a police officer to bring the books of BURCH, containing his bills of sales of negroes for the year 1841 and previous years. They were fortunately procured, but no bill of sale was found of this colored man by any name. Upon this positive evidence that the man had been in the possession of BURCH and that he had been in slavery for a period of more than eleven years, the Court decided that the testimony of the slave trader established the fact that BURCH came honestly by him, and consequently discharged the defendant. The counsel for the defendant had drawn up, before the defendant was discharged, an affidavit signed by BURCH, and had a warrant out against the colored man, for a conspiracy with the two white men before referred to, to defraud BURCH out of \$625. The warrant was served, and the colored man arrested and brought before Officer GODDARD. BURCH and his witnesses appeared in Court, and H. B. NORTHRUP appeared as counsel for the colored man, stating that he was ready to proceed as counsel on the part of the defendant, and asking no delay whatever. BURCH, after consulting privately for a short time with, stated to the Magistrate that he wished him to dismiss the complaint, as he would not proceed further with it.



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Defendant's counsel stated to the Magistrate that, if the complaint was withdrawn, it must be withdrawn without the request or consent of the defendant. BURCH then asked the Magistrate to let him have the complaint and the warrant, and he took them. The counsel for the defendant objected to his receiving them, and insisted that they should remain as a part of the records of the Court, and that the Court should indorse the proceedings which had been had under the process. BURCH delivered them up, and the Court rendered a judgment of discontinuance by the request of the prosecutor, and filed it in his office.

The condition of this colored man during the nine years that he was in the hands of EPPES, was of a character nearly approaching that described by Mrs. STOWE, as the condition of "Uncle Tom" while in that region. During that whole period his hut contained neither a floor, nor a chair, nor a bed, nor a mattress, nor anything for him to lie upon except a board about twelve inches wide, with a block of wood for his pillow, and with a single blanket to cover him, while the walls of his hut did not by any means protect him from the inclemency of the weather. He was sometimes compelled to perform acts revolting to humanity, and outrageous in the highest degree. On one occasion, a coloured girl belonging to EPPES, about 17 years of age, went one Sunday without the permission of her master, to the nearest plantation, about half a mile distant, to visit another colored girl of her acquaintance. She returned in the course of two or three hours, and for that offence she was called up for punishment, which SOLOMON was required to inflict. EPPES compelled him to drive four stakes into the ground at such distances that the hands and ancles of the girl might be tied to them, as she lay with her face upon the ground; and having thus fastened her down, he compelled him while standing by himself, to inflict one hundred lashes upon her bare flesh, she being stripped naked. Having inflicted the hundred blows, SOLOMON refused to proceed any further. EPPES tried to compel him to go on, but he absolutely set him at defiance and refused to murder the girl. EPPES then seized the whip and applied it till he was too weary to continue. Blood flowed from her neck to her feet, and in this condition she was compelled the next day to go in to work as a field hand. She bears the marks still upon her body, although the punishment was inflicted four years ago.

When SOLOMON was about to leave, under the care of Mr. NORTHRUP, this girl came from behind her but, unseen by her master, and throwing her arms around the neck of SOLOMON congratulated him on his escape from slavery, and his return to his family, at the same time in language of despair exclaiming, "But, Oh, God! what will become of me?"

These statements regarding the condition of SOLOMON while with EPPES, and the punishment and brutal treatment of the colored girls, are taken from SOLOMON

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himself. It has been stated that the nearest plantation was distant from that of EPPES a half mile, and of course there could be no interference, on the part of neighbors in any punishment however cruel, or however well disposed to interfere they might be.

By the laws of Louisiana no man can be punished there for having sold SOLOMON into slavery wrongfully, because more than two years had passed since he was sold; and no recovery can be had for his services, because he was bought without the knowledge that he was a free citizen.



January 20th: P.M. to Walden.

I see where snow birds in troops have visited each withered chenopodium that rises above the snow in the yard—and some are large & bushlike – for its seeds their well filled granary now. There are a few tracks reaching from weed to weed where some have run but under the larger plants the snow is entirely trodden & blackened proving that a large flock has been there & flown.

Ah our indescribable winter sky – pure & continent & clear between emerald (?) & amber (?) such as summer never sees. What more beautiful or soothing to the eye than those finely divided or minced clouds like down or loose spread cotton batting now reaching up from the west above my head! Beneath this a different stratum all whose ends are curved like spray or wisps. All kinds of figures are drawn on the blue ground with this fibrous white paint.

No sooner has Walden frozen thick enough to bear than the fishermen have got out their reels & minnows—for he who fishes a pond first in the season expects to succeed best.



January 21, Friday, 1853: It was reported in [The Liberator](#) that in a [spiritualist seance](#), a “magnetized woman” had been asked to send the spirit of [Nathaniel Peabody Rogers](#) from “beyond the veil,” and then those attending the seance in the dark heard the sound of a horn. One of those attending the seance, [Henry C. Wright](#), informed the others that once upon a time he had been with Rogers in the White Mountains, when a hotel keeper had sounded a horn in precisely the same manner!

The following literary notice appeared in [Frederick Douglass’ Paper](#):

GRAHAM’S MAGAZINE, for February, has come to hand. The Frontispiece is, to us, an enigma. “Black Letters; or, Tom-Foolery in Literature,” we have perused with attention, regret, and (we would add) disgust. It is the most unjust, the most ungenerous, and the least refined review of the world-renowned book we have ever read. Large prospects may sometimes be seen through small openings – so the expression, “we hate this niggerism,” is the solution of the whole matter. There is something most absurd in the assertion that, as a means of abolition, *Uncle Tom* is “a mistake” and “a failure.” Is Graham in his sober senses? He must pardon us if we presume to doubt it.



January 21st: A fine still warm moonlight evening – we have had 1 or 2 already moon not yet full. To the woods by the deep cut at 9 o’clock. The blueness of the sky at night is an everlasting surprise to me – suggesting the constant presence & prevalence of light in the firmament – the color

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it wears by day – that we see through the veil of night to the constant blue as by day. The night is not black – when the air is clear – but blue still as by day – the great ocean of light and ether is unaffected by our partial night. Night is not universal. At midnight I see into the universal day. Walking at midnight unless it is cloudy still the blue sky o'er arches as by day.

I am somewhat oppressed & saddened by the sameness & apparent poverty of the heavens – that these irregular & few geometrical figures which the constellations make are no other than those seen by the Chaldaean shepherds – I pine for a new World in the heavens as well as on the earth – And though it is some consolation to hear of the wilderness of stars & systems invisible to the naked eye – yet the sky does not make that impression of variety & wildness that even the forest does – as it ought. It makes an impression rather of simplicity & and unchangeableness as of eternal laws – This being the same constellation which the shepherds saw & obedient still to the same law – It does not affect me as that unhand-selled wilderness which the forest is – I seem to see it pierced with visual rays from a thousand observatories – It is more the domain of science than of poetry. But it is the stars as not known to science that I would know – the stars which the lonely traveller knows. The chaldaean shepherd saw not the same stars which I see, and I am elevated in the least toward the heavens I do not accept their classification of them. I am not to be distracted by the names which they have imposed. The sun which I know is not Apollo – nor is the evening star [Venus](#). The heavens shall be as new at least as the world is new. This classification of the stars is old and musty – it is as if a mildew had taken place in the heavens – as if the stars so closely packed had heated & moulded there. If they appear fixed, it is because that hitherto men have been thus necessitated to see them – I see not merely old but new testaments in the skies. Do not I stand as near the stars as the Chaldaean shepherds? The heavens commonly look as dry & meagre as our astronomies are – mere troops as the latter are catalogues of stars – The milky way yields no milk. A few good anecdotes is our science – with a few imposing facts respecting distance & size – & little or nothing about the stars as they concern man – teaching how he may survey a country or sail a ship – & not how he may steer his life – Astrology contained the germ of a higher truth than this – It may happen that the stars are more significant & truly celestial to the teamster than to the astronomer – Nobody sees the stars now – they study astronomy at the district school – & learn that the sun is 195 millions distant & the like – a statement which never made any impression on me because I never walked it and which I cannot be said to believe – But the sun shines nevertheless. Though observatories are multiplied the heavens receive very little attention. The naked eye may easily see farther than the armed. It depends on who looks through it – No superior telescope to this has been invented – In those big ones the recoil is equal to the force of the discharge. The poet's eye in a fine frenzy rolling ranges from earth to heaven – but this the astronomer's does not often do. It does not see far beyond the dome of Greenwich observatory. Compared with the visible phenomena of the heavens the anecdotes of science affect me as trivial & petty. Mans eye is the true star-finder – the comet-seeker. As I sat looking out the window the other evening just after dark I saw the lamp of a freight train – & nearly just over the train a bright star – which looked exactly like the former as if it belonged to a different part of the same train – It was difficult to realize that the one was a feeble oil lamp – the other a world.⁵⁵

As I walk the RR causeway I am – disturbed by the sound of my steps on the frozen ground – I wish to hear the silence of the night. I cannot walk with my ears covered – The silence is something positive & to be heard. I must stand still & listen with open ear far from the noises of the village that the night may make its impression on me – a fertile & eloquent silence. Sometimes the silence is merely negative an arid & barren waste in which I shudder – where no ambrosia grows. I must hear the whispering of a myriad voices. Silence alone is worthy to be heard. Silence is of various depth & fertility like soil. Now it is a mere Sahara where men perish of hunger & thirst – now a fertile bottom or prairie of the west. As I leave the village drawing nearer to the woods – I listen from time

VENUS

55. From the sheaf Thoreau collected under the heading "The Moon," from which after Thoreau's death either [Ellery Channing](#) or [Sophia Thoreau](#) would extrapolate the [Atlantic Monthly](#) article "Night and Moonlight":

As I sat looking out the window the other evening just after dark, I saw the lamp of a freight-train, and ~~nearly~~ [^] *further along at the same height*, just over the train, a bright star which looked exactly like the former, as if it belonged to a different part of the same train. It was difficult to realize that the one was a feeble oil lamp, [^] *and* the other [^] *perhaps* a world.

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to time – to hear the hounds of Silence baying the moon – to know if they are on the track of any game – ⁵⁶ If there's no Diana in the night – what is it worth? I hark the Goddess Diana. The silence rings – it is musical & thrills me. A night in which the silence was audible – I hear the unspeakable. I easily read the moral of my dreams – Yesterday I was impressed with the rottenness of human relations – they appeared full of death & decay – & offended the nostrils – In the night I dreamed of delving amid the graves of the dead and soiled my fingers with their rank mould. It was **sanitarily** – **morally** – & physically true.

If night is the mere negation of day I hear nothing but my own steps in it – Death is with me & life far away – If the elements are not human – if the winds do not sing or sigh – as the stars twinkle – my life runs shallow – I measure the depth of my own being. I walk with vast alliances. I am the Allied powers The holy alliance – absorbing the European potentates. – I do not get much from this blue sky – these twinkling stars – & bright snow fields reflecting an almost rosaceous light. But when I enter the woods – I am fed by the variety – the forms of the trees above against the blue, with the stars seen through the pines like the lamps hung on them in an illumination – the somewhat indistinct and misty fineness of the pine tops – And the finely divided spray of the oaks &c – And the shadows of all these on the snow – The first shadow I came to I thought was a black place where the wood-choppers had had a fire – These myriad shadows checker the white ground & enhance the brightness of the enlightened portions. See the shadows of these young oaks – which have lost half their leaves – more beautiful than themselves like the shadow of a chandelier – & motionless as if they were fallen leaves on the snow – but shake the tree and all is in motion –

In this stillness & at this distance I hear the 9 o'clock bell in Bedford 5 miles off – which I might never hear in the village but here its music surmounts the village din – and has some- thing very sweet & noble & inspiring in it, associated in part with the hooting of owls.

Returning – I thought I heard the creaking of a wagon – just starting from [Hubbards](#) door – & rarely musical it sounded – It was the Telegraph harp. It began to sound but at one spot only. It is Very fitful – & only sounds when it is in the mood – You may go by 20 times both when the wind is high & when it is low – & let it blow which way it will – & yet hear no strain from it – but another time – at a particular spot you may hear a strain rising & swelling on the string – which may at last ripen to something glorious – The wire will perhaps labor long with it before it attains to melody.

Even the creaking of a wagon in a frosty night has music in it which allies it to the highest & purest strain of the muse –

I think it was Jan 20th that I saw that which I think an otter track in path under the Cliffs. no doubt

AEOLIAN HARP

56. [William M. White](#)'s version of [Thoreau](#)'s journal entry is:

*Silence alone is worthy to be heard.
Silence is of various depth and fertility,
Like soil.*

*Now it is a mere Sahara,
Where men perish of hunger and thirst,
Now a fertile bottom, or prairie,
Of the West.*

*As I leave the village,
Drawing nearer to the woods,
I listen from time to time
To hear the hounds of Silence baying the Moon,—
To know if they are on the track of any game.*




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it was. A deep trail in the snow 6 or 7 inches wide & 2 or 3 deep in the middle, as if a log had been drawn along – similar to a muskrats only much larger – & the legs evidently short & the steps short sinking 3 or 4 inches deeper still as if it had waddled along. It finally turned into my old tracks & went toward the river – & Fair Haven Pond. One was killed there last spring.

Israel Rice tells of one shot within the year in a ditch near White Pond – prob. the same. He says I saw an otter track Minot says his mother told him she had seen a deer come down the hill behind her house – where J. Moores now is & cross the road & the meadow in front. – thinks it may have been 80 years ago. Otter are very rare here now – I have not heard of any killed here-abouts for 20 or 30 years till within 2 years – 2 or 3 of them. in Sudbury & at Fair Haven Pond.⁵⁷

 January 22, Saturday, 1853: The Placer, [California Herald](#) reported that on the previous Monday, a miner in Texas Ravine had picked up one piece of rock that had brought him \$700. On Tuesday, Mr. S.P. Ogden and Company took from their claim in Hughes Ravine near Ophir one lump of pure gold that weighed 30 ounces — in addition in a half day of work they had taken out gold amounting to \$62 so their morning of labor had gained them nearly \$600. Then on the previous Wednesday, another lump of gold had been taken out near Ophir that weighed 20 ounces. On one day during that week 40 ounces of gold had been recovered at one of the claims in Doty’s Flat Ravine. A man named Snyder had found in Texas Ravine a lump of gold slightly intermixed with quartz, that weighed a total of 20 pounds. According to the [Miners Advocate](#), the miners, collectively, had been averaging about \$10 per day. Hoo-hah!

The New-York [Illustrated News](#) brought across the pond a report of the great current popularity of the play “Uncle Tom” on the London stage, the great current popularity of a brand of bottled iniquity labeled “Uncle Tom’s Gin,” and the magnificence of the British unfaithfulness to the actual American original storyline:

“UNCLE TOM” ON THE STAGE.

The most remarkable illustration of the impression produced in England by “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” is in the fact that dramas founded upon it were on Christmas night played in London, at Drury Lane, the Adelphi, the Surrey, Saddler’s Wells, and other theatres, and at Astley’s Amphitheatre, where there was an “equestrian version” of it. The extraordinary merit of this last piece was established by the fact that it commanded uninterrupted attention for upwards of two hours, of a “boxing-night” audience assembled to witness a pantomime. This may have been owing to the large preponderance of comic scenes, some of which were quite equal in humor to any part of the pantomime. The fidelity of the representation to Mrs. Stowe’s tale may be judged from the fact that the closing scene was a

57. The poet [W.H. Auden](#) has in 1962 brought forward a snippet from this day’s entry as:

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

Pg	Topic	Aphorism Selected by Auden out of Thoreau
263	Science	It is the stars as not known to science that I would know – the stars which the lonely traveller knows.



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sword combat between Cassy and Legree. At Saddler's Wells, the best hit was a display of rival "Uncle Toms," each greater than the last, followed by an impersonation of the genuine "Old Tom," labelled (*gin*,) "the True Cause of Slavery in England."



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR JANUARY 22D]



January 23, Sunday, 1853: [John Wilkes Booth](#) was baptized at St. Timothy's Protestant Episcopal Church.

[Mrs. Pierce](#), who had given birth to 3 children all of whom were dead, wrote to her 11-year-old Benjy who had been killed in the train wreck while the family was on its way to Washington DC for her husband [Franklin Pierce](#)'s inauguration as President of the United States of America:

My precious child - I must write to you, altho' you are never to see it or know it - How I long to see you and say something to you as if you were as you always have been (until these last three dreadful weeks) near me. Oh! How precious do those days now seem, my darling boy - and how I should have praised [sic] the days passed with you had I suspected they might be so short - Dear, dear child - I cannot bear to think of that agonizing time, when I had just seen you all alive to what was passing around and near me, but not near enough - oh had you but been within reach of your dear father - in a moment changed my dear boy bright form into a lifeless one insensible to your parents' agony - But you spirit yourself, my dear one - was not your redeeming savior ready to receive you? Your sweet little brother? Your dear Uncle Lawrence? - but you are beyond my knowledge at once - Ah, I trust in joy, but I would fain have kept you here - I know not how to go on without you - you were my comfort dear - far more than you thought. I was thinking how pleasantly we should go on together when we found ourselves at home again - and I would do everything to make you love me and have confidence in me and bring you along gently and sweetly - Oh! You were indeed "a part of mine and of your father's heart". When I have told you dear boy how much you depended on me, and felt that you could not do without me - I did not say too how much I depended on you and oh! My precious boy how gladly would I recall all that was unreasonable - or hasty - or mistaken in my conduct toward you. I see surely and I did frequently see afterward that I had wronged you - and would have gladly acknowledged it only that I feared it might weaken your confidence in me and perhaps on that account not be as well for you - and now I am at home again dear boy. Oh what anguish was mine on returning without you, and feeling that it must still be so, while I live - to see your little bed that you loved so much - and which I look at many times in the day, and at night feel as if I must see it shape [?] out again and the clothes turned down for you - and unconsciously look in the morning for it and you - and listen for your bright cheerful voice your



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blithe "good morrow" - and oh! to look around and see your books and everything so connected with you - your dear self - and now on this Sabbath which you loved so much as you said often how I have marked for you each hour with its wonted occupation - and oh to think of you kneeling by me at our evening prayer tonight, dear child - has not the Savior made you His as we so often asked. But now I must kneel alone and beg for strength and support under this crushing sorrow, that the blessed Savior would comfort the heart of your pain stricken Mother - and help me better to bear the burden of your loss which has brought desolation such as I have never (with all my former griefs) known.

Dear precious boy! I have passed through the bitter time of leaving our home, and without my child, my own dear Benny. How did I think of you - dear - in every moment - of all your little parting notes and the many good-byes - and again the ride in those rail cars agonizing to my soul - we went in to the same little saloon as when we went down to Andover the last time - we three then, now only two - but we seemed to see you as when there before - and now we are in Boston, still without you, but I fancying what I should do and what I should say to you - continually, and now we must "journey on e'en when grief is sorest" with the whole head sick and the whole heart faint. I will "look to Jesus" (how often I have directed you to him my precious one) and sought his blessing for you and myself - but my son, my dear son, how much I feel my own faults in regard to you - I know that I did not take the right way and should have dealt with you very gently often when I judged hastily and spoke harshly. I can see that I was "unreasonable" and sometimes almost wonder that you loved me at all. God help me now to correct in bitterness my errors when oh! It is too late for you to have the sweet benefit of it - and now this Sabbath evening you will come in fancy before me and I sit close by you, with your hand in mine perhaps, or you will lean against me on the sofa, or as sometimes you did on Sunday evening sit on my lap a little while and we talk together and say hymns and then play and then by and by you go to bed first putting your arms around me and laying your dear head on my shoulder and then you get in your bed and we have our Sabbath night kiss - but to think I can never have another - Oh Benny, I have not valued such a sweet blessing as I ought.



January 23, Sunday: Rain carrying off the snow & making slosh of the lower half of it- It is perhaps the wettest walking we ever have.



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

THE TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT

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

In Oregon, Jefferson County was attached to Island County and King County was attached to Pierce County — both attachments for judicial purposes (these attachments would be reconfirmed on February 1st).



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



January 25, Tuesday, 1853: The news of this morning was that a proposal had been presented to the federal congress, that the Constitution of the United States be amended, so as to vest power in Congress to establish a uniform system of marriage and to punish its violations.

Aesculap-Polka op.130 by [Johann Baptist Strauss II](#) was performed for the initial time, in the Sperl Ballroom of Vienna.



January 25th, 1853: Pm to Flints Pond Down RR.

There is something spring-like in this afternoon. The earth & sun appear to have approached some degrees— The banks seem to lie in the embrace of the sun. The ground is partly bare. The cress is fresh & green at the bottom of the brooks— What is that long leaved green plant in the brook in Hosmers meadow on the Turnpike? The buttercup leaves appear everywhere when the ground is bare. There are temporary ponds in the fields made by the rain & melted snow — which hardly have time freeze they soak up so fast. As I go up bare-hill — there being only snow enough there to whiten the ground the last year’s stems of the blue berry — (vacillans) give a pink tinge to the hill-side — reminding me of red snow— though they do not seemle it. I am surprised to see Flints Pond 1/4 part open —the middle— Walden which froze much later is nowhere open. But Flints feels the wind & is shallow.

I noticed on a small pitch pine In the axils close to the main stem little spherical bunches of buds an inch & more in diameter with short apparently abortive leaves from some— The leaves were nearly all single as in the plants of one or 2 years growth — and were finely serrate or toothed pectinate(?) On the lot I surveyed for Weston I found the Chestnut oak — (though the teeth are sharper than E’s plate) a handsome leaf still on the young trees— I had taken it for a chestnut before. It is hard to distinguish them by the trunk alone. I found some barberry sprouts when the bushes had been cut down not long since & they were covered with small withered leaves beset with stiff prickles on their edges—& you could see the thorns as it were gradually passing into leaves being on one stage the nerves of the leaf alone starlike & branched thorns — gradually as you descended the stem getting

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some pulp between them. I suppose it was owing to the shortening them in.

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BARBERRY



I still pick chestnuts – some larger ones proved to contain double meats – divided as it were arbitrarily as with a knife each part having the common division without the brown skin transverse to this.

The pickerel of Walden– When I see them lying on the ice or in the well which the fisherman cuts in the ice – I am always surprised by their rare beauty –as if they were a fabulous fish– they are so foreign to the streets or even the woods handsome as flowers & gems –golden & emerald– a transcendent & dazzling beauty which separates by a wide interval from the cadaverous cod & haddock at least a day old which we see They are as foreign as arabia to our Concord life as if the 2 ends of the earth had come together. These are not green like the pines –or gray like the stones – or blue like the sky –but they have if possible to my eye yet rarer colors like precious stones. It is surprising that these fishes are caught here. They are something tropical. They are true topazes in as much as you can only conjecture what place they came from – the pearls of walden– Some animalized Walden water– That in this deep & capacious spring far beneath the rattling teams & chaises & tinkling sleighs that travel the Walden road this great gold & emerald fish swims!! I never chanced to see this kind of fish in any market. With a few convulsive quirks they give up their diluted ghosts

I have noticed that leaves are green & violets bloom later where a bank has been burnt over in the fall as if the fire warmed it. Saw today where a creeping Juniper had been burnt – radical leaves of Johnswort– thistle –clove a dandelion &c as well as sorrel & veronica.

Young white oaks retain their leaves & large ones on their lower parts.

Swamp whit oak(?)

Very young rock chestnut oaks.

The little chinquapin(?) "

Bear oak

The scarlet " (?)

The red "

Black? young trees.

The Witch hazel more or less

Carpinus Americana

Ostrya Virginica. somewhat

Sweet fern more or less

Andromeda

" Panicled(?)

Kalmia latifolia

" Angustifolia

Cranberry

The above are such as I think of which wear their leaves conspicuously now.



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January 26, Wednesday, 1853: According to the Daily Alta California, prospectors in the vicinity of Kelsey's in the California hills had been recovering, from ravines and gulches that had previously been deemed too poor to work, large quantities of coarse gold worth some \$8 to \$10 per day of labor. They were finding some lumps of from 3 to 5 ounces. A stampede of miners would soon begin, some hundred from Coloma with picks, pan, and shovel in hand, plus great numbers from Georgetown and from Greenwood Valley:

Mr. Editor.

I find myself today on Rich Valley, some 3 miles West of Georgetown. Here within a few days past, astonishing discoveries have been made. A vein of decayed quartz was struck containing gold to an extent almost beyond belief. Pans of dirt were washed paid five, seventeen, thirty-eight, and one hundred and eight dollars to the pan. The day following one pan paid as high as \$674 and several others upwards of \$500.

Satanella-Quadrille op.123 by Johann Baptist Strauss II was performed for the initial time, in the Sophiensaal of Vienna (also premiered was Strauss' Satanella-Polka op.124).

Lieutenant William Lewis Herndon delivered his report about the Amazon basin to the Secretary of the Navy, John P. Kennedy. It would be printed during this year in the District of Columbia by Robert Armstrong, Public Printer as EXPLORATION OF THE VALLEY OF THE AMAZON, MADE UNDER DIRECTION OF THE NAVY DEPARTMENT.

LT. HERNDON'S AMAZON



January 26th: Upriver on ice 9 Am above Pantry.

A sharp cutting air – This is a pretty good winter morning however – Not one of the rarer. There are from time to time mornings – both in summer & winter when especially the world seems to begin anew – beyond which memory need not go – for not behind them is yesterday and our past life – when as in the morning of a hoar frost there are visible the effects of a certain creative energy – the world has visibly been recreated in the night – mornings of creation I call them.

In the midst of these marks of a creative energy recently active – while the sun is rising with more than usual splendor I look back – I look back for the era of this creation not into the night but to a dawn for which no man ever rose early enough. A morning which carries us back beyond the Mosaic creation – where crystallizations are fresh & unmelted. It is the poet's hour. Mornings when men are new born – men who have the seeds of life in them. It should be a part of my religion to abroad then. This is not one of those mornings – but a clear cold airy winter day.

It is surprising how much room there is in nature, – if a man will follow his proper path – – In these broad fields – In these extensive woods – on this stretching river I never meet a walker – – passing behind the farmhouses I see no man out – Perhaps I do not meet so many men as I should have met 3 centuries ago when the Indian hunter roamed these woods – I enjoy the retirement & solitude of an early settler – Men have cleared some of the earth which no doubt is an advantage to the walker – I see a man sometimes chopping in the woods – or planting or hoeing in a field – at a distance – & yet there may be a lyceum in the evening & there is a bookshop & library in the village. & 5 times a day I can be whirled to Boston within an hour.

There is a little thin yellow ice on the meadows. I see the bubbles underneath looking like coin. A slight fine snow has fallen in the night & drifted before the wind – I observe that it is so distributed over the ice as show equal spaces of bare ice & of snow at pretty regular distances – I have seen the same phenomenon on the surface of snow in fields as if the surface of the snow disposed itself according to the same law that makes waves of water. There is now a fine steam-like snow blowing over the ice – which continually lodges here & there & forthwith a little drift accumulates – But why does it lodge at such regular intervals – I see this fine drifting snow in the air 10 or 12 feet high at a distance. Perhaps it may have to do with the manner in or the angle at – which the wind strikes the earth.

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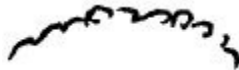
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Made a roaring fire on the edge of the meadow at Ware(?) Hill in Sudbury – A piece of paper Birch bark & dry leaves started it – & then we depended on the dead maple twigs & limbs to kindle the larger dead wood. Green wood will burn better than the damp & rotten wood that lies on the ground. We chose a place which afforded a prospect – but it turned out that we looked only at the fire – It made all places indifferent. The color of the coals – in a glowing heap or seen through the white ashes on the brands – like rubies – The shadows coming & going of the flame passing over the white ashes – of the brands – I burnt off my eyelashes when the fire suddenly blazed up with the wind – without knowing that I had come very near it. Though our fuel was dead & rotten wood found in the snow It made very little smoke which may have been owing to the state of the atmosphere clear & cold – The sound of the air or steam escaping from a brand – its sighing or dying shriek – fine & sharp as a cambric needle – is the music we hear – One half the pleasure is in making the fire. But then we should have something to cook by it. Collecting fresh fuel from time to time is very pleasant. The smoke ever-& anon compelled us to move round to the opposite side. The sap which flowed from some maple boughs which I cut froze in large drops at the end. How came sap there now?

It is remarkable that many men will go with eagerness to Walden Pond in the winter to fish for pickerel – & yet not seem to care for the landscape. Of course it cannot be **merely** for the pickerel they may catch – There is some adventure in it – but any love of nature which they may feel is certainly very slight & indefinite. They call it going a fishing & so indeed it is, though perchance their natures know better – Now I go a fishing & a hunting every day but omit the fish & the game – which are the least important part – I have learned to do without them. They were indispensable only as long as I was a boy – I am encouraged when I see a dozen villagers drawn to walden pond to spend a day in fishing through the ice – & suspect that I have more fellows than I knew, but I am disappointed & surprised to find that they lay so much stress on the fish – which they catch or fail to catch & on nothing else. as if there were nothing else to be caught.

When we got off at some distance from our fire returning – We saw a light bluish smoke rising as high as the woods above it, though, we had not perceived it before, & thought that no one could have detected us.

At the fall on Clematis Brook the forms of the ice were admirable – the coarse spray had frozen as it fell on the rocks – & formed shell like crusts over them, with irregular but beautifully clear & sparkling surfaces like eggshaped diamonds



each being the top of a clubshaped & branched fungus icicle – This spray had improved the least core as the dead & slender rushes drooping over the water & formed larger icicles about them shaped exactly like horns with the skulls often attached – or roots of horns –



on similar slight hints then were built out from the shore & rocks all sorts of fantastic forms with broader & flatter bases from which hung stalactites of ice and on logs in the water were perfect ice fungi of all sizes



under which the water gurgled flat underneath & hemispherical. A form like this would project over

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the water



Looking down on it

six or 7 inches deep by 4 or 5 in width & a foot long held by the rocks but with a slight weed for core. You could take off the incrustations on the rocks – turn them up & they were perfect shells –



These are the horns a foot or 2 high.



In the rock incrustations there were upright clubshaped icicles as I have said packed close together 3 or 4 inches long thus




and so or right & left with a homogeneous or undivided base. They appeared like crystallizations as quartz crystals with rounded instead of flattened summits. – built up from below and as they {open,} widening or thickening to fill the space.

The only birds I have seen today were some jays – one whistled clearly – some of my mewing red frontlets – & some familiar chickadees. They are inquisitive & fly along after the traveller to inspect him.

In civilized nations there are those answering to the rain makers & sorcerers of savages – – Also this office is universal among savage tribes – Bitter cutting cold NW wind on causeway stiffening the face – freezing the ears.

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



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

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

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



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

RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH



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 January 28, Friday, [1853](#): Don José Martí y Pérez was born in [Havana](#).



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[Henry Thoreau](#) made an entry in his journal that he was later to copy into his early lecture "[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT](#)" It would be combined with an entry made on March 2, 1852 to form the following, using [Oliver](#).

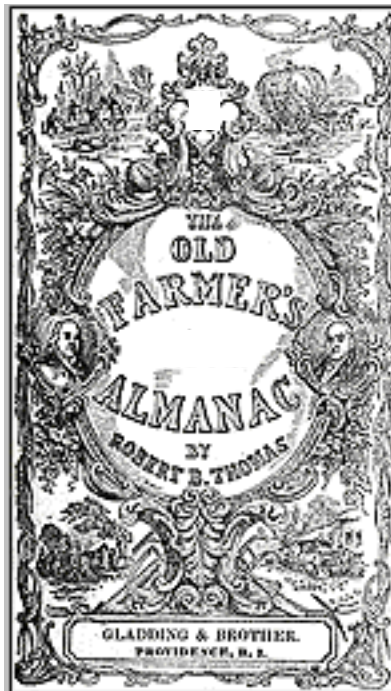
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[Goldsmith](#)'s "[The Deserted Village](#)," line 158:

[Paragraph 23] If any body thinks a thought, how sure we are to hear of it! Though it be only a half thought, or half a delusion it gets into the newspapers, and all the country rings with it at last. But how much clearing of land, and plowing and planting and building of stone wall is done every summer without being heard of out of the district! A man may do a great deal of bogging without becoming illustrious—when if he had done comparatively little work in some intellectual or spiritual bog—we should not have willingly let it die. Agricultural literature is not as extensive as the fields, and the farmer's almanac is never a big book. The exploits of the farmer are not often reported even in the agricultural papers, nor are they handed down by tradition from father to son, praiseworthy and memorable as so many of them are. But if he ran away from hard work once in his youth and chanced to be present at one short battle, he will, even in his old age, love to

**Brad Dean's
Commentary**



Thoreau also made an observation on this day, about human use patterns on the meadows, that would help him come to understand how these wetlands were year after year coming to be less and less able to store water, with the annual flood stage thereby becoming higher and higher, causing water to back up at the Fordway of the Concord River just above the [Billerica dam](#). He would be led eventually to the conclusion that despite the focus and fury of the meadowland hay farmers, this Billerica dam didn't have all that much to do with the deteriorating condition of their river meadows and the spoilage of their winter animal fodder. As Professor Thorson would point out on his page 236, "With respect to meadow wetness, farmers had become their own worst enemies."

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Undeniably, the watershed was changed in the middle by countless transformations within the subwatersheds of all three of Thoreau's rivers. But was it **cursed**? Certainly the owners of the Billerica dam thought so, blaming extra meadow wetness mainly on the loss of sedimentary nutrient, or "slime," needed to keep the meadows from decomposing and descending. For centuries harvests have been sustainable because the smallest particles of river sediment were deposited on the meadows each time they were covered by water. The dams, however, trapped the annual dose of organic sediment in their mill ponds. With less fertilization, hay cutting became unsustainable. Thereafter, vegetative growth was being maintained by the consumption of muck soils. This translated into a loss of volume, which translated into a loss of elevation, which translated into an increase in wetness. Finally, the earlier aerobic bacterial metabolic pathways had added biomass to the meadows. When submerged, the switch to anaerobic conditions consumed the muck, which contributed to slow subsidence and vented what the complainers called "mephitic gasses," mainly hydrogen sulfide. Meanwhile, the farmers on those starving meadows were mismanaging them with too much ditching, burning, and mining. Muck was mined to spread on the upland fields in lieu of animal manure. These excavations created artificial ponds that held more water longer, thereby keeping meadows wetter. As they slowly gave up on the alluvial meadows, farmers were increasingly drawn to upland swamps, which could be managed like cranberry bogs to grow hay. Thoreau described one such "improvement": "Here was an extensive swamp, level of course as a floor, which first had been cut, then ditched broadly, then burnt over; then the surface paved off, stumps and all, in great slices; then these piled up every six feet, three or four feet high, like countless larger muskrat-cabins, to dry; then fire put to them; and so the soil was tamed." Drainage of such wetlands reduced their ability to store water, intensifying the flood wave and therefore causing water to back up higher at the Fordway.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), *THE BOATMAN*, pages 234-235



January 28th 53: Saw 3 ducks █ sailing in the river behind Pritchards this afternoon black with white on wings— Though these 2 or 3 have been the coldest days of the winter & the river is generally closed. Observed a new wall of stones recently dug out of the earth—all yellow & easily detected at a distance— not yet gray with lichens. Though somewhat cool it has been remarkably pleasant today — & the sun sparkles where the river is open are very cheerful to behold.

As I approach Bateman's Pond the ice looked blue— Is it indeed blue like Walden ice?

I saw an improvement, I suppose by Wm Brown —on the shore of this Pond this P.m. which really is something to tell of— The exploits of the farmer are not often reported even in the agricultural paper — nor are they handed down by tradition from father to son —praise-worthy and memorable as so many of them are— though if he ran away from hard work once in his youth & enlisted, and chanced to be present at one short battle, he will even in his old age love to dwell on this "shoulder

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his crutch & show how fields are won” with cruel satire as if he had not far better shown this with his axe & spade & plough. Here was an extensive swamp level of course as a floor – which first had been cut – then ditched broadly – then burnt over – then the surface paved off stumps & all in great slices—then these piled up every six feet 3 or 4 feet high like countless larger muskrat cabins to dry – then fire put to them – & so the soil was tamed.

We witnessed the different stages in dif. parts of the swamp.

You can walk in the woods in no direction but you hear the sound of the axe.

I tasted some black shrivelled pyrus berries in a spruce swamp—rather sweet.







January 29, Saturday, 1853: The period 1852-1870 was the period of France’s Second Empire, which utilized as its front-man a nephew of Napoleon who was consenting to know himself as the Emperor Napoléon III. On this day this ugly little important person got married with Countess Eugénie de Montijo (the Empress entered Notre Dame Cathedral to the music of “Le Prophète” by Giacomo Meyerbeer).

According to the California Placer Herald, some very rich quartz veins at Ophir had not previously been worked. The diggings there had been yielding such “lumps of ore” that the local Wells Fargo & Co. office was exhibiting specimens: a 30-ounce 18-pennyweight from Hayes Ravine and a 30-ounce 13-pennyweight, plus some lumps of 7 to 9 ounces (a “pennyweight” equals 1.55 grams, with 20 such pennyweights amounting to a single Troy ounce and 12 such ounces amounting to a single Troy pound of gold). The Marysville Herald was reporting that new and rich diggings were being discovered between the West Branch and the North Fork of the Feather River. The Coyote Diggings at Frenchtown, and the Flat Diggings at Rich Gulch a mile from Frenchtown, diggings that had begun less than a week earlier, were yielding from 1 to 4 ounces per day per prospector. One lump of pure gold discovered at Coyote Diggings had a value of \$129.



January 29th 53: To Walden


Melvin calls the ducks  which I saw yesterday shell-drakes –being small then wood-shelldrakes– I judge from the plates they were velvet ducks or white winged coots [**White-winged Scoter**  *Melanitta fusca* (~~Velvet Duck~~ (eoot)]. He never shot any at this season. Saw a wood cock last month — never before. Killed a goshawk [**Goshawk**  *Accipiter gentilis* (Cape Eagle or Partridge Hawk)] (which was eating a rabbit) & a cat owl [**Great Horned Owl**  *Bubo virginianus* ~~Hoot Owl or Cat Owl or Hooting Owl~~] lately says I hear the cat owl– Has got only 3 or 4 minks this year – never saw an otter track.

I saw a little greyish mouse frozen into Walden 3 or 4 rods from the shore — its tail sticking out a hole, it had apparently run – into this hole when full of water as if on land & been drowned & frozen. — headed downward it was. The ice is 8 inches thick. It is full of short faint flake-like perpendicular cleavages — an inch or two broad or varying somewhat from the perpendicular. Melvin thinks that the “thundering” of the pond scares the pickerel

Pickerel of at least 3 different forms & colors were lying on the ice of Walden this afternoon– 1st a long & shallow kind most like those caught in the river – steel colored with greenish or brownish lines — darker on the back & white beneath– 2nd a bright golden fish with greenish reflections remarkably deep — with a shorter head — both of these are mottled on the sides with an irregular network of dark brown lines often extending over the back — the meshes 3/4 of an inch long more or less producing longitudinal stripes more or less distinct & continuous — very pure white beneath.– 3d shaped like the last — but peppered on the sides with small dark brown or black spots intermixed with a few faint –blood red ones– very much like a trout– The specific name of reticulatus would not describe this.

These are all very firm fish — & weigh more than their size promises.

The perch also — and indeed all the fishes which inhabit this pond are as much handsomer than ordinary as the water is purer than that of other ponds. Probably many Ichthyologists would make new varieties at least of most of them.

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

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

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




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



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

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

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

 January 31, Monday, 1853: Henry Thoreau quoted from “System of the Heavens as Revealed by Lord Rosse’s Telescopes” on pages 2-47 of Volume II of the NARRATIVE AND MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS of Thomas De Quincey, which had just been published in Boston by the firm of Ticknor, Reed, and Fields:

NARRATIVE MISC. VOL. II

Motor-Quadrille op.129 by Johann Baptist Strauss II was performed for the initial time, in the Sphiensaal of Vienna.

According to the California Daily Union, the snow had nearly all left Kanaka Creek new Downieville, and prospecting was beginning. Mr. Davis had in hand a beautiful lump of gold worth \$127 he had found at Davis Flat, about 4 miles up the North Fork of the Yuba River. There were diggings at Driver’s Claim up the South Fork of the Yuba River that had only been being worked for some 6 weeks, and according to the Mountain Echo a company of 6 men running a sluice there had been averaging \$75 per worker per day.



January 31st: – Found an Ind. adze in the Bridle-Road at the brook just beyond Daniel Clark Jr’s house.

A man is wise with the wisdom of his time only & ignorant with its ignorance— Observe how the greatest minds yield in some degree to the superstitions of their age.

De Quincey (whose pains to prove that was not Christ’s mission to teach men science though he **of course** (!) knew it all, – suggested the above–) says– “This downward direction of the eyes, however,

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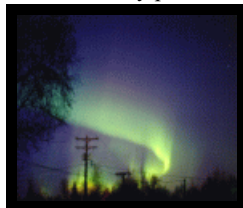
must have been worse in former ages: because, else it never **could** have happened that, until Queen Ann's days, nobody ever hinted in a book that there **was** such a thing, or **could** be such a thing, as the Aurora Borealis; and in fact, Halley had the credit⁵⁸ of discovering it."

[AURORA](#)[SKY EVENT](#)

*Very truly yours,
Thomas De Quincey.*

ATTITUDES ON DE QUINCEY

58. [De Quincey](#) is of course mistaken, since the aurora borealis had already been seen, and named as such, by [Galileo Galilei](#), before [Edmond Halley](#) first was even a gleam in the eye of Edmond Halley pere.


**AURORA BOREALIS**



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FEBRUARY 1853

 February [1853](#): This month's issue of [Harper's New Monthly Magazine](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE

This month's issue of [Putnam's Monthly Magazine of American Literature, Science, and Art](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE

 February [1853](#): [Illinois](#) adopted what was referred to as its "black law," under which any "negro or mulatto" detected by an informer as attempting to reside within that state could be fined \$50 for a first offense, and more for any subsequent offenses. The law stipulated that persons unable to pay such fines were to be sold at public auction to work under conditions of enslavement until at the agreed rate the state had received 50% of the fine and the informer had received 50%. This black law, although seldom enforced, would be remaining on the Illinois lawbooks until 1865.

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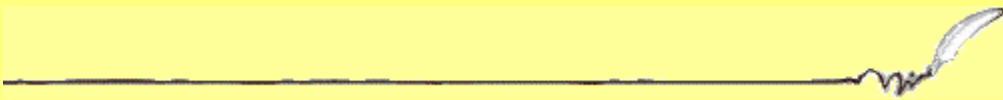
February 1853: In this month, or the previous month, or the subsequent one, Waldo Emerson made a remark in his journal by which we can see that the gentleman was indeed aware that what Henry Thoreau was trying to tell to him, and trying to demonstrate to him, had something to do with being unlike field hands, in that these laborers exchange their time and efforts for a reward not present in the work itself but what Thoreau was recommending was that we put our whole sublunary stock into the last quarter of an hour and carry that whole stock under our arm. You can also see from this extract that the whole thing was rather an irritation to Emerson, for he had to have a grudging respect for the sort of man it makes of Thoreau, and yet he needed to mock it not only through the use of distancing humor (the use of the word “sublunary,” the image of Thoreau carrying everything in his life “under his arm,” the portrayal of Thoreau as a mere negative complainer, the portrayal of Thoreau as an unconscious person whose complaints about others identify his own faults without his realizing how ridiculous this makes him appear) but also, by Emerson’s deployment of phrases such as “Live for the hour,” the worthy advice Thoreau needed to offer about our lives being a present thing was conflated with unworthy advice of the rank of “eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die”:

Walk with Ellery to Lincoln. Benzoin lauris, rich beautiful shrub in this dried up country. Particolored warbler. E. laughed at Nuttall’s description of birds: “on the top of a high tree the bird pours all day the lays of affection,” &c. Affection! Why what is it? a few feathers, with a hole at one end, & a point at the other, & with a pair of wings: affection! Why just as much affection as there is in that lump of peat.

Thoreau is at home; why he has got to maximize the minimum; that will take him some days.

We went to Bear Hill & had a fine outlook. Descending E. got sight of some labourers in the field below. Look at them, he said, those four! for daemoniacs scratching in their cell of pain! Live for the hour. Just as much as any man has done, or laid up, in any way, unfits him for conversation. He has done something, makes him good for boys, but spoils him for the hour. That’s the good of Thoreau, that he puts his whole sublunary stock into the last quarter of an hour; carries his whole stock under his arm.

At home, I found H.T. himself who complained of Arthur Hugh Clough [a poet] or somebody that he or they recited to every one at table the paragraph just read by him & then by them in the latest newspaper & studiously avoided every thing private. I should think he was complaining of one H.D.T.



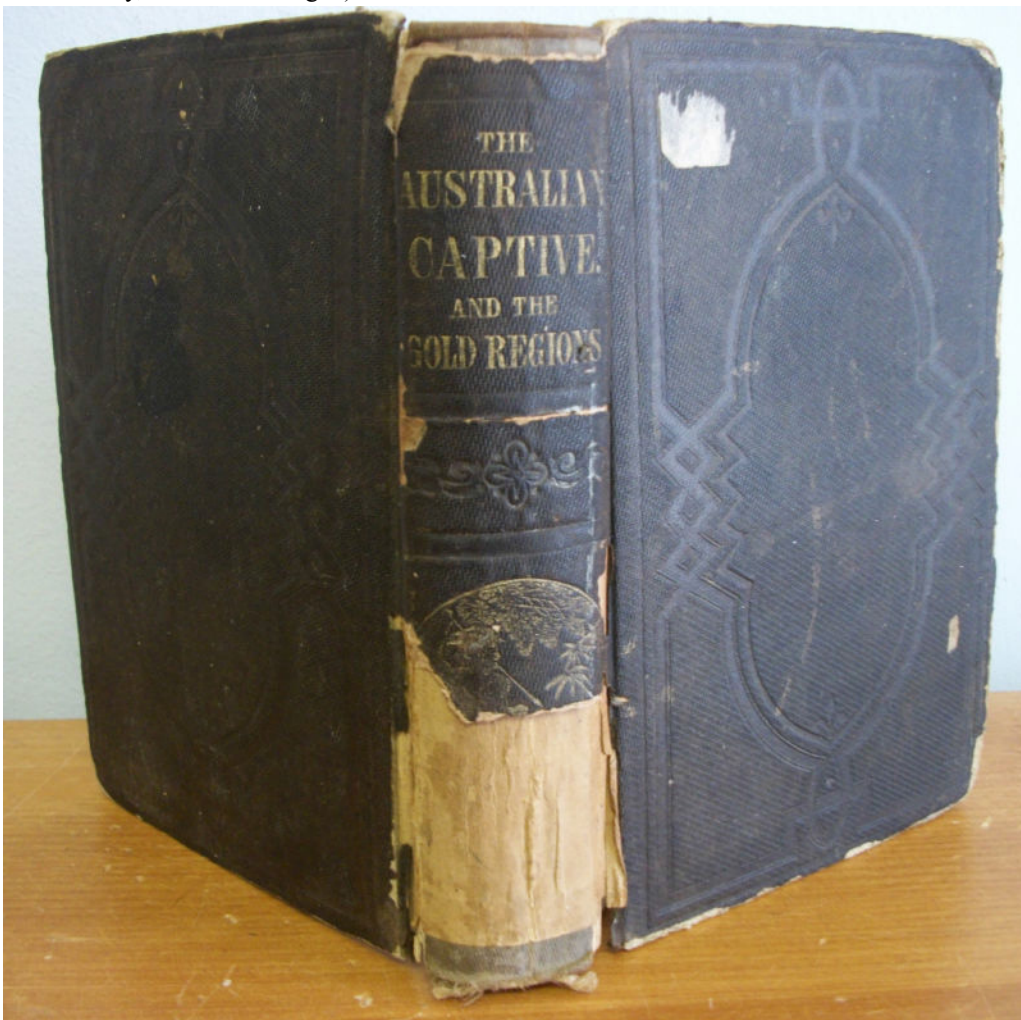
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February [1853](#): [Frederick Douglass](#) visited [Harriet Beecher Stowe](#) at her home.

Douglass wasn't the only one who could publicize a captivity-and-escape narrative! White men also can play that game! At this point, the mass-market trade press republication of [William Jackman](#)'s 1851 THE AUSTRALIAN CAPTIVE; OR, AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE OF 15 YEARS IN THE LIFE OF WILLIAM JACKMAN. IN WHICH, AMONG VARIOUS OTHER ADVENTURES, IS INCLUDED A FORCED RESIDENCE OF A YEAR AND A HALF AMONG THE CANNIBALS OF NUYTS' LAND, ON THE COAST OF THE GREAT AUSTRALIAN BIGHT.


THE AUSTRALIAN CAPTIVE

ALSO INCLUDING, WITH OTHER APPENDICES, [AUSTRALIA](#) AND ITS GOLD, FROM THE LATEST AND BEST AUTHORITIES. WITH VARIOUS ILLUSTRATIONS. EDITED BY REV. I. CHAMBERLAYNE (Auburn: Derby & Miller. Buffalo: Derby, Orton & Mulligan).



(We don't seem to have any way to find out, whether this white man's tale of an exciting adolescence, as told to a local minister in upstate New York—a story which dates back to something that supposedly happened to him all of sixteen years earlier in 1837—had been made up out of whole cloth. The ship names used in the narrative are entirely uncorroborated in nautical records. All we can know for sure is that Mr. Jackman, who had become one Wisconsin farmer among many, would be making money by the vending of this stimulating story for the remainder of his years.)

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

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



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



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


FEMINISM


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

In Oregon, Lewis County gained some territory from Thurston County and exchanged some with Clark County.



Feb. 1. Surveying the Hunt farm.

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

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

Franz Liszt completed his Piano Sonata in b in Weimar.

The following literary notices appeared in Frederick Douglass' Paper:

GRAHAM, for March, has been in our possession many days. It was



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issued before its wonted time, and will, we hope, be duly noticed by all the liberal journals of the country. Mr. Graham sends with it the following:

“CARD TO THE PRESS.

In order to make our position particularly clear, we have printed at page 365 a reply to the personalities and threats of a portion of our exchanges, and send this slip – to direct attention to it – to every one of the nineteen hundred editors with whom we exchange. We meet the question fairly, and with determination to know how many of Graham’s readers go for the gag law. If it is to be a cold shower bath, let us have it at once, lady and gentlemen agitators! We shall take it like a philosopher, but have no fear of much of a ‘shower,’ from people whose vocation it is to make [‘]a very great cry over a very little wool,’ when grief does not cost a sixpence.

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

For the rest, ‘Graham’ the Magazine, may speak for Graham the Editor.”

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

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

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

“In the sudden hurrah which bursts from the throats of the many over the ‘Cabin literature,’ we feel no certainty that Milton, Shakspeare, Byron, Wordsworth, Scott, and Cooper, are in immediate danger of being burned by the hands of the common hangman, to the



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tantaralara of an African dance.”

* * * * *

“Our female agitators have abandoned Bloomers in despair, and are just now bestride a new hobby—an intense love of black folks, in fashionable novels! Flannel ceases to be cut into garments for the children of Africa, but they are most intolerably drenched with ink—on the principle, we suppose, of ‘like to like.’”

* * * * *

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

Would not have a slave to till the ground,

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

* * * * *

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

* * * * *

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



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defence, and so *vires acquirit cundo* – it gathers as it goes, like a rolling snowball in the Oberland. Half the machinery of the whole business would have procured nearly as great a notoriety for any book thoroughly spiced with horrors.”

* * * * *

“The book is vastly overrated, and will soon find its level.” ... “It is clumsily constructed, and inartificial.” ... “The plot is feeble; it is strung and tacked together in a very unworkmanlike way.” ... “But after doing justice to the spirit and earnestness of the work, we are still happy to think it has not power enough to cause as much mischief as some have supposed.”

* * * * *

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

* * * * *

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

In his criticism on “UNCLE TOM,” Graham seems to be left “alone in his glory;” for all the most distinguished Reviewers in Great Britain, France, and Germany, have pronounced the book one of the most wonderful on record: the most celebrated American critics unite in doing it honor; at the present time. Several



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of the *Southern States* are sending extensive orders to Messrs. Jewett, for "*Uncle Tom's Cabin*;" and we doubt whether Graham's *coup de main* will succeed with his Southern patrons; for we do believe that there is more nobleness of character, more generosity, and more straightforwardness among Southern slaveholders, than among Northern cringers to the slave power.

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

Recrimination is the favorite artillery of the defenders and abettors of the slave system. This article is a sort of second edition of Mrs. Julia Tyler's letter to the ladies of England. Though there may be, perhaps, rather more vinegar in the mixture. The beggars of London, the *Irish* paupers, the miners, the factory workers, are all brought forward, as illustrations of the extremes of wretchedness—nor are the millions of India forgotten! To read Graham, and *Graham only*, any one would believe the British Empire to be the greatest of despotisms, and every other spot of earth a paradise.

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

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

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

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something is till the ray of GOD's own light and justice, however foul and dark and wo-begone the place it penetrates."



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




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

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

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

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



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

The thickest ice I have seen this winter is full nine inches.

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February 4, Friday, 1853: In West Point, Indiana, [John Otis Wattles](#) and [Friend Esther Whinery Wattles](#) produced a daughter Theano Wattles (she would become Mrs. Franklin Everett Case).



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR FEBRUARY 4th]



February 5, Saturday, 1853: The Central Bank of Troy, [New York](#) filed articles of incorporation.



Feb. 5. To Walden, P.M.

A thick fog. The trees and woods look well through it. You are inclined to walk in the woods for objects. They are draped with mist, and you hear the sound of it dripping from them. It is a lichen day. Not a bit of rotten wood lies on the dead leaves, but it is covered with fresh, green cup lichens, etc., etc. All the world seems a great lichen and to grow like one to-day, — a sudden humid growth. I remember now that the mist was much thicker over the pond than elsewhere. I could not distinguish a man there more than ten rods off, and the woods, seen dimly across a bay, were mistaken for the opposite side of the pond. I could almost fancy a bay of an acre in extent the whole pond. Elsewhere,

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methinks, I could see twice as far. I felt the greater coolness of the air over the pond, which it was, I suppose, that condensed the vapor more there. Somebody has been fishing in a rude way and left some of their lines, apparently by mistake. They have laid branches of alders over the holes, and, after tying their lines to a stick two feet long to prevent their being pulled through, have passed the slack line over a twig of the alder a foot or more above the ice and tied a dry oak leaf to it, which, being pulled down, will show when they have a bite. These sprigs or boughs are arranged all around the pond.

At the eastern shore I see at last how those ridges or ramparts are formed along the edges of ponds. The sand has been recently cast up there, six or eight inches high, by a foot or two in width, just on the edge of the ice, in the form of waves just breaking on the shore, as if the ice had crowded against the shore and forced it up, or it had been washed down by the rain and lodged against the edge of the ice. On a close examination, I found that apparently the ice had not moved, but rather had melted a foot or two, and left bare ground, the water having subsided since it froze, and its edge was exceedingly thin and rotten. The sand was forced or puffed up in the form of a pent roof for a long distance, and under this roof there was no frost in the ground, though all the shore above was still frozen, and even below, if the ice happened to be very thin and there was no water between it and the sand. Apparently the water of the pond, warmed by the rain which had run into it, especially next the shore, penetrating under the frozen shore, produced this expansion and puffing up of the shore there. Sometimes the ice itself, lying on the shore, was raised. The stones as big as one's fist, which for the most part compose the shore, were heaved up into a less conspicuous ridge, all loose, beneath which also there was no frost; also the dead wood, chips, twigs, and other rubbish. Within a limited space, just on the edge of the ice, was the phenomenon so common in the spring, of the frost coming out of the ground. No matter how large the rocks superimposed, or what the depth of sand that had accumulated, it was heaved up, so that the pitch pines by my shore were literally tipped or pried over by a force applied beneath, and many may now be seen slanted at an angle of forty-five degrees. Taking up some masses of this shore heaved up, which were still frozen, I found that, its in stones a vein of a different kind often passes through and through them, so the frozen sand alternated with sparkling veins of clear ice. Where the water had stood over the sand and frozen, and then fresh sand been worked into it, these veins of ice surrounded by sand were black. The ice of Sam Barrett's pond has a greenish tinge. The bottom of the ice on the edge of the pond next the sand had a singularly reticulated appearance, like tripe or the coats of the stomach, and I thought I detected the effects of countless air-bubbles of all sizes which had melted it there.



The frost is out of the ground in many places. A *Stellaria media* in blossom in the garden, and were of course last month.



February 6, Sunday, 1853: Giuseppe Mazzini led an attempt to take the Milan fortress by force. His appeal for an insurrection was generally ignored and the plan failed. After the failure of the revolt, Austrian Field Marshall Count Radetzky declared a state of siege and closed the city of Milan, in the middle of preparations for "La Traviata."

Anna Caroline Thayer was born in Worcester, Massachusetts, a daughter of Eli Thayer and Caroline Maria Capron Thayer.



Feb. 6. Observed some buds on a young apple tree, partially unfolded at the extremity and apparently swollen. Probably blossom-buds.



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February 7, Monday, 1853: Wiener Punch-Lieder op.131, a waltz by [Johann Baptist Strauss II](#), was performed for the initial time, in the Sperl Ballroom of Vienna.

In the "[Hedgcoxe War of 1852](#)," also known as the "[Peters Colony Rebellion](#)," an armed uprising of Texas colonists protesting what they viewed as an attempt by the Texas Emigration and Land Company to invalidate their land claims, [John Jay Good](#) had led about 100 armed colonists to the Collin County office of agent of the Texas Emigration and Land Company Henry Oliver Hedgcoxe, seized the land company's files, and delivered them to the Dallas County Courthouse, upon which that agent had fled to Austin, Texas — on this day the arrangements were amended and the situation resolved.

The [Virginia Chronicle](#) passed along a report of a wedding ceremony, from the pages of the [Savannah Republican](#):

SOMETHING FOR MRS. STOWE. — We were present, a few evenings ago. at a ceremony winch we regretted at the time could not have been witnessed by Mrs. Stowe and her aristocratic friend, the Duchess of Sutherland. It was a negro wedding. The parses were a servant girl attached to the Pavilion Hotel, where we board, and a "gemman of color" belonging to a prominent citizen. The boarders at the Pavilion and the master anf mistress of the man, were present, besides a number of the colored friends of the bride and bridegroom. Everything had been put in order for the interesting occasion by mine host of the establishment. The bride had sent out her invitations written on the most approved note paper, and enclosed in richly figured envelopes. The following is a copy of one of these invitations:

"Miss Betsy——s compliments to Mr.——, and will be happy to see him on Wednesday evening next, at 8 o'clock at the Pavilion House. Jan 20th, 1873."

The ceremony was performed by one ot the most esteemed clergymen in the city. In fact, the wedding has been postponed several days in consequence of his absence from town — The parties were accompanied by the requisite number of attendants, all dressed in the height of the fashion. The bride was arrayed in white, of course, with a wreath of flowers on her head, and a flowing veil falling over her face: what, with her snowy robes, and ebon complexion, we thought she presented the strongest contrast of white and black we had ever seen. The bridesmaids, with the exception of the wreath and veil, were similarly attired. — The bridegroom and the male attendants were dressed in black cloth, white vests and gloves, and boots so highly polished that Mrs Stowe ought have seen herself in them. The ceremony was conducted with great propriety, ihe parson availed himself of the occasion to give the parties some good advice, and to impress upon them the sanctity of the marriage tie.

The landlady had caused a sumptuous supper to be



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prepared in compliment to the bride, who is represented to be a faithful servant. In the middle of the table was placed a magnificent cake, from the centre of which rose a tree. – It is the custom of the blacks, we understand, to cut from this tree instead of a ring, and the one toward whom it falls as they cut about it, will be the next to get married. The supper, altogether, was such a one, perhaps, as hundreds of poor famished beings, within a stone's throw of the Duchess of Sutherland's princely establishment, never saw in all the days of their misery and want. Such peals of laughter as rang out on the occasion, were never heard in the dens of the London poor. –*Savannah Republican*.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR FEBRUARY 7TH]



February 8, Tuesday, 1853: Manuel Apolinario José María Ignacio Lombardini de la Torre replaced Juan Bautista Ceballos as interim President of [Mexico](#).

A Convention between the United States of America and Great Britain.

[READ THE FULL TEXT](#)



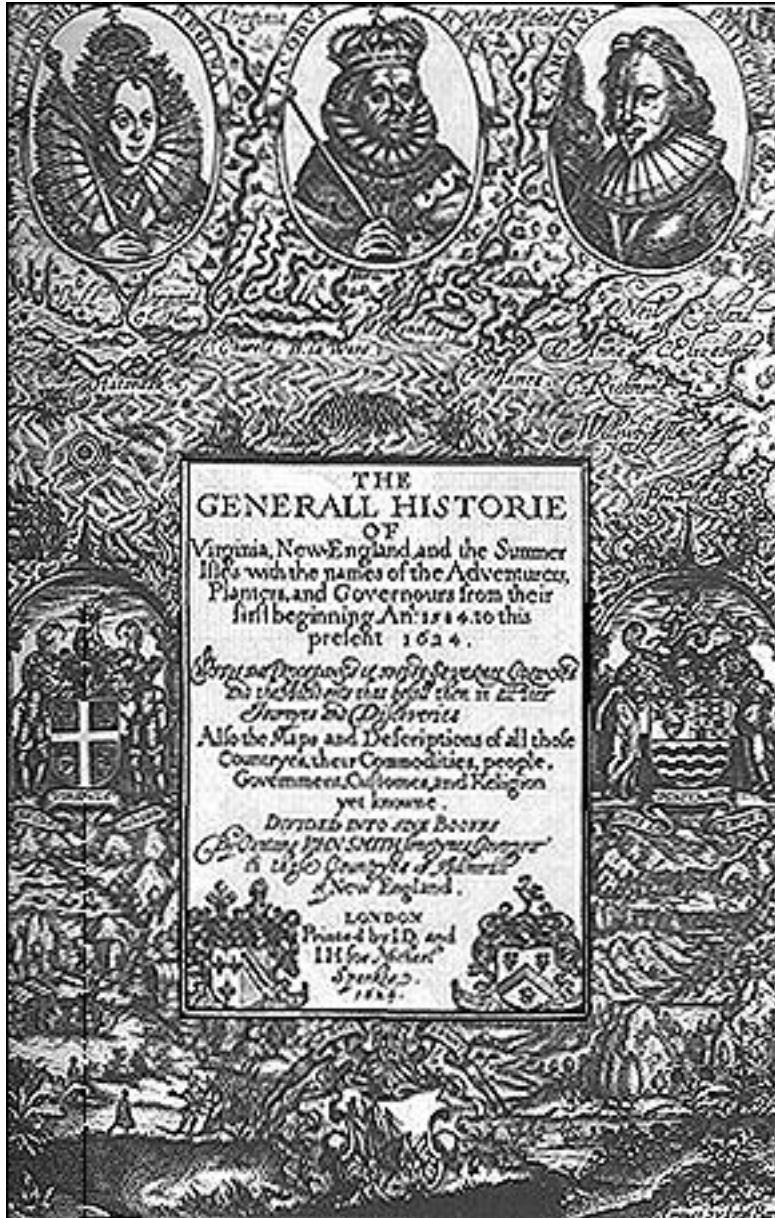
Feb. 8. The warm rains have melted off the surface snow or white ice on Walden, down to the dark ice, the color of the water, only three or four inches thick; but I observe that still, for a rod or more in width around the shores, the ice is white as snow and apparently thicker, probably owing to the reflection from the bottom from the first filling it with air-bubbles.

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February 9, Wednesday, 1853: [Henry Thoreau](#) went into Cambridge and checked out, from [Harvard Library](#), Captain [John Smith](#)'s THE GENERALL HISTORIE OF VIRGINIA, NEW-ENGLAND & THE SUMMER ISLES, TOGETHER WITH THE TRUE TRAVELS, ADVENTURES AND OBSERVATIONS, AND A SEA GRAMMAR (London: Michael Sparkes, 1624).



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[Thoreau](#) also checked out 3 volumes of [Johann-Theodor de Bry](#)'s *DESCRIPTIONES AMERICAE*, otherwise known as the *COLLECTIONES PEREGRINATIONUM IN INDIAM ORIENTALEM ET INDIAM OCCIDENTALEM, XXV PARTIBUS COMPREHENSÆ, A THEODORO, JOAN: THEODORO DE BRY, ET A MATHEO MERIAM PULICATÆ* (Francofurti ad moenum: typis Ioanis Wecheli, sumtibus vero Theodoro de Bry, 1590-1634).




A cheiff Lorde

The cheiff men of the yland haue pearles fringe upon a thred at their eares, and wear bracelets on their armes and about their necks of pearles, or small beades of copper or of smooth bone called mussel in token of authority, and honor. They cover themselves before and behynde as the women doe with a deers skynne handsomely dyed, and fringed. They fold their armes together as they walke, or as they talke one with another in signe of wilfome.

DESCRIPTIONES AMERICAE

[Thoreau](#) also checked out the JESUIT RELATION for 1640. He had already considered the volumes for the years 1633-1638 — [Harvard Library](#) would not obtain, from Québec, a copy of that volume until late in the following year.⁵⁹

59. Thoreau presumably read each and every volume of the JESUIT RELATIONS that was available in the stacks at the [Harvard Library](#). We know due to extensive extracts in his Indian Notebooks #7 and #8 that between 1852 and 1857 he did withdraw or consult all the volumes for the years between 1633 and 1672. Thoreau took notes in particular in regard to the reports by [Father Jean de Brébeuf](#), [Father Jacques Buteux](#), [Father Claude Dablon](#), [Father Jérôme Lalemant](#), [Father Paul Le Jeune](#), [Father François Le Mercier](#), [Father Julien Perrault](#), [Father Jean de Quens](#), [Father Paul Ragueneau](#), and [Father Barthélemy Vimont](#).

 Cramoisy, Sebastian (ed.). *RELATION DE CE QUI S'EST PASSÉ EN LA NOUVELLE FRANCE EN L'ANNÉE 1636: ENVOYÉE AU R. PERE PROVINCIAL DE LA COMPAGNIE DE JESUS EN LA PROVINCE DE FRANCE, PAR LE P. PAUL LE JEUNE DE LA MESME COMPAGNIE, SUPERIEUR DE LA RESIDENCE DE KÉBEC. A Paris: Chez Sebastian Cramoisy..., 1637*

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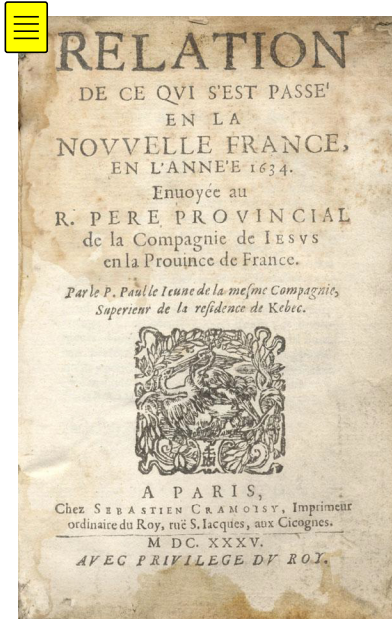
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FRANCISCVS DRACO CVM
IN LOCVM QVENDAM VENIS-
fet, à Rege istius regionis conuenitur.



Um Franciscus Draco aliquando ad locum quendam in America venisset, vidit in littore quadam incolarum tuguria, qua ex rotundis paludibus vel arboribus potius compacta, & in formam pyramidis fastigiata, ab externa parte terra undique oppleta erant. Cumq; ea ingressus esset, inuenit homines in circumferentia, confusè in stramine dormientes, nullo vel aetatis vel sexus seruato discrimine, qui in medio domus ingentem ignem extruxerant. Hi homines Anglis multa exhibebant beneficia, cumq; de eorum aduentu Rex audiuisset, venit eò cum 12000 viris, satis splendide magnificeq;. Ac omnes quidem subditi sui nudi incedebant, ipse vero solus cuniculorum pellibus vestitus erat. Eum caduceator precedebat, sceptrum & regalia regni gestans. Hunc cum DRACO vidisset, instructa statim acie, aduentum eius expectauit, sed ipse pacifice veniens, proluxa eum oratione per caduceatorem allocutus eò, finitaeque oratione imposuit ei duas coronas de sceptro suae caduceo dependentes, & tres catenulas ex ossibus artificiose factas à collo eius suspendit, quibus ipse & totum suum regnum imperiumq; subicere voluit. Interea mulieres etiam non paucae accedebant, quae praelatitia, maxillas & faciem, ad sanguinem vsque lacerarant, incedebant ipsa quoque nuda, nisi quod femorali ex scirpis factò, pudenda aliquo modo circumdederant, & ab humeris pellem cerninam dependentem habebant.

<http://www.canadiana.org>



Thoreau copied from George Heriot's THE HISTORY OF CANADA FROM ITS FIRST DISCOVERY; COMPREHENDING AN ACCOUNT OF THE ORIGINAL ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COLONY OF LOUISIANA. BY GEORGE HERIOT, ESQ. DEPUTY POSTMASTER-GENERAL OF BRITISH AMERICA (Printed for Thomas Norton Longman and Owen Rees, Paternoster Row) into his Indian Notebook #8 and into his Canadian Notebook.



February 9: At Cambridge to-day.

Dr Harris thinks the Indians had no real hemp but their apocynum — and he thinks a kind of nettle — & an asclepias. &c. He doubts if the dog was indigenous among them — Finds nothing to convince him in the history of N. England.⁶⁰ Thinks that the potato which is said to have been carried from Virginia by Raleigh was the ground-nut (which is described, I perceived, in Debry (Heriot?) among the fruits of Virginia), the potato not being indigenous in North America, and the ground-nut

DOG

60. Agassiz asked him what authority there was for it.


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having been called wild potato in New England, the north part of Virginia, and not being found in England. Yet he allows that Raleigh cultivated the potato in Ireland.

Saw the grizzly bear near the Haymarket to-day, said (?) to weigh nineteen hundred, — apparently too much. He looked four feet and a few inches in height, by as much in length, not including his great head, and his tail, which was invisible. He looked gentle, and continually sucked his claws and cleaned between them with his tongue. Small eyes and funny little ears; perfectly bearish, with a strong wild-beast scent; fed on Indian meal and water. Hind paws a foot long. Lying down, with his feet up against the bars; often sitting up in the corner on his hind quarters.

Two sables also, that would not be waked up by day, with their faces in each other's fur. An American chinchilla, and a silver lioness said to be from California.

 February 10, Thursday, 1853: According to the [California Daily Alta California](#), reports back on the eastern seaboard of streams flooded with a golden gravel had been so exaggerated that during September 1850 an ordinary Phoenix dredging machine had been sent from the east to Marysville to scoop up by main force bucketload after bucketload of the golden flooring (of course, the steam engine of this Phoenix dredge had soon been turned to more practical and profitable use).

Louis Moreau Gottschalk offered his 1st [New-York](#) recital.

The [Chinese Christian Army](#) left Wuchang.

CHINESE CIVIL WAR

[Henri-Frédéric Amiel](#), who would be referred to as the “Swiss [Thoreau](#),” wrote in his *JOURNAL INTIME*: “This afternoon I made an excursion to the Salève with my particular friends, Charles Heim, Edmond Scherer, Élie Lecoultre, and Ernest Naville. The conversation was of the most interesting kind, and prevented us from noticing the deep mud which hindered our walking. It was especially Scherer, Naville, and I who kept it alive. Liberty in God, the essence of Christianity, new publications in philosophy, these were our three subjects of conversation. The principle result for me was an excellent exercise in dialectic and in argumentation with solid champions. If I learned nothing, many of my ideas gained new confirmation, and I was able to penetrate more deeply into the minds of my friends. I am much nearer to Scherer than to Naville, but from him also I am in some degree separated.

It is a striking fact, not unlike the changing of swords in “Hamlet,” that the abstract minds, those which move from ideas to facts, are always fighting on behalf of concrete reality; while the concrete minds, which move from facts to ideas, are generally the champions of abstract notions. Each pretends to that over which he has least power; each aims instinctively at what he himself lacks. It is an unconscious protest against the incompleteness of each separate nature. We all tend toward that which we possess least of, and our point of arrival is essentially different from our point of departure. The promised land is the land where one is not. The most intellectual of natures adopts an ethical theory of mind; the most moral of natures has an intellectual theory of morals. This reflection was brought home to me in the course of our three or four hours' discussion. Nothing is more hidden from us than the illusion which lives with us day by day, and our greatest illusion is to believe that we are what we think ourselves to be.

The mathematical intelligence and the historical intelligence (the two classes of intelligences) can never understand each other. When they succeed in doing so as to words, they differ as to the things which the words mean. At the bottom of every discussion of detail between them reappears the problem of the origin of ideas. If the problem is not present to them, there is confusion; if it is present to them, there is separation. They only agree as to the goal — truth; but never as to the road, the method, and the criterion.

Heim represented the impartiality of consciousness, Naville the morality of consciousness, Lecoultre the religion of consciousness, Scherer the intelligence of consciousness, and I the consciousness of consciousness. A common ground, but differing individualities. *Discrimen ingeniorum*.

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What charmed me most in this long discussion was the sense of mental freedom which it awakened in me. To be able to set in motion the greatest subjects of thought without any sense of fatigue, to be greater than the world, to play with one's strength, this is what makes the well-being of intelligence, the Olympic festival of thought. Habere, non haberi. There is an equal happiness in the sense of reciprocal confidence, of friendship, and esteem in the midst of conflict; like athletes, we embrace each other before and after the combat, and the combat is but a deploying of the forces of free and equal men."

The Daily Dispatch of Richmond, Virginia commented that "our Southern ladies" were clearly superior to the northern female reformers who were at the moment attracting such attention, pointing out that these northern female reformers were northern, were female, were reformers, and were attiring themselves in a distinctively unfeminine and unconventional manner:

The female reformers who have made themselves famous by their conventions in the North, have come to New York to make a demonstration the present week. They held a grand meeting in the great Gotham, Monday night. Mrs. Bloomer, Rev. Miss Browne and others made speeches. Our Southern ladies have better sense, and are far more respected than these babbling dames of the North, who, in the excess of Uncle Tomism and Bloomerism, cut such fantastic tricks as are a scandal to their sex.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR FEBRUARY 10TH]



February 10, Thursday, 1853: Beginning on this day and continuing on the 11th, the 12th, the 18th, and the 19th, Henry Thoreau was surveying for John B. Moore. A survey shows land on Lexington Road that had been surveyed and divided by Thoreau in April 1850 and February 1853 for John B. Moore (who made a business of buying and draining swampland for farming), which had previously been the home of Willoughby Prescott (who was storing musket balls and cartridges, etc. for the militia on April 19, 1775), was resold to Ephraim Wales Bull, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Bronson Alcott, and Charles Davis. The land stretched over the hill to Bedford Road and as far east as the Merriam land on the Old Bedford Road. At the end of the month Thoreau noted that, the ground having been bare of snow and he having a need to pay off his debt of \$275 for self-publication of A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS, he had earned one dollar per day, surveying, for the past 76 days.



TIMELINE OF A WEEK

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

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

(The official copy of this survey of course had become the property of the person or persons who had hired this Concord town surveyor to do their surveying work during the 19th Century. Such materials have yet to be recovered.)

View this particular personal working draft of a survey in fine detail:



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http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_Surveys/94a.htm

(This survey plot paper is now at the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts.)

As part of Draft E of [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#), in addition to his surveying, Thoreau had added the troublingly unprecedented challenge “Nature is hard to be overcome, but she must be overcome. What avails it that you are Christian, if you are not purer than the heathen, if you deny yourself no more, if you are not more religious?”, publishing the news that he had become more than a simple nature-worshiper, and probing the wisdom of the old idea that although our way is through nature, the pole star we follow is in the heavens. This passage has always worried a certain class of interpreter, who has been hung up on [Waldo Emerson](#)’s advice that we are to “do our thing,” and thus unprepared to follow Thoreau’s development past the potential Pan-theism of remarks like his September 8, 1841 remark “in proportion as our love of Nature is deep and pure we are independent upon her.” Although Thoreau recognizes that the “new Adam” is going to fall, after Thoreau’s fall he is going to rise and “reach the skies” (February 9, 1851). He had definitely left behind the unreflective “Egyptian slime of health” in which he had been merely fatuous “nature looking into nature with such easy sympathy as the blue-eyed grass in the meadow looks in the face of the sky” (July 21, 1841), and had definitely as of the beginning of 1853 moved into a more complex and more reflective, doubled period of mature life.

TIMELINE OF WALDEN

(In fact [Thoreau](#) had begun to be troubled on this point before 1851, for in an undated journal entry from 1850 he commented: “What is peculiar in the life of a man consists not in his obedience, but his opposition, to his instincts. In one direction or another he strives to live a supernatural life.” But the fullness of this conversion can not have come until sometime after this February 1843 period in his life, for we have a record by Lidian Emerson of a formal conversational debate at the Emersons in February 1843, with [Charles Lane](#) and [Bronson Alcott](#), in which he forthrightly, pushingly, almost rudely maintained quite the contrary – as if he were intent on preventing his self-doubts about nature from coming forward in his mind.)

THE ALCOTT FAMILY

Therefore a warning: If your morality consists of an impression that people ought to “live naturally,” be aware that after 1853 Thoreau would never more be of your ilk. **After that point, the reason Thoreau wanted to be natural was so he could then rise above this as above a baseline.**



February 11, Friday, 1853: Louis Moreau Gottschalk gave his 1st concert in New York, at Niblo’s Saloon (the reviews were mostly positive).

According to the [California Daily Alta California](#), a party of 4 “sons of Erin,” prospecting an unlikely low swampy spot at White Rock near Placerville, working a 30-foot sluice ending in a long tom, had struck a rich pocket that had been yielding 18 to 21 ounces of gold dust each day during their 1st week, with promises of as large a reward for some time to come. In the same timeframe a nearby miner had taken out 41 ounces.



Feb. 11. Friday. While surveying for J. Moore to-day, saw a large wood tortoise stirring in the Mill Brook, and several bodies of frogs⁶¹ without their hind legs. But Sunday it snowed about a foot deep, — our second, only, important snow this winter, — and now the brook is not only frozen over, but almost completely concealed under drifts, and that reminiscence or prophecy of spring is also buried up.

While surveying on the Hunt farm the other day, behind Simon Brown’s house I heard a remarkable echo. In the course of surveying, being obliged to call aloud to my assistant from every side and almost every part of a farm in succession, and at various hours of a day, I am pretty sure to discover

61. *Rana palustris*. Channing saw some entire.



1852-1853

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an echo if any exists, and the other day it was encouraging and soothing to hear it. After so many days of comparatively insignificant drudgery with stupid companions, this leisure, this sportiveness, this generosity in nature, sympathizing with the better part of me; somebody I could talk with, — one degree, at least, better than talking with one's self. Ah! Simon Brown's premises harbor a hired man and a hired maid he wots not of. Some voice of somebody I pined to hear, with whom I could form a community. I did wish, rather, to linger there and call all day to the air and hear my words repeated, but a vulgar necessity dragged me along round the bounds of the farm, to hear only the stale answers of my chain-man shouted back to me.

I am surprised that we make no more ado about echoes. They are almost the only kindred voices that I hear. I wonder that the traveller does not oftener remark upon a remarkable echo, — he who observes so many things. There needs some actual doubleness like this in nature, for if the voices which we commonly hear were all that we ever heard, what then? Has it to do with the season of the year? I have since heard an echo on Moore's farm.

It was the memorable event of the day, that echo I heard, not anything my companions said, or the travellers whom I met, or my thoughts, for they were all mere repetitions or echoes in the worst sense of what I had heard and thought before many times; but this echo was accompanied with novelty, and by its repetition of my voice it did more than double that. It was a profounder Socratic method of suggesting thoughts unutterable to me the speaker. There was one I heartily loved to talk with. Under such favorable auspices I could converse with myself, could reflect; the hour, the atmosphere, and the conformation of the ground permitted it.



February 12, Saturday, 1853: According to the [California Placer Herald](#), a week earlier Mr. Shipley had recovered at his claim in Purdy's Flat a piece of gold, somewhat mixed with quartz, weighing 40 ounces and worth \$11. Mr. Martin of Adams & Co.'s Express at Ophir was reporting that Mr. Henry Haffman, while prospecting at Doty's Flat recently, had dug out a huge lump of gold entirely free of quartz, weighing 88 and a half ounces. Such a very extensive and valuable district of mining country had been discovered at Crow's Flat that it was being proposed to the Bear River Water Company that it dig a ditch to this claim.

A curious event in [California](#), per the [Sacramento Daily Union](#):

Buying a Horse. — [John Chinaman](#), from the mines, took it into his head (under an improved condition of finances), that riding was much more pleasant than walking, as a general thing, and, with the intention of ministering to his bodily comfort in this respect, attended the horse market on Friday, and purchased himself an ambling dun, at the low rate of ten dollars. The pony was put through his paces to the best advantage, while John, grinning a most celestial grin, stood a pleased spectator of the performance. A perfectly disinterested crowd insisted that, to satisfy himself thoroughly of the horse's good points, John should mount him, and try for himself. At one moment he was almost persuaded, but finding the frequent indifferent requests growing into ardent importunities, he respectfully declined the proffer, took the pony by the bridle, and led him off to a more secluded place, where the temptation growing into a passionate desire, he put his foot in the stirrup, and clambered clumsily into the saddle. Holding tightly to the mane, in expectation of scamper, John was horror-struck to find that the pony would not move. By the aid of kicking and

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cuffing, he finally succeeded in getting him into a slow walk, at which gait, some hour or two afterwards, he was seen to enter the precincts of Little China – a grin still on his countenance, but, as it was thought by a disciple of Lavater, a grin more of pain than of pleasure.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR FEBRUARY 12TH]



February 13, Sunday, [1853](#): The Emperor Franz Joseph II ordered the confiscation of all property belonging to the Milan conspirators and ordered that the city of Milan provide for those Austrians wounded in the uprising and provide for the families of those killed.

A former missionary to [Canton](#) in [China](#), the Presbyterian Reverend William Speer (1822-1904), began a [Chinese Mission House](#) in [San Francisco](#).



February 13: In the midst of the snow-storm on Sunday (to-day), I was called to window to see a dense flock of snowbirds on and under the pigweed in the garden. (Probably tree sparrows [[Vesper Sparrow](#)] [Poocetes gramineus](#).) It was so in the other storm. It is to be remarked that I have not observed them in the garden at any other time this winter. They come with the storm, the falling and driving snow. I *suspect* they were my chestnut-fronted ones. (Not linarias [[Common Redpoll](#)] [Carduelis flammea](#)) (or ~~Lesser Redpoll or Red-crown~~.)



February 14, Monday, [1853](#): [Charles Louis Flint](#) began work as the Secretary of the newly formed Massachusetts Board of Agriculture. Immediately he set to work, and issued THE AGRICULTURE OF MASSACHUSETTS, AS SHOWN IN RETURNS OF THE AGRICULTURAL SOCIETIES, 1853, by [Charles L. Flint](#), Massachusetts State Board Of Agriculture.

A certificate of incorporation filed for the [Raritan Bay Union](#) indicates that it had been capitalized at \$500,000 and would begin business with \$6,000 divided into 240 shares at \$25.00 each. George B. Arnold, Clement O. Read, Albert O. Read, Theodore Weld and Sarah M. Grimké would be the stockholders. The Board of Trustees was to be made up of George B. Arnold as President, Clement O. Read, [Marcus Spring](#), George B. Arnold, Joseph L. Pennock and Sarah Tyndale as Directors, Clement, Read as treasurer, and Angelina G. Weld as secretary. Corporate existence was to begin March 1st.




[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR FEBRUARY 14TH]



1852-1853


1852-1853

 February 15, Tuesday, [1853](#): [The Curiosity Shop](#), a humorous illustrated weekly, was begun in [San Francisco](#).

According to the [California Daily Union](#), the gold of El Dorado County, near a new community of 600 persons called Newtown that had sprung up within the past 3 months or so, on Weber Creek, was so abundant that 2 men on the previous Thursday had begun to dig about 300 yards south of the town, carrying the dirt nearly a quarter of a mile to wash it and realizing on their 2d day of work the sum of \$279. The next step would be to dig a ditch or canal to this location. At Webberville, which is next to Coloma and the oldest "diggings" in California, it was clear that there was yet more gold to be recovered. Miners there were averaging \$6 to \$7 per day. A visitor viewed the earnings of 2 men for a single day's work in Webberville, that weighed 1 ounce, 5 pennyweights, and 3 grains, and was apprized that these diggers had been averaging more than that for the previous 10 days.



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

 February 16, Wednesday night, [1853](#): On 4 successive evenings, [Richard Wagner](#) would be reading *Der Ring des Nibelungen* to invited guests in the Hotel Baur au Lac in Zürich (one wonders what his loss rate was, how many of these folks actually stuck it out all the way into the 4th evening without developing a scheduling conflict that would unfortunately necessitate their being absent).

Per the San Joaquin, [California Republican](#), the news from Mariposa:

The Indian Disturbances.


Lieut. Moore arrived in town from Fort Miller yesterday. He assures us that nearly all the accounts relative to the Indian difficulties in that region have been greatly exaggerated. The particulars of the depredations of the Chowchillas were, in the main, correct; but the accounts of the killing of Mr Converse and the attack on Fort Miller were mistakes altogether. The facts of the last case were – a mule was stolen from one of the camps, as was supposed, by Indians. Lieut. Moore with a company, followed the trail of the animal several miles, and finally reached the spot where it had been killed and part of it eaten. One or two arrows still were in the body of the mule, and they were recognised as the same used by the Merced Indians, a warlike and troublesome tribe. In the Chowchilla difficulty, the Indians say that the whites fired first, while the whites as strenuously maintain that the Indians were the aggressors.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR FEBRUARY 16TH]

1852-1853

1852-1853

 February 17, Thursday, 1853: Tenement buildings burned on Roebuck Street in Bridgetown on the Caribbean island of Barbados, killing 97.

The *Monumental City* departed from [San Francisco, California](#) heading for Sydney, Australia.


According to the [California Mountain Echo](#), a new machine called the “patent riffle box” was being said to be of simple construction but better than either the tom or rockers at catching the finest particles of gold.

The [Chinese Christian Army](#) took Kiukang.

CHINESE CIVIL WAR



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

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

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

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



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



1852-1853

1852-1853



February 19, Saturday, [1853](#): The 131-ton brigantine *Antares*, Captain Henry Bull, out of Melbourne, [Australia](#) sailing for Hobart, was wrecked on a reef of the Furneaux Group, [Van Diemen's Land](#). Using the vessel's longboat, 3 members of the crew managed to reach Launceston and initiate a rescue effort. Meanwhile the last 2 survivors aboard the wreck built a makeshift raft from wreckage and made their way 5 miles to Isabella Island. There they built a better raft and made their way to Flinders Island, from which a sealer took them to Launceston in his boat. From Launceston the *PS Yarra Yarra* took them to Melbourne. In total 8 lives had been lost.

According to the [California Mountain Echo](#), Wm Downey Esq. was exhibiting a beautiful specimen of gold and quartz weighing more than 6 pounds, taken out of the claim of the Durgan Sluicing Co. just below Durgan's Mill. According to the [Placer Herald](#), there was disagreement over which person held primary rights, the person who had erected a house in a place or the prospector who since found precious metal beneath the foundation of that house. The prevailing opinion among prospectors was that when the federal congress of the United States of America had declared the mines of California to be free and open to all who sought their benefit, it meant in effect that miners were to be "lord of all they surveyed" and could undermine existing structures.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR FEBRUARY 19TH]



February 20, Sunday, [1853](#): After the worship service, as he was leaving the South Congregational Church in [Boston](#), the attorney [Manlius Stimson Clarke](#), who was being considered for the position of church deacon, informed the Reverend Frederic Dan Huntington of a health problem (our record seems to be silent, as to what this was).

In [San Francisco's Daily Alta California](#), a letter from Jamestown in the mountains dated February 13th:

EDS. ALTA: — The views expressed by you through the columns of your able and influential journal on the subject of the disposition of the mineral lands of the State, and the propriety of calling a Miner's Convention at an early date to adopt a code of laws with reference thereto, meets with great favor in this section of the mining region. ... all admit that something ought to be done to enlarge and perfect the area of mining claims so as to render the tenure by which they are holden more accurate and permanent.... We say here, let the Convention be called at once ... or else chaos, anarchy and confusion will reign as it has heretofore, to the detriment of the State and the interest of individuals.... It needs but good laws and vigorous hands, with "hearts resolved," to render this portion of the habitable globe a desirable abiding place for the opulent and pleasure-loving gentleman, as well as the energetic and successful miner.... As the counterpart of, and twin brother to, "Peregrine Pickle," I am yours in the embrace of a good cause.

RODERICC RANDOM.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR FEBRUARY 20TH]

1852-1853

1852-1853

February 21, Monday, 1853: To take advantage of a short period of cold weather, the ice-men at Loring's Pond worked until midnight. This would come to Henry Thoreau's attention and would be recorded.



Thoreau measured the planting of all crops near the house of Cyrus Benjamin in Lincoln.

The US federal government authorized the minting of \$3 gold pieces. The amount of actual silver metal used in the minting of most US coins was officially reduced (bait and switch?).

Giuseppe Verdi arrived in Venice to produce La Traviata, particularly upset at the choice of soprano.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR FEBRUARY 21ST]

February 22, Tuesday, 1853: In San Francisco, California, celebration of the 2d anniversary of the organization of a Fire Department was combined with celebration of the birthday of George Washington.

While fishing in Walden Pond, George Melvin sighted shiners (he would inform Henry Thoreau of this).



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR FEBRUARY 22D]

February 23, Wednesday, 1853: Charles Foster was born to Dora Foster and Daniel Foster.

According to the Daily Alta California the miners of Tichenor and Dutch Gulch Flat were taking out such vast quantities of gold that the nearby town of Michigan City, California, made up of more than 30 good and substantial business houses, was prospering. The diggings of Ground Hog's Glory also appeared to be paying well. At Forest Hill below the town, miners were taking out gold by the pound. The region was well supplied with water by means of ditches from Volcano Canyon. The Volcano and Todd's Valley Canal was doubtless the best stock in this mining district.



February 23. Melvin tells me that he saw shiners while fishing in Walden yesterday. The ice-men worked til midnight night before last at Loring's Pond, to improve the short cold. I think myself in a wilder country, and a little nearer to primitive times, when I read in old books which spell the word savages with an l (salvages), like John Smith's "General Historie of Virginia, etc.," reminding me of the derivation of the word from sylva. There is some of the wild wood and its bristling branches still left in their language. The savages they described are really salvages, men of the woods.

GEORGE MELVIN

1852-1853

1852-1853

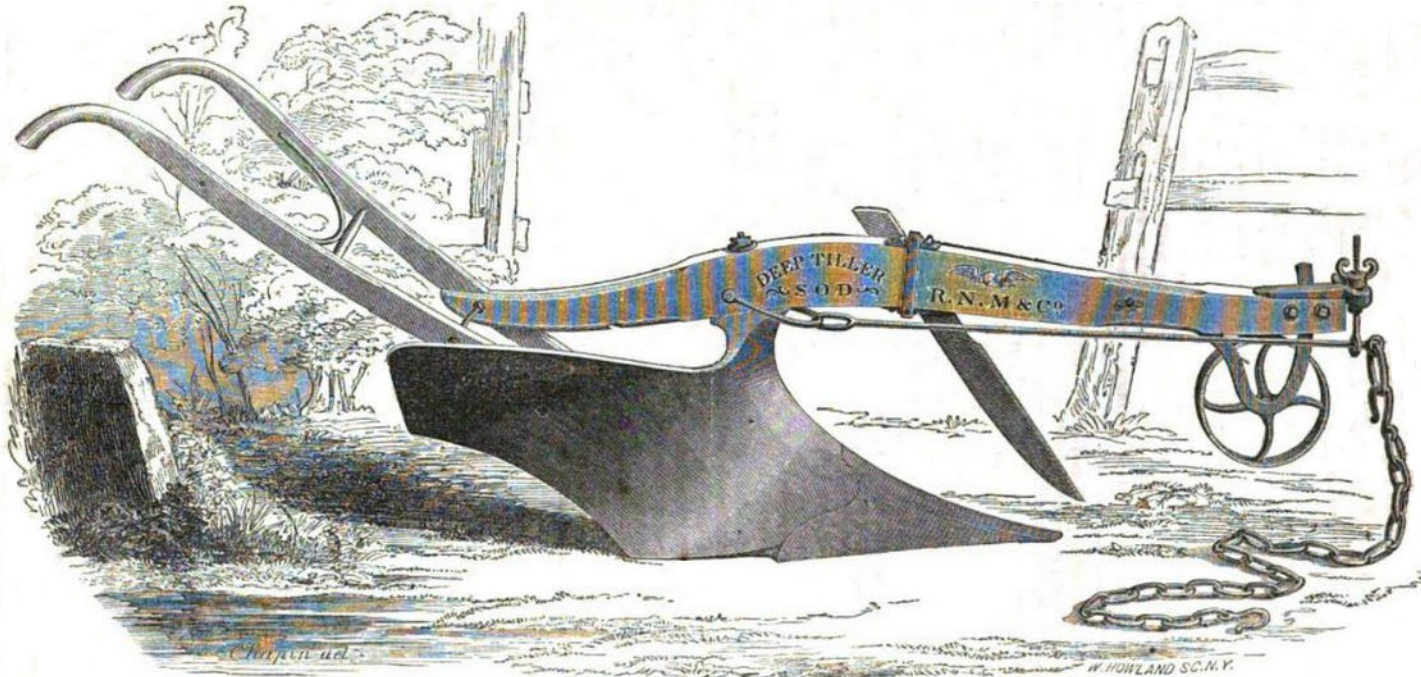


February 24, Thursday, 1853: The British Foreign Office in London issued a passport “for the free passage of Captain Mayne Reid, British subject, traveling on the Continent with a man-servant, James Hawkins, British subject.” This “James Hawkins” was to have been Lajos Kossuth traveling incognito — except that Kossuth would back out his co-conspiracy with Reid at the last moment.

The Chinese Christian Army took Anqing, the capital of Anhui province.

CHINESE CIVIL WAR

Simon Brown made a presentation before the Concord Farmers Club of the history of farm implements such as the plow, and of the several improvements in the mechanism and construction from the earliest plow used on the banks of the Nile, down to the beautiful and polish instruments in use at the present day. He had prepared 10 plates, mounted with varnish, to illustrate this presentation, exhibiting the forms of various Egyptian, Grecian, Roman, Italian, Saxon and American plows. The 1st was a simple crotched stick bound by willow thongs to a rough beam. There were plows with coulters and without them — with moulding boards and without them, with wheels and without them. That material would appear in a piece by J. Reynolds, M.D. on page 197 of the April 1853 edition of The New England Farmer, a monthly journal devoted to Agriculture, Horticulture, and their kindred Arts and Sciences; embellished and illustrated with numerous beautiful engravings.



DEEP TILLER NO. 77.

[Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1853, by RUGGLES, Nourse, Mason & Co., in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of Massachusetts.]

(It would be interesting to know whether local farmer Ephraim Wales Bull, a neighbor of Ralph Waldo Emerson, was present at that presentation, just as it would be interesting to know whether Simon Brown helped Bull get elected as a member of the nativist American Know-Nothing Party to the Massachusetts legislature.)



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



1852-1853

1852-1853

HISTORY'S NOT MADE OF WOULD. WHEN SOMEONE REVEALS, FOR INSTANCE, AS ABOVE, THAT KOSSUTH "WOOD" BACK OUT HIS CO-CONSPIRACY WITH REID AT THE LAST MOMENT, S/HE DISCLOSES THAT WHAT IS BEING CRAFTED IS NOT REALITY BUT PREDESTINARIANISM. THE RULE OF REALITY IS THAT THE FUTURE HASN'T EVER HAPPENED, YET. UNTIL THE MOMENT THAT KOSSUTH DOES BACK OUT, THIS ISN'T REAL, THIS IS A MERE POTENTIALITY.



February 25, Friday, 1853: [Moncure Daniel Conway](#) arrived in Boston by train, presumably penniless or nearly so since his Southern slavemaster daddy, the judge, had cut him off without a cent, and immediately participated in a train collision at 40 miles per hour in which a number of people were injured. Dusting off his trousers and retrieving his luggage, he was able to walk away cracking jokes in regard to the "fast" state of Massachusetts. Get the jokes out of your system, boy, you're going to be a Reverend again right soon.⁶²

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

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

W. McLAIN,

Secretary American Colonization Society.

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



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

Spiritualism

"Stack of the Artist of Kouroo" Project

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



1852-1853

1852-1853

 February 26, Saturday, 1853: Per the [California Placer Herald](#):

PLANK ROADS. — We are indebted to Mr. E. Brown, of Spring Garden, for the following article in relation to plank roads, which he had preserved in one of his papers, and has kindly forwarded to us for publication, which we do with great pleasure, as the subject of plank roads is attracting universal attention at the present time.— The article is taken from the report of of G. Gates, Secretary of the Kentucky Board of Improvement, and contains information that will be found valuable and interesting:—

1. The system of plank roads which originated in Russia, has since been adopted in Canada, and many of our Northern States, entirely superceded the McAdam and Telford rock or gravel roads. The great success and value of the plank road consists in the cheapness, in the ease of draft, in speed, and in comfort to passengers.

2. The approved mode of construction thereof is as follows; For a single track the planks (of pine, hemlock, oak, red elm, black walnut or sweet gum) should be eight feet long, and from three to four inches thick — they should be laid across the road at its line. These planks are to rest on two longitudinal sills or sleepers, each four inches square, bedded in the earth to their full thickness. The earth should be fully kept up to the planks at every point, in order to prevent confined air resting in any vacant space beneath the planks — no pin or spike is needed to confine the plank to the sleepers, their weight being sufficient to keep them firm. There should be placed on the upper surface a coating of sand an inch thick. — There should be provided for a single track turn-out places — and to effect this, an earthen road must be banked up ten or twelve feet wide on one side, and two or three on the other — each embankment should be made flush with the ends of the plank, and then sloping out so as to carry off the water, as perfect drainage is the great secret in constructing any kind of a road. The plank should be laid even, with part thereof projecting two or three inches beyond the general line of the road, in order to prevent ruts made by wheels at the junction of the plank and each turn-out. And if the bed on which the planks are to be laid, is a new one, it would be better to be traveled one season before they are laid down. One track, with the supplementary earth road has formed will be sufficient for all ordinary travel. And, if the tonnage transported on the road be chiefly in one direction, (the track should be laid on that side of the road which will enable the loaded teams to keep it, and thereby force all the unloaded ones to do the turning out

3. To make a double track, all that is needed is to make two tracks each eight feet wide, or one sixteen feet wide. The former is preferred. For the sixteen feet track, three or five longitudinal sills are required, each to be four by six inches, and laid edge-wise and embedded in trenches six inches deep. These timbers should be from fifteen to twenty feet long. Great advantage is obtained in the construction of the double track with long plank, by giving the road bed a slight convexity of two or three inches in the center, and springing the plank road



1852-1853

1852-1853

to the outside sills, and attaching them thereto by half inch spikes or nails three feet [sic] long.

4. The duration of plank roads is from eight to twelve years; this matter, however, depends entirely upon decay from rot, and not by the surface wear of the plank – the sand which is spread upon the track when finished, protects the wood from the shoe soles of the horses, (which cause most of the plank to wear) and soon penetrates the grain of the plank until with the wood fibres and the deposits on the road, a tough elastic covering is formed whereby the plank is saved from the further wear. Experience teaches that one-half the wear and tear of seven years occurs in the first year. – Therefore, it is a matter of great importance on these roads to have small tollage, in order to invite such an amount of travel as will promote their wearing out instead of rotting.

5. The cost of the plank road greatly depends on its locality. But it will be found the following estimate will approximate to an average valuation, to wit: For one mile of road with a single track, made with plank eight feet wide and three inches thick, will require 126,820 feet board measure of plank, and of sills 4 by 4. 14,080, making in all of lumber 140,000 feet, and costing say five dollars per thousand, would equal the sum of \$700. The laying and grading will cost from thirty cents to a dollar per rod, or from \$96 to \$320 per mile. The earth work, sluices, bridges and contingencies, admit of no average estimate. – Therefore, without them, and one hundred dollars per mile for engineering superintendence, and one hundred dollars for gate houses, we have the total cost per mile from one thousand to two thousand two hundred and twenty-four dollars.

ICE. – The ship *George Raynes* arrived at San Francisco on Friday last, with a cargo of 900 tons of ice, consigned by the Poston and California Ice Company to Flint, Peabody & Co., Agents.

WASHINGTON MONUMENT FUND. – The entire amount subscribed in California towards the erection of the Washington Monument, including the munificent donation of the Sansome Hook and Ladder Company, is \$8,537 73.

JOAQUIN AND HIS GANG. – Gov. Bigler offers a reward of 1,000 dol. for the apprehension of the bandit, Joaquin.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR FEBRUARY 26th]



1852-1853

1852-1853

 February 27, Sunday, 1853: Peter II replaced August as Grand Duke of Oldenburg.

Moncure Daniel Conway attended the Reverend Theodore Parker's sermon in the downtown Boston Music Hall and was put off when Parker cracked jokes from the pulpit. Members of the congregation were, would you believe, **chuckling** during **worship**.



February 27. Went to hear Theodore Parker. His sermon was on Good and Evil Temper. Text, Proverbs 15:17, "Better is a dinner of herbs," etc. I don't like him at all, and wish I had worshipped at King's Chapel with Mr. Peabody, whom with his whole family I love.

Not only that, but Conway observed that some of the men in the congregation had **mustaches**, and that some of the women were wearing **rouge**. Still, he needed to talk to the Reverend Parker because he was bearing a message from Nancy Williams, one of the family's slaves in Virginia, to her escaped husband Benjamin Williams who was thought to be residing in the Boston area. Conway needed to make the contact by way of some white man who could trust him, who also had contacts in the local black community. The two men soon made contact with a black man who assured them that, although Benjamin Williams had escaped on to Canada, he would know how to pass this written message on to him.⁶³

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

VOLUME II

Conway would explain why at 1st he didn't like the Reverend Parker, and went to hear Father Taylor at the Seamen's Bethel:

63. Of course, there's every possibility that this communicant merely trotted around the corner and handed his wife's note to Benjamin Williams. Why take a risk when you aren't obliged to?



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1852-1853



As to my worry at the first sermon I heard in Boston, -that of Theodore Parker,- I was disturbed by the lack of anything in the Music Hall or in the secular music sympathetic with my lonely and forlorn heart. In the afternoon I was consoled by hearing at the Seamen's Bethel the famous Father Taylor. I had read the graphic description of him by Charles Dickens ("American Notes"), and had heard that Emerson was an admirer of Father Taylor. Some one told me that Taylor was a sort of Arian; also that in a circle of his ministerial brethren where Emerson was spoken of as leading youth to hell, Father Taylor remarked, "It may be that Emerson is going to hell, but of one thing I am certain: he will change the climate there, and emigration will set that way."

After listening to his sermon, -plain, practical, in no part sensational,- I approached Father Taylor and told him I had just left the Baltimore Conference. He urged me to go home with him, and on the way was at first severe about my leaving the Methodist Church. I answered that if I could, like himself, be a Methodist and ignore the Trinitarian dogma, I would have done so; but Methodism in Boston and that in the Baltimore Conference differed. The old man relented. "Well," said he, "our Southern brethren **are** very strict about some things of which they know nothing." I then knocked at the door of his heart with the name of Emerson, and it opened wide. Our talk became cordial. He told me, I think, that Emerson was a contributor to the Seamen's Bethel, and at any rate interested me in his account of Emerson as a man, and apart from his writings.



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There was something rather hard about Parker's manner at first that may have been due to very natural misgivings. Having found that he was the man most likely to help me fulfil aunt Nancy's commission, I carried a note of introduction to him from some antislavery friend at Cambridge, but even antislavery men might be mistaken. A Virginian asking the whereabouts of a negro might properly be met with hesitation, though it did not occur to me. I was courteously received in his large library, where he sat at his desk beneath his grandfather's old musket fixed to the wall. He took down the fugitive's name, etc., and said he would make inquiries, appointing a day for my return. For the rest he showed interest in my experiences, and spoke with such admiration of Emerson that I began to warm toward him. A few days later he went with me through the negro quarters, and I got still nearer to him. I remember by the way that a man met us and asked the way to the Roman Catholic Church. Parker took pains to inform him, and then remarked, "A heretic may sometimes point a man to the True Church." But he did not smile. At length we entered into the house of some intelligent coloured people, who saluted Parker with the greatest homage, which he received with pathetic humility. "This," he said, "is a Virginian, but an honourable Virginian, who wishes to find one Benjamin Williams, who some time ago escaped from his master in Stafford County, Va, and for whom he has a message from his wife, Nancy Williams. I hope you will be able to discover Mr. Williams." After a brief consultation with others of the family, the man went out to bring some neighbours, and meanwhile I was quite overcome by the pleasant conversation of Parker with the humble women around him. He spoke sweetly and graciously to young and old. It was all beautiful and touching, and I was ashamed that I had disliked him. The man returned with several neighbours, and having inquired closely as to the fugitive's appearance, they remembered such a man, who was in Canada. A little later I had the satisfaction of sending his address to a free negro in Falmouth, who conveyed it to aunt Nancy.

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [H.G.O. Blake](#).



To: Harrison Gray Otis Blake

From: HDT

Date: 27 February 1853

Concord Feb. 27th '53

Mr Blake,

I have not answered your letter before because I have been almost

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constantly in the fields surveying of late. It is long since I have spent so many days so profitably in a pecuniary sense; so unprofitably, it seems to me, in a more important sense. I have earned just a dollar a day for 76 days past; for though I charge at a higher rate for the days which are seen to be spent, yet so many more are spent than appears. This is instead of lecturing, which has not offered, to pay for that book which I printed. I have not only cheap hours, but cheap weeks and months, i.e. weeks which are bought at the rate I have named. Not that they are quite lost to me, or make me very melancholy, alas! for I too often take a cheap satisfaction in so spending them, – weeks of pasturing and browsing, like beeves and deer, which give me animal health, it may be, but create a tough skin over the soul and intellectual part. Yet if men should offer my body a maintenance for the work of my head alone, I feel that it would be a dangerous temptation.

As to whether what you speak of as the “world’s way” (Which for the most part is my way) or that which is shown me, is the better. The former is imposture, the latter is truth. I have the coldest confidence in the last. There is only such hesitation as the appetites feel in following the aspirations. The clod hesitates because it is inert, wants animation. The one is the way of death, the other of life everlasting. My hours are not “cheap in such a way that I doubt whether the world’s way would not have been better,” but cheap in such a way that I doubt whether the world’s way, which I have adopted for the time, could be worse. The whole enterprise of this nation which is not an upward, but a west-ward one, toward Oregon California, Japan &c, is totally devoid of interest to me, whether performed on foot or by a Pacific railroad. It is not illustrated by a thought, it is not warmed by a sentiment. There is nothing in it which one should lay down his life for, nor even his gloves, hardly which one should take up a newspaper for. It is perfectly heathenish – a flibustiering toward heaven by the great western route. No, they may go their way to their manifest destiny which I trust is not mine. May my 76 dollars whenever I get them help to carry me in the other direction. I see them on their winding way, but no music is wafted from their host, only the rattling of change in their pockets. I would rather be a captive knight, and let them all pass by, than be free only to go whither they are bound. What end do they propose to themselves beyond Japan? What aims more lofty have they than the prairie dogs?

As it respects these things I have not changed an opinion one iota from the first. As the stars looked to me when I was a shepherd in Assyria, they look to me now a New Englander. The higher the mt. on which you stand, the less change in the prospect from year to year, from age to age. Above a certain height, there is no change. I am a Switzer on the edge of the glacier, with his advantages & disadvantages, goitre, or what not. (You may suspect it to be some kind of swelling at any rate). I have had but one spiritual birth (excuse

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the word,) and now whether it rains or snows, whether I laugh or cry, fall farther below or approach nearer to my standard, whether Pierce or Scott is elected, – not a new scintillation of light flashes on me, but ever and anon, though with longer intervals, the same surprising & everlastingly new light dawns to me, with only such variations as in the coming of the natural day, with which, indeed, it is often coincident. As to how to preserve potatoes from rotting, your opinion may change from year to year, but as how to preserve your Soul from rotting, I have nothing to learn, but something to practise. Thus I declaim against them, but I in my folly am the world I condemn.

I very rarely indeed if ever “feel any itching to be what is called useful to my fellow men”. Sometimes, it may be, when my thoughts for want of employment, fall into a beaten path or humdrum, I have dreamed idly of stopping a man’s horse that was running away, but perchance I wished that he might run in order that I might stop him, – or, of putting out a fire, but then of course it must have got well a-going. Now, to tell the truth, I do not dream much of acting upon horses before they run, or of preventing fires which are not yet kindled. What a foul subject is this of doing good, instead of minding ones life, which should be his business –doing good as a dead carcass, which is only fit for manure, instead of as a living man, – Instead of taking care to flourish & smell & taste sweet and refresh all mankind to the extent of our capacity & quality. People will sometimes try to persuade you that you have done something from that motive, as if you did not already know enough about it. If I ever did a man any good, in their sense, of course it was something exceptional, and insignificant compared with the good or evil which I am constantly doing by being what I am. As if you were to preach to ice to shape itself into burning glasses, which are sometimes useful, and so the peculiar properties of ice be lost— Ice that merely performs the office of a burning glass does not do its duty.

The problem of life becomes one cannot say by how many degrees more complicated as our material wealth is increased, whether that needle they tell of was a gate-way or not, – since the problem is not merely nor mainly to get life for our bodies, but by this or a similar discipline to get life for our souls; by cultivating the lowland farm on right principles, that is with this view, to turn i t into an upland farm. You have so many more talents to account for. If I accomplish as much more in spiritual work as I am richer i n worldly goods, then I am just as worthy, or worth just as much as I was before, and no more. I see that, in my own case, money might be of great service to me, but probably it would not be, for the difficulty now is that I do not improve my opportunities, and therefore I am not prepared to have my opportunities increased. Now I warn you, if it be as you say, you have got to put o n the pack of an Upland Farmer in good earnest the coming spring, the lowland farm being cared for, aye you

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must be selecting your seeds forth with and doing what winter work you can; and while others are raising potatoes and Baldwin apples for you, you must be raising apples of the Hesperides for them. (Only hear how he preaches!) No man can suspect that he is the proprietor of an Upland farm, i.e. upland in the sense that it will produce nobler crops and better repay cultivation in the long run, but he will be perfectly sure that he ought to cultivate it.

Though we are desirous to earn our bread, we need not be anxious to satisfy men for it – though we shall take care to pay them, – but Good who alone gave it to us— Men may in effect put us in the debtors jail, for that matter, simply for paying our whole debt to God, which includes our debt to them, and though we have his receipt for it, for his paper is dishonored. The cashier will tell you that he has no stock in his bank.

How prompt we are to satisfy the hunger & thirst of our bodies; how slow to satisfy the hunger & thirst of our souls. In deed we would be practical folks cannot use this word without blushing because of our infidelity, having starved this substance almost to a shadow. We feel it to be as absurd as if a man were to break forth into a eulogy on his dog who has 'nt any. An ordinary man will work every day for a year at shovelling dirt to support his body, or a family of bodies, but he is an extraordinary man who will work a whole day in a year for the support of his soul. Even the priests, the men of God, so called, for the most part confess that they work for the support of the body. But he alone is the truly enterprising & practical man who succeeds in maintaining his soul here. Have 'nt we our everlasting life to get? and is 'nt that the only excuse at last for eating drinking sleeping, or even carrying an umbrella when it rains? A man might as well devote himself to raising pork, as to fattening the bodies or temporal part merely of the whole human family. If we made the true distinction we should almost all of us be seen to be in the almshouse for Souls.

I am much indebted to you because you look so steadily at the better side, or rather the true center of me (for our true center may & perhaps oftenest does lie entirely aside from us, and we are in fact eccentric,) and as I have elsewhere said "Give me an opportunity to live." You speak as if the image or idea which I see were reflected from me to you, and I see it again reflected from you to me, because we stand at the right angle to one another; and so it goes zigzag, to what successive reflecting surfaces, before it is all dissipated, or absorbed by the more unreflecting, or differently reflecting, – who knows? Or perhaps what you see directly you refer to me. What a little shelf is required, by which we may impinge upon another, and build there our eirie in the clouds, and all the heavens we see above us we refer to the crags around and beneath us. Some piece of mica, as it were, in the face or eyes of one, as on the Delectable Mts., slanted at the right angle, reflects the heavens to us. But in the slow

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geological upheavals & depressions, these mutual angles are disturbed, these suns set, & new ones rise to us. That ideal which I worshipped was a greater stranger to the mica than to me. It was not the hero I admired but the reflection from his epaulet or helmet. It is nothing (for us) permanently inherent in another, but his attitude or relation to what we prize that we admire. The meanest man may glitter with micacious particles to his fellow's eye. These are the spangles that adorn a man. The highest union – the only un-ion (don't laugh) or central oneness, is the coincidence of visual rays. Our club room was an apartment in a constellation where our visual rays met (and there was no debate about about the restaurant) The way between us is over the mount.

Your words make me think of a man of my acquaintance whom I occasionally meet, whom you too appear to have met, one Myself, as he is called, Yet why not call him Your-self? If you have met with him & know him it is all I have done, and surely where there is a mutual acquaintance the my & thy make a distinction without a difference. I do not wonder that you do not like my Canada story. It concerns me but little, and probably is not worth the time it took to tell it. Yet I had absolutely no design whatever in my mind, but simply to report what I saw. I have inserted all of myself that was implicated or made the excursion. It has come to an end at any rate, they will print no more, but return me my mss. when it is but little more than half done –as well as another I had sent them, because the editor Curtis requires the liberty to omit the heresies without consulting me – a privilege California is not rich enough to bid for.

I thank you again & again for attending to me; that is to say I am glad that you hear me and that you also are glad. Hold fast to your most indefinite waking dream. The very green dust on the walls is an organised vegetable; the atmosphere has its fauna & flora floating in it; & shall we think that dreams are but dust & ashes, are always disintegrated & crumbling thoughts and not dust like thoughts trooping to its standard with music, systems beginning to be organized. These expectations these are roots these are nuts which even the poorest man has in his bin, and roasts or cracks them occasionally in winter evenings, which even the poor debtor retains with his bed and his pig, i.e. his idleness & sensuality. Men go to the opera because they hear there a faint expression in sound of this news which is never quite distinctly proclaimed. Suppose a man were to sell the hue, the least amount of coloring matter in the superficies of his thought, –for a farm. –were to exchange an absolute & infinite value for a relative –& finite one –to gain the whole world & lose his own soul!

*Do not wait as long as I have before you write. If you will look at another star, I will try to supply my side of the triangle
Tell Mr Brown that I remember him & trust that he remembers me.
Yrs H.D.T.*

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PS. Excuse this rather flippant preaching – which does not cost me enough – and do not think that I mean you always – though your letter suggested the subjects.



Feb. 27. [Frank Brown](#) has killed within a day or two a tree sparrow *Emberiza Canadensis* Canada Bunting or Tree sparrow of Audubon's Synopsis– [[Tree Bunting](#) [Emberiza Canadensis](#) or [Tree Sparrow](#) [Fringilla canadensis](#)] I think this must be my bright chestnut fronted bird of the winter (A mistake. *Vide Journal*, Volume V, page 3.) though Peabody says it is distinguished by the spot on the breast? which reminds me of the larger finch like bird.

A week or two ago I brought home a handsome pitch pine cone which had freshly fallen and was closed perfectly tight. It was put into a table drawer. To-day I am agreeably surprised to find that it has there dried and opened with perfect regularity, filling the drawer, and from a solid, narrow, and sharp cone, has become a broad, rounded, open one, — has, in fact, expanded with the regularity of a flower's petals into a conical flower of rigid scales, and has shed a remarkable quantity of delicate-winged seeds. Each scale, which is very elaborately and perfectly constructed, is armed with a short spine, pointing downward, as if to protect its seed from squirrels and birds. That hard closed cone, which defied all violent attempts to open it, and could only be cut open with [*sic*], has thus yielded to the gentle persuasion of warmth and dryness. The expanding [of] the pine cones, that, too, is a season.

[Mr Herbert](#) is strenuous that I say ruffed grouse for Partridge [[Ruffed Grouse](#) [Bonasa umbellus](#) ([Partridge](#))] & hare for rabbit.

He says of the snipe [[Common Snipe](#) [Gallinago gallinago](#) ([Brown Snipe](#) or [Wilson's Snipe](#))] "I am myself satisfied that the sound is produced by the fact, that the bird, by some muscular action or other, turns the quill-feathers edgewise, as he drops plumb through the air; and that, while in this position, during his accelerated descent, the vibration of the feathers, and the passage of the air between them, gives utterance to this wild humming sound."



February 28, Monday, [1853](#): According to the [Daily Union](#), at Fish Ravine near Coloma, [California](#) the miners were making average wages, and due to the rain provisions were so scarce that flour, pork, barley, and other provisions were selling at a dollar a pound. More gold had been taken out of the diggings at Spanish Flat that winter than ever before, with every ravine and gulch paying well. When water failed at Gold Flat, the miners were compelled to abandon some good-paying claims. However, rich diggings were discovered at Negro Bar east of Placerville. According to the [Democratic State Journal](#), there had been a report from the Middle Fork of the American River that the mines at Yankee Slide and at Maxem Slide were taking out gold in large quantities. At the recently discovered Maxem Slide about 20 miles above Georgetown on the Middle Fork of the American River, claims had sold as high as \$3,000 each, with more than that being offered but refused for others. In a single day, recently, 7 men had taken out, from dirt resembling cement, \$5,000 in very coarse gold. All the miners were retrieving more than an ounce per day. Some of the miners, while digging through a soft rock they had supposed to be bedrock, had found clay intermixed with sand and gravel that had rewarded them well. Some 10 days earlier, in Big Canyon, several miners who had worked there in 1850 and 1851, had returned despite high waters and commenced to drift into one of the numerous slides there, and had been recovering coarse gold worth from \$4 to \$6 per pan.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR FEBRUARY 28TH]

MARCH 1853

➡ March 1853: This month's issue of [Harper's New Monthly Magazine](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE

This month's issue of [Putnam's Monthly Magazine of American Literature, Science, and Art](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE

➡ March 1853: To pay off his debt to the famous author [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#) for having authored a campaign biography, President [Franklin Pierce](#) nominated his college chum to the US Senate to be appointed US consul in the port of Liverpool, England, a major patronage plum that was worth between \$30,000.⁰⁰ and \$40,000.⁰⁰ a year to its holder, chiefly in bribes from shippers.



➡ March 1853: [William Cooper Nell](#) drafted a petition to the Constitutional Convention to revise the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

➡ March 1853: [Henry Thoreau](#) recorded in his journal a marginal entry he had noticed while studying Benzo's HISTORY OF THE WEST INDIES, *coelum non animum mutant, qui trans mare currunt*.⁶⁴ Four days later, in a criticism of [John Evelyn](#), he made use of the term "sesquipedalian words."⁶⁵

64. Those with the benefit of the classical education would have recognized these as from the writings of [Horace](#). Those who have not had the benefit of the classical education may now resort to the [internet](#).

65. It would be of interest to know whether Thoreau ever noticed that John Evelyn's "diary" was not actually a diary in the true sense of the word, as he had been in the habit (as his father had before him) of going back and "enhancing" previous entries.

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March 1853: The Emperor [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全 sent his trusted courier Yeh to [Canton](#) to invite the Reverend [Issachar J. Roberts](#) 罗孝全 to visit the grand new capital of 30 millions of [Christian Chinese](#) at Nanjing on the Yangzi River. (Roberts would make it as far as the lower reaches of the Yangzi River of [China](#), but there he would be intercepted and turned back by a *Qing* patrol boat.)



Though it is so long since we parted, yet I constantly cherish a remembrance of you. Now that the grateful breezes of spring salute men, while distant, I have thought of you, my venerated elder brother. It is indeed praiseworthy that you have traversed myriads of leagues of ocean to publish the true doctrine of the Redeemer, and that you, with all your heart, serve the Lord. I respectfully make known to you that, notwithstanding my unworthiness and incapacity, the Heavenly Father has not cast me off; but, in the fulness of his grace, has enabled me to obtain possession of the extensive region embraced in the Liang-hu and Kiang-nan (Hoo-nan, Hoo-peh, Ngan-hwui, and Kiang-su). I have written to you several times, but have yet received no answer to my letters.

In consequence of the multiplicity of public affairs engaging



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my attention, I have not had leisure to instruct [the people] morning and evening. But I have promulgated the Ten Commandments to the army and to the rest of the population, and have taught them all to pray morning and evening. Still, those who understand the Gospel are not many. Therefore I deem it right to send the messenger ... in person to wish you peace, and to request you, my elder brother, if you are not disposed to abandon me, to [come and] bring with you many brethren to help to propagate the Gospel and administer the ordinance of baptism. So shall we obtain the true doctrine. Hereafter, when my enterprise is successfully terminated, I will disseminate the doctrine throughout the whole empire, that all may return to the one Lord, and worship only the true God. This is what my heart truly desires. I refrain from alluding to other matters than the above, and say no more at present. Wishing you happiness, your ignorant younger brother, Hung-siu-tsuen, salutes you.

THE TAIPING REBELLION

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March 1853: [Lydia Maria Child](#) usually came home to Wayland, Massachusetts by way of the train out of Boston past Walden Pond (she would transfer to the stagecoach at Concord). One day, during this period in which she was composing her 3-volume treatise upon the world religions, Richard Fuller sat down next to her and was lecturing her on the importance of revival meetings, such as the business-men's meetings where one could hear "men who had been devoted to lucre singing and praying so devoutly." Whereupon she gave him a piece of her mind:

I told him I was afraid most of them were but taking out a new lease to cheat with impunity. He, very condescendingly, informed me that God did not make **me** to have **opinions**; that God made **me** for the **affections**; that he intended **me** to write about children and flowers; implying all the while, that it was for **him**, and such as **he**, to decide upon matters high profound.



But when Maria exited the train and took her seat in the stagecoach, she found she had merely exchanged one religious bore for another, for the woman seated next to her was also fresh from a Boston revival meeting:


Her voice was as hard and sharp as her theology, and she had with her very pert disagreeable little girl, whom she set to reciting verses about the "Lord Jesus," in a manner as mechanical as the Buddhist praying-machines. Alas for religion! What absurdities are everywhere enacted in its holy name!





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 March 1853: Since he had already been a minister, [Moncure Daniel Conway](#) was accepted into the middle class at [Harvard Divinity School](#), and had only one semester of work to complete before he would again be entitled to make money by preaching, and only three semesters of work to complete before he would again be using the title Reverend. He could only have been a charity student, since his Southern slavemaster daddy, the judge, had cut him off without a cent when he had announced that he could no longer be of the Methodist faith (or perhaps the abolitionists, knowing a good thing when they saw it, were fronting this young Southern gentleman his tuition money to make a Unitarian abolitionist out of him?). A group of 15 [Harvard](#) students, among them Conway, invited [Bronson Alcott](#) to deliver an extracurricular course “Conversations on Modern Life” at the Divinity School. [Franklin Benjamin Sanborn](#) was also among these young men, although he was not a divinity student. After the meeting [Ednah Dow Littlehale](#) introduced [Sanborn](#) to Alcott. Sometime later in the year [Sanborn](#) would be invited to a vegetarian dinner with the Alcotts at 20 Pinckney Street in Boston.⁶⁶

THE ALCOTT FAMILY

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

VOLUME II

66. Eventually [Sanborn](#) would be delivering [Bronson](#)'s funeral eulogy and writing his biography.

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➡ March 1853: The death blow to Graham's Magazine may have been a hostile review of the immensely popular UNCLE TOM'S CABIN, which editor George Rex Graham denounced as a "BAD BOOK." He would write later that "it gives an unfair and untrue picture of southern life. It is badly constructed, badly timed, and made up for a bad purpose.... We feel nothing but contempt for the whole class of liberty people (falsely so named) whose ideas of liberty consist in allowing nobody to live who expresses sentiments adverse to their notions." In April he would sell his magazine a 2d time. This time it would be run by an undedicated editor and, after the December 1858 issue, would be incorporated into another periodical and would fall off our radar scope.

MAGAZINES

Here is the image "The Quaker Settlement" used in the edition of the book dating to this year:



Here is its illustration of a slave cabin:



➡ March 1853: Emily Dickinson assisted in a clandestine correspondence between her brother Austin Dickinson and Susan Gilbert (eventually she would be helping this younger brother to cheat on his wife Susan Gilbert Dickinson with the much younger Mrs. Mabel Loomis Todd, offering to the couple the use of a couch in her dining room upon which they could indulge their adulterous passions long term to their hearts' content).


➡ March 1853: The idiom "across lots" was in use, meaning "directly," or "straightaway," as witness this comment in Brigham Young's JOURNAL OF DISCOURSES:

Go to hell across lots.

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

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 March 1, Tuesday, [1853](#): The Mercantile Library Association of the City of San Francisco was opened on the 2d floor of the [California](#) Exchange.

[San Francisco](#) experienced a sharp earthquake shock.

In the Mary Joseph “Hannah” Corcoran riots in front of St. Mary’s [Catholic](#) Church on Richmond Street in [Charlestown, Massachusetts](#), threats were made to tear down that church, and the building needed to be defended from the local Baptists by the city police force. Refer to the Reverend Thomas Ford Caldicott, D.D.’s [HANNAH CORCORAN, AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE OF HER CONVERSION FROM ROMANISM, HER ABDUCTION FROM CHARLESTOWN, AND THE TREATMENT SHE RECEIVED DURING HER ABSENCE](#) (Boston: Gould and Lincoln, 59 Washington Street).



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR MARCH 1ST]


 March 2, Wednesday, [1853](#): Mr. Gwin of [California](#) addressed the US Senate on the topic of the transportation of United States mail from San Francisco to [Shanghai](#).

By dividing Oregon, the US federal Congress initiated a Territory of Washington; this new entity included all of present Washington State and parts of present Idaho and Montana. Clarke County, Island County (including the disputed San Juan Islands), Jefferson, King, Lewis, Pacific, Pierce, and Thurston Counties all became counties in Washington, and part of Oregon’s Clackamas County became its “Non-County Area 1.”



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR MARCH 2D]



 March 3, Thursday evening, [1853](#): On this morning the little-known English painter Eyre Crowe, traveling in America with William Makepeace Thackeray, responded to an advertisement for a slave auction in Richmond, Virginia: “Fifteen likely negroes to be disposed of between half-past nine and twelve — five men, six women, two boys, and two girls.” His sketching attracted such attention that no-one offered a bid, and so the auctioneer protested. As the artist would recount in his memoir *WITH THACKERAY IN AMERICA*, “I got up with the intention of leaving quietly, but, feeling this would savour of flight, I turned round to the now evidently angry crowd of dealers, and said ‘You may turn me away, but I can recollect all I have seen.’” Crowe would remember that he had witnessed something somewhat differently from what he had portrayed in this sketch, which would in 1856 be published in the [Illustrated London News](#) — he had “Europeanized” the physiognomy of the black people, as conventional at that time in order to reduce for white viewers a sense of their otherness. In his finished painting which would in 1861 be exhibited at the Royal Academy, this group would no longer seem docile and waiting. The women would be shown as tense and anxious. In his sketch it had not been made clear whether the man to the right had been part of the family group but in his painting, the man was revealed as angry, anguished, and unresigned “because he cannot defend his family.” Crowe’s painting “Slaves Waiting for Sale, Richmond, Virginia” would be discussed in [The Times](#), the [Athenaeum](#), and [Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine and Art Journal](#).

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The US Secretary of the Treasury directed that an assay office under the Director of the Mint be established in [New-York](#).

Louis Moreau Gottschalk premiered his Fragment of the Symphony, “The Battle of Bunker Hill” in Philadelphia.

On the night before his inauguration in [Washington DC](#), president-elect [Franklin Pierce](#) slept at the luxurious [Willard’s Hotel](#) which would in the 1860s be the haunt of [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#).⁶⁷



The [Herald](#) of Marysville, [California](#) reported that a person had just arrived from Hess’s Crossing on the Middle Yuba River, about 5 miles above where the Middle Yuba River flowed into the main Yuba River, and was reporting that near the lower end of the bar there, in a ravine, gold was being recovered in quartz-free lumps ranging from a few grains to half an ounce. The miners were generally doing well in bank diggings at the Crossing, and more would be done as soon as water was brought to the diggings.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR MARCH 3d]

67. [Hawthorne](#) would consider the lobby and bar of [Willard’s Hotel](#) to be “the center of Washington and the nation,” more so than “either the Capitol or the White House or the State Department.” He very much liked the thought that one’s common “identity is lost” there among the “illustrious men.”

[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)**1852-1853****1852-1853**

Here is the campaign poster:



Senator Underwood wanted to amend the appropriations bill for the US Navy:

A bill making appropriations for the naval service for the year ending June 30, 1854. Mr. Underwood offered the following amendment: -

"For executing the provisions of the act approved 3d of March, 1819, entitled 'An act in addition to the acts prohibiting the slave trade,' \$20,000." Amendment agreed to, and bill passed. It appears, however, to have been subsequently amended in the House, and the appropriation does not stand in the final act. CONGRESSIONAL GLOBE, 32nd Congress, 2d session, page 1072; STATUTES AT LARGE, X. 214.

[INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE](#)

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 March 4, Friday, 1853: The federal Congress appropriated \$150,000 to survey potential routes west for our nation's 1st transcontinental railway.

[HISTORY OF RR](#)

That morning the name of former Senator and Congressman [Franklin Pierce](#), a heroic officer of a volunteer brigade in the successful war upon [Mexico](#), had not been placed in nomination at the national convention of his Democratic party until the 35th polling of its delegates, and he had not become their chosen candidate until their 49th ballot (it is almost as if they were aware that he had been rather totally ineffective during that conflict, displaying little more ability than the ability to fall off a horse). Nevertheless on this morning he became President of the United States of America (until March 3, 1857). It was snowing. Although a commemorative copper token was struck,



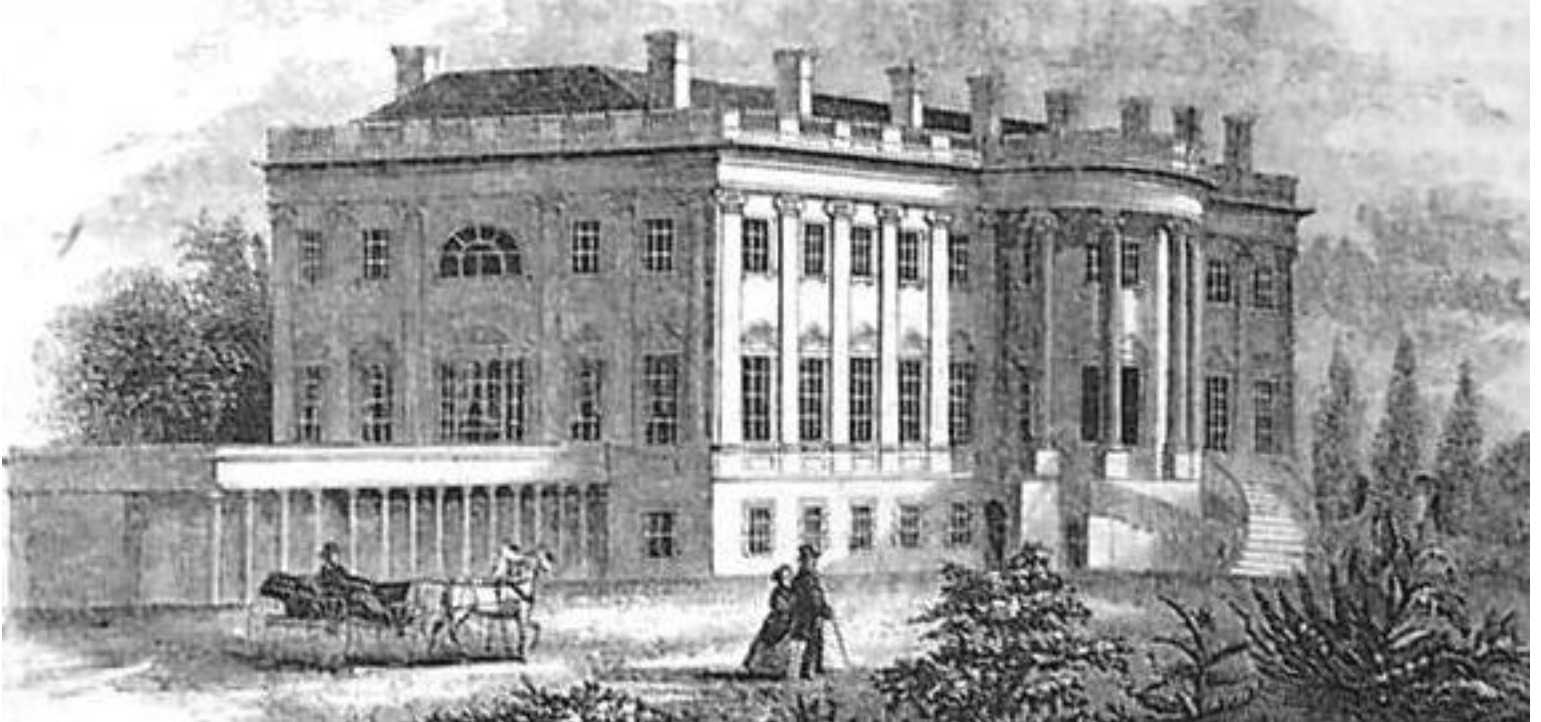
there would be no inaugural fete because officially he was in mourning, his only child Ben having been killed  in that railroad car accident of January 6th.



(Mrs. Pierce would be sitting out his presidency at home in New Hampshire in mourning; she would never

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visit the White House.)

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When Chief Justice Roger Taney came to administer the oath of office as President of the United States of America on the East Portico of the Capitol, this gent who had never caviled at the thought of killing other humans, who would earn fame as one of our very worst presidents, the nation's replacement for [Millard Fillmore](#), due to his religious scruples quailed at the term "swear" and chose, rather, to "affirm" that he would perform his duties in his new office. He would go down in history not only as incompetent but also as our only president to affirm, rather than swear, his oath of office.⁶⁸



68. Oh, give us a break please!

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My Countrymen: It is a relief to feel that no heart but my own can know the personal regret and bitter sorrow over which I have been borne to a position so suitable for others rather than desirable for myself. The circumstances under which I have been called for a limited period to preside over the destinies of the Republic fill me with a profound sense of responsibility, but with nothing like shrinking apprehension. I repair to the post assigned me not as to one sought, but in obedience to the unsolicited expression of your will, answerable only for a fearless, faithful, and diligent exercise of my best powers. I ought to be, and am, truly grateful for the rare manifestation of the nation's confidence; but this, so far from lightening my obligations, only adds to their weight. You have summoned me in my weakness; you must sustain me by your strength. When looking for the fulfillment of reasonable requirements, you will not be unmindful of the great changes which have occurred, even within the last quarter of a century, and the consequent augmentation and complexity of duties imposed in the administration both of your home and foreign affairs. Whether the elements of inherent force in the Republic have kept pace with its unparalleled progression in territory, population, and wealth has been the subject of earnest thought and discussion on both sides of the ocean. Less than sixty-four years ago the Father of his Country made "the" then "recent accession of the important State of North Carolina to the Constitution of the United States" one of the subjects of his special congratulation. At that moment, however, when the agitation consequent upon the Revolutionary struggle had hardly subsided, when we were just emerging from the weakness and embarrassments of the Confederation, there was an evident consciousness of vigor equal to the great mission so wisely and bravely fulfilled by our fathers. It was not a presumptuous assurance, but a calm faith, springing from a clear view of the sources of power in a government constituted like ours. It is no paradox to say that although comparatively weak the new-born nation was intrinsically strong. Inconsiderable in population and apparent resources, it was upheld by a broad and intelligent comprehension of rights and an all-pervading purpose to maintain them, stronger than armaments. It came from the furnace of the Revolution, tempered to the necessities of the times. The thoughts of the men of that day were as practical as their sentiments were patriotic. They wasted no portion of their energies upon idle and delusive speculations, but with a firm and fearless step advanced beyond the governmental landmarks which had hitherto circumscribed the limits of human freedom and planted their standard, where it has stood against dangers which have threatened from abroad, and internal agitation, which has at times fearfully menaced at home. They proved themselves equal to the solution of the great problem, to understand which their minds had been illuminated by the dawning lights of the Revolution. The object sought was not a thing dreamed of; it was a thing realized. They had exhibited only the power to achieve, but, what all history affirms to be so much more unusual, the capacity to maintain. The oppressed throughout the world from that day to the present have turned their eyes hitherward, not to find those lights extinguished or to fear lest they should wane, but to be constantly cheered by their steady and



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increasing radiance. In this our country has, in my judgment, thus far fulfilled its highest duty to suffering humanity. It has spoken and will continue to speak, not only by its words, but by its acts, the language of sympathy, encouragement, and hope to those who earnestly listen to tones which pronounce for the largest rational liberty. But after all, the most animating encouragement and potent appeal for freedom will be its own history—its trials and its triumphs. Preeminently, the power of our advocacy reposes in our example; but no example, be it remembered, can be powerful for lasting good, whatever apparent advantages may be gained, which is not based upon eternal principles of right and justice. Our fathers decided for themselves, both upon the hour to declare and the hour to strike. They were their own judges of the circumstances under which it became them to pledge to each other "their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor" for the acquisition of the priceless inheritance transmitted to us. The energy with which that great conflict was opened and, under the guidance of a manifest and beneficent Providence the uncomplaining endurance with which it was prosecuted to its consummation were only surpassed by the wisdom and patriotic spirit of concession which characterized all the counsels of the early fathers. One of the most impressive evidences of that wisdom is to be found in the fact that the actual working of our system has dispelled a degree of solicitude which at the outset disturbed bold hearts and far-reaching intellects. The apprehension of dangers from extended territory, multiplied States, accumulated wealth, and augmented population has proved to be unfounded. The stars upon your banner have become nearly threefold their original number; your densely populated possessions skirt the shores of the two great oceans; and yet this vast increase of people and territory has not only shown itself compatible with the harmonious action of the States and Federal Government in their respective constitutional spheres, but has afforded an additional guaranty of the strength and integrity of both. With an experience thus suggestive and cheering, the policy of my Administration will not be controlled by any timid forebodings of evil from expansion. Indeed, it is not to be disguised that our attitude as a nation and our position on the globe render the acquisition of certain possessions not within our jurisdiction eminently important for our protection, if not in the future essential for the preservation of the rights of commerce and the peace of the world. Should they be obtained, it will be through no grasping spirit, but with a view to obvious national interest and security, and in a manner entirely consistent with the strictest observance of national faith. We have nothing in our history or position to invite aggression; we have everything to beckon us to the cultivation of relations of peace and amity with all nations. Purposes, therefore, at once just and pacific will be significantly marked in the conduct of our foreign affairs. I intend that my Administration shall leave no blot upon our fair record, and trust I may safely give the assurance that no act within the legitimate scope of my constitutional control will be tolerated on the part of any portion of our citizens which can not challenge a ready justification before the tribunal of the civilized world. An Administration would be



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unworthy of confidence at home or respect abroad should it cease to be influenced by the conviction that no apparent advantage can be purchased at a price so dear as that of national wrong or dishonor. It is not your privilege as a nation to speak of a distant past. The striking incidents of your history, replete with instruction and furnishing abundant grounds for hopeful confidence, are comprised in a period comparatively brief. But if your past is limited, your future is boundless. Its obligations through the unexplored pathway of advancement, and will be limitless as duration. Hence a sound and comprehensive policy should embrace not less the distant future than the urgent present. The great objects of our pursuit as a people are best to be attained by peace, and are entirely consistent with the tranquillity and interests of the rest of mankind. With the neighboring nations upon our continent we should cultivate kindly and fraternal relations. We can desire nothing in regard to them so much as to see them consolidate their strength and pursue the paths of prosperity and happiness. If in the course of their growth we should open new channels of trade and create additional facilities for friendly intercourse, the benefits realized will be equal and mutual. Of the complicated European systems of national polity we have heretofore been independent. From their wars, their tumults, and anxieties we have been, happily, almost entirely exempt. Whilst these are confined to the nations which gave them existence, and within their legitimate jurisdiction, they can not affect us except as they appeal to our sympathies in the cause of human freedom and universal advancement. But the vast interests of commerce are common to all mankind, and the advantages of trade and international intercourse must always present a noble field for the moral influence of a great people. With these views firmly and honestly carried out, we have a right to expect, and shall under all circumstances require, prompt reciprocity. The rights which belong to us as a nation are not alone to be regarded, but those which pertain to every citizen in his individual capacity, at home and abroad, must be sacredly maintained. So long as he can discern every star in its place upon that ensign, without wealth to purchase for him preferment or title to secure for him place, it will be his privilege, and must be his acknowledged right, to stand unabashed even in the presence of princes, with a proud consciousness that he is himself one of a nation of sovereigns and that he can not in legitimate pursuit wander so far from home that the agent whom he shall leave behind in the place which I now occupy will not see that no rude hand of power or tyrannical passion is laid upon him with impunity. He must realize that upon every sea and on every soil where our enterprise may rightfully seek the protection of our flag American citizenship is an inviolable panoply for the security of American rights. And in this connection it can hardly be necessary to reaffirm a principle which should now be regarded as fundamental. The rights, security, and repose of this Confederacy reject the idea of interference or colonization on this side of the ocean by any foreign power beyond present jurisdiction as utterly inadmissible. The opportunities of observation furnished by my brief experience as a soldier confirmed in my own mind the opinion, entertained and acted upon



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by others from the formation of the Government, that the maintenance of large standing armies in our country would be not only dangerous, but unnecessary. They also illustrated the importance—I might well say the absolute necessity—of the military science and practical skill furnished in such an eminent degree by the institution which has made your Army what it is, under the discipline and instruction of officers not more distinguished for their solid attainments, gallantry, and devotion to the public service than for unobtrusive bearing and high moral tone. The Army as organized must be the nucleus around which in every time of need the strength of your military power, the sure bulwark of your defense—a national militia—may be readily formed into a well-disciplined and efficient organization. And the skill and self-devotion of the Navy assure you that you may take the performance of the past as a pledge for the future, and may confidently expect that the flag which has waved its untarnished folds over every sea will still float in undiminished honor. But these, like many other subjects, will be appropriately brought at a future time to the attention of the coordinate branches of the Government, to which I shall always look with profound respect and with trustful confidence that they will accord to me the aid and support which I shall so much need and which their experience and wisdom will readily suggest. In the administration of domestic affairs you expect a devoted integrity in the public service and an observance of rigid economy in all departments, so marked as never justly to be questioned. If this reasonable expectation be not realized, I frankly confess that one of your leading hopes is doomed to disappointment, and that my efforts in a very important particular must result in a humiliating failure. Offices can be properly regarded only in the light of aids for the accomplishment of these objects, and as occupancy can confer no prerogative nor importunate desire for preferment any claim, the public interest imperatively demands that they be considered with sole reference to the duties to be performed. Good citizens may well claim the protection of good laws and the benign influence of good government, but a claim for office is what the people of a republic should never recognize. No reasonable man of any party will expect the Administration to be so regardless of its responsibility and of the obvious elements of success as to retain persons known to be under the influence of political hostility and partisan prejudice in positions which will require not only severe labor, but cordial cooperation. Having no implied engagements to ratify, no rewards to bestow, no resentments to remember, and no personal wishes to consult in selections for official station, I shall fulfill this difficult and delicate trust, admitting no motive as worthy either of my character or position which does not contemplate an efficient discharge of duty and the best interests of my country. I acknowledge my obligations to the masses of my countrymen, and to them alone. Higher objects than personal aggrandizement gave direction and energy to their exertions in the late canvass, and they shall not be disappointed. They require at my hands diligence, integrity, and capacity wherever there are duties to be performed. Without these qualities in their public servants, more stringent laws for the prevention or punishment

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of fraud, negligence, and speculation will be vain. With them they will be unnecessary. But these are not the only points to which you look for vigilant watchfulness. The dangers of a concentration of all power in the general government of a confederacy so vast as ours are too obvious to be disregarded. You have a right, therefore, to expect your agents in every department to regard strictly the limits imposed upon them by the Constitution of the United States. The great scheme of our constitutional liberty rests upon a proper distribution of power between the State and Federal authorities, and experience has shown that the harmony and happiness of our people must depend upon a just discrimination between the separate rights and responsibilities of the States and your common rights and obligations under the General Government; and here, in my opinion, are the considerations which should form the true basis of future concord in regard to the questions which have most seriously disturbed public tranquillity. If the Federal Government will confine itself to the exercise of powers clearly granted by the Constitution, it can hardly happen that its action upon any question should endanger the institutions of the States or interfere with their right to manage matters strictly domestic according to the will of their own people. In expressing briefly my views upon an important subject rich has recently agitated the nation to almost a fearful degree, I am moved by no other impulse than a most earnest desire for the perpetuation of that Union which has made us what we are, showering upon us blessings and conferring a power and influence which our fathers could hardly have anticipated, even with their most sanguine hopes directed to a far-off future. The sentiments I now announce were not unknown before the expression of the voice which called me here. My own position upon this subject was clear and unequivocal, upon the record of my words and my acts, and it is only recurred to at this time because silence might perhaps be misconstrued. With the Union my best and dearest earthly hopes are entwined. Without it what are we individually or collectively? What becomes of the noblest field ever opened for the advancement of our race in religion, in government, in the arts, and in all that dignifies and adorns mankind? From that radiant constellation which both illumines our own way and points out to struggling nations their course, let but a single star be lost, and, if these be not utter darkness, the luster of the whole is dimmed. Do my countrymen need any assurance that such a catastrophe is not to overtake them while I possess the power to stay it? It is with me an earnest and vital belief that as the Union has been the source, under Providence, of our prosperity to this time, so it is the surest pledge of a continuance of the blessings we have enjoyed, and which we are sacredly bound to transmit undiminished to our children. The field of calm and free discussion in our country is open, and will always be so, but never has been and never can be traversed for good in a spirit of sectionalism and uncharitableness. The founders of the Republic dealt with things as they were presented to them, in a spirit of self-sacrificing patriotism, and, as time has proved, with a comprehensive wisdom which it will always be safe for us to consult. Every measure tending to strengthen the fraternal feelings of all the members



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of our Union has had my heartfelt approbation. To every theory of society or government, whether the offspring of feverish ambition or of morbid enthusiasm, calculated to dissolve the bonds of law and affection which unite us, I shall interpose a ready and stern resistance. I believe that involuntary servitude, as it exists in different States of this Confederacy, is recognized by the Constitution. I believe that it stands like any other admitted right, and that the States where it exists are entitled to efficient remedies to enforce the constitutional provisions. I hold that the laws of 50, commonly called the "compromise measures," are strictly constitutional and to be unhesitatingly carried into effect. I believe that the constituted authorities of this Republic are bound to regard the rights of the South in this respect as they would view any other legal and constitutional right, and that the laws to enforce them should be respected and obeyed, not with a reluctance encouraged by abstract opinions as to their propriety in a different state of society, but cheerfully and according to the decisions of the tribunal to which their exposition belongs. Such have been, and are, my convictions, and upon them I shall act. I fervently hope that the question is at rest, and that no sectional or ambitious or fanatical excitement may again threaten the durability of our institutions or obscure the light of our prosperity. But let not the foundation of our hope rest upon man's wisdom. It will not be sufficient that sectional prejudices find no place in the public deliberations. It will not be sufficient that the rash counsels of human passion are rejected. It must be felt that there is no national security but in the nation's humble, acknowledged dependence upon God and His overruling providence. We have been carried in safety through a perilous crisis. Wise counsels, like those which gave us the Constitution, prevailed to uphold it. Let the period be remembered as an admonition, and not as an encouragement, in any section of the Union, to make experiments where experiments are fraught with such fearful hazard. Let it be impressed upon all hearts that, beautiful as our fabric is, no earthly power or wisdom could ever reunite its broken fragments. Standing, as I do, almost within view of the green slopes of Monticello, and, as it were, within reach of the tomb of Washington, with all the cherished memories of the past gathering around me like so many eloquent voices of exhortation from heaven, I can express no better hope for my country than that the kind Providence which smiled upon our fathers may enable their children to preserve the blessings they have inherited.



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[Thomas Davis](#) had been elected to the federal congress, and on this day took his seat as a Democrat. His wife [Paulina Wright Davis](#) would reside with him in [Washington DC](#). (Thomas would serve out his term, but would then fail to win re-election in 1854 and would need to return to the manufacture of jewelry in [Providence, Rhode Island](#).)

A good time was had that day in [Washington](#), by all and sundry:



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Pierce would, as he had pledged, be appointing an entirely proslavery cabinet:



To Thine Own Self Be True

A letter from Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe to Dr. Wardlaw, dated December 4, 1852, had been read at the Second Annual Meeting of the Glasgow Female New Association for the Abolition of Slavery, and at this point was printed in Frederick Douglass' Paper:

DEAR SIR:—I was most deeply and gratefully touched by your kind letter, and by its certainly very unexpected contents. That Christian hearts in good old Scotland should turn so warmly



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towards me, seems to me like a dream; yet it is no less a most pleasant one. For myself I can claim no merit in that work which has been the cause of this. It was an instinctive, irresistible outburst, and had no more merit in it than a mother's wailing for her first born. The success of the work, so strange, so utterly unexpected, only astonishes me. I can only say that this bubble of my mind, has risen on the mighty stream of a divine purpose, and even a bubble can go far on such a side. I am much of my time pressed down with a heavy sadness, "for the hurt of the daughter of my people" is so horrible, so sad – such a dishonor to Christ and his cause.

But, again, when I see that a spirit above me is issuing this feeble work – choosing the weak things of the world to confound the mighty – then I have hope. Why has He given it this success, unless He means some mercy to the cause? Please to say to those Christian friends who have sent me the invitation in your letter, that I gladly accept it – though, when I get there, I fear that they may be disappointed. I never was much to see, and now I am in feeble health – worn and weary. I am now putting through the press another work, "A Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin," containing all the facts and documents which confirm the story; truth darker and sadder, and more painful to write than the fiction was. I shall call heaven and earth to witness to the deeds which have been done here! Alas! That I should do it. Should God spare my life till April, I trust to mingle prayers and Christian affection with the Christians of Scotland.

Yours in the gospel of Jesus,
H. B. STOWE



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR MARCH 4TH]



March 5, Saturday, 1853: The Placer Herald of Placerville, California reported that gold dust was continuing to be turned in at the rate of some \$70,000 per week. For the past two weeks there had been excitement caused by the prospecting of the entire slope of the mountain divide between Rich Flat and the American River. A shaft had been sunk a year earlier and the party of 15 that had sunk this shaft had recently reappeared, and reinstated their claim, and had begun to engage in the digging of a 1½-mile ditch for the introduction of water from the aqueduct at the head of Rich Flat. The Daily Alta California reported that at Mamaluke Hill near Georgetown (a remarkable collection of buildings because the ground on which the buildings were situated had turned out to be so rich in gold, that some of the store structures had since been undermined) a group of 1,000 miners that had been tunneling without success for some 3 months, had in the past 5 days been able to extract \$15,000 per day from a line of deposit that seemed extensive. Other parties that had struck the same line of deposit were extracting daily the sums of \$4,000, \$5,000, and \$6,000 per day.

Arriving in Washington DC, Jefferson Davis went immediately to meet with President Franklin Pierce.

Arthur William Foote was born at 44 Warren Street, Salem, Massachusetts, the 3d of 6 children (3 surviving infancy) born to Caleb Foote, editor of the Salem Gazette and Mary Wilder White, amateur singer and daughter of a judge.

German immigrant Heinrich Engelhard Steinweg and 5 of his sons founded Steinway and Sons, a piano

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factory, at Manhattan Island's 85 Varick Street in [New-York](#).

The Saint Paul Fire and Marine Insurance Company, a predecessor to The Travelers [insurance](#) company, was founded in St. Paul, [Minnesota](#), serving local customers who were having a difficult time getting claim payments in a timely manner from insurance companies on the east coast of the United States.

[Henry Thoreau](#) mentioned in his journal that he had received a circular letter early in March or shortly before from a scientist he had met, [Spencer Fullerton Baird](#), the secretary of [Louis Agassiz](#)'s American Association



for the Advancement of Science, advising him and, he suspected, "thousand of others," that he had been proposed for membership in the Association. The letter asked him "to fill in the blank against certain questions, among which the most important one was what branch of science [he] was specially interested in." Thoreau did not respond, apparently assuming the group would take no action.



March 5. [F. Brown](#) showed me to-day some lesser redpolls which he shot yesterday. They turn out to be my falsely-called chestnut-frontleted bird of the winter. "*Linaria minor*, Ray. Lesser Redpoll Linnet. From Pennsylvania and New Jersey to Maine, in winter; inland to Kentucky. Breeds in Maine, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Labrador, and the Fur Countries." -[Audubon's Synopsis](#). They have a sharp bill, black legs and claws, and a bright-crimson crown or frontlet, in the male reaching to the base of the bill, with, in his case, a delicate rose or carmine on the breast and rump. Though this is described by Nuttall as an occasional visitor in the winter, it has been the prevailing bird here this winter.

Yesterday I got my grape cuttings. The day before went to the Corner Spring to look at the tufts of green grass. (got some of the very common leptogium (?)). Is it one of the *Collemacae*? Was pleased with the sight of the yellow osiers of the golden willow, and the red of the cornel, now colors are so rare. Saw the green fine-threaded conferva in a ditch, commonly called frog-spittle. Brought it home in my pocket, and it expanded again in a tumbler. It appeared quite a fresh growth, with what looked like filmy air-bubbles, as big as large shot, in its midst.

The secretary for the Association for the Advancement of Science requests me, as he probably has thousands of others, by a printed circular letter from Washington the other day, to fill the blank against certain questions, among which the most important one was what branch of science I was specially interested in, using the term science in the most comprehensive sense possible. Now, though I could state to a select few that department of human inquiry which engages me, and should be rejoiced at an opportunity to do so, I felt that it would be to make myself the laughing-stock of the scientific community to describe or attempt to describe to them that branch of science which specially interests me, inasmuch as they do not believe in a science which deals with the



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higher law. So I was obliged to speak to their condition and describe to them that poor part of me which alone they can understand. The fact is I am a mystic, a transcendentalist, and a natural philosopher to boot. Now I think of it, I should have told them at once that I was a transcendentalist. That would have been the shortest way of telling them that they would not understand my explanations.

How absurd that, though I probably stand as near to nature as any of them, and am by constitution as good an observer as most, yet a true account of my relation to nature should excite their ridicule only! If it had been the secretary of an association of which [Plato](#) or [Aristotle](#) was the president, I should not have hesitated to describe my studies at once and particularly.

THOREAU ON NORMATIVE SCIENCE



March 6, Sunday, 1853: Giuseppe Verdi's opera LA TRAVIATA to words of Piave after Dumas was performed for the initial time, in Teatro La Fenice, Venice. This libretto was based on an Alexander Dumas play, LA DAME AUX CAMÉLIAS, with music by Giuseppe Verdi. The evening was a disaster. Critics blamed the singers. Verdi would write, "La Traviata was a grand fiasco, and what was worse, they laughed."

Kaiser Franz Josef I. Rettungs-Jubel-Marsch op. 126 by [Johann Baptist Strauss II](#) was performed for the initial time, in the Sperl Ballroom, Vienna.

The [Daily Alta California](#) of San Francisco, [California](#) reported that although at Coloma in the vicinity of Spanish Flat, in consequence of a scarcity of water, little gold mining had been done, the recent completion of the Rock Creek Canal had enabled a large recovery of gold. At Johntown on Monday past, 2 men had taken out in a few hours 14 ounces of very coarse gold in the creek near McConnells Store. Miners at Manhattan Creek were making \$3 to \$8 a day from the coarse gold, often of the finest quality, in diggings from 8 to 10 feet deep, and a few claims there were paying an ounce a day. At a place called Negro Bluff a short distance below the famous Grey Eagle City, that had for a long time been almost entirely abandoned, very extensive work had been resumed and "estate and veral tunnels were now being ran in the hill and all without exception, are paying most admirably averaging say one hundred to eight hundred dollars a day to the claim." At a place called Volcano Slide the gold was being found thickly distributed through a hard, black cement, resembling very much volcanic lava. "Claims at that place cannot be bought for scarcely any price great is their richness. Some days they yield as high as from \$100 to \$1000 per day to the hand and we are informed that at no time do they fall much short of \$50 per day to the hand." According to the [Miners Advocate](#), at Canyon Creek, which for two years past had been considered by some worked out, a day or two since, there had been a piece taken out weighing about \$367, and a couple of miners one day last week washed out \$330.



March 6. Sunday. Last Sunday I plucked some alder (apparently speckled) twigs, some (apparently *tremuloides*) aspen, and some swamp (?) willow, and put them in water in a warm room, Immediately the alder catkins were relaxed and began to lengthen and open, and by the second day to drop their pollen; like handsome pendants they hung round the pitcher, and at the same time the smaller female flower expanded and brightened. In about four days the aspens began to show their red anthers and feathery scales, being an inch in length and still extending. March 2d, I added the andromeda; March 3d, the rhodora. This morning, the ground being still covered with snow, there was quite a fog over the river and meadows, which I think owing to a warm atmosphere over the cold snow.

P.M. — To Lee's Hill.

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
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I am pleased to cut the small woods with my knife to see their color. The high blueberry, hazel, and swamp-pink are green. I love to see the dear green sprouts of the sassafras and its large and fragrant buds and bark. The twigs or extremities of the branches of young trees twenty feet high look as if scorched and blackened. I gathered a pocketful of pignuts from a tree of Lee's Hill. Still sound, half of them. The water is pretty high on the meadows (though the ground is covered with snow), so that we get a little of the peculiar still lake view at evening when the wind goes down.

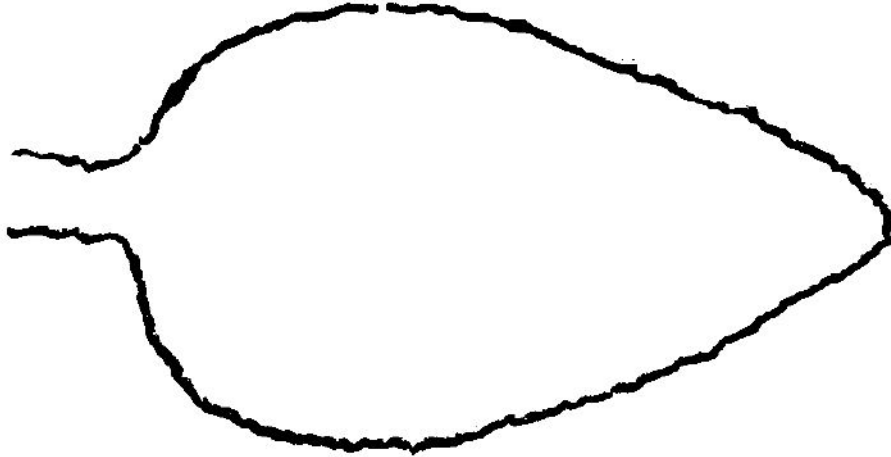
Two red squirrels made an ado about or above me near the North River, hastily running from tree to tree, leaping from the extremity of one bough to that of the nearest, or the next tree, until they gained and ascended a large white pine. I approached and stood under this, while they made a great fuss about me. One at length came part way down to reconnoitre me. It seemed that one did the barking — a faint, short, drippy bark, like that of a *toy* dog, — its tail vibrating each time, while its neck was stretched over a bough as it peered at me. The other, higher up, kept up a sort of gurgling whistle, more like a bird than a beast. When I made a noise they would stop a moment.

Seared up a partridge, which had crawled into a pile of wood. Saw, a gray hare, a dirty yellowish gray, not trig and neat, but, as usual, apparently in a *deshabille*.

As it frequently does, it ran a little way and stopped just at the entrance to its retreat; then, when I moved again, suddenly disappeared. By a slight obscure hole in the snow, it had access to a large and apparently deep woodchuck's (?) hole.

Stednian Buttrick calls the ducks  which we see the winter, widgeons and wood sheldrakes.

The licinlock cones have shed their seeds, but there are some closed yet on the ground. Part of the pitch pine cones are yet closed. This is the form of one:—



March 7, Monday, 1853: Jefferson Davis took the oath of office as Secretary of War.



March 7. The lichen on the earth and stones amid mosses which I have thought a *collema*, is, I now think, a *peltigera*, perhaps *P. canina* (mad-dog *peltigera* of Hooker?). The catkins of the sweet-gale have now, after nine days, opened, and drop their sulphury pollen more perfectly than the alders and poplars, methinks, which soon dried up and the last turned black, *i.e.* the anthers. I doubt if the willow catkins gathered at the same time (February 27) will blossom, though they have expanded.

P.M. — To Walden, Goose, and Flint's Ponds, and chestnut wood by Turnpike.

The silk of the most forward willows does not generally project the length of the scale beyond the scale yet, and I am in doubt whether they give any indication of spring; but I saw one whose catkins projected more than the length of the scale, and revealed a tinge of red through their silk, which I

1852-1853


1852-1853

think have felt the influence of the new year. Also the dark chocolate-colored alder catkins — what I have called *A. incana* — are not only relaxed, but there is an obvious looseness and space between the scales. I doubt if I have detected the speckled alder in flower. I see, however, some with short thick reddish catkins and a dull opaque bark, others with a fresh glossy and speckled bark and long, rather more forward (?), dark-chocolate catkins. These may be only a more recent and vigorous growth of the other. There is one of these a few rods east of the Peak clearing, on the shore of Walden. On the side of the Peak, I see now small radical (?) or lower leaves of a goldenrod, as fresh as anything, the dark mulberry, claret, or lake colored radical leaves of the hawkweed,⁶⁹ and the greenish radical leaves of the bushy gerardia.

What is the earliest sign of spring? The motion of worms and insects? The flow of sap in trees and the swelling of buds? Do not the insects awake with the flow of the sap? Bluebirds, etc., probably do not come till insects come out. Or are there earlier signs in the water? — the tortoises, frogs, etc. The little cup and cocciferæ lichens, mixed with other cladonias of the reindeer moss kind, are full of fresh fruit to-day. The scarlet apothecia of the cocciferæ on the stumps and earth partly covered with snow, with which they contrast, I never saw more fresh and brilliant, but they shrivel up and lose their brightness by the time you get them home. The only birds I see to-day are the lesser redpolls. I have not seen a fox-colored sparrow or a *Fringilla hyemalis*. In the Flint's Pond Mill Brook ditch, I see where the green conferva is left suspended vertically to the twigs, the water having gone down, and, being blanched, looks like very dense cobwebs. There are still a few pretty bright surnach berries left.

Gathered a few chestnuts. A good many, if not most, are now turned black and soured or spoiled and softened by the wet. Where they are less exposed to moisture, close to the base of the [*sic*], or on stumps where the ground is more elevated, or where they are protected under a very thick heap of light-lying leaves, they are perfectly sound and sweet and fresh yet, neither shrivelled nor soured (?). This peculiar condition is probably requisite to preserve their life for sprouting. I planted some in Sophia's pot. No doubt the mice and squirrels put many in secure, sufficiently dry and sufficiently moist places for this purpose, and so do a service. I find whitish grubs stretching themselves under the moist chestnut leaves, but they were in the same state in January.

Found the yellow bud of a *Nuphar advena* in the ditch on the Turnpike on E. Hosmer's land, bud nearly half an inch in diameter on a very thick stem, three fourths of an inch thick at base and ten inches long, four or five inches above the mud. This may have swollen somewhat during the warmest weather in the winter, after pushing up in the fall. And I see that it may, in such a case, in favorable locations, blossom at very early but irregular periods in the spring. What are the weeds in the water, — these which, together with the common cress, have been perfectly green and fresh all winter, one in regular beds of small roundish leaves very like the cress,⁷⁰ the other with a long, narrow, coarse leaf?⁷¹

I read an account the other clay of a snipe, [**Common Snipe**  *Gallinago gallinago* (~~Brown Snipe or Wilson's Snipe~~)] I think it was, which, though neither plucked nor drawn, underwent no change but that of drying up, becoming a natural mummy for some unknown reason, as has happened to other, larger bodies. Methinks that many, if not most, men are a sort of natural mummies. The life having departed out of them, decay and putrefaction, disorganization, has not taken place, but they still keep up a dry and withered semblance of life. What the salt is that saves them and robs the worms I do not know. Some bodies there are that, being dead and buried, do not decay, but after the lapse of years are found as fresh as if they had died but yesterday. So some men, though all true life was long ago extinct in them, wear this deceitful semblance of life. They seem to *live* on, without salt or season, from mere toughness or dryness or some antiseptic duality in their fibre. They do not mellowly dissolve and fatten the earth with their decay.


69. ?? Was it not *Aster undulatus*?

70. *Chrysosplenium*?

71. Probably forget-me-not.

1852-1853

1852-1853

 March 8, Tuesday, 1853: [Henry Thoreau](#) went to Saxonville in Framingham, with [Francis Brown](#), via Wayland, returning via Sudbury.

In the Mary Joseph “Hannah” Corcoran riots, St. Mary’s [Catholic](#) Church on Richmond Street in [Charlestown, Massachusetts](#) again needed to be defended from the Baptists by the local police force. Refer to the Reverend Thomas Ford Caldicott, D.D.’s [HANNAH CORCORAN, AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE OF HER CONVERSION FROM ROMANISM, HER ABDUCTION FROM CHARLESTOWN, AND THE TREATMENT SHE RECEIVED DURING HER ABSENCE](#) (Boston: Gould and Lincoln, 59 Washington Street).

The [Chinese Christian Army](#) of the *Tai-p’ing T’ien-kuo* or “Central Kingdom of Great Peace” sweeping down the fertile valley of the Yangze River nearly 80,000 strong, appeared outside the city walls of [Nanjing](#).

CHINESE CIVIL WAR

Spring 1845	Ice of Walden Pond first completely open on April 1st
Spring 1846	Ice of Walden Pond first completely open on March 25th
Spring 1847	Ice of Walden Pond first completely open on April 8th
Spring 1851	Ice of Concord River opened much before February 25th; Ice of Walden Pond first completely open on March 28th
Spring 1852	Ice of Concord River opened at least by March 14th; Ice of Walden Pond first completely open on April 18th
Spring 1853	Ice of Concord River opened at least by about March 8th; Ice of Walden Pond first completely open on March 23d
Spring 1854	Ice of Concord River opened about March 9th, average March 5th; Ice of Walden Pond first completely open about April 7th
Spring 1856	Ice of Concord River opened on March 5th; Ice cleared on Walden Pond on April 18th

When [Thoreau](#) relaunched his new flat-bottomed boat, he found it was leaking.



March 8. 10 A.M. — Rode to Saxonville with [F. Brown](#) to look at a small place for sale, *via* Wayland. Return by Sudbury.


On wheels in snow. A spring sheen on the snow. The melting snow, running and sparkling down-hill in the ruts, was quite springlike. The snow pure white, but full of water and dissolving through the heat of the sun. Saw a mink run across the road in Sudbury, a large black weasel, to appearance, worming its supple way over the snow. Where it ran, its tracks were thus: = = = the intervals between the fore and hind feet sixteen or eighteen inches by two and a half.


The distant view of the open flooded Sudbury meadows, all darts blue, surrounded by a landscape of white snow, gave an impulse to the dormant sap in my veins. Dark-blue and angry waves, contrasting with the white but melting winter landscape. Ponds, of course, do not yet afford this water prospect; only the flooded meadows. There is no ice over or near the stream, and the flood has covered or broken up much of the ice on the meadows. The aspect of these waters at sunset, when the air is still, begins to be unspeakably soothing and promising. Waters are at length, and begin to reflect, and, instead of looking into the sky, I look into the placid reflecting water for the signs and promise of the morrow. These meadows are the most of ocean that I have fairly learned. Now, when the sap of the trees is probably beginning to flow, the sap of the earth, the river, overflows and bursts



1852-1853

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its icy fetters. This is the sap of which I make my sugar after the frosty nights, boiling it down and crystallizing it. I must be on the lookout now for the gulls and the ducks . That dark-blue meadowy revelation. It is as when the sap of the maple bursts forth early and runs down the trunk to the snow.

Saw two or three hawks sailing. Saw the remains of four cows and a horse that were burned in a barn a month ago. Where the paunch was, a large bag of coarse hay and stalks was seen in the midst of an indistinct circumference of ribs. Saw some very large willow buds expanded (their silks) to thrice the length of their scales, indistinctly carved or waved with darker lines around them. They look snore like, are more of, spring than anything I have seen. Heard the *phebe*, or spring note of the chickadee [**Chicadee, Black-capped  Parus atricapillus** ~~Titmouse, Titmice~~], now, before any spring bird has arrived.

I know of no more pleasant employment than to ride about the country with a companion very early in the spring, looking at farms with a view to purchasing if not paying for them.

Heard the first flies buzz in the sun on the south side of the house.



March 9, Wednesday, 1853: New-York's Columbia Fire Insurance Company was issued a 30-year charter as a stock company, capitalized at \$200,000.

Henry Thoreau had received a payment from Putnam's Monthly Magazine of American Literature, Science and Art, and used it to pay down a debt to Horace Greeley.



To: Horace Greeley

From: HDT

Date: 9 March 1853

Concord Feb. 9th '53

Friend Greeley,

I send you inclosed Putnam's cheque for 59 dollars, which together with the 20 dollars sent last December—make, nearly enough, principal & interest of the \$75 which you lent me last July—

However I regard that loan as a kindness for which I am still indebted to you both principal and interest. I am sorry that my manuscript should be so mangled, insignificant as it is, but I do not know how I could have helped it fairly, since I was born to be a pantheist—if that be the name of me, and to do the deeds of one.

I suppose that Sartain is quite out of hearing by this time, & it is well that I sent him no more.

Let me know how much I am still indebted to you pecuniarily for trouble taken in disposing of my papers—which I am sorry to think were hardly worth your time.

Yrs with new thanks

Henry D. Thoreau

1852-1853

1852-1853

Thoreau began a new notebook of nearly 500 pages, with marbled blue/red/olive boards, numbering it "XV." He would be making entries in this book through August 18, 1853, and the manuscript volume is now in the Pierpont Morgan Library under accession number MA 1302.21. In this one there are no missing leaves. Thoreau commented at the start of his new journal volume that [George Minott](#), who lived on the Lexington Road opposite the Emersons, "thinks & quotes some old worthy as authority for saying that the bark of the striped squirrel is the or a first sure sign of decided spring weather."



March 9. Wednesday. Rain, dissolving the snow and raising the river. I do not perceive that the early elm or the white maple buds have swollen yet. So the relaxed and loosened (?) alder catkins and the extended willow catkins and poplar catkins are the first signs of reviving vegetation which I have witnessed. Minott thinks, and quotes some old worthy as authority for saying, that the bark of the striped squirrel is the, or a, first sure sign of decided spring weather.



March 10, Thursday. [1853](#): A detachment of [U.S. Marines](#) disembarked at San Juan del Norte, Nicaragua to prevent Cornelius Vanderbilt's Accessory Transit Company from being evicted by the local government. This would be the 1st of many such interventions by the United States in Nicaragua.

[US MILITARY INTERVENTIONS](#)

The [Daily Union](#) of [California](#) printed the letter of a man at Auburn in Placer County who had been watching the recovery of gold from a small spur of an ancient river channel:

Mr. Editor. I walked up the hill this morning, with a friend, to see the new surface diggings near Carpenter's Tunnel. We found the miners busily engaged in carting the dirt on short rails, in small trucks, to be washed out immediately below the Bear River Ditch. The earth is taken from the sides and top of an extensive drift formation. The stones being well water-worn; but how it all got there, it would puzzle a better geologist than I to decide. The first company we conversed with were taking out from \$12 to \$16 to the hand per day; the next from \$20 upwards. There are very many "claims" lying idle on either side - but why a piece of stick placed in the ground should prevent, for an indefinite period, industrious men from doing themselves and the country good, by bringing into circulation what is now locked up and useless in the earth, is to me unaccountable; and savors some writ of the dog in the manger. There is abundance of water and room enough for hundreds. Indeed from the whole hill being "drift" and there being no bed rock, it is probable that the hills will be leveled with the plain before they have "given entire satisfaction" the miners throughout the neighborhood are quietly realizing, and doing well.

Having heard crows and cocks in the distance, [Henry Thoreau](#) quoted [Anacreon](#)'s "the works of men shine" in his journal and amplified the thought as "so the sounds of men and birds are musical."

In his journal for this day Thoreau is still turning over and over in his mind a conundrum having to do with helicoidal flow in a meandering stream bed, that he had commented upon in his journal entry for April 11, 1852. He fully grasped that he had arrived at an observation, but not at an explanation.⁷² Here is [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#) again:





1852-1853

1852-1853



Finally, in the boldest stroke of his inductive genius during the Walden years, Thoreau linked the side-to-side meandering with up-and-down meandering to recognize an even more fundamental type of three-dimensional meandering known as helicoidal flow. This is a corkscrew motion in which the forward-propagating sine curve of momentum rotates around the line of gravitational flow. In this conception, line, wave, and circle become a single entity. This unification took place in Thoreau's mind on the bank of Nut Meadow Brook on a lovely spring day in 1852 [April 11, 1852 journal entry below] when he noticed the streamlines of flow "meandering as much up and down as from side to side, deepest where narrowest, and ever gullying under this bank or that, its bottom lifted up to one side or the other, the current inclining to one side." At this point, the only thing Thoreau lacked was the explanation for the helical pattern he was seeing. Still searching a year later, he asks [refer to March 10, 1853 journal entry] "What is the theory of these sudden pitches, or steep shelving places, in the sandy bottom of the brook?" Thoreau's unwillingness to let go of an observation he does not fully understand brands him as a curiosity-driven scientist, hardly the trope-seeing transcendentalist he had left behind him a few years earlier.



March 10. This is the first really spring day. The sun is brightly reflected from all surfaces, and the north side of the street begins to be a little more passable to foot-travellers. You not think it necessary to button up your coat.

P.M. — To Second Division Brook.

As I stand looking over the swollen river, looking from the bridge into the flowing, eddying tide, — the almost strange chocolate-colored water, — the sound of distant crows and cocks is full of spring. As Anacreon says "the works of men shine," so the sounds of inert and birds are musical. Something analogous to the thawing of the ice seems to have taken place in the air. At the end of winter there is a season in which we are daily expecting spring, and finally a day when it arrives.

I see many middling-sized black spiders on the edge of the snow, very active. By John Hosmer's ditch by the riverside I see the skunk-cabbage springing freshly, the points of the spathes just peeping out of the ground, in some other places three inches high even. The radical leaves of innumerable plants (as here a dock in and near the water) are evidently affected by the spring influences. Many plants are to some extent evergreen, like the buttercup now beginning to start. Methinks the first obvious evidence of spring is the pushing out of the swamp willow catkins, then the relaxing of the earlier alder catkins, then the pushing up of skunk-cabbage spathes (and pads at the bottom of water). This is the order I am inclined to, though perhaps any of these may take precedence of all the rest in any particular case. [*Vide* next page.]

What is that dark pickle-green alga (?) at the bottom of this ditch, looking *somewhat* like a decaying

72. Explanation for the helicoidal flow of meandering streams would need to wait, either for 1876 and Professor James Thomson, LL.D., F.R.S.E.'s "On the Origin of Windings of Rivers in Alluvial Plains, with Remarks on the Flow of Water round Bends in Pipes," Proceedings of the Royal Society of London. From May 4, 1876, to February 22, 1877. Volume XXV, pages 5-8,

ON THE ORIGIN OF WINDINGS

or for 1926 and [Albert Einstein](#)'s "*Die Ursache der Mäanderbildung der Flußläufe und des sogenannten Baer'schen Gesetzes*," (*Die Naturwissenschaften*, 1926, 11, S. 223-224) translated as "The cause of the Formation of Meanders in the Courses of Rivers and of the so-called [Karl Ernest von] Baer's Law," as pages 249-253 of *IDEAS AND OPINIONS* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1954).

FORMATION OF MEANDERS

1852-1853

1852-1853

cross, with fruit like a lichen?

At Nut Meadow Brook crossing we rest awhile on the rail, gazing into the eddying stream. The ripple-marks on the sandy bottom, where silver spangles shine in the river with black wrecks of caddis-cases lodged under each shelving sand, the shadows of the invisible dimples reflecting prismatic colors on the bottom, the minnows already stemming the current with restless, wiggling tails, ever and anon darting aside, probably to secure some invisible mote in the water, whose shadows we do not at first detect on the sandy bottom, — when detected so much more obvious as well as larger and more interesting than the substance, — in which each fin is distinctly seen, though scarcely to be detected in the substance; these are all very beautiful and exhilarating sights, a sort of diet drink to heal our winter discontent. Have the minnows played thus all winter? The equisetum at the bottom has freshly grown several inches. Then should I not have given the precedence on the last page to this and some other water-plants? I suspect that I should, and the flags appear to be starting. I am surprised to find on the rail a young tortoise, an inch and one sixteenth long in the shell, which has crawled out to sun, or perchance is on its way to the water, which I think must be the *Emys guttata*, for there is a large and distinct yellow spot on each dorsal and lateral plate, and the third dorsal plate is hexagonal and not quadrangular, as the *E. picta* is described to be, though in my specimen I can't make it out to be so. Yet the edges of the plates are prominent, as is described in the *E. insculpta*, which, but for the spots and two yellow spots on each side of the hind head and one fainter on the top of the head, I should take it to be. It is about seven eighths of an inch wide. Very inactive. When was it hatched and where?

What is the theory of these sudden pitches, or steep shelving places, in the sandy bottom of the brook? It is very interesting to walk along such a brook as this in the midst of the meadow, which you can better do now before the frost is quite out of the sod, and gaze into the deep holes in its irregular bottom and the dark gulfs under the banks. Where it rushes rapidly over the edge of a steep slope in the bottom,



the shadow of the disturbed surface is like sand hurried forward in the water. The bottom, being of shifting sand, is exceedingly irregular and interesting. What was that sound that came on the softened air? It was the warble of the first bluebird from that scraggy apple orchard yonder. When this is heard, then has spring arrived. It must be that the willow twigs, both the yellow and green, are brighter-colored than before. I cannot be deceived. They shine as if the sap were already flowing under the bark; a certain lively and glossy hue they have. The early poplars are pushing forward their catkins, though they make not so much display as the willows.

Still in some parts of the woods it is good sledding. At Second Division Brook, the fragrance of the senecio, which is decidedly evergreen, which I have bruised, is very permanent and brings round the year again. It is a memorable sweet meadowy fragrance. I find a yellow-spotted tortoise (*Emys guttata*) in the brook. A very few leaves of cowslips, and those wholly under water, show themselves yet. The leaves of the water saxifrage, for the most part frost-bitten, are common enough. Near the caltha was also green frog-spawn, and Channing says he saw pollywogs. [Thoreau's footnote: "Possibly lizards." What Thoreau has been interpreted by the 1906 editor to mean in this footnote is newts, or salamanders.] Perhaps it is a particularly warm place. The alder's catkins — the earliest of them — are very plainly expanding, or, rather, the scales are loose and separated, and the whole catkin relaxed.

Minott says that old Sam Nutting, the hunter, — Fox Nutting, Old Fox, he was called, — who died more than forty years ago (he lived in Jacob Baker's house, Lincoln; came from Weston) and was some seventy years old then, told him that he had killed not only bear about Fair Haven among the walnuts, but *moose!*

1852-1853

1852-1853

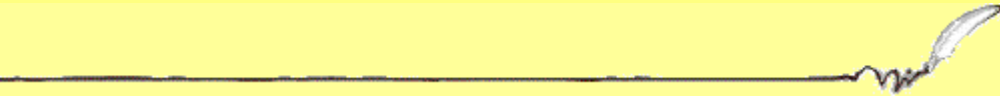
During the last decade of his life, Thoreau visited his rivers more than twice as often as the upland woods and lakes that he is far better known for writing about.

– [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 3



The Hill-Lake reach of the [Sudbury River](#) – [Clamshell Bank](#), [Nut Meadow Brook](#), [Conantum](#), and Fairhaven Bay – was rendered more lakelike because its outlet over the boat-place bar had been raised. In consequence, channel obstructions were submerged more deeply. A pulse of ecological change affected the shorelines. Meadows became broader and more variable, attracting Thoreau's botanical interests. Its principal tributary, [Nut Meadow Brook](#), carried more water during storms, making it more interesting than it had been in earlier times. It became Henry's best laboratory for observing hydraulic processes, and the place where he first understood the physics of the meandering process.

– [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 238



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



1852-1853

1852-1853



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

US MILITARY INTERVENTIONS

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

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

An unsigned paragraph appeared in Frederick Douglass' Paper:

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



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

TIMELINE OF CANADA

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

*Concord Mar. 11 '53
Mr Curtis,
Together with the MS
of my Cape Cod adventures Mr Put-
nam sends me only 70 or 80 pages of
the "Canada", all which having been
printed is of course of no use to me.
He states that "the remainder of the
MSS seems to have been lost at the
printers'." You will not be surprised
if I wish to know if it actually is lost,
and if reasonable pains have been
taken to recover it. Supposing that
Mr P. may not have had an
opportunity to consult you respecting
its whereabouts –or have thought
it of importance enough to inquire
after particularly– I write again
to you to whom I entrusted it to as-*

^ the first (out of 200)



1852-1853

1852-1853

*sure you that it is of more value to me than may appear.
With your leave I will improve
this opportunity to acknowledge the
receipt of another cheque from Mr-
Putnam.
I trust that if we ever have
any intercourse hereafter it may be some-*

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



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

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

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



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



1852-1853

1852-1853



March 12, Saturday, 1853: The 1,021-ton 180x36-foot clipper ship *Northern Light* with Captain Freeman Hatch of Eastham, Massachusetts at the helm, which was preparing in [San Francisco](#) to return to Boston harbor, agreed to a contest with the clipper *Contest* bound for New-York. The *Contest* departed on this day whereas the *Northern Light* would not be able to leave for Boston until the following day (however, for maximum speed it would be traveling entirely without cargo).

The [Placer Herald](#) of [California](#) reported that a lump of gold of 78 ounces 13-pennyweight had been taken from Spanish Gulch near Ophir. It printed a letter from Yankee Jim's in the mountains:

We started for Michigan City by way of the Forest House, over an excellent ridge road. In the neighborhood of the house a rich vein of gold had recently been discovered by Mr. Snyder, Moore, and Cheesburgh. The yield had been immense. In one pan full they took out \$850. They have been offered \$30,500 for the claim, but we understand they will not take less than \$70,000. The deposit in which the gold is found is a kind of cement resembling ochre in color and becomes soft by the action of water and exposure to the air. The cement seems to be literally studded with gold. We pursued our course to Sarahsville, then to Bird's Valley onto Michigan City. Just below the town site there is a flat, or point of a hill rather, which pays to the depth of 20 or 30 feet. Mr. Finley's claim the day we were here (Tuesday) yielded 24 ounces and has yielded as high as 50 ounces in one day, generally working from 10 to 16 men.



1852-1853

1852-1853

In the passage from [Henry Thoreau](#)'s journal of this date, [Robert Milder](#) has keyed in on the choice phrase "as near as possible to the channel in which your life flows" in order to offer, in REIMAGINING THOREAU (NY: Cambridge UP, 1995, pages 49-50), an understanding of "what pragmatists would call [Thoreau's] admirable resilience, purists his philosophical indifference":

...despite passages of deep reflection and beauty, WEEK is a transitional work analogous within Thoreau's career to MARDI within Melville's; both are ambitious books that developed in the writing and whose popular and critical failure was assuaged by the author's conviction that they were stepping-stones to wisdom. Melville's major works characteristically changed as their author responded exuberantly to what Warner Berthoff called "that rush of interior development which served him for education." Composed over several years through multiple drafts, WEEK and WALDEN also changed; but where Melville tended to write himself forward into new attitudes, overrunning all obstructions, Thoreau often felt his way laterally, searching for an aperture to write himself out of an idea or orientation that had become straitening. "If he is wise," Thoreau later remarked, the scholar will set aside fruitless studies and turn elsewhere, "as a plant in a cellar will strive toward the light." Thoreau rarely solved the intellectual or spiritual problems that beset him; neither did he deny or evade them. He met them head-on, brooded on them in his journals, pressed them to an anguished crux of insolubility, then left them behind, beckoned by some new interest or life possibility that presented itself. The pattern would mark his entire career and is at the heart of what pragmatists would call his admirable resilience, purists his philosophical indifference. Thoreau himself called it dwelling "as near as possible to the channel in which your life flows."

Here is his analysis (page 119), of the revisions being made by Thoreau, during this 1852-1853-1854 timeframe, to drafts B and C of the WALDEN manuscript which had been laid by since 1849:

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



1852-1853



March 12, 1853. The death-bed scenes and observations even of the best and wisest afford but a sorry picture of our humanity.

— [Henry Thoreau](#)

1852-1853



March 12. Saturday. Last night it snowed, a sleety snow again, and now the ground is whitened with it, and where are gone the [bluebirds](#) [[Eastern Bluebird](#) [Sialia sialis](#)] whose warble was wafted to me so lately like a blue wavelet through the air?

The greater part of the alder catkins (as well as the willow) are still in their winter condition, but some have their scales conspicuously loosened and elevated, showing their lighter-colored edges and interstices. They are actually beginning to blossom, certainly in advance of the willows. The sweet-gale is the prettiest flower which I have [found] expanded yet.

It is essential that a man confine himself to pursuits — a scholar, for instance, to studies — which lie next to and conduce to his life, which do not go against the grain, either of his will or his imagination. The scholar finds in his experience some studies to be most fertile and radiant with light, others dry, barren, and dark. If he is wise, he will not persevere in the last, as a plant in a cellar will strive toward the light. He will confine the observations of his mind as closely as possible to the experience or life of his senses. His thought must live with and be inspired with the life of the body. The death-bed scenes and observations even of the best and wisest afford but a sorry picture of our humanity. Some men endeavor to live a constrained life, to subject their whole lives to their wills, as he who said he would give a sign if he were conscious after his head was cut off, — but he gave no sign. Dwell as near as possible to the channel in which your life flows. A man may associate with such companions, he may pursue such employments, as will darken the day for him. Men choose darkness rather than light.



March 13, Sunday, [1853](#): [Moncure Daniel Conway](#) met [Henry Wadsworth Longfellow](#).⁷³

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

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

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



1852-1853

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[Henry Thoreau](#) made an entry in his journal that he was later to copy into his early lecture [“WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT”](#). It would be combined with an entry made in January 1851 to form the following:

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

**Brad Dean's
Commentary**

1. [GENESIS 25:32-34](#)
2. [MARK 8:36](#) Bradley P. Dean has emended the manuscript copy-text from ‘What shall it profit &c’ by completing the sentence and adding the quotation marks.
3. Here Thoreau refers to his own book, [WALDEN](#), pages 32-33. He uses the figure “ninety-nine in a hundred” in the journal source of this passage. J. Lyndon Shanley notes the same change in the WALDEN manuscripts (THE MAKING OF *WALDEN* [Chicago: U. of Chicago P., 1957], page 35).

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



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text for most of “What Shall It Profit” 38 and all of “What Shall It Profit” 39 at NBiSU. The information from the NBiSU manuscript has been incorporated into the text and notes of this article with only one exception: ‘point-blank shots’ in the first sentence of “What Shall It Profit” 39 is an emendation of ‘point blank-shots’ in the manuscript copy-text. Authority for this emendation is derived from an intermediate lecture-draft manuscript at Harvard University (bMS Am 278.5 [20D]; see Dean, “Sound of a Flail,” pages 432-35, for a transcription) and “Life without Principle” 14.



March 13. 6 A.M. — To Cliffs.

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

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



March 14, Monday, 1853: Daniel Shattuck Surette was born in Concord to Louis A. Surette and Frances Jane Shattuck Surette. This infant would survive only until October 2d.

At groundbreaking ceremonies at Presidio Hill in San Francisco just north of Lake Street and 13th Avenue, for piping a municipal water supply from Mountain Lake, Lieutenant Governor Purdy and Acting Mayor Haven delivered addresses (water would begin to flow during September).

Henry Thoreau repaired the his new flat-bottomed boat to stop it from leaking.

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March 14. P.M. — Repairing my boat.

"Up Assabet" is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau's two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), *THE BOATMAN*, page 10

"Upriver," "To Fairhaven," and "To Clamshell" were other common opening phrases. This signified a southward trip up the lakelike [Sudbury River](#), which zigzagged between rocky cliffs and lush meadows. Its current could be detected only at narrows and shallows. Parallel lines of sweet-scented lily pads, aquatic flowers rooted in shoreline mud, and buttonbush swamps flanked the river for much of its length. With a breeze from the north or east, he would usually sail. Otherwise he would row.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), *THE BOATMAN*, page 11

High winds, growing colder and colder, ground stiffening again. My ears have not been colder the past winter. Lowell Fay tells me that he overtook with a boat and killed last July a woodchuck which was crossing the river at Hollowell Place. He also says that the blacksmith of Sudbury has two otter skins taken in that town. March is rightly famous for its winds.



March 15, Tuesday, 1853: The San Joaquin, [California Republican](#) printed a letter from Little York:

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

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

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

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

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



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

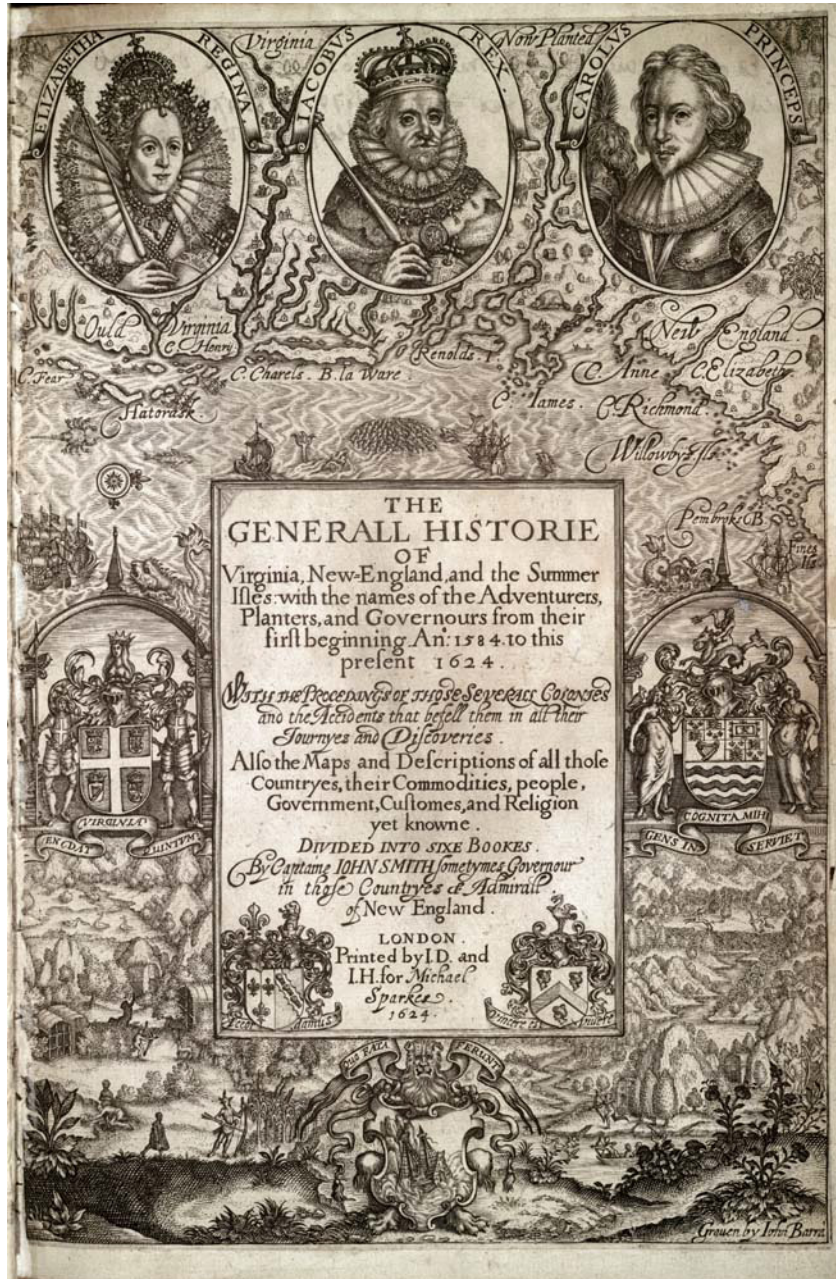
Organization, —how it prevails! After a little discipline, we study with love and reverence the forms of disease as healthy organisms. The fungi have a department in the science of botany. Who can doubt but that they too are fungi lower in the scale which he sees on the wick of his lamp!

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

DOG

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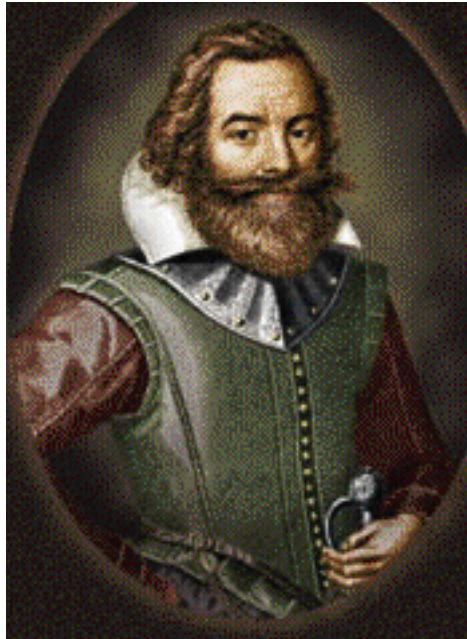



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sensible to have built as many charity houses. These are the vex'd Bermoothes.

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BERMUDA



 March 16, Wednesday, 1853: The builders and contractors of San Francisco met at the Mountaineer House and elected Captain E.F. Lupton as their President and William Craine as their Secretary.

In Constantinople, Russian emissary Prince A.S. Menshikov demanded that the Ottoman Empire agree to a treaty enshrining Russia's right to protect Christians living in Ottoman territories.

Theodore Sedgwick Fay was nominated as Minister Resident for Switzerland and Liechtenstein. He would present his credentials in Berne on June 29th, and would serve until 1861.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Theodore S. Fay."



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR MARCH 16TH]

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March 17. Thursday, 1853: In [San Francisco](#), [The Wide West](#) was instituted by Bonestell & Williston as a Sunday literary newspaper.

[Christian Johann Doppler](#), whose lectures on experimental physics [Gregor Mendel](#) had attended at the University of Vienna, died at the age of 49 of a lung disease from which he had been seeking relief in Venice. He was survived by his wife and 5 children.

[Henry Thoreau](#) went to Lexington, Massachusetts, with [Francis C. Brown](#).



March 17. [Channing](#) says he saw [blackbirds](#), yesterday; [F.C. Brown](#), that they were getting ice out of Loring's Pond yesterday.

P.M. — Rode to Lexington with [Brown](#).

Saw, on the corner of a wall by a house about three quarters of a mile from the monument on the Bedford road, a stone apparently worn by water into the form of a rude bird-like idol, which I thought, as I rode by, to be the work of the Indians. It was probably discovered and used by them. It was as near as nature might come by accident to an eagle, with a very regular pedestal such as busts have, on which it stood, — in all about two and a half feet high. Whitewashed as well as the wall. Found not near water. It is one of those stones which [Schoolcraft](#) describes as found among the Chippeways.

The ways are mostly settled, frozen dry.

THE RED RACE



March 18, Friday, 1853: We now have a complete on-line source for the contents of the issue of [Frederick Douglass' Paper](#) for this date:

ON-LINE RESOURCE

The [Chinese Christian Army](#) fought its way into [Nanjing](#). About 20,000 Imperial officials, soldiers and wealthy individuals were killed. A large number of women were herded into an empty building that was then set ablaze while the *Tai-p'ing* offered Christian prayers outside.

CHINESE CIVIL WAR



March 18: The season is so far advanced that the sun, every now and then promising to shine out through this rather warm rain, lighting up transiently with a whiter light the dark day and my dark chamber, affects me as I have not been affected for a long time. I must go forth.

P.M. — To Conantum.

I find it unexpectedly mild. It appears to be clearing up but will be wet underfoot.

Now, then, spring is beginning again in earnest after this short check. Is it not always thus? Is there not always an early promise of spring, something answering to the Indian summer, which succeeds the summer, so an Indian or false spring preceding the true spring, — first false promise which merely excites our expectations to disappoint them, followed by a short return of winter? Yet all things appear to have made progress, even during these wintry days, for I cannot believe that they have thus instantaneously taken a start. I no sooner step out of the house than I hear the [bluebirds](#) [[Eastern Bluebird](#) [Sialia sialis](#)] in the air, and far and near, everywhere except in the woods, throughout the town you may hear them, — the blue curls of their warblings, — harbingers of serene

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and warm weather, little azure rills of melody trickling here and there from out the air, their short warble trilled in the air reminding of so many corkscrews assaulting and thawing the torpid mass of winter, assisting the ice and snow to melt and the streams to flow. Everywhere also, all over the town, within an hour or two have come out little black two-winged gnats with plumed or fuzzy shoulders. When I catch one in my hands, it looks like [a] bit of black silk ravelling. They have suddenly come forth everywhere.



How eagerly the birds of passage penetrate the northern ice, watching for a crack by which to enter! Forthwith the swift ducks will be seen winging their way along the rivers and up the coast. They watch the weather more sedulously than the teamster. All nature is thus forward to move with the revolution of the seasons. Now for some days the birds have been ready by myriads, a flight or two south, to invade our latitudes and, with this mild and serener weather, resume their flight.

Bells and the lowing of cows have acquired I know not what new melody in this air, for a change has come over all things, as well as our spirits. They sound more limpid, as, in this sun just bursting forth, the drops of water on the sprays, are prismatic. The geiropodium has bleached all white.



I stand still now and listen if I may hear the note of any new bird, for the sound of my steps hinders, and there are so few sounds at this season in a still afternoon like this that you are pretty sure to detect one within a considerable distance. Hark! Did I not hear the note of some bird then? Methinks it could not have been my own breathing through my nose. No, there it is again, –a robin [**American Robin** ■ *Turdus migratorius*]; and we have put the winter so much further behind us. What mate does he call to in these deserted fields? It is, as it were, a scared note as he whisks by, followed by the familiar but still anxious *toot, toot, toot*. He does not sing as yet. There were one or two more fine bird-like tinkling sounds I could not trace home, not to be referred to my breathing.

It is decidedly clearing rip. At Conantum Cliff the columbines have started and the saxifrage even, the former as conspicuously as any plant, particularly any on dry ground. Both these grow there in high and dry chinks in the face of the cliff, where no soil appears, and the sunnier the exposure the more advanced. Even if a fallen fragment of the rock is so placed as to reflect the heat upon it, it has the start of its neighbors, These plants waste not a day, not a moment, suitable to their development. I pluck dry sprigs of pennyroyal, which I love to put in my pocket, for it scents me thoroughly and reminds me of garrets full of herbs.

With regard to my seringo-bird (and others), I think that my good genius withheld his name that I might learn his character.

I came forth expecting to hear new birds, and I am not disappointed. We know well what to count upon. Their coming is more sure than the arrival of the sailing and steaming packets. Almost while I listen for this purpose, I hear the *chuck, chuck* of a blackbird in the sky, whom I cannot detect. So small an object is lost in the wide expanse of the heavens, though no obstacle intervenes. When your eye has detected it, you can follow it well enough, but it is difficult to bring your sight to bear on it, as to direct a telescope to a particular star. How many hawks may fly undetected, yet within sight, above our heads! And there's the great gull I came to see, already fishing in front of Bittern Cliff. Now he stoops to the water for his prey, but sluggishly, methinks. He requires a high and perhaps a head wind to make his motions graceful. I see no mate. He must have come up, methinks, before the storm was over, unless he started when I did. I believe it is only an easterly wind or storm brings him up.

The ice in Fair Haven is more than half melted, and now the woods beyond the pond, reflected in its serene water where there has been opaque ice so long, affect me as they perhaps will not again this year.⁷⁴ The oaks have not yet lost their leaves. The thistles, which keep their heads so low they do not feel the wind, show their green faces everywhere. It grows more and more fair. Yesterday at this hour it was more raw and blustering than the past winter; to-day it seems more mild and balmy than summer. I have rarely known a greater contrast. There is a little cap of dark and angry cloud on Wachusett, not so wide as the mountain's base, while all the rest of the horizon there is clear.

Several times I hear and see blackbirds flying north singly, high overhead, chucking as if to find their mates, migrating; or are they even now getting near their own breeding-place? Perchance these are blackbirds that were hatched here – that know me! I saw a silent sparrow lurking amid the hazels and other shrubs by a wall and picking worms or what-not, — brownish gray with a forked tail, two triangular black spots on the breast, and black stripes lengthwise there, altogether a gray, much

ASTRONOMY


74. The tapping of the woodpecker ■ about this time.

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striped bird, two brownish stripes with a lighter-colored one on the center of the head. Soon after I heard a song sparrow distinctly. Could it have been this?⁷⁵ I think not.

The bluebird and song sparrow sing immediately on their arrival, and hence deserve to enjoy some prominence. They give expression to the joy which the season inspires. But the robin and blackbird only *peep* and *chuck* at first, commonly, and the lark is silent and flitting. The bluebird at once fills the air with his sweet warbling, and the song sparrow from the top of a rail pours forth his most joyous strain. Both express their delight at the weather which permits them to return to their favorite haunts. They are the more welcome to man for it.

Hearing a faint quack, I looked up and saw two apparently dusky ducks  winging their swift way northward over the course of the river. Channing says he saw some large white-breasted ducks to-day, and also a frog. I have seen dead frogs, as if killed while dormant.

The sun is now declining, with a warm and bright light on all things, a light which answers to the late afterglow of the year, when, in the fall, wrapping his cloak closer about him, the traveller goes home at night to prepare for winter. This the foreglow of the year, when the walker goes home at eve to dream of summer.

To-day first I smelled the earth.

**THOREAU AS
ORNITHOLOGIST**



March 19, Saturday, 1853: The Placer, [California Herald](#) took note that the shipment of gold aboard the *Golden State*, that had recently sailed, was reported to have amounted to \$2,419,500. It printed a cautionary tale about a man named Edmund Brookie who had buried \$700 near Ophir some time back — going to look for it the other day, he found it had been dug up: “Miners leave your money at one of the express offices and there no one will ‘prospect’ for it.” It reported that a miner prospecting a few days since near the line of the El Dorado Ditch at Michigan City had discovered new digging on a hillside, that paid him \$52 in three pans full. Meanwhile 2 miners working in Auburn Ravine took out a lump 6 ounces and ten dollars, plus 17 dollars in fine gold. They had sighted a lump of gold in the hand of a miner on Sunday that weighed \$95, and the miner claimed this to be the 3d such lump he had taken out of his claim this winter. The miners about Auburn were doing better than they have anytime during the winter. Two companies, the Mammoth and Empire on Rich Flat near town, have been averaging an ounce per day to the hand. Now that miners had learned that gold existed in the hills and flats of Downieville thousands of feet above the ravines and river beds, and had sought for it in those elevated places, they were hearing daily of new discoveries. Among the richest was that of Oak Valley Hill some 1,500 to 2,000 feet higher than Downieville, where diggings were prospecting from 25 cents to a dollar a pan.

By this day [Henry Thoreau](#) had repainted his new flat-bottomed boat after its repairs, with paint that he mixed himself by putting dry pigment through an old coffee grinder and then mixing it with oil. He wrote “Spanish brown and raw oil were the ingredients” (this pigment was the cheapest because it was merely iron oxides from the soil). After painting he had “filled the seams with some grafting-wax I had melted.” Then he had broken up his coffee-mill and fastened its metal to the prow of the boat to protect it.

In [China](#), the sappers of the *Tai-p'ing T'ien-kuo* or “Central Kingdom of Great Peace” detonated a petard mine beneath the city wall of Nanjing and the [Chinese Christian Army](#) rushed in.

CHINESE CIVIL WAR

75. Think now (March 24) it must have been the song sparrow. *Vide* Apr. 1st.

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March 19. This morning I hear the blackbird's [**Common Grackle** █ *Quiscalus quiscula* (~~Crow-blackbird~~)] fine clear whistle and also his sprayey note, as he is swayed back and forth on the twigs of the elm or of the black willow over the [river]. His first note may be a chuck, but his second is a rich gurgle or warble.

"Coelum non animum mutant, qui trans mare currunt."
 (Marginal index in [Jerome] Benzo's "History of the West Indies.")⁷⁶

Observed the leaves of a dock in the water, more forward than any vegetation I have noticed.



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

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

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

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



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

A rather cool and breezy morning, which was followed by milder day. We go listening for early birds, with bread and cheese for our dinner.

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

76. [Jerome Benzo \[Girolamo Benzoni\]](#) was born at Milan in the year 1519. The account he received of the newly-discovered world led him to Spain in 1541; he embarked thence for America and remained 14 years. HISTORIA DEL MONDO NUOVO appeared at Venice in Italian, in 1565, and was reprinted in 1572 and afterwards translated into Latin, French, German, and Flemish. An 1857 edition by Admiral W.H. Smyth published in London by the Hakluyt Society as HISTORY OF THE NEW WORLD, BY GIROLAMO BENZONI, OF MILAN: SHEWING HIS TRAVELS IN AMERICA, FROM A.D. 1541 TO 1556: WITH SOME PARTICULARS OF THE ISLAND OF CANARY [*sic*], would be the only English translation prior to 2017.

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

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

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

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

I am surprised to find Flint's Pond not more than half broken up. Probably it was detained by the late short but severe cold, while Walden, being deeper, was not. Standing on the icy side, the pond appears nearly all frozen; the breadth of open water is far removed and diminished to a streak; I say it is beginning to break up. Standing on the water side (which in Flint's is the middle portion), it appears to be but bordered with ice, and I say there is ice still left in the pond.


Saw a bluish-winged beetle or two. In a stubble-field east of Mt. Tabor, started up a pack (though for number, about twenty, it may have been a bevy) of quail [**Northern Bobwhite**  **Colinus virginianus**], which went off to some young pitch pines, with a whirl like a shot, the plump, round



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birds. The redpolls are still numerous. On the warm, dry cliff, looking south over Beaver Pond, I was surprised to see a large butterfly, black with buff-edged wings, so tender a creature to be out so early, and, when alighted, opening and shutting its wings. What does it do these frosty nights? Its chrysalis must have hung in some sunny nook of the rocks. Born to be food for some early bird. Cutting a maple for a bridge over Lily Brook, I was rejoiced to see a sap falling in large, clear drops from the wound.

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 March 20, Sunday, 1853: The Chinese Christian Army of the *Tai-p'ing T'ien-kuo* or “Central Kingdom of Great Peace” had fully invested the city of Nanjing despite the fact that remnants of the *Q'ing* army were holding out in the central citadel. The city would become their *T'ien-ching*, their “Heavenly Capital.”

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Upon the capture of this central citadel, their several female battalions of 500 women each would be permanently disbanded.



(The [Taipings](#) were specifically Protestant Christians. In Nanjing they discover some 200 Catholic Chinese and these Catholics –being of course the worst of heretics– were going to be awarded an exceedingly rough time.)

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March 21, Monday, 1853: The schooner *USS Fenimore Cooper* was commissioned as a ship's tender. It would depart with a surveying expedition from Hampton Roads, Virginia and navigate the Cape of Good Hope, its expedition traveling throughout the Pacific Ocean accumulating hydrographic information from the South China Sea to the Bering Strait in the Arctic and Alaska. Subsequently it would deliver supplies out of San Francisco, California and then return again to its Pacific Ocean survey work, continuing until on August 13th, 1859 it would be destroyed in a typhoon off Yokohama, [Japan](#).



March 21: Morning along the river.

The air full of song sparrows [*Melospiza* [melodia](#)], — *swedit swedit swedit* and then a rapid jingle or trill, holding up its head without fear of me, the innocent, humble bird, or one pursuing another through the alders by the waterside. Why are the early birds found most along the water? These song sparrows are now first heard *commonly*. The black-birds , too, create some melody. And the [bluebirds](#) [*Eastern Bluebird* [Sialia sialis](#)], how sweet their warble in the soft air, heard over the water! The robin [*American Robin* [Turdus migratorius](#)] is heard further off, and seen flying rapidly, hurriedly through the orchard. And now the elms suddenly ring with the *chill-lill-lill* and canary-like notes of the *Fringilla hyemalis* [*Dark-eyed Junco* [Junco hyemalis](#)], which fill the air more than those of any bird yet, — a little strange they sound because they do not tarry to breed with us, — a ringing sound. The Cheney elm buds appear to be beginning to open, and a few green blades of grass are shooting up on our bank.

I think that with my knife I can cut a pole that will bridge almost anything that can be called a *brook* even in New England.

Observed yesterday where a mass of ice in Walden of about an acre had cracked off from the main body and blown thirty or forty rods, crumbling up its edge against the eastern shore.

Might not my Journal be called "Field Notes?"

I see a honey-bee about my boat, apparently attracted by beeswax (if there is any) in the grafting-wax with which I have luted it. There are many; one is caught and killed in it.

P.M. — To Kibbe Place.

The *Stellaria media* is fairly in bloom in Mr. Cheney's garden. This, then, is our earliest flower; though it is said to have been introduced. It may blossom under favorable circumstances in warmer weather any time in the winter. It has been so much opened that you could easily count its petals any month the past winter, and plainly blossoms with the first pleasant weather that brings the robins [*American Robin* [Turdus migratorius](#)], etc., in numbers. I heard undoubtedly a frog jump into the river, though I did not see him. Conspicuous, now that the snow is almost entirely gone, are the fresh-looking evergreen leaves of the pyrola. What shall I name those run-out pastures, those arid downs, where the reindeer lichen fairly covers the whole surface, and your feet crunch it at every step? I see the *Fringilla hyemalis* [*Dark-eyed Junco* [Junco hyemalis](#)] on the old Carlisle road. How suddenly the newly arrived birds are dispersed over the whole town! How numerous they must be! Robins are now quite abundant, flying in flocks. One after another flits away before you from the trees, somewhat like grasshoppers in the grass, uttering their notes faintly, ventriloquizing, in fact. I hear [one] meditating a bar to be sung anon, which sounds a quarter of a mile off, though he is within two rods. However, they do not yet get to melody. I thank the red-wing [*Red-winged Blackbird* [Agelaius phoeniceus](#)] for a little bustle and commotion which he makes, trying to people the fields again. Today, as well as yesterday, there is a slight warns haze before the day is over. A hawk looking about. Are they not more active now? Do they not, in fact, migrate? What is that lustrous green pestle-shaped beetle (common enough) with a waved buff spot on each wing-case? When he flew, I thought he showed blue beneath and was the same I saw yesterday in Lincoln, — the first beetle-insect I have seen. Insects and flies, both in air and water, come out in the spring sun. Just as flies buzz on the dry and sunny side of a bank or rock, those little wiggling insects come forth in the open and sunny water, and are no less active, though they do not hum. Saw two more of those large black and buff butterflies. The same degree of heat brings them out everywhere.

The bees this morning had access to no flower; so they came to my grafting-wax, notwithstanding it was mixed with tallow and covered with fresh paint. Often they essayed to light on it and retreated

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with disgust;

yet one got caught. As they detected the beeswax concealed and disguised in this composition, so they will receive the earliest intelligence of the blossoming of the first flower which contains any sweet for them.

It is a genial and reassuring day; the mere warmth of the west wind amounts almost to balminess. The softness of the air mollifies our own dry and congealed substance. I sit down by a wall to see if I can muse again. We become, as it were, pliant and ductile again to strange but memorable influences; we are led a little way by our genius. We are affected like the earth, and yield to the elemental tenderness; winter breaks up within us; the frost is coming out of me, and I am heaved like the road; accumulated masses of ice and snow dissolve, and thoughts like a freshet pour down unwonted channels. A strain of music comes to solace the traveller over earth's downs and dignify his chagrins, the petty men whom he meets are the shadows of grander to come. Roads lead elsewhither than to Carlisle and Sudbury. The earth is uninhabited but fair to inhabit, like the old Carlisle road. Is then the road so rough that it should be neglected? Not only narrow but rough is the way that leadeth to life everlasting. Our experience does not wear upon us. It is seen to be fabulous or symbolical, and the future is worth expecting. Encouraged, I set out once more to climb the mountain of the earth, for my steps are symbolical steps, and in all my walking I have not reached the top of the earth yet.

In two or three places I hear the ground squirrel's pert chirrup or *qui vive* in the wall, like a bird or a cricket. Though I do not see him, the sun has reached him too.

Ah! then, as I was rising this crowning road, just beyond the old lime-kiln, there leaked into my open ear the faint peep of a hyla from some far pool. One little hyla somewhere in the fens, aroused by the genial season, crawls up the bank or a bush, squats on a dry leaf, and essays a note or two, which scarcely rends the air, does no violence to the zephyr, but yet breaks through all obstacles, thick-planted maples, and far over the downs to the ear of the listening naturalist, who will never see that piper in this world, — nor even the next, it may be, — as it were the first faint cry of the new-born year, notwithstanding the notes of birds. Where so long I have heard only the brattling and moaning of the wind, what means this tenser, far-piercing sound? All nature rejoices with one joy. If the hyla has revived again, may not I? He is heard the first warm, hazy evening.

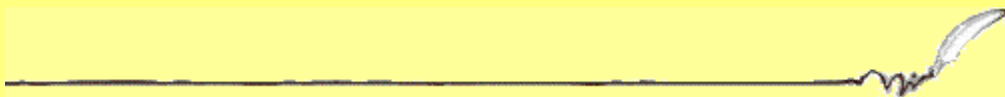
Came home through the Hunt pasture. A warmer sunset marks the season. Some oaks have lost their leaves.

Whatever your sex or position, life is a battle in which you are to show your pluck, and woe be to the coward. Whether passed on a bed of sickness or a tented field, it is ever the same fair play and admits no foolish distinction. Despair and postponement are cowardice and defeat. Men were born to succeed, not to fail.

J. Farmer saw a phoebe [~~Eastern Phoebe~~ **Sayornis phoebe** ~~Bridge Pewee~~] to-day, They build in his cellar. I hear a few peepers [~~spring peeper~~ **Pseudacris crucifer**] from over the meadows at my door in the evening.

During the last decade of his life, Thoreau visited his rivers more than twice as often as the upland woods and lakes that he is far better known for writing about.


— Professor Robert M. Thorson, THE BOATMAN, page 3





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 March 22, Tuesday, 1853: [Henry Thoreau](#) relaunched his repainted and repaired flat-bottom boat.

The New-York Times offered information about emigration that had been posted to it by [Karl Marx](#) on March 4th:

The Colonial Emigration Office gives the following return of the emigration from England, Scotland, and Ireland, to all parts of the world, from Jan. 1, 1847, to Jan. 30, 1852:

Year	English	Scotch	Irish	Total
1847	34,685	8,616	214,969	258,270
1848	58,865	11,505	177,719	248,089
1849	73,613	17,127	208,758	299,498
1850	57,843	15,154	207,852	280,849
1851	69,557	18,646	247,763	335,966
1852 (till June)	40,767	11,562	143,375	195,704
Total	335,330	82,610	1,200,436	1,618,376

"Nine-tenths," remarks the Office, "of the emigrants from Liverpool are assumed to be Irish. About three-fourths of the emigrants from Scotland are Celts, either from the Highlands, or from Ireland through Glasgow."

Nearly four-fifths of the whole emigration are, accordingly, to be regarded as belonging to the Celtic population of Ireland and of the Highlands and islands of Scotland. The London Economist says of this emigration: "It is consequent on the breaking down of the system of society founded on small holdings and potato cultivation;" and adds: "The departure of the redundant part of the population of Ireland and the Highlands of Scotland is an indispensable preliminary to every kind of improvement. The revenue of Ireland has not suffered in any degree from the famine of 1846-47, or from the emigration that has since taken place. On the contrary, her net revenue amounted in 1851 to £4,281,999, being about £184,000 greater than in 1843."

Begin with pauperising the inhabitants of a country, and when there is no more profit to be ground out of them, when they have grown a burden to the revenue, drive them away, and sum up your Net Revenue! Such is the doctrine laid down by Ricardo, in his celebrated work, "The Principle of Political Economy." The annual profits of a capitalist amounting to £2,000, what does it matter to him whether he employs 100 men or 1,000 men? "Is not," says Ricardo, "the real income of a nation similar?" The



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net real income of a nation, rents and profits, remaining the same, it is no subject of consideration whether it is derived from ten millions of people or from twelve millions. Sismondi, in his "Nouveaux Principes d'Economie Politique," answers that, according to this view of the matter, the English nation would not be interested at all in the disappearance of the whole population, the King (at that time it was no Queen, but a King) remaining alone in the midst of the island, supposing only that automatic machinery enabled him to procure the amount of net revenue now produced by a population of twenty millions. Indeed that grammatical entity, "the national wealth," would in this case not be diminished.

But it is not only the pauperised inhabitants of Green Erin [Ireland] and of the Highlands of Scotland that are swept away by agricultural improvements, and by the "breaking down of the antiquated system of society." It is not only the able-bodied agricultural labourers from England, Wales, and Lower Scotland, whose passages are paid by the Emigration Commissioners. The wheel of "improvement" is now seizing another class, the most stationary class in England. A startling emigration movement has sprung up among the smaller English farmers, especially those holding heavy clay soils, who, with bad prospects for the coming harvest, and in want of sufficient capital to make the great improvements on their farms which would enable them to pay their old rents, have no other alternative but to cross the sea in search of a new country and of new lands, I am not speaking now of the emigration caused by the gold mania, but only of the compulsory emigration produced by landlordism, concentration of farms, application of machinery to the soil, and introduction of the modern system of agriculture on a great scale.

In the ancient States, in Greece and Rome, compulsory emigration, assuming the shape of the periodical establishment of colonies, formed a regular link in the structure of society. The whole system of those States was founded on certain limits to the numbers of the population, which could not be surpassed without endangering the condition of antique civilisation itself. But why was it so? Because the application of science to material production was utterly unknown to them. To remain civilised they were forced to remain few. Otherwise they would have had to submit to the bodily drudgery which transformed the free citizen into a slave. The want of productive power made citizenship dependent on a certain proportion in numbers not to be disturbed. Forced emigration was the only remedy.

It was the same pressure of population on the powers of production. that drove the barbarians from the high plains of Asia to invade the Old World. The same cause acted there, although under a different form. To remain barbarians they were forced to remain few. They were pastoral, hunting, war-waging tribes, whose manners of production required a large space for every individual, as is now the case with the Indian tribes in North-America. By augmenting in numbers they curtailed each other's field of production. Thus the surplus population was forced to undertake those great adventurous migratory movements which laid the foundation of the peoples of ancient and modern Europe.



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But with modern compulsory emigration the case stands quite opposite. Here it is not the want of productive power which creates a surplus population; it is the increase of productive power which demands a diminution of population, and drives away the surplus by famine or emigration. It is not population that presses on productive power; it is productive power that presses on population.

Now I share neither in the opinions of Ricardo, who regards 'Net-Revenue' as the Moloch to whom entire populations must be sacrificed, without even so much as complaint, nor in the opinion of Sismondi, who, in his hypochondriacal philanthropy, would forcibly retain the superannuated methods of agriculture and proscribe science from industry, as Plato expelled poets from his Republic. Society is undergoing a silent revolution, which must be submitted to, and which takes no more notice of the human existences it breaks down than an earthquake regards the houses it subverts. The classes and the races, too weak to master the new conditions of life, must give way. But can there be anything more puerile, more short-sighted, than the views of those Economists who believe in all earnest that this woeful transitory state means nothing but adapting society to the acquisitive propensities of capitalists, both landlords and money-lords? In Great Britain the working of that process is most transparent. The application of modern science to production clears the land of its inhabitants, but it concentrates people in manufacturing towns.

"No manufacturing workmen," says The Economist, "have been assisted by the Emigration Commissioners, except a few Spitalfields and Paisley hand-loom weavers, and few or none are emigrated at their own expense."

The Economist knows very well that they could not emigrate at their own expense, and that the industrial middle-class would not assist them in emigrating. Now, to what does this lead? The rural population, the most stationary and conservative element of modern society, disappears while the industrial proletariat, by the very working of modern production, finds itself gathered in mighty centres, around the great productive forces, whose history of creation has hitherto been the martyrology of the labourers. Who will prevent them from going a step further, and appropriating these forces, to which they have been appropriated before - Where will be the power of resisting them? Nowhere! Then, it will be of no use to appeal to the 'rights of property.' The modern changes in the art of production have, according to the Bourgeois Economists themselves, broken down the antiquated system of society and its modes of appropriation. They have expropriated the Scotch clansman, the Irish cottier and tenant, the English yeoman, the hand-loom weaver, numberless handicrafts, whole generations of factory children and women; they will expropriate, in due time, the landlord and the cotton lord.







March 22: As soon as the damp gardens are bared of snow and a really warm spring day arrives, the chick-weed blossoms fairly.


As soon as those spring mornings arrive in which the birds sing, I am sure to be an early riser. I am

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
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waked by my genius. I wake to inaudible melodies and am surprised to find myself expecting the dawn in so serene and joyful and expectant a mood. I have an appointment with spring. She comes to the window to wake me, and I go forth an hour or two earlier than usual. It is by especial favor that I am waked, — not rudely but gently, as infants should be waked. Though as yet the trill of the chip-bird is not heard, — added, — like the sparkling bead which bursts on bottled cider or ale. When we wake indeed, with a double awakening, — not only from our ordinary nocturnal slumbers, but from our diurnal, — we burst through the thallus of our ordinary life with a proper ex-cite, we awake with emphasis.

6 A.M. — To Cliffs. There is a white frost on the ground. One robin [**American Robin**  **Turdus migratorius**] really sings on the elms. Even the cockerel crows with new lustiness. Already I hear from the railroad the plaintive strain of a lark or two. They sit now conspicuous on the bare russet ground. The tinkling bubbles of the song sparrow are wafted from distant fence-posts, — little rills of song that begin to flow and tinkle as soon as the frost is out of the ground. The blackbird tries to sing, as it were with a bone in his throat, or to whistle and sing at once. Whither so fast, the restless creature, — *chuck chuck*, at every rod, and now and then *whistle-ter-ee*? The *chill-lill* of the blue snow-birds [**Dark-eyed Junco**  **Junco hyemalis** (Slate-colored Sparrow or Snow-bird)] is heard again. A partridge [**Ruffed Grouse**  **Bonasa umbellus** (Partridge)] goes off on Fair Haven Hillside with a sudden whir like the wad of a six-pounder, keeping just level with the tops of the sprouts. These birds and quails [**Northern Bobwhite**  **Colinus virginianus**] go off like a report. It affects one's philosophy, after so long living in winter quarters, to see the day dawn from some hill. Our effete lowland town is fresh as New Hampshire. It is as if we had migrated and were ready to begin life again in a new country, with new hopes and resolutions. See your town with the dew on it, in as wild a morning mist (though thin) as ever draped it. To stay in the house all day, such reviving spring days as the past have been, bending over a stove and gnawing one's heart, seems to me as absurd as for a woodchuck to linger in his burrow. We have not heard the news then! Sucking the claws of our philosophy when there is game to be had!

The tapping of the woodpecker,  *rat-tat-tat*, knocking at the door of some sluggish grub to tell him that the spring has arrived, and his fate, this is one of the season sounds, calling the roll of birds and insects, the reveille. The Cliff woods are comparatively silent. Not yet the woodland birds, except, perhaps, the woodpecker, so far as it migrates; only the orchard and river birds have arrived. Probably the improvements of men thus advance the season. This is the Bahamas and the tropics or turning-point to the redpoll. Is not the woodpecker (downy?) our first woodland bird? Come to see what effects the frost and snow and rain have produced on decaying trees, — what trunks will drum.

THOREAU AS ORNITHOLOGIST

Fair Haven Pond will be open entirely in the course of the day. The oak plain is still red. There are no expanding leaves to greet and reflect the sun as it first falls over the hills. To see the first rays of the sun falling over an eastern wooded ridge on to a western wood and stream and lake! I go along the riverside to see the now novel reflections. The subsiding waters have left a thousand little isles, where willows and sweet-gale and the meadow itself appears. I hear the phoebe note of the chickadee [**Chicadee, Black-capped**  **Parus atricapillus** ~~Titmouse, Titmice~~], one taking it up behind another as in a catch, phe-bee phe-bee. The very earliest alder is in bloom and sheds its pollen. I detect a few catkins at a distance by their distinct yellowish color. This the first native flower. One of my willow catkins in the pitcher has opened at length.

That is an interesting morning when one first uses the warmth of the sun instead of fire; bathes in the sun, as anon in the river; eschewing fire, draws up to a garret window and warms his thoughts at nature's great central fire, as does the buzzing fly by his side. Like it, too, our muse, wiping the dust off her long-unused wings, goes blundering through the cobweb of criticism, more dusty still, — what venerable cobweb is that, which has hitherto escaped the broom, whose spider is invisible, but the North American Review? — and carries away the half of it.

No sap flows from the maples I cut into, except that one in Lincoln. What means it? *Hylodes Pickeringii*, a name that is longer than the frog itself! A description of animals, too, from a dead specimen only, as if, in a work on man, you were to describe a dead man only, omitting his manners



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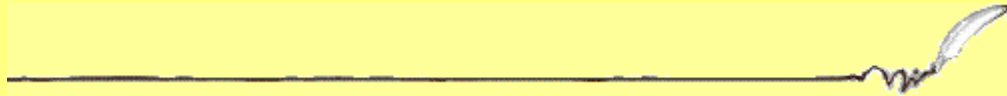
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and customs, his institutions and divine faculties, from want of opportunity to observe them, suggesting, perchance, that the colors of the eye are said to be much more brilliant in the living specimen, and that some cannibal, your neighbor, who has tried him on the table, has found him to be sweet and nutritious, good on the gridiron. Having had no opportunity to observe his habits, because you do not live in the country. Only dindons and dandies. Nothing is known of his habits. Food seeds of wheat, beef, pork, and potatoes.

**THOREAU ON
NORMATIVE SCIENCE**

During the last decade of his life, Thoreau visited his rivers more than twice as often as the upland woods and lakes that he is far better known for writing about.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 3



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

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

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



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

6 A.M. — Up the North River.

A fresh, cool spring morning.

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

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

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

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

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

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

P.M. — To Howard's meadow.

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

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

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

I go to look for mud turtles in Heywood's meadow. The alder catkins, just burst open, are prettily marked spirally by streaks of yellow, contrasting with alternate rows of rich reddish-brown scales, which make one revolution in the length of the catkin. I see trout glance (*Vide* amount of seed in Tribune, Mar. 16, 1860.) alone; the brook, as indeed a month ago. I hear in Heywood's north meadow the most unmusical low croak from one or two frogs, though it is half ice there yet, — a remarkable note with which to greet the new year, as if one's teeth slid off with a grating sound in cracking a nut, — but not a frog nor a dimple is to be seen. Man cannot afford to be a naturalist, to look at Nature directly, but only with the side of his eye. He must look through and beyond her. To look at her is fatal as to look at the head of Medusa. It turns the man of science to stone.⁷⁷ I feel that I am dissipated

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by so many observations. I should be the magnet in the midst of all this dust and filings. I knock the back of my hand against a rock, and as I smooth back the skin, I find myself prepared to study lichens there. I look upon man but as a fungus. I have almost a slight, dry headache as the result of all this observing. How to observe is how to be have. O for a little Lethe! To crown all, lichens, which are so thin, are described in the *dry* state, as they are most commonly, not most truly, seen. Truly, they are *dryly* described.


Without being the owner of any land, I find that I have a civil right in the river, — that, if I am not a landowner I am a water-owner. It is fitting, therefore, that I should have a boat, a cart, for this my farm. Since it is almost wholly given up to a few of us, Awhile the other highways are much travelled, no wonder that I improve it. Such a one as I will choose to dwell in a township where there are most ponds and rivers and our range is widest. In relation to the river, I find my natural rights least infringed (if it is an extensive common' still left. Certain savage liberties still prevail in the oldest and most civilized countries. I am pleased to find that, in Gilbert White's day, at least, the laborers in that part of England enjoyed certain rights of communion in the royal forest, — so called, though no large wood, — where they cut their turf and other fuel, etc., etc., and obtained materials for broom-making, etc., where other labor failed. It is no longer so, according to his editor. Nobody legislates for me, for the way would be not to legislate at all.

I am surprised as well as delighted when any one wishes to know what I think. It is such a rare use they would make of me, as if then were acquainted with the tool. Commonly, if men want anything of me, it is only to know how many acres I make of their land, or, at most, what trivial news I have burdened myself with. They never will go to law for my meat. They prefer the shell.

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

During the last decade of his life, Thoreau visited his rivers more than twice as often as the upland woods and lakes that he is far better known for writing about.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 3



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

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

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

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

[Paragraph3] At a lyceum, not long since, I felt that the lecturer had chosen a theme too foreign to himself, and so failed to interest me as much as he might have done.¹ He described things not in or near to his heart, but toward his extremities and superficialities. There was, in this sense, no truly central or centralizing thought in the lecture. I would have had him deal with his privatest experience, as the poet does. The greatest compliment that was ever paid me was when one asked me what I thought, and attended to my answer. I am surprised, as well as delighted, when this happens, it is such a rare use he would make of me, as if he were acquainted with the tool. Commonly, if men want anything of me, it is only to know how many acres I make of their land,—since I am a surveyor,—or, at most, what trivial news I have burdened myself with. They never will go to law for my meat; they prefer the shell. A man once came a considerable distance to ask me to lecture on Slavery; but on conversing with him, I found that he and his clique expected seven-eighths of the lecture to be theirs, and only one-eighth mine; so I declined. I take it for granted, when I am invited to lecture anywhere, that there is a desire to hear what **I think** on some subject, though I may be the greatest fool in the country,—and not that I should say pleasant things merely, or such as the audience will assent to; and I resolve, accordingly, that I will give you a strong dose of myself.² You have sent for me, and engaged to pay for me, and I am determined that you shall have me, though I bore you beyond all precedent.³

Brad Dean's
Commentary

1. Thoreau drew this and the following three sentences from his journal entry of 8 April 1854. Three days earlier [Waldo Emerson](#) lectured at the Concord Lyceum on the "foreign" subject of "France."
2. On authority of the [Nantucket Island Inquirer](#), Bradley P. Dean has emended the essay copy-text by omitting '—for I have had a little experience in that business,—', which follows 'lecture anywhere,'; and by changing 'them' to 'you'.
3. On authority of the [Inquirer](#), Dean also emended the essay copy-text by changing the three plural pronouns in this sentence from the 3rd to the 2nd person.

Also, on this day, [Thoreau](#) noted that [Walden Pond](#) had become clear of ice:

WALDEN: In 1845 Walden was first completely open on the 1st of April; in '46, the 25th of March; in '47, the 8th of April; in '51, the 28th of March; in '52, the 18th of April; in '53, the 23rd of March; in '54, about the 7th of April.



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

From the point of view of Thoreau as a boatman, his three-river Anthropocene landscape was an improvement over its early Puritan condition. He never said this explicitly, but it's pretty easy to connect the dots between the changes that he knew were taking



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place and how he liked to spend his time. When he wrote that "all nature begins to work with new impetuosity on Monday," he was not being critical. The holding back of water on Sundays and its releases on Monday morning was similar in concept to the scheduled releases of stored water from modern dams to improve whitewater kayaking and to restore the natural habitat of rivers, most notably on the Colorado River. This catch-and-release of stream water enlivened Thoreau's daily boating experiences by providing pulses of flow.

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

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



March 24, Thursday, [1853](#): The white overseer William Brent reported [Anthony Burns](#) to the Richmond, Virginia authorities as a slave missing from his place of obligation.

In [San Francisco](#), Governor Bigler delivered a special message about the extension of the Water Front.

The [Daily Dispatch](#) of Richmond, Virginia reported a conversation between a mother and a daughter:

"Mother," asked a little girl, while listening to the reading of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," "why don't the book mention Topsy's last name? I have tried to hear it whenever it spoke of her but it has not once spoke it?"

"Why, she had no other name, child."

"Yes she had, mother, and I know it?"

"What was it?"

"Why, Turvy - Topsy Turvy?"

"You had better go to bed, my dear," said the mother.



March 24, 1853: 6 A.M. — By river to Hemlocks.

I see where the muskrats opened clams, probably last evening, close to the water's edge, or in the fork of fir or a willow, or on a tussock just covered with water, the shells remaining, for they bring the clam to the air to eat it. The downy (?) woodpeckers are quite numerous this morning, the skirts

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of their coats barred with white and a large, long white spot on their backs. They have a smart, shrill peep or whistle, somewhat like a robin [[American Robin](#) [Turdus migratorius](#)], but more metallic. Saw two gray squirrels coursing over the trees on the Rock Island. The forest is to them a vast web over which they run with as little hesitation as a spider across his net. They appear to have planned or to be familiar with their course before they start. The Island has several bunches of leaves in its trees, probably their nests. For several mornings the water has been perfectly smooth at six o'clock, but by seven the wind has risen with the ascending sun and the waves with the wind, and the day assumed a new and less promising respect.

I think I may consider the shepherd's-purse in bloom to-day, for its flowers are nearly as conspicuous as those of the stellaria, which had its spring opening some days since, both being the worse for the frost this morning. Since the cold snap of the 14th, 15th, etc., have walked for the most part with unbuttoned coat, and for the most part without mittens.

I find the arrow-headed character on our plains, older than the written character in Persia.

Now are the windy days of March drying up the superabundant moisture. The river does not yet preserve a smooth reflecting surface far into the day. The meadows are mostly bare, the water going down, but perchance the April rains will fill them again.

Last afternoon was moist and cloudy and still, and the robin sang faintly, as if to usher in a warm rainstorm, but it cleared off at evening.

There are very slight but white mists on the river these mornings.

It spits a little snow this afternoon.

P. M. - To Second Division Brook.

The white pine wood, freshly cut, piled by the side of the Charles Miles road, is agreeable to walk beside. I like the smell of it, all ready for the borers, and the rich light-yellow color of the freshly split wood and the purple color of the sap at the ends of the quarters, from which distill perfectly clear and crystalline tears, colorless and brilliant as diamonds, tears shed for the loss of a forest in which is a world of light and purity, its life oozing out. These beautiful accidents that attend on man's works! Fit pendants to the ears of the Queen of Heaven! How full of interest is one of these wrecks of a wood! [C.](#) declares that [Mrs. Ripley](#) spent one whole season studying the lichens on a stick of wood they were about to put on the fire. I am surprised to find that these terebinthine (?) tears have a hard (seemingly soft as water) not film but transparent skin over them. How many curiosities are brought to us with our wood! The trees and the lichens that clothe them, the forest warrior and his shield adhering to him.

I have heard of two skeletons dug up in Concord within twenty years, one, at least, undoubtedly an Indian. This was as they were digging away the bank directly behind I. Moore's house. Dr. Jarvis pronounced it an Indian. The other near the jail.

I tied a string round what I take to be the *Alnus incana*, two or three rods this side Jenny's Road, on T. Wheeler's ditch. The bark is of a more opaque and lighter color, the fruit more orbicular, but the most sure difference was that a part of the pistillate catkins were upright. It was not quite in bloom, but neither were some of those whose fertile catkins drooped, nor could I yet see a difference in the color of the opened catkins.

At Second Division, saw pollywogs again, full grown with long tails. The cowslip leaves are in many places above water, and I see what I suppose is that slender rush two inches high at the bottom of the water like a fine grass. What is that foliaceous plant amid the mosses in the wet which resembles the algæ? I find nothing like it in [Hooker](#) under head of Algæ. In many cases I find that the willow cones are a mere dense cluster of loose leaves, suggesting that the scales of cones of all kinds are only modified leaves, a crowding and stinting, of the leaves, as the stem becomes a thorn; and in this view those conical bunches of leaves of so many of the pine family have relation to the cones of the tree as well in origin as in form. The leaf, perchance, becomes calyx, cone, husk, and nutshell.

The past has been a remarkable winter; such a one as I do not remember. The ground has been bare almost all the time, and the river has been open about as much. I got but one chance to take a turn on skates over half an acre. The first snow more than an inch deep fell January 13th, but probably was not a foot deep and was soon gone. There was about as much more fell February 13th, and no more to be remembered, *i.e.* only two or three inches since. I doubt if there has been one day when it was decidedly better sleighing than wheeling. I have hardly heard the sound of sleigh-bells. A yellow lily bud already yellow at, the Tortoise Ditch Nut Meadow.

Those little holes in sandy fields and on the sides of hills, which I see so numerous as soon as the

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snow is off and the frost off the ground, are probably made by the skunk in search of bugs and worms, as Rice says. His tracks in the winter are very numerous, considering how rarely he is seen at that season. Probably the tortoises do not lay their eggs so early as I thought. The skunk gets them too.

FLORA BOREALI AMERICANA

During the last decade of his life, Thoreau visited his rivers more than twice as often as the upland woods and lakes that he is far better known for writing about.

— *Professor Robert M. Thorson*, THE BOATMAN, page 3




March 25, Friday, 1853: The [California](#) Legislature approved State Surveyor General William M. Eddy's map as the official map of the State of [California](#). It exempted San Francisco volunteer firemen from military and jury duty (these would come to be known as "Exempt Firemen").



[J.P. Brown](#) and [Waldo Emerson](#) had noted that the ice was disappearing from "Long Pond" (a sphagnum bog made up mostly of Leatherleaf (*Chamaedaphne calyculata*), shaped like a moccasin-print, at N 42.43512, W 71.34483 leading from Fair Haven Bay in the direction of Walden Pond).

[Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed in Framingham, Massachusetts.



March 25. I forgot to say yesterday that several little groves of alders on which I had set my eye had been cut down the past winter. One in Trillium Woods was a favorite because it was so dense and regular, its outline rounded as if it were a moss bed: and another more than two miles from this, at Dugan's, which I went to see yesterday, was then being cut, like the former, to supply charcoal for powder. Dugan does most of this work about the town. The willow hedges by causeways are regularly trimmed and peeled. The small wood brings eight dollars a cord. Alders, also, and poplars are extensively used.

6 A.M. — To Brister's Hill.

The *Fringilla hyemalis* [Dark-eyed Junco ■ *Junco hyemalis*] sing most in concert of any bird nowadays that I hear. Sitting near together on an oak or pine in the woods or an elm in the village, they keep up a very pleasant, enlivening, and incessant jingling and twittering *chill-lill-lill*, so that it is difficult to distinguish a single bird's note, — parts of it much like a canary. This sound advances me furthest toward summer, unless it be the note of the lark, who, by the way, is the most steady singer at present. Notwithstanding the raw and windy mornings, it will sit on a low twig or tussock or pile of manure in the meadow and sing for hours, as sweetly and plaintively as in summer. I see

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the white-breasted nuthatch [**White-breasted Nuthatch** █ *Sitta carolinensis* (~~White-bellied Nuthatch~~)], head downward, on the oaks. First heard his rapid and, as it were, angry *gnah gnah gna*, and a faint, wiry creaking note about grubs as he moved round the tree. I thought I heard the note of a robin [**American Robin** █ *Turdus migratorius*] and of a bluebird [**Eastern Bluebird** █ *Sialia sialis*] from an oak. It proceeded from a small bird about as big as a blue-[bird], which did not perch like a woodpecker, uttering first some notes robin-like or like the golden robin [**Northern Oriole** █ *Icterus galbula* (~~Fiery Hangbird or Hangbird or Gold Robin or Golden Robin~~)], then perfect bluebird warbles,⁷⁸ and then it flew off with a flight like neither. From what I saw and heard afterward I suspected it might be a downy woodpecker █. I see fine little green beds of moss peeping up at Brister's Spring above the water.

When I saw the fungi in my lamp, I was startled and awed, as if I were stooping too low, and should next be found classifying carbuncles and ulcers. Is there not sense in the mass of men who ignore and confound these things, and never see the cryptogamous on the one side any more than the stars on the other? Underfoot they catch a transient glimpse of what they call toadstools, mosses, and frog-spittle, and overhead of the heavens, but they can all read the pillars on a Mexican quarter. They ignore the worlds above and below, keep straight along, and do not run their boots down at the heel as I do. How to keep the heels up I have been obliged to study carefully, turning the nigh foot painfully on side-hills. I find that the shoemakers, to save a few iron heel-pegs, do not complete the rows on the inside by three or four, — the very place in the whole boot where they are most needed, — which has fatal consequences to the buyer. I often see the tracks of them in the paths. It is as if you were to put no underpinning under one corner of your house. I have managed to cross very wet and miry places dry-shod by moving rapidly on my heels. I always use leather strings tied in a hard knot; they untie but too easily even then.

The various lights in which you may regard the earth, *e.g.* the dry land as sea bottom, or the sea bottom as a dry down.

Those willow cones appear to be galls, for, cutting open one of the leafy ones, I found a hard core such as are often seen bare, the nucleus of the cone, and in it a grub. This gall had completely checked the extension of the twig, and the leaves had collected and overflowed it as the water at a dam. Perchance when the twig is vigorous and full of sap the cone is leafy; otherwise a hard cone.

11 A.M. — To Framingham.

A Lincoln man heard a flock of geese [**Canada Goose** █ *Branta canadensis* (~~Wild Goose~~)], he thinks it was day before yesterday.

Measured a white oak in front of Mr. Billings's new house, about one mile beyond Saxonville, — twelve and one twelfth feet in circumference at four feet from the ground (the smallest place within ten feet from the ground), fourteen feet circumference at ground, and a great spread.

Frank's place is on the Concord River within less than ten miles of Whitehall Pond in Hopkinton, one of [the sources], perhaps the principal source, of the river. I thought that a month hence the stream could not be twenty feet wide there. Mr. Wheeler, auctioneer, of Framingham, told me that the timber of the factory at Saxonville was brought by water to within about one mile of where the mill stands. There is a slight rapid.

Brown says that he saw the north end of Long Pond covered with ice the 22d, and that R.W.E. saw the south end entirely open. The red maple buds already redden the swamps and riverside. The winter rye greens the ground.

78. Was it not the fox-colored sparrow?



WALDEN: The first sparrow of spring! The year beginning with younger hope than ever! The faint silvery warblings heard over the partially bare and moist fields from the blue-bird, the song-sparrow, and the red-wing, as if the last flakes of winter tinkled as they fell! What at such a time are histories, chronologies, traditions, and all written revelations? The brooks sing carols and glees to the spring. The marsh-hawk sailing low over the meadow is already seeing the first slimy life that awakes. The sinking sound of melting snow is heard in all dells, and the ice dissolves apace in the ponds. The grass flames up on the hillsides like a spring fire, -"et primitus oritur herba imbribus primoribus evocata," -as if the earth sent forth an inward heat to greet the returning sun; not yellow but green is the color of its flame;- the symbol of perpetual youth, the grass-blade, like a long green ribbon, streams from the sod into the summer, checked indeed by the frost, but anon pushing on again, lifting its spear of last year's hay with the fresh life below. It grows as steadily as the rill oozes out of the ground. It is almost identical with that, for in the growing days of June, when the rills are dry, the grass blades are their channels, and from year to year the herds drink at this perennial green stream, and the mower draws from it betimes their winter supply. So our human life but dies down to its root, and still puts forth its green blade to eternity.

EASTERN BLUEBIRD
RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD



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

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

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

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

[MAGAZINE](#)[CONSULT THE WIKIPEDIA](#)

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

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

UNDERGROUND RAILROAD



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[Henry Thoreau](#) began to use the word “honk,” not before of record in English. (All any duck had ever been able to say in English was “quack.”) Thoreau may have borrowed this from the Narragansett or Wampanoag term for “Canada goose,” which is *Honck*, or he may merely have been being his usual inventive self. (The origin of the term “honkey” is also still in doubt.)



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

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

GEORGE MINOTT

P.M. — Up Assabet to stone-heaps, in boat.

“Up Assabet” is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau's two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), *THE BOATMAN*, page 10

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

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

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

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

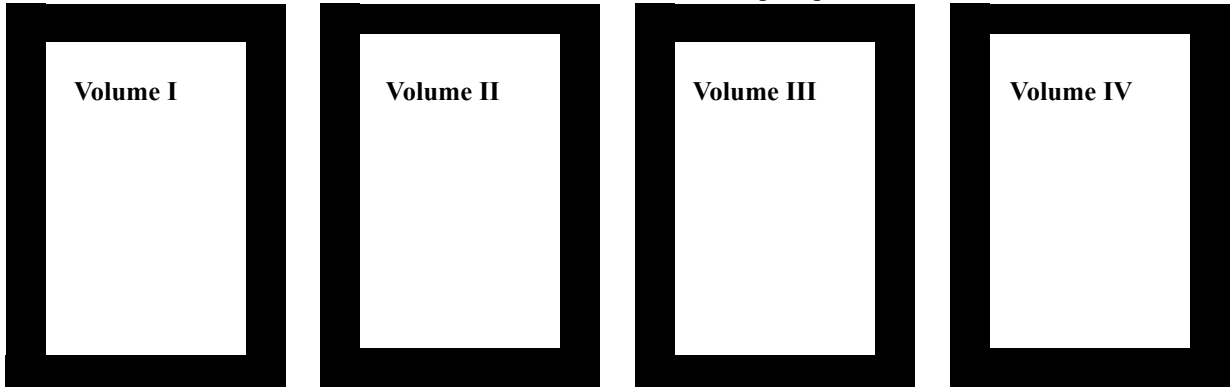
Went forth just after sunset. A storm gathering, an April-like storm. I hear now in the dusk only the song sparrow along the fences and a few hylas at a distance. And now the rattling drops compel me

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to return.

March 27, Easter Sunday, 1853: Aunt Maria Thoreau had wanted her nephew Henry Thoreau to read the MEMOIRS of Dr. Thomas Chalmers, a Scottish minister who had put up container after container of these



preserves, but he had not promised that he would do this. Henry recorded that on this date “she was heard through the Partition shouting to my Aunt Jane [Aunt Jane Thoreau], who is deaf,



‘Think of it! He stood half an hour today to hear the frogs croak, and he wouldn’t read the life of Chalmers.’”

HENRY’S RELATIVES

Here is a David Wagoner poem, “Thoreau and the Toads”:

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Thomas Chalmers, D.D., LL.D.

DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS.

EDITED BY REV. WILLIAM HANNA, LL.D.

Forming Vols. I., II., and III. of "Chalmers's Posthumous Works." 12mo, Muslin, \$3 00; Sheep extra, \$3 75.

All must concede that Dr. Chalmers's works are destined to exert no small influence on the character of the age. For the last quarter of a century and more, he has been regarded in both hemispheres as one of the greatest intellectual and moral lights of the world; and though dead, he yet speaketh, and will speak in his productions to the end of time. The first three volumes of his posthumous works consist of his observations in connection with his daily reading of the Scriptures; and while they bear the impress of a magnificent intellect, they breathe a spirit of ethereal purity and lofty devotion. One scarcely knows, in reading these pages, which to admire most, the great man or the humble Christian.—*Argus.*

Thomas Chalmers, D.D., LL.D.

SABBATH SCRIPTURE READINGS.

EDITED BY REV. WILLIAM HANNA, LL.D.

Forming Volumes IV. and V. of "Chalmers's Posthumous Works." 12mo, Muslin, \$2 00; Sheep extra, \$2 50.

It is a book which few will open without deep interest and deeper reverence. There is no tinge of sectarianism in these pages: they are imbued throughout with a catholic spirit, and glow with that universal kindness which was so distinguishing a characteristic of the man.—*London Atlas.*

In heart and in brain, in mind and in soul, we may say Dr. Chalmers was one in a million of created beings; in these passages he has poured forth a rich stream of intelligence to interest mankind.—*Literary Gazette.*

These pages have the charm of originality—the mature fruits of a whole lifetime's study of the Divine Oracles.—*The Patriot.*

SERMONS BY THE LATE THOMAS CHALMERS, D.D., LL.D.,

Illustrative of different Stages in his Ministry. From 1798 to 1847.

EDITED BY REV. WILLIAM HANNA, LL.D.

Forming Volume VI. of "Chalmers's Posthumous Works." 12mo, Muslin, \$1 00; Sheep extra, \$1 25.

This volume contains sermons, beginning in 1798, and we need not speak of the peculiar eloquence and effect of the preacher. They stand well the examination of the closet, not only in style, but, what is far better, in moral discipline and doctrine. The Divine summary of human duty is a fine example of the enforcement of both religious and moral duties; on the guilt of calumny, a glorious moral discourse. His several farewell discourses are full of rich humanity and touching reflections; but there are thirty-three sermons, and we can not particularize their relative merits. Leaving the more theological subjects, we would say, that those on courteousness, and the duties of masters and servants, are worthy of being framed in letters of gold, as lessons for the right discharge of simple daily duties.—*London Literary Gazette.*

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After the spring thaw, their voices ringing
 At dusk would beckon him through the meadow
 To the edge of their pond where, barefoot,
 He would wade slowly into the water
 And stand there in the last of light
 To see the mating toads—a hundred or more
 In the shallows around him, ignoring him
 Or taking him for another, inflating
 The pale-green bubbles of their throats to call
 For *bufo terrestris*, leaping half out of the pool
 And scrambling to find partners. The atmosphere
 Would quiver with their harmonic over-
 And undertones, with their loud, decent proposals
 Like the sounds of a church potluck, their invocations
 And offertories for disorderly conduct,
 With the publishing of their indelicate banns
 And blessings to the needy in their distress
 And benedictions even beyond springtime
 To all those of the faith. And he would see
 Among this communal rapture, there underwater,
 The small grey males lying silent
 On the backs of females, holding on
 To their counterparts with every slippery finger
 And toe, both motionless, both gazing
 Inward at the Indivisible
 And rising from time to time together
 To the surface only an inch above them
 To breathe, then settling again and staring
 With such a consciousness of being
 Common American toads, he would stand beside them,
 As content as they were with their medium
 Of exchange, the soles of his feet trembling
 With a resonance he could feel deep in his spine,
 Believing this mud could be his altar too,
 And his pulpit, where all of his intentions
 Would be as clear as theirs, as clear as the air
 In the chill of the fading light. He would lift
 His bare feet gently and silently, making scarcely
 A ripple, balancing
 Himself onto the grass and, while his brethren
 Like a drunken choir went on
 And on without him, would sit down
 Vibrant on the earth and once again struggle
 Into his stockings, into his waterproof boots,
 And straighten and square-knot his rawhide laces.



March 27. Sunday. After a long spell of fair weather, the first April-like rain fell last night. But it is fair again this morning with a cool breeze, which will hardly permit the catkins to open. I miss very much the early willows along the railroad, which have been cut down the past winter to prevent catching fire from the engines and spreading to the woods. And hence my neighbor the switch-man has bean-poles to sell.

P.M. — To [Martial Miles](#)'s.

The skunk-cabbage in full bloom under the Clamshell Hill; undoubtedly was open yesterday afternoon. Perhaps I might have found one a day earlier still, had I looked here carefully. Call it the 26th. The spathes of those in bloom are open at *least* half an inch wide. Many are decaying, having been killed by that severe cold a fortnight ago, probably else it would have blossomed earlier. Nevertheless, the spathes appear to furnish a remarkable protection to the spadix, they are so curved over it as well as involved about it, and so roomy. What meant those little pellets of the pollen in one of these vegetable shells? Had some bee left them yesterday? The inside of the shell-like vessel which the spathe makes contains considerable of the yellow pollen of the flower. I fear I may not

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have got so early a specimen of this as of the other plants thus far, after all. Clusters of stout, curved spear-heads about three inches high; in some the mahogany-color, in some the yellowish green prevails. Some are a very dark mahogany, others almost a clear light yellow. Also the thistles, johnswort (radical leaves), buttercups, clover, mullein, have grown very decidedly. I see but one tortoise (*Emys guttata*) in Nut Meadow Brook now; the weather is too raw and gusty.

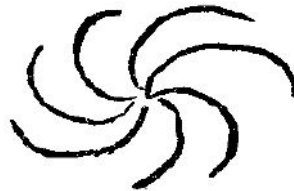


The hazel is fully out. The 23d was perhaps full early to date them. It is in some respects the most interesting flower yet, though so minute that only an observer of nature, or one who looked for them, would notice it. It is the highest and richest colored yet, — ten or a dozen little rays at the end of the buds which are [at] the ends and along the sides of the bare stems. Some of the flowers are a light, some a dark crimson. The high color of this minute, unobserved flower, at this cold, leafless, and almost flowerless season! It is a beautiful greeting of the spring, when the catkins are scarcely relaxed and there are no signs of life in the bush. Moreover, they are so tender that I never get one home in good condition. They wilt and turn black.

Tried to see the faint-croaking frogs at [J.P. Brown's](#) Pond in the woods. They are remarkably timid and shy; had their noses and eyes out, croaking, but all ceased, dove, and concealed themselves, before I got within a rod of the shore. Stood perfectly still amid the bushes on the shore, before one showed himself; finally five or six, and all eyed me, gradually approached me within three feet to reconnoitre, and, though I waited about half an hour, would not utter a sound nor take their eyes off me, — were plainly affected by curiosity. Dark brown and some, perhaps, dark green, about two inches long; had their noses and eyes out when they croaked. If described at all, must be either young of *Rana pipiens* or the *R. palustris*.

That earliest willow I can find, behind [Miles's](#), sheltered by a wood on the north but on high and dry land (!!), will bloom to-morrow if it is pleasant. I see the yellow now. I see the earth freshly stirred and tracks about the woodchuck-holes. So they have been out. You hear that faint croak of frogs and, toward night, a few hylas regularly, now. Did not see frog spavin in the pool by [Hubbard's](#) Wood. Still the hardback and meadow-sweet tops are perfect.

The base of the pitch pine cone which, closed, was semicircular, after it has opened becomes more or less flat and horizontal by the crowding of the scales backward upon the smaller and imperfect ones next the stem, and, viewed on this flat end, they are handsomely arranged in curving rays.



March 28, Monday, [1853](#): [Henry Thoreau](#) lectured.

The lighthouse structure on Alcatraz Island in [San Francisco Bay](#) was completed, awaiting arrival of the latest revolving lantern from France.



March 28, Monday: My [Aunt Maria](#) asked me to read the life of [Dr. Chalmers](#) which, however, I did not promise to do. Yesterday, Sunday, she was heard through the partition shouting to my [Aunt Jane](#), who is deaf, "Think of it! He stood half an hour today to hear the frogs croak, and

he wouldn't read the life of [Chalmers](#)."



6 A.M. — To Cliffs.

Too cold for the birds to sing much. There appears to be more snow on the mountains. Many of our spring rains are snow-storms there. The woods ring with the cheerful jingle of the *F. hyemalis* [**Dark-eyed Junco** [Junco hyemalis](#)]. This is a very trig and compact little bird, and appears to be in good condition. The straight edge of slate on their breasts contrasts remarkably with the white from beneath; the short, light-colored bill is also very conspicuous amid the dark slate: and when they fly from you, the two white feathers in their tails are very distinct at a good distance. They are very lively, pursuing each other from bush to bush. Could that be the fox-colored sparrow [**Fox Sparrow** [Passerella iliaca](#) (~~Fox-colored Sparrow~~)] I saw this morning, — that reddish-brown sparrow?⁷⁹

I do not now think of a bird that *hops* so distinctly, rapidly, and commonly as the robin [**American Robin** [Turdus migratorius](#)], with its head up. Why is the pollen of flowers commonly yellow? I saw yesterday, on the warm pool by Hubbard's Wood, long, narrow blades of reddish grass, bent nearly at right angles and floating on the water, lighter-colored beneath (lake-colored?). The floating part was from six inches to ten or twelve in length. This is much the greatest growth of grass that I have seen, for it is scarcely anywhere yet visibly green. It is an agreeable surprise, flushing the cheek, this warm color on the surface of some warm pool.

P.M. — To Assabet.

Saw eleven black ducks [near](#) the bathing-place on the Assabet, flying up the stream. Came within three or four rods of me, then wheeled and went down. Their faint quack sounded much [like] the croak of the frogs occasionally heard now, in the pools. As they wheeled and went off, made a very fine whistling sound, which yet I think was not made by their wings.

Opened an ant-hill about two and a half feet wide and eight inches high, in open land. It was light and dry, and apparently made by the ants; free from stones or sticks for about a foot in depth. The ants, which were red with black abdomens and were about a third of an inch long, crawled about sluggishly on being exposed. Their galleries, a quarter of an inch and more in diameter, with ants in them, extended to the depth of two feet in the yellow sand, and how much further I don't know. Opened another in the woods with black ants of the same size in the same condition.



This is a raw, cloudy, and disagreeable day. Yet I think you are most likely to see wild fowl this weather. I saw in Dodd's yard and flying thence to the alders by the river what I think must be the tree sparrow,⁸⁰ — a ferruginous crowned, or headed, and partly winged bird, light beneath, with a few of the *F. hyemalis* [**Dark-eyed Junco** [Junco hyemalis](#)] in company. It sang sweetly, much like some notes of a canary. One pursued another. It was not large enough for the fox-colored sparrow [**Fox Sparrow** [Passerella iliaca](#) (~~Fox-colored Sparrow~~ or ~~cinnamon sparrow~~)]. Perhaps I have seen it before within the month.

As near as I can make out, the hawks or falcons I am likely to see here are the American sparrow hawk [**Sparrow Hawk** [Falco sparverius](#)], the fish hawk [**Osprey** [Pandion haliaetus](#) (~~Fish Eagle~~ or ~~Fish Hawk~~)], the goshawk [**Goshawk** [Accipiter gentilis](#) (~~Cape Eagle~~ or ~~Partridge Hawk~~)], the short-winged buzzard (if this is the same with [Brown](#)'s stuffed sharp-shinned or slate-colored hawk [**Sharp-shinned Hawk** [Accipiter striatus](#) (slate-colored hawk, including subspecies *perobscurus*, *velox*, *suttoni*, *madrensis*, *fringilloides*, and *venator*)], — not slate in his

79. Probably.


80. No doubt of it.

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specimen; is not this the common small hawk that soars?), the red-tailed hawk [Red-tailed Hawk  *Buteo jamaicensis* (Hen Hawk)] (have we the red-shouldered hawk, about the same size and aspect with the last?), the hen-harrier [Northern Harrier  *Circus cyaneus*]. (I suppose it is the adult of this with the slate-color over meadows.)



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

 March 29, Tuesday, 1853: The Chinese Christian ruler Hung Hsiu Ch'üan 洪秀全 entered his new capital city of Nanjing, followed by his 32 main women, each of them carrying an imperial yellow parasol (this would have been his way to indicate himself to be not only the possessor of a California-kingsize bed but also — the true emperor of China).



(The Taipings were deleting the final 8 verses of Genesis 19 from their BIBLE — they just couldn't deal with Lot's daughters having gotten themselves PG by their own daddy.)

In California, the Times & Transcript was informed by a friend from Yuba County that mines in the vicinity of Hess Crossing of the Middle Yuba River had been yielding remarkably well, many of the miners averaging from \$100 to \$150 per week clear of expenses. The diggings were situated on the ridge to the north of the bridge, about a mile from the river. They lie in the same range that Sweetland's and the French Corral are situated, and which are continued intervals onto Nevada. Two years since it was demonstrated that the main stream ran through this district, and the recent discoveries have now proved it, river pebbles being found at the bottom.



March 29: Four ducks, two by two, are sailing conspicuously on the river. There appear to be two pairs. In each case one two-thirds white and another grayish-brown, and, I think, smaller. They are very shy and fly at fifty rods' distance.... Would it not be well to carry a spyglass in order to watch these shy birds such as ducks [he believed them to be Common Merganser  *Mergus merganser* (*Shecorway*⁸¹ or *Goosander* or *Sheldrake*)] and hawks ? In some respects, methinks,


81. *Shecorway* is the Abenaki name for mergansers.

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it would be better than a gun. The latter brings them nearer dead, but the former alive. You can identify the species better by killing the bird, because it was a dead specimen that was so minutely described, but you can study the habits and appearance best in the living specimen. These ducks first flew north, or somewhat against the wind (was it to get under weigh?), then wheeled, flew nearer me, and went south upstream, where I saw them afterward.



 March 30, Wednesday, 1853: At the New-York Central racially integrated school, a teacher named William G. Allen (not the same person as the teacher [William B. Allen](#) of Concord), and one of the white students at said school, Mary King, over much opposition, finally were able to marry, and moved to England. What had all the ruckus been about?

Allen, a graduate of the [Oneida Institution](#) who had read for the law in the office of [Ellis Gray Loring](#) before becoming a teacher, was the son of a white Virginian and a free mulatto woman, which means — the groom was **approximately, shudder, a quarter black**:

OUR COLOR PREJUDICES

Tai-p'ing leader Hung Hsui-ch'uan, who believed himself to be the little brother of Jesus, entered [Nanking](#) amidst great ceremony and there began to set up the ideal society of the *Tai-p'ing T'ien-kuo* or “Central Kingdom of Great Peace.”

CHINESE CIVIL WAR

La Tonelli, an opéra comique by Ambroise Thomas to words of Sauvage, was performed for the initial time, at the Théâtre Favart, Paris.

After an 11-year absence, Louis Moreau Gottschalk disembarked from a Mississippi paddle-wheeler at his home in New Orleans, from Louisville, Kentucky. The boat being all of 8 hours early, no one came down to the dock to greet him.



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March 30, Wednesday, 1853: A patent was granted to Hyman Lipman for a pencil with “a rubber” attached to its top end, to be used in the erasing of mistakes.



Vincent Willem van Gogh was born into a Dutch Reformed family of Groot-Zundert in North Brabant in the Netherlands, a son of the Reverend Theodorus van Gogh of the Dutch Reformed Church, and Anna Cornelia Carpentus van Gogh.



March 30: April weather, alternate rain and brightening up. I am not sure my willow will bloom fairly to-day. How warily the flowers open! not to be caught out too early, not bursting into bloom with the first genial heat, but holding back as if foreseeing the transient checks, and yielding only to the absolute progress of the season. However, probably some hardy flowers which are quite ready will open just before a cold snap, while others, which were almost equally advanced, may be retarded a week. Is it not the pollen which the bees seek in the earliest flowers, as the skunk-cabbage (?) and the willow, having occasion for bee-bread first? As usual, the robin [American Robin *Turdus migratorius*] sings more this cloudy and showery morning than I have heard it yet.

P.M. — To Cliffs.

The gooseberry leaves in the garden are just *beginning* to show a little green. Is this the same with the wild? Lilacs have buds equally advanced.

Seeing one of those little holes (which I have thought were made by beetles or dor-bugs) in Wheeler's upland rye-field near the Burying-Ground, the mouth walled about like a well with a raised curb with fragments of dried grass and little bits of wood, I resolved to explore it, but after the first shovelful I lost the trace of it, for I had filled it with sand. Finding another, I stuck a mullein stalk into it to a surprising depth, and then could dig with confidence. At fifteen or sixteen inches from the surface, I found a black spider, nearly three quarters of an inch long in the body, clasping the mullein, but very sluggish, only moving its legs, but not crawling away. In another hole I found another similar spider in exactly the same condition and at the same depth, but in this case my stick went clown only one foot and was there stopped by ice, which filled the hole, but after digging through an inch of frozen ground, I found the spider in the dry cavity, three or four inches deeper. How the water stood so as to freeze above him I don't know. I could see nothing like a nest at the bottom, nor any enlargement of the hole. The soil is very sandy and light. In the sand beneath the frost was a moving common red earthworm, I did not expect to find frost in such a place now.

Now commences the season for fires in the woods. The winter, and now the sun and winds, have dried old leaves more thoroughly than ever, and there are no green leaves to shade the ground or to check flames, and these high March winds are the very ones to spread them. It is a dry, windy, and withal hazy day, — that blue smoky haze that reminds of fires, which some have thought the effect of distant fires in the woods, which perhaps is only a finer mist, produced by the increased heat of the sun on an earth abounding in moisture. Is not this White's London smoke (*vide* Commonplace-Book), and followed by rain? The woods look peculiarly dry and russet. There is as yet no new greenness in the landscape. With these thoughts and impressions I had not gone far before I saw the smoke of a fire on Fair Haven Hill. Some boys were going *sassafras*ing, for boys will have some pursuit peculiar to every season. A match came in contact with a marble, nobody knew how, and suddenly the fire flashed up the broad open hillside, consuming the low grass and sweet-fern and leaving a smoking, blackened waste. A few glowing stumps with spadefuls of fresh earth thrown on them, the white ashes here and there on the black ground, and the not disagreeable scent of smoke and cinders was all that was left when I arrived.

I see from the Cliffs that the young oaks look thin, are losing their leaves. A warm, breezy wind roves in the woods. Dry leaves, which I at first mistake for birds, go sailing through the air in front of the Cliff. The distant highways, I perceive, begin to be dusty; sandy fields to be dry. There is an inspiring strong ripple on the river, which seems to flow up-stream.

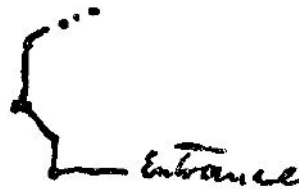
I see again that same kind of clouds that I saw the 10th of last April, low in the sky; higher and overhead those great downy clouds, equal to the intervals of celestial blue, with glowing edges and

with wet bases. The sky is mapped with them as with New Hollands and Borneos. There are mares'-tails and rosettes in the west.

The motions of a hawk █ correcting the flaws in the wind by raising his shoulder from time to time, are much like those of a leaf yielding to them. For the little hawks are hunting now. You have not to sit long on the Cliffs before you see one. I still see fresh earth where the skunk, if it is he, has been probing last night for insects about the pines in pastures and any dead twigs that afford lurking-places. Saw a dead cricket in one. They make a hole sometimes so deep and pointed that only two fingers will fathom it. If dor-bugs make such holes as the spiders, they can easily find them.

I am surprised to find many of the early sedge already out. It may have been out a day or two. I should put it between the skunk-cabbage and the aspen, — at any rate, before the last. Little black ants in the pitchy-looking earth about the base of white pines in woods are still dormant.

All, those youthful days! are they never to return? when the walker does not too curiously observe particulars, but sees, hears, scents, tastes, and feels only himself, — the phenomena that show themselves in him, — his expanding body, his intellect and heart. No worm or insect, quadruped or bird, confined his view, but the unbounded universe was his. A bird is now become a mote in his eye. Dug into what I take to be a woodchuck's burrow in the low knoll below the Cliffs. It was in the side of the hill and sloped gently downward at first, diagonally, into the hill about five feet, perhaps westerly, then turned and ran north into the hill about three feet, then northwest further into the hill four feet, then north again five feet, then northeast I know not how far, the last five feet perhaps ascending. It was the full length of the shovel from the surface of the ground to the bottom of the hole when I left off, owing, perhaps, to the rise of the hill. The hole was arched above and flat on the bottom like an oven, about five inches [in] diameter at base, and it seemed to have a pretty hard crust as I broke into it. There was a little enlargement, perhaps ten inches in diameter, in the angle at the end of twelve feet. It was thus.



It was a wonder where the sand was conveyed to, for there was not a wheelbarrow-load at the entrance.



March 31, Thursday, 1853: Did [Henry Thoreau](#) on this day survey a strip of land in Lincoln, for the building of a barn fence? Was there a "Loring D." auction?



March 31: The robins [[American Robin](#) █ [Turdus migratorius](#)] sing at the very earliest dawn. I wake with their note ringing in my ear.

6 A.M. — To Island by boat.

The pickerels dart away from the shallows, where they have spent the night. It is spearing-tune, then. The chickadee [[Black-capped Chickadee](#) █ [Parus atricapillus](#)] sings, not merely *phebe* but *pbe-be-be*. Heard a note like that of the warbling vireo [[Warbling Vireo](#) █ [Vireo gilvus](#)] from a bird in Cheney's elm which I think must be a fox-colored sparrow [[Fox Sparrow](#) █ [Passerella iliaca](#) (~~Fox-colored Sparrow or cinnamon sparrow~~)]. Should think it a vireo if it could be here now.


9 A.M. — To Lincoln, surveying for Mr. Austin.






The catkins of the hazel are now trembling in the wind and much lengthened, showing yellowish and beginning to shed pollen.

Saw and heard sing in a peach orchard my *warbling vireo* [[Warbling Vireo](#) █ [Vireo gilvus](#)] of the

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morning. It must be the fox-colored sparrow [Fox Sparrow  *Passerella iliaca* (~~Fox-colored Sparrow or cinnamon sparrow~~)]. It is plumper than a bluebird, tail fox-colored, a distinct spot on the breast, no bars visible on wings. Beginning with a clear, rich, deliberate note, jingling more rapidly at the end; much like the warbling vireo at the end.

I afterward heard a fine concert of little songsters along the edge of the meadow. Approached and watched and listened for more than half an hour. There were many little sparrows, difficult to detect, flitting and hopping along and scratching the ground like hens, under the alders, willows, and cornets in a wet leafy place, occasionally alighting on a low twig and preening themselves, they had bright-bay crowns, two rather indistinct white bars on wings, an ashy breast and dark tail. These twittered sweetly, some parts very much lilac a canary and many together, making it the fullest and sweetest I have heard yet, — like a shopful of canaries. The blackbirds  may make more noise. About the size of a song sparrow [Song Sparrow  *Melospiza melodia*]. I think these are the tree sparrow [American Tree Sparrow  *Spizella arborea*]. Also, mixed with them, and puzzling me to distinguish for a long time, were many of the fox-colored (?) sparrows mentioned above, with a creamy cinnamon-tinged ashy breast, cinnamon shoulderlet, ashy about side head and throat, a fox-colored tail; a size larger than the others; the spot on breast very marked. Were evidently two birds intimately mixed. Did not Peabody confound them when he mentioned the mark on the breast of the tree sparrow? The rich strain of the fox-colored sparrow [Fox Sparrow  *Passerella iliaca* (~~Fox-colored Sparrow or cinnamon sparrow~~)], as I think it is, added much to the quire. The latter solos, the former in concert. I kept off a hawk  by my presence. These were for a long time invisible to me, except when they flitted past.












Heard the jingle of the rush sparrow [Field Sparrow  *Spizella pusilla*].

A range-pole on the side of Mt. Tabor, twenty-odd feet long and ten or twelve from the ground, slanted upward on three forked posts like a rafter, a bower being opposite the lower end two rods off, and this end of the pole full of shot.

Mt. Tabor. — When the air is a little hazy, the mountains are particularly dark blue. It is affecting to see a distant mountain-top, like the summits of Uncannunuc, well seen from this hill, whereon you camped for a night in your youth, which you have never revisited, still as blue and ethereal to your eyes as is your memory of it. It lies like an isle in the far heavens, a part of earth unprophaned, which does not bear a price in the market, is not advertised by the real estate broker.

There is another fire in the horizon, and there was one also yesterday, on the side of this hill. What is that forward weed, its narrow green leaves floating at end of a long stein, in springs for cattle south side this hill, somewhat potamogeton-like?⁸²

Brown has these birds set up which I may wish to examine: —

 Turtle-dove [Mourning Dove  *Zenaida macroura*], green Heron [Green-backed Heron  *Butorides striatus* (~~Green Bittern, Small Bittern~~)], *Ardea Herodias* [Great Blue Heron  *Ardea herodias* (~~Blue—Heron~~)], pileated woodpecker [Pileated Woodpecker  *Dryocopus pileatus*, log-cock], fox-colored sparrow [Fox Sparrow  *Passerella iliaca* (~~Fox-colored Sparrow or cinnamon sparrow~~)], young of purple finch [Purple Finch  *Carpodacus purpureus* (~~American linnet~~)], white-eyed vireo [White-eyed Vireo  *Vireo griseus*], goldfinch, [American Goldfinch  *Carduelis tristis*] brown creeper [Brown Creeper  *Certhia americana*], scarlet tanager (male and female) [Scarlet Tanager  *Piranga olivacea*], white-breasted nuthatch [White-breasted Nuthatch  *Sitta carolinensis* (~~White-bellied Nuthatch~~)], solitary vireo [Solitary Vireo  *Vireo solitarius*], red-eyed vireo [Red-eyed Vireo  *Vireo olivaceus* (~~red-eye~~)], yellow redpoll warbler [Yellow Warbler  *Dendroica petechia*], hermit thrush [Hermit Thrush  *Catharus guttatus*] (killed here), cardinal grosbeak  , pine grosbeak [Pine Grosbeak  *Pinicola enucleator*], black-billed cuckoo [Black-billed Cuckoo  *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*], mockingbird [Mockingbird  *Mimus polyglottos*], woodcock [Woodcock, American  *Scolopax minor*], *Totanus flavipes* (or small Yellow-leg), (great ditto?), Bartram's tatter (or upland plover), golden ditto? [Upland sandpiper  *Bartramia longicauda*], *Falco sparverius*, sharp-shinned or slate-colored hawk [Sharp-shinned Hawk  *Accipter striatus* (slate-colored hawk, including subspecies *perobscurus*, *velox*, *suttoni*, *madrensis*, *fringilloides*, and *venator*)], or *F. Pennsylvanicus* of Wilson, green-winged teal  , blue-winged teal  , wood duck [Wood Duck  *Aix sponsa*] (young drakes).


82. *Callitriche verna*. Vide May 2d.



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SPRING 1853

 Spring [1853](#): [Brownson's Quarterly Review](#), No. 1

CATHOLICISM

- I. *The Worship of Mary*
- II. *The Two Orders, Spiritual and Temporal*
- III. *Father Gury's Moral Theology*
- IV. *Protestantism Not a Religion*
- V. *Catholics of England and Ireland*
- VI. *Literary Notices and Criticisms*

MAGAZINES

ORESTES AUGUSTUS BROWNSON

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Spring [1853](#): The 150-foot steamboat *West Newton* out of Fort Snelling on the Mississippi River arrived in what was going to become Nicollet County, [Minnesota](#), farther up the Minnesota River than any such boat had previously ventured.



It carried 3 companies of soldiers from Forts Snelling and Dodge with their families, carpenters, and supplies for the creation of a containment fort at the edge of the newer, smaller Dakota Indian Reservation. This fort they would name [Fort Ridgely](#) in memory of 3 men named Ridgely who had died during the war upon [Mexico](#), although by the Woodland Dakotas that it contained on this reservation it would be known as “The Soldiers’ House.”

The water on [Francis Parkman, Jr.](#)’s left knee began to bother him again. He would be incapacitated for several years.

“Parkman’s accomplishments are all the more impressive in light of the fact that he suffered from a debilitating neurological illness, which plagued him his entire life, and which was never properly diagnosed. He was often unable to walk, and for long periods he was effectively blind, being unable to see but the slightest amount of light. Much of his research involved having people read documents to him, and much of his writing was written in the dark, or dictated to others.”



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It was probably during this spring that [Waldo Emerson](#) wrote in his journal about [Margaret Fuller](#) and [Bronson Alcott](#):

It is a bitter satire on our social order, just at present, the number of bad cases. Margaret Fuller having attained the highest & broadest culture that any American woman has possessed, came home with an Italian gentleman whom she had married, & their infant son, & perished by shipwreck on the rocks of Fire Island, off New York; and her friends said, "Well, on the whole, it was not so lamentable, & perhaps it was the best thing that could happen to her. For, had she lived, what could she have done? How could she have supported herself, her husband, & child?" And, most persons, hearing this, acquiesced in this view that, after the education had gone far, such is the expensiveness of America, that the best use to put a fine woman to, is to drown her to save her board.

Well, the like or the stronger plight is that of Mr Alcott, the most refined & the most advanced soul we have had in New England, who makes all other souls appear slow & cheap & mechanical; a man of such a courtesy & greatness, that (in conversation) all others, even the intellectual, seem sharp & fighting for victory, & angry – he has the unalterable sweetness of a muse – yet because he cannot earn money by his pen or his talk, or by schoolkeeping or bookkeeping or editing or any kind of meanness – nay, for this very cause, that he is ahead of his contemporaries – is higher than they, & keeps himself out of the shop-condescensions & smug arts which they stoop to, or, unhappily, need not stoop to, but find themselves, as it were, born to – therefore, it is the unanimous opinion of New England judges that this man must die; we shall all hear of his death with pleasure, & feel relieved that his board & clothes also are saved! We do not adjudge him to hemlock, or to garrotting – we are much too hypocritical & cowardly for that; but we not less surely doom him, by refusing to protest against this doom, or combine to save him, & to set him on employments fit for him & salutary to the state, or to the Senate of fine Souls, which is the heart of the state.



 Late Spring [1853](#): [Thomas Carlyle](#) started to draft his THE HISTORY OF FRIEDRICH II OF PRUSSIA, CALLED FREDERICK THE GREAT.

 Spring/Summer [1853](#): [Horace Rice Hosmer](#) would recollect, later, that during this period he had been “a foot-peddler” and that during that period he had been experimenting with [Bronson Alcott](#)’s and [Sylvester Graham](#)’s and [Henry Thoreau](#)’s food notions. He “found by repeated experiments” that he “could walk farther, carry more weight, and feel better every way by eating whole wheat bread and butter and cheese, pilot or ship bread, rather than meat. These food theories were being tested by hundreds of young men besides Thoreau —”



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APRIL 1853

April 1853: This month's issue of [Harper's New Monthly Magazine](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE

This month's issue of [Putnam's Monthly Magazine of American Literature, Science, and Art](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE

April 1853: This edition of [The New England Farmer, a monthly journal devoted to Agriculture, Horticulture, and their kindred Arts and Sciences; embelished and illustrated with numerous beautiful engravings](#) included a piece by J. Reynolds on page 197 reporting a presentation made on [February 24th, 1853](#) by [Simon Brown](#) before the [Concord](#) Farmers Club on the history of farm implements.

[Henry Thoreau](#) was being written to by [Loring Henry Austin](#) in Lincoln.



To: [HDT](#)
From: [Loring H. Austin](#)
Date: [4/53](#)

*H.D. Thoreau Esqr
Lincoln [] Apr []
Dear Sir— I inclose you [] with many thanks for you [] labor — the
amount of the []
Sent me— Yours
\$3.00.
Truly L.H. Au []*

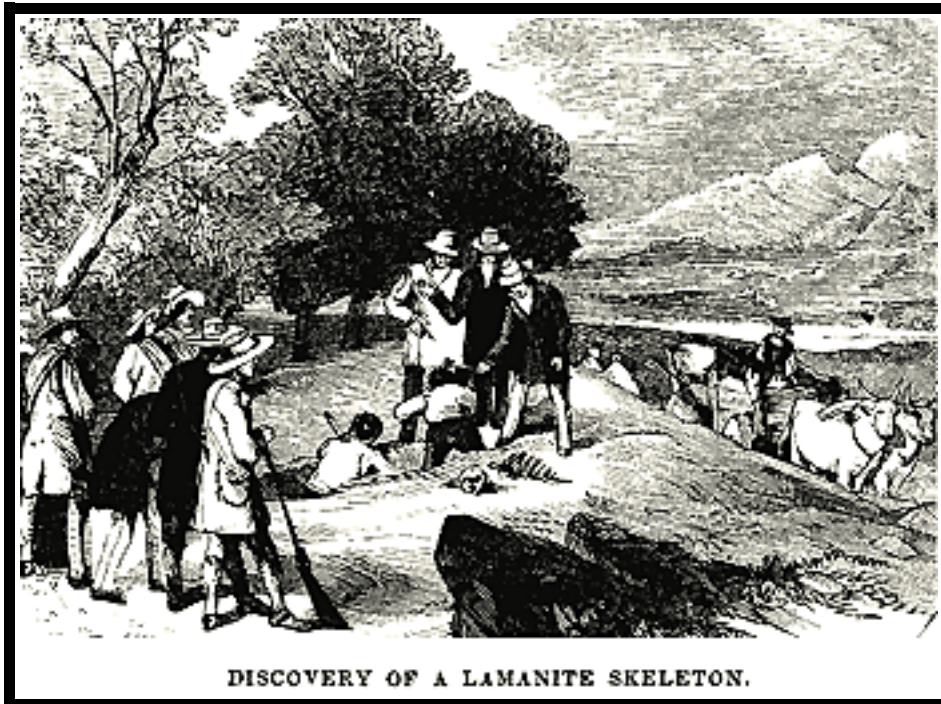
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April 1853: In the National Magazine, a Methodist reverend described crossing a swamp in Mississippi which he characterized as “the most dreary and desolate place in the world.” He fell into a deep depression, became feverish, got lost, decided he was going to die, and committed himself to the glory of God — and of course, that saved him, what did you expect?

During this month some white Americans were unashamedly digging up native American graves, hoping to find, in with the bones, something of **value**. Of course they had a picture drawn of what they were doing and had it published — what did you expect, **shame**?




Stephen Pearl Andrews's 103-page LOVE, MARRIAGE, AND DIVORCE, AND THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE INDIVIDUAL. A DISCUSSION BY HENRY JAMES, HORACE GREELEY, AND STEPHEN PEARL ANDREWS: INCLUDING THE FINAL REPLIES OF MR. ANDREWS, REJECTED BY THE TRIBUNE” was reprinted from the pages of the New-York Tribune by Stringer & Townsend, Publishers. Andrews exhorts Henry James, Sr. and Horace Greeley to “Give up, I beseech you, the search after the remedy for the evils of government in more government. The road lies just the other way, toward Individuality and Freedom from all government.” (Does this more remind you of Ayn Rand, or does it more remind you of Ronald Reagan?)



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 April 1853: Early in the month, Qingjiang, Taizhou, and Yangzhou fell into the hands of the [Chinese Christian Army](#) in its grand new headquarters in Nanjing. This gave the Christians control over the [Grand Canal](#) which was the main source of supply for the city of Beijing, and in Beijing the price of grain trebled. Mr. Thomas T. Meadows and Sir George Bonham, British Minister, obtained an interview with the Taiping Northern King. The Chinese Christians, aware that the Reverend [Issachar J. Roberts](#) 罗孝全 had recently returned to China after a visit to the United States, invited him to come see their new *T'ien-ching* or “Heavenly Capital” of the *Tai-p'ing T'ien-kuo* or “Central Kingdom of Great Peace” which they had created in the center of China, and counsel them in their faith. He came of course, but what this Tennessee [Baptist](#) found when he arrived was that these little yellow people were doing baptism the wrong way. Instead of baptizing by total immersion, the only way to obtain salvation, they merely scrubbed their bosoms to indicate a cleansing of the heart. And, they weren't even interested in being corrected! After the Christians beheaded, in their living quarters, in continuation of a doctrinal dispute, the yellow Christian with whom the Reverend Roberts had been traveling, the white man departed in a great huff.

THE TAEPING REBELLION

Meanwhile, these Chinese Christians were doing something quite remarkable in this [mulberry](#)-and-silkworm district of [China](#) which they had taken in hand:

before 1853	for over a decade exports had been annually: 16,000 to 25,000 bales	Baseline data.
1853	25,571 bales	Christians controlled Nanjing in the silk district of China.
1854	61,984 bales	
1860-1861	69,137 bales	Christians controlled Soochow and almost the entire silk district.
1861-1862	88,754 bales	
1862-1863	83,264 bales	
1863-1864	46,863 bales	
1864-1865	41,128 bales	The Chinese Christians had been exterminated.

SILK
NORTHAMPTON MA


 April 1853: [Cornelius Conway Felton](#) sailed from Boston harbor, on a tour of Europe that would continue until March 1854.

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



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April 1, Friday, [1853](#): Edvard Grieg became a student in Tank's School in Bergen.

[Cincinnati, Ohio](#) made itself the 1st US city to employ full-time professional firefighters. The head of this service would be Miles Greenwood (March 19, 1807-November 5, 1885), who with Abel Shawk and Alexander Bonner Latta had in the previous year devised the 1st practical horse-drawn steam fire engine, able to get set up and initiate a stream of water with an amazingly short delay of only 7 of 10 minutes, which they had presented to the city on January 1st, 1853. It was because of its enormous fire losses that the city of Cincinnati had been able to overcome the political power of its volunteer fire brigades and organize the nation's 1st salaried fire department, and order for this department a 22,000-pound steam fire engine drawn by a team of horses. Previous to this, although steam engines had been available since 1829 which could pump a jet of water twice as high as any team of muscular volunteer firemen, fire brigades had been refusing to utilize such engines. This was for the same reason that firewagons equipped to be drawn by teams of horses had been being shunned in favor of the sorts of rigs that could be pulled along by the men themselves: in the earlier period the volunteer fire brigades were monopolized by young rowdies preoccupied with showing off their individual strength and their gang spirit. All too frequently, competing brigades of firefighters had been engaging in fisticuffs in the streets to determine which was going to get credit, before turning to extinguishing the conflagration. We all of course knew that this was both dangerous and costly, but it had been as inexpedient for local politicians to speak out against the volunteer fire brigades as it is now for national politicians to speak out against the National Rifle Association — and for very much the same macho subliminal reasons. Once Cincinnati had bitten the bullet, and done so successfully, other cities would be following along. Boston would make this conversion in 1860 after several more severe drunken brawls, then New-York in 1865, then Philadelphia in 1871.

[Harriet Beecher Stowe](#), along with her husband Calvin Stowe, her brother Charles, her sister-in-law Sarah Buckingham Beecher, Sarah's brother William, and Sarah's son William, departed for Liverpool, England to receive a petition signed by more than half a million women, entitled "An Affectionate and Christian Address of Many Thousands of Women of Great Britain and Ireland to their Sisters the Women of the United States of America." There would be speeches authored by Harriet, which would of course be read to the assemblies by her husband. After a series of antislavery events in Great Britain the travelers would pass on for a tour of Europe. The result of this would be Stowe's 1854 [SUNNY MEMORIES OF FOREIGN LANDS](#).

A letter posted by a free man of color, M.R. Delany, in Pittsburgh on March 22d appeared in [Frederick Douglass' Paper](#), and an editorial response was provided:

FREDERICK DOUGLASS, ESQ.: DEAR SIR: — I notice in your paper of March 4 an article in which you speak of having paid a visit to Mrs. H.E.B. Stowe, for the purpose, as you say, of consulting her, "as to some method which should contribute successfully and permanently, in the improvement and elevation of the free people of color in the United States." Also, in the number of March 18th, in an article by a writer over the initials of "P.C.S.," in reference to the same subject, he concludes by saying, "I await with much interest the suggestions of Mrs. Stowe in this matter."

Now, I simply wish to say, that we have always fallen into great errors in efforts of this kind, going to others than the *intelligent* and *experienced* among ourselves; and in all due respect and deference to Mrs. Stowe, I beg leave to say, that she *knows nothing about us*, "the Free Colored people of the United States," neither does any other white person — and, consequently, can contrive no successful scheme for our elevation; it must be done by ourselves. I am aware, that I differ with many in thus expressing myself, but I cannot help



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it; though I stand alone, and offend my best friends, so help me God! in a matter of such moment and importance, I will express my opinion. Why, in God's name, don't the leaders among our people make suggestions, and consult the most competent among their own brethren concerning our elevation? This they do not do; and I have not known one, whose province it was to do so, to go ten miles for such a purpose. We shall never effect anything until this is done.

I accord with the suggestions of H.O. Wagoner for a National Council or Consultation of our people, provided *intelligence*, *maturity* and *experience* in matters among them, could be so gathered together; other than this, would be a mere mockery – like the Convention of 1848, a coming together of rivals, to test their success for the "biggest offices." As God lives, I will never, knowingly, lend my aid to any such work, while our brethren groan in vassalage and bondage, and I and mine under oppression and degradation, such as we now suffer.

I would not give the counsel of one dozen *intelligent* colored freeman of the *right stamp*, for that of all the white and unsuitable colored persons in the land. But something must be done, and that speedily.

The so called free states, by their acts, are now virtually saying to the South, "you *shall not* emancipate; your blacks *must be slaves*; and should they come North, there is no refuge for them." I shall not be surprised to see, at no distant day, a solemn Convention called by the whites in the North, to deliberate on the propriety of changing the whole policy to that of slave states. This will be the remedy to prevent dissolution; and *it will come, mark that!* anything on the part of the American people to save their Union. Mark me – the non-slaveholding states will become slave states.

Yours for God and Humanity,

M.R. DELANY.

REMARKS – That colored men would agree among themselves to do something for the efficient and permanent aid of themselves and their race, "is a consummation devoutly to be wished;" but until they do, it is neither wise nor graceful for them, or for any one of them to throw cold water upon plans and efforts made for that purpose by others. To scornfully reject all aid from our white friends, and to denounce them as unworthy of our confidence, looks high and mighty enough on paper; but unless the background is filled up with facts demonstrating our independence and self-sustaining power, of what use is such display of self-consequence? Brother DELANY has worked long and hard, he has written vigorously, and spoken eloquently to colored people – beseeching them, in the name of liberty, and all the dearest interests of humanity, to unite their energies, and to increase their activities in the work of their own elevation; yet where has his voice been heeded? and where is the practical result? Echo answers, where? Is not the field open? Why, then, should any man object to the efforts of Mrs. Stowe, or any one else, who is moved to do anything on our behalf? The assertion that Mrs. Stowe "knows nothing about us," shows that bro. DELANY knows nothing about Mrs. Stowe; for he certainly



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would not so violate his moral, or common sense if he did. When Brother DELANY will submit any plan for benefitting the colored people, or will candidly criticize any plan already submitted, he will be heard with pleasure. But we expect no plan from him. He has written a book – and we may say that it is, in many respects, an excellent book – on the condition, character and destiny of the colored people; but it leaves us just where it finds us, without chart or compass, and in more doubt and perplexity than before we read it.

Brother Delany is one of our strong men; and we are therefore all the more grieved, that at a moment when all our energies should be united in giving effect to the benevolent designs of our friends, his voice should be uplifted to strike a jarring note, or to awaken a feeling of distrust.

In respect to a national convention, we are for it – and will not only go “ten miles,” but a thousand, if need be, to attend it. Away, therefore, with all unworthy flings on that score. – ED.

Also, in this issue of Frederick Douglass' Paper there was the following description of a Senate debate:

Uncle Tom in the Senate

On Wednesday there was a debate in the United States Senate, in the course of which a difference between Messrs. Douglas, of Illinois, and Butler, of South Carolina, elicited the following: –

Mr. Butler, in the course of a speech, in which he expressed dissent from Mr. Douglass, said: “When we despise England, we must despise the tree on the fruit of which we have fed; we must despise Hampden, Sidney, Chatham, Shakspeare, and Burke. – There was no country on God Almighty's earth he loved so much as his own; but he loved England, because she was his mother, and he was proud of the tributary streams which she had poured out on America. The very common law of England made us. We have English laws and literature – and was he to be told we must despise England? He did not wish to court any occasion to become hostile to her. This debate was calculated to sow the seeds of bitterness.

Mr. Douglas – The Senator says we ought to love England, because she is our mother. Now it is hard to tell who our mother was. We have a great many mothers – we have here English, Irish, Scotch, French, Norman, Spanish – every kind of descent; all we have found valuable in England we have adopted, and that which was injurious we have rejected. I did not speak in terms of unkindness of England; but, in speaking of monuments, the point which I made was this: that we should not shut our eyes to the fact that the policy which England is pursuing has its origin in hostility towards us, and is not to enhance our interests. While the Senator spoke of England pouring in her streams of intelligence, I thought that the stream of abolition, treason and insurrection, which she had poured into South Carolina and other slaveholding States of the Union, would at least excuse him from endorsing those streams of literature under the name of “Uncle Tom's Cabin,” and other works – (tremendous applause



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in the gallery, and cries of "Good, good") works libelling us and our institutions, and holding us up to the hate and prejudice of the world. While engaged in this, he was the last to compliment her for her refreshing literature. (Renewed applause.)

The chair suppressed the disorder, and ordered the galleries to be cleared.

Mr. Adams - I hope they will be cleared.

Mr. Douglas - I hope they will.

Mr. Butler - When I spoke of gratitude, I spoke of those things in which we have a common interest. I do not thank the Senator for going out of his way and indicating impure streams. I spoke of the streams which authors and orators have poured out upon us, which I hope have been refreshing to him, and the intelligence of the age. I did not expect a miserable allusion to "Uncle Tom's Cabin." It was *ad captandum*, and not manly made.

Mr. Douglas - I spoke in terms of reverence and respect of the monuments of statesmen in England, of patriotism, legal learning, science, and literature - of all that was great, noble, and admirable. I did not expect statesmen to go back two or three centuries to justify the aggressions of the present age. And when I heard the plaudits relative to the past, I thought I had a right to allude to the present enormity of England.

Mr. Butler - I should like to know how England is responsible for "Uncle Tom's Cabin"? If the Senator takes the sickly sentimentality of the day as an exponent of the English heart and literature, very well. I alluded to our commercial relations with England, and our connexion as a civilized nation, and would the Senate postpone her?

Mr. Douglas - I would postpone her, or give her a greater preference than other nations, but treat her as duty required.

Mr. Butler - We can find sickly sentimentality everywhere, such as the Maine law, and all that. (Laughter.)

Also, in this issue of Frederick Douglass' Paper there appeared N.N.'s description of a Senate debate:

The Stage a Reformer

Most of our readers are probably aware that "Uncle Tom's Cabin" has been dramatised - in which form it has proved nearly as popular as the original work. At the Boston Museum it was performed for fully two months continuously, to crowded houses, seven times a week. It has also been produced at several theatres in Paris, London, Glasgow, New York, &c., with uniform success; that is, it has proved alike attractive to the public and profitable to the managers. - Some of these versions contained a few objectionable features; but on the whole, they did not mince matters; their spirit was abolitionary; true to human nature; hence their attraction.

You may be sure that certain folks in our great eastern cities felt the castigation a *little*. They were maddened to think that "so trumpery a book" should have so many spectators of its heart-thrilling incidents on the stage. Half a dozen tried their hands at rival books, to the benefit of trunk-makers and tobacconists; and now, undeterred by their fate, the playwrights are trying

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their luck at a counter-blast. In Boston, they got up the "White Slave of England," regardless of expense, as managers say; heralded it for weeks before, with enormous placards, appealing to the prejudices of negro-haters; the author bade them "hurl defiance at black obloquy;" and in answer to these deep-drawn summonses, the curtain of the Howard Athenaeum nightly rose to an audience of from 60 to 80 persons, and a ghastly row of empty benches. After thus dragging out five miserable performances, the "White Slave of England" was emancipated. I did not see the play; but it certainly must have been far below par, when such Hunker prints as the *Boston Times* and *Gazette* cut it up. "So much for Buckingham." The stage has some life in it yet; and country managers who wish to avoid empty seats would do well to note these facts.

N. N.



April 1. Of the small and ambiguous sparrow family, methinks I have seen only the song sparrow [Song Sparrow ■ *Melospiza melodia* (*melodia*)], that one with white feathers in tail seen March 23d, the tree sparrow [American Tree Sparrow ■ *Spizella arborea*]; and heard the field or rush sparrow [Field Sparrow ■ *Spizella pusilla* (Rush Sparrow or *juncorum* or Huckleberry-bird)]. I have for some time noticed the large yellow lily roots. Thus far we have had very little if any fresher year, — none since spring came in, I believe. River has been going down a month, at least.

P.M. — To Dugan's.

The three spots on breast of the song sparrow seem to mark a difference of sex. At least, the three-spotted is the one I oftenest hear sing of late. The accompanying one is lighter beneath and one-spotted. One of the former by J.P. Brown's meadow-side, selecting the top of a bush, after lurking and feeding under the alders, sang *olit olit olit* (faster) *chip chip chip che char* (fast) *che wiss wiss wiss*. The last bar was much varied, and sometimes one *olit* omitted in the first. This, I have no doubt, is my bird of March 18th. Another three-spotted sang *vit chit chit char weeter char* *tee chu*.

Saw ten black ducks ■ at Clamshell. Had already started two, who probably occupied an outpost. They all went off with a loud and disagreeable quacking like ducks in a poultry-yard, their wings appearing lighter beneath.

It has rained all night and this forenoon, and now begins to clear up. The rain rests on the downy leaves of the young mulleins in separate, irregular drops, from their irregularity and color looking like ice. The drops quite in the cup of the mullein have a peculiar translucent silveriness, apparently because, being upheld by the wool, it reflects the light which would otherwise be absorbed, as if cased in light. The fresh mullein leaves are pushing up amid the brown unsightly wreck of last fall, which strews the ground like old clothes, — these the new patches.

The gooseberry in Brown's pasture shows no green yet, though ours in the garden does. The former is on the north side of a hill. Many blackbirds ■ in concert, like leaves on the trees. The hazel stigmas now more *fully* out, curving over and a third of an inch long, that the catkins begin to shed pollen. In a skunk's probing, several dead and bruised small black crickets with a brassy tinge or reflection.

That early willow by Miles's (which I have little doubt is Gray's *Salix criocephala*??) has been injured by the rain. The drops rest on the catkins as on the mullein. Though this began to open only day before yesterday and was the earliest I could find, already I hear the well-known hum of a honey-bee, and one alights on it (also a fly or two), loads himself, circles round with a loud humming and is off. Where the first willow catkin opens, there will be found the honey-bee also with it. He found this out as soon as I. The stamens have burst out on the side toward the top, like a sheaf of spears thrust forth to encounter the sun, so many spears as the garrison can spare, advanced_ into the spring. With this flower, so much more flowerlike or noticeable than any yet, begins a new era in the flower season.

The early sedge is very fit to be the earliest grass that flowers here, appearing in the midst of dry tufts more than half hay.




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
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Heard, I have very little doubt, the strain of my seringo?? in the midst of the strain of a song sparrow,
I believe with three spots.
Starlight by river up Assabet.

"Up Assabet" is probably the most common opening phrase in Thoreau's two-million-word journal. This was his favorite destination under default conditions, meaning the wind was light and the river stage was neither in flood nor in drought.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 10

Now, at early starlight, I hear the snipe's [Common Snipe  *Gallinago gallinago*] hovering note as he circles over Nawshawtuct Meadow. Only once did I seem to see him; occasionally his squeak. He is now heard near, now farther, but is sure to circle round again. It sounds very much like a winnowing-machine increasing rapidly in intensity for a few seconds.

There will be no moon till toward morning. A slight mist is rising from the surface of the water. Hear what I should not hesitate to call the squeak of the nighthawk, —only Wilson makes them arrive early in May, — also over the meadow. Can it be the snipe? It is a little fainter than the nighthawk [Common Nighthawk  *Chordeiles minor* (Booming Nighthawk)], perhaps, but it is further off. [It may be the squeak of the snipe mentioned by Nuttall. May be woodcock.]

Without a mist the river appears indefinitely wide. Looking westward, the water, still reflecting the twilight, appears elevated, and the shore-line, being invisible, lost against the distant highland, is referred toward the highland against which it is seen, for the slope of the hill and the expanse of the meadow cannot be appreciated, appearing only edgewise as height. We therefore make the water, which extends but a rod or two, wash the base of hills but a quarter of a mile distant. There are but three elements in the landscape now, — the star-studded sky, the water, reflecting the stars and the lingering daylight, and the dark but comparatively narrow land between. At first there was no fog. Hear ducks, disturbed, make a quacking or loud croaking. Now, at night, the scent of muskrats is very strong in particular localities. Next to the skunk it is perceived further than that of any of our animals that I think of. I perceive no difference between this and the musk with which ladies scent themselves, though here I pronounce it a strong, rank odor. In the faint reflected twilight, I distinguish one rapidly swimming away from me, leaving a widening ripple behind, and now hear one plunge from some willow or rock. A faint croaking from over the meadow up the Assabet, exactly like frogs. Can it be ducks? They stop when I walk toward them. How happens it that I never found them on the water when spearing? Now, and then, when I pass an opening in the trees which line the shore, I am startled by the reflection of some brighter star from a bay.

Ascend Nawshawtuct. See a fire in horizon toward Boston. The first spearer's fire I have noticed is floating along the meadow-side in the south. The mist is now all gone. The baying of dogs is borne to me with great loudness down the river. We still have the wolf in the village.

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April 2, Saturday, 1853: The adjacent Wisconsin villages of Ceresco and Ripon consolidated and decided upon the new name “Morena.” The consolidation itself would stick, but in 1858 they would incorporate not as the City of Morena but as the City of Ripon.

According to The Wabash Courier of Terre Haute, Vigo County, Indiana, a letter from Florence, Italy had mentioned that a giant in that city had sold his body to the Academy of Science to be studied and was to receive, in compensation, 50 cents per day until he died (presumably this would have been *L'Accademia Nazionale delle Scienze detta dei XL?*).

In Placer, California, the Herald learned from the El Dorado News that at Kanaka Bar, another lump of gold amounting to 57 ounces had been discovered about 10 inches from the spot at which a lump weighing between 10 and 11 pounds had previously been recovered. “They never get tired of finding the big lumps at Ophir. A mass of gold and quartz was recently picked out near Jacks Hammonds Diggings. It weighted 80 ounces and sold for \$510. Another piece taken out by Mr. Herchemer weighted 38 ounces and yielded \$370. We know of no place in the mines which have provided as many large and beautiful specimens of gold as Ophir has this past winter. Anyone, who doubts it, has only to look at the cabinet of specimens at Wells Fargo & Co. Express office.”



April 2. 5.30 A.M. — Down railroad.

Ground white with frost and slippery. Thin ice formed over pools. The beaked hazel pistillate blossoms (*i.e.* by Walden road). Do not find its flower described. Are not its catkins distinct from the common in not being stalked? The tree sparrows [**American Tree Sparrow** █ *Spizella arborea*] and a few blue snowbirds [**Dark-eyed Junco** █ *Junco hyemalis* (~~Slate-colored Sparrow~~ or ~~Snowbird~~ or *F. Hyemalis*)] in company sing (the former) very sweetly in the garden this morning. I now see a faint spot on the breast. It says something like *a twee twee, chit chit, chat chit chee var-r*. Notice still plenty of sumach berries, *Juniperus repens* (those in shade green, in light turning purplish), green-briar, and a few barberries, etc., etc.

The farmers are trembling for their poultry nowadays. I heard the scream of hens, and a tumult among their mistresses (at Dugan’s), calling them and scaring away the hawk █, yesterday. They say they do not lose by hawks in midsummer. White quotes Linnaeus as saying of hawks, “Paciscuntur inducias cum avibus, quamdiu cuculus cuculat,” but White doubts it.

“‘Beetles, flies, worms, form part of the lion and tiger’s food, as they do that of the fox.’ See Jarrold’s *Dissert. on Man.*”⁸³ (Mitford, Note to White’s “Selborne.”)

Found twenty or thirty of the little brown nuts of the skunk-cabbage deposited on a shelf of the turf under an apple tree by E. Hubbard’s close, as I have done before. What animal uses them?

The song sparrows, the three-spotted [**Song Sparrow** █ *Melospiza melodia*], away by the meadow-sides, are very shy and cunning; instead of flying will frequently trot along the ground under the bushes, or dodge through a wall like a swallow; and I have observed that they generally bring some object, as a rail or branch, between themselves and the face of the walker, —often with outstretched necks will peep at him anxiously for five or ten minutes.

P.M. — To Second Division Brook.

The rain cleared away yesterday afternoon, and today that haziness is all gone, and the air is remarkably clear. I can see houses with distinct and sharp outlines at a great distance, though there is a little seething shimmer in the air. Especially I can see far into the pine woods to tree behind tree and one tower behind another of silvery needles, stage above stage, relieved with shade. The edge of the wood is not a plane surface, but has depth. Was that *Liana fontinalis* or *pipiens* in the pool by E. Wood’s railroad crossing? The first large frog I have seen. C. says a wasp lit on him.

A wood tortoise by river above Derby’s Bridge; extreme length of shell seven and three eighths inches, extreme breadth five inches across the back part, fore part about one half inch less, and a trifle less still in middle. The orange-color of its inner parts. It was sluggish, lean, and I judged old from



83. [DISSERTATIONS ON MAN, London, 1806, page 232. Mitford’s quotation, if it is from Jarrold, is inexact.]



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the shell being worn beneath and it not resisting much when I drew out its claws: unlike [in] these respects to one I after found. Irides golden. A singularly flat and broad (read with a beak slanting backward much like a snake's head. There were some hundreds of small dark-colored leeches in masses in the chink over his tail and under his hind quarters, a kind of vermin they are much infested by. The same was the case with second one.

Heard and saw what I call the pine warbler [**Pine Warbler**  *Dendroica pinus* (~~Pine Creeper~~)], — *vetter vetter vetter vetter vet*, — the cool woodland sound. The first this year of the higher-colored birds, after the bluebird and the blackbird's wing; is it not? It so affects me as something more tender. Together with the driftwood on the shore of the Assabet and the sawdust from Heywood's mill, I pick up teasel-heads from the factory with the wool still in them. How many tales the stream tells! The poplars by the railroad and near Harrington's, male aspens, begin to-day. A turtle clove. It sailed like a hawk. Heard the hooting owl [**Great Horned Owl**  *Bubo virginianus* ~~Hoot Owl or Cat Owl or Hooting Owl~~] in Ministerial Swamp. It sounded somewhat like the hounding or howling of some dogs, and as often as the whistle of the engine sounded, I noticed a resemblance in the tone. A singular kind of squealing introduced into its note. See the larger red-and-black-abdomen ants at work. See the fine moss in the pastures with beautiful red stems even crimsoning the ground. This is its season. The amelanchier buds look more forward than those of any shrub I notice. The cowslip at Second Division shows the yellow in its bud; will blossom in four or five days. I see the skins of many caddis-worms in the water there. Have not the ephemerae already flown? Again I notice the sort of small green ova in the water there like frog's ova, on the weeds and even on the shells of the snails. The stem, so to speak, of a cocoon, — through it inclosed the leaf-stem of the plant (a viburnum) it was on, and so put on the guise of the leaf, — was still so strongly fastened about the main stem that I broke the latter in getting it off. Cheney's elm blossomed to-day. Many others scarcely a day behind it.

We cannot well afford not to see the geese go over a single Spring, and so commence our year regularly. Observed the first female willow just coming out, apparently *Salix erioccephala*, just beyond woods by Abel Hosmer's field by railroad. Apparently the female willows as well as white maples and poplars, are a few days later than the males. The swollen red maple buds now conspicuously tinge the tops of the trees.

Methinks some birds are earlier this year because the ground has been bare so long. Observed some plowing yesterday.

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April 3, Sunday, [1853](#): [Henry Thoreau](#) made an entry in his journal that he was later to copy into his early lecture ["WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT."](#) It would be combined with an entry made on January 20th, 1852 and an entry made on May 1st, 1851 to form the following:

**Brad Dean's
Commentary**

[Paragraph 78] All summer, and far into the autumn, I unconsciously went by the newspapers and the news, and now I find it was because the morning and the evening were full of news to me. My walks were full of incidents. I attended, not to the affairs of Europe, but to my own affairs in Massachusetts fields. If you chance to live and move and have your being [[Acts 17:28](#)] in that thin stratum in which the events that make the news transpire,—thinner than the paper on which it is printed,—then these things will fill the world for you; but if you soar above or dive below that plane, you cannot remember nor be reminded of them. Really to see the sun rise or go down every day, so to relate ourselves to a universal fact, would preserve us sane forever. Nations! What are nations? Tartars, and Huns, and Chinamen! Like insects, they swarm. The historian strives in vain to make them memorable. It is for want of a man that there are so many men. It is individuals that populate the world. Any man thinking may say with the Spirit of Lodin,— “I look down from my height on nations, And they become ashes before me; —Calm is my dwelling in the clouds; Pleasant are the great fields of my rest.”

Bradley P. Dean has emended the essay copy-text by dropping “perchance” from this sentence (after “autumn”), and by changing the 6 pronouns in this and the following 2 sentences from 2d-person singular to 1st-person singular. Authority for these emendations is derived from the Nantucket [Inquirer](#) summary and from Thoreau’s journal source. This quotation appears in the journal source and on page 96 of Thoreau’s COMMONPLACE BOOK IN THE BERG COLLECTION AT THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY. In the latter Thoreau cites his source as “Ossian’s Grecian Remains ‘Literally translated by Macgregor.’” In James Macpherson’s 1790 edition of THE POEMS OF OSSIAN, a prose version of the quotation appears in “Book One, Carric-Thura”; but instead of “Lodin,” the spelling is “Loda.”



April 3. Saturday [*sic*]. Nothing is more saddening than an ineffectual and proud intercourse with those of whom we expect sympathy and encouragement. I repeatedly find myself drawn toward certain persons but to be disappointed. No concessions which are not radical are the least satisfaction. By myself I can live and thrive, but in the society of incompatible friends I starve. To cultivate their society is to cherish a sore which can only be healed by abandoning them. I cannot trust my neighbors whom I know any more than I can trust the law of gravitation and jump off the Cliffs.

The last two *Tribunes* I have not looked at. I have no time to read newspapers. If you chance to live and move and have your being in that thin stratum in which the events which make the news transpire, — thinner than the paper on which it is printed, — then these things will fill the world for you; but if you soar above or dive below that plane, you cannot remember nor be reminded of them. No fields are so barren to me as the men of whom I expect everything but get nothing. In their neighborhood I experience a painful yearning for society, which cannot be satisfied, for the hate is greater than the love.



P.M. — To Cliffs.

At [Hayden](#)’s I hear hylas on two keys or notes. Heard one after the other, it might be mistaken for the varied note of one. The little croakers, too, are very lively there. I get close to them and witness a great commotion and half hopping, half swimming, about, with their heads out, apparently in pursuit of each other, — perhaps thirty or forty within a few square yards and fifteen or twenty, within one yard. There is not only the incessant lively croaking of many together, as usually heard, but a lower, hoarser, squirming, screwing kind of croak, perhaps from the other sex. As I approach



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nearer, they disperse and bury themselves in the grass at the bottom; only one or two remain outstretched on the surface, and, at another step, these, too, conceal themselves.

Looking up the river yesterday, in a direction opposite to the sun, not long before it set, the water was of a rich, dark blue — while looking at it in a direction diagonal to this, *i.e.* northeast, it was nearly slate-colored.

To my great surprise the saxifrage is in bloom. It was, as it were, by mere accident that I found it. I had not observed any particular forwardness in it, when, happening to look under a projecting rock in a little nook on the south side of a stump, I spied one little plant which had opened three or four blossoms high up the Cliff. Evidently you must look very sharp and faithfully to find the first flower, such is the advantage of position, and when you have postponed a flower for a week and are turning away, a little further search may reveal it. Some flowers, perhaps, have advantages, one year which they have not the next. This spring, as well as the past winter, has been remarkably free from snow, and this reason, and the plant being hardy withal, may account for its early blossoming. With what skill it secures moisture and heat, growing commonly in a little bed of moss which keeps it moist, and lying low in some cleft of the rock! The sunniest and most sheltered exposures possible it secures. This faced the southeast, was nearly a foot cinder the eaves of the rock, had not raised its little strawberry-like cluster of buds in the least above the level of its projecting, calyx-like leaves. It was shelter within shelter. The blasts sweep over it. Ready to shoot upward when it shall be warm. The leaves of those which have been more exposed are turned red. It is a very pretty, snug plant with its notched leaves, one of the neatest and prettiest leaves seen now.

A blackberry vine which lay over the rock was beginning to leave out, as much or more than the gooseberry in the garden, such was the reflected heat. The Missouri currant is perhaps more advanced than the early gooseberry in our garden. The female *Populus tremuliformis* catkins, narrower and at present more red and somewhat less downy than the male, west side of railroad at Deep Cut, quite as forward as the male in this situation. The male *P. grandidentata*'s a little further west are nearly out.

I should have noticed the fact that the pistillate flower of the hazel peeps forth gradually.



April 4, Monday, 1853: Oldenburg and Hanover joined the German Zollverein.

Marietta Alboni appeared as Rosina in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*.

Abraham Lincoln's and Mary Todd Lincoln's 4th and youngest son Thomas "Tad" Lincoln III (his name was not "Thaddeus") was born with a cleft lip and palate that produced difficulty in chewing food, and a speech impediment — a lisp rendering him almost impossible to understand. He would be unschooled and seldom disciplined. Having the run of the White House, he would charge visitors to see his father. He would not learn to read until after his brother Willie had died and his father assassinated (on that night he would be at Grover's Theatre at a performance of the play "Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp" while his mother and father were at Ford's Theatre): "I must learn to take care of myself now." He would die of tuberculosis in Chicago on July 15th, 1871 at the age of 18.

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There was a meeting at 129 Montgomery Street in San Francisco to discuss the founding of a [California Academy of Sciences](#). Dr. Andrew Randall became chairman and Lewis W. Sloat, son of the commodore, secretary. They resolved to draw up a constitution.

[Louis Auguste Blanqui](#)'s carefully prepared escape attempt from the prison Belle-Île, along with his cell-neighbour Barthélemy Cazavan, failed when they were betrayed by the fisherman they were paying to convey them to the mainland of [France](#).

[William M. White](#)'s version of a portion of [Henry Thoreau](#)'s journal entry is:

*I hear the hollow sound of drops
Falling into the water under Hubbard's Bridge,
And each one makes a conspicuous bubble
Which is floated down-stream.
Instead of ripples
There are a myriad dimples on the stream.*

The lichens remember the sea to-day.

*The usually dry cladonias,
Which are so crisp under the feet,
Are full of moist vigor.*

*The rocks speak and tell the tales inscribed on them.
Their inscriptions are brought out.
I pause to study their geography.*

[White](#)'s version of another portion of the journal entry is:

*The other day,
When I had been standing perfectly still
Some ten minutes,
Looking at a willow which had just blossomed,
Some rods in the rear of Martial Miles's house, felt eyes on my back and,
Turning round suddenly,
Saw the heads of two men
Who had stolen out of the house
And were watching me over a rising ground
As fixedly as I the willow.*

*They were studying man,
Which is said to be the proper study of mankind,
I nature,
And yet, when detected,
They felt the cheapest of the two.*

MARTIAL MILES



April 4. Last night, a sugaring of snow, which goes off in an hour or two in the rain. Rains all day. The steam-cloud from the engine rises but slowly in such an atmosphere, and makes a small angle with the earth. It is low, perhaps, for the same reason that the clouds are. The robins [[American Robin](#) [Turdus migratorius](#)] sang this morning, nevertheless, and now more than ever hop about boldly in the garden in the rain, with full, broad, light cow-colored breasts.









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P. M. — Rain, rain. To Clematis Brook *via* Lee's Bridge.

Again I notice that early reddish or purplish grass that lies flat on the pools, like a warm blush suffusing the youthful face of the year. A warm, dripping rain, heard on one's umbrella as on a snug roof, and on the leaves without, suggests comfort. We go abroad with a slow but sure contentment, like turtles under their shells. We never feel so comfortable as when we are abroad in a storm with satisfaction. Our comfort is positive then. We are all compact, and our thoughts collected. We walk under the clouds and mists as under a roof. Now we seem to hear the ground a-soaking up the rain, and not falling [*sic*] ineffectually on a frozen surface. We, too, are penetrated and revived by it. Robins still sing, and song sparrows more or less, and blackbirds, and the unfailing jay screams. How the thirsty grass rejoices! It has pushed up so visibly since morning, and fields that were completely russet yesterday are already tinged with green. We rejoice with the grass.

I hear the hollow sound of drops falling water under Hubbard's Bridge, and each one makes a conspicuous bubble which is floated down-stream. Instead of ripples there are a myriad dimples on the stream. The lichens remember the sea to-day. The usually dry cladonias, which are so crisp under the feet, are full of moist vigor. The rocks speak and tell the tales inscribed on them. Their inscriptions are brought out. I pause to study their geography.

At Conantum End I saw a red-tailed hawk [**Red-tailed Hawk**  *Buteo jamaicensis*] launch himself away from an oak by the pond at my approach, — a heavy flier, flapping even like the great bittern [**American Bittern**  *Botaurus lentiginosus* (~~Great Bittern~~)] at first, — heavy forward. After turning Lee's Cliff I heard, methinks, more birds singing even than in fair weather, — tree sparrows [**American Tree Sparrow**  *Spizella arborea*], whose song has the character of the canary's, *F. hyemalis*'s [**Dark-eyed Junco**  *Junco hyemalis*], *chill-lill*, the sweet strain of the fox-colored sparrow, song sparrows, a nuthatch, jays [**Blue Jay**  *Cyanocitta cristata*], crows [**American Crow**  *Corvus brachyrhynchos*], *bluebirds* [**Eastern Bluebird**  *Sialia sialis*], robins, and a large congregation of blackbirds. They suddenly alight with great din in a stubble-field just over the wall, not perceiving me and my umbrella behind the pitch pines, and there feed silently; then, getting uneasy or anxious, they fly up on to an apple tree, where being reassured, commences a rich but deafening concert, *o-gurgle-ee-e, o-gurgle-ee-e*, some of the most liquid notes ever heard, as if produced by some of the water of the Pierian spring, flowing through some kind of musical water-pipe and at the same time setting in motion a multitude of fine vibrating metallic springs. Like a shepherd merely meditating most enrapturing glees on such a water-pipe. A more liquid bagpipe or clarionet, immersed like bubbles in a thousand sprayey notes, the bubbles half lost in the spray. When I show myself, away they go with a loud harsh *charr-r, charr-r*. At first I had heard an inundation of blackbirds  approaching, some beating time with a loud *chuck, chuck*, while the rest placed a hurried, gurgling fugue.




THOREAU AS ORNITHOLOGIST

Saw a sucker washed to the shore at Lee's Bridge, its tail gone, large fins standing out, purplish on top of head and snout. Reminds me of spring, spearing, and gulls.

A rainy day is to the walker in solitude and retirement like the night. Few travellers are about, and they half hidden under umbrellas and confined to the highways. One's thoughts run in a different channel from usual. It is somewhat like the dark day; it is a light night.

How cheerful the roar of a brook swollen by the rain, especially if there is no sound of a mill in it!

A woodcock [**Woodcock, American**  *Scolopax minor*] went off from the shore of Clematis or Nightshade Pond with a few slight rapid sounds like a watchman's rattle half revolved.

A clustering of small narrow leaves cone-like on the shrub oak. Some late, low, remarkably upright alders (*serrulata*), short thick catkins, at Clematis Brook. The hazel bloom is about one tenth of an inch long (the stigmas) now. A little willow (*Salix Muhlenbergiana?*) nearly ready to bloom, not larger than a sage willow.

All *our* early willows with catkins appearing before the leaves must belong to the group of "The Sallows. Cinereæ. Borrer," and that of the "Two-colored Willows. Discolores. Borrer," as adopted by Barratt; or, in other words, to the first § of Carey in Gray.⁸⁴


The other day, when I had been standing perfectly still some ten minutes, looking at a willow which had just blossomed, some rods in the rear of Martial Miles's house, I felt eyes on my back and,


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turning round suddenly, saw the heads of two men who had stolen out of the house and were watching me over a rising ground as fixedly as I the willow. They were studying man, which is said to be the proper study of mankind, I nature, and yet, when detected, they felt the cheapest of the two. I hear the twitter of tree sparrows from fences and shrubs in the yard and from alders by meadows and the riverside every day.

During the last decade of his life, Thoreau visited his rivers more than twice as often as the upland woods and lakes that he is far better known for writing about.
— *Professor Robert M. Thorson*, THE BOATMAN, page 3



 April 5, Tuesday, 1853: Michigan signed a contract with the Fairbanks Scale Company to dig a canal at the Soo.

The Syracuse Daily Standard attempted to understand why women’s wages were so low. The problem can only be due to the fact that American women are so ignorant and/or supine (see following screen).

SEXISM
SEWING

84. Professor Asa Gray. A MANUAL OF THE BOTANY OF THE NORTHERN UNITED STATES, FROM NEW ENGLAND TO WISCONSIN AND SOUTH TO OHIO AND PENNSYLVANIA INCLUSIVE (THE MOSSES AND LIVERWORTS BY WM. S. SULLIVANT), ARRANGED ACCORDING TO THE NATURAL SYSTEM (Boston: J. Munroe and company).

Generally there were four groups of needlewomen. At the highest-paid stratum stood the dressmakers, who earned as much as \$1.00 a day. Their apprentices usually earned nothing for the first six months of training and had to board themselves; some had to pay the dressmakers \$10 to \$15 for the "privilege" of learning the trade. All too often, apprentices never advanced to dressmaker and spent their lives toiling at the lowest wages. So-called journeymen formed the largest group of needlewomen. They worked fourteen to sixteen hours a day, usually sewing garments in their hovels, then returned the finished products at the close of each week. Conditions varied from city to city, but nearly all wages remained low. During an especially long work week in Cincinnati, needlewomen might earn only ninety cents. Market prices generally rose from 1848 to 1854, while wages fell. Work that had earned about ninety-two cents in 1844 paid only about thirty-eight cents the following year. Typical of the most oppressed workers, only scattered strikes developed against these deplorable conditions.



Unable to support themselves and their families, many of these needlewomen resorted to [prostitution](#). Samuel Joseph May bitterly remarked that while her "base, heartless seducer" escaped the villainy he deserved, society rejected his poor victim as a fallen woman. He believed that for all their vaunted praise of women, Americans possessed about as much real respect for them as "slaveholders feel for their slaves." As the feminist Caroline H. Dall scornfully observed, the nation had given the needlewomen the miserable options of "death or dishonor."

...In an attempt to head off unionization of city needlewomen, the Syracuse Daily Standard ... explained that with so many marginally trained women seeking the same tailoring jobs, wages had to fall: "The law of supply and demand which God has established in the affairs of civilized society inevitably makes slaves of all who either ignorantly or supinely submit themselves to its relentless curse." The paper advised its readers that women, like boys, must be told to turn their attention to industries short of workers, conveniently ignoring the fact that women could not obtain other training because of popular prejudices against working women.



CAROLINE H. DALL

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April 5: The [bluebird](#) [[Eastern Bluebird](#)] [[Sialia sialis](#)] comes to us bright in his vernal dress as a bridegroom. (Cleared up at noon, making a day and a half of rain.) Has he not got new feathers then? [Brooks](#)⁸⁵ says “the greater number of birds renew their plumage in autumn only;” if they have two moults, spring and autumn, there is still but one of the wings and tail feathers. Also says that in the spring various “birds undergo a change of color unaccompanied by any moult.” I have noticed the few phœbes, not to mention other birds, mostly near the river. Is it not because of the greater abundance of insects there, those early moths or ephemerae? As these and other birds are most numerous there, the red-tailed hawk is there to catch them?

DO I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION? GOOD.



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

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

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

Chinese Letters—No. 8.

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

CELESTIAL COUSIN: — The barbarians here are the most arrant gossippers in the world. The common people learn it from their betters, and it is made a matter of science, so far as these savages can reduce anything to science. The chief Mandarin gathers around him once a year, a certain proportion of his blood relations, who practise talking for months together. This Mandarin commands that these talkers be selected on a given day throughout the State, by a curious and mysterious mode which they style an election. At this, a great deal of pains is taken by a multitude of spies and directors, of various grades and complicated duties, to prevent any but the blooded kindred of the Mandarin, most glib and incessant talkers among it, from being elected. You would be astonished as much at the turmoil and excitement this matter creates, as you will be at so ridiculous a custom. And from the accusation and recrimination publicly made against all the candidates, I am sure that among savages, as among civilized men, the best talkers are commonly the worst

85. The [Reverend Professor Charles Brooks](#) of Medford and Hingham, after retiring from active life due to deteriorating eyesight, authored a number of works for juveniles, including ELEMENTS OF ORNITHOLOGY: PREPARED FOR THE USE OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES ... WITH 400 CUTS ... INTENDED FOR THE YOUNG (J. Munroe & Co., 1847).



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men and the poorest thinkers. The persons thus selected from the kindred of the chief, at a set season in the year, all assemble at his domicile, and organize very formally, (for savages,) and in due form go to talking. All manner of topics, from the most ridiculous to the most serious, are discussed in this way. Every subject matter of intrigue and faction, which split and divided them in the intermission, is debated with great rancor and violence. All the old sores are laid open afresh, and mercilessly do they lampoon one another. This is their mode of consultation; it is after this fashion that they legislate. It is something curious that they never interchange opinions, or advise with each other. Each man gets up and makes a studied harangue, or set speech; and then another gets up and does the same thing. In this way they go on for several moons. Their speeches, I am told by those who pretend to understand them, are remarkable for their discussion of almost everything past, present and to come, save the exact subject which they fix upon as the matter to be talked about. For instance, if they say they will talk about navigable streams – they make navigation be by talk, not by propelling ships on water – they will talk essays on moral philosophy, political ethics and economy; and with great labor and thorough minuteness review the character of their factions and party strifes, of which they have more than you can think; and also the worth and discredit of the individuals composing them. I do not know whether this irrelevant trash, which is recasted with much vociferation and bombast, is made the theme of their speeches because they have no knowledge of any specific measure or policy, or whether it is because their talk would soon give out if they were confined to the merits of the subjects proposed. But I think it is for want of capacity and knowledge to comprehend any given thing; for surely the multitude of their topics is innumerable. So great is the rage of this people for gossip, that they not only have these assemblages for State scandal, but they have a great number of inferior societies devoted to the same object. And these not sufficing, they have an order of men who devote their entire life-time and energies to picking up from the common clamor of this clamorous people every idle tale that is told, and printing it, and sending abroad for every one to read who can either pay for the paper or beg it from some one who does pay for it. You would be surprised at the number of these tell-tale sheets; for there are not only hundreds but thousands of these papers all over the land, filled with every imaginable sort of story and discussion, and no little smut and defamation. The eagerness of this order of men to pick up tales and marvellous stories, is only matched by the greediness with which the people read the idle and silly contents of their publications. One of these men who I think is a first cousin of the Mandarin, and a sort of special caterer for him and his kin whom he

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gets around him to talk annually, has picked up the rough drafts of my letters in the streets, into which I had swept them, not supposing any of this savage race could make them out, and has given to the gaping public translations of them; and all this without knowing or caring a copper about who I was! But such translations! I wish it were in my power to send a translation of the translations. Every sublime idea, magnificent thought, apt metaphor and splendid sentiment -- all, all, instead of commingling, sparkling, vivifying and instructing, as in the original, are naked, and coarse, and unsuggestive as the vacant stare of a denuded barbarian. Holy Confucius, what a mess! And yet, doubtless, if I met the fellow, and were to get gracious with him, (that is, take a drink at his expense,) he would confidentially insinuate to me that I was a very famous individual; but notice that I owed it all to his remarkable and singular sagacity and good taste in publishing to the world my letters to you.

Your illustrious kinsman, Tsi-Chow-Choo.



April 6: 6 A.M. – To Cliffs.

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

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

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

CURRENT YOUTUBE VIDEO

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

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



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

A male willow, apparently same with that at H.'s Bridge, or No. 2, near end of second tract on west. Another male by ring-post on east side, long cylindrical catkins, now dark with scales, which are




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


generally more rounded than usual and reddish at base and not lanceolate, turning backwards in blossom and exposing their sides or breasts to the sun, from which side burst forth fifty or seventy-five long white stamens like rays, tipped with yellow anthers which at first were reddish above, — spears to be embraced by invisible Arnold Winkelrieds; — reddish twigs and clear gray beneath. These last colors, especially, distinguish it from Nos. 1 and 2. Also a female, four or five rods north of last, just coming into bloom, with very narrow tapering catkins, lengthening already, some to an inch and a half, ovaries conspicuously stalked; very downy twigs, more reddish and rough than last below. If we consider the eagle  as a large hawk , how he falls in our estimation!

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

P.M. — To Second Division Brook.

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

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

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

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

One cowslip, though it shows the yellow, is not *fairly* out, but will be by to-morrow. How they improve their time! Not a moment of sunshine lost. One thing I may depend on: there has been no idling with the flowers. They advance as steadily as a clock. Nature loses not a moment. tubes no vacation. These plants, now protected by the water, just peeping forth. I should not be surprised to



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find that they drew in their head in a frosty night. Returning by Harrington's, saw a pigeon woodpecker [~~Yellow-shafted Flicker~~ **Colaptes auratus** (~~Golden-winged Woodpecker~~ or ~~Pigeon Woodpecker~~)] flash away, showing the rich golden under side of its glancing wings and the large whitish spot on its back, and presently I heard its familiar long-repeated loud note, almost familiar as that of a barn-door fowl, which it somewhat resembles. The robins, too, now toward sunset, perched on the old apple trees in Tarbell's orchard, twirl forth their evening lays unweariedly. Is that a willow, the low bush from the fireplace ravine which from the lichen oak, fifty or sixty rods distant, shows so red in the westering sunlight? More red, I find, by far than close at hand. To-night for the first time I hear the hylas in full blast.

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

**THOREAU AS
ORNITHOLOGIST**

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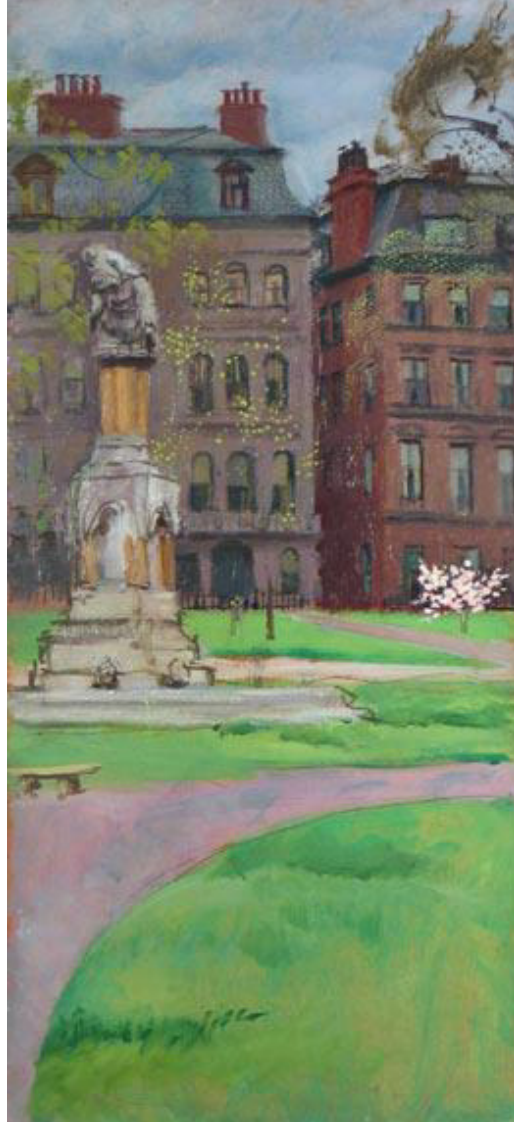
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April 7, Thursday, 1853: Dr. John Snow used chloroform on Queen Victoria for the birth of Prince Leopold. This event would effectively remove much of the stigma then associated with pain relief in childbirth in Great Britain.



ANESTHESIA



The cornerstone for a US Marine Hospital was set in place at Rincon Point in San Francisco.

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

Henry Thoreau and Ellery Channing went down the Concord River by boat to Bedford, Massachusetts.








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

The white-bellied swallows [Tree Swallow Tachycineta bicolor (White-bellied Swallow)] advertise themselves this morning, dashing up the street, and two have already come to disturb the

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


bluebirds [Eastern Bluebird  *Sialia sialis*] at our box. Saw and heard this morning, on a small elm and the wall by Badger's, a sparrow (?), seemingly somewhat slaty-brown and lighter beneath, whose note began loud and clear, *twee-tooai*, etc., etc., ending much like the field sparrow [Field Sparrow  *Spizella pusilla* (~~Rush Sparrow~~)]. Was it a female *F. hyemalis* [Dark-eyed Junco  *Junco hyemalis* (~~Slate-colored Sparrow~~ or ~~Snow-bird~~)]? Or a field [Field Sparrow  *Spizella pusilla* (~~Rush Sparrow~~ or ~~Junco~~ or ~~Huckleberry-bird~~)], or a swamp [Swamp Sparrow  *Melospiza georgiana*], sparrow? Saw no white in tail. Also saw a small, plain, warbler-like bird for a moment, which I did not recognize.

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

"Downriver," "To Great Meadow," and "To Hill" signified a northward trip down the Concord River below the triple point of the confluence. After passing through a straight reach aligned by the local bedrock strike, arched by two bridges, and flanked by gravel bars of historic sediment that were repeatedly dredged, he entered the north side of Great Meadow. Bounded by the site of the Old North Bridge to the southwest and Ball's Hill to the northeast, it was two miles long and half a mile across. When in flood, the meadow was his favorite inland sea to sail upon because the wind was least impeded and the waves were highest.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 11

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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




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

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

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

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 April 8, Friday, 1853: Marietta Alboni appeared as Leonora in Domenico Gaetano Maria Donizetti's *La Favorite*, a revision of *L'ange de Nisida*.



Frederic Edwin Church embarked in New-York harbor for the coast of Columbia and his tour of the Andes range of mountains. In the vicinity of Quito, Equador he would lodge in the same home that had sheltered Alexander von Humboldt some half century earlier.



April 8: 6 A.M. — To Abel Hosmer's ring-post.
 The ground sprinkled, salted, with little snowlike pellets one tenth of an inch in diameter, from half an inch to one inch apart, sometimes cohering starwise together. As if it had spit so much snow only. I think it one form of frost merely, or frozen dew. Noticed the like a week or two ago. It was gone in half an hour, when I came back. What is the peculiar state of the atmosphere that determines these things? The speaker's light last night shone into my chamber on the wall and awakened me.
 Saw and heard my small pine warbler [Pine Warbler  Dendroica pinus (~~Pine Creeper~~)] shaking out his trills, or jingle, even like money coming to its bearings. They appear much the smaller from perching high in the tops of white pines and flitting from tree to tree at that height.
 Is not my night-warbler the white-eyed vireo? — not yet here. Heard the field sparrow again. The male *Populus grandidentata* appears to open very gradually, beginning sooner than I supposed. It shows some of its red anthers long before it opens. There is a female on the left, on Warren's Path at Deep Cut.
 Is not the pollen of the *P. tremuliformis* like rye meal? Are not female flowers of more sober and modest colors, as the willows for instance? The hylas have fairly begun now.

 April 9, Saturday (4 mo., 9th, 7th day), 1853: The Central Bank of Brooklyn, New-York was organized.

The New York State legislature passed "An Act to authorize the formation of Companies for Ferry Purposes."

The Red Cedar Monthly Meeting in Iowa, choosing the name "Fairview" but later to be known as "Springdale," was established in the 2d house erected in Cedar County for religious purposes with Brinton Darlington as clerk:

The Friends of Lynn and Jones counties request the privilege of holding a meeting for worship ... and a preparative meeting....
 To be known by the name of Fairview.



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The composite nature of this new center of [Quakerism](#) in Iowa and the rapidity with which it grew are well shown by the records of the Monthly Meeting for the initial 8 months of its existence. At the inception there had been no fewer than 34 adult male members of the meeting but, by the close of the year, the Monthly Meeting would have received 66 certificates representing 322 men, women, and children. The newbies had arrived from Maine, Vermont, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Canada. This immigration surge would continue for 4 or 5 years.

There are now about 20 families, and some others have purchased land, and are expecting to move here this spring.... Friends here are situated in two settlements, about 9 miles apart. We get no established meetings, but hold one for worship in each settlement regularly twice a week. The upper or northern settlement is near the northern line of the county. The meeting there is held at the house of Tristram Allen, an approved minister from the State of Michigan. Our meeting in this settlement is held at the house of Ansel Rogers, also an approved minister from Michigan.

Gleason's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion depicted a [Japanese](#) wedding (next page).

The *S.S. Lewis* ran aground at Bolinas after overrunning [San Francisco Bay](#) (its 385 passengers were safe).

In Placer, [California](#) the Herald reported that at Spanish Flat \$312 had been paid to 4 men for a week's work. Mr. Earthman of Millertown had brought to the office of the gazette \$135 in quartz gold which he had taken from 2 pounds 10 ounce rock by the simple process of pounding in a mortar and then washing it out in a pan. He had three barrels of such rock at his cabin and felt assured of \$3,000 a bushel by extracting the gold with mortar and pestle in a more perfect way. The miner struck it rich at Owl Creek, one and a half mile from a side of Yankee Jim's, 4 men for 4 days made nothing, then 8 days took out \$80 to \$130 daily. At Oregon Hill, similar to Michigan City, overlooking the American River, the dirt top and bottom would prospect or yield about 10 cents to a pan and on the bed rock 12 to 15 cents. After digging its depth a few feet, a hard cement of quartz gravel, sand and clay was struck. The cement pays well, but hard to work from the indication. The digging will pay immense wages, not on the hills, but is a district county for 2 miles in length from a suburb of Auburn to the American River, which will prove rich mining ground. At Michigan City, Mr. Findley & Co. who has worked the farthest into the Dead Wood Flat, so called, received about 24 ounces on Saturday their last days work; the claim has generally ranged from 8 to 24 ounces. A couple of miners made a deposit with Wells, Fargo & Co., they have been here only nine days and have taken out \$1,200. Others are doing extremely well, the range being from \$5 to \$25 per hand a day. at El Dorado Hill, two miles above this and much beyond that at about the same altitude rich discoveries have been made. Mr. Doummond, an enterprising and successful prospector of this neighborhood, washed out of his individual interest 50 ounces for two and a half days of work.



April 9. P.M. — To Second Division.

The chipping sparrow, with its ashy-white breast and white streak over eye and undivided chestnut crown, holds up its head and pours forth its *che che che che che che*. On a pitch [pine] on side of J. Hosmer's river hill, a pine warbler, by ventriloquism sounding farther off than it was, which was seven or eight feet, hopping and flitting from twig to twig, apparently picking the small flies at and about the base of the needles at the extremities of the twigs. Saw two afterward on the walls by roadside.

A warm and hazy but breezy day. The sound of the laborers' striking the iron rails of the railroad with their sledges, is as in the sultry days of summer, — resounds, as it were, from the hazy shy as a roof, — a more confined and, in that sense, domestic sound echoing along between the earth and





A WRITING ROOM IN JAPAN, FROM A DRAWING BY A BATTLE JAPANESE ARTIST.

JAPANESE CUSTOMS AND HABITUDES.
 The domestic architecture of the Japanese is in accordance with the general disposition of the island, being compact and low, the houses, in general, being constructed by branching off a lower central hall, around which are various apartments, by one or more perpendicular lines. The space intervening between these is divided into rooms of various sizes, by sliding doors, which are opened or shut at pleasure. The houses are generally built on a slight elevation, and are surrounded by a wall, which is in some cases, but not in all, of the same height as the houses. The houses are generally built on a slight elevation, and are surrounded by a wall, which is in some cases, but not in all, of the same height as the houses. The houses are generally built on a slight elevation, and are surrounded by a wall, which is in some cases, but not in all, of the same height as the houses.



A FESTIVAL PROCESSION IN JAPAN, FROM A DRAWING BY A BATTLE JAPANESE ARTIST.

the low heavens. The same strokes would produce a very different sound in the winter. Men fishing for trout. Small light-brown lizards, about five inches long, with somewhat darker tails, and some a light line along back, are very active, wiggling off, in J. P. Brown's ditch, with pollywogs.

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Beyond the desert, hear the hooting owl, which, as formerly, I at first mistook for the hounding of a dog, — a squealing eee followed by *hoo hoo hoo* deliberately, and particularly sonorous and ringing. This at 2 P.M. Now mated. Pay their addresses by day, says Brooks. Winkle lichens, some with greenish bases, on a small white oak, near base. Also large white earlike one higher up. A middling-sized orange-copper butterfly on the mill road, at the clearing, with deeply scalloped leaves [*sic*]. You see the buff-edged and this, etc., in warm, sunny southern exposures on the edge of woods or sides of rocky hills and cliffs, above dry leaves and twigs, where the wood has been lately cut and there are many dry leaves and twigs about. An ant-hill covered with a firm sward except at top. The cowslips are well out, — the first conspicuous herbaceous flower, for the cabbage is concealed in its spathe.

The *Populus tremuliformis*, just beyond, *resound* with the hum of honey-bees, flies, etc. These male trees are frequently at a great distance from the females. Do not the bees and flies alone carry the pollen to the latter? I did not know at first whence the humming of bees proceeded. At this comparatively still season, before the crickets begin, the hum of bees is a very noticeable sound, and the least hum or buzz that fills the void is detected. Here appear to be more bees than on the willows. On the last, where I can see them better, are not only bees with pellets of pollen, but more flies, small bees, and a lady-bug. What do flies get here on male flowers, if not nectar? Bees also in the female willows, of course without pellets. It must be nectar alone there. That willow by H.'s Bridge is very brittle at base of stem, but hard to break above. The more I study willows, the more I am confused. The epigæa will not be out for some days.

Elm blossoms now in prime. Their tops heavier against the sky, a rich brown; their outlines further seen. Most alders done. Some small upright ones still fresh.

Evening. — Hear the snipe a short time at early starlight.

I hear this evening for the first time, from the partially flooded meadow across the river, I standing on this side, at early starlight, a general faint, prolonged stuttering or stertorous croak, — probably same with that heard April 7th, — that kind of growling, like wild beasts or a coffee-mill, which you can produce in your throat. It seems too dry and wooden, not sonorous or pleasing enough, for the toad. I hear occasionally the bullfrog's note, croakingly and hoarsely but faintly imitated, in the midst of it, — Which makes me think it may be they, though I have not seen any frogs so large yet, but that one by the railroad which I suspect may have been a *fontinalis*. What sound do the tortoises make beside hissing? There were the mutilated *Rana palustris* seen in the winter, the hylodes, the small or middling-sized croakers in pools (a shorter, less stuttering note than this to-night), and next the note of the 7th, and tonight the last, the first I have heard from the river. I occasionally see a little frog jump into a brook.

The whole meadow resounds, probably from one end of the river to the other, till evening, with this faint, stertorous breathing. It is the waking up of the meadows. Louder than all is heard the shrill peep of the hylodes and the haverinl; note of the snipe, circling invisible above them all.

Vide again in [Howitt](#), pp. 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 37, 49, 54, 95.

THE BOOK OF THE SEASONS

Is it the red-eye or white-eye whose pensile nest is so common?

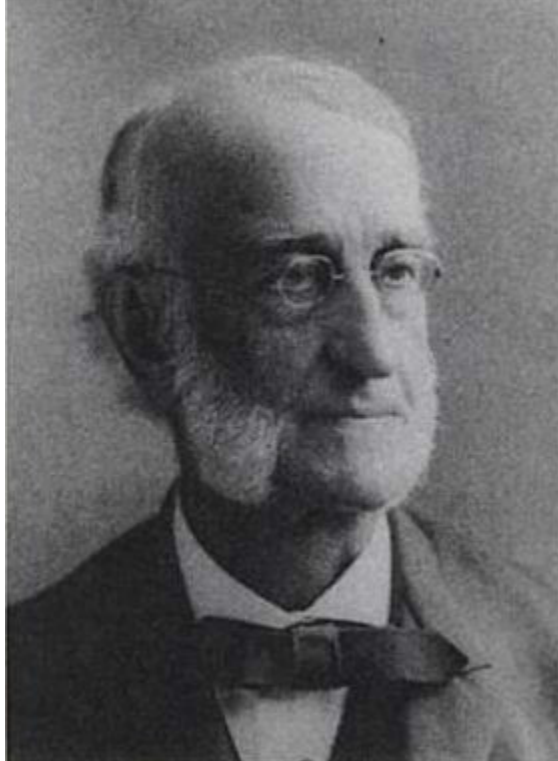
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April 10, Sunday, 1853: Meditation sur le 1er prélude de Bach (Ave Maria) by Charles Gounod was performed for the initial time. The composer-arranger termed it a “mischievous prank.”

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [H.G.O. Blake](#).



To: Harrison Gray Otis Blake

From: HDT

Date: 10 April 1853

Concord Ap. 10th 1853.

Mr Blake,

Another singular kind of spiritual foot ball — really nameless handleless, homeless, like myself — a mere arena for thoughts & feelings; definite enough outwardly, indefinite more than enough inwardly. But I do not know why we should be styled Misterys or Masters, we come so near to being anything or nothing, & seeing that we are mastered, & not wholly sorry to be mastered, by the least phenomenon. It seems to me that we are the mere creatures of thought — one of the lowest forms of intellectual life — we men, as the sunfish is of animal life. As yet our thoughts have acquired no definiteness nor solidity; they are purely molluscous, not vertebrate; and the height of our existence is to float upward in an ocean where the sun shines — appearing only like a vast soup or chowder to the eyes of the immortal navigators. It is wonderful that I can be here, & you there, and that we can correspond, and do many other things, when, in fact, there is so little of us, either or both, anywhere. In a few min-

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utes, I expect, this slight film or dash of vapor that I am will be what is called asleep — resting! forsooth, from what? Hard work! and thought!! The hard work of the dandelion down which floats over the meadow all day — the hard work of a pismire that labors to raise a hillock all day, & even by moonlight. Suddenly I can come forward into the utmost apparent distinctness, & speak with a sort of emphasis to you, — & the next moment I am so faint an entity, and make so slight an impression that nobody can find the traces of me. I try to hunt myself up, and find that the little of me that is discoverable is falling asleep, and then I assist & tuck it up. It is getting late. How can I starve or feed! Can I be said to sleep? There is not enough of me even for that. If you hear a noise — taint I — taint I — as the dog says, with a tin-kettle tied to his tail. I read of something happening to another the other day: how happens it that nothing ever happens to me? A dandelion down that never alights — settles — blown off by a boy to see if his mother wanted him — some divine boy in the upper pastures.

Well if there really is another such a meteor sojourning in these spaces, I would like to ask you if you know whose estate this is that we are on? For my part I enjoy it well enough, what with the wild apples & the scenery, but I should'nt wonder if the owner set his dog on me next. I could remember something not much to the purpose probably, but if I stick to what I do know, then — —

It is worth the while to live respectably unto ourselves. We can possibly get along with a neighbor, even with a bedfellow whom we respect but very little, but as soon as it comes to that that we do not respect ourselves, then we do not get along at all — no matter how much money we are paid for halting. There are old heads in the world who cannot help me by their example or advice to live worthily & satisfactorily to myself, but I believe that it is in my power to elevate myself this very hour above the common level of my life. It is better to have your head in the clouds, and know where you are, if indeed you cannot get it above them, — than to breathe the clearer atmosphere below them, & think that you are in paradise.

Once you were in Milton doubting what to do. To live a better life — this surely can be done. Dot & carry one. Wait not for a clear sight, for that you are to get. What you see clearly you may omit to do. Milton & Worcester! It is all Blake — Blake. Never mind the rats in the wall; the cat will take care of them. All that men have said or are is a very faint rumor, & it is not worth the while to remember or refer to that. If you are to meet God, will you refer to anybody out of that court? How shall men know how I succeed unless they are in at the life? I did not see the Times' reporter there.

Is it not delightful to provide one self with the necessaries of life, — to collect dry wood for the fire when the weather grows cool, or fruits when we grow hungry? — not till then; — And then we have all the time left for thought!

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Of what use were it, pray, to get a little wood to burn to warm your body this cold weather, if there were not a divine fire kindled at the same time to warm your spirit? Unless he can
“Erect himself above himself
How poor a thing is man!”
I cuddle up by my stove & there I get up another fire which warms fire itself. Life is so short that it is not wise to take round-ab out ways, nor can we spend much time in waiting. Is it absolutely necessary then that we should do as we are doing? Are we chiefly under obligations to the Devil — like Tom Walker? Though it is late to leave off this wrong way, it will seem early the moment we be gin on the right way; instead of mid-afternoon it will be early morning with us. We have not got half way to dawn yet
As for the lectures, I feel that I have something to say, especially on Travelling vagueness & Poverty — but I cannot come now — I will wait till I am fuller and have fewer engagements. Your suggestions will help me much to write them when I am ready. I am going to Haverhill tomorrow surveying — for a week or more — You met me on my last errand thither.
I trust that you realize what an exaggerator I am — that I lay myself out to exaggerate whenever I have an opportunity, — pile Pel ion upon Ossa, to reach heaven so. Expect no trivial truth from me unless I am on the witness’ stand. I will come as near to lying as you can drive a coach & four. If it is ’nt thus & so with me, it is with something. I am not particular whether I get the shells or meat, in view of the latter’s worth.
I see that I have not at all answered your letter, but there is time enough for that.
H. D. Thoreau



April 10 (?). P.M. — To Cliffs.

A cold and windy day. Our earliest gooseberry is pretty green; next, probably the Mississippi [*sic*] currant, which is beginning to look green; next, the large buds of the lilac are opening; and next, our second or later gooseberry appears to be just beginning to expand or to show its green, and this appears to be the same with the wild one by [J.P. Brown](#)’s. The male red maple buds now show eight or ten (ten counting everything) scales, alternately crosswise, and the pairs successively brighter red or scarlet, which will account for the gradual reddening of their tops. They are about ready to open. From Fair Haven I see, in the northwestern and northern horizon and pretty high, the light reflected from falling rain, sleet, or hail, or all together, — a certain glow, almost sunny light, from the upright or nearly upright, but always straight, sides of clouds, defined by the falling rain or hail, — for hail and rain fell on me within an hour or two. The northern Peterboro Hill is concealed by a driving storm, while the southern one is distinct.

A small black dor-bug dead in the wood-path.


Two crowfoots out on the Cliff. A very warm and dry exposure, but no further sheltered were they. Pale yellow offering of spring. The saxifrage is beginning to be abundant, elevating its flowers somewhat, pure, trustful, white, amid its pretty notched and reddish cup of leaves. The white saxifrage is a response from earth to the increased light of the year; the yellow crowfoot, to the increased heat of the sun. The buds of the thorn bushes are conspicuous. The chrysosplenium is






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open, a few of them, in [Hubbard](#)'s meadow. I thought he had destroyed them all. When the farmer cleans out his ditches, I mourn the loss of many a flower which he calls a weed. The main charm about the Corner road, just beyond the bridge, to me, has been in the little grove of locusts, sallows, and birches, etc., which has sprung up on the bank as you rise the hill. Yesterday I saw a man who is building a house near by cutting them down. I asked him if he was going to cut them all. He said he was. I said if I were in his place I would not have cut them for a hundred dollars, that they were the chief attraction of the place. "Why," said he, "they are nothing but a parcel of prickly bushes and are not worth anything. I'm going to build a new wall here." And so, to ornament the approach to his house, he substitutes a bare, ugly wall for an interesting grove. I still feel the frost in the meadows firm under my feet. Saw a pretty large narrow-winged hawk with a white rump and white spots or bars on under (?) side of wings. Probably the female or young of a marsh hawk . What was that smaller, broader-winged hawk with *white* rump of April 7th? For, after all, I do not find it described. The sweet-gale will blossom very soon.

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

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

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

There is a very remarkable family scattered about the Northern and Middle States which has contrived to make a greater noise in the world than any other family we know of in modern times, except the Bonapartes: and in making the comparison, we beg pardon of the shade of the great Napoleon, and the person of the little one. Of one of the members of this family we have already had more to say in the Dispatch than has been at all agreeable to us, and we sincerely hoped to have done with them forever. But every now and then someone of them says or does something to excite our ire, and it is impossible for us to hold our peace. They are the sons and daughters of old Lyman Beecher, half a dozen or so of the boys being preachers, and the smartest of the girls being Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, whose very name has grown to us distasteful in the extreme.

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



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

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

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

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

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

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



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



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

9 Am to Haverhill via Cambridge & Boston.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

One Maryland Yellow Throat [**Common Yellowthroat** [Geothlypis trichas](#) (~~Maryland Yellowthroat~~)] — probably female, has no black on side head, & is like a summer yellow bird — except that the last has ends of the wings & tail black.

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


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

American red-start, [**American Redstart** [Setophaga ruticilla](#)] male, is black — forward —



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coppery orange beneath & stripe on wings & near base of tail. Female dark ashy fainter marks.
J.E. Cabot thought my small hawk  might be Cooper's Says that Gould an Englishman is the best authority on birds.

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

[New York State](#) required the Board Of Regents to establish general rules for the incorporation of educational institutions.

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

Hmmm. Was this daring lady "just asking for it"?

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

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



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April 12. Gilpin says that our turkey [x] was domesticated in Windsor Forest at one time, and from its size was an object of consequence to lovers of the picturesque, as most birds are not, and, in its form and color and actions, more picturesque than the peacock [x] or indeed any other bird. Being recently reclaimed from the woods, its habits continue wilder than those of other domestic fowls. "It strays widely for its food, it flies well considering its apparent inactivity, and it perches and roosts on trees." He says of the leaf of the beech: "On handling, it feels as if it were fabricated with metallic rigor.... For this reason, I suppose, as its rigor gives it an elastic quality, the common people in France and Switzerland use it for their beds."

I have heard thus far two sounds from two kinds of frogs, I suppose, the hyla's peep and a rather faint croak in pond-holes.

2 P.M. — To the powder-mills via Harrington's, returning by railroad.

The road through the pitch pine woods beyond J. Hosmer's is very pleasant to me, curving under the pines, without a fence, — the sandy road, with the pines close abutting on it, yellow in the sun and low-branched, with younger pines filling up all to the ground. I love to see a sandy road like this curving through a pitch pine wood where the trees closely border it without fences, a great cart-path merely. That is a pleasant part of the North River, under the black birches. The dog does not hesitate to take to the water for a stick, but the current carries him rapidly down. The lines of sawdust left at different levels on the shore is just hint enough of a sawmill on the stream above.

Saw the first blossoms (bright-yellow stamens or pistils) on the willow catkins to-day. The speckled alders and the maples are earlier then. The yellow blossom appears first on one side of the ament and is the most of bright and sunny color the spring has shown, the most decidedly flower-like that I have seen. It flowers, then, I should say, without regard to the skunk-cabbage, *q. v.* First the speckled alder, then the maple without keys, then this earliest, perhaps swamp, willow with its bright-yellow blossoms on one side of the ament. It is fit that this almost earliest spring flower should be yellow, the color of the sun. Saw a maple in the water with yellowish flowers. Is it the water brings them forward? But I believe that these are all the barren flowers, and the perfect flowers appear afterward. When I look closely, I perceive the sward beginning to be green under my feet, very slightly. It rains with sleet and hail, yet not enough to color the ground. At this season I can walk in the fields without wetting my feet in grass. Observed in the stonework of the railroad bridge — I think it must be in Acton — many large stones more or less disintegrated and even turned to a soft soil into which

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I could thrust my finger, threatening the destruction of the bridge. A geologist is needed to tell you whether your stones will continue stones and not turn to earth. It was very pleasant to come out on the railroad in this gentle rain. The track, laid in gray sand, looks best at such a time, with the rails all wet. The factory bridge, seen through the mist, is agreeably indistinct, seen against a dark-grayish pine wood. I should not know there was a bridge there, if I had not been there. The dark line made by its shaded under side is most that I see here spanning the road; the rails are quite indistinct. We love to see things thus with a certain indistinctness.

I am made somewhat sad this afternoon by the coarseness and vulgarity of my companion, because he is one with whom I have made myself intimate. He inclines latterly to speak with coarse jesting of facts which should always be treated with delicacy and reverence. I lose my respect for the man who can make the mystery of sex the subject of a coarse jest, yet, when you speak earnestly and seriously on the subject, is silent. I feel that this is to be truly irreligious. Whatever may befall me, I trust that I may never lose my respect for purity in others. The subject of sex is one on which I do not wish to meet a man at all unless I *can* meet him on the most inspiring ground, — if his view degrades, and does not elevate. I would preserve purity in act and thought, as I would cherish the memory of my mother. A companion can possess no worse quality than vulgarity. If I find that *he* is not habitually reverent of the fact of sex, I, even I, will not associate with [him]. I will cast this first stone. What were life without some religion of this kind? Can I walk with one who by his jests and by his habitual tone reduces the life of men and women to a level with that of cats and dogs? The man who uses such a vulgar jest describes his relation to his dearest friend. Impure as I am, I could protect and worship purity. I can have no really serious conversation with my companion. He seems not capable of it. The men whom I most esteem, when they speak at all on this subject, do not speak with sufficient reverence. They speak to men with a coarseness which they would not use in the presence of women, and I think they would feel a slight shame if a woman coming in should hear their remarks. A man's speech on this subject should, of course, be ever as reverent and chaste and simple as if it were to be heard by the ears of maidens.

In the New Forest in Hampshire they had a chief officer called the Lord Warden and under him two distinct officers, one to preserve the *venison*. of the forest. another to preserve its *vert*, *i.e.* woods, lawns, etc. Does not our Walden need such? The Lord Warden was a person of distinction, as the Duke of Gloucester.

Walden Wood was my forest walk.

The English forests are divided into "walks," with a keeper presiding over each. My "walk" is ten miles from my house every way. Gilpin says, "It is a forest adage of ancient date, *Non est inquirendum unde venit venison*," *i.e.* whether stolen or not.

"The incroachments of trespassers, and the houses and fences thus raised on the borders of the forest" by forest borderers, were "considered as great nuisances by the old forest law, and were severely punished under the name of *purprestures*, as tending *ad terrorem ferarum* — *ad nocumentum forctae*, etc.,

There is, this afternoon and evening, a rather cool April rain. Pleasant to hear its steady dripping.



April 13, Wednesday, 1853: Henry Thoreau continued to survey in Haverill.

Harriet Beecher Stowe, along with her husband Calvin Ellis Stowe, her brother Charles, her sister-in-law Sarah Buckingham Beecher, Sarah's brother William, and Sarah's son William, were traveling through Great Britain. Speeches authored by Harriet were being read to various assemblies by her husband. On this day the assembly was in Liverpool:

On behalf of Mrs. Stowe I will read from her pen the response to your generous offering: 'It is impossible for me to express the feelings of my heart at the kind and generous manner in which I have been received upon English shores. Just when I had begun to realize that a whole wide ocean lay between me and all that

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is dearest to me, I found most unexpectedly a home and friends waiting to receive me here. I have had not an hour in which to know the heart of a stranger. I have been made to feel at home since the first moment of landing, and wherever I have looked I have seen only the faces of friends. It is with deep feeling that I have found myself on ground that has been consecrated and made holy by the prayers and efforts of those who first commenced the struggle for that sacred cause which has proved so successful in England, and which I have a solemn assurance will yet be successful in my own country. It is a touching thought that here so many have given all that they have, and are, in behalf of oppressed humanity. It is touching to remember that one of the noblest men which England has ever produced now lies stricken under the heavy hand of disease, through a last labor of love in this cause. May God grant us all to feel that nothing is too dear or precious to be given in a work for which such men have lived, and labored, and suffered. No great good is ever wrought out for the human race without the suffering of great hearts. They who would serve their fellow-men are ever reminded that the Captain of their salvation was made perfect through suffering. I gratefully accept the offering confided to my care, and trust it may be so employed that the blessing of many "who are ready to perish" will return upon your heads. Let me ask those—those fathers and mothers in Israel—who have lived and prayed many years for this cause, that as they prayed for their own country in the hour of her struggle, so they will pray now for ours. Love and prayer can hurt no one, can offend no one, and prayer is a real power. If the hearts of all the real Christians of England are poured out in prayer, it will be felt through the heart of the whole American church. Let us all look upward, from our own feebleness and darkness, to Him of whom it is said, "He shall not fail nor be discouraged till he have set judgment in the earth." To him, the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.' — These are the words, my friends, which Mrs. Stowe has written, and I cannot forbear to add a few words of my own. It was our intention, as the invitation to visit Great Britain came from Glasgow, to make our first landing there. But it was ordered by Providence that we should land here; and surely there is no place in the kingdom where a landing could be more appropriate, and where the reception could have been more cordial. [Hear, hear!] It was wholly unexpected by us, I can assure you. We know that there were friendly hearts here, for we had received abundant testimonials to that effect from letters which had come to us across the Atlantic — letters wholly unexpected, and which filled our souls with surprise; but we had no thought that there was such a feeling throughout England, and we scarcely know how to conduct ourselves under it, for we are not accustomed to this kind of receptions. In our own country, unhappily, we are very much divided, and the preponderance of feeling expressed is in the other direction, entirely in opposition, and not in favor. [Hear, hear!] We knew that this city had been the scene of some of the greatest, most disinterested, and most powerful efforts in behalf of emancipation. The name of Clarkson was indissolubly associated with this place, for here he came to make his investigations, and here he was in danger of his life, and here

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he was protected by friends who stood by him through the whole struggle. The names of Cropper, and of Stephen, and of many others in this city, were very familiar to us -[Hear, hear!]- and it was in connection with this city that we received what to our feelings was a most effective testimonial, an unexpected letter from Lord Denman, whom we have always venerated. When I was in England in 1836, there were no two persons whom I more desired to see than the Duke of Wellington and Lord Denman; and soon I sought admission to the House of Lords, where I had the pleasure both of seeing and hearing England's great captain; and I found my way to the Court of Queen's Bench, where I had the pleasure of seeing and hearing England's great judge. But how unexpected was all this to us! When that book was written, in sorrow, and in sadness, and obscurity, and with the heart almost broken in the view of the sufferings which it described, and the still greater sufferings which it dared not describe, there was no expectation of any thing but the prayers of the sufferers and the blessing of God, who has said that the seed which is buried in the earth shall spring up in his own good time; and though it maybe long buried, it will still at length come forth and bear fruit. We never could believe that slavery in our land would be a perpetual curse; but we felt, and felt deeply, that there must be a terrible struggle before we could be delivered from it, and that there must be suffering and martyrdom in this cause, as in every other great cause; for a struggle of eighteen years had taught us its strength. And, under God, we rely very much on the Christian public of Great Britain; for every expression of feeling from the wise and good of this land, with whatever petulance it may be met by some, goes to the heart of the American people. [Hear, hear!] You must not judge of the American people by the expressions which have come across the Atlantic in reference to the subject. Nine tenths of the American people, I think, are, in opinion at least, with you on this great subject; [Hear, hear!] but there is a tremendous pressure brought to bear upon all who are in favor of emancipation. The whole political power, the whole money power, almost the whole ecclesiastical power is wielded in defence of slavery, protecting it from all aggression; and it is as much as a man's reputation is worth to utter a syllable boldly and openly on the other side. Let me say to the ladies who have been active in getting up the address on the subject of slavery, that you have been doing a great and glorious work, and a work most appropriate for you to do; for in slavery it is woman that suffers most intensely, and the suffering woman has a claim upon the sympathy of her sisters in other lands. This address will produce a powerful impression throughout the country. There are ladies already of the highest character in the nation pondering how they shall make a suitable response, and what they shall do in reference to it that will be acceptable to the ladies of the United Kingdom, or will be profitable to the slave; and in due season you will see that the hearts of American women are alive to this matter, as well as the hearts of the women of this country. [Hear, hear!] Such was the mighty influence brought to bear upon every thing that threatened slavery, that had it not been for the decided expression on this side of the Atlantic in reference to the work which has exerted, under God, so much




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influence, there is every reason to fear that it would have been crushed and put under foot, as many other efforts for the overthrow of slavery have been in the United States. But it is impossible; the unanimous voice of Christendom prohibits it; and it shows that God has a work to accomplish, and that he has just commenced it. There are social evils in England. Undoubtedly there are; but the difference between the social evils in England and this great evil of slavery in the United States is just here: In England, the power of the government and the power of Christian sympathy are exerted for the removal of those evils. Look at the committees of inquiry in Parliament, look at the amount of information collected with regard to the suffering poor in their reports, and see how ready the government of Great Britain is to enter into those inquiries, and to remove those evils. Look at the benevolent institutions of the United Kingdom, and see how active all these are in administering relief; and then see the condition of slavery in the United States, where the whole power of the government is used in the contrary direction, where every influence is brought to bear to prevent any mitigation of the evil, and where every voice that is lifted to plead for a mitigation is drowned in vituperation and abuse from those who are determined that the evil shall not be mitigated. This is the difference: England repents and reforms. America refuses to repent and reform. It is said, 'Let each country take care of itself, and let the ladies of England attend to their own business.' Now I have always found that those who labor at home are those who labor abroad; [Hear, hear!] and those who say, 'Let us do the work at home, are those who do no work of good either at home or abroad. [Hear, hear!] It was just so when the great missionary effort came up in the United States. They said, 'We have a great territory here. Let us send missionaries to our own territories. Why should we send missionaries across the ocean?' But those who sent missionaries across the ocean were those who sent missionaries in the United States; and those who did not send missionaries across the ocean were those who sent missionaries nowhere. [Hear, hear!] They who say, 'Charity begins at home,' are generally those who have no charity; and when I see a lady whose name is signed to this address, I am sure to find a lady who is exercising her benevolence at home. Let me thank you for all the interest you have manifested and for all the kindness which we have received at your hands, which we shall ever remember, both with gratitude to you and to God our Father."



April 13: Haverhill. — Pewee [Eastern Wood-Pewee  *Contopus virens*] days and April showers.

First hear toads (and take off coat), a loud, ringing sound filling the air, which yet few notice. First shad caught at Haverhill to-day; first alewife 10th. Fishermen say that no fish can get above the dam at Lawrence.

No shad, etc., were caught at Lowell last year. Were catching smelts with a small seine. It says in deeds that brooks shall be opened or obstructions removed by the 20th of April, on account of fish.



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April 14, Thursday, 1853: Francisco de Lersundi y Hormaechea replaced Federico Roncali as Prime Minister of Spain.

Nathaniel Hawthorne departed for Washington DC to take part in the division of the spoils. Ellery Channing asked for himself: “an appointment to any office.”

In California the Daily Union reported that every year was bringing with it improvements in the process of extraction which were enabling the miners to work the same ground over and over again, making as much or more than they had in the previous year. At Diamond Springs, where with a Long Tom a man hadn't been able to make his room and board, the gold miners were generally doing better than they had done since 1849/1850. Laying their Long Toms aside in favor of sluices –some of these laid down for 800 feet but most from 100 to 200 feet in length– they had begun to throw in the dirt at the upper end and have it completely dissolved before it reached the lower end, with its gold deposited along the sluice. Quicksilver was being extensively used to recover this gold, the miner scattering the mercury along the sluice several times during the day. They were cleaning the gold-saturated quicksilver out these sluices but once a week. One company on Jones Hill, about a quarter of a mile from town, had taken out of their sluice the week before last a total of \$1,900. Last week by working only part of the week they had realized \$1,000. With the sluice and quicksilver they cleared \$10 a day — after paying for water etc. — and out of dirt in which nothing more had been obtained by panning but color.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR APRIL 14TH]



April 15, Friday, 1853: In California the Democratic State Journal reported that they had been visited by W.B. Hamilton on the previous day, and had learned much interesting information about a rich gold-mining region 75 miles from Marysville known as Sears' Diggings. On the west side of Slate Creek, opposite Pine Grove, the Girard Company had recently taken out a lump of pure gold weighing 32 ounces and worth \$543. In general the miners there were making from \$10 to \$30 to each man, per day. These are Coyote diggings, and are very extensive. — Captain Winchester and other men took out \$541 in one day.

Lowell Mason and his wife arrived home in Boston after a European tour of 16 months (their trip had taken them to Great Britain, Germany, Switzerland, and France).

Frederick Douglass' Paper described “Mrs. Stowe's Visit to England”:

By this time, the authoress of “*Uncle Tom's Cabin*” has landed on the free shores of Albion, and is probably receiving emphatic demonstrations of grateful homage from the brightest and best of British men and women. Heaven's blessings attend her! She has brought up to the presence of mankind our people long buried out of sight by slavery and oppression. She has invested our despised and neglected cause with a new and powerful interest, and has added a bright ray to the almost gone out lamp of our hopes. Christianity, refused utterance through the American pulpit, dammed up by the “fear of man that bringeth a snare,” has found expression through the feeble instrumentality of that good woman. And where has it not gone forth asserting its wonderous power. The glory which should have covered the ALTAR of the Lord, and illumined the brows of its vast procession of ministers, encircles the form of a woman – Truly, God is able

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of the weak to confound the mighty.

We feel a deep interest in Mrs. Stowe's visit to England. It is an interest arising out of no sectarian or partizan unity, but the very opposite of this. Were Mrs. Stowe's visit to England on behalf of any Anti-Slavery Society, State or national, much of our interest in it would instantly subside; for in that case, we know that time and energy which should be given to the cause of the oppressed would be consumed in an almost useless debate, as to which anti-slavery society is doing much to promote the anti-slavery cause. There is the "American Anti-Slavery Society," and the "American and Foreign Anti-Slavery," both these Societies have *antecedents*, which the representative of either would be called upon to justify and defend. Too often has the cause of the slave been compelled to give place to the cause of a Society. Anti-slavery, as well as Christianity, has often seen the means apparently exalted above the end – the "ALTAR" above the "gift that sanctifieth the altar." – MRS. STOWE goes to England untrammelled and free. She goes for the cause, and judging from what she has already accomplished, there never went from our shores one whose labors will compare with her's [*sic*]. She will do more than has ever yet been done to present and diffuse among Englishmen a correct understanding of the MEN and the MEASURES operating for the downfall of slavery. She will not exalt the *non-voter* up to heaven, and cast the *anti-slavery voter* down to hell, nor *vice versa*; but will recognize the virtue and value of both. She will not make LEWIS TAPPAN a Saint, and WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON a Satan, but will see in both these men honest, and devoted friends of emancipation. Nor have we any fear that she will be at the pains (*like another American lady*) of trying to convince English abolitionists that our paper is unworthy of support. But enough of this.

The chief good which we anticipate from Mrs. Stowe's mission, is the founding of an INSTITUTION, in which our oppressed and proscribed youth, MALE and FEMALE, may obtain a plain English education, and a practical knowledge of various useful TRADES. Our's [*sic*] is a hard case in this country; but give us education and trades, and we shall live to attend the funeral of slavery, and to see the last colonisation ship rot at the wharf.—Heaven, according to Swedenborg, consists of "uses;" whether this be so or not, down here among men, things are valued according as they are useful, or discarded and thrown away as they are useless. The colored people in this country, will, in the end, stand or fall by this test. With education and a trade, the black man may easily be regarded a useful man, and a good citizen. To make the free colored people thus, intelligent and useful, is the end to which the thoughts and plans of Mrs. Stowe are nobly directed.




April 15: Mouse-ear.



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 April 16, Saturday, 1853: The 1st passenger train in India was dedicated by James Andrew Broun-Ramsay, 1st Marquess of Dalhousie and began service from Bombay's Bori Bunder station to Thane (a distance of 34 kilometers, along the route of what had become the 1st railroad in Asia). The train was made up of 14 carriages containing 400 passengers, who were tugged along by 3 steam locomotives, the *Sahib*, the *Sindh*, and the *Sultan*. A good time was had by all.

Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka wrote to his sister that he intended to remain in Paris at least until 1854.

Emily Dickinson wrote to her younger brother Austin Dickinson:

Dear Austin.

You make me happy, when you write so affectionately, happier than you know, and I always want to write to you as soon as your letters come, but it is not very often convenient that I can. Yet I will the morning after, as I do today. I am all alone, Austin. Father has gone to New York, Vinnie to Northampton, and mother is cutting out apples in the kitchen. I had forgotten Pussy, tho'; she's sitting on the mat, looking up in my face as if she wondered who I was writing to - if she knew it was "Master Austin" I guess she would send some word, for I know Pussy remembers you, and wonders where you are. Sometimes when she's more intelligent, I've half a mind to tell her how you have gone to Cambridge, and are studying the law, but I dont believe she'd understand me.

You cant think how delighted father was, with the account you gave of northerners and southerners, and the electioneering - he seemed to feel so happy to have you interested in what was going on at Cambridge - he said he "knew all about it - he's been thro' the whole, it was only a little specimen of what you'd meet in life, if you lived to enter it." I could'nt hardly help telling him that I thought his idea of life rather a boisterous one, but I kept perfectly still.

I dont love to read your letters all out loud to father - it would be like opening the kitchen door when we get home from meeting Sunday, and are sitting down by the stove saying just what we're a mind to, and having father hear. I dont know why it is, but it gives me a dreadful feeling, and I skipped about the wild flowers, and one or two little things I loved the best, for I could'nt read them loud to anybody [*several words erased*]. I shant see her this morning, because she has to bake Saturday, but she'll come this afternoon, and we shall read your letter together, and talk of how soon you'll be here [*seven lines erased*].

I shall think of you taking tea at Aunt Lavinia's tonight, and we shall take tea alone, how pleasant it would be to have you with us while father is away, but it is'nt May yet. Thank you for remembering me when you found the wild flowers, and for wanting me to stay a week with you. These things are very kind, and I will not forget them. The birds sing beautifully, Pussy is trying to beat them. Dont work too hard Austin, dont get too tired, so that you cannot sleep, we always think of you. Love from us all.

Emilie.

John Thompson is in the office of Mr Vose, in Springfield.



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April 16: Either barn [Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*] or bank [Bank Swallow *Riparia riparia*] swallows overhead. Birds loosen and expand their feathers and look larger in the rain.

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April 17, Sunday, 1853: The US Marine Hospital at the Presidio on [San Francisco](#) peninsula in California was established.

The government of Johan Rudolf Thorbecke in the Netherlands resigned.

Secretary of War [Jefferson Davis](#) wrote to his dear friend Eli Abbott disappointing him in his request to be granted a patronage federal office but placating him with a passel of pleasant words — that the defense of Democracy was the defense of state rights — in defense of which we may die but never surrender:

To the question you ask in relation to my personal wishes I answer, that to advance the doctrine of state rights is my first wish and whatever will most promote this end will be most acceptable to me.

(Actually, when it would come to that in 1865, President Davis, attired in a woman's dress, would elect not to die in defense of state rights — but that's mere post-catastrophe unsatisfactory history rather than pre-catastrophe pious sentiment.)



April 17. Sunday. The elder leaf is the most forward of any shrub or tree I have seen; more than one inch long.

Visited two houses of refuge about one hundred and sixty years old, two miles or more east of Haverhill village, — the Peaslee houses, substantial brick houses some forty by twenty feet. Two rows of bricks project between the two stories; cavities left for the staging; marks of ovens (which projected outdoors) cut off; white oak timber, fifteen by twelve inches, sound; space in chimney above fireplace about three feet deep (see stars); two or three very narrow windows; large-sized bricks. These were the houses of Joseph and Nathaniel Peaslee, appointed houses of refuge by the town about 1690. The occupant of one, not a very old man, told me that his grandfather, Joseph Peaslee, was seventeen years old when the French and Indians attacked the town, killed Rolfe, etc. A Newcomb from Cape Cod lives in the other. There are as many as six garrison-houses and houses of refuge still standing in Haverhill. I have seen four still entire and one partly so, all brick.

Field sparrows common now. The Merrimack is yellow and turbid in the spring; will run clear anon. The red maple begins to show stamens here. A pleasant hilly country north of Great Pond. What were those five large gray ducks *[?]* with white wing-coverts?



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

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

The 1st [railroad](#) in Asia began operation for the entire distance between Bombay and Tanna.

INDIA



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



April 18, Monday or 20, Wednesday, 3PM, 1853: The Reverend [Samuel Ringgold Ward](#) embarked for England. This would be the last time he would see his mother:

Like my father, she was converted in early life, and was a member of the Methodist denomination (though a lover of all Christian denominations) until her death. This event, one of the most afflictive of my life, occurred on the first day of September, 1853, at New York. Since my father's demise I had not seen her for nearly a year; when, being about to sail for England, at the risk of being apprehended by the United States' authorities for a breach of their execrable republican Fugitive Slave Law, I sought my mother, found her, and told her I was about to sail at three p.m., that day (April 20th, 1853), for England. With a calmness and composure which she could always command when emergencies required it, she simply said, in a quiet tone, "To England, my son!" embraced me, commended me to God, and suffered me to depart without a murmur. It was our last meeting. May it be our last parting! For the kind sympathy shown me, upon my reception of the melancholy news of my mother's decease, by many English friends, I shall ever be grateful: the recollection of that event, and the kindness of which it was the occasion, will dwell together in my heart while reason and memory shall endure. In the midst of that peculiarly bereaved feeling inseparable from realizing the thought that one is both fatherless and motherless, it was a sort of melancholy satisfaction to know that my dear parents were gone beyond the reach of slavery and the Fugitive Law. Endangered as their liberty always was, in the free Northern States of New York and New Jersey – doubly so after the law of 1851 – I could but feel a great deal of anxiety concerning them. I knew that there was no living claimant of my parents' bodies and souls; I knew, too, that neither of them would tamely submit to re-enslavement: but I also knew that it was quite possible there should be creditors, or heirs at law; and that there is no State in the American Union wherein there were not free and independent democratic republicans, and soi-disant Christians, "ready, aye ready" to aid in overpowering and capturing a runaway, for pay. But when God was pleased to take



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my father in 1851, and my mother in 1853, I felt relief from my greatest earthly anxiety. Slavery had denied them education, property, caste, rights, liberty; but it could not deny them the application of Christ's blood, nor an admittance to the rest prepared for the righteous. They could not be buried in the same part of a common graveyard, with whites, in their native country; but they can rise at the sound of the first trump, in the day of resurrection. Yes, reader: we who are slaveborn derive a comfort and solace from the death of those dearest to us, if they have the sad misfortune to be BLACKS and AMERICANS, that you know not. God forbid that you or yours should ever have occasion to know it!

There would be interesting details for the Reverend [Samuel Ringgold Ward](#) to relate, in regard to his steamboat journey across the Atlantic:

After I had travelled in the service of the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada from December 1851 until April 1853, they desired to take advantage of the well known anti-slavery feeling of Great Britain, quickened and intensified as that feeling had recently become by the unprecedented influence of Mrs. Stowe's masterpiece, "UNCLE TOM'S CABIN," by sending me to England, to plead in their behalf, and in behalf of my crushed countrymen in America, and the freed men of Canada. Accordingly, I took the good steamer "Europa" on the 18th of April, 1853 (having bid adieu to [Toronto](#), and the precious ones within it, the day before), for my first voyage across the Atlantic. This voyage was, to me, one of no ordinary interest. It was my first departure from my native continent. I was on my way to a strange land, thousands of miles from family, friends, relatives, or any one who cared for me. I confess to no little nervousness on this account.

Then, I had scarcely gone on board before a fact occurred that did nothing to increase my mental comfort. And, while I am about it, I may as well state two facts of like character. The first is, that Lewis Tappan, Esq., in procuring a passage for me, had, with his characteristic straightforward manliness, told the agents that I was a black man. For this I was grateful: it saved me much inconvenience. They sold Mr. T. a ticket upon the back of which was the following indorsement: - "This gentleman's passage is taken with the distinct understanding that he shall have his meals in his state room. - E.C."⁸⁶

Mr. Tappan, both as my personal friend and as a Christian man, remonstrated; but it was of no avail. As if this were not enough, so soon almost as I touched the deck of the ship, a fine gentlemanly-appearing Englishman accosted me -

"Mr. Ward, I believe?"

"The same."

"You are going out to Liverpool?"

"I am."

"When Mr. Tappan took your passage, I was obliged to say to him, that you would take your meals in your state room; for you know, Mr. Ward, what are the prevalent feelings in this country in respect to coloured people, and if you eat at the cabin table Americans will complain. We cannot allow our ship to be the arena

86. The initials of Mr. Edward Cunard.



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of constant quarrels on this subject; we avoid the difficulty by making the rule that coloured passengers shall eat in their state rooms, or we can't take them."

I replied, "I desire, Mr. Cunard, to be in London by the 4th of May. If I wait for another steamer, I shall be too late. For that reason I submit to that to which, I wish you to understand, I do not consent."

"I am an Englishman," said Mr. C.: "I entertain no such feelings; but I must see to the comfort of the passengers. I will see that you have a comfortable state room; and indeed, you shall have a room, if possible, on deck, which will be more pleasant for you; and the steward shall have directions to make you as comfortable as possible; and I wish you a pleasant voyage, sir."

Well, thought I, here is an Englishman perverted, according to his own showing – like the Yankee, making the dollar come before right, law, or anything. He does not "share" Yankee feeling – he only accommodates, panders to it! that is all! His passengers must be made "comfortable"; that is, if they be white. If not, why, the ship must not be "an arena for public discussion," &c.! This was not exactly sea sickness, but no one will be surprised that it did not add to the pleasantness of going to sea. I could not but reflect upon the arrogance of the Americans. They are for freedom, but they must enforce their own views of matters upon other people. They believe in equality; but it must not be exhibited, even in a British ship, in a form different from their way of showing it. In a word, the arrogance of Yankees amounts to this – "Wherever we go, and over whomsoever we meet, our peculiar views, feelings and customs, shall be made the supreme rule." Worse, however, than Yankee arrogance, is the easy accommodating virtue of a Yankeeified Englishman.

The other fact came to my knowledge soon after. It seems that the second steward, having some "flesh in his heart," and seeing that, with one or two exceptions, the second-cabin passengers (of which class I was) were Englishmen, proposed that I should be invited to join my fellow passengers at the table. All agreed but one, and that one was a small-sized Welshman! He had been to Texas, forgotten his Welsh breeding, become a slave-holder and a Negro-hater, and his pro-slavery spoiled dignity couldn't endure my black presence at table. I knew that no passenger, nor even the owners, could legally deny me my right to enter the second cabin. I knew that I had submitted to quite enough, in allowing them to put me into a superior state room, abaft the wheels, 20 feet further aft than second-cabin passengers are allowed to go, as a compromise with Negro-hate. Now, to be kept out of the cabin by a little fellow about "four feet nothing and a half" tall, was quite too much. I therefore entered the cabin when I pleased, defiant of my little friend, who, I am bound to say, became quite civilized in a few days; so much so, that ere we parted, he invited me to a small entertainment, in that very second cabin within which he could not at first endure my presence. What an ever-present demon the spirit of Negro-hate is! How it haunts, tempts, wounds, the black man, wherever his arch-enemy, the American, goes!

In Mr. Cunard's case, in its likeness to and connection with those of many other Englishmen, of such character, I found occasion for serious reflection, that has driven me to a

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conclusion which shall hereafter control my life. It is a conclusion to which my excellent friend, Mr. J.N. Still, of Brooklyn, came long since. I never really differed from him, but I confess that not until I came to Europe did I see it in its full importance. Mr. Cunard is a man of business; so are the mass of Englishmen. What interferes with or threatens a diminution of the gains of business must be avoided. What is right or wrong, if not set aside altogether, must at least be merged in or be made subservient to business considerations. What is peculiar to an Englishman's feelings, what is accordant with the spirit of British law, what is included with a British subject's rights, in my case, must all give way to the mere question of business: i.e., Yankees pay largely, as passengers on the Cunard line. True, there are three Yankee lines competing with it; and it is equally true, that the rights of a black subject are as sacred in the eye of the law as those of a white subject (though Yankees are not subjects, by the way); so it was true, that what were my rights on British soil were my rights in a British ship. It was also true, that Her Majesty's Government retained so much control over that line as to have the power, when necessary – as has since been done – to send half the vessels comprising it to the Baltic, in the transport service. It was equally true, too, that if any one made a disturbance on board of the "Europa," that was the person to be deprived of his rights, and not an innocent person; besides, in my case, the matter was prejudged, and I was made to feel the weight of the regulation, in advance of any disturbance arising from my presence. But, pshaw! This is simply the right and the law of the case. It must be viewed, Mr. Cunard thought, in a business light. Yankees are frequent customers; Negroes are not. Now, could not the thing so be managed as to retain the £50,000 given by the Government for carrying the mails, retain the patronage of the Yankees, and, if some few Negroes occasionally go on the steamers, partly conciliate them and partly sacrifice them? That is the business view of the matter – that is the view of Mr. Cunard; and I am sorry to say, about ninety-nine out of every hundred Englishmen in America view such matters in the same light. What is a Negro made for, but to be kicked about for a white man's convenience?

Then I saw, that the chief, almost the only business of the Negro, is to be a man of business. Let him be planter, merchant, anything by which he may make his impression as a business man. Let a fair representation of us be found, not in servile and menial positions, but in business walks – on 'change, in Lombard Street, at the Docks, anywhere; but let it be in active prosperous business life. Let us become of some value as customers; then, when such devoted men of business as Mr. Cunard have before them the question of treading under foot some Negro, they will conclude differently. They will say, "Yes, it is true he is black, and our taste is like yours, gentlemen – a taste wonderfully improved by living with you under the "stripes and stars" of republican freedom and equality; but then, looking at the matter with an eye to business, the fact is, we cannot very well afford to lose the custom of this class." Yes; black men must seek wealth. We have men of learning, men of professional celebrity, men who can wield the pen, men of the pulpit and the



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forum, but we must have men of wealth; and he who does most to promote his own and his neighbour's weal in this regard, does most to promote the interests of the race.

Could we speak of wealthy blacks as we fortunately can of Robert Morris and Macon Bolden Allen, of Boston, as lawyers; James McCune Smith, of New York, and John V. Degrasse, of Boston, and Thomas Joiner White, of Brooklyn, as medical men; Charles L. Reason, William G. Allen, and George B. Vashon, as college professors; James William Charles Pennington, William Douglass, William Paul Quinn, Daniel A. Payne, Alexander Crummell, Henry Highland Garnet, Amos Gerry Beeman, and William H. Bishop, as divines; James M. Whitfield and Miss Watkins, as poets; Frederic Douglass, William Howard Day, John J. Gains, Charles Mercer Langston, and William J. Watkins, as orators – we should be looked upon and treated in altogether a different manner. But as we have produced such men as I have named – or rather, as they have, under God, produced themselves – so let us hope and be assured that the day is not far distant when, like the Quakers and the Jews, we shall be well and widely known for the pecuniary prosperity and independence of our class.

With the exception of the two annoyances referred to, I had a most delightful voyage, and became a most capital sailor – that is, in the passenger's sense of the term, which simply is, to be able to do nothing, comfortably and perseveringly, without sea sickness. I eat, drank, and slept, well – great comforts, at sea. I had the honour of daily visits from the excellent physician of the vessel, whose acquaintanceship I have the pleasure of still enjoying. Mr. [W.M.](#) did me the honour to spend an hour daily in my state room. He, too, still honours me with his friendly acquaintance. The Lord Bishop of Montreal called upon me, the day after our first Sunday. Perhaps his Lordship was looking after me as a stray sheep, for I did not attend the service conducted by him on the day before. The service was in the after-cabin. I was not a passenger in that cabin. I was partly proscribed, because of my colour, to accommodate the passengers. To be a fellow worshipper with them, on sufferance, was more than my self-respect would allow. I therefore remained in my state room, where, I trust, I found and worshipped the omnipresent, the impartial Jehovah. For the kindness shown me, as well as for the manner of showing it, by the gentlemen referred to, I shall ever be grateful. There were several Americans on board, not one of whom came to me. Of course I did not seek them.

While in England, the Reverend [Samuel Ringgold Ward](#) would attempt to explain to the English audiences how it was, that their American cousins, who were so loud in defense of liberty, could be so easy about the holding of slaves. He pointed up one salient difference between the earlier defenders of the institution of human slavery, in England prior to the general emancipation, and the current American defenders of that peculiar institution, to wit, that no English proslavery advocate had ever attempted to defend the institution of slavery on religious grounds, whereas it was common in America, to hear the institution of slavery defended on religious grounds:

It is a matter of surprise to people in England that the Americans should profess so loudly the Christian religion, and insist so strongly upon republicanism as the only proper form of government, and yet hold slaves and treat Negroes, as they do, in the directest possible opposition both to republicanism

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and Christianity. The opposition which the citizens of the United States, of both the North and the South, make to the anti-slavery cause, is, to Europeans, an inexplicable mystery. Far be it from me to attempt a solution of it. I will endeavour to state the real issue betwixt anti-slavery men and their opponents; and, in doing so, I fear I shall make the matter more, instead of less, mysterious.



Those who recollect, or who have read of, the opposition Clarkson, Wilberforce, and Buxton had to encounter in their day, on the subject of the slave trade, in the British senate, and from Englishmen interested in the slave trade, know what class of arguments were used against the measures of righteousness advocated by them. Precisely the same class of arguments have been made against the abolition of slavery in the United States, by American senators, and by American merchants, theologians, and politicians: indeed, I have seen where the very words used by His Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence, against the abolition of the slave trade, were uttered in the American Senate against the abolition of slavery there. When the abolition of West India slavery was urged by [Henry Peter Brougham](#), Stanley, and others, they in their turn were assailed with the same sort of opposition which their anti-slavery fathers, so to speak, met; and just such opposition have Sumner, Wilson, Seward, Giddings, and others, to overcome in the American Senate now. We explain the opposition of British slaveholders and slave traders to abolition, on the ground of interest, long continued use and abuse of authority, degenerating into petty tyranny and worse than brutal cruelty. These, however, sailed under no flag of boasted freedom. They did not clamour for the equality of all men. They found no fault with other than republican forms of government. They did not set themselves up as universal reformers. They said but little – wisely – about religion, for they had but little religion to talk about; and such as they had, judging from their lives, was more honoured by silence than profession.

In America the case was different. Parties having the least to do with the South, or with slavery, are among the fiercest opposers of the anti-slavery cause. Ladies – save the mark! – and gentlemen of the most amiable and benevolent dispositions, such as contribute to every local charity, listen to all the cries of misery from the Old World, and honour all drafts made upon them for the spread of the gospel among the distant heathen, are the most active and, from their high religious position, the most powerful abettors and defenders of the slave system – not as it was in some ancient country two thousand years ago, but

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as it is now in the United States. Northern pulpit orators defend slavery from the Bible, the Old Testament and the New; and this is not true of one here and there only, it is so of the most learned, most distinguished of them, of all denominations. The very men who cater for British popularity, are the loudest declaimers in favour of this "domestic institution." Another class of them maintain the most studious silence concerning it. If they speak at all, they condemn only "slavery in the abstract," and condemn abolition in the concrete. They neither hold nor treat slavery as sinful; and when pressed, declare that "some sins are not to be preached against." Such was the teaching of a distinguished theological professor to his class in a "school of the prophets" in New York State. Besides, all the machinery of the benevolent societies is so framed, and set, and kept at work, as not only not to interfere with slavery, but to pander to it. The American Tract Society not only publishes no tract against slavery, but they favour that abominable system in the two following ways: - 1. If an English work which they republish has a line in it discountenancing slavery, however indirectly, it is either taken out, or so altered as to lose its force in that particular direction. Their emasculation of "Gurney on the Love of God" is notorious. 2. They refuse to publish a tract on the subject, when other acknowledged Christians and Christian ministers propose to write and prepare one, and defray the expense of publishing the same. No, poor slave: dumb as thou art, dumb shalt thou ever be, so far as this Society is concerned.

The American Bible Society distributes no Bibles among the slave population. To do so, it is freely admitted, were contrary to law in some States - not in all. It is so in nine of the fifteen Slave States, but not in the other six; and some of these laws were framed, and all of them are upholden, and many of them administered and executed, by members, friends, and patrons of this Society. Not one word ever escapes the lips of that Society, as such, against these anti-Protestant laws! In 1841 I knew of an agent of an auxiliary to that Society who was distributing Bibles in Louisiana, and, being ignorant of the laws upon the subject, asked a free coloured man if he could read, with the intention of giving or selling him a Bible if he could. Some one overheard him, and informed against him. He was arrested, tried, found guilty, but leniently discharged, on account of his ignorance of the law which he had violated. Slaveholders and their abettors belong to and are officers of the American Bible Society, and they control it. That slavery forbids the searching of the Scriptures, which Christ enjoins, is to them not even a matter of complaint. Albeit, they pledge themselves to give the Christian Scriptures to every family in the Union.

The American Sunday-school Union stands in precisely the same category, and is controlled by precisely the same influences; and the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions is, and always has been, both in its policy and its officers, of the very same character. The several religious bodies, with their respective branches, of all denominations, except the Quakers and the Free-Will Baptists (although the majority of their numbers are Northern men), are completely subject to the control of their slaveholding members. But the most lamentable fact is,

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that in Congregational New England the sons of Puritan sires are as guilty as the guiltiest enemies of the down-trodden slave. Such was the state of the case in 1839, when my labours began; such, I regret to say, continues the case at this moment: and here I will take the liberty of saying that, although my connection with the New York State Anti-Slavery Society dis severed me from the division of the abolitionists in 1840, and although I never belonged to the Garrison branch of the abolitionists, so-called, I will do them the justice to record, that the least, slightest tendency towards infidelity, or even of impatience with the Churches, was never seen or suspected in them until after the New England clergy, as a body, had taken ground distinctly and openly against the anti-slavery cause (vide Goodall's "History of the Anti-Slavery Cause").

What reason is given for this strange action on the part of religious denominations, benevolent institutions, theological professors, and individual clergymen? I will state it as fairly as I can.

Their chief reason is, that it will disturb their existing harmony so to take up, discuss, and consider this question, as, it seems to abolitionists, its importance demands. In the Churches, while they maintain silence upon it, or ignore it altogether, they have nothing to cause disagreement. This question would be an apple of discord, as brethren of equal piety would range themselves on opposite sides of it. So it would be in the benevolent societies. Harmony, peace, are sought in that country by religious people, at almost any expense; slaveholders are members of the different religious denominations; in fact, one sixth of all the slaveholders belong to Methodists, Baptists, Episcopalians, and Presbyterians. To treat slavery as sinful, would offend these brethren; and what is the use of that? They are good Christians; they treat their slaves well; and so long as they give signs of piety, are regular in their standing, pious in conversation, sound in doctrine, and correct in other matters, save the one of slavery, why should they be disturbed? why offend them?

Some deny the sinfulness of slaveholding; others shelter themselves behind the faults of the abolitionists; others defend slaveholding from the Bible; but I think their love of harmony is their chief alleged reason for their present attitude. Let it not be forgotten, however, that behind all this –and going very far, I think, to explain it– is the contempt they all alike maintain towards the Negro. Surely, if they believed him to be an equal brother man, such miserable pretexts for, and defences of, the doing of the mightiest wrongs against him, would never for a moment be thought of.

The abolitionists, on the other hand, point out the intrinsic nature and character of slavery – not in the abstract, but in the concrete –not as one might imagine it to be, but as it is – not as it was (or was not) two thousand years ago, more or less, but as it is to-day –its brutalizing, chattelizing; buying, selling, the image of God and the members of Christ's body; its adultery, fornication, incest –and ask if religious men and ministers are really serious in declaring this to be no sin? If not serious, is it not a matter too grave to jest about? Violating, as it does, every part and parcel of the Decalogue,

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could He who gave the law from Sinai approve it? They point to the law of love, and ask, Shall not our black brother receive the treatment, the love, of a brother, as well as the Hindoo or the Laplander? They point to the law which denies him the Bible, and ask, Can the God of the Bible approve that law? They hear Christ say, "Inasmuch as ye did it (or did it not) to the least of these my brethren, ye did it (or did it not) unto me." Black men are, in the estimation of these brethren who oppose the anti-slavery cause, "the least." Should not religious men tremble, lest the Son of Man should denounce these terrible words against them?

When told of the piety of slaveholding professors of religion, they point to the acknowledged piety of the Jewish Church; notwithstanding which God denounced them for refusing "to break the yoke and let the oppressed go free" (ISAIAH 1 viii. 1-6). When the harmony and peace of the Church are pleaded for, against them, abolitionists plead for the "wisdom which is from above, which is first pure, then peaceable." When urged, as it frequently is, that it is no part of the business of the Church, or her benevolent handmaids, to speak against existing social and political evils, abolitionists remind brethren of the firm lodgment which the evils connected with and inseparable from slavery have in the Church; so that, as the gentle and gifted Birney hath it, "the American Church is the bulwark of slavery:" so that, as the amiable Barnes saith, "there is no power out of the Church that could sustain slavery a twelvemonth, if the Church should turn her artillery against it."

If abolitionists hear pro-slavery men say there are sins which the Church and the Pulpit ought not and need not rebuke, they point to the preaching of all the true prophets, to the Lord, and to the apostles; all of whom took especial pains to rebuke and to denounce the specific forms of iniquity which, in their own times, were most prevalent, most fashionable, most profitable. This sin of oppression was not among the least of them: so when told that some who denounce slavery, and at the same time inveigh against pro-slavery Churches and ministers, are sceptics, it is with no sort of pleasure that abolitionists recall the time when the most prominent of this class, were as sound and orthodox in their views of divine truth as any of their accusers, and continued to be so until appalled and disgusted by seeing how lamentably the class who now cry out "Infidel!" exhibited that worst, most delusive, most practical form of infidelity – the "holding of the truth in unrighteousness," the justifying of the foulest crimes (such as of necessity enter into and form constituent elements of slavery) by God's holy Word.


Such was the issue betwixt the anti-slavery cause and its religious opposers in 1839; such was it during my humble advocacy of emancipation; and such were, on the one side and on the other, the sort of arguments I had to meet and to make; and such is the issue between those who take opposite sides of this great question in that country now – an issue neither beginning nor ending with the rights and the liberties, the weal or the woe, of the poor Negro; but an issue involving the honour of Christ, the purity of the Church, the character of God, and the nature of our religion – of Christianity – and the influence of

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the American people, religiously, at home and abroad. What sort of Christ is he who, while professing to die for the race, authorizes the exclusion of the coloured portion thereof—at least three fourths— from the commonest benefits of his salvation? Even such is the Christ of American pro-slavery religion. What is the character of that God who, giving a moral code from Sinai, right in the fitness of things, as well as because an emanation from himself and a transcript of his will, but who authorizes one fourth of those upon whom he makes that law binding to violate and trample under foot every precept and principle of that code, touching the other three fourths of their fellow men? Even that is the character of the Deity, as seen in the light—or the darkness— of a pro-slavery religion. How pure can that Church be which smiles upon, fondles, caresses, protects, and rejoices to defend, a system which cannot exist without turning out a million and three quarters of the women of the country to the unbridled lusts of the men who hold despotic power over them? some of these women, three hundred thousand, being owned by members of the Church, and some sixty thousand of these women being members of it too! Such is the purity of the American pro-slavery Church. What can be the nature of a religion with which all this is consistent, and a part of which it is? Just such is the nature of the pro-slavery religion of my native country; and, what is more grievous to add, just so far as it shall spread in heathen lands, just so far as it passes current in Europe, just so far does this blighting, withering influence go with it. Now, abolitionists— Christian abolitionists— in America, are contending as to whether the religion of Jesus, or that which is fashionable about them, shall prevail over themselves and their neighbours. They see that when a system of religion becomes so corrupt as to uphold and defend so abominable a system of iniquities as slavery, it is not to be trusted upon anything else. They know that if such a Church be not reformed it must become a sort of mother of harlots, and all manner of abominations. Whether that Church can be reformed or not is, with them, still a question; with me it is not. But I entreat the reader to look at the issue. It is not whether some men have wisely or unwisely pleaded this cause, nor whether their measures were commendable or not; nor merely, what shall be done with the Negro? It is, shall religion, pure and undefiled, prevail in the land; or shall a corrupt, spurious, human system, dishonouring to God and oppressive to man, have the prevalence? That is the issue, "before Israel and the sun."

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


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

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


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

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



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




 April 20, Wednesday, [1853](#): Generalissimo Antonio López de Santa Anna y Pérez de Lebrón returned from exile in Venezuela and was proclaimed President of [Mexico](#) with wide powers.

[Lewis Caleb Beck](#) died. During this year was published CATALOGUE OF THE CABINET OF NATURAL HISTORY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, AND OF THE HISTORICAL AND ANTIQUARIAN COLLECTION ANNEXED THERETO (a work on which he had been collaborating).



April 20: Saw a toad and a small snake.

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

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

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

Dear Austin.

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We could hardly eat any supper last night, we felt so badly to think you had'nt got the valise, and we talked all the time about it while we sat at the table, and called Mr Cutler names – Father says he "would like to reach him just long enough to cuff his ears." We do feel so badly about it, we dont know what to do. There were all your clothes in such beautiful order, and a cake of new maple sugar, and mother had with her own hand selected and polished the apples, she thought it would please you so. It is too bad – too bad. We do feel vexed about it. Mother thinks it is lost – she says you will never see it. Father thinks he would'nt dare to lose it, but is too selfish to trouble himself by sending you any word. Mother is so afraid that you will need the clothes, and wont know what to do without them, and Vinnie and I keep hoping, and trying to persuade her that you've got them before now.

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

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

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

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

Anna Warner died Tuesday night, and will be buried tomorrow, I suppose. They seem to feel very badly. She has been sick a great while now. You will not be surprised at hearing it.

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Mother wants me to tell you *from her* to get all the clothes you need at some good place in Boston, should you not find the valise. I hope you have got it before now. I should'nt think he *would lose* it, after all you have done for him. Mother says she can never look upon him again.



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



April 22, Friday, 1853: [Marietta Alboni](#) appeared in the title role of *Lucrezia Borgia*.



According to an unsigned report from the Congregationalist, reprinted on this day in Frederick Douglas' Paper, [UNCLE TOM'S CABIN](#) was selling as far away as Persia:

A YEAR'S WORK

Uncle Tom is now one year old. On the 20th of March, 1852, Messrs. John P. Jewett & Co. sold the first copy of the first edition. On the 20th of March, 1853, they



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had published 305,000 copies or – as only about 300 business days had transpired – they had sold (at the ordinary book-rate of one thousand copies to an edition) AN EDITION A DAY for that entire period. Sufficiently remarkable as this may appear, we learn from them – what is more remarkable still – that the demand continues without sensible abatement; nearly as many copies having been sold during the past month, as in any other month in the year. The work is now selling largely at the South, and constant orders are coming in from all parts of the world, Oregon, California, and Australia not excepted. The last foreign mail brought an order for the illustrated edition from Persia!



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR APRIL 22D]

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 April 23, Saturday, 1853: The *Monumental City* arrived in Sydney from San Francisco, by way of Tahiti, after a voyage of 65 days. With 90 passengers, this was the initial steamship to cross the Pacific Ocean (unfortunately, the ship would run aground near Mallacoota, Australia on May 15th with the loss of 37 lives).

The Japanese emperor was introduced to a Western audience:



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April 23, Saturday, [1853](#): In Placer, [California](#) the [Herald](#) reported on pay dirt being found in an ancient river channel at Rattlesnake Flat. “The village of Rattlesnake is situated on a beautiful flat on the North Fork of the American River about seven miles below Auburn. It is located near Manhattan, Horseshoe and Rattlesnake Bar. The mines in the channel, banks and bars of the river were worked in 1849 and were exceedingly rich, and large numbers of miners flocked to that portion of the river to work during the summer and fall seasons, but left again as soon as the winter rains set in, and no permanent settlements were made until after the discovery of the rich diggings in the flat on which the village now stands. Which discovery was made by John C. Barnett & Co., on the 19th day of April 1853. The first pan full of dirt washed by the happy discoverers after they reached the bed rock contained \$15.27. They then washed a bucket full of the dirt and obtained \$20.00.”

The [New York Illustrated News](#) depicted a fight between a bull and a bear that had been staged in the Algiers district of [New Orleans](#) (this “Algiers” district, now the 19th Ward, had been the [barracoon](#) for the city where slaves had been offloaded from slave ships to be fed and sleeked up before auction; it had been where Huguenots from Canada, such as “Evangeline,” had been initially housed upon their disembarcation from Nova Scotia).

[Henry Thoreau](#) arrived in [Haverhill](#).



April 23. Haverhill. — Martins [[Purple Martin](#)] [Progne subis](#)].



April 24, Sunday, [1853](#): The 430-ton 3-masted barque *Sacramento* that Captain William Holmes had brought from Deptford, England on December 22d, 1852 wrecked on Point Lonsdale while awaiting the tide before entering Port Phillip Bay, Australia — without losing any of its crewmembers or any of the 220 government immigrants who were aboard.

[Henry Thoreau](#), in [Haverhill](#), again in his journal referred to the figure “[Ossian](#).” He would use this material in his essay “[MOONLIGHT](#)”:

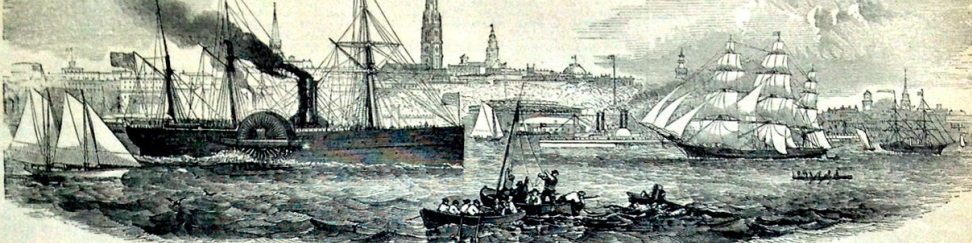


April 24. Sunday. To and around Creek Pond and back over Parsonage Hill, Haverhill. Field horse-tail in bloom. Marsh (?) hawk [Progne](#), with black tips of wings. Alders about all done. Green leaves just beginning to expand. Houstonias. How affecting that, annually at this season, as surely as the sun takes a higher course in the heavens, this pure and simple little flower peeps out and spots the great globe with white in our America, its four little white or bluish petals on a slender stalk making a delicate flower about a third of an inch in diameter! What a significant, though faint, utterance of spring through the veins of earth!

I see, in a pool by the Creek Brook, pretty chains of toad-spawn in double parallel crenate or serpentine or sometimes corkscrewing lines of black ova, close together, immersed in a light-colored jelly a third of an inch in diameter, appearing as if the two strings were one, like a lace with two scalloped black borders. This is what they were singing about.

Haverhill is remarkably bare of trees. The young ladies cannot tell where is the nearest woods. I saw the moon rise here tonight over great bare hills eastward, and it reminded me of [Ossian](#). Saw a pretty islet in the Creek Pond on the east side covered with white pine wood, appearing from the south higher than wide and as if the trees grew out of the water. You saw the light-colored trunks six or eight feet beneath, and then the heavy green mass overhung the water a rod, under and beyond which you see the light surface of the pond, which gives the isle a peculiarly light and floating appearance. So much beauty does a wooded islet add to a pond. It is an object sufficiently central and *insular*. Dandelions. How surprising this bright-yellow disk! Why study other hieroglyphics? It is along the

ILLUSTRATED NEWS.

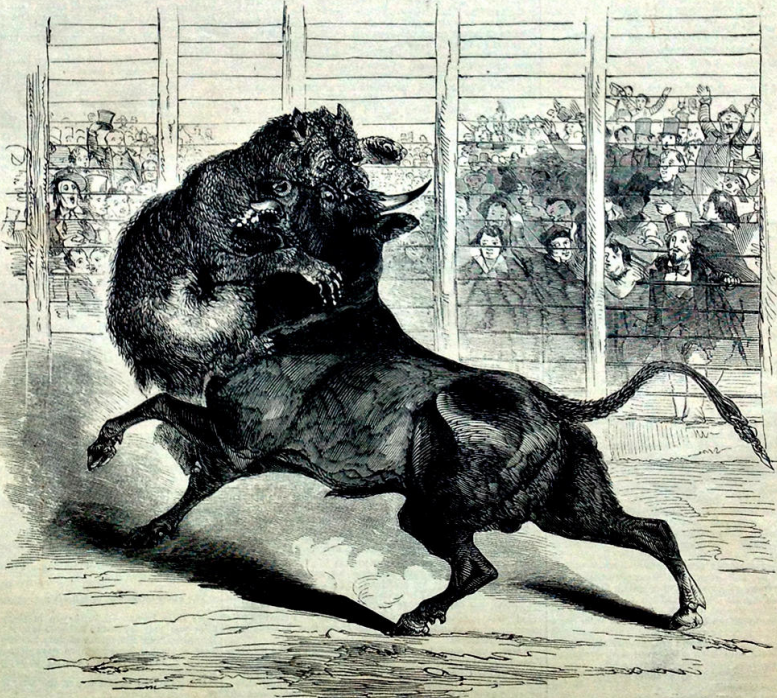


No. 17. VOL. I. NEW YORK, SATURDAY, APRIL 23, 1853. PRICE SIX CENTS.

BULL AND BEAR FIGHT.—PRIZE FIGHTING.
 A species of cruel Spanish amusement has been allowed to take place recently in New Orleans, which has received the well-merited reprobation of the intelligent press throughout the United States. Were it not that our position, as journalists, requires a portraiture of all that is remarkable in our land, we should be loth to publish any incident so calculated to blight the good name of our sister city. But we regret to add that the fair fame of our northern cities, and of European cities, have not been less sullied, though in a different manner. Prize fighting, between reasonable men, has taken place again and again near our northern cities, and has resulted in the death and disfigurement of the participants, and who shall say that the cruelty of the former exceeds that of the latter—that the ten thousand citizens assembled to see a brutal prize fight are not more degraded in their tastes than a Spanish population, delighting themselves over the cruelty of a bull and bear fight. This amusement is not confined to the Atlantic cities. It first commenced in California, and attracted crowds of spectators, taking best among the mining population. There, as here, the intelligent portion of the press raised a strong voice against the inhuman practice, and, of late, it has there fallen into disrepute, and has almost wholly ceased. Such we know must be the result here. We have too much confidence in the good sense of our citizens to suppose that such revolting scenes can be tolerated any length of time.
 Our correspondent at New Orleans has not failed to supply us with a faithful sketch of the encounter, to which we append his own version of the affair. The excellence of the sketch almost challenges forgiveness of its subject.
 "In the arena was a cage about thirty feet square and twelve feet high, built of timber, grated, with bars of iron; in it stood a large powerful dark slate colored bull, Napoleon 4th—sole-

march of that establishment. By the side of this stood another cage, with a large and powerful grizzly bear, which would weigh about four or five cwt., and would stand from three and a half to four feet high, with a lank sort of India-rubber movement and action about him—about half devil. We had just time to notice the preparatory arrangements, when the crowd from outside broke through; in rushed several thousand people; they flew like magic on to the top of the large cage, which was covered with boards, so that the cage was soon surrounded and covered

and making a low bellow; the bear, in the meantime, walking round by the bars of the cage, with a deep low howl. After going quite round the cage, and finding it all secure, he stopped, and his eyes began to fire up. The bull by this time appeared to be up to the boiling pitch of rage, unable longer to bear the insolence of the bear. At him he plunged. The bear struck the bull's ear; this enraged the bull, who made another plunge at the bear—the bear, not counting exactly on the sport, got entangled on the bull's horns, buried his teeth in the upper side of the bull's head; the bull, however, whirled him off. After they had time to breathe awhile, they were stirred up with long poles. The bull made a desperate drive at the bear, knocked him on his back, jumped on him length-ways.—There the two were—head to head. The bear opening his paws quick as a flash of lightning, took the bull, clasped one paw each side of his head, grasped his nose with his tusks, and in this position held and hugged the bull—both bear and bull kicking with their hind feet, the bear still sticking to his embrace.—After remaining some minutes in this position, during which time the blood flowed profusely, the bull, suspecting that the bear was snoking rather too much of his life, made a desperate effort, and cleared himself. An other short respite, and the bull was again warmed up to the scratch. The bear missing his hold, the bull caught him in the eye. The bear was perfectly savage. At it they went again; the bull threw the bear six or eight feet into the air, the bear fell and pretended to be dead. The bull, not being satisfied with these pretensions, drove at him again—the bear grabbed him by the nose, and another hug ensued. The bull extricated himself, and at the bear he went until Bruin sneaked into a corner, out of which he could neither be coaxed, hattered, nor driven. The bull set up a loud bellow, as he proudly walked about the cage, pawing. The excited multitude gave one long, loud yell for Napoleon 4th, and departed."



BULL AND BEAR FIGHT, NEW ORLEANS.

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NOLA DNA, LLC.

east side of this pond that the Indians are said to have taken their way with Hannah Dustin and her nurse in 1697 toward the Merrimack. I walked along it and thought how they might have been



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ambuscaded.



April 25, Monday, [1853](#): At the opening of the new Normal Musical Institute in New-York, the introductory address was delivered by its director, Lowell Mason.

There was a blaze on the [California](#) Wharf at the corner of Drumm Street in San Francisco, resulting in a loss of \$22,000. At another fire, on Stockton Street near Union Street, there was a loss of \$20,000.

The [Democratic State Journal](#) of [California](#) reported yet another fortunate gold strike: “A friend on whom we can rely informed us yesterday of another of those pieces of good fortune which are known only in California by the laboring man. Three miners were plastering up their old log cabin, on Jackass Gulch, about a week or two ago, when they perceived gold in the dirt which they were handling, taken only at a distance of a few feet from the cabin. They immediately dug out a panful of dirt, in which they discovered 40 dollars worth of pure gold. They, of course, sought farther, and discovered a vein of decomposed quartz, very rich, which they have been working ever since. For a week past they have taken out *from three to five pounds of gold per diem*. The vein is about eight inches square, and contains several pounds of gold to the foot. They have only to take out the decomposed rock, burn it, and then beat it up in a mortar, which releases the precious metal. If their lead holds out only a short time longer, they will be comparatively rich men.”



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



April 26, Tuesday, [1853](#): William Pratt, owner of a general store, blacksmith shop, and cotton gin in “Prattsburg,” [North Carolina](#), and [Dr. Bartlett Leonidas Snipes Durham](#), who had a farm plot near Pinhook,⁸⁷ had competed to provide the railroad with a plot of ground for a depot halfway between the depot in Morrisville and the one in Hillsborough, and Dr. Durham had won with a 5-acre plot of otherwise worthless ground. On this day at this [Durham Station](#) a branch office of the United States Post Office opened for business.

Dutch King William III disbanded the 2d Chamber.

A party of Mormons that had departed from Liverpool on February 28th, 1853 had arrived at New Orleans on the previous day. Their elder Christopher Arthur wrote this report home:

Dear President S.W. Richards – We have just arrived at New Orleans, and it is with a heart truly grateful to God my Eternal Father, for all his multiplied mercies, that I now sit down to pen you a few items of our voyage across the great Atlantic. Never I believe since the days of old Captain Noah, until the present emigration, has a more respectable company of Saints crossed the wide deluge of waters, to be freed from Babylon’s corruptions, than has sailed in the International.

I am happy to say that my right hand counselor, Elder [John] Lyon, in conjunction with Elder [Richard E.] Waddington, has greatly aided me in carrying out the following measures, which have greatly contributed to our comfort and happiness, during

87. “Pinhook,” a synonym for “petty, small-time,” indicated “to act as a pinhooker, ... a small-time speculator in farm products, esp. tobacco, esp. one who buys directly from farmers” (this was roughly on the spot that is now the traffic circle of Erwin Tower).

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our voyage.

After we left the shores of old England, we entered into the following order – I summoned a meeting of all the priesthood, and when we had ascertained the number and standing of each person, we divided the ship into eight wards, and appointed six traveling elders for the steerage, and two elders for the second cabin, each elder holding his ward as a branch of the International Conference, and having authority over the same, to hold meetings each morning, and otherwise to preside over all their affairs, spiritual and temporal. These elders were to be held amenable to the general council, in seeing after the Saints' welfare, and were to report the same, every Thursday evening, viz., state of health, sickness, behavior, standing, &c. They were to be assisted by a priest or teacher, in carrying out the above measures.

I also appointed meetings to be held every evening for worship, testimony bearing, teaching, &c., under the prescribed order, which was carried fully into effect.

The Saints, without exception, have enjoyed a great amount of the Spirit of God, and our hearts have been made to rejoice in the gifts and blessings of the Holy Ghost, such as speaking in tongues, interpretation, prophesying, and in a flood of intelligence being poured out upon us in rich effusion through the priesthood. These things and the good conduct of the Saints, have had a happy result in bringing many to a knowledge of the truth. And I am now glad to inform you, that we have baptized all on board, except three persons. We can number the captain, first and second mates, with eighteen of the crew, most of whom intend going right through to the Valley. The carpenter, and eight of the seamen, are Swedish, German, and Dutch. There are two negroes, and others from Otaheite, & c. Many of them have already testified to the truth of this work, and are rejoicing in the anticipation of building up Zion.

The others baptized, were friends of the brethren. The number baptized in all is forty-eight, since we left our native shores. The captain is truly a noble, generous-hearted man; and to his honor I can say that no man every left Liverpool with a company of Saints, more beloved by them, or who has been more friendly and social than he has been with us; indeed, words are inadequate to express his fatherly care over us as a people, our welfare seemed to be near to his heart.

The whole ship's company have been free from sickness of any kind, except the ordinary malady of seasickness, which was of no consequence materially, to those afflicted. We have had five weeks of headwinds and some heavy gales, in which our good ship was nearly tossed upside down, having only distanced in that time about 1400 miles from Liverpool. But, wonderful to relate, in fifteen days we nearly reached the mouth of the Mississippi, sailing most days at the rate of 220 miles per twenty-four hours. The sea and the winds seemed to conspire together, to frustrate your prophesyings concerning us, still my mind reverted to your words which inspired me with faith to look for the fulfilment of them, for which I am truly thankful to our God.

On the 6th of April, we held the twenty-third anniversary of the organization of the Church, which was, in our circumstances, a splendid affair. Early in the morning, a goodly number of



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brethren assembled on the forecastle, and fired six rounds of musketry, to usher in our festivities. At half-past ten we marched in regular procession to the poop deck, in the following order – president and counselors with sashes, and white rosettes on their breast, who took their seats with their backs to the main-mast. After them followed twelve young men appropriately robed, each with a white rod in his hand, with sashes, rosettes, &c. Then followed twelve young women mostly dressed in light dresses, each holding in her hand a scroll of white paper, bearing the significant motto, "Utah's rights," adorned with ribands and white rosettes. The young men took their seats on the right hand of the presidency, and the young women on the left. Then followed twelve old, venerable men, dressed similar to the young men, each carrying a Bible and Book of Mormon in his hand, led on by Father [George P.] Waugh, who read portions out of each book, illustrative of this latter-day work.

We then took the Sacrament, and attended to the celebration of four marriages, which finished our forenoon service.

At two o'clock we met, and took our seats as formerly, and after an address from the president, songs, speeches, and recitations, commemorative of the occasion, followed in due order for three hours. Henry Maibin, from Brighton, composed and sung a song graphically and wittily portraying our happy company, and our progress from Liverpool.

In the evening we met on the quarter deck, and skipped the light fantastic toe, to a late hour. During the whole day, everything was done with the highest decorum, and I can say to the credit of the company that a more harmonious festival was never before held on the high seas.

I am happy to state with regard to our provisions that no complaints have been made, most considering the provision to be good and ample. And in their name we have to return you heartfelt gratitude and thanks for the exercise of that sagacity which God has so amply blessed you with, in providing for their wants, and otherwise in your choice of a vessel so well fitted to promote the health and comfort of all concerned.

I never enjoyed so much of the Spirit of God since I entered the Church of Jesus Christ, as I have with this company of Saints. I rejoice to say that my right hand counselor, Elder John Lyon, is one of the best men I have met with, and I hope we shall be near neighbors when we reach the Valley of the Great Salt Lake. Elder Richard Waddington has been unwell, he has now recovered, and is taking an active part in connection with all the priesthood.

I hope, to baptize Brother (Captain) Brown's wife, before I leave New Orleans.

I am happy to say we called Brother Brown with other of the officers of the ship, to office – Brother Brown to the office of elder.

Now, dear brother, with these few items of our procedure, I beg to conclude, praying God our Eternal Father to bless you abundantly for all you have done for us, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Yours, affectionately,



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Christopher Arthur



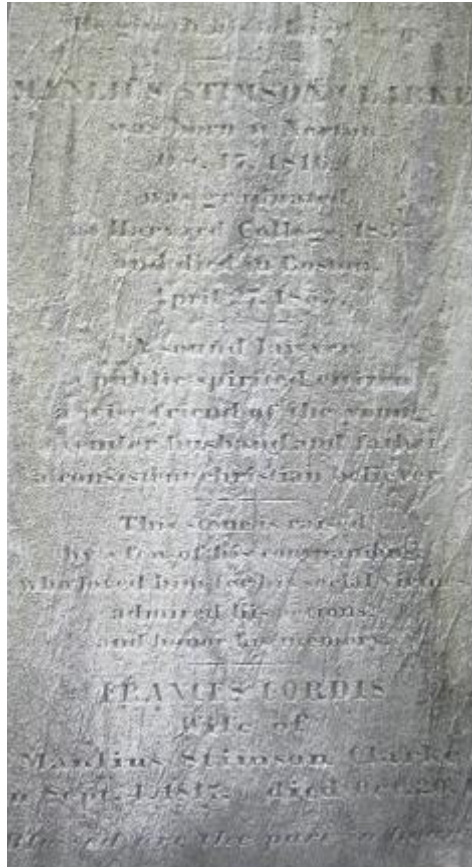
[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR APRIL 26TH]

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April 27, Wednesday, 1853: [Manlius Stimson Clarke](#) died in [Boston](#) at the age of 37 (the record seems to be silent, as to the disease that had caused this untimely demise).



His gravestone in Forest Hills Cemetery in the Jamaica Plain section of Boston, if you would care to visit, is now near that of the poet e e cummings, closely related.




[Henri-Frédéric Amiel](#), who would be referred to as the “Swiss [Thoreau](#),” wrote in his *JOURNAL INTIME*: “This evening I read the treatise by Nicole so much admired by Mme. de Sévigné: “Des moyens de conserver la paix avec les hommes.” Wisdom so gentle and so insinuating, so shrewd, piercing, and yet humble, which divines so well the hidden thoughts and secrets of the heart, and brings them all into the sacred bondage of love to God and man, how good and delightful a thing it is! Everything in it is smooth, even well put together, well thought out, but no display, no tinsel, no worldly ornaments of style. The moralist forgets himself and in us appeals only to the conscience. He becomes a confessor, a friend, a counsellor.”

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The Dutch bark *John Van Hoorn* arrived at [Hong Kong](#) and passenger Hosea Stout, a Mormon, recorded “We had a fine sail through the group of Islands in the midst of which Hong Kong was situated and arrived in harbor at three p.m. where we had a fine view of the shipping and the city of Victoria which is situated on the side hill. ... We had scarcely dropped anchor before the deck was covered with chinees men and women as well as professional whites who were seeking for an opportunity to make a drive on the Green Horns. While the china men were seeking employment and the women also were soliciting our washing patronage, while others came forward to bargain off their professional sex to the crew and all whom it concerned at the lowest possible rates, which seemed on board to range at about one dollar each. The custom far exceeding the patronage even at that [crossed out] reduced rates, and I was informed by those who said they knew by experience, that in the city such services could be procured for from ten to twenty cents.”



April 27: Haverhill. — The warbling vireo [**Warbling Vireo**  *Vireo gilvus*].

Talked with a fisherman at the Burrough [*sic*], who was cracking and eating walnuts on a post before his hut. He said he got twenty cents a stick for saving marked logs, which were mostly owned at Lowell, but trees that fell in and whatever was not marked belonged to them. Much went by in the ice and could not be got. They haul it in and tie it. He called it Little Concord where I lived. They got some small stuff which came from that river, and said he knew the ice, it was blue (it is not) and was turned over by the falls. The Lawrence dam breaks up the ice so now that it will not be so likely to jam below and produce a freshet. Said a thousand dollars' damage was done by a recent freshet to the farm just above, at the great bend. The wind blowing on to the shore ate it away, trees and all. In the greatest freshet he could remember, methinks about ten years ago, the water came up to his window-sill. His family took refuge on the hillside. His barn was moved and tipped over, his well filled up, and it took him, with help, a day or more to clear a passage through the ice from his door to his well. His trees were all prostrated by the ice. This was apparently between twenty and thirty feet above the present level. Says the railroad bridge hurts the fishing; by stopping the ice and wearing away and deepening the channel near the north shore, where they fish, — draw their seines. Call it sixty rods wide, — their seines being thirty rods long, — and twenty-five feet deep in the middle.

Interesting to me are their habits and conversation who live along the shores of a great river. The shore, here some seventy or eighty feet high, is broken by gullies, more or less sandy, where water has flowed down, and the cottages rise not more than one sixth or one seventh the way up.



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

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

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



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



April 29, Friday, 1853: The Daily Dispatch of Richmond, Virginia arrived at the conclusion that in Charleston, South Carolina, enslavement was just as pleasant a situation for people of color, as was freedom for white Americans:

SLAVES IN CHARLESTON. — A correspondent of the National Intelligencer, writing from Charleston, says that "the slaves in and about Charleston appear to be the happiest creatures that ever walked the earth." That is just exactly the truth; and they not only appear so, but are indeed what they seem. The climate suits them, and they have little to do, which suits them just as well, and Horace Greeley, and Aunt Stowe, and all the tribe of dark-skinned philosophers put together, with all the schemes and inventions they ever have conceived, or ever may, cannot make them happier.

By the calculations of Captain George Sheppard (or Shepherd) at noon, his barque *Rebecca* was still a good 200 miles west of Van Diemen's Land. However, at about 9PM, coasting along at 8 and a half knots in stiff north-westerly breezes, the vessel ran aground without warning about quarter of a mile offshore about 10 miles south of the Arthur River. At about 10PM the vessel rolled over onto its beam-ends. A boat containing the master's wife, a ship's boy, and 7 of the crew capsized and but 3 of the crew managed to get ashore.

It was reported that when Gerrit Smith had been elected to Congress, he had been advised by Henry C. Wright not to associate with congressmen who held slaves. Instead, Wright had urged, demand that Congress expel these men. And if it fail so to do, resign and return home. But Smith and his wife had come from slaveholding families, and Smith's brother currently held slaves, and these slaveholding Congressmen were welcomed into Smith's home although he of course made it very clear to such guests that he was boycotting all commodities

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produced through the labor of enslaved persons. This came as no surprise to Wright, who had commented on April 15, 1840 that “Bro. Smith is influenced — it may be unconsciously.... His conscience and reason are with nonresistance, but his circumstances battle against it.”



The Junta Cubana of New-York called on a former associate of Narciso López, General John A. Quitman, to lead yet another American invasion of [Cuba](#), proposing that as his reward for success he would become “exclusive chief of our revolution, not only in its military, but also in its civil sense.”

Frederick Douglass’ Paper announced Mrs. Stowe’s “The Key to Uncle Tom’s Cabin,” and printed a letter that Martin Delany had posted from Pittsburgh on April 15th, and took notice of the fact that half a million antislavery tracts had been produced:

American Slavery, like every other form of wickedness, has a strong desire just to be left alone; and slaveholders, above all other preachers, to whom we ever listened, insist most strongly on the duty of every man’s minding his own business. They are sure that to drag slavery out of its natural darkness, will only rivet the fetters more firmly on their slaves; still, they have very strong reasons against coming to the light. “Let us declare,” said a Carolina journal, some years ago, “that the subject of slavery is not and shall not be open to discussion within our borders — that the moment any preacher or private citizen shall attempt to enlighten us on that subject, his tongue shall be cutout and cast upon a dung hill?” Unlike Ajax, the cry is, give us but darkness, and slavery asks no more. “Mind your own business,” said the late Mr. Clay to Mr. Mendenhall. “Look at home,” said the amiable Mrs. Julia Gardner [wife of]

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Ex-President John Tyler, of Virginia, to the Duchess of Sutherland. Well, there is a good deal in the idea of one's minding his own business; and we are not sure that, if that idea were fully carried out, it would not abolish slavery. — Suppose every slaveholder should some day resolve to mind his own business, take care of his own concerns, be at the pains and industry of providing for his own wants with his own hands, or with the money obtained by his own energies — and suppose he should say to his slaves, "follow my example, mind your own business, don't look after mine, but look after your own business in your own way" — why, just here would be the end of slavery. Slaveholders preach to others this doctrine while they are themselves most grossly and scandalously intermeddling with the business of others to the utter neglect of their own.

It is noticeable, too, that the complaint of interference is never preferred against any of our sainted priesthood who bulwark the system with the gospel. These holy Doctors are held to be very properly employed. It is only your hot-headed men who think a "nigger" has rights as well as a white man — that a slave is as good as his master — who are supposed to need counsel to mind their own business.

But to return. Slavery dreads exposure. The light, which strengthens other systems, weakens slavery; and slaveholders know this very well. The wonder is, that, knowing it so well, they do not more skilfully manage their affairs. It is surprising that they allow such fiendish advertisements to find their way into their public journals — permit such bloody enactments to stain their statute books — and, publicly, commit such shocking atrocities as fill the pages of the "*Thousand Witnesses*," and swell the volume of the "*Key*" to "*Uncle Tom's Cabin*." Some one should call attention to this unguarded point. How would it do, instead of advertising in the everywhere circulating newspaper for "blood-hounds to *hunt slaves*," "*cash for negroes*," &c.;, to use small hand-bills for the purpose? These would not come North, telling their tales of misery on the one hand, and of deep wickedness on the other. Then, too, would it not be well to repeal most of the laws regulating the whipping, branding, ironing, shooting, stabbing, hanging and quartering, of slaves? Could not all these ends be attained without their being provided for in the statute book? Could not "the spirit" be retained without "the letter?" For it is "the letter" which, in this instance, is deadly — while "the spirit" of these laws is the life of the system of slavery. We should not be surprised if some such suggestions prevailed at the South; for slavery cannot bear to be looked at. The slaveholder must become a madman, and forget the eyes of just men and of a just God, when he burns his name into the flesh of a woman.

Bold and incorrigible as slaveholders, generally, are, they are, nevertheless, far from being indifferent to the good opinions of their fellow-men. They are seldom found willing to acknowledge themselves cruel, or wanting at all in the sentiments of humanity. On the contrary, none are more anxious than they to be regarded as kind and humane. Hence, they are ever anticipating objections to the slave system, by asserting the mildness of the treatment of their slaves, the excellency of their condition and the quiet of their minds. The best of



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them, however, would find the presence, for any considerable time, of a Northern man of anti-slavery principles on their plantations, watching the intercourse between themselves and their contented and happy, unpaid laborers, very inconvenient and irksome! No. Masters should be seen apart from their slaves. They find it easier to commend slavery in its absence, than when confronted by its ugly features.

Willingly enough are these slaveholding gentlemen and ladies to be seen at Saratoga Springs, at Niagara, where they are arrayed in purple and fine linen, and are covered with silks, satins and broadcloth – their hands shining with gold, and their bosoms sparkling with diamonds. Their manner is so genteel – their conversation so winning – their smiles are full of kindness, that they easily make their way, win friends, and conceal their abominations. But bring them out from their hiding place – tear off the gold with which their sin is plated, and they stand out, by all the deductions of reason, morality, and religion, naked pirates before God and man, guilty of cruelty which might make a devil blush. Concealment, then, is the constant care of slaveholders. To see a slave speaking to a Northern man throws them into agony. So anxious are they to retain the secrets of the slave prison, that they denounce death against any in their midst who undertakes to reveal them.

But all efforts to conceal the enormity of slavery fail. The most unwise thing which, perhaps, was ever done by slaveholders, in order to hide the ugly features of slavery, was the calling in question, and denying the truthfulness of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." They had better have owned the "soft impeachment" therein contained – for the "KEY" not only proves the correctness of every essential part of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," but proves more and worse things against the murderous system than are alleged in that great book. Since the publication of that repository of human [illegible] – "The Testimony of a Thousand Witnesses" – there has not been an exposure of slavery so terrible as the Key to "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Let it be circulated far and wide, at home and abroad; let young and old read it, think of it, and learn from it to hate slavery with unappeasible intensity. The book, then, will be not only a Key to "Uncle Tom's Cabin," but a key to unlock the prison-house for the deliverance of millions who are now pining in chains, crying, "HOW LONG! HOW LONG! O LORD GOD [illegible]! HOW LONG SHALL THESE THINGS BE?"

...

FREDERICK DOUGLASS, ESQ: DEAR SIR: – I "throw in" this note, between the three letters which I promised you in regular succession.

It is now certain, that the Rev. JOSIAH HENSON, of Dawn, Canada West, is the real Uncle Tom, the Christian hero, in Mrs. Stowe's far-famed book of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Mr. Henson is well known to both you and I, and what is said of him in Mrs. S.'s "Key," as far as we are acquainted with the man, and even the opinion we might form of him from our knowledge of his character, we know, or at least believe, to be true to the letter.

Now, what I simply wish to suggest to you, is this: Since Mrs. Stowe and Messrs. Jewett & Co., Publishers, have realized so great an amount of money from the sale of a work founded upon this good old man, whose living testimony has to be brought to

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sustain this great book – and believing that the publishers have realized five dollars to the authoress' one – would it be expecting too much to suggest, that they – the publishers – present Father Henson – for by that name we all know him – with at least five thous. – no, I won't name any particular sum – but a portion of the profits? I do not know what you may think about it; but it strikes me that this would be but just and right.

I have always thought that George and Eliza were Mr. Henry Bibb and his first wife, with the character of Mr. Lewis Hayden, his wife Harriet and little son, who also effected their escape from Kentucky, under the auspices of Delia Webster, and that martyr philanthropist, Calvin Fairbanks, now incarcerated in a Kentucky States' prison dungeon. I say the person of Bibb with the character of Hayden; because, in personal appearance of stature and color, as well as circumstances, Bibb answers precisely to George; while he stood quietly by, as he tells us in his own great narrative – and it is a great book – with a hoe in his hand, begging his master to desist, while he *stripped his wife's clothes off* (!!!) and lacerated her flesh, until the blood flowed in pools at her feet! To the contrary, had this been Hayden – who, by the way, is not like Bibb nearly white, but black – he would have buried the hoe deep in the master's skull, laying him lifeless at his feet.

I am of the opinion, that Mrs. Stowe has draughted largely on all of the best fugitive slave narratives – at least on Douglass', Brown's, Bibb's, and perhaps Clark's, as well as the living Household of old Father Henson; but of this I am not competent to judge, not having as yet read "Uncle Tom's Cabin," my wife having told me the most I know about it. But these draughts on your narratives, clothed in Mrs. Stowe's own language, only makes her work the more valuable, as it is the more truthful.

The "negro language," attributed to Uncle Tom by the authoress, makes the character more natural for a slave; but I would barely state, that Father Josiah Henson makes use of as good language, as anyone in a thousand Americans.

The probability is, that either to make the story the more effecting, or to conceal the facts of the old man's still being alive, Mrs. Stowe closed his earthly career in New Orleans; but a fact which the publishers may not know: *Father Henson is still a slave* by the laws of the United States – a fugitive slave in Canada. It may be but justice to him to say, that I have neither seen nor heard directly or indirectly from Father Henson since September, 1851 – then, I was in Toronto, Canada.

The person of Father Henson will increase the valuation of Mrs. Stowe's work very much in England, as he is well known, and highly respected there. His son, Josiah Henson, Jr., is still in England, having accompanied his father there in the winter of 1850.

I may perhaps have made freer use of your and the other names herein mentioned, than what was altogether consonant with your feelings; but I didn't ask you – that's all. Yours for God and Humanity.

M.R. DELANY.



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PITTSBURGH, April 15th, 1853.

“STRIKE THE IRON WHILE IT IS HOT”

AMONGST the means recently adapted to expose the dreadful iniquities of Slavery, none has been more efficacious than the well-known publication, *Uncle Tom's Cabin; or, Negro Life in the Slave States of America*. — The gratitude of the Christian public is especially due to the gifted authoress for that production of her graphic pen. Her name will be chronicled amongst the most [...] benefactors of the human race, and recurred to with feelings of the highest imitation and esteem, when the memory of those who have soaked the earth with human gore will be remembered with abhorrence, or consigned to oblivion.

Mrs. Stowe's Work has come down upon the dark abodes of human bondage like the morning sunlight, unfolding to view the enormities of slavery in a manner which has fastened all over upon them, and awakened sympathy in hearts unused to feel. Day by day, and hour by hour throughout the civilized world, sympathy is diminishing for the oppressor, and increasing for its victims. — Never since the abolition of Colonial Slavery has there existed so deep and powerful an anti-slavery feeling as at the present moment.

The touching, but too truthful tale of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, has rekindled the slumbering embers of anti-slavery zeal into active flame. Its recitals have baptized with holy fire myriads who before cared nothing for the bleeding slave. Where is the heart it has not roused into indignation or melted into tears? It is extremely desirable that this feeling should not be allowed to pass hastily away, without its leading to practical results. The old adage, "Strike the iron while it is hot," seems especially applicable to the present moment. Some immediate means must be adopted to strengthen the impression, and fix it indelibly on the public mind, till slavery be eradicated. Now, it is the press we have to thank as the medium for calling forth much of this feeling, and as the press ever remains to be one of the mightiest instrumentalities that can be employed in the annihilation of systems of cruelty, despotism, it has been resolved to embrace the present favorable opportunity for a general distribution of Anti-Slavery Tracts, and to issue not less 500,000, as it is only by printing largely that they can be done very cheap. Printed in this ratio they can be supplied to the public at a very low cost.




April 29: Return to Concord. At Natural History Rooms in Boston. Have I seen the least bittern [**Least Bittern** **Ixobrychus exilis**]? It is so brown above and yellowish, woolly, white beneath. The American goshawk [**Goshawk** **Accipiter gentilis** (**Cape Eagle**, **Partridge Hawk**)] is slate above, gray beneath; the young spotted dark and white beneath, and brown above. Fish hawk [**Osprey** **Pandion haliaetus** (**Fish Eagle** or **Fish Hawk**)], white beneath. Young of marsh hawk [**Northern Harrier** **Circus cyaneus** (**Hen Harrier** or **Frog Hawk**) Marsh hawk], reddish-brown above, iron-rusty beneath. Summer duck [**Wood Duck** **Aix sponsa** (summer duck)] with a crest. Dusky duck [**Black Duck** **Anas rubripes** (**Dusky Duck**)], not black, but rather dark brown. The velvet ducks [White-winged Scoter **Melanitta fusca** (**Velvet Duck**) (eoot)] I saw, hardly large enough for this. My whiter ducks may be the *Merganser castor*, or the red-breasted [**Red-breasted**



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Merganser  *Mergus serrator*].

 April 30, Saturday, 1853: The Placer, California Herald reported that Mr. Barnett who had a claim at Rattlesnake Bar, who had previously communicated with them, had recently sent in some dirt richly studded with gold. A Placer townsman had visited this claim a few days since, had for curiosity washed out a pan of its dirt, which to his surprise had yielded \$5.15. Meanwhile the Placerville Herald, evidently a different gazette, reported that at the small mining town of White Rock – “so called because of a ridge of beautiful white quartz, that appears above the surface, and is so purely white, that its reflection becomes really painful to the eyes of the passer over when the sun shines vertically upon it,” more than 30 tom heads of water per day from the South Fork Canal was being used at a single locality known as White Rock Diggingsn about 3 miles to the east or north-east of the town, and there was “quite a brisk trade with the miners in and beyond the town, along the line of the Canal” — “men are steadily but surely ‘making their pile’.”

The Daily Dispatch of Richmond, Virginia passed along an unsigned report out of the pages of the National Democrat:

MRS. HARRIET BEECHER STOWE'S CHARITY. — There was recently a family of thirty slaves in Virginia which the owner offered to sell into freedom at a very small price, and some benevolent parties in Philadelphia undertook to raise the amount by subscription. The facts were presented by letter to Mrs. Sigourney, who immediately enclosed twenty five dollars for the object. Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe was also written to, and of course she responded by sending a very large amount of money for the “glorious purpose.” She had just realized an immense fortune by her abolitionism; she was on the eve of starting for England, to be feted by the Duchess of Sutherland, and caressed by the hand of the nobility, and of course she gave a ‘very’ large sum to purchase these thirty slaves. No, good reader, she gave not one cent. She sent back a letter, full of sweet sympathy, abounding with the charity of advice and approval, but as empty of money as her own face is of shame at the contemptable [sic] part she is now playing in England of forging a State's evidence against her country. “No, she had no money for the poor slave.” As her eminent friend and co-laborer, Mr. Aminidab Sleek, would say, “It is not in our way.” Her “mission” is to make money out of negro philanthropy, and not for it. — National Democrat



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Around 4AM the barque *Rebecca*, wrecked a quarter of a mile off the shore of [Van Diemen's Land](#) about 10 miles south of the Arthur River, began to break up. Those still surviving attempted to get ashore using floating wreckage. In total 11 were successful, but Captain George Sheppard (or Shepherd) was drowned as his wife had been. Chief Officer William Hirkus took command of the 11 survivors. Recovering the bodies of the 9 who had drowned, they buried them above the high tide mark. Eventually they were able to kill some kangaroos and start a fire and cook them. They came across a friendly dog that had a collar and, tying a message to its collar, drove it away. Government surveyor Gordon Burgess and his party would see this note and find the 11 survivors 23 days after they had been cast away. They would be led overland to Woolnorth, and the cutter *David Howie* would convey them to Circular Head.

The Lewis County Bank at Martinsburgh, [New York](#) was capitalized at \$100,000.

Samuel A. Jackman was born in Madison, Wisconsin.

[Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed, for [Frances R. Gourgas](#), some land conveyed by E.R. [Elizabeth Rockwood?] Hoar probably from the Agricultural Society land on Bedford Street between New Hill Burying Ground and Reuben Brown's.

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

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

(The official copy of this survey of course had become the property of the person or persons who had hired this Concord town surveyor to do their surveying work during the 19th Century. Such materials have yet to be recovered.)

View this particular personal working draft of a survey in fine detail:

http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_surveys/44.htm



[Thoreau](#) surveyed for the Mill Dam Company, showing their land with buildings, additions, and elevations. He showed the Mill Brook as Bound-In Brook under the present Anderson's Store on the Mill Dam. This work continued into October-November 1855.

View this particular survey in fine detail:

http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_surveys/88a.htm



April 30. Concord. — Cultivated cherry in bloom.

Moses Emerson, the kind and gentlemanly man who assisted and looked after me in Haverhill, said that a good horse was worth \$75, and all above was fancy, and that when he saw a man driving a fast horse he expected he would fail soon.

The Reverend [Samuel Ringgold Ward](#) sighted the coast of Ireland:

On Saturday, the last day of April, we saw land on the coast of Ireland. We then moved gracefully along the coast of Wales, telegraphed our approach at Holyhead, took a pilot early on Sunday morning, and, at eleven o'clock precisely, anchored in the Mersey, after a passage of ten days, fifteen hours, and fifteen minutes, mean time. I was in England — the England of my former reading, and my ardent admiration. I was at Liverpool — that Liverpool whose merchants, but sixty years before, had

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mobbed Clarkson for prying into and exposing the secret inhumanities of their slave trade. I was in a land of freedom, of true equality. I did not feel as some blacks say they felt, upon landing – that I was, for the first time in my life, a man. No, I always felt that; however wronged, maltreated, outraged – still, a man. Indeed, the very bitterness of what I had suffered at home consisted chiefly in the consciousness I always carried with me of being an equal man to any of those who trampled upon me.

My first experience of English dealing was in being charged treble fare by a Liverpool cabman, a race with which I have had much to do since. Acting upon the advice given me by John Laidlaw, Esq., I went to Clayton Square, where I found good quarters at Mr. Brown's very genteel Temperance Hotel. The Rev. Dr. Willis had very kindly given me a note of introduction to the master of the Grecian Hotel; but I found no reason to desire a change, and therefore remained, while in Liverpool, where I first lodged.

Several things arrested my attention upon the first day of my being in England. One was, the comfort and cleanliness, not to say the elegance of appearance, presented by the working classes. I had always, in the United States, heard and read of the English working classes as being ground down to the very earth – as being far worse in their condition than the American slaves. Their circumstances, in the rural and the factory districts, I had always heard described as the most destitute. That they wrought for sixpence a day I had been informed by I know not how many Americans, who had visited England. How many times have I heard from the lips of American protectionists, and seen in the columns of their journals, statements such as this – “If we do not maintain a protection tariff, English manufacturers, who pay their operatives but sixpence a day, will flood our markets with their products, and the factory operative in America will, in consequence, be compelled to work for sixpence a day, as the English operative now does”! When I was an American protectionist, how I used to “take up that parable,” and, believing it, repeat it! How others with me believed the same too often told falsehood! Here was before me, in Lancashire and her noble port – Lancashire, the head quarters of British, if not European, factory interest – almost a manufacturing kingdom in itself – a most abundant refutation of what, on this subject, I had nearly a thousand times heard, read, believed, and repeated.

But this was Sunday. The next day, having occasion to cross the Mersey, I saw nearly as many well-dressed working men, with their wives and sweethearts, enjoying the holiday of that Monday, as I had seen the day before. This led me, as I travelled further into the factory district, to make definite inquiries into the condition of the operatives; and, as I may not again recur to it, I will put down here, in few words, a sort of summary of the information I obtained. I learned – indeed, saw with my own eyes – that throughout Lancashire the young women in the factories dress as well as the young women I had seen at Lowell, [Dover, New Hampshire](#), Manchester, Nashua, and other manufacturing towns in New England. I had been in those towns but a year and a half before; and now, at Manchester, Bolton,

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Preston, Wigan, &c., had a fair opportunity of comparing them. I learned as well, that the wages of the different grades of operatives varied from highest to lowest, each respectively being about the same as in New England. The hours of labour were not greater; and upon visiting several factories (among them that of Sir Elkanah Armitage, at Pendleton, Manchester), I found the work as easy, and the health and cheerfulness of the operatives as good, as I had seen in the same class on the other side of the Atlantic. What was true, comparing the English with the American female operative, is equally true of the male. I was agreeably surprised to learn that the condition of these people, as I had heard of it at home, was a misrepresentation of the condition in which I found them. Formerly, the operatives had suffered much from the want of care exercised by themselves, and more from the want of humanity on the part of their employers; like some persons of other business, of whom we have been speaking, humanity was made to succumb to business: but, by the perseverance of Lord Shaftesbury (then Lord Ashley) and others, Government exerted an influence between the employer and the employed, and led to the adoption of many very important improvements.

Here were two truths which the pro-slavery portion of the Americans did not at all like to tell, and therefore cleverly and conveniently forgot them: 1, That the improvements referred to do exist. 2, That the British Parliament shows an interest in behalf of these people, who "are worse off than our slaves." It better suits their purpose to state matters as they were, than as they are; and to state the truth, that the Government of Great Britain, through its legislature, looks after these people, would rather spoil the parallel between the British free labourer and the American slave! It is a clever thing to forget just what one chooses not to recollect!

Another thing that attracted my attention was, the beautiful twilight of this latitude. Forgetting that I was eleven degrees further north than ever before, I wondered why at eight o'clock it was so light. I then learned how to join Englishmen in the enjoyment of that most delightful part of the day. But when I went to Scotland, subsequently, I was still more charmed, especially at midsummer, in the far north, with this pleasing feature of a northern residence.

I wondered, also, that I could not realize the vast distance I had come, and the mighty space between me and those loved ones I had left behind. I seemed to be simply in a neighbouring town, when in Liverpool. I could see in this town, and in the appearance of many of its inhabitants, some resemblance to Boston and the Bostonians. Nothing wore, to my view, the strange aspect which I had expected. This, I think, was owing partly to my having travelled so much before, constantly visiting strange places and constantly seeing new faces; partly to the strong resemblance of the New England people to those of Liverpool; but, more than either, to the fact that in Canada, especially in Toronto, we are English in habits, manners, &c.

I beg to add, too, that I could not have anticipated how much my faith would be strengthened, by trusting in God amid the exposures of a voyage. Faith grew stronger by its own exercise. For nine consecutive nights I had lain my head upon my pillow



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at sea. In the midst of the vast deep, where our great vessel and all it contained might, like the "President," go to the bottom in an hour, leaving none to tell the story of our fate, and no traces of even the whereabouts of our destruction —to trust God in these circumstances —to hear the rolling heaving ocean, at deep dark midnight, and still to trust him —to listen to the hurried commands, and the rattling of ropes and sails, and the hundred and one accompaniments of a storm, and still to trust him —give faith a strength peculiar only to its trial amid dangers. I could not help writing to Mrs. Ward, that, having long before learned to trust our Heavenly Father as the God of the land, I had now learned to rely upon him as the God of the ocean. I know not how far this accords with the experience of other voyagers, and have now no means of knowing whether the same feeling will continue with myself; but I do know that it at present is far from being one of the least striking or the least pleasing incidents of my first voyage.

HDT

WHAT?

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MAY 1853

THE 1ST TUESDAY IN MAY WAS THE ANNUAL "MUSTER DAY," ON WHICH ALL THE ABLEBODIED WHITE MEN OF A TOWN WERE SUPPOSEDLY REQUIRED TO FALL INTO FORMATION, WITH THEIR PERSONAL FIREARMS, TO UNDERGO THEIR ANNUAL DAY OF MILITARY TRAINING AND MILITIA INDOCTRINATION.



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 May 1853: [Harper's New Monthly Magazine](#) characterized the [swampy](#) landscape of the American South as: "Life and death are locked in close embrace."

CONSULT THIS ISSUE


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

CONSULT THIS ISSUE

[Waldo Emerson](#) began to compose the genre of material he would use to denigrate [Henry Thoreau](#) in his obituary: pounding beans when he should have been pounding empires, lacking ambition, always being in opposition, leading huckleberry parties when he should have been leading parties of engineers, and being forgotten. So he didn't impress Thoreau all that much, well, he had disciples, there were people whom he did impress, quite reputable people in fact, people who were doing something with their lives — and he impressed them a whole lot.

[Ezra Ripley](#) of Concord got married with [Harriet M. Hayden](#) of East Cambridge, about whose family little is known. Might she have been a daughter of [Lewis Hayden](#) and [Harriet Bell Hayden](#) of Beacon Hill in Boston, near the African meetinghouse, whose home functioned as a stop on the Underground Railroad?




 May-August 1853: [Richard Henry Dana, Jr.](#) participated in a Massachusetts Constitutional Convention in [Boston](#).

[Henry Browne Blackwell](#) heard [Lucy Stone](#) move an antislavery audience in New-York to tears with what would become known as her "fugitive mother" speech, and he was blinded by adoration. He would follow her to Massachusetts and obtained a formal letter of introduction from [William Lloyd Garrison](#). Although Stone would gladly accept him as a friend, she was reluctant to acquire a suitor because she feared marriage would require her to surrender control over herself and prevent her from pursuing her chosen task. Blackwell, not having been personally rejected, resolved to convince her that a marriage, with him, would not require such a sacrifice, neither of personality nor of career. He would attempt to persuade her that a marriage based on equality would enable each of them to marshal his or her own energies to accomplish more than they might alone. He too was devoting himself to working for the good of humanity, although he considered that he must wait until he had attained the freedom to command his own time and action — a "pecuniary independence" which he expected to be able to achieve in some 3 years.

Through correspondence during that summer, Blackwell and Stone would muse over the nature and faults of the marriage institution and the benefits of a true, ideal marriage. Eager to demonstrate how he could help her accomplish more, he wrote to business acquaintances to engage halls and place newspaper notice while personally printing and mailing broadsides for posting, arranging a lecture tour in Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, and Kentucky.


FEMINISM

 May 1853: After the demise of Dr. Horner, [Dr. Joseph Leidy](#) was elected Professor of Anatomy at the [University of Pennsylvania](#). Publication of his FLORA AND FAUNA WITHIN LIVING ANIMALS and his THE ANCIENT FAUNA OF NEBRASKA.

PALEONTOLOGY

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 May 1853: The [Chinese Christian](#) forces of the *Tai-p'ing T'ien-kuo* or “Central Kingdom of Great Peace” launched a major offensive into North [China](#), a column of 70,000 aimed directly at the “demon’s den” of Beijing and the control there of the foreign *Qing* emperor. This expedition would not succeed, the demon *Qing* armies retreating before them following a careful and thorough scorched-earth policy — else the history of China would be most radically different from what it has been during our lifetimes.


This was Zheng Guo-fan, the loyalist general:




Meanwhile, in Canton, a messenger presented to the Reverend [Issachar J. Roberts](#) 罗孝全 the letter from [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全 inviting him to come to the new capital city of Nanjing to propagate the [Baptist](#) gospel.

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 May 1853: Plans were completed by John Lenthall, Chief Constructor of the Navy, for a replacement for the USS Constellation, a sailing frigate that had been companion ship to the USS Constitution, “Old Ironsides” but was currently being broken up as irreparable, at the Gosport Navy Yard in Portsmouth, Virginia.



 May 1853: The Reverend Samuel Ringgold Ward was in London, getting his feet on the ground after his trans-Atlantic crossing of 10 days. Among the people he met there were other American visitors, such as the author Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe and the touring singer Miss Greenfield:

After presenting my letters at Liverpool, I took the train for London, for the purpose of meeting the great leaders of England's unrivalled benevolent movements, during the May Meetings. Finding most agreeable travelling companions, and seeing England in her first of May dress, to my very great delight, I reached London at about four p.m., in the midst of a pouring rain. Unfavourable as was the day for seeing London, yet London has some things, many things, innumerable things, to show, on any day. Here, I was much more impressed with my being a stranger than at Liverpool. There was no such thing as learning my way. There was neither rational beginning nor ending to the streets. They were so tortuous, that, starting in one of them in a certain direction, I soon found myself going in the opposite direction in the same street! Still, even London can be learned, with all its intricacies; and after a while I became, in this respect, a Londoner.

Delivering my letters to the persons to whom kind friends had commended me, and finding myself expected at the Anti-Slavery Office, I set about the work of attending the May Meetings. I am sure people must have been amused with my exceedingly awkward, backwoods appearance. A backwoodsman in London is sure to be conspicuous. The more he tries to hide the fact that he is such, the more apparent he makes it. But I adopted the easiest, quietest mannerism I could command, and confessed myself a mere colonist, asking no one to take me for more than I was, while I cared not how much they underrated me.

Exeter Hall I had often heard of, and went there the first thing after my arrival. A meeting was in progress – with speeches, cheering, passing resolutions, and all that sort of thing, to which I was not an entire stranger. A large fine-looking person was in the chair. I took a seat near to a most affable gentleman; and wishing to know who the chairman was, I wrote on a card and handed it to my neighbour, “Who is the gentleman in the chair?” “The Marquis of Cholmondeley,” was his reply, on another card. I had seen a nobleman, a lord – for the first time!

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The Rev. Thomas Binney, to whom I brought letters from Rev. Mr. Roaf, my pastor, received me most kindly. Mrs. Binney acted as if we had been acquainted for the preceding six-and-twenty years; and, being the first London lady with whom I had the pleasure of acquaintance, I saw in her what I have since seen in English people of all ranks, who are really genteel – a most skilful and yet an indescribably easy way of making one feel perfectly at ease with them. I cannot tell how it is done. I saw it in all good English society, but how they did it I know not; at any rate, they are most successful in making one feel it. I think a part of it is, in being perfectly at ease themselves; and another part is, the perfectly captivating kindness that is seen in all they say and do. In this respect, really genteel people, of all ranks, are perfectly alike; in this you cannot distinguish a nobleman from a commoner: but the most ridiculous blunders are made by those assuming it to whom it is not habitual, natural, or educational.

My first introduction to any portion of the British public was at the meeting of the Colonial Missionary Society, on the evening of its anniversary, at Poultry Chapel. To the Rev. Thomas James, its excellent Secretary, I had brought letters. On their presentation, this gentleman, as a sort of "Minister for the Colonies," took me by the hand most warmly. At his invitation I attended the meeting in question. The Rev. Mr. Binney kindly introduced me, in a manner which, I fear, my effort did not at all justify. At that meeting the Lord Mayor Challis presided. I had never before seen a Lord Mayor. His Lordship kindly invited me to the Mansion House, in company with several ministers of the Congregational denomination, a few days after. About the same time the meeting of the Congregational Union occurred, and I was formally introduced to the body by the Secretary, Rev. George Smith, in company with Rev. Charles Beecher, whom I had not met before. Then came a dinner for the ministers and delegates at Radley's Hotel, at which I was called upon for a speech.

The amiable Rev. James Sherman, at that time minister of Surrey Chapel, with his accustomed kindness took me in his carriage to the dinner; and afterwards, for four months, not only made me his guest, but made his house my home. I never lived so long with any other person, on the same terms. While I live, that dear gentleman will seem to me as a most generous fatherly friend.

It was at his home, the best place to study a man's character, that I learned who James Sherman is, and how and why to appreciate him. If I love him more than some persons do, while all admire him and multitudes love him, it is because I know him better and am more indebted to him. His is not the friendship of the passing hour; it is not that which only smiles when everybody else does, and deserts one in the hour of trial and need; it is not the friendship which easily exhausts itself in a few courtly, complimentary phrases, and common-place, costless, worthless because heartless, flatteries. The friendship of James Sherman is that of a man of feeling, as well as a man of honour; it is that which places at one's disposal whatever he has, whatever he can do, and rejoices in any sacrifice to accommodate whoever may have the good fortune to

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be admitted to his intimate acquaintance. Since the demise of my dear father, I have seen no man whom, in adversity and prosperity, in sunshine and in storm, I could so safely trust, in whom I could so implicitly rely in any and all the varying and trying circumstances of life and fortune, as James Sherman. This, I know, is no honour to one so exalted, from one so humble. But gratitude and affection, it seems to me, are not out of place here; and I wish to convey to the friends of the Negro on the other side of the Atlantic, what they have a right to receive, my deep and humble though ardent sense of obligation to that gentleman, both in my own behalf and in behalf of my people. Once introduced to their meetings, kind brethren found enough for me to do, Sunday and every other day, until the meetings were over, and I had formed a list of acquaintances well worthy of my crossing the Atlantic. Having served several other causes, it became time to launch my own, especially as I had not dragged it upon other people's platforms.

I had arrived in England at a fortunate time – not merely because of the May meetings, but because of the twofold fact that "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was in every body's hands and heart, and its gifted authoress was the English people's guest. For anti-slavery purposes, a more favourable time could not have been chosen for visiting England. I may be allowed to dwell upon this for a moment. The book came in the very best time, as if by an ordination of Divine Providence. A year before, the expected invasion of England by the French absorbed so much attention, that it could not have been so patiently and attentively read, nor could it have made so deep an impression; a year after, the war with Russia engrossed universal attention: but the issue of that work during a sort of lull in public affairs, between these two events, was most opportune. I regard it, I repeat, as a special ordination of Providence.

"Uncle Tom's Cabin" had so impressed the anti-slavery people of the aristocratic classes, as to lead to the celebrated address of English women to the women of America, in behalf of the enslaved. This, with its powerful effect, was the theme of universal discussion when Mrs. Stowe arrived in England. The book from the one side of the Atlantic, the address from the other side, and the arrival of her whose gifted pen had been the occasion of the one and the origin of the other, awakened more attention to the anti-slavery cause in England, in 1853, than had existed since the agitation of the emancipation question in 1832. It was my singularly good fortune to meet Mrs. Stowe at the house of Rev. James Sherman, in May; indeed, we were dwellers under his hospitable roof, along with Rev. Dr. Stowe and Rev. C. Beecher, for some three weeks....

When I arrived in England, I found Miss Greenfield, known in America by the soubriquet of "Black Swan," had arrived here. I had the pleasure of hearing her sing at Stafford House, at a concert attended by some of the most distinguished of the British nobility. It was a concert given on purpose to introduce Miss Greenfield at that house which is nearest in position to the royal palace, and whose mistress is nearest in rank to royalty. What a sight for my poor eyes! Stafford House, British nobility, and a Negress! I saw the perfect respect with which Miss G. was treated by all. The Prussian Ambassador was in



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raptures at her versatility of voice. Sir David Brewster said to me, "she has two throats" – alluding to the perfect ease with which she passed from the highest to the lowest notes. It was plainly enough to be seen that the concert had very significant connections with the anti-slavery cause. Mrs. Stowe and her brother were there. The Rev. James Sherman was among the guests. Lord Shaftesbury was among the most conspicuous of them. Then, to remove all doubt as to the great object of the concert, Lord Shaftesbury said to me, "We call this house Aunt Harriet's cabin (the Duchess's name being Harriet); and I tell her, that it honours her house to have it used for such a cause and such a purpose." This, said in the warm, earnest manner peculiar to his Lordship, made him appear to me more noble than ever. After music had ceased, the guests were invited to go over the house. Lord Blantyre⁸⁸ kindly showed us the magnificent pictures in the gallery, and treated us all as most welcome guests, which doubtless we were.

The day following, I was invited by Lady Dover to see from her drawing-room window a review of the troops, it being the Queen's birthday. Soon after, I attended a concert of Miss Greenfield's at Hanover Square Rooms. There I had the honour of being introduced to the Earl of Carlisle, at his Lordship's request, by the Rev. C. Beecher. Mentioning the object of my visit to his Lordship, he readily replied, "Nothing can be more interesting." During a trip down the Thames, I had the honour of an introduction to the Honourable A.F. Kinnaird and his amiable lady; and, by Mr. Kinnaird, to Lord Haddo. The kind interest taken in the coloured people by these distinguished personages, being to me an entirely new thing, kept me in a state of most excited delight. Attending a meeting at Willis's Rooms, in June of that year, I was introduced by Lord Shaftesbury to Viscount Ebrington. Calling upon the latter at his residence, the next day, he was pleased to bring Jamaica prominently before me, and to express his deep interest in the people of that island. Stephen Bourne, Esq., had suggested it before. When the time came⁸⁹ that I was at liberty to consider the subject more definitely, I took the liberty of writing him on the subject, whereupon his Lordship honoured me with an invitation to dine with Lady Ebrington and a party. There I was introduced to the Earl of Harrowby, the Honourable John Fortescue, Sir James Weir Hogg, Governor Wodehouse, of British Guiana, and several other persons of distinction, all of whom gave me the highest assurances of their lively regard for the best weal of the Negro. At another time,⁹⁰ I had the very great pleasure of being a fellow traveller with the Duke of Argyll and the Earl of Elgin, from London to Manchester. The interest these two representatives of the great houses of Campbell and Bruce took in the anti-slavery cause was far more than I was prepared for; but the intimate acquaintanceship with all the windings and intricacies of the American slave power, possessed by the great descendant of Robert Bruce, quite astonished me. In his place as Governor-General of Canada, Lord Elgin, with his clear

88. Son-in-law to the Duke of Sutherland.

89. In February, 1854.

90. 24th November, 1853.

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comprehension of things, has been seeing what was going on in the adjoining States so plainly, as to understand American politics and American politicians as well as if he had been born in that country. But what pleased me most was the perfect knowledge his Lordship showed of the anti-slavery question. Charles Sumner, the anti-slavery senator from Massachusetts, is an intimate friend of Lord Elgin. The career of Mr. Sumner in the Senate he understands perfectly; and with it, his Lordship understands all the minutiae of the anti-slavery struggle, and its issues. Unlike too many Englishmen, the noble Earl does not keep his anti-slavery sentiments secret, when on the other side of the Atlantic. Participating in none of the Yankee feelings against Negroes, he does not act like them towards coloured men. Being guided by his own conscientious sense of right, he does not inquire what is popular, but treads the path which duty makes plain. Making no pretensions to philanthropy (though one of the most liberal of all our nobility), his Lordship, both in his administrations as Governor, and in his intercourse with others as a gentleman, commingles the strictly just with the charmingly affable. Like Lord Carlisle, Lord Elgin has a fulness and a minuteness of knowledge concerning everything around him which makes him a most ready instructor, as well as a most agreeable companion to men of good breeding, of whatever rank.

What I saw of Lord Elgin, that day, left me no reason to wonder that such a Governor-General should carry all hearts with him in Canada and in Jamaica, where his Lordship had been viceregent. I saw just the man to reject the Larwill petition against the Elgin Settlement; and was abundantly prepared, from what I had the great privilege of observing that day, for the two following anecdotes of Lord Elgin: - When Governor of Jamaica, the noble Lord, like Lord Sligo, carried out his own convictions as to the rights and equality of Negroes. On one occasion a black man⁹¹ proposed to bring his child to the font for baptism. The arrangement with the clergyman was completed; but shortly after, the minister learned that the Governor was about to bring his child on that Sunday, whereupon the Negro was advised to postpone the baptism of his child until another time. His Excellency, hearing this, expressed his entire willingness to have the black child brought to the font at the same time with his own; and when the time came, the Governor and the Negro stood, side by side, each for his own child, upon terms of perfect equality, before the altar of God. If any one say that was no more than right, I beg to remind him, that in those days, in an island where the Negro had been most shamefully oppressed, and despised alike by free coloured people and whites - at a time, too, when the status of the then recently freed man was much below what it is now, and when there was a universal ill feeling towards the Negroes, on account of what was called the "misfortunes" growing out of emancipation - at such a time, for a Governor-General, high and illustrious in rank, a nobleman, descended from the First of Scots, to make such a demonstration of his practical belief in the equality and the oneness of our human nature, and the common level upon which we all stand before the Almighty Father, was what we blacks may justly be proud of

91. I do not know whether this occurred at Kingston or Spanish Town.



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and grateful for. It was right, simply right; but in those days right in that direction was of rare occurrence, and therefore the more valuable.

The other anecdote of his Lordship I received indirectly, but in a most authentic form. Lord Elgin was at Washington in 1854, as Her Majesty's special ambassador to make what is called the Reciprocity Treaty between the United States and Canada. It was quite natural that a member of the British House of Peers should go into Congress occasionally, during a short residence at the American capital: Lord Elgin did so. He was there about the time of the closing scenes of the Congress of 1854 (the 3rd of March). The Honourable Gerrit Smith, from whom I receive the facts, in giving a most graphic account of this scene, especially the drunkenness of honourable members, says, "but what greatly increased my mortification was, that Lord Elgin, the Governor-General of Canada, sat by my side, and witnessed the intemperance of which I complain. I apologized to his Lordship for it, and he remarked that he had seen disorder and confusion in the House of Commons, in former days." Now, what is there in this remark of Mr. Smith? It is evidence that Lord Elgin, when in America, when in Washington, and in Congress, took a seat beside an abolitionist — being neither ashamed, as a peer nor as a representative of the Crown, in a twofold sense, to be found, in the presence of slaveholders and Northern slaveocrats, in such company, though knowing perfectly well how unpopular abolitionism is in that capital; nor disdaining to take his place in Congress beside the most radical, most decided, abolitionist in the legislature. The reader must know two facts before he can understand how highly I appreciate these two anecdotes, especially the last. 1. He must know what it is to see and feel how strongly the current of public opinion sets, in that great country, against every phase and semblance of abolition. 2. He must know also, how few Englishmen there are who, visiting America, maintain their British principles on this subject while there. Throughout his entire career as Governor of Jamaica and as Governor-General of Canada, Lord Elgin always honoured his principles.

I said his Lordship makes no pretensions to philanthropy: I mean, he is a man above all pretensions — a man of practical realities. What he is, he seems; what he seems, he is. I mean, also, that Lord Elgin is not one of those who claim any especial favours for the coloured man, or who expect any especial worship from him. This is about the sum of some people's philanthropy, touching the Negro. Lord Elgin, however, does just what the British Negro needs at the hands of a British Governor or a British gentleman — treats him as he would any other man in like circumstances. For that I thank him, in behalf of my people. For that reason I was most grateful for the Providence which gave me the honour of a journey of seven hours with so illustrious a fellow passenger. I write the more freely because Lord Elgin is a public man, because I write in behalf of a grateful people, and because I scarcely believe that this humble volume can travel so far northward as Dunfermline⁹² before its humble author shall be quite forgotten.

92. Lord Elgin's residence.

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The Duke of Argyll was also in the carriage at the time to which I allude. I had first seen his Grace at Stafford House. He did me the honour to say to Mrs. Stowe, he should like to see me. When I waited upon him, I was treated like a friend. I know no other term suitably conveying my impression of the easy manner in which his Grace was pleased to receive and to converse with me. Afterwards, upon all occasions, that noblest of the Campbells laid me under obligations for like affability. As a Minister of Her Majesty this young nobleman has already distinguished himself, having been in two successive Cabinets charged with the war with Russia. At the head of one of Scotland's most noble houses, she may justly be proud of him. Early called to the peerage, at an early age entering the Cabinet, and frequently having to speak in the House of Lords, in debate with some of the most skilful tacticians of the Opposition, always sustaining himself by the exhibition of wisdom beyond his years, and giving promise of great future usefulness, England may reasonably rejoice that she has the services of one so able now, so hopeful for the future. Earnest and devoted in religion, the friends of Christian benevolence always find him ready with his purse, his pen, and his influence, to promote their objects and encourage their labours. That the British Negro has such a friend is both a cause of congratulation and a sign of future blessing. That the down-trodden slave of my native country may know of one so exalted, whose bosom is so full of benevolent feeling for him, is a matter for great thankfulness. Yes; we may all thank God for the gift of such a nobleman in our imperial senate, and we may all pray that God may long spare his useful life.

The Duchess of Argyll, eldest daughter of the Duke of Sutherland, is one of the most devotedly benevolent persons in England. She seems to have been especially blest with her mother's spirit, and to be thoroughly imbued with her principles. It seems to cost her Grace nothing to be kind, because it is so natural. She has, as well, a most kind manner of showing kindness. There is a great deal in that. Some persons are so rough or so cold, so distant, so haughty, in doing or rather attempting kindness, as really to spoil it; but the Duchess of Argyll makes her kindness double by her sweet, smiling, winning way of showing it. I do not wonder that she is a friend of the slave. Her mother, and her noble maternal ancestry for generations, have been so; and it would be difficult for such a heart not to feel for the woes of others, and condemn the wrongs inflicted upon them. In having made the acquaintance of the Duke of Argyll and her Grace the Duchess – in having seen the kind Christian manner in which they devote themselves to works of love, and educate their children to the same – I feel that I have enjoyed an honour and a pleasure which fall to the lot of but few colonists, and appreciate it accordingly.



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May 1, Sunday, 1853: J.C. Christian Russ invited the Germans of [San Francisco](#) to celebrate May Day at his property, Russ Gardens, at 6th and Harrison streets. Emma Jane Swasey (who was, coincidentally, a Nordic type) was crowned as that city's 1st Queen of May.

The Central Bank of Troy, [New York](#) was capitalized at \$200,000, with a charter extending through the year 2353.

A convention meeting in Santa Fe approved a constitution for Argentina, without Buenos Aires.

Veilchen-Polka op.132 by [Johann Baptist Strauss II](#) was performed for the initial time, in the Sperl Ballroom of Vienna.

The Reverend Frederic Dan Huntington (1819-1904) delivered a eulogy at his South Congregational Church of [Boston](#) in the memory of [Manlius Stimson Clarke](#) that would be printed as a 32-page pamphlet by Crosby, Nichols, and Company, 111 Washington Street, THE CHARACTER OF MANLIUS STIMSON CLARKE. A DISCOURSE DELIVERED IN THE SOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, MAY 1, 1853. BY F.D. HUNTINGTON.

FREDERIC D. HUNTINGTON

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

Commenced raining at six o'clock this morning and rained quite hard for awhile. Expected to lay by to-day had not some riotious Spaniards camped by us. Concluded to travel a few miles, started about ten o'clock, traveled about ten miles and camped for the night.



May 1. Sunday. A cold northwest wind. Now, on my return to Concord, I am struck by the increased greenness of the country, or landscape.

I find that since I left Concord, April 11th, there have blossomed here, probably nearly in the following order, these plants, including those I saw in Haverhill: dandelion, field horse-tail, *Antennaria plantaginifolia*, sweet-gale, epigæa, *Populus grandidentata*, *Salix tristis*, *Viola ovata*, (Ellen Emerson found it April 20th), *Potentilla Canadensis*, comptonia, *Thalictrum anemonoides*, *Anemone nemorosa*, *V. blanda*, *P. balsamifera*, *Aquilegia Canadensis*, *Hedyotis cœrulea*, andromeda, *Fragaria Virginiana* (?) (distinguished from the other species in fruit), *Salix alba*, benzoin, *Amelanchier Canadensis* var. *Botryapium*. Peach, cultivated cherry, and the following apparently just begun: *Viola pedata*, *Ostrya Virginica*, *V. cucullata*, (Ellen Emerson says she saw it the 30th ult.; it is to be looked for at Depot Field Brook). And *Rumex Acetosella* shows red and is eight inches high on Columbine Cliff.

The expanding leaves of the sugar maples now make small crosses against the sky. Other conspicuous green leaves are the gooseberry, currant, elder, the willows just beginning, and alder, and apple trees and high blackberry, amelanchier, meadow-sweet, beside many herbaceous plants. Drosera (round-leaved) leaves now. Sedge-grass (early sedge) very abundant still. The *Vaccinium Pennsylvanicum* is just ready to bloom and also the *vacillans* nearly. These things observed on way—

To Cliffs.




The oak leaves on the plain are fallen. The colors are now: light blue above (where is my cyanometer? Saussure invented one, and [Humboldt](#) used it in his travels); landscape russet and greenish, spotted with fawn-colored plowed lands, with green pine and gray or reddish oak woods intermixed, and dark-blue or slate-colored water here and there. It is greenest in the meadows and where water has lately stood, and a strong, invigorating scent comes up from the fresh meadows. It is like the greenness of an apple faintly or dimly appearing through the russet.

A phoebe's ~~Bridge Pewee~~ ([Eastern Phoebe](#) [Sayornis phoebe](#)) nest and one cream-colored




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white egg at the spring-house; nest of mud, lined with grass and edged with hypnum. Channing has seen a robin's [**American Robin**  *Turdus migratorius*] nest and eggs. I hear a black and white creeper [**Black-and-white Warbler**  *Mniotilta varia* (~~Black-and-white Creeper~~)] at the Cliffs, and a chewink [**Rufous-sided Towhee**  *Pipilo erythrophthalmus*].

The shrub oaks are well budded. The young ivy leaves are red on Cliffs. Oaks and hickory buds just ready to open. How aromatic the balm-of-Gilead buds now!




The large woolly ferns and others stand up a foot on banks. The skunk-cabbage leaves green the warm, springy meads.

Was it not the black and yellow or spotted warbler [**Yellow Warbler**  *Dendroica petechia*] [*Vide* May 10th.] I saw by the Corner Spring? Apparently black, brown-striped, with a yellow rump and also yellow wing, shoulders, and sides of breast, with a large black spot on breast; size of phoebe nearly; note somewhat like yellowbird. Yet I think it much too dark for the myrtle-bird.

Columbine Cliff [**J6**] a place to look for early rue anemones and *nemorosa* and dandelions. The columbines have been out some days. How ornamental to these dark-colored perpendicular cliffs, nodding from the clefts and shelves!

The barn swallow [**Barn Swallow**  *Hirundo rustica*] is about.

Have we the *Viola lanceolata*? [*Yes. Vide Hubbard's* meadow, by willows.] Is not the *Botryapium* our earliest variety of arnelanchier, and what difference in the fruit?

Channing says he has heard the wood thrush [**Wood Thrush**  *Catharus mustelina*], brown thrasher [**Brown Thrasher**  *Toxostoma rufum*], and stake-driver [**American Bittern**  *Botaurus lentiginosus*] (?), since I have been gone. This and last page for birds which I find come in the interval. Did I not see the oven-bird yesterday?



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

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




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

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

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

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



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

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Small pewee [[Eastern Wood-Pewee](#)  [Contopus virens](#)]?

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



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



While working up his courage he had breakfast at an inn, and walked over to the Old Manse and meditated for a while the Old North Bridge. Then, having exhausted his possibilities, he walked out the Lexington road to the Emerson home and presented his credentials. "Eloquent, wonderful, grand and simple, his speech flowed constantly, bearing the wealth of ages on it." Emerson gave his visitor a copy of [Margaret Fuller](#)'s [WOMAN IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY](#) bearing her autograph. Then the two of them walked over to visit with [Henry Thoreau](#), who asked him what he was studying at the [Harvard Divinity School](#). When Conway indicated that he was studying "The Scriptures," Thoreau affected naiveté and inquired "The Hindu, Arabic or Jewish?"⁹³

May 3, 1853. is a date under which I wrote a couplet from Emerson's "Woodnotes,"—

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

93. How different [Thoreau](#)'s little jest was from what is known as "the Belfast joke":

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

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-for on that day I first met Emerson. Dr. Palfrey, on finding in our conversations that it was Emerson who had touched me in my sleep in Virginia, advised me to visit him. I felt shy about invading the "spot that is sacred to thought and God." but he urged me to go and gave me a letter to Emerson. I knew too well the importance of a morning to go straight to Emerson's house, and inquired the way to the Old Manse. It was a fortunate excursion. The man I most wished to meet was Emerson; the man I most wished to see was Hawthorne. He no longer resided at the Old Manse, but as I was gazing from the road down the archway of ash-trees at the house whose "mosses" his genius had made spiritual moss-roses, out stepped the magician himself. It has been a conceit of mine that I had never seen a portrait of Hawthorne, but recognized him as one I had seen in dreams he had evoked. At any rate, I knew it was my Prospero. Who else could have those soft-flashing unsearchable eyes, that *beauté du diable* at middle age? He did not observe me, and as I slowly followed him towards the village, doubts were awakened by the elegance and even smartness of his dress. But I did not reflect that Prospero had left his isle, temporarily buried his book, and was passing from his masque to his masquerade as consul at Liverpool and man of the world. Hawthorne was making calls before his departure for Europe. I felt so timid about calling on Emerson -it appeared such a one-sided affair- that I once turned my steps toward the railway station. But soon after twelve I knocked at Emerson's door, and sent in Dr. Palfrey's letter, with a request that I might call on him during the afternoon. The children came to say that their father was out, but would return to dinner at one, and their mother wished me to remain. The three children entertained me pleasantly, mainly in the bower that Alcott had built in the front garden. I was presently sent for. Emerson met me at the front door, welcome beaming in his eyes, and took me into his library. He remembered receiving a letter from me two or three years before. On learning that I was at the Divinity School and had come to Concord simply to see him, he called from his library door, "Queeny!" Mrs. Emerson came, and I was invited to remain some days. I had, however, to return to college that evening, and though I begged that his day should not be long interfered with, he insisted on my passing the afternoon with him. When we were alone, Emerson inquired about the experiences that had led me away from my Methodism, and about my friendships. "The gods," he said, "generally provide the young thinker with friends." When I told him how deeply words of his, met by chance in an English magazine, had moved me while I was a law student in Virginia, he said, "When the mind has reached a certain stage it may be sometimes crystallized by a slight touch." I had so little realized their import, I told him that they only resulted in leading me to leave the law for the Methodist ministry. It had been among the Hicksite Quakers that I found sympathetic friends, after entering on the path of inquiry. He then began to talk about the Quakers and their inner light. He had formed a near friendship with Mary Rotch of New Bedford. "Mary Rotch told us that her little girl one day asked if she might do something. She replied, 'What does the voice in thee say?' The

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child went off, and after a time returned to say 'Mother, the little voice says, no.' That," said Emerson, "starts the tears to one's eyes." He especially respected the Quaker faith that every "scripture" must be held subject to the reader's inner light. "I am accustomed to find errors in writings of the great men, and it is an impertinence to demand that I shall recognize none in some particular volume." The children presently came in, - Ellen, Edward, and Edith. They were all pretty, and came up to their father with their several reports on the incidents of the morning. Edith had some story to tell of a trouble among one or two rough families in Concord. A man had hinted that a woman next door had stolen something, and she had struck him in the leg with a corkscrew. Emerson summed this up by saying, "He insinuated that she was a rogue, and she insinuated the corkscrew in his leg." Ellen perceived the joke. and I many times remarked the quickness with which, while not yet out of girlhood, she appreciated every word of her father. The dinner was early; the children were with us, and the talk was the most homelike and merry that I had known for a long time. When the children were gone Mrs. Emerson told me that they had been christened. "Husband was not willing the children should be christened in the formal way, but said he would offer no objection when I could find a minister as pure and good as the children. That was reasonable, and we waited some time; but when William Henry Channing came on a visit to us, we agreed that he was good enough to christen our children." While Emerson was preparing for the walk, I looked about the library. Over the mantle hung a large copy of Michael Angelo's "Parcæ;" there were two statuettes of Goethe, of whom also there was an engraved portrait on the wall. Afterwards Emerson showed me a collection of portraits - Shakespeare, Dante, Montaigne, Goethe, and Swedenborg. The furniture of the room was rather antique and simple. There were four long shelves completely occupied, he said, by his MSS., of which there must have been enough to furnish a score of printed volumes. Our walk was around Walden Pond, on both sides of which Emerson owned land. Our conversation related to the religious ferment of the time. He said that the Unitarian churches were stated to be no longer producing ministers equal to their forerunners, but were more and more finding their best men in those coming from orthodox churches. That was a symptom. Those from other churches, having gone through experiences and reached personal convictions strong enough to break with their past. would of course have some enthusiasm for their new faith. But the Unitarians might take note of that intimation that individual growth and experience are essential for the religious teacher. I mentioned Theodore Parker. and he said, "It is a comfort to remember that there is one sane voice amid the religious and political affairs of the country." I said that I could not understand how I could have tolerated those dogmas of inherited depravity, blood atonement. eternal damnation for Adam's sin, and the rest. He said, "I cannot feel interested in Christianity; it seems deplorable that there should be a tendency to creeds that would take men back to the chimpanzee." He smiled at the importance ascribed to academic terms. "I have very good grounds for being Unitarian and Trinitarian too: I need not nibble at one loaf forever, but

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eat it and go on to earn another." He said that while he could not personally attend any church, he held a pew in the Unitarian church for his wife and children who desired it, and indeed would in any case support the minister, because it is well "to have a conscientious man to sit on school committees, to help at town meetings, to attend the sick and the dead." As we were walking through the woods he remarked that the voices of some fishermen out on the water, talking about their affairs, were intoned by the distance and the water into music; and that the curves which their oars made, marked under the sunlight in silver, made a succession of beautiful bows. This may have started a train of thought related to the abhorrence I had expressed of the old dogmas, to which I had added something about the Methodist repugnance with which I had witnessed in Maryland some Catholic ceremonies. "Yet," he said, "they possess beauty in the distance. When one sees them on the stage, -processions of priests in their vestments chanting their hymns at the opera, -they are in their place, and offend no sentiment." I mentioned a task set me at the Divinity School, to write an essay on Eschatology, and Emerson said, "An actually existent fly is more important than a possibly existent angel." Again presently: "The old artist said, *Pingo in eternitatem*; this *eternitatem* for which I paint is not in past or future, but is the height of every living hour." When we were in a byway among the bushes, Emerson suddenly stopped and exclaimed, "Ah! there is one of the gods of the wood!" I looked and saw nothing; then turned to him and followed his glance. but still beheld nothing unusual. He was looking along the path before us through a thicket. "Where?" I asked. "Did you see it?" he said, now moving on. "No, I saw nothing - what was it? "No matter," said he gently. I repeated my question, but he still said smilingly, "Never mind, if you did not see it." I was a little piqued, but said no more, and very soon was listening to talk that made my Eschatology seem ridiculous. Perhaps the sylvan god I had missed was a pretty snake, a squirrel or other little note in the symphony of nature. My instruction in the supremacy of the present hour began not so much in Emerson's words as in himself. Standing beside the ruin of the shanty Thoreau built with his own hands. and lived in for a year at a cost of twenty-eight dollars, twelve and a half cents, Emerson appeared an incarnation of the wondrous day he was giving me. My enthusiasm for Margaret Fuller Ossoli, excited by her "Memoirs," led Emerson in parting to give me a copy of her *WOMAN IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY*, - an English edition she had sent him from London, with her initials in it. At my request he added his own name and the date. That evening I sat in my room in Divinity Hall (No. 34) as one enriched, and wrote: "May 3. The most memorable day of my life: spent with Ralph Waldo Emerson!" Two days later I attended a great dinner given in Boston to Senator Hale of New Hampshire. I went over with Dr. Palfrey, who was chairman. Emerson was there, but when Palfrey called for a speech from him he had departed. What was my chagrin, on my return to the Divinity School, to find that Emerson had been there to call upon me!

Being homeless in the North, my summer vacation (1853) was passed at Concord. The Emersons found for me a very pleasant abode at "Hillside," on Ponkataset [Ponkawtasset] Hill, about

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a mile out of the village, where Ellery Channing once lived, and where he wrote his poem on New England. Two sisters, the Misses Hunt, educated ladies, received me into this pleasant cottage, where I was the only boarder. These ladies were cousins of Miss Martha Hunt, whose suicide in Concord River and the recovery of her body are described in Hawthorne's BLITHEDEALE ROMANCE. They were troubled because G. W. Curtis, in his HOMES OF AMERICAN AUTHORS, had suggested that Martha's suicide was due to the contrast between her transcendental ideals and the coarseness of her home. They described the family of their cousin as educated people. One of these sisters walked with me to the river and pointed out all the places connected with the tragedy, and some years later another cousin drowned herself there. Emerson introduced me to his friends. First of all he took me to Henry Thoreau, who lived in the village with his parents and his sister. The kindly and silent pencil-maker, his father, John Thoreau, was French in appearance, and Henry resembled him physically; but neither parent impressed me as possessing mental qualities that could account for such a rare spirit as Henry. He was thirty-six when I met him. He received me pleasantly, and asked what we were studying at Cambridge. I answered, "The Scriptures." "Which?" he asked. Emerson said, "You will find our Thoreau a sad pagan." Thoreau had long been a reverent reader of Oriental scriptures, and showed me his bibles, translated from various languages into French and English.

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

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

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

The cruellest weapons, however, which this huntsman took with him were lenses and an old book in which to press plants. He was not talkative, but his occasional monologues were extraordinary. I remember being surprised at every step with revelations of

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

Thoreau ate no meat; he told me his only reason was a feeling of the filthiness of flesh-eating. A bear huntsman he thought was entitled to his steak. He had never attempted to make any general principle on the subject, and later in life ate meat in order not to cause inconvenience to the family.

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

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

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

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

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

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

I made the acquaintance of several elderly persons in Concord who told me incidents related by their grandparents concerning the Concord fight of April 19, 1775, but I was too much interested in the heroes of 1858 to care much for those of the old Revolution. One day Emerson pointed out to me across the street the venerable Bon. Samuel Hoar and his daughter Elizabeth, and told me the story of their visit to Charleston, S.C. (1844), the eminent lawyer being commissioned by his State to plead for the release of Massachusetts seamen seized from

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ships and imprisoned there because of their colour. Amid threats of violence the lawyer and his daughter were driven out of Charleston unheard. I had not known this, and thenceforth bowed low whenever I passed the old lawyer. Without any historic halo the Hon. Samuel Hoar would have arrested the attention of a stranger, not only by his very tall thin form and the small face – blond and beardless – that looked as if come out of Bellini's canvas, but also by his dreamy look and movement. He was seventy-five, but no indications of age explained that absorbed look. Probably it was this as well as the face that suggested to Emerson a resemblance to Dante. "He is a saint," said Emerson as the old gentleman passed one day; "he no longer dwells with us down on earth." There could hardly be a greater contrast than that between the old man and his Bon Judge Rockwood: Hoar, – and I should think also Senator Hoar, so far as appearance went, for the latter I knew only by seeing him occasionally. The "Judge," as Lowell calls him in "The Biglow Papers," made an admirable attorney-general of the United States, but his force was almost formidable in little Concord. One felt in meeting him that the glasses on those bright eyes were microscopic, and that he was under impending cross-examination. He was rationalistic and a "free-soiler," though his antislavery record did not satisfy abolitionists.⁹⁴ The judge was unconscious of the satirical accent in his humour. He was personally devoted to Emerson, who, however, rather dreaded him, as he told me half-bumorous, on account of his tendencies to argumentative and remorselessly logical talk. The judge, however, was very amiable in his family and especially with his sister Elizabeth. This lady, who resembled the father more than her brothers did, was most lovely and intellectual. The death of Emerson's brilliant brother Charles, to whom Miss Elizabeth was betrothed, was the pathetic legend of Concord, and the reverential affection of Emerson for her represented a sentiment of the community. But the lady, in a sense widowed, was interested and active in all the culture and affairs of Concord; her sorrows had turned to sunshine for those around her.

Mrs. Ripley, the widow of the Rev. Samuel Ripley, a kinsman of Emerson, occupied the famous "Old Manse." An admirable sketch of her life was written by Elizabeth Hoar. She had a wide reputation for learning. I had heard at Cambridge that when students were rusticated they used to board at Concord in order to be coached by her. She was a fine botanist. A legend ran that Professor Gray called on her and found her instructing a student in differential calculus, correcting the Greek translation of another, and at the same time shelling peas, and rocking her grandchild's cradle with her foot. But never was lady more simple and unostentatious. In her sixty-third year she was handsome, and her intelligent interest extended from her fruit-trees and poultry to the profoundest problems of her time. Thus the Old Manse had for me precious "mosses" which Hawthorne had not gathered. Her daughters Phœbe and Sophia (afterwards wife of Professor Thayer of Cambridge) always met me with a friendliness gratefully remembered. No doubt they and other

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

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ladies in Concord bore in mind that I was far away from my relatives. I found in [Mrs. Ripley](#) an intelligent sympathizer with my advancing religious ideas. She was a Theist through recognition of a supreme Reason intimated in the facts of individual reason. She said, "I cannot believe in miracles, because I believe in God." The subject of spirit manifestations was considered by her worthy of study only as a contemporary illustration of the fallaciousness of human testimony wherever emotions or passions are involved. "People believe what they've a mind to," she said.

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

When after the talk at dinner I was walking with Emerson, he said that Goethe had written some things - "Elective Affinities," for instance - which could be really read only by minds which had undergone individual training. He was the only great writer who had tamed upon the moral conventions and demanded by what right they claimed to control his life. But people with eyes could not omit Goethe.

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

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

I managed to make friends with the Concord children. Never had a small town a more charming circle of lovely children. The children of Emerson, of Judge Rockwood Hoar, of the Loring and Barrett families, mostly girls between ten and twelve years, were all pretty and intelligent, and as it was vacation time they were prepared for walks, picnics, boating, etc. Other of their elders beside myself found delight in the society of these young people, especially Thoreau. He used to take us out on the river in his boat, and by his scientific talk guide us into the water-lilies' fairyland. He showed us his miracle of putting his hand into the water and bringing up a fish.⁹⁵

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

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

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

Mrs. Freeman had said, "I see a lady who is a good deal worried about somebody named John." The selection of a name so common rather amused me; but I afterwards had to show my neighbour a letter from my mother saying that she was troubled by the betrothal of a relative named John.⁹⁶

From [Agassiz](#) I derived great benefit. When he rose before us in his class, a rosy flush on his face indicated his delight in communicating his knowledge. His shapely form, eager movements

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

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

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("his body thought"), large soft eyes, easy unconscious gestures, and sonorous English, with just enough foreign accent to add piquancy, together made Agassiz the perfect lecturer. He was skillful too as a draughtsman, and often while speaking made a few marks on the blackboard which conveyed a complete impression of the thing elucidated.

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

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

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

The determined repudiation by Agassiz of the discovery of Darwin caused something like dismay in scientific circles throughout Europe as well as in America. Concerning this I have some memories that may interest men of science. When I belonged to the class of Agassiz (1853-54), he repeatedly referred to the hypothesis of continuous development of species in a way which has suggested to me a possibility that he may have had some private information of what was to come from [Charles Darwin](#). In his Introduction (1869) Darwin speaks of having submitted a sketch of his work to Sir Charles Lyell and Sir Joseph Hooker, - "the latter having seen my sketch of 1844." Either of these, or Darwin himself, might have consulted Agassiz. Most of us knew

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about such a theory only through the popular "Vestiges of Creation," to which he paid little attention. He seemed to have been excited by some German, — perhaps Schopenhauer, in whose works the idea of self-evolution in organic nature is potential, — of whom he spoke with a flush of anger when adding, "He says himself that he is an atheist." At any rate, during 1854 especially his mind was much occupied with the subject. I also remember well that during this time he often dwelt upon what he called the "ideal connection" between the different forms of life, describing with drawings the embryonic changes; in that progress no unbridged chasm after the dawn of organic life.

At the end of every week a portion of the afternoon was given for our putting questions to Agassiz, the occasion often giving rise to earnest discussion. These repeatedly raised the theory of development in "The Vestiges of Creation." Agassiz frequently referred to the spiritual evolution with which Emerson was particularly associated. But just after Darwin's discovery had appeared, I happened to be dining at the Saturday Club in Boston, when something like an encounter between these two friends occurred. Agassiz was seated at the head of the table, Emerson being on his right. It was near the end of the dinner, and around the long table those present were paired off in conversation; but being next to Emerson I could enjoy the conversation he held with Agassiz. After a time the professor made some little fling at the new theory. Emerson said smilingly that on reading it he had at once expressed satisfaction at confirmation of what he (Agassiz) had long been telling us. All of those beautiful harmonies of form with form throughout nature which he had so finely divined were now proved to be genuine relationship. "Yes," said Agassiz eagerly, "ideal relationship, connected thoughts of a Being acting with an intelligent purpose." Emerson, to whom the visible universe was all a manifestation of things ideal, said that the physical selection appeared to him a counterpart of the ideal development. Whereupon Agassiz exclaimed, "There I cannot agree with you," and changed the subject. There was at Concord a course of lectures every year, one of which was given by Agassiz. His coming was an important event. He was always a guest of the Emersons, where the literary people of the village were able to meet him. On one such occasion I remember listening to a curious conversation between Agassiz and A. [Bronson Alcott](#), — who lived and moved in a waking dream. After delighting Agassiz by repudiating the theory of the development of man from animals, he filled the professor with dismay by equally decrying the notion that God could ever have created ferocious and poisonous beasts. When Agassiz asked who could have created them, Alcott said they were the various forms of human sin. Man was the first being created. And the horrible creatures were originated by his lusts and animalisms. When Agassiz, bewildered, urged that geology proved that the animals existed before man, Alcott suggested that man might have originated them before his appearance in his present form. Agassiz having given a signal of distress, Emerson came to the rescue with some reconciling discourse on the development of life and thought, with which the professor had to be content, although there was a *souçon* of Evolutionism in every word our host uttered.



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

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

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

VOLUME II

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

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

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

Mr. Editor: — The storm which commenced yesterday continued with slight intermissions until sunset today, when it again fired up. The present system of sluicing seems to have opened a new era in the history of gold washing. It meets in every place and ravine with unprecedented success. The average yield, so far as I can learn from extensive inquiry, and personal observation, is, under this system, greater than it has ever been since the location of the place, while in numerous claims the product is astonishingly large. In a claim adjoining Wheelock's Ravine, D.C. Dickinson, have taken out over 35 pounds of gold in a little over three weeks. I saw them take out of their sluice last week \$1,532, the result of five days washing. The claim of Mr. La



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Mountaine is paying at the same rate also. The old Stoner Diggings, which were considered nearly exhausted in '50 are still paying by sluicing, as richly as ever. During the past week I learn that the Mr. Bryant, working four hands on their claim at these diggings have taken out amounts daily from 15 to 22½ ounces. The dirt in Dead Man's Hollow, and all other ravines, Matthew's and Weaver Creek, which were said to be completely worked out by cradle and toms, are now yielding on the improved method, nearly as well as ever. What is reality is years lost in the gross amount abstracted from the mines, seems to be counter balance to new-comers in the various improved means of gold washing. a an evidence that mining is now regarded as more productive generally than heretofore, I may mention the fact that there is more labor and less loafing and dissipation in and around Diamond Springs, than was ever before known. Men seem willing to work, because their labor evidently is well rewarded. May this state of things with us long continue.

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



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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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


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





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May 4. Cattle are going up country. Hear the *tull-lull* of the chickadee (?).⁹⁷ The currant in bloom. The Canada plum just ready, probably to-day. [Not before the 7th.]

8 A.M. — To Walden and Cliffs.

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

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


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

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

The indigo-bird and mate; dark throat and light beneath, and white spot oil wings, which is not described; a hoarse note, and rapid the first two or three syllables, — *twe twe twee*, dwelling on the last, or *twe twe twe-e*, or as if an *r* in it, *tre*, etc., not musical.⁹⁸ The myrtle-bird, which makes me think the more that I saw the black and yellow warbler on Sunday.

I find apparently two varieties of the amelanchier, — the first I noticed, with *smooth* reddish delicate leaves and somewhat linear petals and loose racemes, petals somewhat pinkish; the second to-day, perhaps a little later than the first, leaves light-colored and downy and petals broader and perhaps not quite so long as the first, racemes more crowded. I am not sure that this is the variety *oblongifolium* of Gray.⁹⁹

It is stated in the Life of Humboldt¹⁰⁰ that he proved “that the expression, ‘the ocean reflects the sky,’ was a purely poetical, but not a scientifically correct one, as the sea is often blue when the sky is almost totally covered with light white clouds.” He used Saussure’s cyanometer even to measure the color of the sea. This might probably be used to measure the intensity of the color of blue flowers like lupines at a distance. Humboldt speaks of its having been proved that pine pollen falls from the

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

98. Thoreau’s “indigo-bird” of this day has been identified as a **Black-throated Blue Warbler** *Dendroica caerulescens*.



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

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

BROTHER ALEXANDER

BROTHER WILLIAM



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atmosphere.

**THOREAU AS
ORNITHOLOGIST**

 May 5, Thursday, 1853: [Moncure Daniel Conway](#) heard [William Lloyd Garrison](#) for the 1st time.


[Thomas Adams](#) began a [Journal](#).¹⁰¹

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

Started as early as possible. A great deal of stock on the road, and a great many wagons, all in a hurry to get to the Kansas River, and get across first. Met some Indians on the road, the first we have seen on the plains. Gave them some bread and meat and a dime. They thanked us and passed on. Crossed two very bad streams, camped within 1 mile of the ferry. We could not cross in two or three days, cattle very troublesome, got frightened and scattered but soon got them together.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR MAY 5th]

 May 6, Friday, 1853: Father [Isaac Hecker](#), CSSR wrote to [Orestes Augustus Brownson](#), Esq.

There was a major rail disaster at Norwalk, Connecticut, killing 46.

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

Lost 1 ox last night, but found him again without much trouble. Commenced raining about noon and rained all night. Have not traveled any to-day.

101. Thomas Adams had been born in the District of Columbia in 1830 and was educated as a Civil Engineer. He served as assistant topographer on an expedition from the Mississippi to Fort Benton. At Fort Benton he was made a non-commissioned officer and assigned to Lieutenant Donelson. From Fort Benton to St. Mary's Mission he served as assistant artist. During Winter 1853/1854 he served Captain John Mullan as an artist, sketching points of interest from Cantonment Stevens to Fort Hall and to the Kootenai region in what is now Idaho. During Spring 1854 he was appointed as a Special Agent to the Flathead Indians. He helped gather all of the tribal headmen together for the Council and Treaty signing in 1855 at Fort Benton and Hell Gate. When the Railroad Survey was complete he chose to remain in Bitterroot Valley. In 1856 he was involved in trading on the Emigrant Trail (near Fort Hall). He wintered cattle during 1858 in the Flint Creek Valley. He was there when gold was discovered at Gold Creek during May 1858. He edited the Valley Tan Newspaper at Camp Floyd from June 22, 1858 to September 21, 1859. In 1862 he returned to Gold Creek to mine. On February 26, 1862 he got married with Louise, a step-daughter of Lonepenny, a Flathead, but a month later the marriage was dissolved by mutual agreement. A baby boy born of this union and was taken by him from Louise. The boy cried so hard, however, that he sent him back to his mother. In 1864 he left the Territory for Washington DC. The 1870 US Census shows him and a 3-year-old James in the District of Columbia, with a housekeeper and domestic servant, with occupation "Farmer." His wife Eliza R. Barry Adams died in 1870. The 1880 US Census shows him and his household as living with his sister Alice in the District of Columbia, with occupation "Civil Engineer." He died of uremia on April 3, 1900 at the age of 70.

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May 6. P.M. — To [Nut Meadow Brook](#) and [Corner Spring](#).

Choice plum in gardens. The *Salix alba* is conspicuous and interesting in the landscape now, some bright yellow, truly golden (staminate?), some greenish, filling the air of causeways with a sweet scent. The whole landscape is many shades greener for the rain, almost a blue green. The leafing of the trees has commenced, and the forms of some, accordingly, begin to be defined. Some, however, like the large maples, elms, etc., look heavy and are defined by their samaræ and not yet by their leaves, which are not comparatively forward. I perceive the strong odor of horse-mint, rising dark above the brooks. Hear the loud echoing note of the pees-weet-weet-weet-weet [Eastern Phoebe [Sayornis phoebe](#)]. *Viola cucullata* at [John Hosmer](#)'s ditch by [Clamshell Hill](#). Four large robin's [American Robin [Turdus migratorius](#)] eggs in an apple tree. A ground-bird's nest with eggs. *Equisetum sylvaticum* in front of [Hosmer](#)'s Gorge. I have seen no ducks since I returned from Haverhill on the 29th April. There are pretty large leaves on the young red maples (which have no flowers), disposed crosswise, as well as on the sugar maple, but not so with larger flowering maples. The maple-tops begin to look red now with the growing keys, at a distance, — crescents of red. *Uvularia sessilifolia* just begun. Common knawel, apparently for some time, though [Bigelow](#) says July (?). Those long spear-shaped buds of the viburnum have expanded into dark but handsome leaves rather early; probably *Viburnum nudum*.

As I walk through the village at evening, when the air is still damp after the rainy morning, I perceive and am exhilarated by the sweet scent of expanding leaves. The woods are beginning to be in the gray now, leaves and flower-buds generally expanding, covered with a mealy or downy web (which now reminds me of those plants like gnaphalium, swathed in cotton), a clean dirt, which whitens the coat of the walker.

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May 6, Friday, [1853](#): The [railroad](#) drawbridge outside South Norwalk, Connecticut had been raised to allow the passage of the steamboat *Pacific*. A red ball the size of a basketball (this is decidedly an anachronism because basketball had not as yet been invented) had been raised to the top of a signal mast alongside the tracks, to warn approaching trains that the Norwalk River drawbridge was up. The speed limit posted on these tracks was 10 miles per hour. A passenger train approached the Norwalk River at a high rate of speed, disregarding the speed limit, its engineer being the Edward Tucker who had survived the New York & New Haven's first wreck in 1849,¹⁰² and when Tucker belatedly saw the red ball at the top of the mast he yelled out for his brakemen to apply the brakes (not an anachronism, since railroad safety brakes had in 1845 been invented by [Elisha Graves Otis](#)), and leaped from the locomotive without closing the throttle of the engine. The leap broke his leg. The brakemen, seeing their engineer leaping from their locomotive, followed almost instantly by his fireman, also leaped rather than applying the brakes. The train took a nose-dive off the end of

102. For general background, please refer to Robert B. Shaw's A HISTORY OF RAILROAD ACCIDENTS, SAFETY PRECAUTIONS, AND OPERATING PRACTICES (2d edition, N.p.: Vail-Ballou Press, 1978).



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the tracks, shattering against the stone bridge abutments on the other side of the drawbridge and dropping into the water. Of the passengers, 46 were killed and 25 injured. This being the US of America, a mob immediately assembled but was distracted from its purpose by an argument, hopefully staged, about whether to hang Tucker with his broken leg from the signal mast or [-hanging](#) being too fine a fate for him— to simply put him out of his misery by shooting him, and meanwhile Tucker was blubbing that the bridge attendant must have raised the red ball after the accident to save his own hide — and this combination of argumentation and blubbing and blaming delayed the mob from its amusement until the authorities could come to Tucker's rescue. This feckless engineer had survived yet another crash.¹⁰³

TIMELINE OF ACCIDENTS

News of this dreadful event would arrive after considerable delay, delivered by ship to the west coast of the continent:

The most dreadful accident recorded in the history of Railroads occurred at Norwalk, Conn. (on the New Haven Railroad) on the 6th of May. The irregularity of our files renders it impossible to give the details of this great catastrophe. It seems, however, that in consequence of the negligence or stupidity of some of the employees of the Company, the signals were either wrongly given or misunderstood, by which an express passenger train was rushed upon a bridge while the draw was up, and the cars thrown through the break. Forty-five persons were killed and twenty-seven wounded (out of 218 passengers on board). This casualty has given rise to a great deal of discussion in the papers.

Frederick Douglass' Paper described Mrs. Stowe's arrival in England, and printed a letter from Martin Delany in Rochester replied to by Frederick Douglass:

Mrs. Stowe in England.

The landing of a princess, with all the etceteras of courtly splendor, on the shores of old England, could not produce a greater sensation, nor awaken a deeper and wider interest, than has the arrival of the authoress of "Uncle TOM'S CABIN," in that country. — We shall give, in our next paper, extracts from the copious comments, and the lengthy and interesting proceedings, attending the progress of our eminent benefactress.

Some of our American papers affect to feel very much scandalized because Mrs. Stowe is receiving considerable sums of money from English people; and some have had the hardihood to impute mercenary motives to her because she receives them. JONATHAN is *peculiarly conscientious* on this point. To love money, it would seem, is an unpardonable sin in his eyes; and for any of his daughters to manifest such a love, is to bring upon his venerable head deep humiliation! — Our neighbor of the American says:

"It is known that Mrs. STOWE'S book has won for her great popularity in England, and it is therefore not surprising that she should take an early opportunity to

103. Was Edward Tucker fired for his misconduct? No, because he had already lost his job with the [railroad](#) on account of his injury. This was the United States of America, land of liberty, and Tucker was a free man, which meant that his destiny was his own. In that day and age anyone injured in the workplace for any reason was automatically out of work — because an injured worker can't continue to do work and therefore had no claim to receive any more pay. In the American South, this was one of the arguments for slavery: that being someone's slave meant that someone had some responsibility toward one, and cared whether one lived or died.



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visit that country. Incense is pleasant to most people, and Mrs. S. may be pardoned for wishing to inhale it on European ground. But incense alone is not what she seeks. Her pocket, as well as her nostrils, is open. Already has her book brought her a fortune; nevertheless she accepts without scruple a purse filled with penny contributions of English women! There is nothing like thrift."

It may relieve the American to learn (what, by the way, is the simple truth) that the contributions which Mrs. Stowe is receiving, as he says, from English women, are not intended, exclusively, for her purse, or for that of her family. She receives them, simply, as a means of continuing those good works which have already distinguished her as a Christian philanthropist. The money which she receives is to be, in part, appropriated to the establishment of some institution, which shall be of effectual and permanent benefit to the colored people of the United States. If it be degrading for Americans to receive money from English women for such a purpose, how much more degrading is it that Americans do not, of themselves, contribute their money for such a purpose. There are, at this moment, two colored young ladies, at Oberlin College, being educated at the charge of Harriet Beecher Stowe; and these two ladies were snatched from a fate worse than death. They were intended, by American refinement and civilization, for the NEW ORLEANS MARKET, where their youth and beauty would have commanded the highest prices. It is to enable Mrs. Stowe to prosecute a work of benevolence already begun, that donations are made to her in England; and she is no more to blame for receiving them than Father Mathew was for receiving the thousands of dollars he did in this country. The cause in which Mrs. Stowe is engaged is not an American cause, nor a national cause, but an universal cause – one which appeals to the heart of universal humanity. – It is, therefore, as proper for an Englishwoman as for an American, to espouse it, to aid it, and to co-operate with those of every land, and of every nation, who labor to make that cause triumphant.

Mrs. Stowe's Position.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS, Esq: DEAR SIR: – I send you, according to promise, the second of my series of letters. In saying, in my letter of the 22nd of March, that "Mrs. Stowe knows nothing about us – 'the Free Colored People of the United States' – neither does any white person," I admit the expression to be ironical, and not intended to be taken in its literal sense; but I meant to be understood in so saying, that they known nothing, comparatively, about us, to the intelligent, reflecting, general observers among the Free Colored People of the North. And while I readily admit, that I "know nothing about Mrs. Stowe," I desire very much, to learn something of her; and as I could not expect it of Mrs. Stowe, to do so, were she in the country at present, I may at least ask it of brother Douglass, and hope that he will neither consider it derogatory to Mrs. Stowe's position nor attainments, to give me the required information concerning her. I go beyond the mere point of asking it as a favor; I demand it

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as a right – from you I mean – as I am an interested party, and however humble, may put such reasonable questions to the other party – looking upon you, in this case, as the attorney of said party – as may be necessary to the pending proceedings.

First, then, assertion; is not Mrs. Stowe a Colonizationalist? having so avowed, or at least subscribed to, and recommended their principles in her great work of Uncle Tom.

Secondly; although Mrs. Stowe has ably, eloquently and pathetically portrayed some of the sufferings of the slave, is it any evidence that she has any sympathy for his thrice-morally crucified, semi-free brethren any where, or of the African race at all; when in the same world-renowned and widely circulated work, she sneers at Hayti – the only truly free and independent civilized black nation as such, or colored if you please, on the face of the earth – at the same time holding up the little dependent colonization settlement of Liberia in high estimation? I must be permitted to draw my own conclusions, when I say that I can see no other cause for this singular discrepancy in Mrs. Stowe's interest in the colored race, than that one is independent of, and the other subservient to, white men's power. You will certainly not consider this idea far-fetched, because it is true American policy; and I do not think strange, even of Mrs. Stowe, for following in a path so conspicuous, as almost to become the principal public highway. At least, no one will dispute its being a well-trodden path.

Thirdly, says brother Douglass, "Why, then, should any man object to the efforts of Mrs. Stowe, or any one else, who is moved to do anything in our behalf?" Bro. Douglass does not mean, and I will not so torture his language, as to make it imply that he means, that we should permit any body to undertake measures for our elevation. If so, those of Gurley, Pinney, and other colonizationalists, should be acknowledged by us as acceptable measures. But are we to accept of colonization measures for our elevation? – Certainly not, you will readily reply. Then, if that be true, and Mrs. Stowe be what I have predicated – which I hope her friends may prove, satisfactorily, to the contrary – we should reject the proffers of Mrs. Stowe, as readily as those of any other colonizationalist. What! Have our children tutored under colonization measures? God Forbid! But why question Mrs. Stowe's measures? I will tell you. In May last, a colored man, – humble and common placed, to be sure – chanced to meet Mrs. Stowe at the house of Mr. B—, in the city of N—, State of N—, where he had called with some articles for sale. He informs me that Mrs. Stowe was very indifferent towards him – more so, he thought, than any of the several persons present; and hearing him speak of his elevation in the United States, she asked, very seriously, what he expected to gain by any efforts that could be made here; and when he referred to the West Indies, and South America, &c.;, as an alternative, she at once asked him, "why he did not go to Liberia" – that moral and political bane of the colored people of this country – manifesting no sympathy whatever with the tortured feelings, crushed spirits and outraged homes of the Free Colored people, even the poor wretch who then stood before her. All this may have been, you may say, and still Mrs. Stowe be all that we could desire. It may be; but he who can believe such things, has stronger faith and

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confidence than I, in our American people. I must admit, that in them my confidence is terribly shattered. But, I will suppose a case as parallel with this one.

Mrs. Christian, of Vienna, in Austria, a highly intellectual, pious lady, writes a book – an excellent work – which is beginning to attract general public attention, for it is portrayal of Hungarian wrongs. The deeply-moved sympathies of the lady's soul seems to teem through every chapter and page, exposing Austrian oppression, and, impliedly, advocating Hungarian rights – as would be reasonably supposed – the right to live freemen in Austria, or, at least, Hungary, their native part of the Empire. While the public attention is thus aroused, and that lady's book is almost the only topic of conversation among the people, from Paris to St. Petersburg, what would be thought of that lady if a poor Hungarian chanced to meet her, and she manifested no sympathy for him, the present representative in poverty and obscurity of the very people whose cause she professed to espouse; and when he claimed the right to live in Austria, she would unconcernedly ask him why he did not go to Siberia, the inhospitable criminal colony of Russia – answering very well to the Liberia of the American colonizationists, only not so cruel – since Russia sends only her criminals, mostly deserting soldiers and political offenders, while the United States Colonization Society forces innocent men, women and children to go, who never did harm to any one? Surely, according to the supposition predicated above, the Hungarians would have great cause for fearing, if not suspecting Mrs. Christian's fidelity to their cause.

Lastly; the Industrial Institution in contemplation by Mrs. Stowe, for the tuition of colored youth, proposes, as I understand it, the entire employment of white instructors. This, I strongly object to, as having a tendency to engender in our youth a higher degree of respect and confidence for white persons than for those of their own color; and creates the impression that colored persons are incapable of teaching, and only suited to subordinate positions. I have observed carefully, in all of my travels in our country – in all the schools that I visited – colored schools I mean – that in those taught in whole or part by colored persons, the pupils were always the most respectful towards me, and the less menial in their general bearing. I do not object to white teachers in part; but I do say, that wherever competent colored teachers could be obtained for any of the departments, they should be employed. Self-respect begets due obedience to others; and obedience is the first step to self-government among any people. Certainly, this should be an essential part of the training of our people, separated in interests as we have been, in this country. All the rude and abominable ideas that exist among us, in preferences for color, have been engendered from the whites; and in God's name, I ask them to do nothing more to increase this absurdity.

Another consideration, is, that all of the pecuniary advantages arising from this position go into the pockets of white men and women, thereby depriving colored persons, so far, of this

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livelihood. This is the same old song sung over again,

“Dimes and dollars — dollars and dimes.”

and I will say, without the fear of offence, that nothing that has as yet been gotten up by our friends, for the assistance of the colored people of the United States, has ever been of any pecuniary benefit to them. Our white friends take care of that part. There are, to my knowledge, two exceptions to this allegation — Douglass’ printing establishment, and the “Alleghany Institute;” the one having a colored man at the head, and in the other, the assistant being a colored man.

There is an old American story about an Indian and a white man, hunting game together; when they shoot wild turkeys and buzzards, agreeing to divide, taking bird about; the white huntsman being the teller. In counting, the white man would say, alternately taking up either bird, “turkey for me, and buzzard for you — buzzard for you, and turkey for me. “He growing tired of that method of counting the game, soon accosted his friend: “Uh! How’s dis? All buzzard for me; but you never say, turkey for me, once.” I feel somewhat as this Indian did; I am growing weary of receiving the buzzard as our share, while our tellers get all the turkeys. That “is not the way to ‘tell’ it” to me. But I have not yet read the “Key to Uncle Tom’s Cabin,” and it maybe that, in that, Mrs. S. — and I sincerely hope she has — has changed her [illegible], and renounced Colonization as she had made a public avowal of it; and a priori, just so far as her work received favor, her opinions on that subject will also be received.

I am aware that I am saying much more than is allowable, as I do not know of any of our professed anti-slavery friends who have taken public positions, who will permit any of their measures to be questioned by a colored person, except in the fullness of those great and good hearts — W. L. Garrison, Gerritt Smith, and that more than excellent woman, Mrs. Hester Moore, of Philadelphia, whose name you now scarcely ever hear of. She is an abolitionist of the Garrison and Smith sort; she loves the cause of Hungary for the sake of the Hungarians.

Let me say another thing, brother Douglass; that is, that no enterprise, institution, or anything else, should be commenced for us, or our general benefit, without first consulting us. By this, I mean, consulting the various communities of the colored people in the United States, by such a correspondence as should make public the measure, and solicit their general interests and coincidence. In this way, the intelligence and desires of the whole people would be elicited, and an intelligent understanding of their real desires obtained. Other than this, is treating us as slaves, and presupposing us all to be ignorant, and incapable of knowing our own wants. Many of the measures of our friends have failed from this very cause; and I am fearful that many more will fail.

In conclusion, brother Douglass, let me say, that I am the last person among us who would wilfully “strike a jarring note, or awaken a feeling of distrust,” uncalled for; and although you may pronounce it “unwise, ungraceful, and sounding high and mighty on paper;” as much high respect as an humble simple-minded person should have for them, and as much honored as I



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should feel in having such names enrolled as our benefactors – associated with our degraded position in society; believe me when I tell you, that I speak it as a son, a brother, a husband and a father; I speak it from the consciousness of oppressed humanity, outraged manhood, of a degraded husband and disabled father; I speak it from the recesses of a wounded bleeding heart – in the name of my wife and children, who look to me for protection, as the joint partner of our humble fireside; I say, if this great fund and aid are to be sent here to foster and aid the schemes of the American Colonization Society, as I say to you – I say with reverence, and an humbleness of feeling, becoming my position, with a bowed-down head, that the benevolent, great and good, the Duchess of Sutherland, Mr. Gurney, their graces the Earl of Shaftesbury and the Earl of Carlisle; had far better retain their money in the Charity Fund of Stafford House, or any other place, than to send it to the United States for any such unhallowed purposes! – No person will be more gratified, nor will more readily join in commendation, than I, of any good measure attempted to be carried out by Mrs. Stowe, if the contrary of her colonization principles be disproved. I will not accept chains from a king, any sooner than from a peasant; and never shall, willingly, submit to any measures for my own degradation. I am in hopes, brother Douglass, as every one else will understand my true position.

Yours for God and down-trodden Humanity,

M.R. DELANY.

PITTSBURGH, April 18th, 1853.

The Letter of M.R. Delany.

This letter is premature, unfair, uncalled for, and, withal, needlessly long; but, happily, it needs not a long reply.

Can brother Delany be the writer of it? – It lacks his generous spirit. The letter is premature, because it attacks a plan, the details of which are yet undefined. It is unfair, because imputes designs (and replies to them) which have never been declared. It is uncalled for, because there is nothing in the position of Mrs. Stowe which should awaken against her a single suspicion of unfriendliness towards the free colored people of the United States; but, on the contrary, there is much in it to inspire confidence in her friendship.

The information for which brother Delany asks, concerning Mrs. Stowe, he has given himself. He says she is a colonizationist; and we ask, what if she is? – names do not frighten us. A little while ago, brother Delany was a colonizationist. If we do not misremember, in his book he declared in favor of colonizing the eastern coast of Africa. Yet, we never suspected his friendliness to the colored people; nor should we feel called upon to oppose any plan he might submit, for the benefit of the colored people, on that account. We recognize friends wherever we find them.

Whoever will bring a straw's weight of influence to break the chains of our brother bondmen, or whisper one word of encouragement and sympathy to our proscribed race in the North, shall be welcomed by us to that philanthropic field of labor. We shall not, therefore, allow the sentiments put in the brief



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letter of GEORGE HARRIS, at the close of Uncle Tom's Cabin, to vitiate forever Mrs. Stowe's power to do us good. Who doubts that Mrs. Stowe is more of an abolitionist now than when she wrote that chapter? — We believe that lady to be but at the beginning of her labors for the colored people of this country. Brother Delany says, nothing should be done for us, or commenced for us, without "consulting us." Where will he find "us" to consult with? Through what organization, or what channel could such consulting be carried on? Does he mean by consulting "us" that nothing is to be done for the improvement of the colored people in general, without consulting each colored man in the country whether it shall be done? How many, in this case, constitute "us"? Evidently brother Delany is a little unreasonable here.

Four years ago, a proposition was made, through the columns of The North Star, for the formation of a "National League," and a constitution for said League was drawn up, fully setting forth a plan for united, intelligent and effective co-operation on the part of the free colored people of the United States — a body capable of being "consulted." The colored people, in their wisdom, or in their indifference, gave the scheme little or no encouragement — and it failed. Now, we happen to know that such an organization as was then proposed, was enquired for, and sought for by Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe; she wished, most of all, to hear from such a body what could be done for the free colored people of the United States? But there was no such body to answer.

The fact is, brother Delany, we are a disunited and scattered people, and very much of the responsibility of this disunion must fall upon such colored men as yourself and the writer of this. We want more confidence in each other, as a race — more self-forgetfulness, and less disposition to find fault with well-meant efforts for our benefit. Mr. Delany knows that, at this moment, he could call a respectable Convention of the free colored people of the Northern States. Why don't he issue his call? and he knows, too, that, were we to issue such a call, it would instantly be regarded as an effort to promote the interests of our paper. This consideration, and a willingness on our part to occupy an obscure position in such a movement, has led us to refrain from issuing a call. The Voice of the Fugitive, we observe, has suggested the holding, in New York, of a "World's Convention" during the "World's Fair." A better proposition, we think, would be to hold in that city a "National Convention" of the colored people. Will not friend Delany draw up a call for such a Convention, and send it to us for publication?

But to return. Brother Delany asks, if we should allow "any body" to undertake measures for our elevation? YES, we answer — any body, even a slaveholder. Why not? Then says brother Delany, why not accept the measures of "Gurley and Pinney"? We answer, simply because their measures do not commend themselves to our judgment. That is all. If "Gurley and Pinney" would establish an industrial college, where colored young men could learn useful trades, with a view to their becoming useful men and respectable citizens of the United States, we should applaud them and co-operate with them.

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We don't object to Colonizations because they express a lively interest in the civilization and Christianization of Africa; nor because they desire the prosperity of Liberia; but it is because, like brother Delany, they have not sufficient faith in the people of the United States to believe that the black man can ever get justice at their hands on American soil. It is because they have systematically, and almost universally, sought to spread their hopelessness among the free colored people themselves; and thereby rendered them, if not contented with, at least resigned to the degradation which they have been taught to believe must be perpetual and immutable, while they remain where they are. It is because, having denied the possibility of our elevation here, they have sought to make good this denial, by encouraging the enactment of laws subjecting us to the most flagrant outrages, and stripping us of all the safeguards necessary to the security of our liberty, persons and property. — We say all this of the American Colonization Society; but we are far from saying this of many who speak and wish well to Liberia. As to the imputation that all the pecuniary profit arising out of the industrial scheme will probably pass into the pockets of the whites, it will be quite time enough to denounce such a purpose when such a purpose is avowed. But we have already dwelt too long on a letter which perhaps carried its own answer with it.



May 7, Saturday, 1853: For the 1st time this season [Henry Thoreau](#) heard the pumlike note of the stake-driver [[American Bittern](#) [Botaurus lentiginosus](#)]. He made notes on other birds as well, that eventually would appear in [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#).

“Le trésor à Mathurin,” an opéra-comique by Jacques Offenbach to words of Battu, was performed for the initial time, in Salle Herz (this would later be revived as “Le mariage aux lanternes”).



[WALDEN](#): Early in May, the oaks, hickories, maples, and other trees, just putting out amidst the pine woods around the pond, imparted a brightness like sunshine to the landscape, especially in cloudy days, as if the sun were breaking through mists and shining faintly on the hill-sides here and there. On the third or fourth of May I saw a loon in the pond, and during the first week of the month I heard the whippoorwill, the brown-thrasher, the veery, the wood-pewee, the chewink, and other birds. I had heard the wood-thrush long before. The phoebe had already come once more and looked in at my door and window, to see if my house was cavern-like enough for her, sustaining herself on humming wings with clinched talons, as if she held by the air, while she surveyed the premises.

WHIPPOORWILL


WOOD THRUSH

CHEWINK



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Thoreau noted in his journal that a dead white-throated sparrow [[White-throated Sparrow](#)  [Zonotrichia albicollis](#)] was found in Waldo Emerson's garden. He did not comment on this species's *Po-or Sam Peabody, Peabody, Peabody* song, because the specimen he was observing had died — but it is worth commenting here that in recent decades this species has been noticed to have altered its song to be more like *Oh sweet Cana, Cana, Cana*.

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

Started very early without our breakfast in order to be first at the ferry. Got there and while waiting the rope broke. We then turned and went to another ferry 7 miles above. Passed a wagon said to have a man in it sick with the small pox. Came within a mile and a half of the ferry and camped. Will not cross till Monday morning.

The [Herald](#) of Placer, [California](#) reported:

FROM GRASS VALLEY — The companies, who are working the cement at Cement Bar, are making good wages. The gravel in the cement resembles very much of the gravel found in other bars of the river, with the exception that it is cemented so compactly together and to the bed rock that it often requires the hammer and chisel to separate it. In this compact conglomerate, a mass of iron, boulders, quartz and every other almost known substance of which the bed of the river is usually formed, and near, frequently on the bed rock in small patches, is found the gold. I have seen pieces of this cement not larger than half the size of a man's head, and not a very large head at that, contained more than thirty dollars sticking out in all directions, in specks from a few cents in value to several dollars. It is in patches quite small, but often yields hundreds of dollars to a few square inches. A man may work, however, several days without seeing the color, at another time he may take out months' wages in a few minutes.

At Indian Hill near Colonel Sprags, I saw between five and six hundred dollars of fine gold that was taken out there by four men in one day. At Humbug, they are doing well. At Kenedy's Diggings near Elizabethtown, they are doing a big business, last week, three men, I am informed panned out in one day over \$800, something over \$300 was taken out at one pan. New diggings are being struck on old leads traced to the banks in which the miners are doing extremely well, almost every day. A lump was taken out a few days since which weighted over 8 ounces.

Upon the whole there can be no doubt that taking into account, Yankee Jim's digging, the ravines through Elizabethtown, Green Valley, Indiana Hill, Eastman Hill and Thompson Hill, that the miners are doing well.

Since writing you the above, one of my partners came in from Elizabethtown and bring cheering news from that place and the ravines between here and there. He stopped over night with a miner four miles from here who exhibited to him a piece of quartz with gold which he had just taken from his claim, of the richest kind, it had not then been weighted, but his description of it was that "it was as large as a pumpkin, larger at one end spotted all over with gold, the seams and cavities were also filled with



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the same and it was monstrously heavy.”

The Herald of Placer, [California](#) also passed along a news item out of the State Journal, according to which 3 men had taken from their claim at Kanaka Bar on the South Fork of the American River, in a single day last week, 9 pounds, 9 ounces and \$7 worth of gold. One piece of rich gold ore was reported as closely resembling a cast-iron flat iron without a handle so as to be easily mistaken for such an ordinary item — except of course for its color, and its weight. The Herald of Placerville, evidently a different gazette issued in a different town, reported buyer skepticism:

NO I WON'T TAKE IT — This was the answer we received last week from a gentleman to whom we offered a copy of the Herald; and he gave as his reasons, that all the papers were filled with the great strikes, big lumps and rich diggings, while nothing was said of the many that were barely making “grub” (a California term for board.) We assured him that if he would inform us correctly of any such instances, we would be happy to notice them in our columns.

He then declared that his was just the case, that his name was Samuel Tucker, that he had worked hard all day, and in panning out at night, had made just *two bits*, and out of that had to pay two dollars for the use of water, and at the same time board himself.

Now there are a great many men in California that are doing no better than Mr. Tucker, and there are a great many in every other country besides California. But we dare assert and we think with safety, that even Mr. Tucker would not be willing to hire out and do a full man's day's work, for less than three dollars per day, double the amount he could receive, we presume, for the same amount of labor done in the State from whence he emigrated. This wonderful feat of two bits in one whole day, was perpetrated upon Smith's Ranch.

VALUE OF LABOR IN THE MINES — In conversation with Geo. Fuller and other miners at Smith's Ranch, we are assured that there are many men at work at that excellent mining locality that working by the day, receive *three dollars*, and in some instances more per day, in cash. Dr. Frothingham, who employs hands at Coon Hollow, mining, says that good hands there are getting as high as \$4 per day, boarding themselves. At Gold Flat, half a mile from Diamond Springs, and two and a half miles from Placerville, hands are receiving \$2.75 per day and board.

FORTY-TWO OUNCES — Daniel Greenfield, & Co., only managed to make from their claim on Smith's Ranch, week before last, forty-two ounces of gold dust, and the last week only forty-one ounces; but this amount they did make, and are at times taking as high as ten dollars per day to the man. Their operations can be carried on through the entire summer as water is now easily procured by purchase from South Fork Canal Company, at reasonable or paying rates.

SLUICING CLAIMS — We frequently see it asserted in papers from different parts of the State, that certain rich surface or sluicing grounds have been discovered, that will prospect one, two and sometimes as high as three dollars to the pan. Now, we have no such sluicing or surface claims in El Dorado County, nor do we believe they exist in California. There may have been a

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single pan, here and there, in certain localities or obtained under peculiar circumstances, that have yielded much more than even that amount of pure gold. But to say that whole claims exist that will pay anything like that amount, or even the lowest figure, is saying must a little too much nor is it necessary, even though an immense yield might be expected.

A man can easily throw into a sluice eight hundred pans of earth per day; this at only one cent to the pan, would be eight dollars per day, and this is deemed fair wages. And now, does anyone say there is a sluice claim in California that pays regularly one dollar, or fifty cents, or even twenty cents to the pan? We certainly do not believe it, for at twenty cents, even, it would pay one hundred and sixty dollars per day, to the man shoveling. So that when you hear of surface or sluicing claims, that will prospect from ten to twenty cents to the pan, unless a lead is struck, make up your mind as a thing certain, that some one wants to sell a claim badly, or that the people in that vicinity want neighbors, or the mechanic and merchant more business. Printers would never tell such stories on their own account.



May 7. Forenoon. — Up North River to stone-heaps.

The willows (*Salix alba*) where I keep my boat resound with the hum of bees and other insects. The leaves of the aspen are perhaps the most conspicuous of any, though the *Salix alba*, from its mass and its flowers in addition, makes the greater impression. I hear the loud cackling of the flicker [Yellow-shafted Flicker ■ *Colaptes auratus*] about the aspen at the rock. A gray squirrel is stealing along beneath. Hundreds of tortoises, painted and wood, are heard hurrying through the dry leaves on the bank, and seen tumbling into the water as my boat approaches; sometimes half a dozen and more are sunning on a floating rail, and one will remain with outstretched neck, its head moving slowly round in a semicircle, while the boat passes within a few feet. Fresh green meadow-grass is springing up, as the water goes down, and flags. The larch has grown a quarter of an inch or more, studded with green buds; not so forward as the Scotch larch. The hemlock and the pitch pine have also started.

The keys of the white maple are more than half an inch long, not including stem; a dull-purplish cottony white. They make no such show as the red. The keys of the red are longer-stemmed but as yet much smaller. The leaves of the white are perhaps most advanced, yet lost in the fruit. The catkins of the hop-hornbeam, yellow tassels hanging from the trees, which grow on the steep bank of the Assabet, give them a light, graceful, and quite noticeable appearance. It is among the more conspicuous growths now; yet the anthers shed no pollen yet. Smaller trees and limbs which have few or no catkins have leaves, elm-like, already an inch long. The black cherry leaves are among the more conspicuous, more than an inch long. One of the many cherries which have when bruised the strong cherry scent. But this is the strongest and most rummy of all. The black oak buds are considerably expanded, probably more than any oaks. Their catkins are more than half an inch long. The swamp white oak is late, but the tips of the buds show yellowish green. The sugar maple in blossom, probably, for a day or two, but since April 30th, though the peduncles are not half their length yet. Apple trees are greened with opening leaves, and their blossom-buds show the red.

As I advance up the Assabet, the lively note of the yellowbird [Yellow Warbler ■ *Dendroica petechia* (Yellow-bird or Summer Yellow-bird)] is borne from the willows, and the creeper [Brown Creeper ■ *Certhia americana*] is seen busy amid the lichens of the maple, and the loud, jingling *tche tche tche tche*, etc., of the chip-bird [Chipping Sparrow ■ *Spizella passerina*] rings along the shore occasionally. The chewink [Rufous-sided Towhee ■ *Pipilo erythrophthalmus*] is seen and heard scratching amid the dry leaves like a hen. The woods now begin to ring with the woodland note of the oven-bird [Ovenbird ■ *Seiurus aurocapillus*]. I hear the mew of the first catbird [Gray Catbird ■ *Dumetella carolinensis*], and, soon after, its rich and varied melody; and there sits on a tree over the water the ungainly kingfisher [Belted Kingfisher ■ *Ceryle alcyon*], who



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flies off with an apparently laborious flight, sounding his alarum.

A few yellow lily pads are already spread out on the surface, tender, reddish leaves, with a still crenate or scalloped border like that of some tin platters on which turnovers are cooked, while the muddy bottom is almost everywhere spotted with the large reddish ruffle-like leaves, from the midst of which the flowerstems already stand up a foot, aiming toward the light and heat. That long reddish *bent* grass abounds on the river now. That small kind of pondweed, with a whorl of small leaves on the surface and nutlets already in the axils of the very common linear leaves, is common in the river. I hear the *witter-che* of the Maryland yellow-throat [**Common Yellowthroat** █ *Geothlypis trichas*], also, on the willows. The note of the peewee [**Spotted Sandpiper** █ *Actitis macularia*] resounds along the river, — standing on the rocks laid bare by the fallen water or running along the sandy shore. The rich medley of the thrasher [**Thrasher, Brown** █ *Toxostoma rufum* (~~Mavis, red~~)] is also heard.

In the frog-spawn (which looks like oats in a jelly, masses as big as the fist), I distinguish the form of the pollywog, which squirms a little. The female flowers of the sweet-gale, somewhat like but larger and more crowded than the hazel, is now an interesting sight along the edge of the river. That early cross-like plant is a foot high and budded.

The stone-heaps have been formed since I was here before, methinks about a month ago, and for the most part of fresh stones; *i.e.*, piles several feet in diameter by a foot high have evidently been made (no doubt commonly on the ruins of old ones) within a month. The stones are less than the size of a hen's egg, down to a pebble; now all under water. The Haverhill fisherman found the young of the common eel in such, and referred them to it.

I take it to be the small pewee [**Eastern Wood-Pewee** █ *Contopus virens*] whose smart chirp I hear so commonly. The delicate cherry-like leaf, transparent red, of the shad-bush is now interesting, especially in the sun. Some have green leaves. There is one of the former, five inches in diameter and eighteen or twenty feet high, on the Island, with only four to six flowers to a raceme. Heard a stake-driver [**American Bittern** █ *Botaurus lentiginosus*]. Saw a large snake, I think a black one, drop into the river close by; pursued, and as he found me gaining, he dived when he lead reached the middle, and that was the last I saw of him. Fishing has commenced in the river. A white-throated sparrow [**White-throated Sparrow** █ *Zonotrichia albicollis*] died in R.W.E.'s garden this morning. Half the streak over eye yellow. A passer. The odor of the sweet-briar along the side of a house. Riding through Lincoln, found the peach bloom now in prime, generally a dark pink with a lighter almost white inmixed, more striking from the complete absence of leaves, and especially when seen against the green of pines. I can find no wild gooseberry in bloom yet. The barberry bushes are in some places now quite green.

Various grasses in bloom for a week.

With respect to leafing, the more conspicuous and forward trees and shrubs are the following, and nearly in this order, as I think, and these have formed *small* leaves: Gooseberry, aspens (not *grandidentata*), willows, young maples of all kinds, balm-of-Gilead (?), elder, meadow-sweet, back cherry, and is that Jersey tea on Island? or diervilla? ostrya, alder, white birch and the three others, *Pyrus arbutifolia* (?), apple, amelanchier, choke(?)-cherry, dwarf ditto, wild red, *Viburnum nudum* (?) and *Lentago*, barberry.

The following are bursting into leaf: Hazel, shrub oak, black oak and red, white pine, larch, cornel, thorns, etc., elms.

Yorick. [This was Thoreau's rendering of the **Veery** █ *Catharus fuscescens*'s call-note.]

Some birds — pewees, ground birds, robins [**American Robin** █ *Turdus migratorius*], etc. — have already built nests and laid their eggs, before the leaves are expanded or the fields fairly green. Heard to-day that more slumbrous stertorous sound (not the hoarse one of early frogs) as I paddled up the river. Is it tortoises? These are abundantly out.

The *Viola pedata* with the large pale-blue flower is now quite common along warm sandy banks. The *ovata* is ~i smaller and darker and striped violet.

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May 8, Sunday, 1853: [John Farrar](#) died in Cambridge, Massachusetts.



A setting of the 91st Psalm for solo voices and chorus by [Giacomo Meyerbeer](#) was performed for the initial time, in the Friedenskirche of Potsdam in the presence of King Friedrich Wilhelm IV of Prussia and King Leopold I of Belgium.

Captain George Hyde took the 3-masted steamer [Argo](#) out of Southampton, under sail power boosted by a Maudslay, Sons and Field's reciprocating engine driving a single screw; they would arrive at Melbourne, Australia in 64 days despite a stop enroute at Cape St. Vincent (this vessel would return via Cape Horn in 63 days, to considerable acclaim as the 1st steamer to circumnavigate the globe).

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

Drove down on the bank of the river, so we would not be crowded out when our turn came around. I have heard more swearing to-day, than I ever heard in one day before, or ever wish to again.



May 8. P.M. — To Annurnsack.


A long row of elms just set out by Wheeler from his gate to the old Lee place. The planting of so

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long a row of trees which are so stately and may endure so long deserves to be recorded. In many localities a much shorter row, or even a few scattered trees, set out sixty or a hundred years since, is the most conspicuous as well as interesting relic of the past in sight. Nothing more proves the civility of one's ancestors.

The *Ribes floridum*, wild black currant, just begun by the wooden bridge just this side of the Assabet stone bridge, with dotted leaves. The thimble-berry and high blackberry leaves are among the *most* forward. That large reddish-stemmed cornel shows now narrow green buds tipped with reddish, three quarters of an inch long by one quarter wide.

Sonic thrashers [**Brown Thrasher**  *Toxostroma rufum*] are plainly better singers than others. How surprising and interesting this cluster of leek buds on the rock in the [Jesse Hosmer](#) farm, composed of thick, succulent green leaves, cactus-like, tipped with dull purple, in buds from a half-inch to three inches in diameter! What tenacity of life! Its leaves so disposed (from circumference to centre) as to break joints. Some place it on a gate-post to grow high and dry above the earth for a curiosity. It may be a convenient symbol.

At the foot of Annurnsack, rising from the Jesse Hosmer meadow, was surprised by the brilliant pale scarlet flowers of the painted-cup (*Castilleja coccinea*) just coming into bloom. Some may have been out a day or two. Methinks this the most high-colored and brilliant flower yet, not excepting the columbine. In color it matches [Sophia's](#) cactus blossoms exactly. It is all the more interesting for being a painted leaf and not petal, and its spidery leaves, pinnatifid with linear divisions, increase its strangeness. It is now from three to six inches high, rising from the moist base of the hill. It is wonderful what a variety of flowers may grow within the range of a walk, and how long some very conspicuous ones may escape the most diligent walker, if you do not chance to visit their localities the right week or fortnight, when their signs are out. It is a flaming leaf. The very leaf has flowered; not the ripe tints of autumn, but the rose in the cheek of infancy; a more positive flowering. Still more abundant on the same ground was the *Erigeron bellidifolius*, robin's-plantain [the soft-leaved calamint], with a pale-purple ray still erect, like a small thimble, not yet horizontal. This, then, its very earliest date. Neither of these did I see last year, and I was affected as if I had got into a new botanical district. A kind of mint, shoots now six or eight inches high, with a velvety purple or lake under surface to leaves.

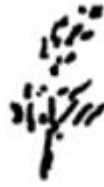
They have cut off the woods, and with them the shad-bush, on the top of Annurnsack, but laid open new and wider prospects. The landscape is in some respects more interesting because of the overcast sky, threatening rain; a cold southwest wind. I am struck and charmed by the quantity of forest, especially in the southwest, after having witnessed the bareness of the Haverhill country. It is as if every farmer had a beautiful garden and boundless plantations of trees and shrubs, such as no imperial wealth can surpass. The pyramidal pine-tops are now seen rising out of a reddish mistiness of the deciduous trees just bursting into leaf. A week ago the deciduous woods had not this misty look, and the evergreens were more sharply divided from them, but now they have the appearance of being merged in or buoyed up in a mist. I am not [*sic*] sure what is the cause of the reddish line around the lower edges of the wood. It is plainly the red maple, and in many places, no doubt, the shrub oak. The oaks are plainly more gray already and some trees greenish. *Vide* again after a week. The catkins of the black birch appear more advanced than those of the white birch. They are very large, four inches long, half a dozen gracefully drooping at the ends of the twigs bent down by their weight, conspicuous at a distance in wisps, as if dry leaves left on, very rich golden. The yellow birch is the first I have noticed fully in bloom, — considerably in advance of the others. Its flowers smell like its bark. Methinks the black and the paper birch next, and then the white, or all nearly together. The leaves of the *papyracea* unfold like a fan and are sticky. How fresh and glossy! And the catkins I gather shed pollen the next morning.


Some hickory buds are nearly two inches long. The handsome finely divided leaves of the *pedicularis* are conspicuous. It is now budded amid the painted-cups. The fruit of the *Populus grandidentata* appears puffed up and blasted into a large bright yellow [*sic*], like some plums some seasons. The thorn bushes have so far leaved out on the north side of Annurnsack as to reveal their forms, as I look up the hill and see them against the light. They are remarkably uniform, somewhat

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like this, the leading shoot finally rising above the rest, somewhat like a broad poplar.



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

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

[following screen]






THE ALCOTT FAMILY

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

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

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



May 9. Since I returned from Haverhill, not only I find the ducks  are gone, but I no longer hear the *chill-lill* of the blue snowbird [[Snow Bunting](#)  *Plectrophenax nivalis*] or the sweet strains of the fox-colored sparrow [[Fox Sparrow](#)  *Passerella iliaca*] and the tree sparrow [[American Tree Sparrow](#)  *Spizella arborea*]. The robin [[American Robin](#)  *Turdus migratorius*]'s strain is less remarkable.

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

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

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



At sundown paddled up the river.

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

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

This has been almost the first warm day; none yet quite so warm. Walking to the Cliffs this afternoon, I noticed, on Fair Haven Hill, a season stillness, as I looked over the distant budding forest and heard the buzzing of a fly.

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

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

**Brad Dean's
Commentary**

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



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



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

“How blind that cannot see serenity!”

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

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



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

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

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

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



May 10: 5 A.M. — Up railroad.

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

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







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

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


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

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

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

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

When I heard the first bobolink [**Bobolink**  ***Dolichonyx oryzivorus***] strain this morning I could not at first collect myself enough to tell what it was I heard, — a reminiscence of last May in all its prime occurring in the midst of the experience of this in its unripe state. Suddenly the season being sufficiently advanced, the atmosphere in the right condition, these flashing, scintillating notes are struck out from it where that dark mote disappears through it, as sparks by a flint, with a tinkling sound. This flashing, tinkling meteor bursts through the expectant meadow air, leaving a train of tinkling notes behind. Successive regiments of birds arrive and are disbanded in our fields, like soldiers still wearing their regimentals. I doubted at first if it were not a strain brought on a few days in advance by an imitative catbird [**Gray Catbird**  ***Dumetella carolinensis***] or thrush (?) from



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where he had been staying. Within a day or more, a lower and decidedly downy and small racemed amelanchier has opened, and I think that the first and slightly downy and greenish-leaved ones are associated with the decidedly smooth and red-leaved *Botryapium*. Is not this now the most conspicuous native flower? The *Vaccinium vacillans* is out.

The three colored violets, as I observe them this afternoon, are thus distinguished: the *ovata*, a dark lilac, especially in sun; the *cucullata*, oftenest slaty-blue, sometimes lilac, deeper within, more or less pale and striped; the *pedata*, large, exposed, clear pale-blue with a white spot. None like the sky, but *pedata* most like it, lilac *ovata* least like it. Yet the last is the richest-colored. The *pedata* often pale to whiteness. It begins now to be quite obvious along the side of warm and sandy woodland paths.

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

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

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


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

I hear, and have for a week, in the woods, the note of one or more small birds somewhat like a yellow-bird's [Yellow Warbler █ *Dendroica petechia*]. What is it? Is it the red-start [American Redstart █ *Setophaga ruticilla*]? I now see one of these. The first I have distinguished. And now I feel pretty certain that my black and yellow warbler of May 1st was this. As I sit, it inquisitively hops nearer and nearer. It is one of the election-birds¹⁰⁴ of rare colors which I can remember, mingled dark and reddish. This reminds me that I supposed much more variety and fertility in nature before I had learned the numbers and the names of each order. I find that I had expected such fertility in our Concord woods alone as not even the completest museum of stuffed birds of all the forms and colors

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

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
from all parts of the world comes up to. The neat and active creeper [**Brown Creeper**  *Certhia americana*] hops about the trunks, its note like a squeaking twig.

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

ROSS/ADAMS COMMENTARY

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

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

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



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for the low hum of a bee in the grass. Heard a tree-toad. The pond, Walden, has risen considerably since the melting.

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

THOREAU AS ORNITHOLOGIST



May 11, Wednesday, 1853: [Henri-Frédéric Amiel](#), who would be referred to as the “Swiss [Thoreau](#),” wrote in his *JOURNAL INTIME*: “Psychology, poetry, philosophy, history, and science, I have swept rapidly to-day on the wings of the invisible hippogriff through all these spheres of thought. But the general impression has been one of tumult and anguish, temptation and disquiet. I love to plunge deep into the ocean of life; but it is not without losing sometimes all sense of the axis and the pole, without losing myself and feeling the consciousness of my own nature and vocation growing faint and wavering. The whirlwind of the wandering Jew carries me away, tears me from my little familiar enclosure, and makes me behold all the empires of men. In my voluntary abandonment to the generality, the universal, the infinite, my particular ego evaporates like a drop of water in a furnace; it only condenses itself anew at the return of cold, after enthusiasm has died out and the sense of reality has returned. Alternate expansion and condensation, abandonment and recovery of self, the conquest of the world to be pursued on the one side, the deepening of consciousness on the other — such is the play of the inner life, the march of the microcosmic mind, the marriage of the individual soul with the universal soul, the finite with the infinite, whence springs the intellectual progress of man. Other betrothals unite the soul to God, the religious consciousness with the divine; these belong to the history of the will. And what precedes will is feeling, preceded itself by instinct. Man is only what he becomes — profound truth; but he becomes only what he is, truth still more profound. What am I? Terrible question! Problem of predestination, of birth, of liberty, there lies the abyss. And yet one must plunge into it, and I have done so. The prelude of Bach I heard this evening predisposed me to it; it paints the soul tormented and appealing and finally seizing upon God, and possessing itself of peace and the infinite with an all-prevailing fervor and passion.”

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

Waited till 8:30 o'clock for our company, could see nothing of them, concluded it was best for us to go on. Traveled 16 miles today, passed Little Vermillion in the distance.

In [New-York](#), [Frederick Douglass](#) spoke before the American Anti-Slavery Society:

SIR, it is evident that there is in this country a purely slavery party — a party which exists for no other earthly purpose but to promote the interests of slavery. The presence of this party is felt everywhere in the republic. It is known by no particular name, and has assumed no definite shape; but its branches reach far and wide in the church and in the state. This shapeless and nameless party is not intangible in other and more important respects. That party, sir, has determined upon a fixed,

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definite, and comprehensive policy toward the whole colored population of the United States. What that policy is, it becomes us as abolitionists, and especially does it become the colored people themselves, to consider and to understand fully. We ought to know who our enemies are, where they are, and what are their objects and measures. Well, sir, here is my version of it -not original with me -but mine because I hold it to be true.

I understand this policy to comprehend five cardinal objects. They are these: 1st. The complete suppression of all anti-slavery discussion. 2d. The expatriation of the entire free people of color from the United States. 3d. The unending perpetuation of slavery in this republic. 4th. The nationalization of slavery to the extent of making slavery respected in every state of the Union. 5th. The extension of slavery over Mexico and the entire South American states.

Sir, these objects are forcibly presented to us in the stern logic of passing events; in the facts which are and have been passing around us during the last three years. The country has been and is now dividing on these grand issues. In their magnitude, these issues cast all others into the shade, depriving them of all life and vitality. Old party ties are broken. Like is finding its like on either side of these great issues, and the great battle is at hand. For the present, the best representative of the slavery party in politics is the democratic party. Its great head for the present is President [Franklin Pierce](#), whose boast it was, before his election, that his whole life had been consistent with the interests of slavery, that he is above reproach on that score. In his inaugural address, he reassures the south on this point. Well, the head of the slave power being in power, it is natural that the pro slavery elements should cluster around the administration, and this is rapidly being done. A fraternization is going on. The stringent protectionists and the free-traders strike hands. The supporters of [Millard Fillmore](#) are becoming the supporters of Pierce. The silver-gray whig shakes hands with the hunker democrat; the former only differing from the latter in name. They are of one heart, one mind, and the union is natural and perhaps inevitable. Both hate Negroes; both hate progress; both hate the "[Higher Law](#);" both hate [William Henry Seward](#); both hate the free democratic party; and upon this hateful basis they are forming a union of hatred. "Pilate and Herod are thus made friends." Even the central organ of the whig party is extending its beggar hand for a morsel from the table of slavery democracy, and when spurned from the feast by the more deserving, it pockets the insult; when kicked on one side it turns the other, and perseveres in its importunities. The fact is, that paper comprehends the demands of the times; it understands the age and its issues; it wisely sees that slavery and freedom are the great antagonistic forces in the country, and it goes to its own side. Silver grays and hunkers all understand this. They are, therefore, rapidly sinking all other questions to nothing, compared with the increasing demands of slavery. They are collecting, arranging, and consolidating their forces for the accomplishment of their appointed work.

The keystone to the arch of this grand union of the slavery party of the United States, is the compromise of 1850. In that

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compromise we have all the objects of our slaveholding policy specified. It is, sir, favorable to this view of the designs of the slave power, that both the whig and the democratic party bent lower, sunk deeper, and strained harder, in their conventions, preparatory to the late presidential election, to meet the demands of the slavery party than at any previous time in their history. Never did parties come before the northern people with propositions of such undisguised contempt for the moral sentiment and the religious ideas of that people. They virtually asked them to unite in a war upon free speech, and upon conscience, and to drive the Almighty presence from the councils of the nation. Resting their platforms upon the fugitive slave bill, they boldly asked the people for political power to execute the horrible and hell-black provisions of that bill. The history of that election reveals, with great clearness, the extent to which slavery has shot its leprous distillment through the life-blood of the nation. The party most thoroughly opposed to the cause of justice and humanity, triumphed; while the party suspected of a leaning toward liberty, was overwhelmingly defeated, some say annihilated. But here is a still more important fact, illustrating the designs of the slave power. It is a fact full of meaning, that no sooner did the democratic slavery party come into power, than a system of legislation was presented to the legislatures of the northern states, designed to put the states in harmony with the fugitive slave law, and the malignant bearing of the national government toward the colored inhabitants of the country. This whole movement on the part of the states, bears the evidence of having one origin, emanating from one head, and urged forward by one power. It was simultaneous, uniform, and general, and looked to one end. It was intended to put thorns under feet already bleeding; to crush a people already bowed down; to enslave a people already but half free; in a word, it was intended to discourage, dishearten, and drive the free colored people out of the country. In looking at the recent black law of [Illinois](#), one is struck dumb with its enormity. It would seem that the men who enacted that law, had not only banished from their minds all sense of justice, but all sense of shame. It coolly proposes to sell the bodies and souls of the blacks to increase the intelligence and refinement of the whites; to rob every black stranger who ventures among them, to increase their literary fund.

While this is going on in the states, a pro-slavery, political board of health is established at Washington. Senators Hale, Chase, and Sumner are robbed of a part of their senatorial dignity and consequence as representing sovereign states, because they have refused to be inoculated with the slavery virus. Among the services which a senator is expected by his state to perform, are many that can only be done efficiently on committees; and, in saying to these honorable senators, you shall not serve on the committees of this body, the slavery party took the responsibility of robbing and insulting the states that sent them. It is an attempt at Washington to decide for the states who shall be sent to the senate. Sir, it strikes me that this aggression on the part of the slave power did not meet at the hands of the proscribed senators the rebuke which we had a

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right to expect would be administered. It seems to me that an opportunity was lost, that the great principle of senatorial equality was left undefended, at a time when its vindication was sternly demanded. But it is not to the purpose of my present statement to criticise the conduct of our friends. I am persuaded that much ought to be left to the discretion of anti-slavery men in congress, and charges of recreancy should never be made but on the most sufficient grounds. For, of all the places in the world where an anti-slavery man needs the confidence and encouragement of friends, I take Washington to be that place.

Let me now call attention to the social influences which are operating and cooperating with the slavery party of the country, designed to contribute to one or all of the grand objects aimed at by that party. We see here the black man attacked in his vital interests; prejudice and hate are excited against him; enmity is stirred up between him and other laborers. The Irish people, warm-hearted, generous, and sympathizing with the oppressed everywhere, when they stand upon their own green island, are instantly taught, on arriving in this Christian country, to hate and despise the colored people. They are taught to believe that we eat the bread which of right belongs to them. The cruel lie is told the Irish, that our adversity is essential to their prosperity. Sir, the Irish-American will find out his mistake one day. He will find that in assuming our avocation he also has assumed our degradation. But for the present we are sufferers. The old employments by which we have heretofore gained our livelihood, are gradually, and it may be inevitably, passing into other hands. Every hour sees us elbowed out of some employment to make room perhaps for some newly-arrived emigrants, whose hunger and color are thought to give them a title to especial favor. White men are becoming house-servants, cooks, and stewards, common laborers, and flunkeys to our gentry, and, for aught I see, they adjust themselves to their stations with all becoming obsequiousness. This fact proves that if we cannot rise to the whites, the whites can fall to us. Now, sir, look once more. While the colored people are thus elbowed out of employment; while the enmity of emigrants is being excited against us; while state after state enacts laws against us; while we are hunted down, like wild game, and oppressed with a general feeling of insecurity -the American colonization society -that old offender against the best interests and slanderer of the colored people- awakens to new life, and vigorously presses its scheme upon the consideration of the people and the government. New papers are started -some for the north and some for the south- and each in its tone adapting itself to its latitude. Government, state and national, is called upon for appropriations to enable the society to send us out of the country by steam! They want steamers to carry letters and Negroes to Africa. Evidently, this society looks upon our "extremity as its opportunity," and we may expect that it will use the occasion well. They do not deplore, but glory, in our misfortunes.

But, sir, I must hasten. I have thus briefly given my view of one aspect of the present condition and future prospects of the colored people of the United States. And what I have said is far

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

from encouraging to my afflicted people. I have seen the cloud gather upon the sable brows of some who hear me. I confess the case looks black enough. Sir, I am not a hopeful man. I think I am apt even to undercalculate the benefits of the future. Yet, sir, in this seemingly desperate case, I do not despair for my people. There is a bright side to almost every picture of this kind; and ours is no exception to the general rule. If the influences against us are strong, those for us are also strong. To the inquiry, will our enemies prevail in the execution of their designs. In my God and in my soul, I believe they **will not**. Let us look at the first object sought for by the slavery party of the country, viz: the suppression of anti slavery discussion. They desire to suppress discussion on this subject, with a view to the peace of the slaveholder and the security of slavery. Now, sir, neither the principle nor the subordinate objects here declared, can be at all gained by the slave power, and for this reason: It involves the proposition to padlock the lips of the whites, in order to secure the fetters on the limbs of the blacks. The right of speech, precious and priceless, **cannot, will not**, be surrendered to slavery. Its suppression is asked for, as I have said, to give peace and security to slaveholders. Sir, that thing cannot be done. God has interposed an insuperable obstacle to any such result. "There can be **no peace**, saith my God, to the wicked." Suppose it were possible to put down this discussion, what would it avail the guilty slaveholder, pillowed as he is upon heaving bosoms of ruined souls? He could not have a peaceful spirit. If every anti-slavery tongue in the nation were silent -every anti-slavery organization dissolved -every anti-slavery press demolished -every anti slavery periodical, paper, book, pamphlet, or what not, were searched out, gathered, deliberately burned to ashes, and their ashes given to the four winds of heaven, still, still the slaveholder could have "**no peace**." In every pulsation of his heart, in every throb of his life, in every glance of his eye, in the breeze that soothes, and in the thunder that startles, would be waked up an accuser, whose cause is, "Thou art, verily, guilty concerning thy brother."



May 11. 5 A.M. — In the morning and evening, when waters are still and smooth, and dimpled by innate currents only, not disturbed by foreign winds and currents of the air, and reflect more light than at noonday. [*Sic.*]

P.M. — To Corner Spring *via* Hubbard's Bathing-Place.

The buck-bean is budded, but hard to find now. The *Viola lanceolata* is now abundant thereabouts, methinks larger and quite as fragrant (which is not, saying much) as the *blanda*. How long has it been open? It is a warm afternoon, and great numbers of painted and spotted tortoises are lying in the sun in the meadow. I notice that the thin scales are peeling off of one of the painted and curled up more than half an inch at the edges, and others look as if they had just lost them, the dividing-line being of a dull cream-color. Has this lying in the sun anything to do with it?

I nearly stepped upon a song sparrow [**Song Sparrow**  *Melospiza melodia*] and a striped snake at the same time. The bird fluttered away almost as if detained. I thought it was a case of charming, without doubt, and should think so still if I had not found her nest with five eggs there, which will account for her being so near the snake that was about to devour her. The amelanchier has a sickish fragrance. It must be the myrtle-bird [**Yellow-rumped Warbler**  *Dendroica coronata*] which is



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now so common in [Hubbard's](#) Meadow Woods or Swamp, with a note somewhat like a yellowbird's [[Yellow Warbler](#) [Dendroica petechia](#)], striped olive-yellow and black on back or shoulders, light or white beneath, black dim; restless bird; sharp head. The catbird [[Gray Catbird](#) [Dumetella carolinensis](#)] has a squeaking and split note with some clear whistles. The late pipes (*limosum?*), now nearly a foot high, are very handsome, like Oriental work, their encircled columns of some precious wood or gem, or like small bamboos, from Oriental jungles. Very much like art. The gold-thread, apparently for a day or two, though few flowers compared with buds; not at once referred to its leaf, so distant on its thread-like peduncle. The water-saxifrage also for a day or two in some places, on its tall, straight stem, rising from its whorl of leaves. Sorrel now fairly out in some places. I will put it under May 8th. A high blueberry by [Potter's](#) heater piece. A yellow lily.

The red-eye [[Red-eyed Vireo](#) [Vireo olivaceus](#)] at the spring; quite a woodland note. The different moods or degrees of wildness and poetry of which the song of birds is the keynote. The wood thrush [[Wood Thrush](#) [Hylocichla mustelina](#)] [Mr. Barnum](#) never lured nor can, though he could bribe [Jenny Lind](#) and put her into his cage. How many little birds of the warbler family [are](#) busy now about the opening buds, while I sit by the spring! They are almost as much a part of the tree as its blossoms and leaves. They come and give it voice. Its twigs feel with pleasure their little feet clasping them.

I hear the distant drumming of a partridge [[Ruffed Grouse](#) [Bonasa umbellus](#) (Partridge)]. Its

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beat, however distant and low, falls still with a remarkably forcible, almost painful, impulse on the ear, like veritable little drumsticks on our tympanum, as if it were a throbbing or fluttering in our veins or brows or the chambers of the ear, and belonging to ourselves — as if it were produced by some little insect which had made its way up into the passages of the ear, so penetrating is it. It is as palpable to the ear as the sharpest note of a fife. Of course, that bird can drum with its wings on a log which can go off with such a powerful whir, beating the air. I have seen a thoroughly frightened hen and cockerel fly almost as powerfully, but neither can sustain it long. Beginning slowly and deliberately, the partridge's beat sounds faster and faster from far away under the boughs and through the aisles of the wood until it becomes a regular roll, but is speedily concluded. How many things shall we not see and be and do, when we walk there where the partridge drums!

As I stand by the river in the truly warm sun, I hear the low trump of a bullfrog, but half sounded, — doubting if it be really July, — some bassoon sounds, as it were the tuning that precedes the summer's orchestra; and all is silent again. How the air is saturated with sweetness on causeways these willow days! The willow alone of trees as yet makes light, often *rounded masses* of verdure in large trees, stage above stage. But oftenest they are cut down at the height of four or five feet and spread out thence. There appear to be most clouds in the horizon on [one] of these days of drifting downy clouds, because, when we look that way, more fall within our field of view, but when we look upward, overhead we see the true proportion of clear blue. The mountains are something solid which is blue, a *terra firma* in the heavens; but in the heavens there is nothing but the air. Blue is the color of the day, and the sky is blue by night as well as by day, because it knows no night.



May 12, Thursday, [1853](#): Tom the Fool, a comic opera by Anton Rubinstein to words of Mikhaylov, was performed for the initial time, in the Aleksandrinskiy Theater of St. Petersburg.

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

Started quite early and had some trouble with our cattle. They are not very well broke to drive in such a team. Traveled 25 today.



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John Shawney (or Schoney or Scholer) and Joseph Anderson VanZandt Dodge, who had deserted from the US Army of the frontier, had happened on each other as they were separately attempting to wend their way toward the east. On the plains they fell in with a Delaware native American family headed toward St. Joseph, Missouri with mules loaded with furs and other articles, who offered food and company, murdered the natives, and were caught with their belongings. They would be [hanged](#) on July 22d, 1853, and the bodies of the murderers would be buried in St. Louis's Rock Springs Cemetery. On this day the [Daily Journal](#) of Hannibal, Missouri copied an article from the St. Louis [Daily Missouri Democrat](#) reporting on visits by the Reverend William Armstrong of the local Methodist Church, and Father Joseph P. Fischer/Fisher of St. Mary of Victories Catholic Church, to the cells of the two condemned murderers:

The Doomed Convicts.

The Rev. Mr. Armstrong of the Methodist Church is in attendance upon Anson Vanzandt, otherwise known as Dodge, and Father Fisher is regular in his visits to the condemned cell of Scholer alias Shawney. On Sunday last several young ladies accompanied Mr. Armstrong to Dodge's cell and passed part of the time in singing hymns, in which Dodge joined.

Dodge has written two letters, one to his brother and the other to his wife. A man acquainted with him, who visited his cell a few days since, promised to take these letters to his home, but as they are still in the hands of Mr. Musick, the deputy jailer, uncalled for, the probability is that they will never reach their intended destination unless forwarded by mail. — In the letter to his brother he begs him and his wife to remain faithful to the Church (meaning the Methodist), and says I wish I had repented before it was too late. He states that he is prepared to die and not afraid, and begs him repeatedly to write to his father to get up a petition for a postponement of the day of execution, as in that event his pardon may possibly follow.

The letter to his wife commences abruptly with the terrible announcement thus — "I take up my pen in hand to write you that I am to be hung on the 1st of June." He tells her that he is innocent of the crime for which he is to perish; that he has been a great sinner, but hopes to come to Christ yet; desires her to hold fast by her church; informs her that his lawyer has sent on to Washington for a postponement of the execution, but does not hope for a pardon; and wishes her to come out here to see him, or he will never see her again. The whole is very terrible and in no part more so than in this profession of innocence, where no doubt exists of his guilt.



May 12. 5.30 A.M. — To Nawshawtuct by river.

The first considerable fog I have noticed, at first as high as the trees, curling gray over the water now beneath me, as I paddle my boat, and through it I see the welling dimples of the still stream. You are pretty sure now to hear the stake-driver [[American Bittern](#) [Botaurus lentiginosus](#)] farther or nearer, morning or evening. Thought I heard a tanager [[Tanager, Scarlet](#) [Piranga olivacea](#)]. What are those dark-brown striped sparrow-like birds, rather tame, on hickories, size of myrtle-bird, mottled with black on breast and more or less distinct yellowish on rump and wing shoulder, at least

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on male; somewhat brown-creeper-looking, without long bill? The fog has now risen up as high as the houses at 6.15 and mingled with the smokes of the town. The first [*sic*] are puffed up as if they were cold, to nearly twice their size, as they sit on willows. The yellowbird [**American Goldfinch** **Carduleis tristis**] has another note, *tchut tchut tchar te tchit e war*.

P.M. — To Black Birch Woods and Yellow Birch Swamp.

Veronica serpyllifolia at Flint's and along the road-sides, apparently for some for not only are there some frost-bitten flowers, but pods alone as large as flowers, even as if they belonged to last year. Yet is it any earlier than May? A pretty but minute bluish flower. Some grass is seen to leave in the distance on the side of N. Barret's warm hill, showing the lighter under sides. That is a soft, soothing, June-like impression when the most forward grass is seen to wave and the sorrel looks reddish. The year has the down of youth on its cheek. This, too, is the era of the bobolink [**Bobolink** **Dolichonyx oryzivorus**], now, when apple trees are ready to burst into bloom. Now it is too late to retreat from the summer adventure. You have passed the Rubicon, and will spend your summer here. Lately, for a few days, the note of the pine warbler [**Pine Warbler** **Dendroica pinus** (**Pine Creeper**)] rang through the woods, but now it is lost in the notes of other birds. Then each song was solo. Its *vetter vetter vetter vetter* rang through silent woods. Now I rarely hear it. A yellow butterfly.

The river meadows from Barrett's wall are very green where the water has gone down. A wild pear in blossom on Ponkawtasset, detected by its uprightness and no large limbs; but the blossoms, being white, are not so handsome as the apple, but are earlier.

The *V. cucullata* are large and conspicuous on Barrett's side-hill. The *ovata* blue the ground in the Boulder Field. These and the *pedata* are all more or less lilac-colored, and it produces a pleasing bewilderment to pass from clump to clump, and one species to another, and say which is the most lilac. Putting one cluster beside another more lilac, the first no longer seems lilac at all. Has not violet then always some lilac in it?

The birches (white) are now rapidly and conspicuously greening. They make the first conspicuous mass of green amid the evergreens; not grayish or hoary like the oaks; a closer-woven light-green vest. The black birch is now a beautiful sight, its long, slender, bushy branches waving in the wind (the leaf-buds but just beginning to unfold), with countless little tassel-like bunches of five or six golden catkins, spotted with brown and three inches long, one bunch at the end of each drooping twig, hanging straight down, or dangling like heads of rye, or blown off at various angles with the horizon. All these, seen against the sky on the otherwise bare trees, make an exceedingly graceful outline, the catkin is so large and conspicuous. (On the white birch the catkins are more slender, and are concealed by the more forward leaves.) The reddish long female flowers are detected in the axils lower down. I notice that the staminate ones are apparently torn by birds, pecking at insects. Not a bunch is perfect. The yellow birch is considerably the most forward, — its flowers, not, perhaps, its leaves, which last are only expanded on young trees, though here is one large one leaved out. The yellow birch first, then the black or the paper birch, then the white. The staminate flowers of the yellow birch are already imbrowned and dry, and the female flowers large and hop-like, one inch long. The twigs of this tree are, methinks, still longer and slenderer than those of the black birch, a yard long by one sixth of an inch diameter at base without a branch at the ends of the limbs, or a yard and a half by a third of an inch with a little fork near the end, or often three inches in diameter by more than twenty feet; and so is described the whole tree, of long slender branches springing from the height of five or six feet upward in the form of a great brush. I do not know another place in town where there are black birches enough to give you the effect of a forest of these trees, but in a swamp here. They are so slender and brushy that they yield to the wind, and their tops, with gracefully drooping twigs bent down by dangling tassel-like catkins, are all inclined one way, sweeping the air, making a peculiarly light and graceful sight.

I am surprised to find the pedicularis, or lousewort, — a yellowish one, — out, on a warm bank near the meadow-edge. The hellebore is the most forward herb, two feet high.


The tupelo shows signs of life, but is later than the black willow; not so late, nearly, as the button-bush. The oaks are in the gray. Some in warm localities already have expanded small leaves, both black, red, and shrub oak. The large light-yellowish scales of the hickory buds, also, are turned back, revealing blossom-buds and little clusters of tender leaves ready to unfold, and the now [*sic*] web of verdure is spreading thick and palpable over the forest. Shade is being born; the summer is pitching



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its tent; concealment will soon be afforded to the birds in which to build their nests.

The robin [**American Robin**  *Turdus migratorius*] nowadays betrays its great bare nest and blue eggs by its anxious peeping at your approach.

Is that the so-called Canada plum, now in bloom twenty rods this side the lime-kiln in the road? And is it ever indigenous here?

The farmers on all sides are mending their fences and turning out their cows to pasture. You see where the rails have been newly sharpened, and the leafing birches have been cut and laid over gaps in the walls, as if old fences were putting forth leaves.

The beautiful round red (?) buds of the grape now, like beads, at long intervals along the bare vine. William Wheeler has raised a new staring house beyond the Corner Bridge, and so done irreparable injury to a large section of country for walkers. It obliges us to take still more steps after weary ones, to reach the secluded fields and woods. Channing proposes that we petition him to put his house out of sight; that we send it in to him in the form of a round-robin with his name on one side and mine on the other, — so to abate a nuisance.

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May 13, Friday, 1853: [Jean Désiré Gustave Courbet](#) had painted wrestlers who had struggled in a French style based on Greco-Roman wrestling, in the former hippodrome on the Champs-Élysées of Paris. The painting was exhibited in conjunction with this painter's "[The Bathers](#)," which had been heavily criticized not only because of the sketchiness of its background and the hugeness of the woman's ass, but in addition the depiction of the soles of her feet as muddy. On this day he wrote his parents that since, in regard to "[The Wrestlers](#)," he had cautiously "covered their nudity," the critics "have not yet said anything good or bad about it."



As the wagon train bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America was fording the Big Blue River (a pretty stream of about 70 yards), they needed to block up the boxes of the wagons to keep above the water (all the wagons got across the ford safely).



May 13: Methinks I hear and see the tanager [[Scarlet Tanager](#) [Piranga olivacea](#)] now. The middle of May is the time for many transient sylvias.

P.M. — To Conantum.




See a goldfinch [[American Goldfinch](#) [Carduelis tristis](#)] glance by on the back road and hear its cool watery twitter. A little larger than a yellowbird [[Yellow Warbler](#) [Dendroica petechia](#)], more golden, or paler (?) yellow, with black [*sic*] and on wings. A robin's [nest](#), with young, on the causeway. At Corner Spring, stood listening to a catbird [[Gray Catbird](#) [Dumetella carolinensis](#)], sounding a good way off. Was surprised to detect the singer within a rod and a half on a low twig, the ventriloquist. Should not have believed it was he, if I had not seen the movements of his throat, corresponding to each note, —looking at this near singer whose notes sounded so far away. There is a small bird or two I have not taken pains to identify; one's note, perhaps that of May 6th, *ce, ce, te ter twee*, like a fine squeaking amid the pines.


—'s peach trees in bloom, the richest, highest color of any tree's bloom, like wine compared to beer; the trees, bare of leaves, one mass of pink, some dark, some light, almost flame-like seen against green hillsides or the red ground where the woods have just been cut. How much more

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beautiful than the life of the peach-raiser! No such rich pink bloom falling through cracks in the dark shutters irradiates his soul. If only such a peach-bloom hue suffused the dark chambers of his soul! Large masses of bloom with the delicate tint which commonly belongs to minute plants only.

The bass is suddenly as forward in leaf as the white birch; leaves one inch across, how varnished, thin, and transparent! It is apparently the *Myosotis stricta*, now just in flower at [Columbine Cliff](#) [[Gleason coordinates J6 in Conantum](#)], scorpion grass, minute and white, three inches high, somewhat like a cerastium. An *Arum triphyllum*, but no signs of pollen yet. Probably was set down too early last year, *i.e.* before pollen. A thorn with expanded leaves, not deeply lobed, and large red scales and a beautifully shining or varnished ash-colored twig. The male sassafras just out, probably yesterday, but the twig end is the sweetest. A big woodpecker  enlarging the entrance to its nest in an apple tree. I thought it the echo of carpenters at work on Wheeler's house three quarters of a mile off. It was within four or five rods. How well the woodpecker must know by the ring if the tree is hollow, by this time!

Most of the anthers of the black ash are black and withered or blasted, but the rest show no pollen yet. Still methinks it [is] now in bloom; leaf-buds not started. The white ash (male), with its male buds conspicuous but not ready yet, its leaf-buds partly expanded. So, if its flowers are a little later, which is not certain, its leaves are earlier than the last. The sweet viburnum, apparently equally advanced with the *nudum*, but not so dark-colored, in advance of cornels. Hazelnuts next to birches. Heard a stake-driver [[American Bittern](#)  *Botaurus lentiginosus*] in Hubbard's meadow from Corner road. Thus far off, I hear only, or chiefly, the last dry, hard click or stroke part of the note, sounding like the echo from some near wood of a distant stake-driving. Here only this portion of the note, but close by it is more like pumping, when the dry stroke is accompanied by the incessant sound of the pump.



May 14, Saturday, 1853: [Henry Thoreau](#) went on the river to Wayland, Massachusetts.

During the last decade of his life, Thoreau visited his rivers more than twice as often as the upland woods and lakes that he is far better known for writing about.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), *THE BOATMAN*, page 3



[Gail Borden](#) applied for a patent on condensing milk.

The Massachusetts tract "Boston Corner" was transferred to [New York State](#).

[Hector Berlioz](#) once again departed Paris for London, to conduct.

Mustafa Naili Pasha replaced Damad Mehmed Ali Pasha as Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire.

[Henri-Frédéric Amiel](#), who would be referred to as the "Swiss [Thoreau](#)," wrote in his *JOURNAL INTIME*: "Third quartet concert. It was short. Variations for piano and violin by Beethoven, and two quartets, not more. The quartets were perfectly clear and easy to understand. One was by Mozart and the other by Beethoven, so that I could compare the two masters. Their individuality seemed to become plain to me: Mozart — grace, liberty, certainty, freedom, and precision of style, and exquisite and aristocratic beauty, serenity of soul, the health and talent of the master, both on a level with his genius; Beethoven — more pathetic, more passionate, more torn with feeling, more intricate, more profound, less perfect, more the slave of his genius, more carried away by

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his fancy or his passion, more moving, and more sublime than Mozart. Mozart refreshes you, like the “Dialogues” of Plato; he respects you, reveals to you your strength, gives you freedom and balance. Beethoven seizes upon you; he is more tragic and oratorical, while Mozart is more disinterested and poetical. Mozart is more Greek, and Beethoven more Christian. One is serene, the other serious. The first is stronger than destiny, because he takes life less profoundly; the second is less strong, because he has dared to measure himself against deeper sorrows. His talent is not always equal to his genius, and pathos is his dominant feature, as perfection is that of Mozart. In Mozart the balance of the whole is perfect, and art triumphs; in Beethoven feeling governs everything and emotion troubles his art in proportion as it deepens it.”

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

One of our wagon wheels begin [sic] to crack, fearful of it, don't know what to do if it breaks down for timber is scarce here, the wind blows a perfect hurricane to our backs, the oxen do not do much pulling. Camped early. Camping places scarce and very poor.

The [Herald](#) of Placer, [California](#) reported heartening recent news from the old Spanish Flat diggings — where acres of ground had been thrown up and washed in 1849 and 1850, acres that had since been largely abandoned for want of water with the original claimants scattering far and near, some of them back to the States. On the old Collins Claim there, that had since come to be owned by Mr. Hillman and 3 others, 24 ounces 10 dollars and 70 cents of gold were taken out on the previous Tuesday, and then on Thursday 25 ounces.



May 14. Saturday. 9 A.M. — To Wayland by boat.

E. Wood has added a pair of ugly wings to his house, bare of trees and painted white, particularly conspicuous from the river. You might speak of the alar extent of this house, monopolizing so much of our horizon; but alas! it is not formed for flight, after all.

The water is considerably rough to-day, and higher than usual at this season. The black willows have started, but make no show of green. The button-bushes are yet apparently dead. The green buds of yellow lilies are bobbing up and down, already showing more or less yellow this the most forward sign in the water. The great scalloped platters of their leaves have begun to show themselves on the surface, and the red round leaves of the white lily, now red above as well as below. A myriad of polygonums, potamogetons, and pontederias are pushing up from the bottom, but have not yet reached the surface. Dandelions and houstonias, etc., spot the meadows with yellow and white.

The still dead-looking willows and button-bushes are alive with red-wings [**Red-winged Blackbird** [Agelaius phoeniceus](#)], now perched on a yielding twig, now pursuing a female swiftly over the meadow, now darting across the stream. No two have epaulets equally brilliant. Some are small and almost white, and others a brilliant vermilion. They are handsomer than the golden robin [**Northern Oriole** [Icterus galbula](#) (~~Fiery Hangbird or Hangbird or Gold Robin or Golden Robin~~)] methinks. The yellowbird [**Yellow Warbler** [Dendroica petechia](#)], kingbird [**Eastern Kingbird** [Tyrannus tyrannus](#)], and pewee [**Eastern Wood-Pewee** [Contopus virens](#)], beside many swallows , are also seen. But the rich colors and the rich and varied notes of the blackbirds

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[Red-winged Blackbird █ *Agelaius phoeniceus*] surpass them all.



Passing Conantum under sail at 10 o'clock, the cows in this pasture are already chewing the cud in the thin shade of the apple trees, a picture of peace, already enjoying the luxury of their green pastures. I was not prepared to find the season so far advanced. The breeze which comes over the water, sensibly cooled or freshened by it, is already grateful. Suddenly there start up from the riverside at the entrance of Fair Haven Pond, scared by our sail, two great blue herons [**Great Blue Heron** █ *Ardea herodias*], —slate-color rather, —slowly flapping and undulating, their projecting breast-bones very visible, —or is it possibly their necks bent back? — their legs stuck out straight behind. Getting higher by their flight, they straight come back to reconnoitre us.

Land at Lee's Cliff, where the herons have preceded us and are perched on the oaks, conspicuous from afar, and again we have a fair view of their flight. We find here, unexpectedly, the warmth of June. The hot, dry scent, or say warm and balmy, from ground amid the pitch pines carpeted with red needles, where a wiry green grass is springing up, reminds us of June and of wild pinks. Under the south side of the Cliff, vegetation seems a fortnight earlier than elsewhere. Not only the beautiful little veronicas (*serpyllifolia*) are abundantly out, and cowslips past their prime, columbines past prime, and saxifrage gone to seed, some of it, and dandelions, and the sod sparkling with the pure, brilliant, spotless yellow of cinquefoil, also violets and strawberries, but the glossy or varnished yellow of buttercups (*bmlbosus*, also abundant, some days out) spots the hillside. The south side of these rocks is like a hothouse where the gardener has removed his glass. The air, scented with sweetbrier, may almost make you faint in imagination. The nearer the base of the rock, the more forward each plant. The trees are equally forward, red and black; leaves an inch and a half long and shoots of three inches.

The prospect from these rocks is early-June-like. You notice the tender light green of the birches, both white and paper, and the brown-red tops of the maples where their keys are. Close under the lee of the button-bushes which skirt the pond, as I look south, there is a narrow smooth strip of water, silvery and contrasting with the darker rippled body of the pond. Its edge, or the separation between this, which I will call the polished silvery border of the pond, and the dark and ruffled body, is not a straight line or film, but an ever-varying, irregular and finely serrated or fringed border, ever changing as the breeze falls over the bushes at an angle more or less steep, so that this moment it is

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a rod wide, the next not half so much. Every feature is thus fluent in the landscape.



Again we embark, now having furled our sail and taken to our oars. The air is clear and fine-grained, and as we glide by the hills I can look into the very roots of the grass amid the springing pines in their deepest valleys. The wind rises, but still it is not a cold wind. There is nothing but slate-colored water and a few red pads appearing at Lily Bay.


After leaving Rice's harbor the wind is with us again. What a fine tender *yellow* green from the meadow-grass just pushed up, where the sun strikes it at the right angle! How it contrasts with the dark bluish-green of that rye, already beginning to wave, which covers that little rounded hill by Pantry Brook! Grain waves earlier than grass. How flat the top of the muskrat's head as he swims, and his back, even with it, and then when he dives he ludicrously shows his tail. They look gray and




brown, like a rabbit, now. At Forget-me-not Spring the chrysosplenium beds are very large, rich and deep, almost out of bloom. I find none of the early blackberry in bloom. It is mostly destroyed. Already we pluck and eat the sweet flag and detect small critch-icrotches. The handsome comandra leaves also are prominent, In the woods which skirt the river near Deacon Farrar's swamp, the *Populus grandidentata*, just expanding its downy leaves, makes silvery patches in the sun. It is abundant and truly silvery.


The paper birch woods at Fair haven present this aspect: there is the somewhat dense light green of aspens (*tremuliformis*) and paper birches in the foreground next the water, both of one tint, and occasionally a red maple with brownish-red top, with equally advanced, aye, more fully expanded, intermixed or a little higher up—very tall and slender amelanchiers (*Botryapium?*), some twenty-five feet high, on which no signs of fruit, though I have seen them on some; some silvery grandidentata, and red and black oaks (some yellowish, some reddish, green), and still reddish-white oaks, just starting; and green pines for contrast, showing the silvery under sides of their leaves or the edges of their dark stages (contrasting with their shaded under sides). These are the colors of the forest-top, — the rug, looking down on it.

Tufts of coarse grass are in full bloom along the riverside, — little islets big enough to support a fisherman.

Again we scare up the herons [Great Blue Heron  *Ardea herodias*], who, methinks, will build hereabouts. They were standing by the waterside. And again they alight farther below, and we see their light-colored heads erect, and their bodies at various angles as they stoop to drink. And again they flap away with their great slate-blue wings, necks curled up (?) and legs straight out behind, and having attained a great elevation, they circle back over our heads, now seemingly black as crows against the sky, — crows with long wings they might be taken for, — but higher and higher they mount by stages in the sky, till heads and tails are lost and they are mere black wavelets amid the blue, one always following close behind the other. They are evidently mated. It would be worth the while if we could see them oftener in our sky.

Some apple trees are fairly out.

What is that small slate-colored hawk [Sharp-shinned Hawk  *Accipter striatus* (slate-colored hawk, including subspecies *perobscurus*, *velox*, *suttoni*, *madrensis*, *fringilloides*, and *venator*)] with black tips to wings?

 May 15, Sunday, 1853: Lowell Mason became music director of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New-York.


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

Started about nine o'clock, traveled about six miles found a better camp and stopped till morning.



May 15: Sunday. P. M. — To Annursnack.

Silvery cinquefoil now open. Its petals, perchance, show the green between them, but the beautiful under sides of the leaves more than make up for it. What was that bird beyond the Lee place, with a chickadee-like note, black head and throat, and light color round the neck and beneath; methinks longer and slenderer than the chickadee? The golden willow catkins begin to fall; their prime is past. And buttercups and silvery cinquefoil, and the first apple blossoms, avid waving grass beginning to be tinged with sorrel, introduce us to a different season. The huckleberry, *resinosa*, its red flowers are open, in more favorable places several days earlier, probably; and the earliest shrub and red and black oaks in warm exposures may be set down to to-day. A red butterfly goes by. Methinks I have seen them before. The painted-cup is now abundantly and fully out. Six or eight inches high above its spidery leaves, almost like a red flame, it stands on edge of the hill just rising from the meadow, — on the instep of the hill. It tells of July with its fiery color. It promises a heat we have not experienced yet. This is a field which lies nearer to summer. Yellow is the color of spring, red, of midsummer. Through pale golden and green we arrive at the yellow of the buttercup; through scarlet, to the fiery July red, the red lily.

The first cricket's chirrup which I have chanced to hear now falls on my ear and makes me forget all else; all else is a thin and moveable crust down to that depth where he resides eternally. He already foretells autumn. Deep under the dry border of some rock in this hillside he sits, and makes the finest singing of birds outward and insignificant, his own song is so much deeper and more significant. His voice has set me thinking, philosophizing, moralizing at once. It is not so wildly melodious, but it is wiser and more mature than that of the wood thrush [[Wood Thrush](#)  *Hylocichla mustelina*]. With this elixir I see clear through the summer now to autumn, and any summer works seems frivolous. I am disposed to ask this humblebee that hurries humming past so busily if he knows what he is about. At one leap I go from the just opened buttercup to the life-everlasting. This singer has antedated autumn. His strain is superior (inferior?)¹⁰⁵ to seasons. It annihilates time and space; the summer is for time-servers.

The *Erigeron hellidifolius* has now spread its rays out flat since last Sabbath. I may set it down to May 10th, methinks. It is the first of what I may call the daisy family, sometimes almost white. What are those large conical-shaped fungi of which I see a dozen round an apple tree? I thought them pieces of a yellowish wasp-nest, they are so honeycombed.



I looked again on the forest from this hill, which view may contrast with that of last Sunday. The mist produced by the leafing of the deciduous trees has greatly thickened now and lost much of its reddishness in the lighter green of expanding leaves, has become a brownish or yellowish green, except where it has attained distinctness in the light-green foliage of the birch, the earliest distinct foliage visible in extensive great masses at a great distance, the aspen not being common. The pines and other evergreens fast being merged in a sea of foliage.

The weather has grown rapidly warm. Methinks I wore a greatcoat here last Sunday; now an undercoat is too much. I even think of bathing in the river. I love to sit in the wind on this hill and be blown on. We bathe thus first in air; then, when the air has warmed it, in water.

105. Exaltedly inferior.



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Here are ten cows feeding on the hill beside me. Why do they move about so fast as they feed? They have advanced thirty rods in ten minutes, and sometimes the [last] one runs to keep up. Is it to give the grass thus a chance to grow more equally and always get a fresh bite? The tall buttercup on the west edge of Painted-Cup Meadow for a day or two at least, and the fringed polygala as long. This side stone bridge, *Barbarea vulgaris*, or common winter cress yellow rocket, also as long. A thorn will blossom in a day or two, without varnished ashy twigs and with deep-cut lobes. The following trees and shrubs methinks leaf out in nearly the following order. The more questionable, or which I have not seen, are marked — (?).

Gooseberry	Thorns	Swamp white oak
Currant	Waxwork	Chestnut oak
Trembles	Maples (??)	Hardhack (?)
Some willows	Shrub oak	Salix nigra
Young white, red, and sugar maples	Chinquapin oak	Grape
Balm-of-Gilead	Red	White ash
Elder	Black	Black "
Meadow-sweet	Scarlet	Sumach
Diervilla	Hazel	Beech (?)
Black cherry	Larch	Swamp-pink
Ostrya	White pine	Witch-hazel } (?)
Alder	Elm	Nemopanthes } (?)
Paper birch	Hornbeam (??)	Prinos
Black "	Cornels (some later?)	Clethra
Yellow "	Chestnut	Tupelo
White "	Great-leaved poplar	Mountain laurel (??)
<i>Pyrus arbutifolia</i>	Butternut	Panicled andromeda
	Hickories	Dwarf



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Gooseberry	Thorns	Swamp white oak
Apple	Bass	Rhodora
Amelanchier	Sassafras	Button-bush
Choke cherry	Locust (?)	Hemlock (?) ? (?) ^a
Dwarf "	Celtis(?)	White spruce
Wild red "	Pitch pine	Black spruce
<i>Viburnum nudum</i>	<i>Juniperus repens</i>	
<i>Viburnum Lentago</i>	Red cedar	
Maple-leaved	White "	
viburnum?	Arbor-vitæ	
Barberry	White oak	

a. Seen a day or two after the button-bush started. The hemlock appeared later, but it may [be] because it is of slower growth.
The above list made (?) May 20th.



May 16, Monday, 1853: The new constitution and bylaws prepared for the [California](#) Academy of Sciences was approved.

HISTORY OF RR

The 1st train in Ontario ran between Toronto and Aurora on the Ontario Simcoe and Huron Railroad Union line. The name would be changed to Northern Railway of [Canada](#) on August 16th, 1858 and this would become part of the Northern and Northwestern Railway on June 6th, 1879 (now part of Canadian National).

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

Stormy this morning, started late and camped early.
Very disagreeable. Traveled roads pretty good considering we have had so much rain.



May 16. E. Hoar saw the henbit (*Lamium amplexicaule*) a week ago from Mr. Pritchard's garden. Celandine is out a day or more, and rhodora, trillium, and yellow violets yesterday at least. Horse-chestnut to-day. What handsome long yellow, threadlike peduncles to the staminate flowers of the sugar maple! three inches long, tassel-like, appearing with the leaves.


A man is about town with a wagon-load of the Rhododendron maximum this evening from Gardiner, Maine. It is well budded; buds nearly an inch long; long, narrow, thick leaves, six inches long or more. He says it means the "rose of Dendrum" and will grow from a mere slip cut off and stuck in any soil, — only water it three times a day!!! No doubt of it.

It has been oppressively warm to-day, the first really warm, sultry-like weather, so that we were prepared for a thunder-storm at evening. At 5 P.M., dark, heavy, wet-looking clouds are seen in the northern horizon, perhaps over the Merrimack Valley, and we say it is going down the river and we shall not get a drop. The main body goes by, there is a shower in the north, and the western sky is

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suffused with yellow where its thin skirts are withdrawing. People stand at their doors in the warm evening, listening to the muttering of distant thunder and watching the forked lightning, now descending to the earth, now ascending to the clouds. This the first really warm day and thunder-shower. Had thunder-shower while I was in Haverhill in April. Nature appears to have passed a crisis. All slimy reptile life is wide awake. The sprayey dream of the toad has a new sound; from the meadow the hylodes are heard more distinctly; and the tree-toad chirrups often from the elms (?). The sultry warmth and moister air has called him into life. We smell the fresher and cooler air from where the storm has passed. And now that it has grown dark, the skirts of the cloud seem to promise us a shower. It lightens incessantly right in the west; the right wing of the rear guard of the storm is steadily advancing and firing, and every flash shows the outlines of the cloud. We look out into the dark, and ever and anon comes a sudden illumination blinding our eyes, like a vast glow-worm, succeeded ere long by the roll of thunder. The first pattering of drops is beard; all west windows are hastily shut. The weak-eyed sit with their hacks to windows and close the blinds. But we are disappointed, after all, and each flash reveals a narrow strip of evening red through the thin drops below the advancing cloud.

 May 17, Tuesday, 1853: [California](#) dealt with mental illness by providing for the involuntary confinement of persons diagnosed with mental illness and by providing state funding for the care of indigents. California's 1st such facility would be an Insane Asylum of California opened in Stockton in 1853, later to be known as Stockton State Hospital.¹⁰⁶

PSYCHOLOGY

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

We crossed Otter creek and the 3 Sandies today, crossing rather bad at each, passed three graves side by side. Two were buried June 4th, 1850, the other June 4th, 1852. Camped 4 miles from Little Blue, looked around and counted 13 camps in sight, in all about 2500 head of cattle. One drove alone had 1300 head in it. Grass not very good to night.

The 1st performance of [Robert Schumann's](#) Fest-Overture op.123 for tenor, chorus, and orchestra to words of Müller and Claudius closed the Lower Rhine Music Festival in Düsseldorf.

Batavia, [New York's](#) Dean Richmond, vice-president of the Buffalo and Rochester [Railroad](#), consolidated 10 short lines between New York and Albany to form the New York Central Railroad. He became president of the new line, moving to Batavia. A spur was run to Lewiston.

[Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed some land belonging to John Reynolds (Reynolds) in the southwest part of Concord near John Potter and [E.G. Hayden](#), probably on Fair Haven Road near Sudbury Road.

JONAS POTTER



106. Street, W.R. A CHRONOLOGY OF NOTEWORTHY EVENTS IN AMERICAN [PSYCHOLOGY](#). Washington DC: American Psychological Association, 1994



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

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

(The official copy of this survey of course had become the property of the person or persons who had hired this Concord town surveyor to do their surveying work during the 19th Century. Such materials have yet to be recovered.)

View this particular personal working draft of a survey in fine detail:

<http://www.concordlibrary.org/special-collections/thoreau-surveys/99a>

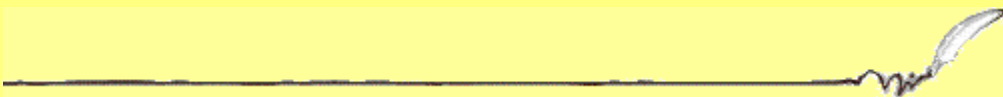
In a sheaf of Thoreau's notes titled "The Moon" extracts from which had been utilized by someone as the basis for the short article "Night and Moonlight" ascribed to Thoreau in [The Atlantic Monthly](#) in November 1863, and afterward republished in the EXCURSIONS volume (a sheaf that was delivered to Houghton, Mifflin & Co. along with the 39 ms volumes of Thoreau's journal) we find some notes from this date, informing us that "Large insects begin to fly at night. Dumping of frogs at eve begun, telling the weather is warm. First nighthawk seen May 17th, '53."



May 17. 5 A.M. — To Island by boat.

During the last decade of his life, Thoreau visited his rivers more than twice as often as the upland woods and lakes that he is far better known for writing about.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 3



Everything has sensibly advanced during the warm and moist night. Some, trees, as the small maples in the street, already look verdurous. The air has not sensibly cooled much. The chimney swallows [**Chimney Swift** [Chaetura pelagica](#)] are busily skimming low over the river and just touching the water without regard to me, as a week ago they did, and as they circle back overhead to repeat the experiment, I hear a sharp snap or short rustling of their wings. The button-bush now shows the first signs of life, on a close inspection, in its small round, smooth, greenish buds. The polygonums and pontederias are getting above water, the latter like spoons on long handles. The *Cornus florida* is blossoming; will be fairly out to-day. [Involucre not spread and true flowers not open till about May 20th.] The *Polygonatum pubescens*; one on the Island has just opened. This is the smaller Solomon's-seal. A thorn there will blossom to-day. The *Viola palmata* is out there, in the meadow. Everywhere the huckleberry's sticky leaves are seen expanding, and the *high blueberry* is in blossom. Now is the time to admire the very young and tender leaves. The blossoms of the red oak hang down under its young leaves as under a canopy. The petals have already fallen from the *Amelanchier Botryapium*, and young berries are plainly forming. I hear the wood pewee [**Eastern Wood-Pewee** [Contopus virens](#)], *pe-a-wai*. The heat of yesterday has brought him on.

P.M. — To Corner Spring and Fair Haven Cliffs.

Myosotis laxa is out a day or two. At first does not run; is short and upright like *M. stricta*. Golden senecio will be out by to-morrow at least. The early cinquefoil is now in its prime and spots the banks and hillsides and dry meadows with its dazzling yellow. How lively! It is one of the most interesting

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yellow flowers. The fields are also now whitened, perhaps as much as ever, with the houstonia. The buck-bean is out, apparently to-day, the singularly fuzzy-looking blossom. How inconspicuous its leaves now! The rhodora is peculiar for being, like the peach, a profusion of pink blossoms on a leafless stem. This shrub is, then, a late one to leaf out. The bobolink [**Bobolink** ■ *Dolichonyx oryzivorus*] skims by before the wind how far without motion of his wings! sometimes borne sidewise as he turns his head — for thus he can fly— and tinkling, *linking*, incessantly all the way. How very beautiful, like the fairest flowers, the young black oak shoots with leaves an inch long now! like red velvet on one side and downy white on the other, with only a red edge. Compare this with the pinker white oak. The *Salix nigra* just in bloom. The trientalis, properly called star-flower, is a white star, single, double, or treble. The fringed polygala surprises us in meadows or in low woods as a rarer, richer, and more delicate color, with a singularly tender or delicate-looking leaf. As you approach midsummer, the color of flowers is more intense and fiery. The reddest flower is the flower especially. Our blood is not white, nor is it yellow, nor even blue. The nodding trillium has apparently been out a day or two. Metbinks it smells like the lady's-slipper. Also the *Ranunculus recurvatus* for a day or two. The small two or three leaved Solomon's seal is just out. The *Viola cucullata* is sometimes eight inches high, and leaves in proportion. It must be the largest of the violets except perhaps the yellow. The *V. blanda* is almost entirely out of bloom at the spring.


Returning toward Fair Haven, I perceive at Potter's fence the first whiff of that ineffable fragrance from the Wheeler meadow, — as it were the promise of strawberries, pineapples, etc., in the aroma of their flowers, so blandly sweet, — aroma that fitly fore-runs the sunnier and the autumn's most delicious fruits. It would certainly restore all such sick as could be conscious of it. The odors of no garden are to be named with it. It is wafted from the garden of gardens. It appears to blow from the river meadow from the west or southwest, here about forty rods wide or more. If the air here always possessed this bland sweetness, this spot would become famous and be visited by sick and well from all parts of the earth. It would be carried off in bottles and become an article of traffic which kings would strive to monopolize. The air of Elysium cannot be more sweet.

Cardamine hirsuta out some time by the ivy tree. The *Viola lanceolata* seems to pass into the *cucullata* insensibly, but can that small round-leaved white violet now so abundantly in blossom in open low ground be the same with that large round-leaved one now about out of blossom in shady low ground *Arabis rhomboidea* just out by the willow on the Corner causeway. The *Ranunculus repens* perhaps yesterday, with its spotted leaves and its not recurved calyx though furrowed stem. Was that a very large *Veronica serpyllifolia* by the Corner Spring? Who shall keep with the lupines? They will apparently blossom within a week under Fair Haven. The *Viola sagittata*, of which *Viola ovata* is made a variety, is now very marked there. The *V. pedata* there presents the greatest array of blue of any flower as yet. The flowers are so raised above their leaves, and so close together, that they make a more indelible impression of blue on the eye; it is almost dazzling. I blink as I look at them, they seem to reflect the blue rays so forcibly, with a slight tinge of lilac. To be sure, there is no telling what the redder *ovata* might not do if they grew as densely, so many elves or scales of blue side by side, forming; small shields of that color four or five inches in diameter. The effect and intensity is very much increased by the numbers.

I hear the first unquestionable nighthawk [**Common Nighthawk** ■ *Chordeiles minor*] squeak and see him circling far off high above the earth. It is now about 5 o'clock P.M. The tree-toads are heard in the rather moist atmosphere, as if presaging rain. I hear the dumping sound of bull(?)frogs, telling the weather is warm. The paddocks, as if too lazy to be disturbed, say now to the intruder, "don't, don't, don't, don't," also in the morning after the first sultry night.

The chinquapin oak may be said to flower and leave out at the same time with the *ilicifolia*. It is distinguished as well by its yellow catkins as by its leaves. *Pyrus arbutifolia* is out, to-day or yesterday. A crataegus just out.


I sit now on a rock on the west slope of Fair Haven orchard, an hour before sunset, this warm, almost sultry evening, the air filled with the sweetness of apple blossoms (this is blossom week), — or I think it is mainly that meadow fragrance still, — the sun partly concealed behind a low cloud in the west, the air cleared by last evening's thunder-shower, the river now beautifully smooth (though a warm, bland breeze blows up here), full of light and reflecting the placid western sky and the dark woods which overhang it. I was surprised, on turning round, to behold the serene and everlasting beauty of the world, it was so soothing. I saw that I could not go home to supper and lose it. It was so much fairer, serener, more beautiful, than my mood had been. The fields beyond the river have

unexpectedly a smooth, lawn-like beauty, and in beautiful curves sweep round the edge of the woods. The rapidly expanding foliage of the deciduous [trees] (last evening's rain or moisture has started them) lights up with a lively yellow green the dark pines which we have so long been used to. Some patches (I speak of woods half a mile or more off) are a lively green, some gray or reddish-gray still, where white oaks stand. With the stillness of the air comes the stillness of the water. The sweetest singers among the birds are heard more distinctly now, as the reflections are seen more distinctly in the water, – the veery [Veery  *Catharus fuscescens*] constantly now. Methinks this serene, ambrosial beauty could hardly have been but for last evening's thundershower, which, to be sure, barely touched us, but cleared the air and gave a start to vegetation. The elm on the opposite side of the river has now a thin but dark verdure, almost as dark as the pines, while, as I have said, the prevailing color of the deciduous woods is a light yellowish and sunny green. The woods rarely if ever present a more beautiful aspect from afar than now. Methinks the black oak at early leafing is more red than the red oak. Ah, the beauty of this last hour of the day — when a power stills the air and smooths all waters and all minds — that partakes of the light of the day and the stillness of the night!


Sit on Cliffs. The Shrub Oak Plain, where are so many young white oaks, is now a faint rose-color, almost like a distant peach orchard in bloom and seen against sere red ground. What might at first be taken for the color of some sere leaves and bare twigs still left, its tender red expanding leaves. You might say of the white oaks and of many black oaks at least, "When the oaks are in the red." The perfect smoothness of Fair Haven Pond, full of light and reflecting the wood so distinctly, while still occasionally the sun shines warm and brightly from behind a cloud, giving the completest contrast of sunshine and shade, is enough to make this hour memorable. The red pincushion gall is already formed on the new black oak leaves, with little grubs in them, and the leaves, scarcely more than two inches long, are already attacked by other foes.

Looking down from these rocks, the black oak has a very light hoary or faint silvery color; the white oak, though much less advanced, has a yet more hoary color; but the red oaks (as well as the hickories) have a lively, glossy aspen green, a shade lighter than the birch now, and their long yellowish catkins appear further advanced than the black. Some black as well as white oaks are reddish still.


The new shoots now color the whole of the juniper (creeping) with a light yellow tinge. It appears to be just in blossom, and those little green berries must be already a year old; and, as it is called dioecious, these must be the fertile blossoms. This must be *Krigia Virginica* now budded, close by the juniper [This is queried in pencil.] and will blossom in a day or two. [Out on Nobscot the 22d.] The low blackberry, apparently, on Cliffs is out, earlier than elsewhere, and *Veronica arvensis* (?), very small, obscure pale-blue flower, and, to my surprise, *Linaria Canadensis*.

Returning slowly, I sit on the wall of the orchard by the white pine. Now the cows begin to low, and the river reflects the golden light of the sun just before his setting. The sough of the wind in the pines is more noticeable, as if the air were otherwise more still and hollow. The wood thrush [Wood Thrush  *Catharus mustelina*] has sung for some time. He touches a depth in me which no other bird's song does. He has learned to sing, and no thrumming of the strings or tuning disturbs you. Other birds may whistle pretty well, but he is a master of a finer-toned instrument. His song is musical, not from association merely, not from variety, but the character of its tone. It is all divine, — a [Shakespeare](#) among birds, and a [Homer](#) too.

This sweetness of the air, does it not always first succeed a thunder-storm? Is it not a general sweetness, and not to be referred to a particular plant?

He who cuts down woods beyond a certain limit exterminates birds. How red are the scales of some hickory buds, now turned back! The fragrance of the apple blossom reminds me of a pure and innocent and unsophisticated country girl bedecked for church. The purple sunset is reflected from the surface of the river, as if its surface were tinged with *lake*. Here is a field sparrow [Field Sparrow  *Spizella pusilla*] that varies his strain very sweetly.

Coming home from Spring by Potter's Path to the Corner road in the dusk, saw a dead-leaf-colored hylodes; detected it by its expanding and relapsing bubble, nearly twice as big as its head, as it sat on an alder twig six inches from ground and one rod from a pool.

The beach plum is out to-day. [Apparently same with that by red house and Jenny Dugan's and probably not beach plum.] The whip-poor-will [Whip-poor-will  *Caprimulgus vociferus*] sings. Large insects now fly at night. This is a somewhat sultry night. We must begin now to look out for



insects about the candles. The lilac out.
Genius rises above nature; in spite of heat, in spite of cold, works and lives.

 May 18, Wednesday, 1853: Benicia became the capital of [California](#).

Members of a secret society, the "Triad," rose in [Amoy](#) and, with the help of local citizenry, took over the port. They proceeded to execute Imperial Chinese officials and moneylenders.

Louis Moreau Gottschalk departed New Orleans aboard the steamboat *Magnolia*, for a concert tour.

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

Started quite early, traveled slow, camped early.
Grass miserable.



May 18. 5 A.M. — The rhodora is one of the very latest-leaving shrubs, for its leaf-buds are but just expanding, making scarcely any show yet, but quite leafless amid the blossoms. The *Celtis occidentalis* in bloom, maybe a day. Its shoots have grown two inches. It is as forward as the hickory at least; more than the elm. A red clover in blossom. A geranium budded; will open in a day or two. Surprised to see a *Ranunculus Purshii* open. A choke-cherry blossomed in a tumbler yesterday, [On Island. May 20th.] and probably outdoors.

Finding the *Linaria Canadensis* yesterday at the Cliffs on a very close search for flowers makes me think that, by looking very carefully in the most favored and warmest localities, you may find most flowers out some weeks even in advance of the rest of their kind.

We have had no storm this spring thus far, but it mizzles to-night. Perchance a May storm is brewing. This day it has mizzled, — as it were a dewy atmosphere, through which for the most part the sun shines. Metbinks this is common at this season of the tender foliage, which requires a moist air and protection against the sun.

A singular effect produced by a mass of ferns at a little distance, some rods square, their light yellow-green tops seen above the dark masses of their fruit. At first one is puzzled to account for it. White ash fully in bloom.

 May 19, Thursday, 1853: In [San Francisco, California](#) the Daily Sun began.

[Ednah Dow Littlehale](#) became [Ednah Dow Littlehale Cheney](#), and with the coming of winter would be off with the groom [Seth Wells Cheney](#) to Europe to spend several years (then he would die).

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

Traveled only 13 or 14 miles today. One of our cattle gave out and laid down in the yoke. Camped early on a beautiful little stream, clear as crystal.



May 19. Thunder-showers in the night, and it still storms, with holdings-up. A May storm, gentle and rather warm. The days of the golden willow are over for this season; their withered catkins



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strew the causeways and cover the water and also my boat, which is moored beneath them. The locust has grown three inches and is blossom-budded. It may come just after the white ash at least, and before the celtis. The weather toward evening still cloudy and somewhat mizzling. The foliage of the young maples, elms, etc., in the street has become, since the rain commenced, several shades darker, changing from its tender and lighter green, as if the electricity of the thunder-storm may have had some effect on it. It is best observed while it is still cloudy; almost a bluish, no longer yellowish green, it is peculiarly rich. The very grass appears to have undergone a similar change.



May 20, Friday, 1853: A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

Bought some fish this morning which was quite a rarity to us. The weather is cool and pleasant. While taking our noon our former company came up. Traveled a few miles and camped again.

Frederick Douglass' Paper posted an editorial by [Frederick Douglass](#) in which he called on his fellow citizens for a Colored National Convention. Numerous citizens had already signed:

FELLOW CITIZENS: — In the exercise of a liberty which we hope you will not deem unwarrantable, and which is given us, in virtue of our connection and identity with you, the undersigned do hereby, most earnestly and affectionately, invite you, by your appropriate and chosen representatives, to assemble at ROCHESTER, N.Y., on the 6th of July, 1853, under the form and title of a National Convention of the free people of color of the United States.

After due thought and reflection upon the subject, in which has entered a profound desire to serve a common cause, we have arrived at the conclusion, that the time has now fully come when the free colored people from all parts of the United States, should meet together, to confer and deliberate upon their present condition, and upon principles and measures important to their welfare, progress and general improvement.

The aspects of our cause, whether viewed as being hostile or friendly, are alike full of argument in favor of such a Convention. — Both reason and feeling have assigned to us a place in the conflict now going on in our land, between liberty and equality on the one hand, and slavery and caste on the other — a place which we cannot fail to occupy without branding ourselves as unworthy of our natural post, and recreant to the cause we profess to love. Under the whole heavens, there is not to be found a people which can show better cause for assembling in such Convention as we.

Our fellow-countrymen now in chains, to whom we are united in a common destiny, demand it; and a wide solicitude for our own honor, and that of our children, impel us to this course of action. We have gross and flagrant wrongs against which, if we are men of spirit, we are bound to protest. We have high and holy rights, which every instinct of human nature and every sentiment of manly virtue bid us to preserve and protect to the full extent of our ability. We have opportunities to improve — difficulties peculiar to our condition to meet — mistakes and errors of our own to correct — and therefore we need the



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accumulated knowledge, the united character, and the combined wisdom of our people to make us (under God) sufficient for these things. The Fugitive Slave Act, the most cruel, unconstitutional and scandalous outrage of modern times – the proscriptive legislation of several States with a view to drive our people from their borders – the exclusion of our children from schools supported by our money – the prohibition of the exercise of the franchise – the exclusion of colored citizens from the jury box – the social barriers erected against our learning trades – the wily and vigorous efforts of the American Colonization Society to employ the arm of government to expel us from our native land – and withal the propitious awakening to the fact of our condition at home and abroad, which has followed the publication of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," call trumpet-tongued for our union, co-operation and action in the [illegible].

Convinced that the number amongst us must be small, who so far miscalculate and undervalue the importance of united and intelligent moral action, as to regard it as useless, the undersigned do not feel called upon here for an argument in its favor. Our warfare is not one where force can be employed; we battle against false and hurtful customs, and against the great errors and opinions which support such customs. Nations are more and more subject to the enlightened and energetically expressed judgment of mankind. On the subject of our own condition and welfare, we may safely and properly appeal to that judgment. Let us meet, then, near the anniversary of this nation's independence, and enforce anew the great principles and self-evident truths which were proclaimed at the beginning of the Republic.

Among the matters which will engage the attention of the Convention, will be a proposition to establish a NATIONAL COUNCIL of our people with a view to permanent existence. This subject is one of vast importance, and should only be disposed of in the light of wise deliberation. There will come before the Convention matters touching the disposition of such funds as our friends abroad, through Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, may appropriate to the cause of our progress and improvement. In a word, the whole field of our interests will be opened to enquiry, investigation and determination.

That this may be done successfully, it is desirable that each delegate to the Convention should bring with him an accurate statement as to the number of colored inhabitants in his town or neighborhood – the amount of property owned by them – their business or occupation – the state of education – the return of their school privileges, and number of children in attendance, and any other information which may serve the great purposes of the Convention.

In order that no community shall be represented beyond its due proportion, it is intended that the Convention shall only be composed of regularly chosen delegates, appointed by public meetings, and bearing credentials signed by the President of said meetings.

It is recommended that all colored churches, literary and other societies, banded together for laudable purposes, proceed at once to the appointment of at least one, and not more than three, delegates to attend the National Convention. Such persons as

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come from towns, villages or counties, where no regular delegate may have been chosen, shall be received and enrolled as honorary members of the Convention.

N. Y. City.

JAMES W.C. PENNINGTON,
HENRY M. WILSON,
CHARLES B. RAY,
JAMES MCCUNE SMITH.

Brooklyn, N.Y.

WM. J. WILSON,
JUNIUS C. MORELL,
JOHN N. STILL,
AMOS N. FREEMAN,

Rochester, N.Y.

JACOB P. MORRIS,
FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Albany, N.Y.

WM. H. TOPP,
STEPHEN MYERS,

Providence, R.I.

GEORGE T. DOWNING,
WM. JOESON,
JOHN N. SMITH,

Ohio.

JOHN MERCER LANGSTON,
WM.H. DAY
DAVID JENKINS,
JOHN J. GAINES,

Pennsylvania.

MARTIN R. DELANY,
CHARLES L. REASON,
J.J.G. BIAS,
J.B. VASHON,

N. Bedford, Mass.

DANIEL RUGGLES,
L. KELLY,
ROBERT MORRIS,
H.O. WAGONER,

Illinois.

E.P. ROBERS,

Newark, N.J.

GEO. DE BAPTIST

Troy, N.Y.

BENJAMIN LYNCH,
S. S. BALTIMORE,

Connecticut.

ISAAC CROSS,
GEO. GARRISON


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May 20. The 18th and 19th a rather gentle and warm May storm, — more rain, methinks, than we have had before: this spring at one time. Began with thunder-showers on the night of the 18th, the flashing van of the storm, followed by the long, dripping main body, with, at very long intervals, an occasional firing or skirmishing in the rear or on the flanks.

6 A.M. — To Island by river.

Probably a red-wing [**Red-winged Blackbird**  *Agelaius phoeniceus*] blackbird's nest, of grass, hung between two button-bushes; whitish eggs with irregular black marks. Sarsaparilla (*Aralia nudicaulis*), probably two days. White oak, swamp white, and chestnut oak probably will open by the 22d.

The white ashes are in full flower now, and how long?

8 A.M. — To Flint's Pond.

Cornus Canadensis just out. Probably the *C. florida* should be set down to-day, since it just begins to shed pollen and its involucre is more open. It is a fair but cool and windy day, a strong northwest wind, and the grass, to which the rain has given such a start, conspicuously waves, showing its lighter under side, and the buttercups toss in the wind. The pitch and white pines have grown from one to five inches.

On Pine Hill. — In this clear morning light and a strong wind from the northwest, the mountains in the horizon, seen against some low, thin clouds in the background, look darker and more like earth than usual; you distinguish forest and pasture on them. This in the clear. Cool atmosphere in the morning after a rain-storm, with the wind northwest. They will grow more ethereal, melting into the sky, as the day advances.

The beech is already one of the most densely clothed trees, or rather makes a great show of verdure from the size of its fully expanded light-green leaves, though some are later. The fresh shoots on low branches are five or six inches long. It is an interesting tree to me, with its neat, close, tight-looking bark, like the dress which athletes wear, its bare instep, and roots beginning to branch like bird's feet, showing how it is planted and holds by the ground. Not merely stuck in the ground like a stick. It gives the beholder the same pleasure that it does to see the timbers of a house above and around. Do they blossom here? I found nuts, but apparently not sound, at Haverhill the other day, — last year's. There are some slender, perfectly horizontal limbs which go zigzagging, as if were creeping through the air, only two or three feet above the ground, over the side-hill, as if they corresponded to concealed rills in the ground beneath.

Plenty of arums now in bloom. Probably my earliest one was in bloom, for I did not look within it. What is that pretty, transparent moss in the brooks, which holds the rain or dewdrops so beautifully on the under sides of the leaflets, through which they sparkle crystallinely? Fresh checkerberry shoots now. The cedars are full of yellowish cedar apples and minute berries just formed, the effete stamiferous blossom still on. When did they begin to bloom? I find none of the rare hedyotis yet on Bare Hill. The peach bloom is now gone and the apple bloom come. Heard the seringo note, like a rattling watch-spring, from a flock passing swiftly overhead.

The wind makes such a din in the woods that the notes of birds are lost, and added to this is the sound of the waves of Flint's Pond breaking on the shore, - the fresh surf. The pond is spotted with whitecaps, five or six feet long by one foot, like a thin flock of sheep running toward the southeast shore. The smallest lakes can be lashed into a sort of fury by the wind, and are quite ocean-like then. These caps are a striving to dilute the water with air.

The barberry will probably blossom to-day.

Here, by the side of the pond, a fire has recently run through the young woods on the hillside. It is surprising how clean it has swept the ground, only the very lowest and dampest rotten leaves remaining, but uvularias and srnilacinas have pushed up here and there conspicuously on the black ground, a foot high. At first you do not observe the full effect of the fire, walling amid the bare dead or dying trees, which wear a perfect winter aspect, which, as trees generally are not yet fully leaved out and you are still used to this, you do not notice, till you look up and see the still green tops everywhere above the height of fifteen feet. Yet the trees do not bear many marks of fire commonly; they are but little blackened, except where the fire has run a few feet up a birch, or paused at a dry stump, or a young evergreen has been killed and reddened by it and is now dropping a shower of red leaves. Hemlock will blossom to-morrow. The geranium is just out, and the lady's-slipper. Some

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with old seed-vessels are still seen.

Hear again, what I have heard for a week or more sometimes, that rasping, springy note, a very hoarse chirp, — *ooh, twee twee twee*, — from a bluish bird as big as a bluebird, with some bright yellow about head, white beneath and lateral tail-feathers, and black cheeks (?). This and that sort of brown-creeper-like bird of May 12 and the chickadee-like bird (which may be the chickadee [**Chicadee, Black-capped** █ *Parus atricapillus* Titmouse, Titmice]), and the *ah te ter twee* of deep pine woods (which also may be the chickadee), I have not identified.

Arbor vitæ has been out some time and the butternut some days. Mountain-ash on the 18th. Larch apparently ten days. Nemopanthes several days. The swamp blueberry abundantly out.

Saw a tanager [**Scarlet Tanager** █ *Piranga olivacea*] in Sleepy Hollow. It most takes the eye of any bird. You here have the red-wing reversed, - the deepest scarlet of the red-wing spread over the whole body, not on the wing-coverts merely, while the wings are black. It flies through the green foliage as if it would ignite the leaves.

Of deciduous trees and shrubs, the latest to leaf out, as I find by observation to-day, must be the panicled andromeda, rhodora, and button-bush. In some places, however, the first has perfectly formed leaves, the rhodora at most not half unfolded, the button-bush for the most part just bursting buds. But I have not seen the prinus and perhaps one or two other shrubs. I have no doubt that the button-bush may be called the latest of all.

Is that female ash by river at Lee's Hill a new kind? In bloom fully May 18th.

Even this remote forest, which stands so far away and innocent, has this terrible foe Fire to fear. Lightning may ignite a dead tree or the dry leaves, and in a few minutes a green forest be blackened and killed. This liability to accident from which no part of nature is exempt.

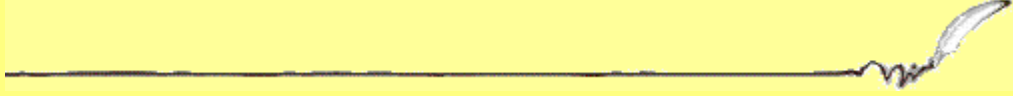
Plucked to-day a bunch of *Viola pedata*, consisting of four divisions or offshoots around a central or fifth root, all united and about one inch in diameter at the ground and four inches at top.

	Flowers	Buds
1st division contained	10	5
2d " "	11	4
3d " "	9	4
4th " "	8	4
5th " "	11	5
	-----	-----
	49	22

And perhaps more buds would still make their appearance, and undoubtedly half a dozen more would have blown the next day. Forming a complex, close little testudo of violet scales above their leaves.

During the last decade of his life, Thoreau visited his rivers more than twice as often as the upland woods and lakes that he is far better known for writing about.

— Professor Robert M. Thorson, THE BOATMAN, page 3





May 21, Saturday, 1853: After a Russian demand was rejected by Turkey, that it be designated as protector of Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire, Russian emissary Prince A.S. Menshikov left Constantinople, precipitating a break in relations.

Lola Montez, Countess of Landsfeldt, arrived in San Francisco, California with a dog and a manager. She would appear at the American Theatre on Sansome Street (newly renovated to hold an audience of 3,000) in "School for Scandal," and later perform the initial performances of her notorious Spider Dance.

Henry Thoreau took his sister Sophia in his boat up the Assabet river to a little island on which there was a spring in which the herb of St. Barbara, a rock cress that looks like mustard, was growing. It was on this voyage that they found a kitten someone had attempted to drown, that had managed to save itself and then managed to attract the attention of kind rescuers and, by its heartrendingly kittenish behavior, successfully re-establish itself in our world of beings with ongoing lives and adequate support networks.


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

Started quite early, came 22 miles today which is too far on this poor feed. Our ox laid down again. It has been quite warm today.



May 21. P.M. — Up Assabet to cress, with Sophia.

Land on Island. One of the most beautiful things to me now is the reddish-ash, and, higher, the silvery, canopies of half a dozen young white oak leaves over their catkins, — thousands of little tents pitched in the air for the May training of the flowers, so many little parasols to their tenderer flowers. Young white oaks and shrub oaks have a reddish look quite similar to their *withered* leaves in the winter.

It is still windy weather, and while I hear the bobolink [Bobolink  Dolichonyx oryzivorus] strain dying away in the distance through the maples, I can [*sic*] the falling apple blossoms which I do not see, as if they were his falling notes. Yet the water is quite still and smooth by the Hemlocks, and as the weather is warm, it is a soothing sight to see it covered with dust there over the Deep Eddy.

Landed beyond the grape-vine bower and cleared out the spring of leaves and sticks and mud, and deepened it, making an outlet, and it soon ran clear and cold. The cress, which proves to be the rock cress, or herb of St. Barbara, is now luxuriant and in bloom in many places along the river, looking like mustard. Found the *Ranunculus abortivus*, apparently some time in blossom, in the woods opposite to the cress. Put it after the *repens*.

There are, apparently, two kinds of thorns close together on Nawshawtuct, — one now and for some days in blossom, both bushes and the largest tree, — which are evidently varieties of the *Crataegus coccinea*, or scarlet-fruited thorn. The tree one is about eleven feet high by ten feet, and would be taken for an apple tree; is crowded full with white bloom very compact and handsome; the most showy of any native tree in these parts when in bloom. Its thorns are stout. But there is another kind, thin, wisp-shaped trees, not yet in bloom, with very long, slender, straight needle-shaped thorns and two or three stipules to each peduncle. As it has the usual petioles, is not the cockspur, but may be a variety of the first-named.

The grass begins to be conspicuously reddened with sorrel. The white maple keys are nearly two inches long by a half-inch wide, in pairs, with waved inner edges like green moths ready to bear off their seeds. [*Vide* May 29, 1854.] The red maple keys are not half so large now, and are a dull red, of a similar form. The hickories are budded and show the red anthers.



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YOUR GARDEN-VARIETY ACADEMIC HISTORIAN INVITES YOU TO CLIMB ABOARD A HOVERING TIME MACHINE TO SKIM IN METATIME BACK ACROSS THE GEOLOGY OF OUR PAST TIMESLICES, WHILE OFFERING UP A GARDEN VARIETY OF COGENT ASSESSMENTS OF OUR PROGRESSION. WHAT A LOAD OF CRAP! YOU SHOULD REFUSE THIS HELICOPTERISH OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORICAL PAST, FOR IN THIS REAL WORLD THINGS HAPPEN ONLY AS THEY HAPPEN. WHAT THIS SORT WRITES AMOUNTS, ON THE MODEL OF “SCIENCE FICTION,” MERELY TO “HISTORY FICTION”: IT’S NOT WORTHY OF YOUR ATTENTION.



May 22, Sunday, [1853](#): Three nights of concerts featuring the music of [Richard Wagner](#) ended in Zürich with the composer’s 40th birthday party. At this banquet he was given a laurel wreath, and a poem in his honor was read. This poem, presented anonymously, had been created by the wife of a close friend, Johanna Spyri, someone who would become most famous in 1880 when she would create the character known as Heidi. Although this festival brought Wagner great acclaim it also generated a considerable debt.

[Henry Thoreau](#) went by carriage with [Ellery Channing](#) to Nobscot Hill in northern Framingham, Massachusetts.

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

Had a very high wind last night. It might be called a hurricane. Blew down all our tents. Had to turn our wagons back to the wind and lock both wheels and run the tongue in the ground to keep the wagon still. Came very near blowing our wagon over. Scattered our cattle in every direction. Next morning we found some kettles and pans that were not lost, and some pans and kettles that were lost we did not find. Some of our clothing was blown about a quarter of a mile from camp. We found all our cattle after considerable searching among other droves. I have seen the lightening and heard it thunder, but never saw any to equal this. The heavens were in a perfect blaze and the thunder rolled from one side to the other, as if it had no rest. Started about eight o’clock, concluded it was best to drive slow and let our company go on. Our cattle are getting poor. Camped about 2 miles from Platte river, near another small company. One of them came to us and asked us if we were traveling alone. He said they

Spiritualism

“Stack of the Artist of Kouroo” Project

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
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had only two wagons and no loose cattle. They had also 4 cows, 3 of them were giving milk, and we could have all the milk we wanted if we would join them. The company consisted of seven men and one woman.




May 22. Sunday. To Nobscot with [W.E.C.](#)

This is the third windy day following the two days' rain. A washing day, such as we always have it this season, methinks. The grass has sprung up as by magic since the rains. The birds are heard through the pleasant clashing wind, which enlivens everything.

It is clear June, the first day of summer. The rye, which, when I last looked, was one foot high, is now three feet high and waving and tossing its heads in the wind. We ride by these bluish-green waving rye-fields in the woods, as if an Indian juggler had made them spring up in a night. Why, the sickle and cradle will soon be taken up. Though I walk every day I am never prepared for this magical growth of the rye. I am advanced by whole months, as it were, into summer. Sorrel reddens the fields. Cows are preparing the mill: for dune butter. Already the falling apple blossoms fill the air and spot the roads and fields, and some are already turned dark with decay on the ground. With this warmth and wind the air is full of haze, such as we have not had before. The lilac is scented at every house. The wood pewee's [Eastern Wood-Pewee  *Contopus virens*] warm note is heard.


We ride through warm, sandy shrub oak roads, where the *Viola pedata* blues the edge of the path, and the sand cherry and the choke-cherry whiten it. The crickets now first are generally heard. *Houstonias* whiten the fields and are now in their prime. The thorn bushes are full of bloom. Observed a *large* sassafras tree in bloom, — a rich lemon (?) yellow.

Left our horse at the Howe tavern. The oldest date on the sign is "D.H. 1716." An old woman, who had been a servant in the family and said she was ninety-one, said this was the first house built on the spot. Went on to Nobscot. Very warm in the woods, — and hear the hoarse note of the tanager [Scarlet Tanager  *Piranga olivacea*] and the sweet *pe-a-wai*, —but pleasantly breezy on the bare hilltops. Can't see the mountains. Found an abundance of the *Viola Mulalenbergii*¹⁰⁷ (*debilis* of [Bigelow](#)), a stalked violet, pale blue and bearded.

The *krigia* out, a redder, more July, yellow than the dandelion; also a yellow Bethlehem-star and ribwort; and the mountain cranberry still here and there in blossom, though for the most part small berries formed. An abundance of saxifrage going to seed, and in their midst two or three looking densely white like the pearly everlasting — round dense white heads, apparently an abortion, an abnormal state, without stamens, etc., which I cannot find described.

The pastures on this hill and its spurs are sprinkled profusely with thorny pyramidal apple scrubs, very thick and stubborn, first planted by the cows, then browsed by them and kept down stubborn and thorny for years, till, as they spread, their centre is protected and beyond reach and shoots up into a tree, giving a wine-glass form to the whole; and finally perchance the bottom disappears and cows come in to stand in the shade and rub against and redden the trunk.

They must make fine dark shadows, these shrubs, when the sun is low; perfectly pyramidal they are now, many of them. You see the cow-dung everywhere now with a hundred little trees springing up in it. Thus the cows create their own shade and food.¹⁰⁸

This hill, Nobscot, is the summit of the island (?) or cape between the Assabet and Musketaquid — perhaps the best point from which to view the Concord River valley. The Wayland hills bound it on the east; Berlin, Bolton, [and] Harvard hills on the west. The Sudbury meadows, seen here and there in distance, are of a peculiar bluish green. This is the first truly lively summer Sunday, what with lilacs, warm weather, waving rye, slight[ly] dusty sandy roads in some places, falling apple blossoms, etc., etc., and the wood pewee [Eastern Wood-Pewee  *Contopus virens*]. The country people walk so quietly to church, and at five o'clock the farmer stands reading the newspaper while his cows go through the bars. I ought perhaps to have measured the neat white oak by Howe's. A remarkably thick white pine wood this side of Willis's pond!!





When yesterday [Sophia](#) and I were rowing past Mr. Prichard's land, where the river is bordered by a row of elms and low willows, at 6 P.M., we heard a singular note of distress as it were from a catbird

107. Also Holden farm and Pinxter-Flower Brook.

108. See Excursions. 305; I3iv. 374, 375.]

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[Gray Catbird  *Dumetella carolinensis*] — a loud, vibrating, catbird sort of note, as if the catbird's mew were imitated by a smart vibrating spring. Blackbirds  and others were flitting about, apparently attracted by it. At first, thinking it was merely some peevish catbird [Gray Catbird  *Dumetella carolinensis*] or red-wing [Red-winged Blackbird  *Agelaius phoeniceus*], I was disregarding it, but on second thought turned the bows to the shore, looking into the trees as well as over the shore, thinking some bird might be in distress, caught by a snake or in a forked twig. The hovering birds dispersed at my approach; the note of distress sounded louder and nearer as I approached the shore covered with low osiers. The sound came from the ground, not from the trees. I saw a little black animal making haste to meet the boat under the osiers. A young muskrat? a mink? No, it was a little dot of a kitten. It was scarcely six inches long from the face to the base — or I might as well say the tip — of the tail, for the latter was a short, sharp pyramid, perfectly perpendicular but not swelled in the least. It was a very handsome and very precocious kitten, in perfectly good condition, its breadth being considerably more than one third of its length. Leaving its mewings, it came scrambling over the stones as fast as its weak legs would permit, straight to me. I took it up and dropped it into the boat, but while I was pushing off it ran the length of the boat to Sophia, who held it while we rowed homeward. Evidently it had not been weaned — was smaller than we remembered that kittens ever were — almost infinitely small; yet it had hailed a boat, its life being in danger, and saved itself. Its performance, considering its age and amount of experience, was more wonderful than that of any young mathematician or musician that I have read of.

Various were the conjectures as to how the kitten came there, a quarter of a mile from a house. The possible solutions were finally reduced to three: first, it must either have been born there, or, secondly, carried there by its mother, or, thirdly, by human hands.

In the first case, it had possibly brothers and sisters, one or both, and its mother had left them to go a-hunting on her own account and might be expected back.

In the second, she might equally be expected to return. At any rate, not having thought of all this till we got home, we found that we had got ourselves into a scrape; for this kitten, though exceedingly interesting, required one nurse to attend it constantly for the present, and, of course, another to spell the first; and, beside, we had already a cat well-nigh grown, who manifested such a disposition toward the young stranger that we had no doubt it would have torn it in pieces in a moment if left alone with it. As nobody made up his or her mind to have it drowned, and still less to drown it, — having once looked into its innocent extremely pale blue eyes (as of milk thrice skimmed) and had his finger or his chin sucked by it, while, its eyes being shut, its little paws played a soothing tune, it was resolved to keep it till it could be suitably disposed of. It rested nowhere, in no lap, under no covert, but still faintly cried for its mother and its accustomed supper. It ran toward every sound or movement of a human being, and whoever crossed the room it was sure to follow at a rapid pace. It had all the ways of a cat of the maturest years; could purr divinely and raised its back to rub all boots and shoes.

When it raised its foot to scratch its ear, which by the way it never hit, it was sure to fall over and roll on the floor. It climbed straight up the sitter, faintly mewings all the way, and sucked his chin. In vain, at first, its head was bent down into saucers of milk which its eyes did not see, and its chin was wetted.


But soon it learned to suck a finger that had been dipped in it, and better still a rag; and then at last it slept and rested. The street was explored in vain to find its owner, and at length an Irish family took it into their cradle. Soon after we learned that a neighbor who had heard the mewings of kittens in the partition had sent for a carpenter, taken off a board, and found two the very day at noon that we sailed. That same hour it was first brought to the light a coarse Irish cook had volunteered to drown it, had carried it to the river, and without bag or sinker had cast it in! It saved itself and hailed a boat! What an eventful life! What a precocious kitten! We feared it owed its first plump condition to the water. How strong and effective the instinct of self-preservation!

Our quince blossomed yesterday. Saw many low blackberries in bloom to-day.

During the last decade of his life, Thoreau visited his rivers more than twice as often as the upland woods and lakes that he is far better known for writing about.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 3



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

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

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



May 23. P.M. — To Ministerial Swamp.

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

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

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

The geum is out, maybe one day.

As I rise the hill beyond Geum Meadow I perceive the sweet fragrance of the season from over the turf; as if the vales were vast saucers full of strawberries, as if our walks were on the rim of such a saucer. With this, couple the fact that directly the fresh shoots of the firs and spruces will have the fragrance of strawberries. White clover. I see the light purple of the rhodora enlivening the edges of swamps — another color the sun wears. It is a beautiful shrub seen afar, and makes a great show

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from the abundance of its bloom unconcealed by leaves, rising above the andromeda. Is it not. the most showy *high-colored* flower or shrub? Flowers are the different colors of the sunlight.

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

Uncle Tom's Cabin in Alabama.

To the Editors of the Evening Post:

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

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

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

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



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

Very respectfully, &c.,
_____.



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

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



May 25, Wednesday, [1853](#): [Waldo Emerson](#)'s 50th birthday.

[Henry Thoreau](#) was disappointed in a piece of behavior he happened to observe, of [Ellery Channing](#) in the yard of his home, characterizing it in his journal as boorish and mean.

The [California Daily Union](#) passed along prospects for mining the present path of the South Yuba River:

WASHINGTON-JEFFERSON AREA — SOUTH YUBA — The river is looked to as a great harvest-field for summer operations, and it will probably be flumed as soon as possible. But while the high water keeps the banks out of reach, the mines have attacked the flats, where the river use to run, probably in the good old days when the country rejoiced in the name of Ophir, and Solomon's sluices raked the river beds where Jonathan's "toms" but scratch up the leavings in the banks. However, they left enough in place to make many a man's fortune in these degenerate days when silver furniture is more rare than golden was taken in the queen of Sheba's boudoir. For instance, on "Bandy Flat" in the last three days, three men took out over \$1,300. I saw over \$500 in their pan at night, from one day's work. It is beautiful lump gold, with chunks from \$20 to \$40. Here are three or four other companies on the Flat, who all average over an ounce a day to the man. Between this flat and Washington, a distance of nearly a mile, the whole extent of ground is staked off. Several companies have "struck it rich" on another flat about midway between there and Washington, which is formed by a slide from the hills having turned the river from its natural channel.



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Being the first to sink a hole there, we assume the right of discovery to christen the digging, which in accordance with our financial condition being the name of "Flat Broke Slide."

On Washington Hill extensive coyote digging have been discovered and on Scotchman's Creek, and at Omega there are a great many at work doing well. On Jefferson Canyon, there will be hundreds mining as soon as the water falls, as these were last year. Even at the tops of the hills in the vicinity excellent prospects have been discovered for winter diggings. Hill digging is comparatively a new thing here, because the river has drawn all the miners attention during the summer and winter generally depopulates this part of the country.

Even on the highest hills, there is every appearance of the action of large streams of water, huge boulders are found, rounded and smooth as those in the river, are piled up as though in bars, with sand and gravel of the same quality as in the river beds. The entire country affords food for a great deal of speculation – some assume that immense bodies of water once covered the hills and wore the deep gorges in their action, some think the Yuba were once much larger and their course had been changed to the present one by volcanic eruptions. There are many places where slides from the mountains have turned the river from its course and which will some day be tunneled with success. On Poorman's Creek, which empties into the Yuba near opposite Washington some companies have been taking out their pound per day and on the opposite bank of the Yuba, there are a great many flats which pays good wages.

There are also hundreds of places not prospected, which offer every temptation in their appearance and situation, and when the miner begins to gather in, as they will soon, I believe these will prove the most extensive diggings of any in the country, if not in the State.

With free settlers protesting that they needed the work and did not need competition from fresh cadres of transported criminals, the final convict transport ship arriving at Hobart Town, [Van Diemen's Land](#) was the 630-ton *St. Vincent* out of Spithead in Hampshire, England by way of Gibraltar. The vessel had conveyed 212 male convicts 5 of whom had died in transit. In the 1st half-century of this young colony, 89 wrecks had occurred around the island, a number of which had involved the deaths of convicts. In all, some 74,000, give or take, had survived the process of transportation and arrived on this remote island for a duration there of unremitting toil. (Norfolk Island was in this year also closed to convicts.)

An influential "Exposition of Sentiments" document was adopted by the Pennsylvania [Yearly Meeting](#) of Progressive Friends at Kennett Square. Friend [Lucretia Mott](#) helped draft this, although she remained with Philadelphia's [Hicksite](#) Yearly Meeting. Friend Joseph Dugdale, one of the Clerks who signed it, later removed to [Illinois](#) and became a major figure in the new Illinois Yearly Meeting. Friend Jesse H. "Ducky" Holmes, a



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Swarthmore professor and Clerk of the Progressive Yearly Meeting during its final two decades, was also a member of Swarthmore Meeting, and would be a very active figure in the Friends General Conference until his death in 1940. This Progressive reformation of liberal Quakerism would come to fruition in 1926, when the Friends General Conference would adopt a Uniform Discipline. This document would become the basis and template for new editions of all the Friends General Conference yearly meetings, which emerged in rapid succession thereafter, and closely resembled it. The Uniform Discipline codified such Progressive principles as the idealization of the individual seeking conscience, a congregational polity, the quiet abolition of Ministers and Elders, the near-total abandonment of disownment, and a renewed emphasis on humanitarian reform as the goal and sign of authentic religion. The result would become “meetinghouse” or “unprogrammed” Quakerism as we know it today.

**EXPOSITION OF SENTIMENTS
ADOPTED BY THE PENNSYLVANIA YEARLY MEETING
OF PROGRESSIVE FRIENDS, 1853**

To the Friends of Pure and Undefined Religion, and to all Seekers after Truth, of whatever name or denomination, the Pennsylvania Yearly Meeting of Progressive Friends sendeth Greeting;

DEAR FRIENDS: Having been led, as we trust, through obedience to the revelations of truth, to form a Religious Association upon principles always too little regarded and often trampled under foot by professing Christians and popular sects, we are constrained to address you in explanation of our leading sentiments, purposes, plan; and hopes.

If, as we believe, the basis of our organization, and the arrangements we propose for the culture of man's religious powers, are in harmony with the Divine laws, and adapted to the wants of human nature and the demands of the present age, it is certainly incumbent upon us to diffuse true knowledge thereof as widely as possible; and if, on the other hand, "the light that is in us be darkness," it is proper that we should invoke your earnest efforts to redeem us from our errors, and turn our feet into the highway of holiness and truth. We, therefore, ask your serious and unprejudiced consideration of the matters presented in this Exposition, so that, whether you shall accept or reject our propositions, your conclusions may minister to your own peace of mind and growth in the love and practice of the truth.

In our efforts to apply the principles of Christianity to daily life, and to social customs and institutions which we deemed subversive of individual and national morality, as well as in conflict with the laws of God, we encountered the hostility of the popular sects, to one or another of which most of us belonged, and to which we were bound by ties that grew with our growth and strengthened with our strength. Mingling with the chime of church bells and with the tones of the preacher's voice, or breaking upon the stillness of our religious assemblies, we heard the clank of the slave's chain, the groans of the wounded and dying on the field of bloody strife, the noise of drunken revelry, the sad cry of the widow and the fatherless, and the wail of homeless, despairing poverty, driven

By foul Oppression's ruffian gluttony



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Forth from life's plenteous feast;

and when, in obedience to the voice of God, speaking through the holiest sympathies and purest impulses of our Godlike humanity, we sought to arouse our countrymen to united efforts for the relief of human suffering, the removal of giant wrongs, the suppression of foul iniquities, we found the Church, in spite of her solemn professions, arrayed against us, blocking up the path of reform with her serried ranks, prostituting her mighty influence to the support of wickedness in high places, smiling complacently upon the haughty oppressor, "justifying the wicked for a reward," maligning the faithful Abdiels who dared to stand up for the truth and to testify against popular crimes—thus traitorously upsetting the very foundations of the Religion she was sacredly bound to support and exemplify, and doing in the name of Christ deeds at which humanity shuddered, obliterating her indignant blushes only with the tears that welled up from the deeps of her great loving heart.

For a time, though not without deep mortification and discouragement, we bore this appalling delinquency, thinking in our short-sightedness that it was mainly the result of a temporary mistake, and not of an incurable leprosy tainting the whole body. In the "patience of hope" we toiled on, seeking to reform alike the Church and the world, and deeming it certain that the former would speedily abandon her false and sinful position, and "come up to the help of the Lord" against the hosts of unrighteousness and oppression. Our hopes in this respect were doomed to a sad and bitter disappointment.

The leaders of the Church, instead of retracing the false step which they had taken, grew more and more hostile to the cause of Christian Reform, while there was not found in the body enough of moral principle to reject their counsels and repudiate their impious claims to a Divine warrant for their criminal apostasy. Inflated with spiritual pride, and claiming to be the anointed expounders of God's will, they mocked at Philanthropy as no part of religion, exalted in its place the Dagon of man-made Disciplines, charged obedience to the decisions of Yearly Meetings or other ecclesiastical assemblies, as the sum of human obligation, bade us stifle the gushing sympathies which link us to our kind, and passively "wait God's time" for the removal of the evils that afflict and curse our race; as if God had not revealed his purpose of doing this work by human instrumentality — as if there were times when deeds of charity and mercy are offensive in His sight — as if the cry of suffering Humanity and the emotions it stirs within us were not a sufficient revelation of His will, and we were bound to wait in listless inactivity for some supernatural or miraculous manifestation of His authority and power!

Alas! how many have thus waited, until at last the spiritual ear has become too dull and heavy to vibrate under the gentle tones of the "still, small voice," and the head so hard and cold, that it has ceased to beat at the cry of mortal woe! Superstition has woven around their souls her impenetrable veil, excluding the warm sunlight of God's presence, paralyzing their moral energies, and leaving their holiest sympathies to stagnate for lack of use; thus unfitting them for the work the good Father

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sets before them in common with all His children, and defeating the great end and purpose of their earthly life.

When we refused to obey the mandate of our ecclesiastical rulers, choosing to hearken to the voice of God rather than unto the voice of man, we found our worst foes in our own religious households; the rod of ecclesiastical power was lifted above our heads, and some of us were made to understand that excommunication was the price to be paid for the exercise of that liberty which Jesus proclaimed as the birthright of his disciples. We might have devoted our energies, to the acquisition of wealth, and, in imitation of the example of many who stood high in the Church, entered into close relations with men devoid of religious principle in the pursuit of that object and no voice of censure or reproof would have been lifted against us; but when we associated with noble men and women, not of our sect, for the purpose of abolishing slavery, war, intemperance, and other crying abominations, and our zeal for humanity made us indifferent to the forms of the Church, though more than ever alive to the great principles she had so long professed to believe and revere, we were treated as offenders; and the strange spectacle was witnessed of bodies, claiming to be God's representatives on earth, excluding from their pale, men and women of blameless lives for loving peace, purity and freedom so devotedly, as to be willing to co-operate with all whose hearts prompted them to labor for the promotion of those heavenly virtues. Thus were the great and ennobling principles of our common humanity subordinated to sectarian shibboleths, and that Divine charity, which is the essence of the God-like, and the sum of every virtue in man, narrowed down to the dimensions of a particular creed, or smothered under the petty limitations of speculative theology.

Driven thus to choose between our loyalty to sect and our allegiance to God, and feeling still the need of some outward help in the cultivation of the religious sentiment, we were naturally led to investigate the whole subject of religious organization, its nature, uses and sphere, and the source and extent of its powers. The result of our inquiries is a clear conviction, that Churches, however high their pretensions of authority derived from God, are only human organizations, and the repositories of only such powers as may have been rightfully conferred upon them by the individuals of whom they are composed, or derived from the laws of our social nature. It is time that this truth, so long obscured by the sorcery of priestcraft, were clearly understood and boldly proclaimed.

Too long have the common people been deluded with the idea that the Church holds a mysterious or organic relation to the Infinite, — a relation distinct from that existing between the soul and its Creator, and conferring special powers and prerogatives. Perhaps no error has done more than this to debase and enslave the mind of man, to fetter his godlike powers, and make him the ready instrument of superstition and priestcraft. It is the most vicious element of Popery, from which our Protestant sects are not yet delivered. Our religion, which should make us free and self-reliant, willing to bend the knee only to God, as he stands revealed to our own consciousness, withered by the touch of this superstition, becomes, in the



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hands of ambitious and designing men, the instrument of our degradation the symbol of littleness, meanness, bigotry and hypocrisy.

The Romish Church sets up for herself a claim of absolute infallibility, and the various Protestant sects, professing to deride her pretensions, yet tax our credulity scarcely less. From the Episcopal Church, with her imposing ritual and elaborate ceremonials, down to modern Quakerism, with its professed abjuration of all forms, its rustic garb and look of "meek simplicity," all seem deluded with the idea that the Church, being made after a Divine pattern, is supernaturally preserved from error. Even the Quaker regards the decision of his Yearly Meeting with a superstitious reverence scarcely inferior to that which the Catholic awards to the decrees of the Pope and the Cardinals. Do his reason and common sense suggest that the Yearly Meeting has decided erroneously or unjustly, he banishes the thought as little less than impious, becomes silent if not acquiescent, and mayhap lays his reason and common sense a sacrifice on the altar of the Church. Poor man! let him be once fairly convinced that ecclesiastical bodies, however sacred their professions, however worthy of esteem within their legitimate sphere, are yet only human, and without authority to bind the conscience even of the humblest of God's children, and he will no longer dare to offer such a sacrifice, to dishonor his Creator by debasing his powers.

It would be easy to show that this claim of supernatural power, on the part of the organized Church, is at war with the whole genius and spirit of Christianity as exhibited in the life and teachings of Jesus, and without warrant in the writings of the Apostles and primitive Christians, as well as subversive of individual rights and responsibilities. Jesus nowhere indicated an intention to organize a Church clothed with such power. Indeed, it does not appear from his recorded words that he even contemplated any organization whatever of those who should embrace his doctrines, He specified no such work as incumbent upon those whom he sent forth as witnesses of the truth, but left them to adopt such instrumentalities as might recur to them adapted to promote the object of their mission

The Apostles did indeed organize Churches, but they did not pretend that they were framed after a Divinely prescribed pattern, still less that they were clothed with a supernatural power. "It was not," says a learned writer, "until the number of personal followers of Jesus increased by thousands, and the need of some organization began to be felt, that any thing like the institution of a distinct and permanent religious society appears to have been definitely contemplated. And then nothing more was done, than was necessary to that present exigency. Thus the whole institution of the Church at Jerusalem grew up by degrees, as one step after another was called for by a succession of circumstances altogether peculiar." A religious periodical of high authority in matters of ecclesiastical history, testified, some years since, as follows:

Men have clung as with a dying grasp to a few shreds of ancient tradition, and deemed it sacrilege to meddle with these consecrated relics. They have attached a peculiar sacredness to their own constitutions,



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councils, ordinances, creeds and decisions, as if they rested on Divine right and apostolic authority.... The beautiful theories of Church government, devised with so much care and put together with so much skill and art, have, we are sure, no manner of resemblance to the Churches mentioned in the Acts and Epistles. The primitive Christians, could they come among us, would be not a little surprised to hear their assemblies, gathered by stealth for worship, with or without particular standing officers, referred to as the models after which the superstructure of denominational Churches is supposed to be fashioned. They were simple-hearted men and women, exposed to continual persecution, and bound together in Christian love; forming and modifying their regulations exactly as was needed; never once dreaming that they or their successors were bound to a single system by some great code, provided by Divine authority.... The reason of associating together was, to further this great end, mutually to enliven the feelings of devotion, strengthen the principles of piety, and aid in, and urge to, the discharge of duty.... Some things were practiced in some Churches and not in others. Some officers existed in one and not in another; some met in one place and not in another; and all had a right to do whatever might be conducive to the general good.

We have dwelt at some length on this point, because we deem it of fundamental importance. This claim of organic communion with God lies at the root of many evils in the Churches around us, and hence we desire to make our denial of its validity as emphatic as possible. We would impress upon the minds of all whom our voice may reach, the truth, that there is no mysterious alchemy whereby a company of men, mean and selfish as individuals, are transmuted into a holy body; no Divine afflatus vouchsafed to them in the mass, superseding the necessity of personal conformity to the will of God.

Such a claim is the acme of superstition and imposture. It is amazing that it should for so long a period have deceived and befouled the nations! When will the people learn that there is nothing Divine, nothing too sacred for investigation, in the artificial arrangements and prescribed formalities of sects? Alas! what multitudes join the popular Churches, submitting to their rites and paying the expenses of their administration, deluding themselves meanwhile with the idea that they are thus ensuring their eternal salvation, even though their daily lives are defiled by sordid and debasing acts, and they scarcely lift a finger or breathe one honest aspiration for their own or the world's moral improvement!

Our inquiries into the nature and uses of Religions Organization have also brought us to the conclusion, that the Churches around us have made a vital mistake in demanding uniformity of belief in respect to scholastic theology, ordinances, rites and forms, as a condition of religious fellowship and the basis of associated effort. It would hardly be possible to exaggerate the evils resulting from this mistake. It has led the Church into dissensions, hypocrisy and all uncharitableness, and instead of

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promoting a manly, vigorous and healthful piety, which ever manifests itself in works of practical benevolence and would make her a burning and a shining light in the presence of surrounding darkness, it narrows the scope of her vision, dwarfs the intellect, smothers the heart, and makes her the purveyor of traditions and shams, a covert for meanness and treachery, and a hiding-place for the perpetrators and apologists of popular wickedness. It reverses the arrangements proposed by Jesus and his early followers, putting that first which should be last, the incidental in place of the primary, the temporary in place of the eternal. Jesus enjoins it upon his bearers to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness;" but the popular Church practically tells us, on pain of eternal perdition, to seek first of all the theology of that kingdom, assuring us, with impious tongue, that if we only master that, get its different parts properly arranged and labeled, and learn to believe them, however inconsistent with each other, and contrary to our reason and common sense, the righteousness may safely enough be left to take care of itself!

Instead of requiring as the evidence of our piety the "fruits" demanded in the Gospel of Jesus, it sneers at "good works" as "carnal" and inefficacious, bids us mind our catechisms, disciplines and confessions of faith; to come regularly to its assemblies, and worship according to its prescribed forms! It is no wonder that politicians, bent upon schemes of selfish aggrandizement, mock at the [Higher Law](#), and declare their own oppressive statutes a finality, when the Church is found thus corrupt and apostate. No marvel that insatiate Wealth tramples upon lowly Poverty; that War's "red thunders" reverberate round the world that Drunkenness counts its victims by tens of thousands; that Land Monopoly grinds humanity in the dust; that Lust is doing his work of defilement and shame with impunity; that immortal beings are driven to their daily toil tinder the lash, and even sold in the shambles, when the Church proffers absolution for such crimes upon terms so easy of fulfilment.

The natural counterpart of this false and superstitious devotion to creeds and forms is an unnatural sourness and melancholy – a Pharisical spirit, which frowns upon amusements as an offence to God, and which would cover the face of society with a sanctimonious gloom as repugnant to Religion as to unperverted human nature. The victims of this spirit converse about religion, not in manly and natural tones, indicative of sincerity and earnestness, but in a whining, canting manner, as if it were a burden hard to be borne, but which they reluctantly consent to carry during their mortal life, as the only means of eternal salvation!

We are persuaded that the exhibitions of this spirit on the part of the Church have produced incalculable mischief, by exciting the prejudices of the young against all Religion as necessarily of an ascetic character, and by placing amusements beyond the pale of Christian influence, thus making them liable to excesses which might otherwise be avoided. The Christian, of all other persons, should not be of a sad countenance, but ever cheerful and hopeful in his demeanor, making the very atmosphere he breathes a witness of the serene joy that dwells in his heart. No false idea of sanctity, no superstitious or fanatical "worry"



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about his soul, should he ever suffer to make his presence distasteful and unwelcome to the young.

We cannot undertake to particularize all the errors of principle and practice in the popular Churches, which our investigations have revealed to us; but there is one more which we must not pass in silence. We allude to that vicious and despotic feature in the organization of most of them, which, beginning in the subordination of the individual to the local Church, or to Elders. Overseers, or other officers thereof; ends in the subjection of local bodies to some larger assembly or central power. There are, indeed, some Churches which have attempted to abolish this system, but they are still too much bound by usage to practices inconsistent with their theories.

Experience, as well as observation, has taught us that local organizations should in the first place be formed upon principles which will offer the best possible safeguard to the equal rights of the individual members, and discourage tyranny, whether of the many or the few; and, in the next place, that they should never allow any other body, however numerous or imposing, to exercise authority over them. The forms of Church organization, instead of being such as are suggested by the ideas of individual freedom and responsibility which pervade the teachings of Jesus, would seem to have been borrowed from anti-Christian and despotic systems of civil government, whereof force is the vital and controlling element. Under such forms religious tyranny, always difficult of repression is sure to spring up into a vigorous life.

It would be easy to illustrate this truth by a reference to the history of any of those Churches in which the affiliated and subordinating system of government prevails, but the experience of many of our number naturally leads us to point to the Society of Friends as a warning against this lamentable evil. The setting apart of ministers as a distinct order of persons, and for life; the appointment of Elders to sit in judgment upon the services of the Ministry, and to determine officially what is and what is not inspiration; the subjection of individual liberty to official dictation; the subordination of Preparative to Monthly, of Monthly to Quarterly, of Quarterly to Yearly Meetings; all this affords a covert for despotic authority. It is an arrangement whereby the few are enabled to control the many, and to carry into successful operation their plans for keeping the Church popular with the world, while she is trampling upon her own most vital principles, and obstinately refusing to do the work for which she was originally established. It aggravates, moreover, all the other evils which have crept into the body, and renders the work of reform extremely difficult, if not impossible.

But while we thus earnestly deny the claims of Religious Associations to Divine authority, and maintain that they form no exception to the rule, that "institutions are made for man, not man for institutions," and while we would fearlessly expose all that is wrong in existing Churches, we do not therefore repudiate such associations as necessarily evil. Founded upon right principles, adjusted to the wants of our social nature, within their legitimate sphere as the servants and helpers, not the masters of the soul, as a means and not an end, we esteem

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them of great importance. It is only when they interpose between our consciences and God, assuming to tell us authoritatively how much and what we must believe, and virtually trampling under foot the right of private judgment, that our manhood prompts us to reject them

The mistakes which men have made in their efforts to realize the benefits of Religious Association, however strange and even preposterous they may appear to us at this advanced period of the world's history, were only the incidents of Humanity imperfectly informed and developed. They should not therefore discourage us, still less lead us into other errors at the opposite extreme. Men have also made great mistakes in science, and in things pertaining to physical life – in astronomy, chemistry, and the mechanic arts, and even in agriculture; and it would be no more absurd to urge these mistakes as a reason for abandoning all associated effort in such matters, than it would be to allege the similar blunders into which men have fallen in regard to Religion, and the abuses growing out of them, as a reason why we should resist the strong impulse of our nature which prompts us to combine our efforts for the promotion of piety and good morals.

Past errors and present imperfections, instead of affording an argument against organization, are only illustrations of its necessity, as a means whereby the strong may help the weak, the highly cultivated soul minister to the edification of those less enlightened, and social influence become the aid and support of individual virtue. Beavers do not more naturally combine to build their habitations, than men and women, inspired by a common love of God and Humanity, and a common thirst for religious excellence, mingle and combine their individual efforts for the promotion of pure and undefiled religion among themselves and throughout the world.

In forming The Pennsylvania Yearly Meeting of Progressive Friends, we have followed the instincts of our moral and social nature, and acted upon the settled conviction, that such an organization was necessary to our highest efficiency in the work which our Heavenly Father has given us to do. We seek not to diminish, but to intensify in ourselves the sense of individual responsibility – not to escape from duty, but to aid one another in its performance – to lift up before all who may be influenced by our words or actions a high standard of moral and religious excellence – to commit ourselves before the world as the friends of righteousness and truth, and as under the highest obligations to labor for the redemption of mankind from every form of error and sin.

It has been our honest endeavor to avoid, if possible, the mistakes into which previous organizations have so generally fallen, and especially those radical errors which are pointed out in this address. To this end we have made our association as simple as possible, having done little more than to provide for an annual assembly. We claim for this organization no other powers than such as we ourselves have conferred upon it in consistency with our own and others' individual freedom. We make no draft upon the veneration of our fellow-men for any arrangement that we have adopted, or may adopt hereafter. Veneration is due only to God, and to those eternal principles

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of Rectitude, Justice and Love, of which He is the embodiment. We have set forth no forms nor ceremonies; nor have we sought to impose upon ourselves or others a system of doctrinal belief. Such matters we have left where Jesus left them, with the conscience and common sense of the individual. It has been our cherished purpose to restore the union between Religion and Life, and to place works of goodness and mercy far above theological speculations and scholastic subtleties of doctrine. Creed-making is not among the objects of our association. Christianity, as it presents itself to our minds, is too deep, too broad, and too high, to be brought within the cold propositions of the theologian. We should as soon think of bottling up the sunshine for the use of posterity, as of attempting to adjust the free and universal principles taught and exemplified by Jesus of Nazareth to the angles of a man-made creed.

Churches which undertake this impious and impracticable work doom themselves thereby to barrenness and death. Instead of being warmed and animated by that living faith which "works by love" and overcomes the world, they lapse into bigotry and intolerance, and their formularies, having no life in themselves, become at length mere petrifications, fossil remains of ideas, which, however significant once, have no longer any adaptation to the condition of the race. It is sad to behold a Church, with Christ's name upon its brow, turning away from the wells of immortal truth, and clinging with superstitious pertinacity and veneration to the shell of an ancient creed, or the letter of an ancient Discipline, from which the original soul long since took its flight; swift to frown upon the slightest departure from its forms and theories, but slow to utter a testimony against a popular sin; ever zealous in tithing "mint, anise and cumin," but heavy of step and slow of speech when the great interests of Humanity are at stake.

Our terms of membership are at once simple, practical and catholic. If we may be said to have a test, it is one which applies to the heart and the life, not to the head nor to any of its speculations. Our platform is broad as Humanity, and comprehensive as Truth. We interrogate no man as to his theological belief; we send no Committees to pry into the motives of those who may desire to share the benefits of our Association; but open the door to all who recognize the Equal Brotherhood of the Human Family, without regard to sex, color or condition, and who acknowledge the duty of defining and illustrating their faith in God, not by assent to a creed, but by lives of personal purity, and works of beneficence and charity to mankind. If, by any possibility, there should be found here and there a sincere inquirer after truth, who may not feel himself included in this invitation to membership, we shall still bid him welcome to our assemblies, and listen with patience to whatever his highest convictions may prompt him to offer.

We do not seek to bind our Association together by external bands, nor by agreement in theological opinions. Identity of object, oneness of spirit in respect to the practical ditties of life, the communion of soul with soul in a common love of the beautiful and true, and a common aspiration after moral

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excellence, – these are our bond of union; and when these shall die out in our hearts, nothing will remain to hold us together; and those who shall come after us will not be subjected to the trouble of tearing down a great ecclesiastical edifice, constructed by our hands, before they can make provision for the supply of their own religious wants.

The name of our Association is suggestive of its history and principles. As a sign of our adherence to the great moral testimonies which the Society of Friends has so long professed, as well as for historical reasons, we have adopted in part the name chosen by Fox, Penn, and other reformers of a past generation, for the Societies which they founded, and which, we regret to say, have in our day widely departed from the spirit and principles of those illustrious men. The term "Progressive" is intended as a recognition of the fact, that our knowledge of truth is limited, and as an indication of an honest purpose on our part to "go on unto perfection," and to avail ourselves from time to time of whatever new light may be shed upon our path.

Our meetings are at present conducted very much like those of the Society of Friends, except that they are not ruled by Elders, and that we have among us no privileged class called Ministers. We welcome alike the word of exhortation, the voice of prayer, and the song of praise and thanksgiving, whichever may well up from the "inner fulness" of the devoted heart; and if at any time words shall be uttered that appear to us to savor not of life but of contention and speculation, while we may feel called upon to speak our own sentiments with freedom, we hope not to be found denying the liberty of speech to others. Some may fear that liberty so unrestricted may lead to disorder and confusion, but we are persuaded that gentleness and forbearance are more potent than official dictation, and that the instinctive sense of right and wrong, in the breast of even a misguided and obtrusive man, will afford the best safeguard of propriety and order in our assemblies.

As a Yearly Meeting, we disclaim all disciplinary authority, whether over individual members or local Associations. We shall, from time to time, declare our sentiments on such subjects as may demand our attention; but they will be armed with no other force than that which our moral influence may impart, or which may belong to the nature of truth when earnestly and honestly spoken. It will be our aim to cherish freedom of thought and speech, on every subject relating to man's highest welfare. In saying this, we have no mental reservations to mock the earnest seeker after truth. We have no thunderbolts to launch at those whose perceptions of truth lead them to different conclusions from those of the majority; no edicts of excommunication to scare the soul from its researches; no sanctimonious scowl to dart at him who carries the torch of free inquiry into the very holy of holies. We know of no question too sacred for examination nor in respect to which human reason should yield to human authority, however ancient or venerable.

Our organization is formed upon such principles, that while the body will not be responsible for the acts of individuals, so, on the other hand, individuals and minorities may avoid responsibility for any acts of the body which they do not approve, by recording their votes against such acts, or, if they



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think the case demands it, by a protest. It will, more-over, be the right of any individual to withdraw from the Association at any moment, without being required to give reasons for so doing, and without being subjected to censure on the part of the meeting.

Believing that local Associations, similar in their principles and aims to ours, would meet the wants of multitudes at the present day, and that they would be likely to accomplish great good, we hope to see such established in every community where a sufficient number of persons are found ready for the work. The men and women who are engaged in the various moral reforms of the day, and who have become weary of the prevalent sectarianism, might, we believe, gain strength for their special labors by establishing regular meetings on the First day of the week, for mutual edification and improvement for an interchange of the sympathies growing out of common pursuits and trials, and for the cultivation of their moral and religious powers. The principle of human fraternity would be thereby strengthened among them, and their children be preserved from many unhealthful influences, and prepared to meet the responsibilities of, life in a spirit becoming to the age in which their lot has been cast

Surely, these are objects worthy of our earnest thought and most careful attention. Our province is not that of iconoclasts alone. We must build as well as destroy. If there are evil institutions to be overthrown and pernicious customs to be uprooted, so also is there need of a new social fabric, of which righteousness and peace are to be the foundations. If there are vices to be done away, so also are there virtues to be promoted; if there are corrupt freedoms to be hewn down and cast into the fire so also are there plants of godliness to be trained, and flowers of heavenly beauty and fragrance to be nurtured. And in this work we must help each other, not occasionally and incidentally alone, but regularly and systematically.

The arrangements for meetings should in every case be adapted to the peculiar wants and tastes of the communities in which they are respectively held, care being taken to keep forms subordinate to works of practical goodness and beneficence. It is neither necessary nor desirable that one meeting should be an exact copy of another. Adhering closely to fundamental principles, there will still be scope for a variety of modes and forms.

The local Associations should do more than hold weekly meetings. They should regard it a sacred duty to provide for the visitation and help of the poor in their respective neighborhoods, to lend their sympathy and encouragement to such as are borne down under heavy trials, and to afford prompt and efficient aid in every right effort for the promotion of Temperance, Peace, Anti-Slavery, Education, the Equal Rights of Woman, &c.; that thus the public may be convinced that the Religion they seek to diffuse and establish is not an aggregation of mysteries, abstractions, and unmeaning forms, but a Religion for practical, every-day use, whose natural tendency is to fructify the conscience, intensify the sense of moral responsibility, purify and ennoble the aims of men, and thus to make society wiser, better, and happier. Such Associations, moreover, ought to



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regard it as their special function to cultivate and develop the religious sentiment among their members, and, so far as possible, in the community generally. For this purpose they would do well to establish libraries, in which the works of eminent anti-sectarian writers upon moral, ethical, and religious subjects might become accessible to all classes, especially to the young.

Such Associations would naturally communicate, by letter or otherwise, with the Yearly Meeting, each giving That body the results of its own peculiar experience, and receiving in return the experiences of others, with such suggestions as the Quarterly Meeting, upon a careful comparison of the whole, may be qualified to make. The various Yearly Meetings may also strengthen one another's hands by fraternal, correspondence and counsel; and thus, without ecclesiastical authority or domination on the part of any, the whole body of believers in practical Christianity throughout the country may be cemented together in Christian love, and prepared to labor in harmony for the redemption of mankind from every evil and false way, and for the establishment of universal righteousness, purity, and peace A Church thus united would wield a moral power like that of the Apostles and immediate followers of Jesus, and the means by which it would conquer the world are those which an Apostle has described:

BY PURENESS, BY KNOWLEDGE, BY LONG-SUFFERING, BY THE
HOLY SPIRIT, BY LOVE UNFEIGNED, BY THE ARMOR OF
RIGHTEOUSNESS ON THE RIGHT HAND AND ON THE LEFT.

Dear Friends! are these ideas of a Church Utopian? Are we dreamers and enthusiasts? or is the day foretold by ancient prophets and bards beginning to dawn upon our darkness and to light the dull horizon with its reviving rays? Are we always to walk amid shadows and shams? Do we not hear the voice of God speaking to us in the deep silence of our souls, and uttering itself in the events that are passing before us, bidding us awake from our slumbers, to cast away our doubts, and purify ourselves for the work of building up a pure Christianity upon the earth Are not the fields every where white unto the harvest? and are there not all around us men and women, whose hearts God hath touched with holy fire, and who stand ready to enlist with us in this glorious cause?

Let us, then, not falter, nor hesitate. What if our numbers are few, and the hosts of superstition and sin stand before us in menacing array? What are their boasts to us, when we know that the truth we promulgate is "a part of the celestial machinery of God," and that, "whoso puts that machinery in gear for mankind hath the Almighty to turn his wheel?"

O, brother man I fold to thy heart thy brother
Where pity dwells, the peace of God is there;
To worship rightly, is to love each other,
Each smile a hymn, each kindly deed a prayer.

Follow with reverent steps the great example
Of Him whoso holy work was 'doing good;'
So shall the wide earth seem our Father's temple,
Each loving life a psalm of gratitude.



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Then shall all shackles fall; the stormy clangor
Of wild war music o'er the earth shall cease;
Love shall tread out the baleful five of anger,
And in its ashes plant the tree of peace.

Signed on behalf and by direction of the Pennsylvania Yearly Meeting of Progressive Friends, held at Old Kennett, Chester County, by adjournments, from the 22d to the 25th of Fifth Month, 1853.

Joseph A. Dugdale,
Sidney Peirce,
Clerks



May 25. Wednesday. Election day. — Rain yesterday afternoon and to-day. Heard the popping of guns last night and this morning, nevertheless.

I quarrel with most botanists' description of different species, say of willows. It is a difference without a distinction. No stress is laid upon the peculiarity of the species in question, and it requires a very careful examination and comparison to detect any difference in the description. Having described you one species, he begins again at the beginning when he comes to the next and describes it *absolutely*, wasting time; in fact does not describe the species, but rather the genus or family; as if, in describing the particular races of men, you should say of each in its turn that it is but dust and to dust it shall return. The object should be to describe not those particulars in which a species resembles its genus, for they are many and that would be but a negative description, but those in which it is peculiar, for they are few and positive.

CRUICKSHANK COMMENTARY

Steady fisherman's rain, without wind, straight down, flooding the ground and spattering on it, beating off the blossoms of apples and thorns, etc. Within the last week or so the grass and leaves have grown many shades darker, and if we had leaped from last Wednesday to this, we should have been startled by the change — the dark bluish green of rank grass especially. How rapidly the young twigs shoot — the herbs, trees, shrubs no sooner leaf out than they shoot forward surprisingly, as if they had acquired a head by being repressed so long. The[y] do not grow nearly so rapidly at any [other] season. Many do most of their growing for the year in a week or two at this season. They shoot — they *spring* — and the rest of the year they harden and mature, and perhaps have a second spring in the latter part of summer or in the fall. The hedge-mustard is just out.

Two young men who borrowed my boat the other day returned from the riverside through [Channing's](#) yard, quietly. It was almost the only way for them. But, as they passed out his gate, C. boorishly walked out his house behind them in his shirt-sleeves, and shut his gate again behind them as if to shut them out. It was just that sort of behavior which, if he had met with it in Italy or France, he would have complained of, whose meanness he would have condemned.

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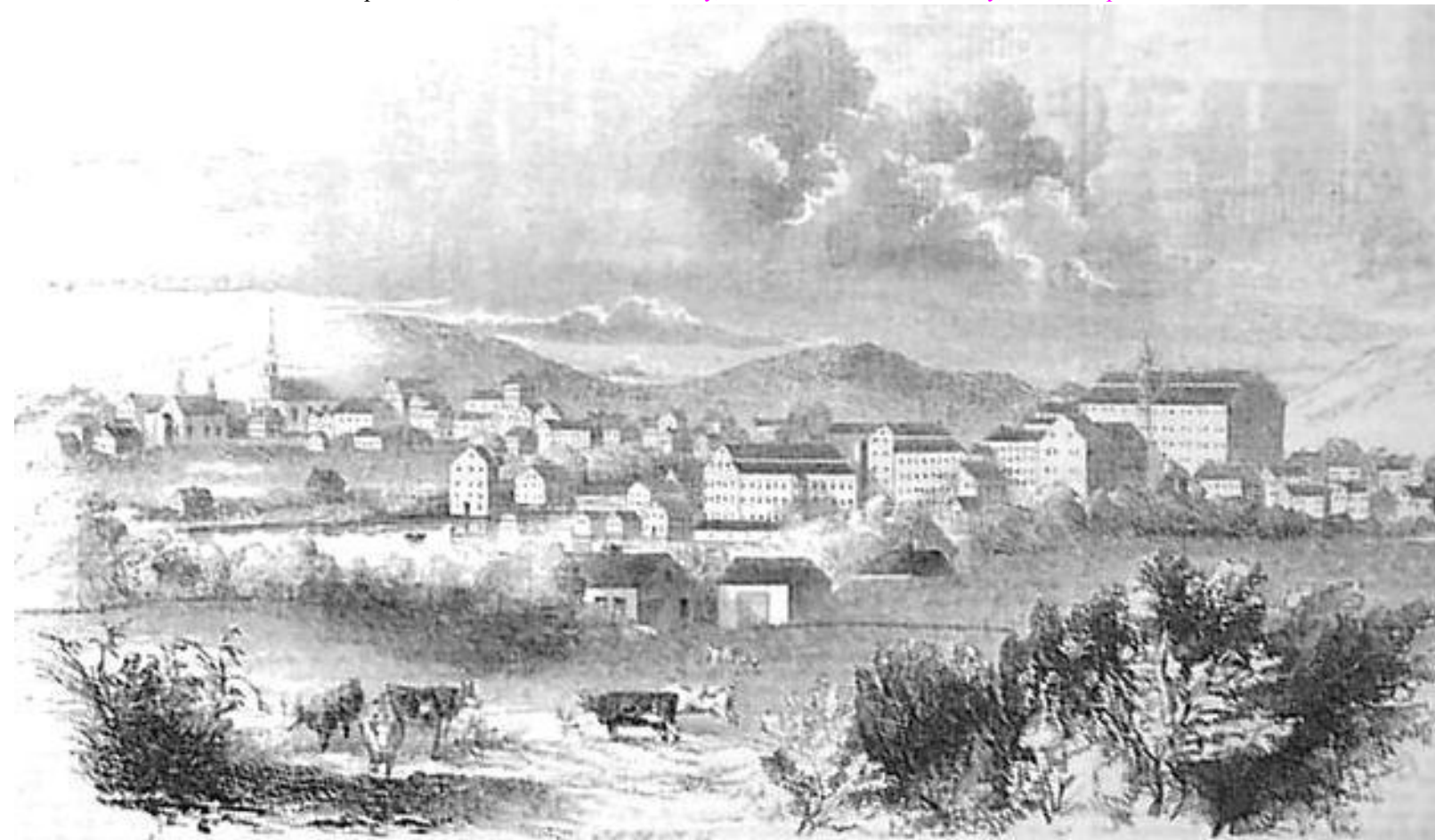


May 26, Thursday, [1853](#): The Senate approved the appointment of [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#) as US consul at the port of Liverpool, England. When he became sure of this income, Hawthorne settled an income of \$200.¹⁰⁹ upon his surviving sister Elizabeth.

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

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

A view was published, of the towns of [Amesbury, Massachusetts](#) and [Salisbury, New Hampshire](#):



May 26. P.M. — To Lee's Cliff.

No breaking away, but the clouds have ceased to drop rain awhile and the birds are very lively. The waters are dark, and our attention is confined to earth. Saw two striped snakes deliberately drop from the stone bank wall into the river at Hubbard's Bridge and remain under water while we looked. Do not perceive the meadow fragrance in this wet weather. A high blueberry bush by roadside beyond

109. Approximately the sum one could obtain in those years by working full time at woman's wages as a seamstress.

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the bridge very full of blossoms. It has the more florid and blossoming effect because the leaves are few and quite distinct, or standing out from the flowers — the countless inverted white mugs (in rows and everywhere as on counters or shelves) with their peculiar green calyxes. If there are as many berries as blossoms we shall fare well.

Now is the time to walk in low, damp maple copses and see the tender, luxuriant foliage that has pushed up, mushroom-like, before the sun has come to harden it — the ferns of various species and in various stages, some now in their most perfect and beautiful condition, completely unfolded, tender and delicate, but perfect in all their details, far more than any lace work — the most elaborate leaf we have. So flat, just from the laundry, as if pressed by some invisible flat-iron in the air. Unfolding with such mathematical precision in the free air, — green, starched and pressed, — might they not be transferred, patterns for [Mechlin and Brussels](#)? Skunk-cabbage, nodding trillium with concealed flowers, sarsaparilla, and arums, *uvularias* in thick-sown regiments now past their prime — a rank growth of these, forming an almost uninterrupted counter of green leaves a foot or two above the damp ground. *Actæa alba* some time. Maidenhair — frames of basins spirally arranged. The pitch pines just out, with crowded bunches of staminate blossoms about the new shoots.

That barberry, bush near the bars on Conantum is methinks now the most beautiful, light, and graceful bush that I ever saw in bloom. It is shaped like a haycock, broad and dense, yet light as if some leaven had raised it. But how orientally beautiful now, seen through this dark mizzling air, its parallel or rather concentric wreaths composed of leaves and flowers keeping each other apart and lightening the whole mass, each wreath above composed of rich dark-green leaves, below of drooping racemes of lively yellow flowers! Its beauty consists in a great measure in this intimate mixture of flowers and leaves, the small rich-colored flowers not being too much massed. It suggests the yellow-robed priests perchance of Thibet (?). The lowest wreaths lie on the ground. But go not so near as to be disturbed by that sickening buttery odor, as of an underdone batter pudding, all eggs but no spice. Who would think this would bake into such a red acid fruit?

Woodchucks seen tumbling into their holes.

The *Galium aparine*, common cleavers, a new one and the earliest, several days out, perhaps, high up at the base of the rocks under Lee's Cliff. In the same place *Turritis stricta*, straight tower-mustard, a slender towering plant with a delicate whitish or purplish-white blossom; not in [Bigelow](#), nor located in New England by [Gray](#). Side-flowering sandwort is abundant, for some time, by wall of Lee's field near Garfield's. The *Cratægus Crus-Galli* is all ready to blossom close by the barberry bush on Conantum. It is distinguished by its leaves, which are wedge-obovate with a short petiole and shining on the upper side, as if varnished and the varnish had soaked in in spots. What is that soft-leaved rubus (?), three-leaved with the odd one wedge-based, now in bloom? I see no thorns on my slip.



May 27, Friday, [1853](#): [Henry C. Wright](#) acknowledged to the readers of [The Liberator](#) that, checking up on his brother Chester who had been claimed by a medium to be dead at a specific time and place of a specific thing, he had discovered that his brother was still quite alive and kicking. There had been “a mistake, somewhere.” However, Wright continued, he still believed in [spiritualism](#) despite your occasional extraneous mistake such as this one. Those who refused to believe in spiritualism, he suggested, were “hunkers,” people who automatically scoffed at any novel idea.



The 26-year-old Irish immigrant James McGuigan arrived in the port of [New Orleans](#) and went directly to its Charity Hospital, telling them that he had been ill for the past 4 days (it would turn out that the immigration vessel he had been aboard had been traveling up the Mississippi River alongside a vessel from the Caribbean, that had evidently been carrying the [yellow fever](#)). Within hours McGuigan became delirious and, early the following morning, brought up a [black vomit](#); by 6 AM he was dead. This would turn out to be the initial fatality in the worst epidemic any American city has ever experienced.



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The clipper ship *Northern Light* arrived in Boston, 76 days and 5 hours out of [San Francisco, California](#).

William Speiden, Jr. reported that the bay waters were so clear he could see “coral on the bottom some twenty five or thirty feet deep.” [Japanese](#) boats came alongside with live provisions, including a bullock, some pigs, sheep, and chickens, but trade was declined until [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) had been given an opportunity to communicate with local [Japanese](#) leadership.

[Frederick Douglass' Paper](#) carried a notice of the Wednesday morning session of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society (excerpted below):

On Wednesday morning, at eight o'clock, an adjourned meeting of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society was held in the lecture room of the Tabernacle. Rev. J. Warner, Williamsburg, presided....

UNCLE TOM'S CABIN.

Dr. McCune Smith then moved the following resolutions: Resolved, That the warm thanks of this meeting to be presented to Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, for writing the inimitably beautiful and truthful story called Uncle Tom's Cabin, and that we rejoice that the Almighty is awakening the finest literary talent of the country to lay their best offerings on the altar of human freedom; and

Resolved, That we earnestly call upon the women of the United States, earnestly and zealously to follow in the glorious path laid out for them by Harriet Beecher Stowe, Grace Greenwood and Lydia M. Child.

Dr. Smith eulogised “Uncle Tom's Cabin,” and said its success—unexampled as it was—proved the depth and the breadth of the anti-slavery feeling in this country. The writer had touched a vein richer than California gold, and would be followed by a host of Grub street imitators. If there was romance in the country, it was in the relations between masters and slaves, and in the mixed relations growing out of them. He then proceeded, at some length, to criticise the critic of the Literary World, who had turned this beautiful story into ridicule, while he puffed a world of fiction, on the other side, without merit or invention.

Mr. Lewis Tappan said Mr. Jewett had sold a thousand copies of the work every day since it was published, or 50,000 copies in eight weeks — a sale that was unparalleled in the whole world. Look at the humble origin of this book. Dr. Baily, one day at my house said, I think I will get Mrs. Stowe to write a story for my paper (for Dr. Baily put stories in his paper, just as parents put pills into preserves for their children.) He wrote her a note, and enclosed a \$100 bill.—She sent him No. 1 of “Uncle Tom,” for the National Era, and said she would finish it in three numbers. She was astonished herself at the way it looked in print. In a month or two he sent her \$200 more, and so went on the tale till she completed the work. Mrs. Stowe is now in Brooklyn, and was here yesterday. She told me that when the fugitive



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slave law came out, her pillow was wet every night, with her tears, and if any book was ever written from the effect of prayer, it was that book. I introduced her last night to Uncle Tom's grandson. She is going to write more, and others are going to rival her. A distinguished gentleman in Massachusetts is writing a tale on the Fugitive Slave Law.

Dr. McCune Smith. - It is suggested by a gentleman here, that it is Daniel Webster. - (Great laughter.)

Mr. Tappan.-Ladies can do much good by writing. For instance, the book of Mrs. Nicholson, on Ireland, was very valuable. The Irish were not blacks, but they had wrongs. I observe the lady is in the room, and congratulate her on this work. Then there is the work of Mrs. Child, in the very title of which there is genius - "An appeal in behalf of Americans called Africans." - President Day, of Yale College, a man of eighty years of age, boasted that he never read a novel, yet he was caught with "Uncle Tom." It is not a fiction, but a narrative of facts in the form of a fiction. A lawyer told me that the escape of Eliza, over the Ohio river, was too extravagant to be true.

Mr. Cook. - It is true; I know the man that helped her over the river.

Mr. Tappan - A lawyer, one of the most distinguished members of the Union Safety Committee, told me that he verily believed that book had broken down their cause.- (Great laughter.) Already an edition is being brought out in Canada, and I have no doubt that it will soon be in half a dozen of the languages of Europe. Now is the time to go out with your agencies, after the seed is sown by this book.

Dr. Thomas Ritter moved that the following be added to the resolution: - "That the publisher be requested to publish a cheap edition for the people, at 37 cents." If he does, I will expend \$25 for copies to this tribute. A gentleman told me that he would spend several hundred dollars in the purchase of copies of a cheap edition, to send to the students of a college.

Mr. Tappan - Send it to the members of Congress.

Mr. Ritter - Copies of it have been sent to the Southern Senators, except Mr. Dawson, who said he would not read it if it were sent to him.

Mr. Tappan - It is rather too much of a good thing to expect the publisher to do this when he is selling a thousand copies per day, at \$1.50. Three paper mills cannot supply the paper fast enough. I am sorry to say that the publisher derives the chief profit from it. He has already made \$25,000; and he will make \$50,000. He made a hard bargain with Mrs. Stowe. She receives fifteen cents upon each copy sold. It has enabled her to purchase a house and a garden for her husband and children. A letter from Dr. Ritter would have as much effect as a resolution by this body. I don't think we ought to interfere between the publisher and the author. Rev. Mr. Ray, (colored,) said the way Mr. Jewett got

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hold of this book was as follows: He took the Era, and his wife read the story. She asked her husband to read it, but he was too busy. When the second number came out she insisted on his writing to Mrs. Stowe for permission to publish the remainder of the story with what had already appeared, in the form of a book. Mr. Jewett did so in obedience to his wife, (laughter) not caring much about the matter himself.

Dr. Ritter withdrew his amendment, and the resolutions were then passed.





May 27. 5.30 A.M. — To Island.

The *Cornus florida* now fairly out, and the involucre is now not greenish-white but white tipped with reddish — like a small flock of white birds passing three and a half inches in diameter, the larger ones, as I find by measuring. It is something quite novel in the tree line. That needle-shaped variety of thorn is now almost *fully* out on Lee's Hill; *i.e.* half the flowers open. Amelanchier berries are as large as small peas. How beautiful the geranium flower-buds just opening! — little purple cylindrical tubes or hoods — cigaritos — with the petals lapped over and round each other. One opens visibly in a pitcher before me. Heard a stake-driver [**American Bittern**  ***Botaurus lentiginosus***] yesterday in the rain. It sounded exactly like a man pumping, while another man struck on the head of the pump with an axe, the last strokes sounding peculiarly dry and hard like a forcible echo from the wood-side. One would think all Concord would be built on piles by this time. Very deliberately they drive, and in the intervals are considering the progress of the pile into the soft mud. They are working by the day. He is early and late at his work, building his stake[?]-house, yet did anybody ever see the pile he had driven? He has come back from his Southern tour to finish that job of spike-driving which he undertook last year. It is heavy work — not to be hurried. Only green hands are overhasty.

A turtle walking is as if a man were to try to walk by sticking his legs and arms merely out the windows.

P.M. — To Saw Mill Brook.

Cleared up last night after two and a half days' rain. This, with the two days' rain the 18th and 19th, makes our May rain -and more rain either of the two than at any other time this spring. Coming out into the sun after this rain, with my thick clothes, I find it unexpectedly and oppressively warm. Yet the heat seems tempered by a certain moisture still lingering in the air. (Methinks I heard a cuckoo [**Black-billed Cuckoo**  ***Coccyzus erythrophthalmus***] yesterday and a quail [**Northern Bobwhite**  ***Colinus virginianus***] (?) to-day.) A new season has commenced — summer — leafy June. The elms begin to droop and are heavy with shade. The buttercups in the churchyard are now in perfection, and it is surprising what a fairyland they make on some hillsides, looking more glossy and bright than ever after the rain. The vireo, too, is heard more than ever on the elms; his note begins to prevail. The broad pads lying on the surface of the ditches on the Turnpike seem to reflect a fierce heat upon the traveller. Yellow clover is out — how long? Hellebore a day or two at Saw Mill Brook-its great spike of green flowers with yellow anthers. Its great plaited leaves look like a green shirt bosom; drawn out smooth they prove to be basins. Was that *Stellaria longifolia* in bloom in the low ground at Saw Mill Brook? The crickets, which I have heard for a week now more and more, as much as anything mark a new season. They are importers of thought into the world — the poor trivial world; wholesale dealers in that article. Blue-eyed grass has been out some time, as I judge by the size of its seed- Vessel. The river does not look blue from Smith's Hill, — nor has it from any point for some time past, — but indistinctly slaty and rippling, as through a mistiness. Is it not getting to be too warm? A gray down or lint comes off of the leaves and shoots, which have grown so rapidly during the warm wet weather, and whitens the clothes with clean dirt. This is the state of the woods — the beardless woods, with downy cheek as yet. Sit in shade nowadays. The bullfrogs lie spread out on the surface of Flint's Pond. Holding down my head, the young rustics begin to look thick and green in the shallow water advancing into the deep.

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8 P.M. — Up Union Turnpike.

The reign of insects commences this warm evening after the rains. They could not come out before. I hear from the pitch pine woods beyond E. Wood's a vast faint hum, as of a factory far enough off to be musical. I can fancy it something ambrosial from starlit mansions, a faint murmuring harp music rising from all groves; and soon insects are felt on the hands and face, and dor-bugs are heard humming by, or entangled in the pines, like winged bullets. I suppose that those dor-bugs which I saw the other day just beginning to stir under the dead leaves have now first issued forth. They never mistake their time. Between the pines here, white and pitch, whose outlines are dimly seen, — the rising grass cool and damp beneath, — they are heard like a thousand bullets. The toads, too, completely fill the air with their dreamy snore; so that I wonder that everybody does not remark upon it and, the first time they hear it, do not rush to the riverside and the pools and capture 'a thousand; but hardly the naturalists know whence the sound proceeds, and nobody else seems to bear it at all. The whole air trembles with it, and hearing has no other pillow but this rippling one. Tree-toads, too, keep up an incessant din from elms (?)—when near, drowning the common toads. The toads gradually ceased after midnight and I heard not one in the morning. They want much muggy warmth.



May 28, Saturday, [1853](#): [Michael Flannery](#) had boarded the *Meridian* headed out of Liverpool and Ireland toward the New World. On this day the *Meridian* arrived at the docks of Boston, Massachusetts and Michael disembarked. It is likely that Michael knew of Concord before he had left Ireland, because he would promptly find his way there to work as a day laborer, farm hand, and woodcutter. According to that ship's papers, "Michael Flannery" had reached the age of 36, but the current Flannery family believes that to be inaccurate because it would have made him 2 to 6 years younger than the recent bride he had left behind in Ireland, [Ann Kelly Flannery](#).

The king of Ryukyu, Sho Tai (1843-1901) was a child at the time. Therefore, it was acting Prince Regent Sho Taimu who made the necessary call on [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) aboard the *USS Susquehanna* as acting regent of Okinawa, as a member of the royal family, and as the hereditary lord of Mabuni Village south of Naha.

[Lysander Spooner](#) had been providing pro bono counsel and advice in escaped-slave cases. In this year, he informed [Gerrit Smith](#), he had sent to [Lewis Tappan](#) some arguments to use in the case of Jane Trainer (abolitionists in New York were hoping to save this minor from enslavement by arguing that since all God's children are born free, it is logically preposterous that she had inherited a status such as slavery from the social predicament of her mother).

TAPPAN FAMILY

Sheppard's Asylum, an early private mental hospital, was founded on this day by Moses Sheppard and others. Actual construction of a facility for this institution outside [Baltimore](#) would be delayed, however, by lack of



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funding and then by the outbreak of civil war although a groundbreaking would take place on May 25, 1862. In 1898 the name would be changed to recognize a major benefactor, to the Sheppard and [Enoch Pratt](#) Hospital.¹¹⁰

[PSYCHOLOGY](#)

In [San Francisco](#), the members of Columbian Engine Co. No. 11 celebrated the arrival of their very new and very decorative fire engine.

The Placer, [California Herald](#) reported that an immense flat along the banks of the North Fork of the American River, at Rattlesnake Bar, had been completely “coyote” holed with gold diggings, with gold being discovered extensively from the surface to a depth of 40 feet. Meanwhile the [Daily Union](#) was theorizing about where all such surface lumps and grains of gold must have originated:

It is conceded that the gold found in the beds of rivers, ravines and placer diggings was once embedded in quartz, from which it was liberated by the action of the elements through countless ages, and deposited where it is now found. If this hypothesis be correct, what an incalculable quantity of gold must be still locked up on the gold bearing quartz leads known to exist in this State. In all countries in which gold mining has been pursued, for a century, it has been from mines where the leads were followed deep into the earth, and the same vein worked time out of mind. Surface diggings, whatever they may prove in California and Australia, have heretofore been exhausted within the century in which they were discovered.

110. Street, W.R. A CHRONOLOGY OF NOTEWORTHY EVENTS IN AMERICAN [PSYCHOLOGY](#). Washington DC: American Psychological Association, 1994

[Lucy Stone](#), the 1st woman from Massachusetts to complete a BA degree, was pioneering the Bloomer costume, a costume we have lost the ability to recognize as daring and defiant and impious:



LUCY STONE.—FROM A DRAWING BY BRADY.

At about this point, in late May, [Henry Thoreau](#) was studying [Henry Mayhew's](#) 1851 [LONDON LABOUR AND THE LONDON POOR](#).



May 28. A rose in a garden.
 5 P.M. —To Lupine Hill by boat.
 The carnival of the year commencing — a warm, moist, hazy air, the water already smooth and

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uncommonly high, the river overflowing, and yellow lilies all drowned, their stems not long; enough to reach the surface. I see [lee boat-club, or three or four in pink shirts, rowing at a distance. Beech-drops out apparently some days, the old bridge landing at Nawshawtuct; also just out green-briar. Already the ringing croak of a toad begins to be heard here and there along the river, and the *troonk* of a bullfrog from time to time. What is peculiar now, beginning yesterday, after rains, is the sudden heat, and the more general sound of insects by day, and the loud ringing croak of common toads and tree-toads at evening and in the night. Our river has so little current that when the wind has gone down, as at present, it is dark and perfectly smooth, and at present dusty as a stagnant pool in every part of it; far from there being any murmur, there is no ripple nor eddy for the most part. Hubbard has plowed up the low-lying field at the bathing-place and planted it with potatoes; and now we find that the field we resort to was equally used by the Indians, for their arrowheads are now exposed by the plow. The sidesaddle-flower conspicuous, but no pollen yet. The bulbous arethusa out a day or two - probably yesterday. Thought in a measure prepared for it, still its beauty surprised me; it is by far the highest and richest color yet. Its intense color in the midst of the green meadow made it look twice as large as reality; it looks very foreign in the midst of our plants -its richly speckled, curled, and bearded lip. Devil's-needles begin to fly; saw one the 14th. Thesium just out. This hazy afternoon the sun is shorn of his beams now at six o'clock, and the lupines do not look so well for it; their lilac tints show best looking at them towards the sun, for they are transparent. Last night in the dark they were all a pale, whitish color like the moon by day — a mere dull luminousness, as if they reflected light absorbed by day. Seen from this point now, the pitch pines on Bear Garden Hill, the fresh green foliage of the deciduous trees now so prevails, the pitch pines, which lately looked green, are of a dark-brownish or mulberry color by contrast, and the white pines almost as dark, but bluer. In this haziness no doubt they are a *little* darker than usual. The grass on pretty high ground is wet with dew an hour before sunset. Whiteweed now, and cotton-grass. For three quarters of an hour the sun is a great round red ball in the west, reflected in the water; at first a scarlet, but as it descends growing more purple and crimson and larger, with a blue bar of a cloud across it; still reflected in the water, two suns, one above the other, below the hilly bank; as if it were a round hole in the cope of heaven, through which we looked into a crimson atmosphere. If such scenes were painted faithfully they would be pronounced unnatural. It is remarkable at how little distance a hillside covered with lupines looks blue, while a house or board painted blue is seen so great a distance. A sprig of wilted fir now grown an inch emits that rich fragrance somewhat like strawberries and pineapples, yet peculiar.

[Mayhew](#), in his "[London Labour and London Poor](#)," treating of the costermongers, or those who get their living in the streets of London, speaks of "the muscular irritability begotten by continued wandering," making one "unable to rest for any time in one place." Mentions the instance of a girl who had been accustomed to sell sprats in the streets, who having been taken into a gentleman's house out of charity, "the pressure of shoes was intolerable to her." "But no sooner did she hear from her friends, that sprats were again in the market, than as if there were some magical influence in the fish, she at once requested to be freed from the confinement, and permitted to return to her old calling." I am perhaps equally accustomed to a roaming field-life, experience a good deal of that muscular irritability, and have a good many friends who let me know when sprats arc in the market.

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May 29, Sunday, 1853: Henry Thoreau for the 7th time (Dr. Bradley P. Dean has noticed) deployed in his journal a weather term that had been originated by Luke Howard: “These are afternoons when you expect a thunder shower before night –the outlines of cloudy cumuli are dimly seen through the hazy furnace like air rising in the west–”

The 1,021-ton 180x36-foot clipper ship *Northern Light* with Captain Freeman Hatch of Eastham, Massachusetts at the helm beat the previous San Francisco-Cape-Horn-Boston speed records of 85 days for the *Flying Dutchman* and 84 days for the *Comet*. The vessel had been in competition with the clipper *Contest* bound for New-York. The *Contest* had departed San Francisco for New-York on March 12th whereas the *Northern Light* had departed San Francisco for Boston on the 13th, but on the 38th day of sailing the *Northern Light* overtook the *Contest* off Cape Horn. The Boston Post of course pointed out that to accomplish this record-setting 76 days and 6 hours the vessel had been traveling entirely without cargo.


The Daily Alta California of San Francisco passed along from the Placerville Herald the good news of a rich recent discovery in a swampy spot on the bank of the South Yuba River:

RICH DISCOVERY. — We learn from Mr. Weber the enterprising county assessor, that new diggings have been discovered in a flat between Washington and Jefferson, on South Yuba, on Tuesday, the 17th three men took out with a tom \$530 on Wednesday they washed from one half pan \$183. Our informant passed about noon and their morning work amounted to \$440.75. This party of men had worked about 5 days on the spot. Some six or 8 other companies are at work and all who have been at work a few days, so as to get in, are averaging about \$20 to the hand. The place contains about 4 acres and rises very gradually from the river. The gold lies in crevices and is quite coarse, the largest piece taken out weighing \$30 The party had made a cut in the bank from the river among the rocks to drain their claims, which at the point when so much gold was discovered, was about six feet deep to the crevice.



May 29: These last two days, with their sultry, hazy air, are the first that suggest the expression “the furnace-like heat.” Bathing has begun. In the evening and during the night the ring of the toads fills the air, so that some have to shut the windows toward the river, but when you awake in the morning one is to be heard. As it grows warmer in noon I hear a few again; but still I do them numerous and loudly as earlier in the that hour, though far more numerous and night.

P.M. —To Hosmer’s Holden place.

Thimble-berry two or three days. Cattle stand in the river by the bridge for coolness. Place my hat lightly on my head that the air may circulate beneath. Wild roses budded before you know it-will be out often before you know they are budded. Fields are whitened with mouse-ear gone to seed — a mass of white fuzz blowing off one side-and also with dandelion globes of seeds. Some plants have already reached their fall. How still the hot noon; people have retired behind blinds. Yet the kingbird [Eastern Kingbird  *Tyrannus tyrannus*] –lively bird, with belly and tail edged with white, and with its lively twittering– stirs and keeps the air brisk. I see men and women through open windows in white undress taking their Sunday-afternoon nap, overcome with heat. At A. Hosmer’s hill on the Union Turnpike I see the tanager hoarsely warbling in the shade; the surprising red bird, a small morsel of Brazil, advanced picket of that Brazilian army, — parrot-like. But no more shall we see; it is only an affair of outposts. It appears as if he loved to contrast himself with the green of the forest. These are afternoons when you expect a thunder-shower before night; the outlines of cloudy cumuli are dimly seen through the hazy, furnace-like air rising in the west. *Spergularia rubra*, spurry sandwort, in the roadside ditch on left just beyond A. Hosmer’s hill; also *Veronica peregrina* (?) a good while. The last also in Great Fields in the path.

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Raspberry out. That exceedingly neat and interesting little flower blue-eyed grass now claims our attention. The barrenest pastures wear now a green and luxuriant aspect. I see many of those round, white, pigeon-egg fungi in the grass since the rains. Do they become puffballs? The thyme-leaved veronica shows its modest face in little crescent-shaped regiments in every little hollow in the pastures where there is moisture, and around stumps and in the road ditches. The *Crataegus Crus-Galli* this side the Holden place on left, probably yesterday, thorns three inches long, flowers with anthers not conspicuously red. The *Viola debilis* near west end of Holden farm in meadow south side of road.



May 30, Monday, 1853: Father [Isaac Hecker](#), CSSR wrote to [Orestes Augustus Brownson](#), Esq.



[Dr. Elisha Kent Kane](#) made a final call to assure his fiancée [Maggie Fox](#) that all would be well, in preparation for sailing for the Arctic on the following day. He asked Cornelius Grinnell to act as Maggie's guardian during his absence, keeping her supplied her with funds and information about the expedition. In a final letter written as he left Newfoundland, Kane would imagine his beloved under the shade of a drooping chestnut, startling the birds with her "tokens of the spirit-world." He advised her to study German and asked that she "write naughty letters" to him in that "noble language." He promised to be true to his promises and asked her only to "exercise often, laugh when you can, grow as fat as you please; and when I return-God granting me that distant blessing-... let me have at least the rewarding consciousness of having done my duty."

Le Repos de la Sainte Famille from La fuite en Egypte for chorus and orchestra by Hector Berlioz to his own words was performed for the initial time, in London.

American stores barque *USS Caprice* arrived in Japanese waters from [Hong Kong](#) and resupplied the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Susquehanna* with cargo, coal, and bread.

In the afternoon [Henry Thoreau](#) sailed downriver with [Ellery Channing](#) to Carlyle Bridge and back upriver in a stiff breeze, making remarkably good time:



May 30. The morning wind forever blows; the poem of the world is uninterrupted, but few are the ears that hear it. Forever that strain of the harp which soothed the Cerberus and called me back to life is sounding. Olympus is the outside of the earth everywhere.

5 A.M. — To Cliffs.

High blackberry out. As I go by [Hayden](#)'s in the still cool morning, the farmer's door is open — probably his cattle have been attended to — and the odor of the bacon which is being fried for his breakfast fills the air. The dog lies with his paws hanging over the door-sill this agreeably cool morning. The cistus out, probably yesterday, — a simple and delicate flower, its stamens all swept to one side. It upholds a delicate saffron-golden (?) basin about nine inches from the ground.

As I look off from Fair Haven I perceive that that downy, silvery hoariness has mostly left the leaves (it now comes off on to the clothes), and they are of a uniform smooth light green, while the pines are a dirty dark brown, almost purple, and are mostly merged and lost in the deciduous trees. The *Erigeron bellidifolius* is a tender-looking, pale-purple, aster-like flower a foot high in little squads, nodding in the wind on the bare slopes of hill pastures. Young bush-like black cherries a day or two, on Cliffs and in such favorable places. The hylodes were about done peeping before those last few warm days, — when the toads began in earnest in the river, — but last night being somewhat cooler they were not so loud.

P.M. — To Carlisle Bridge by boat.



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A strong but somewhat gusty southerly wind, before which [C.](#) and I sailed all the way from home to Carlisle Bridge in not far from an hour; the river unusually high for the season. Very pleasant to feel the strong, fresh southerly wind from over the water. There are no clouds in the sky, but a high haziness, as if the moisture drawn up by yesterday's heat was condensed by to-day's comparative coolness. The water a dull slate-color and waves running high, — a dirty yellow where they break, — and long streaks of white foam, six or eight feet apart, stretching north and south between Concord and Bedford, — without end. The common blue flag just out at Ball's Hill. The white maples, especially those shaped like large bushes, on the banks are now full of foliage, showing the white under sides of the leaves in the wind, and the swamp white oak, having similar silvery under sides to its leaves, and both growing abundantly and prevailing here along the river, make or impart a peculiar flashing light to the scenery in windy weather, all bright, flashing, and cheerful. On the meadows are large yellow-green patches of ferns beginning to prevail. Passed a large boat anchored off in the meadows not far from the boundary of Concord. It was quite a piece of ocean scenery, we saw it so long before reaching it and so long after; and it looked larger than reality, what with the roaring of the wind in our shrouds and the dashing of the waves. The incessant drifting about of a boat so anchored by a long cable, playing with its halter, now showing more, now less, of its side, is a pleasing sight. Landed at a high lupine bank by Carlisle Bridge. How many such lupine banks there are! — whose blue you detect many rods off. There I found, methinks, minute *Specularia perfoliata*, with small crenate clasping leaves alternate at some distance apart, on upright stems about three inches high, but apparently *fruiting in the bud*. Also the *Silene antirrhina* very abundant there. The *Viola palmata*, which is later, and therefore, methinks, fresher than most, is now quite prevalent, one of the most common, in fact, in low ground and a very handsome purple, with more red than usual in its violet. The pines now clotted with white shoots, the pitch pines a little reddish, are an interesting sight now. Whence came all those dead slackers, a dozen at least, which we saw floating to-day, some on their sides, transversely barred, some on their backs with their white bellies up and dark fins on each side? Why are they suckers only that we see? Can it be because the spearers have thrown them away? Or has some bird of prey dropped them? I rarely see other fish floating. 1) Melvin gave George Brooks some pink azaleas yesterday, said to have grown in the north part of the town. The white maple keys falling and covering the river.



May 31, Tuesday, [1853](#): [Dr. Elisha Kent Kane](#) sailed aboard the *Advance* with the 2d Grinnell expedition from New-York harbor (they would winter in Rensselaer Bay).

The British vessel *Sea* was driven ashore and wrecked near Port Phillip, Victoria with the loss of 17 of the 26 on board, and in addition of a rescuer.

Some Americans went ashore and some [Japanese](#) visited the side-wheel steam frigate *USS Susquehanna*, bringing fish.

The [Daily Alta California](#) of [San Francisco](#) pontificated about the gold rush:

The desire of becoming suddenly rich has probably been the cause of more evil to California than to any other country in the world. People have not, at a general thing, come here to stay, but to get a certain amount of gold and then leave. They have not been willing to wait long enough to take things to advantage, but as soon as they set foot on our shores they have dashed to anything that offered itself, little regarding consequences. Hence we see so many, who have been here for a long time, and in many instances men of good sense, have succeeded but poorly from the fact that in the race for wealth they were in too much haste to make speed. Every one who has been here for a year or

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two can see how he might have made a fortune had he used more deliberation and waited for the auspicious moment. But people would not do that, and they have either in many instances spent their time in building air-castles and chasing *ignis fatuus*, till they find, after a long and laborious time, they have little to show for their toil. In the meanwhile, those who have been more deliberate, and, Mahomet-like, preferred to have the mountain come to them, rather than go themselves to the mountain, have, at a general thing, been far more successful. We may notice that when a man has settled down in some advantageous spot and begun in a small way, by raising vegetables, poultry and pigs, he has almost invariably become rich in the world. So it has been with the rancho. If he has used judgment and discrimination in his location, he has accumulated property in spite of himself. Since this is the case, it seems unaccountable that people will not learn to take things to greater advantage in California, and settle down more quiet and contented. There need not be this over-anxiety about wealth, and there ought not to be, for it defeats itself. The tortoise is more like to win the race here than the hare, and we look to a recognition of this idea at being calculated to be of great service to the State and give as a more contented and permanent population.

But the folly of this over eagerness for wealth is better illustrated in the mines than in any other part of the country. There it is the practice for them to get at much as possible to-day – to work when that evening's tale shall show the most dust, not heeding whether or no the work must all be done over again. Men do not work in the way they would elsewhere, and as they would here if they had a better title to the grounds, and everybody was not actuated by the desire to get what he can in a short time and leave. What stupid folly has been manifested in the kind of methods used for washing the gold. For a long time the cradle and pan were the only instruments employed. People could see then, at well as now, that this was a laborious method of washing dirt, but they had no time to stop for experiments: no time for improvements; and so they worked on with such means as were most convenient. If they stopped a day to make improved machine, it was lost time; for that night would show no addition to the bag. Hence the first digging consisted in coyoting and tracing out rich leads and the narrow beds of gulches, leaving the great burden of the dirt to be washed afterward. How often do the same miners wash the same dirt several times! They begin, and finding how much they can take by washing out the best part of a bar or gulch, they leave those parts that pay least until they work out the richest part, thinking to find smother as rich place elsewhere. But they are often disappointed, and go to work on the bar again, and wash over the old tailings to get them out of the way, and then they go deeper in the bars and banks. In fact, we do not believe the history of the world hardly shows a parallel to the useless labor that has been performed in the California mines. We have been led into these remarks by reading the following extract from the Sonora Herald:

We must not forget to mention here the Union Water Company, which supplies Murphy's, Douglass' Flat, Angel's, and other localities with water brought from



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the North Branch of the Stanislaus. The canal of this company is a successful operation; and we saw, both at Murphy's and Douglass', that the miners have as large a supply of the element as they need. The enterprise of this company is meeting with a fine reward, their daily receipt being, we are informed, about seven or eight hundred dollars. There are but twenty shareholders. One of their improvements and sources of revenue is worthy of note. It is a large sluice or flume, about half a mile long, which is laid at the foot of the hill which we have already spoken of, and which receives all the water and tailings which pass from the hundred sluices of the miners along its line. It was constructed at the solicitation of the miners on the Flat, whose claims were previously being flooded by the water used by those on the hill-side, and now not only prevents a recurrence of the injury, but is the source of a handsome revenue to the company. One man employed by the company is engaged at the end of this great sluice, in re-washing the tailings which have passed through it, which sometimes yield several pounds of fine gold in a day. This in the first time that we have heard of tailings being tried on so extensive a scale, and the success of the enterprise in this instance renders it well worthy of imitation.

This extract goes to prove the truth of what we have before expressed, that there is an immense amount of gold existing in the ground in the form of an impalpable powder, and too fine to save by any process yet discovered. The sluice is doubtless a great improvement on anything which has preceded it, but even that does not save it all. The rocker and the tom have been in a great measure discarded, because of the waste of gold; but yet people have been extremely slow to find out what was for their interest. Men used the rocker and the tom for a long time when they might have used the sluice to far better advantage, but they had not time to look into the matter and learn that every day they were wasting money by the course they were pursuing. They could not think of going to the expense of such a thing as a long sluice, for they did not intend to stop in the country but a short time— only long enough to get a "pile," and then they would bid good-bye to California. So they worked on in the shiftless way they did, in many instances losing more gold than they saved.

We have seen all these acts of folly, and though there have been great improvements made in the method of washing gold, there is no doubt that there is great room for farther improvement. The sluice, if made long enough and of the right pitch, with plenty of clear water, will save all the gold but the finest, yet we have known a trough of quicksilver at the end of such a sluice to catch, day after day, from an ounce and a half to two ounces of gold daily. Yet for all this evidence so direct and indisputable, the most of the sluices around had no such appendage as a few pounds of quicksilver! Are we not right in saying the history of the world does not show a parallel for useless labor to be met with in the mines of California. These tailings will of course sooner or later all be worked over again,

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but a tithe of the labor and expense, if employed at first in doing the work thoroughly, would have rendered this labor unnecessary. The idea has been to get the most possible to-day, and so long as the present scrambling system obtains, men will not give the subject of economising the thought and attention which the subject is entitled to. Repeated instances have come to our knowledge when the amount of gold saved has been doubled by a little alteration or improvement made in the ripple-box or in the construction of the sluice, and we hope to see more attention given to this subject, and trust that whenever any advancement is made, the public may be informed of it. The attention of all practical miners is asked to the consideration of the matter, and any suggestions or observations on a question of so much importance, are earnestly solicited.

A CALIFORNIA POLITICIAN IN A SCRAPE. — We learn from the *Shasta Courier* of Saturday, that one Col. Harper, at one time a prominent politician in the northern part of the State, and a contestant for a seat in the Senate, robbed an old lady of \$1,800 on Wednesday. They were passengers together in a stage coach, and the honorable politician abstracted the money from her carpetbag. He was lodged in Hamilton jail.



May 31. Some incidents in my life have seemed far more allegorical than actual; they were so significant that they plainly served no other use. That is, I have been more impressed by their allegorical significance and fitness; they have been like myths or passages in a myth, rather than mere incidents or history which have to wait to become significant. Quite in harmony with my subjective philosophy. This, for instance: that, when I thought I knew the flowers so well, the beautiful purple azalea or pinxter-flower should be shown me by the hunter who found it. Such facts are lifted quite above the level of the actual. They are all just such events as my imagination prepares me for, no matter how incredible. Perfectly in keeping with my life and characteristic. Ever and anon something will occur which my philosophy has not dreamed of. The limits of the actual are set some thoughts further off. That which had seemed a rigid wall of vast thickness unexpectedly proves a thin and undulating drapery. The boundaries of the actual are no more fixed and rigid than the elasticity of our imaginations. The fact that a rare and beautiful flower which we never saw, perhaps never heard [of], for which therefore there was no place in our thoughts, may at length be found in our immediate neighborhood, is very suggestive.

P.M. — A change in the weather. It is comparatively cool since last night, and the air is very clear accordingly; none of that haze in it occasioned by the late heat. Yesterday was another very windy day, making the sixth, I believe, of this May, the 23d having been the last. The leaves are now fairly expanded — that has been the work of May — and are of a dark summer greenness. Some have even begun to cut the rankest grass in front yards. May has been, on the whole, a pleasant month, with a few days of gentle rain-storm, — fishermen's rains, — straight down and spattering on the earth, — and the last week quite warm, even somewhat sultry arid summer-like. The bulk of the planting has been done this month, and there have been half a dozen days of strong breezy and gusty, but not cold, winds, — northwest and then southwest and south. It is surprising to see how many leaves are already attacked by insects, — leafrollers, pincushion galls, one kind of oak-balls, etc., etc.; and many a shrub and tree, black cherry and shrub oak, is no sooner leaved out than it is completely stripped by its caterpillar foes.

I am going in search of the *Azalea nudiflora*. [Sophia](#) brought home a single flower without twig or leaf from [Mrs. Brooks](#)'s last evening. Mrs. Brooks. I find, has a large twig in a vase of water, still pretty fresh, which she says [George Melvin](#) gave to her son [George](#). I called at his office. He says that Melvin came in to [Mr. Gourgas](#)'s office, where he and others were sitting Saturday evening, with his arms full and gave each a sprig, but he does n't know where he got it. Somebody, I heard, had

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seen it at [Captain Jarvis](#)'s; so I went there. I found that they had some still pretty fresh in the house. Melvin gave it to them Saturday night, but they did not know where he got it. A young man working at [Stedman Buttrick](#)'s said it was a. secret; there was only one bush in the town; Melvin knew of it and Stedman knew; when asked, Melvin said he got it in the swamp, or from a bush, etc. The young man thought it grew on the Island across the river on the [Wheeler](#) farm. I went on to Melvin's house, though I did not expect to find him at home at this hour, so early in the afternoon. (Saw the wood sorrel out, a day or two perhaps, by the way.) At length I saw his dog by the door, and knew he was at home. He was sitting in the shade, bareheaded, at his back door. He had a large pailful of the azalea recently plucked and in the shade behind his house, which he said he was going to carry to town at evening. He had also a sprig set out. He had been out all the forenoon and said he had got seven pickerel, — perhaps ten [?]. Apparently he had been drinking and was just getting over it. At first he was a little shy about telling me where the azalea grew, but I saw that I should get it out of him. He dilly-dallied a little; called to his neighbor [Farmer](#), whom he called "Razor," to know if he could tell me where that flower grew. He called it, by the way, the "red honeysuckle." This was to prolong the time and make the most of his secret. I felt pretty sure the plant was to be found on [Wheeler](#)'s land beyond the river, as the young man had said, for I had remembered how, some weeks before this, when I went up the Assabet after the yellow rocket, I saw [Melvin](#), who had just crossed with his dog, and when I landed to pluck the rocket he appeared out of the woods, said he was after a fish-pole, and asked me the name of my flower. Did n't think it was very handsome, — "not so handsome as the honeysuckle, is it?" And now I knew it was his "red honeysuckle," and not the columbine, he meant. Well, I told him he had better tell me where it was; I was a botanist and ought to know. But he thought I couldn't possibly find it by his directions. I told him he'd better tell me and have the glory of it, for I should surely find it if he did n't; I'd got a clue to it, and should n't give it up. I should go over the river for it. I could smell it a good way, you know. He thought I could smell it half a mile, and he wondered that I had n't stumbled on it, or [Channing](#). Channing, he said, came close by it once, when it was in flower. He thought he'd surely find it then; but he did n't, and he said nothing to him. He told me he found it about ten years ago, and he went to it every year. It blossomed at the old election time, and he thought it "the handsomest flower that grows." Yarrow just out.

In the meanwhile, [Farmer](#), who was hoeing, came up to the wall, and we fell into a talk about Dodge's Brook, which runs through his farm. A man in Cambridge, he said, had recently written to [Mr. Monroe](#) about it, but he did n't know why. All he knew about the brook was that he had seen it dry and then again, after a week of dry weather in which no rain fell, it would be full again, and either the writer or [Monroe](#) said there were only two such brooks in all North America. One of its sources — he thought the principal one was in his land. We all went to it. It was in a meadow, — rather a dry one, once a swamp. He said it never ceased to flow at the head now, since he dug it out, and never froze there. He ran a pole down eight or nine feet into the mud to show me the depth. He had minnows there in a large deep pool, and cast an insect into the water, which they presently rose to and swallowed. Fifteen years ago he dug it out nine feet deep and found spruce logs as big as his leg, which the beavers had gnawed, with the marks of their teeth very distinct upon them; but they soon crumbled away on coming to the air. [Melvin](#), meanwhile, was telling me of a pair of geese [[Canada Goose](#) [Branta canadensis](#)] he had seen which were breeding in the Bedford Swamp. He had seen them within a day. Last year he got a large brood (11?) of black ducks there.

We went on down the brook, — [Melvin](#) and I and his dog, — and crossed the river in his boat, and he conducted me to where the *Azalea nudiflora* grew, — it was a little past its prime, perhaps, — and showed me how near [Channing](#) came. ("You won't tell him what I said; will You?" said he.) I offered to pay him for his trouble, but he wouldn't take anything. He had just as lief I'd know as not. He thought it first came out last Wednesday, on the 25th.

Azalea nudiflora, — purple azalea, pinxter-flower, — but [Gray](#) and [Bigelow](#) say nothing about its clamminess. It is a conspicuously beautiful flowering shrub, with the sweet fragrance of the common swamp-pink, but the flowers are larger and, in this case, a fine lively rosy pink, not so clammy as the other, and, being earlier, it is free from the insects which often infest and spoil the first, though I find a very few little flies on them. With a broader, somewhat downy pale-green leaf. Growing in the shade of large wood, like the laurel. The flowers, being in naked umbels, are so much the more conspicuous. (The *Viola debilis* by the brook, near the azalea.) It is a flower with the fragrance of the swamp[-pink], without its extreme *clamminess* and consequent insects, and with a high and beautiful color and larger segments to the corolla, with very much exerted stamens and pistil. Eaton says the




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nudiflora is “not viscous;” names half a dozen varieties and among them *A. partita* (flesh-colored flowers, 5-parted to the base), but then this is viscous. And it cannot be his species *A. nitida*, with glabrous and shining and small leaves. It must be an undescribed variety — a viscous one — of *A. nudiflora*.

[Melvin](#) says the gray squirrel nests are made of leaves, the red squirrel of pine stuff. Jarvis tells me that [Stedman Buttrick](#) once hired [Melvin](#) to work for him on condition that he should not take his gun into the field, but he had known him to do so when Buttrick was away and earn two or three dollars with his game beside his day’s work, but of course the last was neglected. There is a little danger of a frost to-night.

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 June [1853](#): During this year [cholera](#) was killing 4,737 in Copenhagen, Denmark, and during this month it killed 1,865 on the island of St. Thomas in the Danish West Indies.


 June [1853](#): Lawrence Kip entered the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

 June [1853](#): This month’s issue of [Harper’s New Monthly Magazine](#) (we have reason to infer that Henry Thoreau was a reader of [Harper’s New Monthly Magazine](#) during this timeframe).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE

This month’s issue of [Putnam’s Monthly Magazine of American Literature, Science, and Art](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE

 June [1853](#): At this point a 10th British edition of [Robert Chambers](#)’s anonymous 1844 VESTIGES OF THE NATURAL HISTORY OF CREATION was necessary. There was something inordinately attractive about this anonymous author’s scientific theorizing. For an example, consider that in speaking of the assumption “that the human race is one,” the author was offering after a general analysis that:

The Negro alone is here unaccounted for; and of that race it may fairly be said, that it is the one most likely to have an independent origin, seeing that it is a type so peculiar in an inveterate black colour, and so mean in development. But it is not necessary to presume such an origin for it, as much good argument might be employed to shew that it is only a deteriorated offshoot of the general stock.

Please bear in mind that the above racist sentiment is **not** the reason why the book needed to be an entirely anonymous one! The above racist sentiment is **not** the reason why all communications with the publisher needed to be conducted by the use of a prearranged code, with prior agreement that all business communications would be immediately burned! The above racist sentiment was **not** the reason why all manuscripts needed to be copied into a hand other than the author’s hand, to ensure total anonymity, before conveyal to the publisher for typesetting! No, not at all. The above racist sentiment was considered



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at the time to be entirely innocuous.

The reason for all this intense secrecy was that the book was sensitive for other — for religious reasons.

The Reverend T. Binney invited the Reverend [Samuel Ringgold Ward](#) to go with him in his carriage to the annual examination and dinner at the Grammar School at Mill Hill. Charles Hindley, Esq., M.P., gave a toast upon civil and religious liberty and introduced the Reverend Ward, offering him an opportunity to deliver some remarks upon that important topic. Part of getting his feet on the ground in England, however, was the black Reverend coming to understand that among these wonderful people, there yet remained a significant number of race enemies:

On a former page I spoke of "pro-slavery men in England, whether natives or exotics." There is no use in concealing that there are such, of both classes. The latter do not always choose to be called pro-slavery men; but that is their position, nevertheless. For example: the Rev. Dr. Cox would like, in England, to pass for the friend of the slave; but at home he is a justifier of slavery. The Rev. Dr. Baird can lecture eloquently about the oppressions the Hungarians suffer at the hands of the Austrians: his lips are sealed, his tongue is dumb, on the oppressions of American slavery. The Rev. Dr. Anderson can inveigh against "Englishmen's singling out slavery for rebuke, passing by other sins:" at home, he has yet to treat it as a sin, for the first time. The Rev. S.J. Prime, D.D., likes well enough to be seen among British abolitionists, but he scorns the company and the principles of Christian abolitionists at home. His paper, "The New York Observer," with which I have been acquainted, more or less, for twenty years, is, without exception, the most persevering pro-slavery paper in the country in which it is published.¹¹¹

Such gentlemen, I repeat, come to this country anxious enough to have an antislavery reputation here; when, like the Rev. Dr. Chickering, of Portland, Maine, they have no antislavery character at home. This is certainly the most dangerous, and perhaps the most numerous, class of exotic pro-slavery men. I did not meet any of them personally, but I had the pleasure of seeing them writhe under the earnest, loving, anti-slavery passages in the speech of the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Wriothsley Noel, at Exeter Hall; and I saw how they looked while the Rev. Thomas Binney, upon the same occasion (the anniversary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, to which the Bishop of Ohio and the Rev. Dr. De Witt, both pro-slavery, were American delegates), poured upon them his huge pity for being "unable" to give the Bible to the slaves: and, as I travelled about, I could every now and then hear of their pro-slavery deliverances. Still they never came out in the face of day and avowed themselves what they are proved to be at home — the friends of slavery, the enemies of anti-slavery, the revilers of the Negro, the supporters of the Fugitive Law.

At times, however, in private circles, one would meet a Spanish slaveholder, or a person who had been a slaveholder in the British West Indies, who would utter, in a very quiet way, denials of anti-slavery truth. I will give a few instances of

111. I cannot except even "Bennett's Herald," or "Webb's Courier and Inquirer"; no, not even the "Journal of Commerce."

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what I mean by native pro-slavery men, and by exotics. Among the former are such Englishmen as the editors of the London "Times," who did their utmost to write down "Uncle Tom's Cabin" — who ridicule and misrepresent the Negro — and, when respectfully asked to publish a dozen lines in their defence, contemptuously refuse to do so. Among such, also, is a lawyer of London, who, when hearing of a movement for the education of Negroes in the West Indies, wrote a pamphlet against the movement — of which pamphlet I had the inexpressible pleasure of hearing Lord Robert Grosvenor say, that in all his life he never had seen so many pages of letterpress contain such "an infinite deal of nothing." To the same class belongs a young physician, who, in a pamphlet concerning Jamaica, published a few weeks since, and which received a favourable critique from the "Morning Advertiser,"¹¹² says all manner of bitter things against the Negro. As a specimen of this person's candour and veracity, he says, "a nigger cannot speak English." One would almost think that the writer proved it to be more difficult for himself to write truth in any language, than for "a nigger to speak English." And lastly, to this class I set down those Englishmen who, like Mr. Baxter (successor of the late Joseph Hume in the representation of the Montrose burghs), travel in America, see slavery, and return with honied words in its favour, to garnish their speeches and adorn their books. I may be pardoned for sparing no more space to them.

Among the latter are to be included such colonists as are always seeking to make it appear that prejudice against Negroes is quite natural and unavoidable, and that a Negro becoming anything else than a mere "hewer of wood and drawer of water" is out of the question. Belonging as I do to one of the humblest classes of colonists, I cannot but feel ashamed of any one from the distant dependencies of the Crown, who, in spite of what Negroes are in the Colonies, can give utterance to an assertion so utterly contradictory to historical truth. I give a specimen of colonial pro-slavery obliquity.

In June, 1853, the Rev. Mr. Dowding, a most excellent clergyman of the Established Church, favoured me with a most cordial invitation to attend a meeting for the promotion of Negro education in the West Indies, by the revival of Berkeley College, in [Bermuda](#). I was but too happy to comply. At the time, I had not an inch of property in any part of the West Indies, nor was it then among the most distant of my intentions to go there to reside; but it was enough for me to know that some of the most exalted in the land, at the head of whom stood the venerable and benevolent Primate, were determined that to this population, along with freedom, education should be given. The meeting was held in Willis's Rooms; the Earl of Harrowby was in the chair. Among the personages present were the Earl of Shaftesbury, Lord Radstock, Lord Robert Grosvenor, Captain the Honourable Joseph Denman, the Honourable Charles Howard, the Rev. J. Hampden Gurney, the Rev. Dr. Vaughan of Harrow, &c.; there was also the Honourable C. S. Haliburton, of Nova Scotia. One of the speeches was made by this gentleman. In the course of his remarks the learned Judge said, that inasmuch as the

112. I regret exceedingly that Mr. Grant should have given currency to so ill-tempered and truthless a pamphlet.

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Bishop of New Brunswick approved the plan, and as he had the highest confidence in the judgment of that right reverend Prelate, he felt pleasure in giving it encouragement and wishing it success. But he ridiculed the idea of a college for Negroes. A school of an ordinary sort would have met his approval, but a college was generally understood to be a place for the education of a gentleman – a gentleman, among that race, was entirely out of the question. He was neither an Englishman nor an American, having been born “along shore,” in Nova Scotia: but he was free on that occasion to say, that he shared in the prejudices generally entertained by Americans in regard to Negroes; and could not regard such feelings as unnatural or unjustifiable, but as inevitable. The idea of mixing with Negroes was naturally, to a white man, altogether and unconquerably repulsive.

I do not profess to give Judge Haliburton’s words,¹¹³ but I think those who heard them will admit that I give his ideas. He made another point, about the ruin of the West India planters by emancipation, which showed but too plainly that, to the heart’s core, he was entirely with and for slavery, and that it was next to impossible to find a more malignant enemy to the Negro than the Honourable C.S. Haliburton. There were present some exceedingly genteel persons, whose embrowned complexions told plainly enough that they were not only West Indians, but that they shared African blood with me, though in a far less degree. We are sometimes amused, if not disgusted, by vulgar persons trying to put on genteel manners, for the sake of inducing the belief that they belong to genteel classes, while their airs and assumptions betray them. So Judge Haliburton, on the occasion referred to, in speaking contemptuously of a class whom his superiors on that platform were seeking to benefit – by the very effort to demonstrate that the Negro could not possibly be a gentleman, proved that, of all things, he himself most needed the qualities of a gentleman. Lord Harrowby, the chairman, had commended the object; Lord Shaftesbury had spoken of the object, and of Negroes (some of whom he named) who, in his Lordship’s opinion, had made and merited a name. I dare not repeat what this distinguished nobleman said. Now for Mr. Haliburton, in such a presence, to give an implied, if not a direct, contradiction to these noblemen, was far more ungentlemanly than anything done by any coloured person in that meeting.

As Judge Haliburton is the representative of a class, and as he is a man of some local popularity, holding opinions in common with other accidentally elevated men of low origin, I beg, without repeating exactly what I was permitted to say on that occasion, to make a remark or two on this matter.

1. It is to be hoped that Englishmen, especially English noblemen, will not suppose that Mr. C.S. Haliburton, the author of “Sam Slick” and some other such productions, is a fair specimen of colonial judges, nor of colonial feeling. His Honour only illustrates the fact that, in the North American colonies in former days, judges were made rather hastily, and of rather singular materials. Such a personage as Mr. Justice Draper, of

113. S.H. Horman-Fisher, Esq., was present, and so was J. Gurney Hoare, Esq. I think either of those gentlemen will attest the general correctness of my version of the speech.

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Toronto, or Sir John Robinson, the Chief Justice of Upper Canada, or Mr. Justice Jones, of Bruntford, or the eminent Ex-Chief Justice Marshall, of Nova Scotia (who devotes himself to the temperance cause, at his own expense, in Canada), would neither offend a platform of noblemen, nor show the bravery of attacking an absent prostrate people with expressions of heartless approval of their sufferings, and sympathy with their tormentors – for the plain reason that each of these personages is incapable both of the indecency and the inhumanity to do so. Judge Haliburton is not: his Honour is most abundantly equal to any such task. Therein he differs, I am proud to say, from colonial judges generally.

2. Admitting that Judge Haliburton's speech (I mean that part of it which was a wholesale disparagement of the Negro; hoping to say something about the subject matter of the other part at some day, not long hence) may have been as beautiful (doubtless it was, in his own eyes) as Vulcan's wife, it was, at the same time, as false as that unchaste daughter of Jove. Within six-and-thirty hours' sail of Judge Haliburton's residence are the cities of Portland and Boston. Five hours more would bring him to New York; and four more, to Philadelphia. The Rev. Mr. Dowding has published the names and opinions of several distinguished coloured gentlemen, in the last-named of those cities, having visited them; and Judge Haliburton could have acquired information concerning them quite as easily: indeed, one cannot believe that a man of letters, wealth, and leisure, a man in a learned profession, did not know of coloured gentlemen so near him as are many in those cities, especially in Portland and Boston.

But Mr. Haliburton spoke as a British colonist. Could he be ignorant of the names of the Honourable Edward Jordan, the Honourable Richard Hill, and the Honourable Peter Moncreif, of Jamaica? Could he fail to know that those eminent personages had, like himself, practised at the bar, worn the ermine, and adorned the legislative hall? Lord Harrowby knew it; why should not Judge Haliburton? An older lawyer, and a far more eminent man, Sir Allan MacNab, of Canada, told me he had seen with great pleasure these and like gentlemen, in the Jamaica Legislature. But Judge Haliburton says, "the idea of a black gentleman is out of the question!"

What lamentable ignorance, to use no harsher term, does such an assertion as Judge Haliburton's betray, in respect to the historical Negro! [Euclid](#) had a black face, woolly hair, thick

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lips, flat nose, and crooked ankles. He was the father of



geometry, but Judge Haliburton had never heard of him, or he could not have said that "the idea of a black gentleman is out of the question." One of the objects of Berkeley College is to teach modern Negroes the science whereof the Negro Euclid was father. To this Judge Haliburton objected. To his learned vision, it was perfectly absurd! Was Terence, the black poet, a gentleman? Were Tertullian, Augustin, Origen (of whom Archbishop Sharpe, the grandfather of Granville Sharpe, speaks as "among the most extraordinary lights of the Church of God"), gentlemen? But let me not do injustice to Mr. Haliburton. I may not know what his idea of a gentleman is. Judging from his appearance, his writings, the taste displayed in the only speech I ever heard him make, the sort of rudeness with which he treated his superiors on this occasion, and the utter destitution of any semblance of liberal feeling then and there shown by him, I am tempted to believe that the standard of a gentleman, holden by Judge Haliburton, is one according to which it may be, after all, no discredit to the Negro race if they do not produce many such specimens.

A word as to the naturalness and inevitable necessity of Negro-hate: that word is, "truthless." In proof of it, the language of every speaker on that occasion, with the single exception of Mr. C.S. Haliburton, in respect to the Negro, was most abundant, most triumphant.

3. I beg to say, that sometimes the unfortunately disproportionate number of Negroes in prisons is pointed out to me as evidence of the very great criminality of my people. I ask any one to say, what chance of a fair and just trial a Negro could have, before such a judge as Mr. Justice Haliburton, when a white man was prosecutor? (I happen to know how Negroes have suffered in such cases.) For it is impossible for a man, when he puts on his judicial robe, to put on another nature: the man and the judge will be very much the same. I know nothing of Judge Haliburton's character, or rather of his history, in this regard; but judging from his own words, and from the likeness of feeling to himself on the part of his fellow citizens, I do not at all wonder that the blacks of Nova Scotia are deprived of many of their rights by them.

The explanation of all this is, that Judge Haliburton, and all

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like him, whether on Yankee or British soil, do not wish to know better. A fair illustration of the class was given me by G. Ralston, Esq., in the case of an American lady who was at the Clarendon when Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs gave a complimentary dinner to his Excellency the Honourable Benjamin Roberts, President of the Republic of [Liberia](#). President Roberts, it is known, is an American by birth, and of African origin. Seeing—and, though an American, so far above the contemptible prejudices of his countrymen as to enable me to say, with great pleasure, with delight—that President Roberts was the “admired of all admirers,” Mr. Ralston proposed to introduce his fair countrywoman to the guest of England's noble Secretary. With real American feeling, this proud republican dame declined. So do all of the class. They choose not to know coloured persons of distinction, when they might; or, knowing them, they choose to misrepresent them.

I must be allowed to record, just here, the very great delight I had in hearing the real gentleman and nobleman speak, at the meeting referred to, in such terms as they were pleased to use, concerning the Negro. Doubt of the Negro's capacity was scouted, as a brainless, senseless thing. Rejoicing in such an opportunity of forwarding such a movement was common to all lips, as it flowed from all hearts; but the expression which struck me with greatest force was the one which conveyed the idea of their indebtedness to the Negro. Upon this Lord Harrowby and Lord Shaftesbury strongly insisted, and the meeting received their words with marked approbation. The Honourable Charles Howard, brother of Lord Carlisle, and Lord Robert Grosvenor, brother to the Marquis of Westminster, dwelt upon this thought as if it were one to which they were no stranger. The Honourable Captain Denman, brother to the present Lord Denman, declared that “we had sinned against the Negro in the West Indies; and while he could not agree with Mr. Ward, that no evils had followed emancipation, he did trace a natural connection between those evils and the sins which preceded them.” The Rev. J. Hampden Gurney, the Rev. Dr. Vaughan, and all the other British gentlemen present, expressed like sentiments. I need not say, that on my people's behalf I was but too proud of the opportunity kindly afforded me, of thanking such benefactors for such words. If any one should infer that the author of “Sam Slick” appeared awkward and out of place in such company, I am quite willing to bear the responsibility of this inference.

Leaving this meeting, and that member of it upon whose words I felt myself called upon to say so much, it may not be inappropriate to say some other things, in this chapter, on this subject. It is not to be denied that a history of the Negro race is unwritten; no, it is written in characters of blood! It is a very compact, succinct chronicle: it comprises but one word and its cognate — slavery, slave trade. There is the history of the Negro, at least for the last seven centuries, while what is said of him before that time is interspersed among the annals of other peoples. It would seem from this fact, at first sight, that those who know nothing of the Negro, except as they see him in slavery and in menial positions, are quite excusable. But scholars deserve no such extenuation. They know what is written of the ancient Negro — from which they might, if they chose, infer



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something concerning the modern Negro. Travellers, too, are inexcusable; for they frequently see in other than slave countries, and in some slave countries too, the descendant of Africa in positions anything but servile or menial. True, there was none who cared for us sufficiently to write our history, in modern days – we were unable to write it ourselves – in the lands of our captivity; and in our fatherland, alas! our condition is far from favourable for the furnishing of historical data. Scraps, patches, anecdotes, these are all that bear record of us. We have now, fortunately, some living men among us who illustrate our manhood, and live down the disparagements of our enemies; but as a rule, our history is that of the chain, the coffle gang, the slave ship, the middle passage, the plantation-hell!

If, however, it be true that honourable mention is made of many of our fathers, and if, in spite of the most adverse circumstances, we have produced some worthy sons of such sires, ought we not to have the benefit of these creditable facts? And yet, I honestly confess that I fear what I say on this subject will, by some professedly anti-slavery persons, be regarded as somewhat objectionable, or as a point upon which it is not best to say a great deal. But if we do not vindicate ourselves, who will do it for us? Alas! who indeed? for we are not without experience in that matter.



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June 1853: A coastal vessel again stopped by San Nicolàs Island off the coast of *Alta California*, at the request of the padre of [Mission San Juan Capistrano](#) on the mainland, to look for the native American isolate known as the "[Lone Woman](#)" left over from a massacre of the 1820s by the Inuit crew of a Russian whaling vessel. This time they found her and brought her to the mainland. Evidently, however, her three decades of isolation from all human contact had removed her immune defenses, for she would die within seven weeks.

In this year or the next [Henry Thoreau](#) was adding into [Draft F](#) of his [WALDEN](#) *ms* a comment about the "Symmes' hole" in the earth, a comment quite as humorous as the comment he had made about it in a student paper while in college but also this time a comment with a point to it, a point which would never have been anticipated by the imaginative [Captain John Cleves Symmes](#):



WALDEN: It is not worth the while to go round the world to count the cats in Zanzibar. Yet do this even till you can do better, and you may perhaps find some "Symmes' Hole" by which to get at the inside at last. England and France, Spain and Portugal, Gold Coast and Slave Coast, all front on this private sea; but no bark from them has ventured out of sight of land, though it is without doubt the direct way to India. If you would learn to speak all tongues and conform to the customs of all nations, if you would travel farther than all travellers, be naturalized in all climes, and cause the Sphinx to dash her head against a stone, even obey the precept of the old philosopher, and Explore thyself. Herein are demanded the eye and the nerve. Only the defeated and deserters go to the wars, cowards that run away and enlist. Start now on that farthest western way, which does not pause at the Mississippi or the Pacific, nor conduct toward a worn-out China or Japan, but leads on direct a tangent to this sphere, summer and winter, day and night, sun down, moon down, and at last earth down too.

CAT

SYMMES HOLE

"THE OLD PHILOSOPHER"

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WALDEN: Yet we should oftener look over the taffarel of our craft, like curious passengers, and not make the voyage like stupid sailors picking oakum. The other side of the globe is but the home of our correspondent. Our voyaging is only great-circle sailing, and the doctors prescribe for diseases of the skin merely. One hastens to Southern Africa to chase the giraffe; but surely that is not the game he would be after. How long, pray, would a man hunt giraffes if he could? Snipes and woodcocks also may afford rare sort; but I trust it would be nobler game to shoot one's self.-

“Direct your eye sight inward, and you'll find
A thousand regions in your mind
Yet undiscovered. Travel them, and be
Expert in home-cosmography.”

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

“Erret, et extremos alter scrutetur Iberos.
Plus habet hic vitæ, plus habet ille viæ.”
Let them wander and scrutinize the outlandish Australians.
I have more of God, they more of the road.

It is not worth the while to go round the world to count the cats in Zanzibar. Yet do this even till you can do better, and you may perhaps find some “Symmes' Hole” by which to get at the inside at last. England and France, Spain and Portugal, Gold Coast and Slave Coast, all front on this private sea; but no bark from them has ventured out of sight of land, though it is without doubt the direct way to India. If you would learn to speak all tongues and conform to the customs of all nations, if you would travel farther than all travellers, be naturalized in all climes, and cause the Sphinx to dash her head against a stone, even obey the precept of the old philosopher, and Explore thyself. Herein are demanded the eye and the nerve. Only the defeated and deserters go to the wars, cowards that run away and enlist. Start now on that farthest western way, which does not pause at the Mississippi or the Pacific, nor conduct toward a worn-out China or Japan, but leads on direct a tangent to this sphere, summer and winter, day and night, sun down, moon down, and at last earth down too.

LEWIS AND CLARK

HENRY GRINNELL

SYMMES HOLE

PEOPLE OF
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[PAINTING](#)

[Frederic Edwin Church](#) painted "[Mount Ktaadn](#)" for the railroad and steamboat magnate Marshall O. Roberts, who had made an obscene amount of money buying and selling land on the basis of inside information about the location of new transportation routes and who was obsessed with America's manifest destiny of infinite expansive boosterism:



That last San Nicoleño, "[Lone Woman](#)" who was being brought to the mainland of [California](#) from that Channel Island just off the coast in June of this year, would become, eventually, allegedly, the inspiration for the pleasant romance ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHINS.¹¹⁴

[HERMITS](#)

114. In the 1950s this offshore landmass, San Nicolàs Island, would serve as a site for top secret Cold War tracking of Soviet nuclear submarines, and would be most decidedly off limits to any romantic tourists. Nowadays those leftover war facilities are being used to track biologicals — which is to say, whales.

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 June/July 1853: [Waldo Emerson](#) wrote in his journal:

H. [Thoreau] seemed stubborn & implacable; always manly & wise, but rarely sweet. One would say that as Webster could never speak without an antagonist, so H. does not feel himself except in opposition. He wants a fallacy to expose, a blunder to pillory, requires a little sense of victory, a roll of the drums, to call his powers into full exercise.

Sylvan [Thoreau] could go wherever woods & waters were & no man was asked for leave. Once or twice the farmer withstood, but it was to no purpose – he could as easily prevent the sparrows or tortoises. It was their land before it was his, & their title was precedent. S. knew what was on their land, & they did not; & he sometimes brought them ostentatiously gifts of flowers or fruits or shrubs which they would gladly have paid great prices for, & did not tell them that he took them from their own woods. Moreover the very time at which he used their land & water (for his boat glided like a trout everywhere unseen) was in hours when they were sound asleep. Long before they were awake he went up & down to survey like a sovereign his possessions, & he passed onward, & left them before the farmer came out of doors. Indeed it was the common opinion of the boys that Mr T. made Concord.

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

Wednesday the 15th. Cannot cross yet today. They do not do as they would wish to be done by with their ferry. It is uncertain when we can cross on the ferry. We thought it best to calk up our wagon box which we did in about two hours and crossed with safety. While crossing word came that the ferry boat had sunk with a heavy wagon.

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

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June 1, Wednesday, [1853](#): [Normal College](#) in Randolph County, [North Carolina](#) awarded its first B.A. degrees.

[Marietta Alboni](#) sailed for France, where she would marry an Italian count. By 1863 she would have abandoned her singing career, except for special appearances at which she would apologize for both her growing obesity and her somewhat diminishing vocal talents by making the smiling comment “I am the shadow of my former self.”



In Pest, two works for piano and orchestra by Franz Liszt were performed for the initial time: *Fantasie über Motive aus Beethovens Ruinen von Athen* and *Fantasie über Ungarische Volksmelodien*.

William Speiden, Jr. went ashore on the Japanese island with officers to take a walk. They were trailed by locals who seemed intrigued by these outsiders. A separate American exploring party also went ashore.

Some Frenchmen in San Francisco, [California](#) organized Lafayette Hook & Ladder Co. No. 2 on Broadway Avenue between Dupont and Stockton, modeled after fire companies in Paris.

[Lola Montez](#) discarded the “manager” with whom she had arrived in San Francisco and got “married” with Patrick Purdy Hull, owner of the San Francisco [Whig](#), whom she had met aboard that ship, and moved to Grass Valley, [California](#) to perform around the Gold Country. During a stay of several years in Grass Valley she

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would accumulate a number of pets, including a bear cub which she kept tethered in her yard.

When US Senator Gwin engaged in a [duel](#) in [San Francisco](#) with J.W. McCorkle, there were no injuries.

[Arthur Buckminster Fuller](#), pastor of the Unitarian Society in Manchester, New Hampshire, was installed to minister over the New North Church in [Boston](#).



[Jefferson Davis](#) began to serve, for a period of 15 days, as acting Secretary of the Navy.

[Henry Thoreau](#), in his journal, toyed with the idea that the fruit typical of the New England ministerial class might be the sort of bitter tree gall that never ripens, rather than the sort of tree fruit that will bring sweetness into the difficult lives of the parishioners:



June 1 [1853]. This gall [pincushion gall on young white oaks] is the tree's "[Ode to Dejection.](#)" How oft it chanceth that the apparent fruit of a shrub, its apple, is merely a gall or blight! How many men meet with some blast in the moist growing days of their youth, and what should have been a sweet and palatable fruit in them becomes a mere puff and excrescence, ripening no kernel, and they say that they have experienced religion! For the hardening of the seed is the crisis. Their fruit is a gall, a puff, an excrescence, for want of moderation and continence. So many plants never ripen their fruit.



Nathan Fiske of the Cambridge, Massachusetts post office advertised in the Chronicle that there had gotten to be quite a few letters there, awaiting pickup by addressees (see following screen).

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

For the last ten days we have been traveling up the Platte Bottom, a distance of 125 miles. Have traveled slow and laid by two days. The grass has been quite good most of the way. Had considerable of rain, which is the most unpleasant part of it. The scenery along the river is much the same, quite pretty, though not enchanting. Nothing of striking interest has occurred, except we see plenty of wolves, antelope, buffalo, prairie dogs and dog towns etc. These prairie dogs are about the size of a squirrel and live in houses underground in towns and villages. They seem quite full of antics. One always stays out so he can see around until we get quite near him.



June 1. Quite a fog this morning. Does it not always follow the cooler nights after the first really warm weather about the end of May? Saw a water snake yesterday, with its tail twisted about some dead weed stubble and quite dry and stiff for an inch, as if it were preparing to shed its skin. A wilted sprig of creeping juniper has a little, a very little, of sweet fragrance, somewhat like that of the fir and spruce. It seems to be just coming into bloom. Bees are swarming now, and those who keep them often have to leave their work in haste to secure them.

P.M. — To Walden.

Summer begins now about a week past, with the expanded leaves, the shade and warm weather. Cultivated fields also are *leaving* out, *i.e.* corn and potatoes coming up. Most trees have bloomed and are now forming their fruit. Young berries, too, are forming, and birds are being hatched. Dor-bugs and other insects have come forth the first warm evening after showers.

The birds have now all (?) come and no longer fly in flocks. The hylodes are no longer heard. The bullfrogs begin to trump. Thick and extensive fogs in the morning begin. Plants are rapidly growing, — *shooting*. Hoeing corn has commenced (June 1st). It is now the season of growth. The first bloom of the year is over. Have not wild animals now henceforth (?) their young? and fishes too?

The pincushion galls on young white oaks are now among the most beautiful objects in the woods, coarse woolly white to appearance, spotted with bright red or crimson on the exposed side. It is remarkable that a mere gall, which at first we are inclined to regard as something abnormal, should be made so beautiful, as if it were the *flower* of the tree: that a disease, an excrescence, should prove, perchance, the greatest beauty, — as the tear of the pearl. Beautiful scarlet sins they may be. Through our temptations, — aye, and our falls, — our virtues appear. As in many a character, — many a poet, — we see that beauty exhibited in a gall, which was meant to have bloomed in a flower, unchecked. Such, however, is the accomplishment of the world. The poet cherishes his chagrins and sets his sighs to music. This gall is the tree's "[Ode to Dejection](#)." How oft it chances that the apparent fruit of a shrub, its apple, is merely a gall or blight! How many men meet with some blast in the moist growing days of their youth, and what should have been a sweet and palatable fruit in them becomes a mere puff and excrescence, ripening no kernel, and they say that they have experienced religion! For the hardening of the seed is the crisis. Their fruit is a gall, a puff, an excrescence, for want of moderation and continence. So many plants never ripen their fruit.

I see the effects of a frost last night and earlier in the hollow west of Laurel Glen. The young white oaks have suffered especially, their leaves shrivelled and now drying up, and the hickories are turned quite black. These effects are most noticeable, not in the deepest hollows, if they are shady, but in those where the wood has been cut off a year or two, next to standing wood which reflected the sun, and which were the warmest during the day. Are not those trees which are latest to leave out generally the most tender in this respect?

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LIST OF LETTERS remaining in the Old Cambridge
Post Office, June 1, 1853.

Allen Wm A	Ellis Charles	McCleary Wm
Allen J Addison	Egin Thomas	McGowan Thomas
Allen Geo N	Eastman Otis S	McCarren James
Atwood B T	Frangan Daniel	McDermot Thomas
Billings Mary E	Fowle John	Mills Samuel
Brennan John	Foster Geo W	Witch E & others
Barber James S	Foster Louis	Mapleton Richard
Bellows Dr A J	Fitzgerald John	Mansfield T & T
Brown A A	Firfield Laura M	Mann John M
Bagley Lucy	Follen E L	Murphy Timothy
Burgay Geo W	Fettypace T J	Miller Daniel
Bennihan Jeremiah	Fair John R	Mason J O
Bradford Jeremiah G	Fumen Bridget	Mellen Sumner
Bruce Miss Louis	French Sophia E	Melvahill Nicholas
Buckley Mrs	Fortune Felix G	Merrill Hannah Mrs
Carpenter & Livingston	Gates Edwin	Manning N W Miss
Chick Sylvester	Gary Lovell	Mansfield H A
Church Maria B Miss	Green Joseph	Neiz Miss
Clifford Andrew	Gilbert Samuel A	Noyes F G
Cran Lucian B	Gould Seth	Nichols Susan F
Cooley Matie C	Guilford S M	Nichols Curtis C
Callaghan Cathrine	Greenly Ann Louisa	Orbiton Catherine G
Callaghan Bridget	Galagher Phebe	Osborn Sarah L Mrs
Courier David	Gaudrich S G	Patterson William
Carlee Patrick	Gould George	Phelps A S Mrs
Carlton David C	Gregg Benjamin C	Peppard Caroline M
Coleman Michael	Gilbert Henry	Pye Mary A
Coran Richard	Hartney Mary	Prentiss Henry C
Clark Abra Miss	Haywood J L	Rand John B
Clark Mary Ann	Harney Mary	Randall G W
Connor Lucy	Helderly Bridget	Ranson Albert
Crane Margaret A	Hongley Patrick	Richardson Royal
Crohn Martha	Horker Elizabeth	Reilly Patrick
Casey James	Hunting Henry E	Rosch Mary
Cox Sylvania Miss	Hanford Horace	Smith Parsons
Carswell James	Johnson N Jr	Shearer Lewis
Cushman Georgian	Kennedy John A	Short Robert
Coolidge Geo 2d	Nicholas Ellen	Story Mr
Cutter C A Miss	Kennedy Thomas	Templeton Charles
Quin Michael	Kate Mrs	Taylor Myron H
Cox Margaret A	Lynch A	Tennent Thomas
Doane Eliza	Lee George	Tuttle John
Davin William	Lerois J W	Thurston Mary
Dashwood Mary	Lewis Abella Mrs	Underwood F H
Dealy Mary	Lincoln John P	Warren Clarissa
Day Israel W	Lincoln Dennis	Winship Sophia
Delany Patrick	Leonard Mary	Wheeler G W
Doogan James	Lovering J F	Wright Samuel J
Dargin Geo W	Laken Francis	Williams W H
Dargin Warren L	Lacompt W W	Walker Henry
Dawes Elizabeth	Lynch Ellen	Whitney Lizzie Miss
Delany Maria	McLellan Mary	Warner Hermann J
Dewolf Sophia	Mcorkle Jane	Walton J Q
Doherty Mary	McBeath James	York Charles


N. B. Persons calling for letters on the above list will please say they are advertised.

NATHAN FISKE, Postmaster.

I notice that most of the *Smilacina racemosa* has had its tip or flower-bud nipped off. Eggs in

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ovenbird's nest [**Ovenbird**  *Seiurus aurocapillus*]. The water-target leaves are conspicuous on the pond meadows now. The heart-leaves already on the river. A little of the pollen now along the shore of the still coves. The pitch pines near by have shed theirs.

The news of the explosion of the powder-mills was not only carried seaward by the cloud which its smoke made, but more effectually, though more slowly, by the fragments which were floated thither by the river. Melvin yesterday showed me quite a pile of fragments, — some short pieces of large timber, — still black with powder, which he had saved as they were drifting by. Nobody takes the trouble to record all the consequences of such an event. And some, no doubt, were carried down to the Merrimack, and by the Merrimack to the ocean, till perchance they got into the Gulf Stream and were cast up the coast of Norway, covered with barnacles, or who can tell what more distant strand?—still bearing some traces of burnt powder, still capable of telling how and where they were launched, to those who can read their signs. To see a man lying all bare, lank, and tender on the rocks, like a skinned frog or lizard! We did not suspect that lie was made of such cold, tender, clammy substance before.

POWDER MILL


Mingling with wrecks of vessels, which communicated a different tale, this wreck of a powder-mill was cast up on some outlandish strand, and went to swell the pile of driftwood collected by some native. Shouldered by whales. Alighted on at first by the muskrat and the peewee, — and finally perhaps the stormy petrel and the beach-birds. It is long before Nature forgets it. How slowly the ruins are being dispersed!

Viola pedata past its prime; and are not the *sagittata*, and run to leaf? and also the *cucullata* (?) (?), so that the *palmata* take their places? I am as white as a miller,—a rye-miller, at least, — with the lint from the young leaves and twigs. The tufts of pinks on the side of the peak by the pond grow raying out somewhat from a centre, somewhat like a cyme, on the warm dry side-hill — some a lighter, some a richer and darker, shade of pink. With what a variety of colors we are entertained! Yet most colors are rare or in small doses, presented us as a condiment or spice. Much of green, blue, black, and white, but of yellow and the different shades of red far less. The eye feasts on the colors of flowers as on titbits; they are its spices.

I hear now, it five o'clock, from this hill, a farmer's horn calling his hands in from the field to an early tea. Heard afar by the walker, over the woods at this hour or at noon, bursting upon the stillness of the air, putting life into some portion of the horizon, this is one of the most suggestive and pleasing of the country sounds produced by man. I know not how far it is peculiar to New England or the United States. I hear two or three prolonged blasts, as I am walking alone some sultry noon in midst of the still woods, — a sound which I know to be produced by human breath, the most sonorous parts of which alone reach me, — and I see in my mind the hired men and master dropping the implements of their labor in the field and wending their way with a sober satisfaction toward the house; I see the well-sweep rise and fall; I see the preparatory ablutions and the table laden with the smoking meal. It is a significant hum in a distant part of the hive. Often it tells me [the] time of day.

How much lupine is now in full bloom on bare sandy brows or promontories running into meadows, where the sod is half worn away and the sand exposed! The geraniums are now getting to be common. *Hieracium venosum* just out on this peak. And the snapdragon catchfly [*Silene Antirrhina*] is here abundantly in blossom, a little after 5 P.M., — a pretty little flower, the petals dull crimson beneath or varnished mahogany-color, and rose-tinted white within or above. It closed on my way home, but opened again in water in the evening. Its opening in the night chiefly is a fact which interests and piques me. Do any insects visit it then? Lambkill just beginning, the very earliest. A purple (!) Canada snapdragon.


New, bright, and glossy light-green leaves of the umbelled wintergreen are shooting on this hillside, but the old leaves are particularly glossy and shining, as if varnished and not yet dry, or most highly polished. Did they look thus in the winter? I do not know any leaf so wet-glossy.

Walking up this side-hill, I disturbed a nighthawk [**Common Nighthawk**  *Chordeiles minor*] eight or ten feet from me, which went, half-fluttering, half hopping, the mottled creature, like a winged toad, as **Nuttall** says the French of Louisiana(?) call them, down the hill as far as I could see. Without moving, I looked about and saw its two eggs on the bare ground, on a slight shelf of the hill, on the dead pine-needles and sand, without any cavity or nest whatever, very obvious when once you had detected them, but not easily detected from their color, a coarse gray formed of white spotted with a bluish or slaty brown, or umber, — a stone — granite — color, like the places it selects. I advanced and put my hand on them, and while I stooped, seeing a shadow on the ground, looked up



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and saw the bird, which had fluttered down the hill so blind and helpless, circling low and swiftly past over my head, showing the white spot on each wing in true nighthawk fashion. When I had gone a dozen rods, it appeared again higher in the air, with its peculiar flitting, limping kind of flight, all the while noiseless, and suddenly descending, it dashed at me within ten feet of my head, like an imp of darkness, then swept away high over the pond, dashing now to this side, now to that, on different tacks, as if, in pursuit of its prey, it had already forgotten its eggs on the earth. I can see how it might easily come to be regarded with superstitious awe. A cuckoo [**Black-billed Cuckoo**  *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*] very plainly heard.

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



June 2, Thursday, 1853: A British fleet arrived in Besika Bay shortly followed by a French fleet, to counter any Russian designs against Turkey.

Giacomo Meyerbeer arrived in Paris from Berlin in hope of producing his new opera *L'étoile du nord*.

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

We expect to cross the South Platte today and dread it exceedingly. We reached it at 1:30 o'clock, blocked up our wagon boxes, mustered up courage and got through safe. This river is about 3/4 of a mile in width and from 1 to 3-1/2 feet deep, tolerably swift and always muddy. The bottom or bed of the river is nothing but quick-sand and shakes a wagon when it goes over it as if it were going over a pavement at a rapid rate. Camped two miles from the ford in the forks of the North and South Platte.



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[Henry Thoreau](#) went out in his boat in the fog on the [Assabet River](#) and the [Sudbury River](#), and dreamed up the epigraph for his [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#):

[TIMELINE OF WALDEN](#)

HDT

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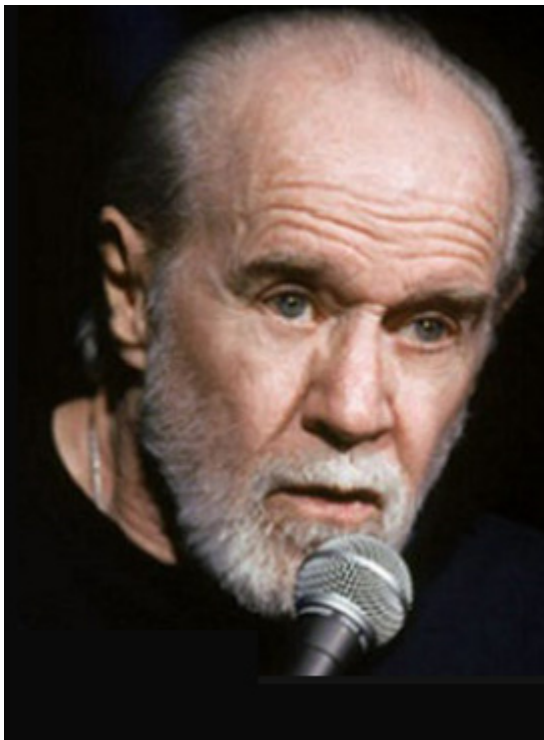
WALDEN: I do not propose to write an ode to dejection, but to brag as lustily as chanticleer in the morning, standing on his roost, if only to wake my neighbors up.

PEOPLE OF
WALDEN



GEOFFREY CHAUCER

CHANTICLEER




I do not propose to write an ode to dejection,
but to brag as lustily as chanticleer
in the morning, standing on his roost,
if only to wake my neighbors up.

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

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June 2. 3:30 A.M. When I awake I hear the low universal chirping or twittering of the chip-birds [**Chipping Sparrow**  *Spizella passerina*], like the bursting bead on the surface of the uncorked day. First come, first served! You must taste the first glass of the day's nectar, if you would get all the spirit of it. Its fixed air begins to stir and escape. Also the robin's morning song is heard as in the spring, earlier than the notes of most other birds, thus bringing back the spring; now rarely heard or noticed in the course of the day.

4 A.M. — To Nawshawtuct.

I go to the river in a fog through which I cannot see more than a dozen rods, — three or four times as deep as the houses. As I row down the stream, the dark, dim outlines of the trees on the banks appear, coming to meet me out of the mist on the one hand, while they retreat and are soon concealed in it on the other. My strokes soon bury them behind me. The birds are wide awake, as if knowing that this fog presages a fair day. I ascend Nawshawtuct from the north side. I am aware that I yield to the same influence which inspires the birds and the cockerels, whose hoarse courage I hear now vaunted. So men should crow in the morning. I would crow like chanticleer in the morning, with all the lustiness that the new day imparts, without thinking of the evening, when I and all of us shall go to roost, — with all the humility of the cock, that takes his perch upon the highest rail and wakes the country with his clarion. Shall not men be inspired as much as cockerels? My feet are soon wet with fog. It is, indeed, a vast dew. And are not the clouds another kind of dew? Cool nights produce them. Now I have reached the hilltop above the fog at a quarter to five, about sunrise, and all around me is a sea of fog, level and white, reaching nearly to the top of this hill, only the tops of a few high hills appearing as distant islands in the main. Wachusett is a more distant and larger island, an Atlantis in the west; there is hardly one to touch at between me and it. It is just like the clouds beneath you* as seen from a mountain. It is a perfect level in some directions, cutting the hills near their summits with a geometrical line, but puffed up here and there, and more and more toward the east, by the influence of the sun. An early freight-train of cars is heard, not seen, rushing through the town beneath it. It resembles nothing so much as the ocean. You can get here the impression which the ocean makes, without ever going to the shore. Men — poor simpletons as they are — will go to a panorama by families, to see a Pilgrim's Progress, perchance, who never yet made progress so far as to the top of such a hill as this at the dawn of a foggy morning. All the fog they know is in their brains. The seashore exhibits nothing more grand or on a larger scale. How grand where it rolls off northeastward (?) over Ball's Hill like a glorious ocean after a storm, just lit by the rising sun! It is as boundless as the view from the highlands of Cape Cod. They are exaggerated billows, the ocean on a larger scale, the sea after some tremendous and unheard-of storm, for the actual sea never appears so tossed up and universally white with foam and spray as this now far in the northeastern horizon, where mountain billows are breaking on some hidden reef or bank. It is tossed up toward the sun and by it into the most boisterous of seas, which no craft, no ocean steamer, is vast enough to sail on.

Meanwhile my hands are numb with cold and my wet feet ache with it. Now, at 5.15, before this southwest wind, it is already grown thin as gossamer in that direction, and woods and houses are seen through it, while it is heaped up toward the sun, and finally becomes so thick there that for a short time it appears in one place a dark, low cloud, such as else can only be seen from mountains; and now long, dark ridges of wood appear through it, and now the sun reflected from the river makes a bright glow in the fog, and now, at 5.30, I see the green surface of the meadows and the water through the trees, sparkling with bright reflections. Men will go further and pay more to see a tawdry picture on canvas, a poor painted scene, than to behold the fairest or grandest scene that nature ever displays in their immediate vicinity, though they may have never seen it in their lives.

The triosteum a day or two. Cherry-birds [**Cedar Waxwing**  *Bombycilla cedrorum* (Cherry-bird)] are the only ones I see in flocks now. I can tell them afar by their peculiar fine springy note. The hickory is not yet blossomed. Sanicle [**black snakeroot**  *Sanicula marilandica*] and waxwork just out. On Monday saw apparently fresh-broken tortoise eggs. Locust tree just opening.



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June 3, Friday, 1853: Frederick Douglass' Paper reported that UNCLE TOM'S CABIN was being used as the basis for a hopefully non-confrontational Diorama:

UNCLE TOMS CABIN has been dioramized in Michigan, by Prof. Foster, in a manner which calls out unbounded applause. Indeed, "the churches have been crowded with admirers." The proprietor is making the tour of the State, and doing what he can to stop "agitation," by having the anti-slavery sentiment all on one side!

In Boston, The Liberator offered a poem to Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe suggested by her recent visit to Scotland:

Lady! thou whose touching story
Makes us weep and smile by turns,
Welcome to the land of Scotia—
Land of Wallace, Bruce, and Burns!

Here, in town and crowded city,
Moorland bleak and lonely glen,
All have felt the powerful pleading
Of thy truthful, godlike pen.

Hoary fathers, in whose bosoms
Patriot ardor long has flowed,
Catch from thee a stronger passion
In the cause of man and God.

Mothers, ever true and tender,
Holier feelings get from thee,
When thou tell'st of poor Eliza,
Forced o'er piles of ice to flee.

When she tempts the dangerous current,
With her infant at her breast,
Of't they breathe the exclamation,
'Save her, Heaven, and make her blest!

'Hark, that shriek! oh, God! she sinketh!
Guide her! guide her to the shore!
Blood-drops from her feet are oozing!
Would that Slavery's reign were o'er!'

Such, fair Lady, are the feelings—
Such the horror, such the pain,
Waked by thee at deeds inhuman—
Deeds that cast on man a stain.

Not the learned alone thou charmest
With thy words and thoughts refined;—
Like sweet Nature's glorious sunshine,
Thou delightest every mind!

Even our little children bless thee,
As they read the Negro's tale;—
O! how eagerly they trace him,
Through oppression's gloomy vale!

Then, in fancy, see him dungeoned,
Bleeding in accursed chains,
Or through tangled forests hunted,
Marked with scars, or wrecked with pains.

And, while shuddering o'er the picture,
O'er the Negro's woes and fears,
How they learn to loathe the slaver!



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He who lives on blood and tears.

Lady! thus the fires of freedom
Have been roused afresh by thee,
And shall blaze till tyrants perish,
And the Negro tribes are free!

Welcome, then, to dear auld Scotia,
Hallowed by the good and brave;
Countless thousands long to hail thee,
Noblest pleader for the slave.

Kilruarnock. ARCH'D M'KAY. CARRIE

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

Started early, commenced raining and continued until near noon.
Cloudy all day. Drove 20 miles to-day.

The [Daily Alta California](#) of [San Francisco](#) reported that in a gold town known as Yankee Jim's, diggings close to Gardners Hotel had produced as high as \$5 worth of gold to the pan of dirt. Lots that had been being bought and sold for \$100 were changing hands at treble that price.





June 3. Friday. P.M. — To Annurnsack.

By way of the linnaea, which I find is not yet out. That thick pine wood is full of birds. Saw a large moth or butterfly exactly like a decayed withered leaf, — a rotten yellowish or buff. The small-leaved pyrola will open in a day or two. Two or three ripe strawberries on the south slope of a dry hill. I was thinking that they had set, when, seeking a more favorable slope, I found ripe fruit.

The painted-cup is in its prime. It reddens the meadow, — Painted-Cup Meadow. It is a splendid show of brilliant scarlet, the color of the cardinal flower, and surpassing it in mass and profusion. They first appear on the side of the hill in drier ground, half a dozen inches high, and their color is most striking then, when it is most rare and precious; but they now cover the meadow, mingled with buttercups, etc., and many are more than eighteen inches high. I do not like the name; it does not remind me of a cup, rather of a flame, when it first appears. It might be called flame-flower, or scarlet-tip. Here is a large meadow full of it, and yet very few in the town have ever seen it. It is startling to see a leaf thus brilliantly painted, as if its tip were dipped into some scarlet tincture, surpassing most flowers in intensity of color. Seen from Annurnsack the woods now appear full-leaved, smooth green, no longer hoary, and the pines a dark mulberry, not green. But you are still covered with lint as you go through the copses. Summer begins when the hoariness disappears from the forest as you look down on it, and gives place thus to smooth green, full and universal.

Butter-and-eggs just out. A small thorn with deep cut-lobed leaves, no flower, on this hill. May be a variety of the scarlet? White cedar now out of bloom. Is that rank grass by the Red Bridge, already between three and four feet high, wild oats?

The song of the robin [[American Robin](#)  [Turdus migratorius](#)] and the chirp (?) of the chip-bird [[Chipping Sparrow](#)  [Spizella passerina](#)] now begin prominently to usher in and to conclude the day. The robin's song seems not so loud as in the early spring, perhaps because there are so many other sounds at present.



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June 4, Saturday, 1853: Ground was broken for a canal at the Soo.

On this day, or on the 24th, the 27-year-old Thomas Russell got married with Mary Ellen “Nellie” Taylor, a daughter of the Methodist Reverend Edward Thompson Taylor of Boston (the children produced by this union would be Ellen Taylor Russell on January 23, 1854, Mary Anne Russell on January 20, 1855 (who would die on May 6, 1894 in Munich, Bavaria), and Dora Walton Russell on August 31, 1861).

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

Quite pleasant in the morning, but had a shower in the evening. Started 2 buffalo about a mile from the road. Nelson wounded one of them, but did not get him, being on foot. Some on horseback ran them about 2 miles and got them. Drove 18 miles to-day.

The Placer, California Herald reported having viewed a lump of pure gold—a beautiful specimen—at the store of L. Newman & Co., that had been dug out at the American at Paradise and weighed 29 ounces.

The Democratic State Journal extrapolated on the still-buried richness of California:

There appears to be a region of country, the width of which has not been ascertained, running nearly south from Sears’ in Sierra County, and extending through Downieville, Chip’s and Minnesota, French Corral, Sweetland’s, and other places in Nevada; through the upper part of Placer County; through El Dorado, at Mameluke Hill and Georgetown; through Calaveras county, at Jackson and Murphy’s; and into Tuolumne at Columbia, Sonora and Campo Seco; and probably much further south and north, although we are not aware that up to this time it has been further explored and ascertained. In this peculiar region of country which we know by experience in some places to be miles in width, the gold lies deep, in some instances hundreds of feet below the surface, and can only be arrived at, by sinking shafts or by tunneling into the sides of the mountains. This requires a large outlay of capital which has prevented new comers, as a general thing, from attempting this kind of diggings. The consequence is, that a very large portion of this region of country extending for two hundred miles in length, is still untouched by the pick, except in most favorable localities. To a person who has traveled through the regions we have mentioned the remarkable similarity in the nature of the soil, and general conformation of the country, leads irresistibly to the conclusion **that a like cause has operated in producing the same result throughout its whole extent.** We have worked in a tunnel at Minnesota in Sierra County, and examined carefully the nature of the soil and rocks in a tunnel near Georgetown in El Dorado, and find them precisely similar in every respect, and both rewarding labor of a year in drifting, at rates that are extravagant, even in California. Persons who can have an opportunity to see the adits, or tunnels as our miners call them, sunk into the sides of the mountains, at the places we have mentioned, and looking to a stranger in the valley below, like the nests of swallows under the eaves of a barn, and then consider that there are hundreds of thousands of acres of similar ground still untouched, — will result arrival at the conclusion, that as yet we have but commenced to



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develop the mineral resources of our state. We visited the tunnel of the Bay State Company at Mameluke Hill, a few weeks since, and were astonished at the system, order and security with which the work is being carried on. This company have been at work over a year, during which time they have tunneled into the side of the mountain, six hundred feet, through a solid bed of clay slate; the roof is a perfect arch, and from the nature of the rock, requires no pillars or supports. After drifting six hundred feet at an immense outlay of capital, they "struck the lead" and are now being richly rewarded for their indomitable perseverance. It would astonish persons not familiar with this plan of mining, to witness the system and order with which works of this kind must necessarily, for the preservation of life, be prosecuted. After striking the lead, the paying dirt is carried out of the tunnel in a car, - on a rail road track, which extends through the whole length of the tunnel, and into the various galleries that descend right and left, - having galleries supported by regular pillars, with arched roofs, which in the dim light of the candles that each person carries, reminds one of the cloisters of the monks in one of the old monasteries of Europe. These tunnels have a regular system of drainage, as well as shafts for ventilation. When we consider, that three years ago, the men who are performing works like these all through the mountains, were engaged at farming, printing, carpentry and various other trades, and knew nothing of systematic mining, except as they had read of it in books, we find in it but a new proof of the unconquerable energy of our people, and of the benefits of that enlightened system of education which so distinguishes our country.

MINING IN SIERRA COUNTY. - At Minnesota the work is all conducted under ground except the washing. The amount of labor that has been performed is really surprising. On the bluff fronting the town, to the east are fourteen tunnels averaging 450 feet in depth each, and a superficial glance would convey to the mind of the traveler, that at least five years labor had been performed by at least 200 men, but one short year has produced the whole of it. "Napoleon sent the world a century ahead" in his passage of the Alps, but the American Miner out steps even his own former anticipations, he does in a year what it would require five years in any other country to perform.

Moore's Flat is turning out large wages to operators, it is two miles distant on the other side of the river (Middle Yuba) and situated on about the same level, Orleans Flat, is hard to beat, as well also as Eureka on the opposite side of the ridge, Concord and German Bars on the middle Yuba are paying about eight or twelve dollars.

The rich quartz lead near German Bar appears to be failing, from the best accounts obtained on the spot, it appears to have been a *bonance*, as it is termed in Mexico, or a single deposit unassociated with an extensive lead.

A new lead has just been struck at what is termed **Snowy Point**, just below German Bar, and on the opposite side of the ridge from that place, which from present appearances is likely to prove as valuable as the placers at Minnesota and surrounding district.

Yumana is doing a good and a large business, there are about

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fifty buildings, some of them frame, at this place and it has become a thriving mining town in a very short period. Gamblers are plenty, but there is but very little game for them, that business has lost its charm among the miners.

Chip's diggings is flourishing, and Smith's diggings on the opposite side of the canyon, give employment to a large number of miners. A more prospering condition of the mining districts of this vicinity has never existed, and among the miners no long faces is seen, but all are jovial and mirthful.

GOLD DIST. — Rough and Ready, says the Nevada Journal, was thought a few months ago to have most faded out, its diggings exhausted, and its hotels closing. Those who supposed so reckoned too fast. Rough and Ready has lately taken a fine start ahead, remodeled its buildings and increased greatly its business. As evidence of the prosperity of its mines, it is sufficient to state that one firm, Swehgart & Co., conducting the business of butchers, take weekly from 60 to 75 pounds of gold dust, besides coin.

BIG LUMP. — A specimen was exhibited to us on Saturday, weighing 154 1/4 ounces. It was taken out a short time since, from New York Ravine, near German Bar, Middle Yuba, and is valued at \$2,000.

ANOTHER. — An 18-pound specimen was taken from the claims of Uncle Joe Sweigart, at Rough and Ready, the past week.



June 4. *Saturday*. The date of the introduction of the *Rhododendron maximum* into Concord is worth preserving, May 16th, '53. They were small plants, one to four feet high, some with large flower-buds, twenty-five cents apiece; and I noticed next day one or more in every front yard on each side of the street, and the inhabitants out watering them. Said to be the most splendid native flower in Massachusetts; in a swamp in Medfield. I hear to-day that one in town has blossomed.

George Minott says he saw many lightning-bugs a warm evening the fore part of this week, after the rains. Probably it was the 29th.

P.M. — To Hubbard's Close Swamp.

The vetch just out by Turnpike, — dark-violet purple. horse-radish fully out (some time). The great ferns are already two or three feet high in Hubbard's shady swamp. The clintonia is abundant there along by the foot of the hill, and in its prime. Look there for its berries. Commonly four leaves there, with an obtuse point, — the lady's-slipper leaf not so rich, dark green and smooth, having several channels. The bullfrog now begins to be heard at night regularly; has taken the place of the hylodes. Looked over the oldest town records at the clerk's office this evening, the old book containing grants of land. Am surprised to find such names as "Walden Pond" and "Fair Haven" as early as 1653, and apparently 1652; also, under the first date at least, "Second Division," the rivers as North and South Rivers (no Assabet at that date), "Swamp bridge," apparently on back road, "Goose Pond," "Mr. Flints Pond," "Mutt Meadow," "Willow Swamp," "Spruce Swamp," etc., etc. "Dongy," "Dung hole," or what-not, appears to be between Walden and Fair Haven. Is Rocky Hill Mr. Emerson's or the Cliffs? Where are South Brook, Frog Ponds, etc., etc., etc. ? It is pleasing to read these evergreen wilderness names, *i.e.* of particular swamps and woods, then applied to now perchance cleared fields and meadows said to be redeemed. The Second Division appears to have been a very large tract between the two rivers.

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June 5, Sunday, 1853: A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

A beautiful day, except the wind blows quite hard from ahead. Came over some very heavy sandy roads. It would seem more like the holy sabbath could we lay by and rest, but this is impossible to-day for we have no wood. To lay by on Sunday is a thing scarcely thought of on the plain. Every one is already tired of the trip and hasten on to the end for provisions are getting out. Reached Ash Hollow at sunset and found no grass. Drove 22 miles today.



June 5. *Sunday*. 5 A.M. — By river to Nawshawtuct. For the most part we are inclined to doubt the prevalence of gross superstition among the civilized ancients, — whether the Greeks, for instance, accepted literally the mythology which we accept as matchless poetry, — but we have only to be reminded of the kind of respect paid to the Sabbath as a holy day here in New England, and the fears which haunt those who break it, to see that our neighbors are the creatures of an equally gross superstition with the ancients. I am convinced that there is no very important difference between a New-Englander's religion and a Roman's. We both worship in the shadow of our sins: they erect the temples for us. Jehovah has no superiority to Jupiter. The New-Englander is a pagan suckled in a creed outworn. Superstition has always reigned. It is absurd to think that these farmers, dressed in their Sunday clothes, proceeding to church, differ essentially in this respect from the Roman peasantry. They have merely changed the names and number of their gods. Men were as good then as they are now, and loved one another as much — or little.

The sweet flag has been out some days. The *Smilacina racemosa*. The river has now assumed a summer aspect, the water gone down somewhat. The pickerel-weed is more conspicuous, a foot high or more, and potamogetons and polygonums appear, and pads are quite abundant. I see green flower-buds¹¹⁵ on the tupelo. The hickory is fairly out. The azalea about done. The carrion-flower just out. Saw no blossom on the gill I looked at yesterday; its prime is probably past. Now see those great green, half fruit, half flower like, excrescences on blueberry and huckleberry bushes. The hemlocks, whose fresh light-green shoots have now grown half an inch or an inch, spotting the trees, contrasting with the dark green of last year's foliage, the fan-like sprays looking like bead bags.

P.M. — To Mason's pasture. The world now full of *verdure* and *fragrance* and the air *comparatively* clear (not yet the constant haze of the dog-days), through which the distant fields are seen, reddened with sorrel, and the meadows wet-green, full of fresh grass, and the trees in their first beautiful, bright, untarnished and unspotted green. May is the bursting into leaf and early flowering, with much coolness and wet and a few decidedly warm days, ushering in summer; June, *verdure* and *growth* with not intolerable, but agreeable, heat. The river meadows from N. Barrett's have for some time lost their early yellow look. Nightshade out, maybe some days. The young pitch pines in Mason's pasture are a glorious sight, now most of the shoots grown six inches, so soft and blue-green, nearly as wide as high. It is nature's front yard. The mountain laurel shows its red flower-buds, but many shoots have been killed by frost. A *Polygonatum pubescens* there two and a half feet long. The large thorn by Yellow Birch Swamp must be a *Cratægus coccinea*. Though full of fruit last year, it has not blossomed this year. There is a tract of pasture, woodland, orchard, and swamp in the north part of the town, through which the old Carlisle road runs, which is nearly two miles square, without a single house and scarcely any cultivated land in it, — four square miles. I perceive some black birch leaves with a beautiful crimson kind of sugaring along the furrows of the nerves, giving them wholly a bright-crimson color, — either a fungus or the deposit of an insect. Seen through a microscope it sparkles like a ruby.

Nature is fair in proportion as the youth is pure. The heavens and the earth are one flower. The earth is the calyx, the heavens the corolla.

115. They are flowers; also the 9th.



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June 6, Monday, 1853: [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) left the *USS Susquehanna* for the Japanese shore with a party of officers, to visit the Prince Regent at Sheuti (Shuri). William Speiden, Jr. was not part of this.

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

Started quite early this morning, traveled till about 9 o'clock, came to some grass and stopped till noon, then traveled till 4 o'clock. Drove 15 miles to-day. Roads very heavy. I am quite unwell to-day, scarcely able to sit up.

That evening [Friedrich Engels](#) wrote from Manchester to [Karl Marx](#) in London:

Dear Marx,

I had intended to write to you by the first post today, but was detained at the office until 8 o'clock. You will have received both Weydemeyer's and Cluss' anti-Willich statements in the *Criminal Zeitung*, i.e. direct from America. If not, write to me at once. As usual, papa Weydemeyer is too long-winded, very seldom makes a point, then promptly blunts it with his style, and unfolds his well-known lack of verve with rare composure. Nevertheless, the man has done his best, the story about Hentze, the "comrade-in-arms", and the influence of others on Hirsch's pen is nicely fashioned; his incredible style and his composure, regarded over there as impassibility, will appeal to the philistines, and his performance can, on the whole, be regarded as satisfactory. Cluss' statement, on the other hand, pleases me enormously. In every line we hear the chuckle of *l'homme supérieur* who, through "personal contact" with Willich, has, as it were, become physically conscious of his superiority. For lightness of style, this surpasses everything that Cluss has ever written. Never a clumsy turn of phrase, not a trace of *gêne* or embarrassment. How well it becomes him thus to ape the worthy citizen of benevolent mien who nevertheless betrays the cloven hoof at every turn. How splendid, the sentence about "revolutionary agencies" being "a swindle" off which, according to Willich, he lives. The chivalrous one will have been surprised to find among the uncouth agents, a fellow who is so dashing, so adroit, so aggressive by nature and yet so unassumingly noble in his bearing, and who returns thrust for thrust a *tempo*. So subtly – far more subtly and deftly than himself. If only Willich had the discernment to discover this! But irritation and due reflection will, I trust, give him a little more insight.

It is obvious that we shall have to see this dirty business through to the bitter end. The more resolutely we tackle it the better. You'll find, by the way, that it won't be so bad after all. The chivalrous one has promised vastly more than he can fulfil. We shall hear of assassination attempts, etc., the Schramm affair will be glamorously tricked out, and such chimeras will be evoked as will cause us to stare at one another in amazement, not having the faintest idea what the man is

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actually talking about; at worst he will tell the story about Marx and Engels arriving drunk one evening at Great Windmill Street (*vide* Kinkel in Cincinnati, *coram* Huzelio). If he goes as far as that, I shall tell the scandal-loving American public what the Besançon Company used to talk about when Willich and the *formosus* pastor Corydon Rauf were not present. *Au bout du compte*, what can a brute of this kind find to tax us with? Mark my word, it will be just as *pauvre* as Teller's smear.

I shall be seeing Borchardt within the next few days. If any recommendations are to be had, you can trust me to get them. But I hardly imagine that Steinthal, etc., have connections of the sort in London. It's almost wholly outside their line of business. Besides, if only for fear of making a fool of himself, the fellow will attempt to put off doing anything about it up here. If it were not for Lupus, I'd consign the chap, etc. I can't abide him, with his smooth, self-important, vainglorious, deceitful charlatan's physiognomy.

If Lassalle has given you a good, neutral address in Düsseldorf, you can send me 100 copies. We shall arrange for them to be packed in bales of twist by firms up here; but they should not be addressed to Lassalle himself, since the packages will go to Gladbach, Elberfeld and so on, where they will have to be stamped and sent by post to Düsseldorf. However, we cannot entrust a package for Lassalle or the Hatzfeldt woman to any local firm, because, 1. they all employ at least one Rhinelander who knows all the gossip, or 2. if that goes off all right, the recipients of the bales will get to know about it, or 3. at the very best the postal authorities will take a look at the things before delivering them. We have a good address in Cologne, but are not, alas, very well acquainted with the people who are the principal buyers here for the firm in Cologne, and hence cannot expect them to do any smuggling. Indeed, what we shall tell the people here is that the packages contain presents for the fair sex.

From all this you will gather that I am once again on passable terms with Charles. The affair was settled with great dispatch at the first suitable opportunity. Nevertheless you will realise that the fool derives a certain pleasure from having been given preference over myself in one rotten respect at least, because of Mr Gottfried Ermen's envy of my old man. *Habeat sibi*. He at any rate realises that, if I so choose, I can become *maître de la situation* within 48 hours, and that's sufficient.

The absence of landed property is indeed the key to the whole of the East. Therein lies its political and religious history. But how to explain the fact that orientals never reached the stage of landed property, not even the feudal kind? This is, I think, largely due to the climate, combined with the nature of the land, more especially the great stretches of desert extending from the Sahara right across Arabia, Persia, India and Tartary to the highest of the Asiatic uplands. Here artificial irrigation is the first prerequisite for agriculture, and this is the responsibility either of the communes, the provinces or the central government. In the East, the government has always consisted of 3 departments only: Finance (pillage at home), War (pillage at home and abroad), and *travaux publics*, provision for reproduction. The British government in India has put a somewhat narrower interpretation on nos. 1 and 2 while completely

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neglecting no. 3, so that Indian agriculture is going to wrack and ruin. Free competition is proving an absolute fiasco there. The fact that the land was made fertile by artificial means and immediately ceased to be so when the conduits fell into disrepair, explains the otherwise curious circumstance that vast expanses are now and wastes which once were magnificently cultivated (Palmyra, Petra, the ruins in the Yemen, any number of localities in Egypt, Persia, Hindustan); it explains the fact that one single war of devastation could depopulate and entirely strip a country of its civilisation for centuries to come. This, I believe, also accounts for the destruction of southern Arabian trade before Mohammed's time, a circumstance very rightly regarded by you as one of the mainsprings of the Mohammedan revolution. I am not sufficiently well acquainted with the history of trade during the first six centuries A.D. to be able to judge to what extent general material conditions in the world made the trade route via Persia to the Black Sea and to Syria and Asia Minor via the Persian Gulf preferable to the Red Sea route. But one significant factor, at any rate, must have been the relative safety of the caravans in the well-ordered Persian Empire under the Sassanids, whereas between 200 and 600 A.D. the Yemen was almost continuously being subjugated, overrun and pillaged by the Abyssinians. By the seventh century the cities of southern Arabia, still flourishing in Roman times, had become a veritable wilderness of ruins; in the course of 500 years what were purely mythical, legendary traditions regarding their origin had been appropriated by the neighbouring Bedouins, (cf. the Koran and the Arab historian Novairi), and the alphabet in which the local inscriptions had been written was almost wholly unknown although *there was no other*, so that *de facto* writing had fallen into oblivion. Things of this kind presuppose, not only a **superseding**, probably due to general trading conditions, but outright violent destruction such as could only be explained by the Ethiopian invasion. The expulsion of the Abyssinians did not take place until about 40 years before Mohammed, and was plainly the first act of the Arabs' awakening national consciousness, which was further aroused by Persian invasions from the North penetrating almost as far as Mecca. I shall not be tackling the history of Mohammed himself for a few days yet; so far it seems to me to have the character of a Bedouin reaction against the settled, albeit decadent urban fellaheen whose religion by then was also much debased, combining as it did a degenerate form of nature worship with a degenerate form of Judaism and Christianity.

Old Bernier's stuff is really very fine. It's a real pleasure to get back to something written by a sensible, lucid old Frenchman who constantly hits the nail on the head *sans avoir l'air de s'en apercevoir* [without appearing to be aware of it]. Since I am in any case tied up with the eastern mummery for some weeks, I have made use of the opportunity to learn Persian. I am put off Arabic, partly by my inborn hatred of Semitic languages, partly by the impossibility of getting anywhere, without considerable expenditure of time, in so extensive a language — one which has 4,000 roots and goes back over 2,000-3,000 years. By comparison, Persian is absolute child's play. Were it not for that damned Arabic alphabet in which every half dozen letters

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looks like every other half dozen and the vowels are not written, I would undertake to learn the entire grammar within 48 hours. This for the better encouragement of Pieper should he feel the urge to imitate me in this poor joke. I have set myself a maximum of three weeks for Persian, so if he stakes two months on it he'll best me anyway. What a pity Weitling can't speak Persian; he would then have his *langue universelle toute trouvée* [universal language ready-made] since it is, to my knowledge, the only language where "me" and "to me" are never at odds, the dative and accusative always being the same.

It is, by the way, rather pleasing to read dissolute old Hafiz in the original language, which sounds quite passable and, in his grammar, old Sir William Jones likes to cite as examples dubious Persian jokes, subsequently translated into Greek verse in his *Commentariis poeseos asiaticae*, because even in Latin they seem to him too obscene. These commentaries, Jones' Works, Vol. II, *De Poesi erotica*, will amuse you. Persian prose, on the other hand, is deadly dull. E.g. the *Rauzât-us-safâ* by the noble Mirkhond, who recounts the Persian epic in very flowery but vacuous language. Of Alexander the Great, he says that the name Iskander, in the Ionian language, is Akshid Rus (like *Iskander*, a corrupt version of *Alexandros*); it means much the same as *filusuf*, which derives from *fila*, love, and *sufa*, wisdom, "Iskander" thus being synonymous with "friend of wisdom".

Of a **retired** king he says: "He beat the drum of abdication with the drumsticks of retirement", as will *père* Willich, should he involve himself any more deeply in the literary fray. Willich will also suffer the same fate as King Afrasiab of Turan when deserted by his troops and of whom Mirkhond says: "He gnawed the nails of horror with the teeth of desperation until the blood of vanquished consciousness welled forth from the finger-tips of shame."

More tomorrow.



June 6. 4.30 A.M. — To Linnwa Woods.

Famous place for tanagers. Considerable fog on river. Few sights more exhilarating than one of these banks of fog lying along a stream. The linnea just out. *Corydalis glauca*, a delicate glaucous plant rarely met with, with delicate flesh-colored and yellow flowers, covered with a glaucous bloom, on dry, rocky hills. Perhaps it suggests gentility. Set it down as early as middle of May or earlier. *Viburnum nudum*; may be [Bigelow's pyrifolium](#) (which [Gray](#) makes a variety), except that its scales are not *black*, though the peduncle of its eye is short. That is apparently *Pyrola chlorantha*, so well budded now. *Galium triflorum* (?) there on the dry hillside; peduncles two-flowered as well as three, green or no petals.

Is that blackberry mixed with the linnaea swamp blackberry? It will open to-day or to-morrow. Begin to observe and to admire the forms of trees with shining foliage and each its shadow on the hillside. This morning I hear the note of young bluebirds in the air, which have recently taken wing, and the old birds keep up such a warbling and twittering as remind me of spring.

According to [Sophia's](#) account she must have seen an emperor moth, "pea-green with a sort of maple keys for tail," in a lady's hand in Cambridge to-day. So it may have come out of the chrysalis seen May 23d.

P.M. — To Conantum by boat.

The *Potamogeton*. [a blank space] out two or three days, probably. The small primrose out at Hubbard's Swimming-Place, drooping at top like a smilacina's leaves. Blue-eyed grass now begins to give that slaty-blue tint to meadows. A breezy day, a June wind showing the under sides of leaves.

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The *now red* round white lily pads are now very numerous and conspicuous, red more or less on both sides and, with the yellow lily pads, turned up by the wind. In May and June we have breezes which, for the most part, are not too cold but exhilarating. I see the breams' nests and breams in them. The larger rushes are conspicuously above water. The *Viburnum dentatum*, that very conspicuously and regularly tooth-leafed shrub, like a saw — with coarse teeth, as yet *very few* flowers in its wines. This is at edge of Hubbard's Woods, opposite Hollowell place. As I sit looking over the side of the boat there, I see the bottom covered with small hypericums springing up in the yellowish water, and in the axils of the leaves under water are little sparkling, silvery beads of air, as are sometimes seen on plants covered with dew out of water, but I do not perceive them on the adjacent plants. The deep shadow of Conantum Cliff and of mere prominences in the hills, now at mid-afternoon as we row by, is very interesting. It is the most pleasing effect of the kind, or contrast of light and shade, that I notice. Methinks that in winter a shadow is not attractive. The air is very clear, — at least, as we look from the river valley, — and the landscape all swept and brushed. We seem to see to some depth into the side of Fair Haven Hill. *Rhus Toxicodendron*, the shrub, out at Bittern Cliff. The sidesaddle-flowers are now in their prime. There are some very large ones hereabouts, five inches in diameter when you flatten out their petals, like great dull-red roses. Their petals are of a peculiar but agreeable red, but their upper sides, — *i.e.* of their calyx-leaves, — shiny leather — red or brown-red, are agreeable. A slippery elm (*Ulmus fulva*) on Lee's Cliff, — red elm. Put it with the common, It has large, rough leaves and straggling branches — a rather small, much-spreading tree, with an appearance between the common elm and iron-wood.

The aspect of the dry rocky hills already indicates the rapid revolution of the seasons. The spring, that early age of the world, following hard on the reign of water and the barren rocks yet dripping with it, is past. How many plants have already dried up! — lichens and algae, which we can still remember, as if belonging to a former epoch, saxifrage, crowfoot, anemone, columbine for the most part, etc. It is Lee's Cliff I am on. There is a growth confined to the damp and early spring. How dry and crisp the turf feels there now, not moist with melted snows, remembering, as it were, when it was the bottom of the sea. How wet-glossy the leaves of the red oak, now fully expanded! They shine when the sun comes out as after rain. I find on a shelf of the rock the *Turritis stricta*, now gone to seed; but two feet two inches high ([Gray](#) allows but one foot?); pods upright and nearly three inches long, linear; and flat leaves decidedly lanceolate or linear; but some minute imperfect unexpanded flowers still on it appear as if they would have been yellowish.

In the very open park in rear of the Rocks on the hilltop, where lambkill and huckleberries and grass alternate, came to one of those handsome, round, mirror-like pools a rod or two in diameter and surrounded with a border of fine weeds, such as you frequently meet with on the top of springy hills. Though warm and muddy at bottom, they are very beautiful and glassy and look as if they were cool springs; so high, exposed to the light, yet so wild and fertile, as if the fertility of the lowland was transferred to the summit of the hills. These are the kind of mirrors at which the huntresses in the golden age arranged their toilets, — which the deer frequented and contemplated their branching horns in.

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June 7, Tuesday, 1853: The Reverend [Samuel Ringgold Ward](#) began his work in England:

By the advice of Rev. T. James, I invited several friends of the anti-slavery cause to a meeting at Radley's Hotel, on the 7th of June, to lay before them the objects of my mission. Having been honoured with the acquaintance of Lord Shaftesbury, I ventured to ask him to take the chair on that occasion; to which, with his Lordship's ordinary kindness, he consented. The meeting, approving of my objects, adjourned to Freemasons' Tavern, on the 21st. In the meantime, Lord Shaftesbury kindly procured for me the names of the following noblemen to attach to the call for that meeting: the Duke of Argyll, the Earl of Harrowby, the Earl Waldegrave, and Lord [Henry Peter Brougham](#). Mr. Sherman procured for me the names of Sir James K. Shuttleworth, Mr. Sheriff Croll, and Messrs. Bevan and Tritton the bankers.

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


Started at the usual hour, traveled till 10 o'clock over very heavy roads, laid by to do some baking and air our provisions, camped near an excellent spring of water, and had a good meal of Buffalo meat.

[William M. White](#)'s version of a portion of [Henry Thoreau](#)'s journal entry is:

*Visited my nighthawk on her nest.
Could hardly believe my eyes
When I stood within seven feet
And beheld her sitting on her eggs,
Her head to me.*

*She looked so Saturnian,
So one with the earth,
So sphinx-like,
A relic of the reign of Saturn
Which Jupiter did not destroy,
A riddle that might well cause a man
To go dash his head against a stone.*



June 7. Visited my nighthawk [**Common Nighthawk**  *Chordeiles minor*] on her nest. Could hardly believe my eyes when I stood within seven feet and beheld her sitting on her eggs, her head to me. She looked so Saturnian, so one with the earth, so sphinx-like, a relic of the reign of Saturn which Jupiter did not destroy, a riddle that might well cause a man to go dash his head against a stone. It was not an actual living creature, far less a winged creature of the air, but a figure in stone or bronze, a fanciful production of art, like the gryphon or phoenix. In fact, with its breast toward me, and owing to its color or size no bill perceptible, it looked like the end [of] a brand, such as are common in a clearing, its breast mottled or alternately waved with dark brown and gray, its flat, grayish, weather-beaten crown, its eyes nearly closed, purposely, lest those bright beads should betray it, with the stony cunning of the sphinx. A fanciful work in bronze to ornament a mantel. It was enough to fill one with awe. The sight of this creature sitting on its eggs impressed me with the venerableness of the globe. There was nothing novel about it. All the while, this seemingly sleeping bronze sphinx, as motionless as the earth, was watching me with intense anxiety through those narrow slits in its eyelids. Another step, and it fluttered down the hill close to the ground, with a wabbling [*sic*] motion, as if touching the ground now with the tip of one wing, now with the other, so ten rods to the water, which [it] skimmed close over a few rods, then rose and soared in the air



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above me. Wonderful creature, which sits motionless on its eggs on the barest, most exposed hills, through pelting storms of rain or hail, as if it were a rock or a part of the earth itself, the outside of the globe, with its eyes shut and its wings folded, and, after the two days' storm, when you think it has become a fit symbol of the rheumatism, it suddenly rises into the air as a bird, one of the most aerial, supple, and graceful of creatures, without stiffness in its wings or joints! It was a fit prelude to meeting Prometheus bound to his rock on Caucasus.



June 8, Wednesday, 1853: As a present for his 43d birthday, Clara Schumann presented [Robert Schumann](#) with the manuscript to her Piano Variations in F# Minor.

Scherzo in E^b minor op.4 for piano solo by [Johannes Brahms](#) was performed for the initial time, at the court of Hanover, by the composer from manuscript. King Georg V pronounces him "little [Beethoven](#)."

The [California Daily Union](#) printed a letter it had received to the effect that "a company known as the American River Mining Company, using steam power, and a few others some two years ago, held a meeting and donated themselves nearly all the best mining ground on what is now called Texas Hill District, and made such laws as would entitle them, as they thought, to say in the language of Robinson Crusoe, I am monarch of all I survey, etc. One of the sections of said laws compels the claimants to work the leads every twelve days, otherwise they were to be forfeited, provided the same could be worked. This they failed to do not only for days, but for months. The claims are workable whenever water can be had for washing the dirt. The consequence was they (the American River Company) had some claims jumped. They attempted to recover the best claims by force, and in this they failed. The five hired men they had at work refused to work when order off by the present claimants. Seven men were from Negro Bar, witnessed the scene, (and not one hundred and fifty as was stated). The miners on Saturday last held a meeting and remodeled the old laws respecting mining in this district, which is the custom in all mining districts — in some districts the laws are altered monthly. The old laws gave the American River Mining Company fifty leads, and they have held twice this number. The new laws that are now adopted gives them thirty leads, and it is said if they don't do any more mining than they have done the past year, it will take them a great many years to work one-half the claims now held under the present laws, and it is well known that their dirt is as good as any in the diggings — paying from \$1.30 to \$1.45 per car load of 30 buckets." The gazette also learned, from the author of the above letter, that the Eureka Company's Canal had been completed running the whole length of the Texas Hill District 13½ feet above the level of the American River, and had begun to provide a race of water sufficient for fifty toms or sluices, at a daily fee of \$3 per device, and had excess water if anyone else should desire to begin the recovery of gold in a claim along its path.

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

Rolled out quite early. Sunset brought us 20 miles farther on our long and tedious journey. Nothing had occurred today worthy of note.





June 8. Wednesday. P.M. – To Well Meadow.

Nest of a Maryland yellow-throat [[Common Yellowthroat](#) [Geothlypis trichas](#)] by Utricularia Pool in a tuft of sedge; made of dry sedge, grass, and a few dry leaves; about four small eggs, a delicate white with reddish-brown spots on larger end; the nest well concealed. At the last small pond near Well Meadow, a frog, apparently a small bullfrog, on the shore enveloped by a swarm of small, almost invisible insects, some resting on him, attracted perhaps by the slime which shone on him. He appeared to endure the persecution like a philosopher. *Utricularia vulgaris* out, how long?

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As I stood by this pond, I heard a hawk [Red-tailed Hawk  *Buteo jamaicensis*] scream, and, looking up, saw a pretty large one circling not far off and incessantly screaming, as I at first supposed to scare and so discover its prey, but its screaming was so incessant and it circled from time to time so near me, as I moved southward, that I began to think it had a nest near by and was angry at my intrusion into its domains. As I moved, the bird still followed and screamed, coming sometimes quite near or within gun-shot, then circling far off or high into the sky. At length, as I was looking up at it, thinking it the only living creature within view, I was singularly startled to behold, as my eye by chance penetrated deeper into the blue, —the abyss of blue above, which I had taken for a solitude,— its mate silently soaring at an immense height and seemingly indifferent to me. We are surprised to discover that there can be an eye on us on that side, and so little suspected, that the heavens are full of eyes, though they look so blue and spotless. Then I knew it was the female that circled and screamed below. At last the latter rose gradually to meet her mate, and they circled together there, as if they could not possibly feel any anxiety on my account. When I drew nearer to the tall trees where I suspected the nest to be, the female descended again, swept by screaming still nearer to me just over the tree-tops and finally, while I was looking for the orchis in the swamp, alighted on a white pine twenty or thirty rods off. (The great fringed orchis just open.) At length I detected the nest about eighty feet from the ground, in a very large white pine by the edge of the swamp. It was about three feet in diameter, of dry sticks, and a young hawk, apparently as big as its mother, stood on the edge of the nest looking down at me, and only moving its head when I moved. In its imperfect plumage and by the slow motion of its head it reminded me strongly of a vulture [Turkey Vulture  *Cathartes aura* (~~Turkey Buzzard~~)], so large and gaunt. It appeared a tawny brown on its neck and breast, and dark brown or blackish on wings. The mother was light beneath, and apparently lighter still on rump.

The *Pyrola chlorantha*, — if the style can be said to be “scarcely exerted,” — under Cliffs, a day or more. The *Aralia hispida* at the foot of the rocks higher up, earlier than elsewhere. White pine in flower, — all the female flowers on the very tops of the trees, a small crimson cone upright on the ends of its peduncles, while the last year's, now three or four inches long and green, are curved downward like scythes. Best seen looking down on the tops of lower pines from the top of a higher one. Apparently just beginning.





June 9, Thursday, 1853: Henry Thoreau made an entry in his journal that he was later to copy into his early lecture "What Shall It Profit?" as:



[Paragraph 12] I had the following account from an Irish girl who went to live at a milk-farmer's in my neighborhood, the other day, not being strong enough to do the work of a village family. She said that twenty-two lodged in the house the first night, including two travelling pig-men—that he kept ten men—had six children and a deaf wife—and one of the men had his wife with him who helped sew, beside taking care of her own child. Also all the cooking and washing for his father and mother who lived in another house, and whom he was bound to carry through, was done in his house—and she was the only girl they hired. The workmen were called up at four by an alarm clock—which was set a quarter of an hour ahead of the clock down stairs, and that more than as much ahead of the town clock—and she was on her feet from that hour till nine at night. Each man had two pairs of overalls in the wash, and the cans to be scalded were countless. Having got through washing the breakfast dishes at a quarter before twelve Sunday noon by Scratchit's time—she left—no more to return. He had told her that the work was easy—that girls had lived with him to recover their health, and then gone away to be married.

[Paragraph 13] He is regarded as one of the most enterprising and

Brad Dean's Commentary

Following completed inspection of American vessels, the USS Susquehanna got under steam, taking the USS Saratoga in tow, and departed for the Bonin (Ogasawara) Islands.

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

We are in sight of stupendous "Court House Rock." Reached it by noon. It looks to be about two miles from the road, but is 8. One of our company visited it and found it to be a huge pile of sand rock, very soft. Could easily cut it with a knife. There are a great many names on it. It has the appearance of a Court House at a distance. It is said to be about 300 feet high. Came 17 miles to-day and camped in sight of Chimney rock.



June 9: 4.30 A.M. —To Nawshawtuct by boat.

A prevalent fog, though not quite so thick as the last described. It is a little more local, for it is so thin southwest of this hill that I can see the earth through it, but as thick as before northeast. Yet here and there deep valleys are excavated in it, as painters imagine the Red Sea for the passage of Pharaoh's host, wherein trees and houses appear as it were at the bottom of the sea. What is peculiar about it is that it is the tops of the trees which you see first and most distinctly, before you see their trunks or where they stand on earth. Far in the northeast there is, as before, apparently a tremendous surf breaking on a distant shoal. It is either a real shoal, i.e. a hill over which the fog breaks, or the effect of the sun's rays on it.

I was amused by the account which Mary, the Irish girl who left us the other day, gave of her experience at —, the milkman's, in the north part of the town. She said that twenty-two lodged in the house the first night, including two pig men, that Mr. — kept ten men, had six children and a deaf wife, and one of the men had his wife with him, who helped sew, beside taking care of her own child. Also all the cooking and washing for his father and mother, who live in another house and whom he is bound to carry through, is done in his house, and she, Mary, was the only girl they hired; and the workmen were called up at four by an alarm clock which was set a quarter of an hour ahead

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of the clock downstairs,— and that more than as much ahead of the town clock, — and she was on her feet from that hour till nine at night. Each man had two pairs of overalls in the wash, and the cans to be scalded were countless. Having got through washing the breakfast dishes by a quarter before twelve, Sunday noon, by ——'s time, she left, no more to return. He had told her that the work was easy, that girls had lived with him to recover their health, and then went away to be married. He is regarded as one of the most enterprising and thrifty farmers in the county, and takes the premiums of the Agricultural Society. He probably exacts too much of his hands.

The steam of the engine streaming far behind is regularly divided, as if it were the vertebra, of a serpent, probably by the strokes of the piston. The reddish seeds or glumes of grasses cover my boots now in the dewy or foggy morning. The diervilla out apparently yesterday. The first white lily bud. White clover is abundant and very sweet on the common, filling the air, but not yet elsewhere as last year.

8 A.M. — To Orchis Swamp; Well Meadow. Hear a goldfinch [**American Goldfinch** █ *Carduelis tristis*]; this the second or third only, that I have heard. Whiteweed now whitens the fields. There are many star flowers. I remember the anemone, especially the rue anemone, which is not yet all gone, lasting longer than the true one above all the trientalis, and of late the yellow Bethlehem-star, and perhaps others.

I have come with a spy-glass to look at the hawks [**Red-tailed Hawk** █ *Buteo jamaicensis*]. They have detected me and are already screaming over my head more than half a mile from the nest. I find no difficulty in looking at the young hawk (there appears to be one only, standing on the edge of the nest), resting the glass in the crotch of a young oak. I can see every wink and the color of its iris. It watches me more steadily than I it, now looking straight down at me with both eyes and outstretched neck, now turning its head and looking with one eye. How its eye and its whole head expresses anger! Its anger is more in its eye than in its beak. It is quite hoary over the eye and on the chin. The mother meanwhile is incessantly circling about and above its charge and me, farther or nearer, sometimes withdrawing a quarter of a mile, but occasionally coming to alight for a moment almost within gunshot, on the top of a tall white pine; but I hardly bring my glass fairly to bear on her, and get sight of her angry eye through the pine-needles, before she circles away again. Thus for an hour that I lay there, screaming every minute or oftener with open bill. Now and then pursued by a kingbird [**Eastern Kingbird** █ *Tyrannus tyrannus*] or a blackbird █, who appear merely to annoy it by dashing down at its back. Meanwhile the male is soaring, apparently quite undisturbed, at a great height above, evidently not hunting, but amusing or recreating himself in the thinner and cooler air, as if pleased with his own circles, like a geometer, and enjoying the sublime scene. I doubt if he has his eye fixed on any prey, or the earth. He probably descends to hunt.

Got two or three handfuls of strawberries on Fair Haven. They are already drying up. The huckleberry bedbug-smelling bug is on them. It is natural that the first fruit which the earth bears should emit and be as it were an embodiment of that vernal fragrance with which the air has teemed. Strawberries are its manna, found ere long where that fragrance has filled the air. Little natural lids or patches on the sides of dry hills, where the fruit sometimes reddens the ground. But it soon dries up, unless there is a great deal of rain. Well, are not the juices of early fruit distilled from the air? Prunella out. The meadows are now yellow with the golden senecio, a more orange yellow, mingled with the light glossy yellow of the buttercup. The green fruit of the sweet-fern now. The *Juniperus repens* appears, though now dry and effete, to have blossomed recently.

The tall white *Erigeron annuus* (?), for thus is the only one described as white tinged with purple, just out.¹¹⁶ The bullfrogs are in full blast to-night. I do not hear a toad from my window; only the crickets beside. The toads I have but rarely heard of late. So there is an evening for the toads and another for the bullfrogs.

116. I think it is *strigosus*, but tinged with purple sometimes.



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June 10, Friday, 1853: On this day [Henry Thoreau](#) made a remark in his journal that indicates to us that he had been reading from the 3d chapter of [Lemuel Shattuck's](#) 1835 [A HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF CONCORD:...](#) (Boston MA: Russell, Odiorne, and Company; Concord: [John Stacy](#), 1835)

Young America left [New-York harbor](#) on a 100-day voyage to San Francisco.

On about this day, [Waldo Emerson](#) wrote in his journal:

Yesterday a ride to Bedford with Ellery, along the "Bedford Levels" & walked all over the premises of the Old Mill - King Philip's Mill - on the Shawsheen River; old mill, with sundry nondescript wooden antiquities - Boys with bare legs were fishing on the little islet in the stream; ... as we rode, one thing was clear, as oft before, that it is favorable to sanity - the occasional change of landscape. If a girl is mad to marry, let her take a ride of ten miles, & see meadows & mountains she never saw before; two villages, & an old mansion house; & the odds are, it will change all her resolutions. World is full of fools who get a-going & never stop: set them off on another tack, & they are half-cured. From Shawsheen we went to Burlington; & E. reiterated his conviction, that the only art in the world is landscape-painting. The boys held up their fish to us from far; a broad new placard on the walls announced to us that the Shawsheen-mill was for sale; but we bought neither the fish nor the mill.

On June 10th [Frederick Douglass' Paper](#) printed an article on Mrs. Stowe and her Money and a letter from William W. Brown:

The Testimonial to Mrs. Stowe.

Some of our contemporaries have been much exercised in mind, and greatly troubled in spirit, lest in accepting the money of the British people, Mrs. Stowe should compromise her dignity as an American authoress. The following, from the pen of Rev. H. WARD BEECHER, who may be supposed to be fully informed on the subject, will, we think, greatly relieve our delicately sensitive neighbors on this point. What is here stated by Mr. Beecher, we know to be true long before Mrs. Stowe left the United States for England.

"A word upon the pecuniary offerings to Mrs. Stowe, in England. It is well known by many that Mrs. Stowe has from the first desired to turn whatever influence this work might give her, to the elevation of the African race. The plan which has been most in her thoughts has been a seminary in which persons of African descent may be thoroughly educated, not merely in literary and scientific courses, but in practical arts, by which they might secure and maintain a proper place in society. To the founding of such an institution she had determined to contribute much of her income; and the hope of securing greater interest for it, was one among the chief reasons for her tour. The generous



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contributions in money, made to her in Great Britain, are not understood by either party, but certainly not by Mrs. Stowe, to be for her own private and personal use, but to be employed for the education and elevation of the free colored people of the North.

"The difficulties in the way of such an enterprise are exceedingly great. A public sentiment among many Christians – whose only conception of duty is to vomit the colored man out of America as an indigestible mass – will not afford much of that sympathetic aid without which our own academies and colleges find it almost impossible to live. – Education for the free colored manis the thing most needed. He can do nothing without it. Nothing can prevent his rising, in due time, with it.

"We speak of northern prejudice against the blacks. It is not mere prejudice. Neither in the north nor in the south is there any prejudice against the blacks as menials. We love to be served by them. Neither odor nor color repel them from our toilet. Dr. Pennington is not allowed, in his pastoral visits among the poor and sick of his flock, scattered all over New York, to ride in an omnibus by the side of white folks; but if Dr. Pennington was a servant and a coachman, he might sit on the same seat with ladies and gentlemen, and ride unrebuked thro' Broadway."

Letter from William W. Brown.

DEAR MR. GARRISON: – I forward to you, by this day's mail, the papers containing accounts of the great meeting held in Exeter Hall last night. No meeting during this anniversary has caused so much talk and excitement as this gathering. No time could possibly have been more appropriate for such a meeting than the present. Uncle Tom's Cabin has come down upon the dark abodes of slavery like a morning sunlight, unfolding to view its enormities in a manner which has fastened all eyes upon the "peculiar situation," and awakening sympathy in hearts that never before felt for the slave. Had Exeter Hall been capable of holding fifty thousand instead of five thousand, it would no doubt have been filled to its utmost capacity. For more than a week before the meeting came off, the tickets were all disposed of, and it was understood that hundreds were applying every day. With those who may be classed as Mrs. Stowe's converts, that lady was the centre of attraction for them; while the elder abolitionists came for the sake of the cause. I entered the great hall an hour before the time, and found the building filled, there scarcely being standing room, except on the platform, which was in charge of the officials, to keep places for those who had tickets to that part of the house. At half-past six, the Earl of Shaftesbury appeared upon the platform, followed by the Committee and speakers, amid the most deafening applause. The Noble Earl, who has many more nobler qualities than that of a mere nobleman, made the opening speech and, as you will see, a good one. While his lordship was speaking, Her Grace, the Duchess of Sutherland, came in, and took her seat in the balcony

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on the right of the platform, and an half hour after, a greater lady (the author of Uncle Tom) made her appearance, and took her seat by the side of the Duchess. At this stage of the meeting, there was a degree of excitement in the room that can better be imagined than described. The waving of hats and handkerchiefs, the clapping of hands, the stamping of feet, and the screaming and fainting of ladies, went on as if it had been in the programme, while the thieves were at work helping themselves out of the abundance of the pockets of those who were most crowded. A few arrests by the police soon taught the latter that there was no room there for pickpockets. Order was once more restored, and the speaking went on. Many good things were said by the different speakers, who were mostly residents of the metropolis. Professor Stowe, as you might expect, was looked upon as the lion of the speakers; but his speech disappointed all, except those of us who knew enough of American divines not to anticipate much from them on the subject of Slavery. For my own part, I was not disappointed, for I have long since despaired of anything being done by clergymen; and the Professor's speech at Glasgow, and subsequent addresses, had prepared me to look for but little from him. — He evidently wishes for no agitation on the subject, and said it would do no good as long as England purchased America's cotton. I look upon this cotton question as nothing more than to divert the public from the main subject itself. Mr. Stowe is not very young, yet he is only a child in the anti-slavery movement. He is now lisping his A, B, C, and if his wife succeeds in making him a good scholar, she will find it no easy thing.

The best speech of the evening was made by our countryman, Samuel R. Ward. Mr. Ward did himself great credit, and exposed the hypocrisy of the American pro-slavery churches in a way that caused Professor Stowe to turn more than once upon his seat. I have but little faith in the American clergy — either colored or white; but I believe Mr. Ward to be one of the most honest, an uncompromising and faithful advocate of his countrymen. He is certainly the best colored minister that has yet visited this country.

I recognized in the audience several of our American friends. Among them was Mrs. Follen, Miss Cabot, J. Miller M'Kim, Miss Pugh, Professor Wm. G. Allen and lady, and Wm. and Ellen Craft. Upon the whole, the anti-slavery cause is in a more healthy state than it ever was before, and from all appearance much good will be done by the present excitement. The fact that no American clergyman has dared to appear at any of the anniversary meetings without professing anti-slavery principles, and that one at least (Rev. Mr. Prune) was denied a seat as a delegate at one of these meetings, shows the feeling already created in Great Britain; and I hope it will soon be understood in America, that no man will be welcomed here, unless he is an out and out abolitionist; and then the days of the slave's deliverance will be close at hand.

Yours, very sincerely,

WM. WELLS BROWN

22 C, Strand, London, May 17, 1853

We copy the above letter from the Liberator, because we are always glad to lay anything from Mr. Brown before our readers.

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His letter is very prettily expressed; but he will pardon us if we suspect that his vicinage to Mr. Disraeli has not been, in all respects, to his advantage. The sentence which we have taken the liberty to mark above, so resembles certain lines which occur in a "Call," published nearly a year ago, by "the Rochester Ladies Anti-Slavery Society," that we fear friend Brown has, like some other literary men, mistaken the beautiful sentiment of another for the creation of his own fancy! The lines to which we refer are as follows; and we think them enough alike to be twins:

*" 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,' by Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, has come down upon the dark abodes of human bondage like the morning sunlight, unfolding to view the enormities of slavery in a manner which has fastened all eyes upon them, and awakened sympathy for the slave in hearts unused to feel." — F. Douglass' Paper, August, 1852.

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

Passed Chimney Rock this morning. This rock is situated about 2 miles to the left of the road and of the same kind of material as Court House Rock. It is about 150 feet high including its base which has the form of a pyramid [*sic*]. At the top of this the chimney commences which is about 5 or 6 ft. in diameter. It is not as high as it was last year (so say those who passed it then), it is constantly wearing away by the storms, which are severe. Came 15 miles to-day and camped in sight of Scotts Bluffs, so called from the circumstance of a man by that name having been killed there by the Indians.



June 10. *Friday*. Another great fog this morning. Haying commencing in front yards.

P. M. — To -Mason's pasture in Carlisle .

Cool but agreeable easterly -rind . Streets now beautiful with verdure and shade of elms, under which you look, through an air clear for summer, to the woods in the horizon . By the way, I amused myself yesterday afternoon with looking from my window, through a spyglass, at the tops of the woods in the horizon . It was pleasant to bring them so near and individualize the trees, to examine in detail the tree-tops which before you had beheld only in the mass as the -woods in the horizon . It was an exceedingly rich border, seen thus against [*sic*], and the imperfections in a particular tree-top more than two miles off were quite apparent . I could easily have seen a hawk sailing over the top of the wood, and possibly his nest in sonic higher tree. Thus to contemplate, from my attic in the village, the hawks circling about their nests above some dense forest or swamp miles awa.v, almost as if they were flies on my own premises! I actually distinguished a taller white pine with which I am well acquainted, with a double top rising high above the surrounding Woods, between two and three miles distant, which, Avith the naked eye, I had confounded with the nearer woods. But to return, as C. and I go through the town, we hear the cool peep of the robin calling to its young, now learning to fly . The locust bloom is now perfect, filling the street with its sweetness, but it is more agreeable to my eye than my nose. The curled dock out. The fuzzy seeds or down of the black (?) willows is filling the air over the river and, falling on the water, covers the surface . By the 30th of May, at least, -white maple keys were falling. How early, then, they had matured their seed ! Cow-wheat out, and *Iris Viryinicu*, and the grape. The mountain laurel will begin to bloom to-morrow . The frost some weeks since killed most of the buds and shoots, except where they were protected by trees or by themselves, and now new shoots have put forth and grow four or five inches from the sides of what

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were the leading ones . It is a plant which plainly requires the protection of the wood . It is stunted in the open pasture . We continued on, round the head of "Cedar Swamp," and *may* say that we drained at the source of it or of Sow All Brook, where a spring is conducted through a hollow log to a tub for cattle . Crossed on to the old Carlisle road by the house north of Isaiah Cxrcen's, and then across the road through the woods to the Paul Adams house by Bateman's Pond. Saw a hog-pasture of a dozen acres in the woods, with thirty or forty large hogs and a shelter for them at night, a half-mile east of the last house, - something rare in these days hereabouts.

What shall this great wild tract over which we strolled be called? Many farmers have pastures there, and wood-lots, and orchards. It consists mainly of rocky pastures . It contains what I call the Boulder Field, the Yellow Birch Swamp, the Black Birch Hill, the Laurel Pasture, the Hog-Pasture, the White Pine Grove, the Easterbrooks Place, the Old Lime-Kiln, the Lime Quarries, Spruce Swamp, the Ermine Weasel Woods ; also the Oak Meadows, the Cedar Swamp, the Kibbe Place, and the old place northwest of Brooks Clark's . Ponkawtasset bounds it on the south. There are a few frog-ponds and an old mill-pond within it, and Bateman's Pond on its edge . What shall the whole be called ? The old Carlisle road, which runs through the middle of it, is bordered on each side with wild apple pastures, where the trees stand without order, having, many if not most of them, sprung up by accident or from pomace sown at random, and are for the most part concealed by birches and pines. These orchards are very extensive, and yet many of these apple trees, growing as forest trees, bear good crops of apples . It is a paradise for walkers in the fall. There are also boundless huckleberry pastures as well as many blueberry swamps. Shall we call it the Easterbrooks Country? It would make a princely estate in Europe, yet it is owned by farmers who live by the labor of their hands and do not esteem it much. Plenty of huckleberries and barberries here.

A second great uninhabited tract is that Iklarlborough road, stretching westerly from Francis Wheeler's to the river, and beyond about three miles, and from Harrington's on the north to Dakin's on the south, more than a mile in width. A third, the Walden Woods. A fourth, the Great Fields . These four are all in Concord .

There are one or two in the town who probably have Indian blood in their veins, and when they exhibit any unusual irascibility, their neighbors say they have got their Indian blood roused .

C. proposes to call the first-named wild the Melvin Preserve, for it is favorite hunting-ground with George Melvin . It is a sort of Robin Hood Ground. Shall we call it the Apple Pastures?

Now, methinks, the birds begin to sing less tumultuously, with, as the weather grows more constantly warm, morning and noon and evening songs, and suitable recesses in the concert .

High blackberries conspicuously in bloom, whitening the side of lanes.

Mention is made in the Town Records, as quoted by Shattuck, page 33, under date of 1651, of "the Hogepen-walke about Annrtnsnake," and reference is at the same time made to "the old hogepen ." The phrase is 4' in the Hogepen-walke about Annrtnsnake," i. e. in the hog-pasture . There is some propriety in calling such a tract a walk, methinks, from the habit which hogs have of walking about with independent air and pausing from time to time to look about from under their flapping ears and snuff the air. The hogs I saw this afternoon, all busily rooting without holding up their heads to look at us, -the whole field looked as if it had been most miserably plowed or scarified with a barrow,-with their shed to retreat. to in rainy weather, affected me as more human than other quadrupeds. They are comparatively clean about. their lodgings, and their shed, with its litter bed, was on the whole cleaner than an Irishman's shanty. I am not certain what there was so very human about them. In 1668 the town had a pasture near Silas Holden's and a herd of fifty cattle constantly watched by a. "herdsman," cte. (page 43) . In 1672 there is an article referring to the "crane field and brickil field."



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June 11, Saturday, 1853: Henry Thoreau referred in his journal to some Concord town records that had been recorded in Lemuel Shattuck's 1835 [A HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF CONCORD:...](#) (Boston MA: Russell, Odiorne, and Company; Concord MA: John Stacy, 1835).

The [California Daily Union](#) had printed something that was on this day repeated in the [Daily Alta California](#): “We saw yesterday, in the hands of one of the companies which found it, a very fine specimen of gold-bearing quartz. It weighed 38½ ounces and was valued at about \$600. It was found at Sarahsville, a mining town near Yankee Jim's, in Placer County, lying imbedded in what miners term cement, fully thirty feet below the bed rock. It is a singular specimen to be found disconnect from a quartz lead and would puzzle an ingenious man to know how it got there.”

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

Started at 6 o'clock. Presently we passed a train that had stopped to bury one of their company who was accidentally shot while trading with the Indians. Traveled till 5 o'clock. Camped in a beautiful little valley surrounded on all sides by towering cliffs which look as if each was trying to excel the other in nearing the sun. From the mountain side issues a stream of water, clear as crystal and cold as ice. This is a God's gift to the thirsty emigrant!

[Henry](#) put together some family tales:



June 11. *Saturday*. Another fog this morning.

The mosquitoes first troubled me a little last night. On the river at dusk I hear the toads still, with the bullfrogs. The black willow, having shed its fuzzy seeds and expanded its foliage, now begins to be handsome, so light and graceful.

The upland fields are already less green where the June-grass is ripening its seeds. They are greenest when only the blade is seen. In the sorrel-fields, also, what lately was the ruddy, rosy cheek of health, now that the sorrel is ripening and dying, has become the tanned and imbrowned cheek of manhood. Probably blackbirds [[Common Grackle](#) [Quiscalus quiscula](#) (~~Crow-blackbird~~)] were never less numerous along our river than in these years. They do not depend on the clearing of the woods and the cultivation of orchards, etc. Streams and meadows, in which they delight, always existed. Most of the towns, soon after they were settled, were obliged to set a price upon their heads. In 1672, according to the town records of Concord, instruction was given to the selectmen, “That incorigment be given for the destroying of blackbirds and jaies.” [[Blue Jay](#) [Cyanocitta cristata](#)] (Shattuck, page 45.)

Murder will out. I find, in the dry excrement of a fox left on a rock, the vertebræ, and talons of a partridge (?) [[Ruffed Grouse](#) [Bonasa umbellus](#) (~~Partridge~~)] which he has consumed. They are *mémoires pour servir*.

I remember [Helen](#)'s telling me that John Marston of Taunton told her that he was on board a vessel during the Revolution, which met another vessel, — and, as I think, one hailed the other, — and a French name being given could not be understood, whereupon sailor, probably aboard his vessel, ran out on the bowsprit and shouted “La Sensible,”¹¹⁷ and that sailor's name was [Thoreau](#). My father tells me that, when the war came on, my grandfather, being thrown out of business and being a young man, went a-privateering. I find from his Diary that John Adams set sail from Port Louis at L'Orient in the French frigate Sensible, Captain Chavagnes, June 17th, 1779, the Bonhomme Richard, Captain Jones, and four other vessels being in company at first, and the Sensible arrival at Boston the 2d of August. On the 13th of November following, he set out for France again in the same frigate

117. The vessel in which John Adams was being brought back from or carried out to France. My father has an idea that he stood on the wharf and cried this to the bystanders.



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from Boston, and he says that a few days before the 24th, “being at the last date on the Grand Bank of Newfoundland,” “we spoke an American privateer, the General Lincoln, Captain Barnes.” If the above-mentioned incident occurred at sea, it was probably on this occasion.



June 12, Sunday, 1853: [Johannes Brahms](#) met Franz Liszt and Peter Cornelius at Altenburg, the mansion of Princess Carolyne Sayn-Wittgenstein in Weimar. Brahms was too nervous to play any of his music so Liszt read the e-flat minor scherzo from manuscript (it is possible that this happened on the 15th rather than the 12th).

Messe des orphéonistes by Charles Gounod was performed for the initial time, in the Church of Saint Germain-l’Auxerrois.




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

The sun arose in splendor this morning, peeping over the hill-tops on one side and casting its glittering rays on the sparkling dew-drops on the other. What splendid scenery is here to cheer the weary emigrant. The cattle were all gone this morning. All hands except one turned out to hunt them and found them about 4 miles from camp. Started at 7:30 o’clock. As we reached the summit of this hill, we had a fine view of Laramie Peak covered with snow. This is about 100 miles distant from camp. It is the highest peak among the Black Hills. Came 16 miles. Good roads and plenty of feed. Good water is scarce.

A number of white men have claimed to have been the original discoverer of Crater Lake, some as early as early 1847 as the force of General John C. Fremont passed through the Sierra Nevada mountain chain. The earliest such discovery that we have been able to substantiate was accomplished on this day by a party of Californian and Oregonian gold prospectors, ___Dodd, John W. Hillman, James L. Loudon, Patrick McManus, George Ross, and Isaac Skeeters, who had decided to venture from Jacksonville up the valley of the Rogue River. This party of Californians had been closely shadowed, in secret, by a party of Oregonian gold prospectors, until the provisions of both parties becoming exhausted, a truce had been called and there had been a union of the two. From a summit they had been able to view numerous lakes, and upon ascending a long gentle slope they came to a brink from which they were able to glimpse “the bluest lake I ever saw,” with snow still reaching down to the water in many places (this brink was a little west of what we now know as Victor Rock). Continuing along said brink for some hours, they estimated the body of water to be not less than 20 miles in diameter, and guessed it to be about 125 miles from Jacksonville. They sighted Wizard Island but not the Phantom Ship, and could locate no outlet (nothing more would be heard of Crater Lake until it would again be discovered by white men in the fall of 1862 — that time a party of 6 miners returning from the Granite Creek mines on the North Fork of the John Day River to winter in the valley of the Rogue River).








June 12: P.M. – To Bear Hill.

Maple-leaved viburnum well out at Laurel Glen, probably 9th. [*Vide* 6th.] The laurel probably by day after to-morrow. The note of the wood thrush [**Wood Thrush**  *Catharus mustelina*] answers to some cool unexhausted morning vigor in the hearer. The leaf of the rattlesnake-plantain now surprises the walker amid the dry leaves on cool hillsides in the woods; of very simple form, but richly veined with longitudinal and transverse white veins. It looks like art. Crows [**American Crow**  *Corvus brachyrhynchos*], like hawks , betray the neighborhood of their nests by harsh

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scolding at the intruder while they circle over the top of the wood. The red-eyed vireo [**Red-eyed Vireo**  *Vireo olivaceus*] is the bird most commonly heard in the woods. The wood thrush [**Wood Thrush**  *Hylocichla mustelina*] and the cuckoo [**Black-billed Cuckoo**  *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*] also are heard now at noon. The round-leaved cornel fully out on Heywood Peak, but not in the woods. Did I mention that the sawed stump of the chestnut made a seat within the bower formed by its sprouts?

Going up Pine Hill, disturbed a partridge [**Ruffed Grouse**  *Bonasa umbellus* (**Partridge**)] and her brood. She ran in dishabille directly to me, within four feet, while her young, not larger than a chicken just hatched, dispersed, flying along a foot or two from the ground, just over the bushes, for a rod or two. The mother kept close at hand to attract my attention, and mewed and clucked and made a noise as when a hawk is in sight. She stepped about and held her head above the bushes and clucked just like a hen. What a remarkable instinct that which keeps the young so silent, and prevents their peeping and betraying themselves! The wild bird will run almost any risk to save her young. The young, I believe, make a fine sound at first in dispersing, something like a cherry-bird [**Cedar Waxwing**  *Bombycilla cedrorum* (**Cherry-bird**)].



I find beechnuts already about fully grown for size, where a tree overhangs Baker's hillside, and there are old nuts on the ground. Were they sound? This tree must have blossomed early, then. A light-green excrescence three inches in diameter on a panicked andromeda. The lint still comes off the bushes on to my clothes. The hedyotis long leaved out; only two or three plants to be found; probably some days.

Visited the great orchis which I am waiting to have open completely. It is emphatically a flower (within gunshot of the hawk's nest); its great spike, six inches by two, of delicate pale-purple flowers, which begin to expand at bottom, rises above and contrasts with the green leaves of the hellebore and skunk-cabbage and ferns (by which its own leaves are concealed) in the cool shade of an alder swamp. It is the more interesting for its rarity and the secluded situations in which it grows, owing to which it is seldom seen, not thrusting itself on the observation of men. It is a pale purple, as if from growing in the shade. It is not remarkable in its stalk and leaves, which indeed are commonly concealed by other plants.

Norway cinquefoil. A wild moss rose in Arethusa Meadow, where are arethusas lingering still. The sidesaddle-flowers are partly turned up now and make a great show, with their broad red petals flapping like saddle ears (?). The tree-climbing ivy. Was it out as early as the other? Apparently so. I forgot to say that I visited my hawk's nest, and the young hawk [**Red-tailed Hawk**  *Buteo jamaicensis*] was perched now four or five feet above the nest, still in the shade. It will soon fly. Now, then, in secluded pine woods, the young hawks sit high on the edges of their nests or on the twigs near by in the shade, waiting for their pinions to grow, while their parents bring them their prey. Their silence also is remarkable, not to betray themselves, nor will the old bird go to the nest while you are in sight. She pursues me half a mile when I withdraw.

The buds of young white oaks which have been frost-bitten are just pushing forth again. Are these such as were intended for next year at the base of the leaf-stalk?



June 13, Monday, **1853**: The *USS Plymouth* arrived in **Japanese** waters, with letters from the United States of America.

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

Started at the usual hour, traveled over heavy sandy roads. Indian wigwams are plenty all along. Trading posts every few miles. We are now in the Sioux nation. Came 14 miles to-day.





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According to a news item that would appear on the following day in the Daily Alta California, the steamship *Pacific* of the Vanderbilt Line, having departed from Panama on May 25th, docked in San Francisco on this afternoon at half past 4 o'clock, bringing the information that there had been a:

Dreadful Railroad Accident at Norwalk!

The *Pacific* sailed from Panama for San Juan del Sud May 25th, at half past 9 P.M., and arrived at half-past 8 A.M. on the 28th. Left I at port steamers *Panama* and *Isthmus*. The *Panama* arrived from San Francisco the 25th, at 11 A.M. The *Pacific* sailed from San Juan the 30th, at 3 P.M., with 317 passengers, of which 50 are ladies and 28 children. The steamer *Sierra Nevada* arrived at San Juan the 28th, at 7 A.M. The *Pacific* arrived at Acapulco the 3d of June, at 6 A.M., and sailed the 4th at half-past 6 A.M. The steamer *Republic*, A. McLean, commander, arrived at Acapulco the 3d inst. At 5 A.M., and sailed for Panama same day at half-past 11 A.M. Passed on the afternoon and night of the 7th inst., in latitude of Cape St. Lucas, two steamers bound down. Since passing Cape St. Lucas have had a succession of northerly and westerly gales and a heavy head sea; have been detained by a dense fog off the harbor ten hours. Arrived at 4:15 P.M. Steamer *Sierra Nevada* passed Acapulco the 24th May, at 10:45 A.M. Steamer *J.L. Stephens* arrived at Acapulco the 24th at half-past 3 P.M.

The most dreadful accident recorded in the history of Railroads occurred at Norwalk, Conn. (on the New Haven Railroad) on the 6th of May. The irregularity of our files renders it impossible to give the details of this great catastrophe. It seems, however, that in consequence of the negligence or stupidity of some of the employees of the Company, the signals were either wrongly given or misunderstood, by which an express passenger train was rushed upon a bridge while the draw was up, and the cars thrown through the break. Forty-five persons were killed and twenty-seven wounded (out of 218 passengers on board). This casualty has given rise to a great deal of discussion in the papers.



June 13: 9 AM. – To Orchis Swamp.

Find that there are two young hawks [**Red-tailed Hawk** ***Buteo jamaicensis***]; one has left the nest and is perched on a small maple seven or eight rods distant. This one appears much smaller than the former one. I am struck by the large, naked head, so vulture-like [**Turkey Vulture** ***Cathartes aura*** (**Turkey Buzzard**)], and large eyes, as if the vulture's were an inferior stage through which the hawk passed. Its feet, too, are large, remarkably developed, by which it holds to its perch securely like an old bird, before its wings can perform their office. It has a buff breast, striped with dark brown. Pratt, when I told him of this nest, said he would like to carry one of his rifles down there. But I told him that I should be sorry to have them killed. I would rather save one of these hawks than have a hundred hens and chickens. It was worth more to see them soar, especially now, that they are so rare in the landscape. It is easy to buy eggs, but not to buy hen-hawks. My neighbors would not hesitate to shoot the last pair of hen-hawks in the town to save a few of their chickens! But such economy is narrow and grovelling. It is necessarily to sacrifice the greater value to the less. I would rather never taste chicken's meat or hen's eggs than never to see a hawk sailing through the upper air again. This sight is worth incomparably more than a chicken soup or a boiled egg. So we exterminate the deer and substitute the hog. It was amusing to observe the swaying to and fro of the young hawk's head to counterbalance the gentle motion of the bough in the wind.

Violets appear to be about done, generally. Four-leaved loosestrife just out; also the smooth wild rose






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yesterday. The pogonia at Forget-me-not Brook.
What was that rare and beautiful bird in the dark woods under the Cliffs, with black above and white spots and bars, a large triangular blood-red spot on breast, and sides of breast and beneath white? Note a warble like the oriole, but softer and sweeter. It was quite tame. I cannot find this bird described. I think it must be a grosbeak.¹¹⁸ At first I thought I saw a chewink, [as] it sat within a rod sideways to me, and I was going to call [Sophia](#) to look at it, but then it turned its breast full toward me and I saw the blood-red breast, a large triangular painted spot occupying the greater part of the breast. It was in the cool, shaded underwood by the old path just under the Cliff. It is a memorable event to meet with so rare a bird. Birds answer to flowers, both in their abundance and their rareness. The meeting with some rare and beautiful flower, which you may never find again, perchance, like the great purple fringed orchis, at least. How much it enhances the wildness and the richness of the forest to see in it some beautiful bird which you never detected before!

[William M. White](#)'s version of [Henry Thoreau](#)'s journal entry would be:

*I would rather save one of these hawks
Than have a hundred hens and chickens.
It was worth more to see them soar
Especially now that they are so rare in the landscape.
It is easy to buy eggs,
But not to buy hen-hawks.*

 June 14, Tuesday, 1853: [Henry Wadsworth Longfellow](#) threw a going-away party for [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#), and both [Waldo Emerson](#) and [James Russell Lowell](#) attended.


Caroussel-Marsch op.133 by [Johann Baptist Strauss II](#) was performed for the initial time, in the Volksgarten of Vienna.

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

Reached Fort Laramie at 2 o'clock P.M. There are about 300 wagons waiting to cross Laramie River. They tell us we can cross tomorrow evening. We take this opportunity to wash and bake.

According to a generak news item in the [Daily Alta California](#):

We surrender our available space almost exclusively to the Atlantic, European, and South American news received by the *Pacific*. The incompleteness of our files prevents a full resume of the general intelligence since last advices. The most interesting feature of the news from the Atlantic is the dreadful railroad accident at Norwalk on the 6th May. The news from Europe is not very important, or rather no important event has happened since our former dates. England and France are comparatively quiet, but they have assured the Porte

118. Probably a rose-breasted grosbeak [[Rose-breasted Grosbeak](#)  [Pheucticus ludovicianus](#)].

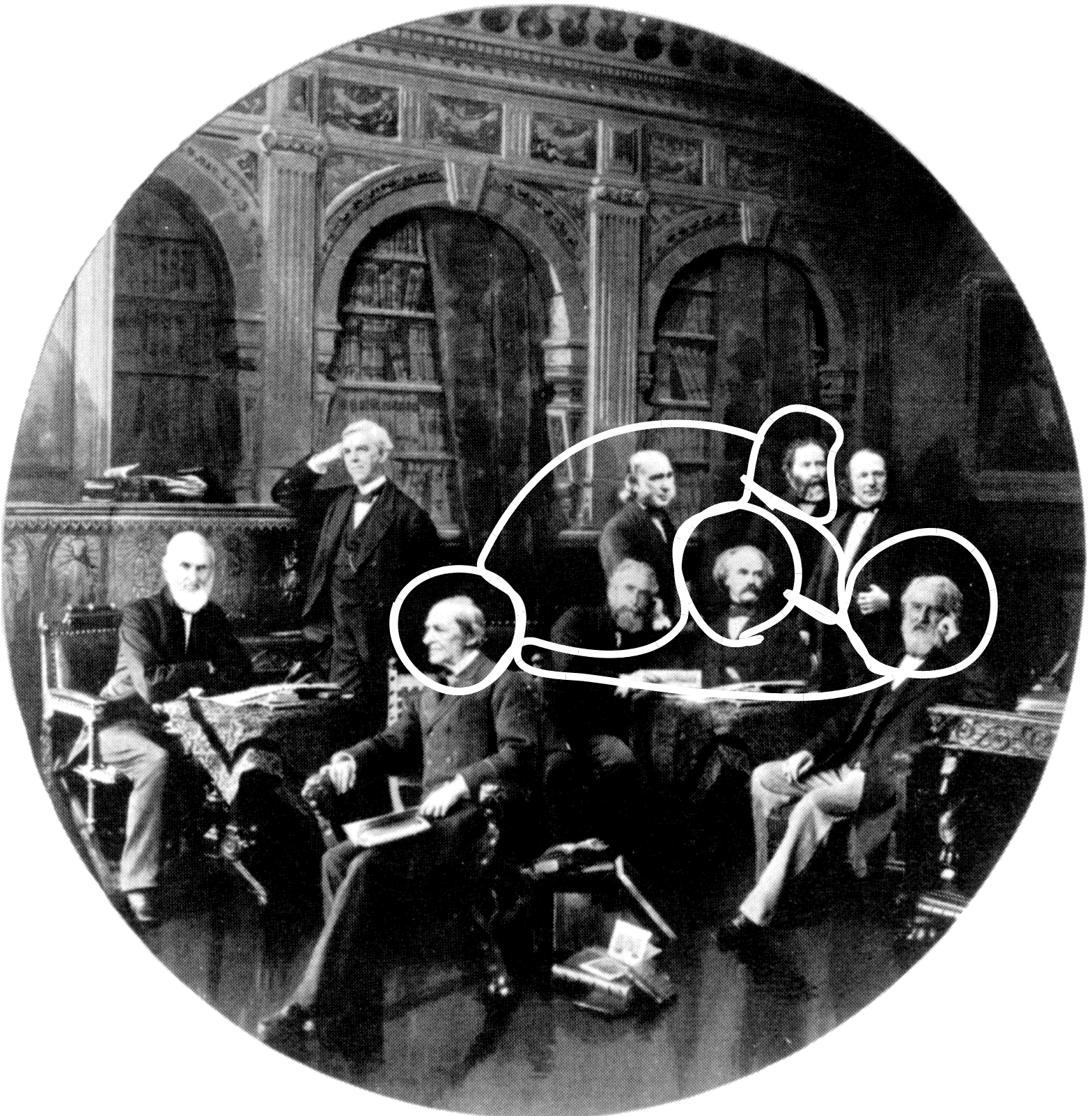
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**Famous Dead White Men (attending a famous dead party?):
Whittier-Holmes-Emerson-Motley-Alcott-Hawthorne-Lowell-Agassiz-Longfellow**

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of their protection in case of need. The people of Germany, Italy and Switzerland are very restless, and in the latter country an unsuccessful attempt has been made to start a revolution. Russia appears to be just now the most active of the European powers. She is making great demands of Turkey, and seems likely to have them granted; and at the same time is moving her troops down the Turkish frontier and making other warlike preparations. Western and Central Europe appears to be a volcano, slightly muttering as though mediating an eruption. The emigration to the United States continues to be large.

[Henry Thoreau](#) and [Ellery Channing](#) went to White Pond and the Harrington Bathing-Place:



June 14. P.M. — To White Pond.

Herd's-grass heads. The warmest afternoon as yet. Ground getting dry, it is so long since we had any rain to speak of.

[C.](#) says he saw a "lurker" yesterday in the woods on the Marlborough road. He heard a distressing noise like a man sneezing but long continued, but at length found it was a man wheezing. He was oldish and grizzled, the stumps of his grizzled beard about an inch long, and his clothes in the worst possible condition, — a wretched-looking creature, an escaped convict hiding in the woods, perhaps. He appeared holding on to his paunch, and wheezing as if it would kill him, He appeared to have come straight through the swamp, and — what was most interesting about him, and proved him to be a lurker of the first class, — one. of our party, as [C.](#) said, — he kept straight, through a field of rye which was fully grown, not regarding it in the least; and, though [C.](#) tried to conceal himself on the edge of the rye, fearing to hurt his feelings if the man should mistake him for the proprietor, yet they met, and the lurker, giving him a short bow, disappeared in the woods on the opposite side of the road. He went through everything.

Went to the Harrington Bathing-Place. Drank at the Tarbell Spring First. The swamp-pink by tomorrow. The *Allium Canadense* in Tarbell's meadow. Wild meadow garlic, with its head of bulbs and a few flower-buds, not yet; apparently with cultivated onion.

The desert at Dugan's is all scored over with tortoise-tracks, — two parallel dotted lines four or five inches apart, the impressions being nearly a half-inch deep, with the distinct mark of the tail making a waving line between. It looks as if twenty tortoises had spent a night travelling over it; and here and there there were marks of a slight digging, but I found no eggs. They came out of the brook near by. Perhaps they select such a bare sandy tract for their encounters, where there is no grass to impede them. Perhaps it makes the most remarkable track of any creature. Sometimes the sand appeared as if dabbled and patted for a foot or more in diameter.

Heard the first locust from amid the shrubs by the roadside. He comes with heat. Snake-sloughs are found nowadays; whitish and bleached they are. Beyond the rye-field on the Marlborough road, the oaks were extensively cut off by the frost some weeks ago. They are all dry and red for half a mile, — young trees eight or ten feet high, — as if a fire had run through them after they had grown two or three inches; and young red leaves are beginning to appear on them. Since the maples and birches are untouched (sometimes a maple!), it looks as if the fire had run in veins. Yet most travellers, if they did not ride close to them, would not notice them, perhaps being used as yet even to a wintry landscape. Is that the indigo-bird [[Black-throated Blue Warbler](#) [Dendroica caerulescens](#)] that sings, between here and White Pond, *a-chit chit-chit awee*? Perhaps the andromeda swamp on this path is as handsome as any, appearing so far down from the hills and still so level. I observed the cotton of aphides on the alders yesterday and to-day. How regularly these phenomena appear! — even the stains or spots or galls on leaves, as that bright yellow on blackberry leaves, now common, and those crimson ring-spots on maple leaves I see to-day, exactly the same pattern with last year's, and the crimson frosting on the black birch leaves I saw the other day. Then there are the huckleberry-apples, and the large green puffs on the panicked andromeda, and also I see now the very light or whitish solid and juicy apples on the swamp-pink, with a fungus-like smell when broken. *Erigeron annuus* (?),¹¹⁹ some white, some purplish, common now and daisy-like. I put it rather early on the

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9th.

On the Strawberry Hill on the further side of White Pond, about fifty feet above the pond and a dozen rods from it, found a painted tortoise laying her eggs. Her posterior was inserted into a slight cavity she had dug in the sandy hillside. There were three eggs already laid, the top of them hardly two inches below the surface. She had dug down about one and a half or two inches, somewhat in the form of the hind part of her shell, and then under the turf up the hill about two and a half inches, enlarging the cavity slightly within, leaving a neck of an oval form about seven eighths of an inch by one and a quarter inches, apparently packing the eggs with her tail. She lay still where I put her, while I examined her eggs, and I replaced her in the hole. A little further on, I saw where such a deposit had been broken up, apparently by a skunk, and the egg-shells strewn about. The whole hole about three inches deep. The three eggs already laid, about one inch long, cream-colored or slightly flesh-color, easily indented with the finger, but a little elastic, not exactly elliptical, but slightly larger at one end.

C. says his dog chased a woodchuck yesterday, and it climbed up into an oak and sat on a limb ten or twelve feet high. He killed a young rabbit. Took another bath at the cove in White Pond. We had already bathed in the North River at Harrington's. It is about 5 P.M. The pond is perfectly smooth and very beautiful now. Its shores are still almost entirely uninjured by the axe. While we are dressing, the bullfrogs in this cove, it is so late in the day, are beginning to trump. They utter a short, laughable, belching sound from time to time and then break into a powerful trump as the whim takes them. The dog lies flat on his belly the while to cool him. We took an old leaky boat and a forked stick which had made part of a fence, and pushed out to see the shores from the middle of the pond. There sit the great paddocks in their yellow vests, imperturbable by the sides of the boat. See now the great stems of trees on the bottom and the stones curiously strewn about. Now we cross the bar to this cove; now we are leaving the edge of the heart-leaves, whose long, clean, slender, threadlike stems rise from the bottom still where six feet deep; and now the stones on the bottom grow dim, as if a mildew formed about them, and now, the bottom is lost in the dim greenness of the water.

How beautifully the northeast (?) shore curves! The pines and other trees so perfect on their water side. There is no rawness nor imperfection to the edge of the wood in this case, as where an axe has cleared, or a cultivated field abuts on it; but the eye rises by natural gradations from the low shrubs, the alders, of the shore to the higher trees. It is a natural selvage. It is comparatively unaffected by man. The water laves the shore as it did a thousand years ago. Such curves in a wood bordering on a field do not affect us as when it is a winding shore of a lake. This is a firmer edge. It will not be so easily torn.

Our boat leaked so, —faster and faster as it sank deeper and tipped with the water in it, — that we were obliged to turn to the shore. The blue flag (*Iris versicolor*) grows in this pure water, rising from the stony bottom all around the shores, and is very beautiful, — not too high-colored, — especially its reflections in the water. There was something [in] its bluish blade which harmonized with the greenish water. The pollen of the pine yellowed the driftwood on the shore and the stems of bushes which stood in the water, and in little flakes extended out some distance on the surface, until at four or five rods in this cove it was suddenly and distinctly bounded by an invisible fence on the surface; but in the middle, as deep down as you could [see], there appeared some fine white particles in the water, either this or something else and perhaps some ova of fishes. Instead of the white lily, which requires mud, or the sweet flag, here grows the blue flag in the water, thinly about the shore. The color of the flower harmonizes singularly with the water.

With our boat's prow to the shore, we sat half an hour this evening listening to the bullfrogs. Their belching is my dumping sound more hoarsely heard near at hand. What imperturbable fellows! One sits perfectly still behind some blades of grass while the dog is chasing others within two feet. Some are quite handsome, large, spotted fellows. We see here and there light-colored greenish-white spots on the bottom where a fish, a bream perhaps, has picked away all the dead wood and leaves for her nest over a space of eighteen inches or more. Young breams from one to three inches long, light-colored and transparent, are swimming about, and here and there a leech in the shallow water, moving as serpents are represented to do. Large devil's-needles are buzzing back and forth. They



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skim along the edge of the blue flags, apparently quite round this cove or further, like hen-harriers [Northern Harrier [Circus cyaneus](#)] beating the bush for game. And now comes a [hummingbird](#) [Ruby-throated Hummingbird [Archilochus colubris](#)] humming from the woods and alights on the blossom of a blue flag. The bullfrogs begin with one or two notes and with each peal add another trill to their trump, *er-roonk*, *er-er-roonk*, *er-er-er-roonlc*, etc. I am amused to hear one after another, and then an unexpectedly deep and confident bass, as if he had charged himself with more wind than the rest. And now, as if by a general agreement, they all trump together, making a deafening noise. Sometimes one jumps up a foot out of water in the midst of these concerts. What are they about? Suddenly a tree-toad in the overhanging woods begins, and another answers, and another, with loud, ringing notes such as I never heard before, and in three minutes they are all silent again. A red-eye [Red-eyed Vireo [Vireo olivaceus](#) (red-eye)] sings on a tree-top, and a cuckoo [Black-billed Cuckoo [Coccyzus erythrophthalmus](#)] is heard far in the wood. These are the evening sounds.

As we look over the water now, the opposite woods are seen dimly through what appears not so much the condensing dew and mist as the dry haziness of the afternoon, now settled and condensed. The woods on the opposite shore have not the distinctness they had an hour before, but perhaps a more agreeable dimness, a sort of gloaming or settling and thickening of the haze over the water, which melts tree into tree and masses them agreeably. The trees no longer bright and distinct, — a bluish mistiness. This appears to be an earlier gloaming before sunset, such as by and by is universal.

Went through the woods along the old canal to Haynes's pasture, from the height of which we looked down on the rich New Hampshire wood we had come out of. The ground rising within the wood gave it the appearance of woods rising by successive stages from a smaller growth on the edge to stately trees in the middle, and Nobscot was seen in the southwest through the blue furnace mist.

This seems the true hour to be abroad sauntering far from home— Your thoughts being already turned toward home — your walk in once sense ended— You are in that favorable frame of mind described by [De Quincey](#), open to great impressions — & you see those rare sights with the unconscious side of the eye — which you would not see by a direct gaze before— Then the dews begin to descend in your mind & its atmosphere is strained of all impurities— And home is farther away than ever — here is home — the beauty of the world impresses you — There is a coolness in your mind as in a well— Life is too grand for supper.—

The wood thrush [Wood Thrush [Catharus mustelina](#)] launches forth his evening strains from the midst of the pines. I admire the moderation of this master. There is nothing tumultuous in his song. He launches forth one strain with all his heart and life and soul, of pure and unmatched melody, and then he pauses and gives the hearer and himself time to digest this, and then another, and another at suitable intervals. Men talk of the *rich* song of other birds — the thrasher [Brown Thrasher [Toxostoma rufum](#) Red-mavis], mocking-bird [Mockingbird [Mimus polyglottos](#)], nightingale [[not a New-World bird](#)]. But I doubt, I doubt. They know not what they say! There is as great an interval between the thrasher and the wood thrush [Wood Thrush [Hylocichla mustelina](#)] as between Thomson's Seasons and Homer. The sweetness of the day crystallizes in this morning coolness.

Probably the tortoise leaves her eggs thus near the surface and in sand that they may receive the greatest heat from the sand, being just deep enough for the sand to receive and retain it and not part with it at night, — not so deep as to be cool.





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Viking Penguin

GOD IN CONCORD by Jane Langton © 1992

... to the carpet of sphagnum moss supporting the bog garden in the middle of Gowing's Swamp. Silently they stood gazing. "Better not all stand in one place," whispered Mary, and they moved apart. The mossy surface billowed beneath their feet. It was not a place for talking. Slowly they walked around the green-gold garden among the dwarfed larches, the paniced andromeda, the swamp azalea and summersweet. Cotton grass lifted puffs of white on wiry stems. "Listen," said Mary. They all looked up as a watery warbling began in the woods, a bell-like melody. A moment later it was repeated in a higher register, the last notes rising out of hearing. They didn't need to be told what it was. Homer looked at Mary. The singing stopped, then began again, a little nearer. . .

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 June/July 1853: Waldo Emerson wrote in his journal:

H. [Thoreau] seemed stubborn & implacable; always manly & wise, but rarely sweet. One would say that as Webster could never speak without an antagonist, so H. does not feel himself except in opposition. He wants a fallacy to expose, a blunder to pillory, requires a little sense of victory, a roll of the drums, to call his powers into full exercise.

Sylvan [Thoreau] could go wherever woods & waters were & no man was asked for leave. Once or twice the farmer withstood, but it was to no purpose – he could as easily prevent the sparrows or tortoises. It was their land before it was his, & their title was precedent. S. knew what was on their land, & they did not; & he sometimes brought them ostentatiously gifts of flowers or fruits or shrubs which they would gladly have paid great prices for, & did not tell them that he took them from their own woods. Moreover the very time at which he used their land & water (for his boat glided like a trout everywhere unseen) was in hours when they were sound asleep. Long before they were awake he went up & down to survey like a sovereign his possessions, & he passed onward, & left them before the farmer came out of doors. Indeed it was the common opinion of the boys that Mr T. made Concord.

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

Wednesday the 15th. Cannot cross yet today. They do not do as they would wish to be done by with their ferry. It is uncertain when we can cross on the ferry. We thought it best to calk up our wagon box which we did in about two hours and crossed with safety. While crossing word came that the ferry boat had sunk with a heavy wagon.

 June 15, Wednesday, 1853: The Wabash Express gazette of Terre Haute, Vigo County, Indiana carried an voyeuristic news column about the fate of an Irish immigrant family with an unnamed dead father (since the “Wards Island” mentioned in the article is a New-York asylum, and a “Vesey Street” runs east/west across lower Manhattan, clearly this article would be merely a copy-and-paste thingie out of the Philadelphia Dispatch). We note that there are unmentioned pieces of information here, such as that in the United States of America of 1853 it was literally unimaginable that it might be the responsibility of an employer to provide his employees with safety equipment that would prevent falls, or that it was the obligation of an employer with an injured employee to provide health care, or that it was the duty of an employer to provide pensions for widows and orphans of employees who were killed on the job:

HARD FATE.

A few days since while three men were engaged in painting the front of a lofty house in Vesey street, the scaffolding gave way and one of the men was instantly killed. His remains were followed to the grave by his widow and her three orphans, two neighbors joining in the solemn ceremony. And now for the

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history of this desolate family, as given by the N. York correspondent of the Philadelphia Dispatch. — He tells us that this family had scarcely been two months in this country! This was the first chance the unfortunate deceased had been favored with, since he landed, of earning a penny; and, though a lawyer and a literary man at home, hunger and want, sickness, penury, and friendlessness, had compelled him to take that day a brush in hand and turn painter, to obtain bread for his starving self and family! How brief was that labor! Instead of returning home at night with his dollar to his famishing little ones, he was carried home before dark on a shutter, a mass of mangled and mutilated humanity. In comfortable circumstances in Dublin, he and his family abandoned their home to better their fortune, and arrived here last February. They had with them about \$280 in gold.

They were robbed of this petty store within five minutes after their trunks reached the shore — some "baggage smasher" having carried off the very trunk that contained it. This left them penniless in a foreign land. Sorrow made the wife ill. Their infant child sickened and died the first week after. The broken-hearted immigrant was next prostrated, himself, by downright trouble and despair [*sic*]. When he recovered, which was slowly, his wife, unused to such hardships, sank away again, a victim to her sufferings. All this exhausted the means of every friend to whom they could apply, and swallowed up, in pledge after pledge, every rag of clothing except that which covered their nakedness. Even the wedding dress had been pawned, the morning of the accident, to obtain food! Yesterday the widow died, and to-day the poor little children will be sent to the alms house! Three months ago the whole family were living joyously in their own native home, and now behold at Ward's Island, in these helpless orphans, all that is left of it! A more crowded chapter of wretchedness and misfortune it has never been our lot to encounter.



June 15. A great fog this morning.

P.M. — To Trillium Woods.


Clover now in its prime. What more luxuriant than a clover-field? The poorest soil that is covered with it looks incomparably fertile. This is perhaps the most characteristic feature of June, resounding with the hum of insects. It is so massive, such a blush on the fields. The rude health of the sorrel cheek has given place to the blush of clover. Painters are wont, in their pictures of Paradise, to strew the ground too thickly with flowers. There should be moderation in all things. Though we love flowers, we do not want them so thick under our feet that we cannot walk without treading on them. But a clover-field in bloom is some excuse for them.

The *Prinos laevigata*, it seems to be, probably, the 14th, though it seems to have three or four pistils, if any, and six to nine stamens and petals. A small wheel-shaped white flower. The peduncles are sometimes branched and have two flowers. *Mitchella repens* just bursting, say to-day. Rose-hubs for a day or two. Here is one on a *Liburizuun nudum* var. *pyrifolium* (?). A strong southerly wind blows. Here are many wild roses northeast of Trillium Woods. We are liable to underrate this flower on account of its commonness. Is it not the queen of our flowers? How ample and high-colored its petals, glancing half concealed from its own green bowers! There is a certain noble and delicate civility about it, — not wildness. It is properly the type of the *Rosacea*, or flowers among others of most wholesome fruits. It is at home in the garden, as readily cultivated as apples. It is the pride of June. In summing up its attractions I should mention its rich color, size, and form, the rare beauty of

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its bud, its fine fragrance, and the beauty of the entire shrub, not to mention the almost innumerable varieties it runs into. I bring home the buds ready to expand, put them in a pitcher of water, and the next morning they open and fill my chamber with fragrance. This, found in the wilderness, must have reminded the Pilgrim of home.

Strawberries in the meadow now ready for the picker. They lie deep at the roots of the grass in the shade; else they are dried up. You spread aside the tall grass, and deep down in little cavities by the roots of the grass you find this rich fruit. But it is only a taste we get here. 5 P.M., I hear distinctly the sound of thunder in the northwest, but not a cloud is in sight, only a little thickness or mistiness in that horizon, and we get no shower. For a week past I have heard the cool, watery note of the goldfinch, [**American Goldfinch**  *Carduelis tristis*] from time to time, as it twittered past.



June 16, Thursday, 1853: In San Francisco, Dr. Edward Alexander Theller—a revolutionary Irishman so short and stout that he had almost failed in 1838 in Quebec to wiggle through a jail window the bars of which had been sawed by the prisoners—began a daily newspaper to be named Present and Future (this was not the Doctor's 1st newspaper nor would it be his last).

In his journal, Henry Thoreau mentioned that he heard the “me ow” of a peacock, very loud, and instanced this peacock as belonging to a Shaw. Who was Shaw? Can we learn more about this peacock?



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

Crossed the other two wagons of our train this morning and 2 more wagons for another train. The owner said he would pay us whatever we would ask if we would set his family and wagon safe on the other side, which we did very soon and charged him \$4.00. He gave us \$5.00 and some corn meal, and seemed very thankful. We wrote letters to our friends to-day, got all over safe, loaded up, drove out 2 miles and camped.



June 16. 4 A.M. —To Nawshawtucl by boat.

No fog this morning and scarcely any dew except in the lowest ground. There is a little air stirring,

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too; the breeze in the night must have been the reason. It threatens to be a hot, as well as dry, day, and gardens begin to suffer.

Before 4 A.M., or sunrise, the sound of chip-birds [**Chipping Sparrow** █ *Spizella passerina*] and robins [**American Robin** █ *Turdus migratorius*] and [bluebirds](#), etc., fills the air and is incessant. It is a crowing on the roost, methinks, as the cock crows before he goes abroad. They do not sing



deliberately as at eve, but greet the morning with an incessant twitter. Even the crickets seem to join the concert. Yet I think it is not the same every morning, though it may be fair. An hour or two later it is comparative silence. The awaking of the birds, a tumultuous twittering.

At sunrise, however, a slight mist curls along the surface of the water. When the sun falls on it, it looks like a red dust.

What is that tall rank grass now in bloom, four or five feet high, with an upright pyramidal spike, which some time ago I mistook for wild rice?¹²⁰ It stands amid the button-bushes on the edge of the river; leafy except the upper foot.

From top of the hill, the sun, just above the horizon, red and shorn of beams, is somewhat pear-shaped, owing to some irregularity in the refraction of the lower strata, produced, as it were, by the dragging of the lower part; and then it becomes a broad ellipse, the lower half a dun red, owing to the grossness of the air. It appears as if it rose in [lie northeast, —over Ball's Hill at any rate. The distant river is like molten silver at this hour; it merely reflects the *light*, not the blue. I hear the meow of Shaw's [peacock](#)¹²¹ here, very loud. What shall I name that small cloud that attends the sun's rising, that hangs over the portals of the day like an embroidered banner and heralds his coming, though sometimes it proves a portcullis which falls and cuts off the new day in its birth?

Bathed in Assabet at Leaning Hemlocks and examined the stone-heaps, now partly exposed to the air, but found nothing. Found four tortoises' deposits on the high bank there just robbed and the eggs devoured. He had not emptied the yolk out of one. The holes had been made exactly in all respects like that I have described. Some were put in pure sand. There were others which had been robbed some days. Apparently about three eggs to each. Presently I saw a skunk making off, — undoubtedly the robber, — with an undulating motion, a white streak above and a parallel and broader black one below (?). A tick in woods by White Pond yesterday. A sweet-briar, apparently yesterday. The locusts on the hill are still white with blossoms, which also strew the ground far and wide as if a sleety snow— had fallen, and also adhere to the trees. They resound with the hum of insects even at 5 A.M.

Coming along near the celtis I heard a singular sound as of a bird in distress amid the bushes, and turned to relieve it. Next thought it a squirrel in an apple tree barking at me. Then found that it came from a hole in the ground under my feet, a loud sound between a grunting and a wheezing, yet not unlike the sound a red squirrel sometimes makes, but louder. Looking down the hole, I saw the tail and hind quarters of a woodchuck, which seemed to be contending with another further down. Reaching down carefully, I took hold of the tail, and, though I had to pull very bard indeed, I drew


120. Canary grass.

121. This Indian Peafowl *Pavo cristatus* evidently belonged to a man by the name of Shaw about whom we seem to know approximately nothing — and its cry is elsewhere in Thoreau's journal described as "[me ow](#)."

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him out between the rocks, a bouncing great fat fellow, and tossed him a little way down the hill. As soon as he recovered from his bewilderment he made for the hole again, but, I barring the way, he ran off elsewhere.

Coming down the river, heard opposite the new houses, where I stopped to pluck the tall grass, a sound as of young blackbirds amid the button-bushes. After a long while gazing, standing on the roots of the button bushes, I detected a couple of meadow or mud hens (*Rallus Virginianus*) [Virginia Rail  *Rallus Virginianus*] gliding about under the button-bushes over the mud and through the shallow water, and uttering a squeaking or squawking note, as if they had a nest there or young. Bodies about the size of a robin; short tail; wings and tail white-edged; bill about one and a half inches long, orange beneath in one bird; brown, deepening into black spots above; turtle-dove color on breasts and beneath; ashy about eyes and cheeks. Seemed not willing to fly, and for a long time unwilling to pass me, because it must come near to keep under the button-bushes.

An old man who used to frequent Walden fifty-five years ago, when it was dark with surrounding forests, tells me that in those days he sometimes saw it all alive with ducks and other game. He went there to fish and used an old log canoe, made of two white pine logs dug out and pinned together and pitched, which lie found on the shore. It was very clumsy but durable and belonged to the pond. He did not know whom it belonged to; it belonged to the pond. He used to make a cable for his anchor of hickory bark tied together. An old man, a potter, who lived in these woods before the Revolution, told him that there was an iron chest at the bottom of the pond, and he had seen it. It would sometimes come floating up toward the shore, and, when you went toward it, go back into deep water and disappear.

P.M. — To Baker Farm by boat.

The yellowish or greenish orchis out, maybe a day or two. It would be a very warm afternoon, if there were not so good a breeze from the southwest. The *lily Ranunculus Purshii* begins to show now, in large fields in shallow, water, both on shore and in middle, the river having gone down lately. The *Ranunculus filiformis* is out a day or two, delayed by the height of the water. Coltracium palustre, some time; vide twenty or thirty rods above the Hubbard Bridge; an interesting leaf.

Was that a smaller bittern  or a meadow-hen [Virginia Rail  *Rallus limicola*] that we started from out the button-bushes? What places for the mud-hen [Clapper Rail *Rallus longirostris*] beneath the wild stems of the button-bushes along the shore, all shaggy with rootlets, as if all the weeds the river produced—all the ranunculus at least—had drifted and lodged against them. Their stems are so nearly horizontal near the mud and water that you can clamber along on them over the water many rods. It is one of the wildest features in our scenery. There is scarcely any firm footing on the ground except where a muskrat has made a heap of clamshells. Picture the river at a low stage of the water, the pads shrivelled in the sun hanging from the dark-brown stems of the button-bush, which are all shaggy with masses of dark rootlets, an impenetrable thicket, and a stake-driver, or *Ardea minor*, sluggishly winging his way up the stream.

The breams' nests, like large deep milk-pans, are left high and dry on the shore. They are not only deepened within, but have raised edges. In some places, as at the boat place at the Baker Farm, they are as close together as they can stick, with each a great bream in it, whose waving fins and tail are tipped with a sort of phosphorescent luminousness.

Saw in the meadow there a more than double sidesaddle flower, — a monster, though not in size. The exterior calyx was of five or six small greenish leaves of different sizes, and others smaller were continued irregularly nearly two inches down the stem. The interior calyx consisted of, not one only, but four, rows of narrower leaves than usual. Petals were none, *now*, at least, it being late, and the stigma, instead of being one, broad and flat, was of half a dozen erectish crimped green leaves. I should have mentioned the rich salmon-brown (is it,) sort of iron-rust color, of the fields of potamogeton, now that the river is low, with its spikes of flowers just rising above the water and the large, semitransparent radical leaves now floating on the surface, here and there. What a rapid and luxuriant growth of weeds along the shore! overtopped by that tall rank grass I mentioned yesterday, now in flower (?).¹²² The polygonums are reddish.

We sailed all the way back from the Baker Farm, though the wind blew very nearly at right angles with the river much of the way. By sitting on one side of the boat we made its edge serve for a keel,

122. *Phalaris*.

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so that she would mind her helm. The dog swam for long distances behind us. Each time we passed under the lee of a wood we were becalmed and then met with contrary and flawy winds till we got fairly beyond its influence. But you can always sail either up or down the river, for the wind inclines to blow with the stream, especially where the banks are high. We taste at each cool spring with which we are acquainted in the bank — making haste to reach it before the dog — who otherwise is sure to be found cooling himself in it. We some times use him on board to sit in the stern & trim the boat while we both row — for he is heavy and other wise we sink the bows to much in the water — but he has a habit of standing too near the rower — & each time recieving a fillip under the chin from the rowers fists — So at last he tumbles himself overboard & takes a riparial excursion — And we are amused to see how judiciously he selects his points for crossing the river from time to time in order to avoid long circuits made by bays & meadows & keep as near us as possible.

At Bittern Cliff, on the south side, the little earth on the rocks is already parched and the shrubs are withering with drought. The spring is long since past there. Found there the *Potentilla arguta*, — crowded cinquefoil, — well out, *our* only white cinquefoil; stem and leaves somewhat like the *Norvegica*, but more woolly, a yellowish white. According to [Bigelow](#), rare. Also there a *Galium trifidum* var. *tinctorium* (?). I see some red maple leaves with the points of the three principal lobes covered with that crimson frosting which I saw some time since on the black birch.

DOG

During the last decade of his life, Thoreau visited his rivers more than twice as often as the upland woods and lakes that he is far better known for writing about.

— [Professor Robert M. Thorson](#), THE BOATMAN, page 3



June 17, Friday, [1853](#): The [New York State](#) Board of Regents chartered Grammar School Madison University in Hamilton, [New York](#).

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

Started early, passed warm springs about 2 o'clock. After leaving the springs we came up a deep hollow at the head of which is a very bad hill to ascend. Two miles from this we camped at the left of the road. Grass good. Passed a lake to the right of the road said to be poisonous. Came 15 miles to-day.



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

Brad Dean's
Commentary

[Paragraph 33] If a man walk in the woods for love of them half of each day, he is in danger of being regarded as a loafer; but if he spends his whole day as a speculator, shearing off those woods and making earth bald before her time, he is esteemed an industrious and enterprising citizen. As if a town had no interest in its forests but to

[Frederick Douglass' Paper](#) reprinted an article by "E." from [The National Era](#):

Negro Intellect. — Ellis and Douglass, and Uncle Tom. From [The National Era](#).

[Chambers' Journal](#) thinks it finds, in the "learned black blacksmith," Harrison W. Ellis, a living character and an actual history that parallels and justifies Mrs. Stowe's Uncle Tom. We see little or nothing of correspondence between these respective instances of historic and fictitious renown. Uncle Tom is a slave, of unmixed African blood, who learned, "somehow or other," to read the Bible, received its teachings in perfect simplicity of heart, without compromise or accommodation, put the practicability of its precepts to the proof of experience, illustrated its divine morality in his life, and died in the strength and for the sake of its truth. The Rev. H.W. Ellis was also a slave, of pure African blood, (his grandfather was an imported Mandingo.) of good repute for piety, very patient and persistent in spirit and purpose under such disabilities as his condition imposed, but without any strong marks of the religious enthusiast or moral hero in his history. He is a prodigy of learning; but we see none of the points which make Uncle Tom a problem or pattern, according as thinkers have more or less faith in his possibility. For our own part, he is a very real personage to us; and, moreover, not nearly so uncommon as he seems to be regarded. Fiction seldom presents such characters, but they are frequent, and even familiar, in experience, if we had but the insight to discern them. They abound among women and slaves. Thousands of such lives are passing unrecognised, and their deaths are unhappily lost to the use of which they are capable, because the observers will not and cannot know them. We do not think it too much to say that every family affords an example, at least once in a century; for Christianity is not an impracticable thing. — When all the early deaths which we witness are accounted for, and our own agency in them is understood, Uncle Tom will not be as singular as he is new to our stupidity of head and heart. It is in the family, where love and the sense of duty hold so strong a rule, that the patience and faith of the saints is most manifest. The slave, where he has the moral and physical temperament of Uncle Tom, is, in effect of the family, and has his whole life governed by its sentiment. If he had been presented as the devotee of a doctrine, the public missionary of a faith, and had voluntarily dedicated his life and at last sacrificed it for the world, receiving his death at the hand of strangers, he would have been that truly

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wonderful and rarest of men, a Christian martyr. We do not write him down commonplace, but it is sad to know that he is regarded as so wonderful and so worthy that his possibility is generally doubted. The sympathy which his story awakens would be still more serviceable to humanity if it were applied as widely as is required, to connect the wrongs and mitigate the sufferings of common life. The Book is making the tour of the world. By the time it shall be "known and read of all men," somebody will be found to explain it deeper, it may be, even, than its own author comprehends it. We venture to predict that a different style of heroism will be demanded, before the black race shall be redeemed from chattle slavery in this country. Patient and pious endurance is not the sort of moral that blunts the edge of tyranny; nor is physical resistance, the heroism of blood, an allowable or promising scheme of self-emancipation for our slave. Ellis and Douglass and their like, are more nearly the pattern men after which the caste may be moulded into freemen. The story of Mr. Ellis, as it is gathered from authenticated documents by Chambers' Journal, presents such points as these. He was born in Pictsylvania County, Virginia, and was sold, first into Tennessee, and afterwards into Alabama. At the age of nine years he formed the purpose of learning to read, principally in order that he might be able to peruse the Bible. He had observed that ministers in preaching, always read from the Bible, and spoke of it as being the WORD OF GOD. The Word of God! The idea made a vivid impression upon him – such doubtless as we remember to have felt in our childhood, when we first encountered the amazing declaration, in the Book of Job, that "God answered him out of the whirlwind, and said." It might well arouse a thoughtful boy to such exertion as would open the wonders of such a book to his eyes. The lad had the matter of a great manhood in him. He had the susceptibility of genius, and against such there is no law and no impediment. At twenty-five he was still a slave, and laboring for his master at the trade of a blacksmith. He had read several books principally on religious subjects; something in these readings put him upon the study of the Latin language. He had no regular instruction, but received, it is stated, "some little assistance from one person and another, as casual opportunities afforded it."

Except for the lack of sufficient leisure, it does not appear that the difficulties in his way were greater than have happened in the lives of many distinguished scholars, whose achievements are recorded in the history of men of letters. He was a slave, indeed; but the thirst of the intellect, like that of the appetites, is but little helped or hindered by ultimate considerations. Genius finds its motives and ends in itself. After acquiring some knowledge of Latin, he undertook the study of Greek, and subsequently of Hebrew. He was all this while a slave, and regularly at work at his anvil. He also read and studied some authors on natural science and moral philosophy, but his reading was chiefly confined to religious books – such as Dwight, Dick, and Boston.

In 1846, the two Synods of Alabama and Mississippi combined to purchase his freedom, and that of his family, (a wife and two children.) with the view of sending him to Africa, under the care of the American Board of Missions. He was introduced at the

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Tuscaloosa Presbytery, as a candidate for clerical orders, and was afterwards ordained by the Synod of Alabama. His examination was eminently satisfactory. At this time the notice states that his wife, about his own age, could read; his son, about seventeen, could read and write, and had made some progress in the study of arithmetic, geography, and other branches of school learning. The daughter, eleven years old, had just commenced learning to read. — The opportunities of the children were only such as the casual intervals of their own and their father's labor afforded them. The whole family was purchased by the two Synods, for \$2,500; and in March, 1847, they went, with a party of emigrants to the colony of Liberia. In 1848, Mr. Ellis was pastor of a Presbyterian congregation in Monrovia. He was then studying the languages of two tribes of the natives, in order to preach to them in their own tongue. He had visited the Mandingo country, in which he was claimed as a countryman. In a letter to an American friend, he describes these people. They are Mohammedans, and some of their priests are intelligent — capable of reading Hebrew, when written in the Arabic character. In 1850, he says, in answer to certain inquiries propounded to him by a gentleman of Alabama: "The children of Liberia are exactly like the white children in America; and, as this part of our community have the best opportunity to equal the corresponding part in America, their equality can be better seen. Remarkable as white children in America are, old persons (slaves) had not the opportunity of seeing much of it where we came from; so that many think our children have more penetrating minds than those in America. This supposition arose out of the above mentioned circumstances; but it is not well founded. The fact is, if there be any difference, it is in this: — Perhaps the Liberia children learn as fast, if not faster, for the first few years; but it maybe the young Americans continue their mental improvement the longest. I think — tho' there may be circumstances by which we shall be able, after a while, to account better for the facts just alluded to — I think it most probable that the lambs stop eating because the shepherds get out of corn."

Mr. Ellis was between thirty and forty years of age, when he was appointed missionary to Africa; and his remarkable attainments in languages, and very clever progress in literature and theology, had all been made before that period, in such leisure as the life of a slave mechanic allowed him.

Of his examination at the Presbytery, a competent witness says: "I believe I utter the sentiments of the whole Presbytery, and of a large assembly present, when I say, that for precision on the details of religious experience; for sober, rational views of what constitutes a call to the ministry; for sound, consistent, scriptural views of the leading doctrines of the Gospel, few candidates for the office have been known to equal him. He read a sermon of his own composition, correct in language, forcible in style, logical in argument, and abounding in pertinent quotations from the Bible. All this looked strange, incredible, from one who had been all his life a slave, with none but the ordinary privileges of a slave."

Of his quality as a blacksmith, his money value as a slave, the general treatment experienced from his several masters, and his

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feelings and opinions about the institution, nothing is given in the notice before us. He is quoted only as saying that he "strove to make himself agreeable and happy in this condition, and compelled all his brethren to submission." What else he counsels, or would counsel if he were absolutely free in his position and office, we have no information. Expatriated as he is, and bound to the service of the pulpit among the heathen of Africa, it is of little consequence what he thinks or says upon the subject of slavery; his life is full enough of instruction to answer for him. He is another and a most unequivocal demonstration of the capacity of the black man for the culture and conditions of high civilization; and a plain proof, moreover, that when a slave comes up to the fashion pattern of a man, he gets too big for his shackles. Skill, as a mechanic, and attainments in scholarship, both tend alike, though in unequal degree, to emancipation. They are available in the assertion of manhood, and the vindication of its rights. Piety, as in the case of Uncle Tom, and apparently in that of the Rev. Ellis, is capable of being prostituted in the service of slavery. Because it acts upon the life mainly as a sentiment, it can be perverted into a sort of spiritual and moral handcuff, and made to answer the master as a restraint upon natural liberty. Ellis, his wife, and two children, were purchased for \$2,500. This may have been much below their market value. When every slave in Virginia is really worth \$5,000 in available faculties for the world's work and use, they will own themselves, and the system will be at an end by a clear financial necessity. That man is too cheap for a freeman who can be raised for much less than \$1,000. The animal can be held in bondage easily enough and while he remains so, neither law nor gospel can emancipate him in fact; but when his educational enhancement will rent, for three or four hundred a year, he is free by the sheer forces of his acquired manhood.

Beyond all measure, therefore, we re[Illegible] Mr. Ellis as a better case for the freedom of his race than any Uncle Tom that the South can produce, or Mrs. Stowe can imagine. — Her hero is a model [Illegible], and will answer on a safe precedent and example on the plantation. Read his story to a [Illegible] of [Illegible], and every enthusiast among them, that nature made noble and poetical, will be inspired with the spirit of self-sacrifice and submission. They will befit for slavery, as well as for heaven. Mr. Ellis was not fit for a slave, and could not be kept one.

Frederick Douglass was also born a slave, and for years entertained the religion of submission; but, happily, he apostatized, and escaped alive. He also, in a most eminent sense, was fitter to be a man than a slave, and it was not in Southern law, Northern prejudice, or sentimental gospel, to crush the soul out of him. Cut Uncle Tom out of the Cabin, and his story might be read to a slave insurrection, instead of the riot set; but a speech or a look from Douglass would have a very different effect. It will belong before the life and adventures of the latter will get as free circulation in the South, as is absolutely accorded to the history of the former.

Depending upon the Tribune for our information, we are free to declare that, of all the speeches made at the late New York

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anniversaries, not one approaches that delivered before the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society by Frederick Douglass, in any quality which distinguishes men and thinkers from each other upon the platform. — Such a demonstration for fitness for freedom, and all the offices of civil life and business, is worth much more for the cause of emancipation than all the sacrifices which submission can make to the spirit of masterdom. Let us have more blacksmiths, scholars, orators, philosophers, and natural noblemen of the race. We have victims enough already, and sympathy for suffering will be most profitably replaced by admiration for evincible magnanimity. It is the real evil of the negro race that they are so fit for slavery as they are, and so often admirable for their patience, contentment, and fidelity. It would be better for them and for the world, if they would more vigorously work out their salvation from bondage here, according to the world's standard of requirement, than content themselves, as they are so prone to do, with providing for a salvation that is to take effect after death. Religion is the highest truth and the supreme influence of human nature. The religion of the Cross, beyond any other, emancipates the life from the control of earth, but it is often only the worship of sorrow; and because it serves so well to die by, men are but too likely to forget that it is really intended to live by. — Douglass has the worthier apprehension of it, and we would not exchange him for a thousand martyrs of the plantation.

E.



June 17. *Friday*. Another breezy night and no fog this morning. The pogonias, adder's-tongue arethusas, I see nowadays, getting to be numerous, are far too pale to compete with the *A. bulbosa*, and then their snake-like odor is much against them.

Fresh mackerel for some days past.

Here have been three ultra-reformers, lecturers on Slavery, Temperance, the Church, etc., in and about our house and Mrs. Brooks's the last three or four days, — A.D. Foss, once a Baptist minister in Hopkinton, N.H.; [Loring Moody, a sort of traveling pattern-working chaplain](#); and H.C. Wright, who shocks old women with his infidel writings. Though Foss was a stranger to the others, you would have thought them old and familiar cronies.... I was awfully pestered with his benignity; feared I should get greased all over with it past restoration; tried to keep some starch in my clothes. He wrote a book called "A Kiss for a Blow," and he behaved as if there were no alternative between these, or as if I had given him a blow. I would have preferred the blow, but he was bent on giving me the kiss, when there was neither quarrel nor agreement between us. I wanted that he should straighten his back, smooth out those ogling wrinkles of benignity about his eyes, and, with a healthy reserve, pronounce something in a downright manner. It was difficult to keep clear of his slimy benignity, with which he sought to cover you before he swallowed you and took you fairly into his bowels. It would have been far worse than the fate of Jonah. I do not wish to get any nearer to a man's bowels than usual. They lick you as a cow her calf. They would fain wrap you about with their bowels. — addressed me as "Henry" within one minute from the time I first laid eyes on him, and when I spoke, he said with drawing, sultry sympathy, "Henry, I know all you would say; I understand you perfectly; you need not explain anything to me;" and to another, "I am going to dive into Henry's inmost depths." I said, "I trust you will not strike your head against the bottom." He could tell in a dark room, with his eyes blinded and in perfect stillness, if there was one there whom he loved. One of the most attractive things about the flowers is their beautiful reserve. The truly beautiful and noble puts its lover, as it were, at an infinite distance, while it attracts him more strongly than ever. I do not like the men who come so near me with their bowels. It is the most disagreeable kind of snare to be caught in. Men's bowels are far more slimy than their brains. They must be ascetics indeed who approach you by this side. What a relief to have heard the ring of one healthy reserved tone! With

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such a forgiving disposition, as if he were all the while forgiving you for existing. Considering our condition or *habit* of soul, maybe corpulent and asthmatic, — maybe dying of atrophy, with all our bones sticking out, — is it kindness to embrace a man? They lay their sweaty hand on your shoulder, or your knee, to magnetize you.

I loved to hear of the old log canoe, which perchance had first been a tree on its brink, and then, as it were, fell into the water, to float there for a generation as the only proper vessel for it, — very thick and at length water-logged. So primitive a vessel! I remember that when I first paddled on it there were more large trunks of trees to be seen indistinctly lying on the bottom, which had probably blown over formerly, when the trees were larger, or had been left on the ice at the last cutting, when wood was cheaper; but now for the most part they have disappeared. The old log canoe, which took the place of a more graceful one of Indian construction.

Now the trunks of trees on the bottom and the old log canoe are gone, the dark surrounding woods are gone, and the villagers, who scarcely know how it lies, instead of going to the pond to bathe or drink, are thinking to bring its water to the village in a pipe, to form a reservoir as high as the roofs of the houses, to wash their dishes and be their scullion, — which should be more sacred than the Ganges, — to earn their Walden by the turning of a cock or drawing of a plug, as they draw cider from a cask. The Boiling Spring is turned into a tank for the Iron Horse to drink at, and the Walden woods have been cut and dried for his fodder. That devilish Iron Horse, whose ear-rending whinner is heard throughout the town, has defiled the Boiling Spring with his feet and drunk it up, and browsed off all the wood around the pond. He has got a taste for berries even, and with unnatural appetite he robs the country babies of mill., with the breath of his nostrils polluting the air. That Trojan horse, with a thousand men in his belly, insidiously introduced by mercenary Greeks. With the scream of a hawk he beats the bush for men, the man-harrier, and carries them to his infernal home by thousands for his progeny. Where is the country's champion, the Moore of Moore Hall, to meet him at the Deep Cut and throw a victorious and avenging lance against this bloated pest?


The dense fields of blue-eyed grass now blue the meadows, as if, in this fair season of the year, the clouds that envelop the earth were dispersing, and blue patches began to appear, answering to the blue sky. The eyes pass from these blue patches into the surrounding green as from the patches of clear sky into the clouds.

If a man walks in the woods for love of them and [to] see his fellows with impartial eye afar, for half his days, he is esteemed a loafer; but if he spends his whole day as a speculator, shearing off those woods, he is esteemed industrious and enterprising — making earth bald before its time.

P.M. — To Walden.

I did not mention yesterday the great devil's-needle with his humped back, which hovered over the boat and, though headed across its course, and not appearing to fly in the direction in which the boat was moving, yet preserved his relation to the boat perfectly. What steamer can reverse its paddle-wheels as he can?

A remarkably strong south wind this afternoon, and cool. The greenness about the edge of Walden is very striking when seen from the Peak nowadays. Is it in the fall?

One of the nighthawk's [Common Nighthawk  *Chordeiles minor*] eggs is hatched. The young is unlike any that I have seen, exactly like a pinch of rabbit's fur or down of that color dropped on the ground, not two inches long, with a dimpling or geometrical or somewhat regular arrangement of minute feathers in the middle, destined to become the wings and tail. Yet even it half opened its eye, and peeped if I mistake not. Was ever bird more completely protected, both by the color of its eggs and of its own body, that sits on them, and of the young bird just hatched? Accordingly the eggs and young are rarely discovered. There was one egg still, and by the side of it this little pinch of down, flattened out and not observed at first, and a foot down the hill had rolled a half of the egg it came out of. There was no callowness, as in the young of most birds. It seemed a singular place for a bird to begin its life, — to come out of its egg, — this little pinch of down, — and lie still on the exact spot where the egg lay, on a flat exposed shelf on the side of a bare hill, with nothing but the whole

heavens, the broad universe above, to brood it when its mother was away.

The most famous example of the revulsion that his style could inspire came from Henry David Thoreau. He saw [Henry Clarke] Wright as a repulsive, feminine, anal creature who threatened his own independent action. His blows were preferable to his kisses. "It was difficult to keep clear of his slimy benignity, with which he sought to cover you and took you into his bowels.... I do not like the men who come so near me with their bowels." This reaction tells much more about Thoreau, but it may also indicate snares with which the Christian reformer encircled others while professing to have no concern for earthly reputation. The radiance with which he converted one person to pacifism appeared to another as sanctimonious encroachment.

A.D. FOSS
ANDREW T. FOSS
LORING MOODY
HENRY C. WRIGHT



June 1 [1853]. This gall [pincushion gall on young white oaks] is the tree's "[Ode to Dejection.](#)" How oft it chances that the apparent fruit of a shrub, its apple, is merely a gall or blight! How many men meet with some blast in the moist growing days of their youth, and what should have been a sweet and palatable fruit in them becomes a mere puff and excrescence, ripening no kernel, and they say that they have experienced religion! For the hardening of the seed is the crisis. Their fruit is a gall, a puff, an excrescence, for want of moderation and continence. So many plants never ripen their fruit.



 June 18, Saturday, 1853: [Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Eben J. Loomis](#):



To: Eben J. Loomis
From: HDT
Date: 18 June 1853

*Concord June 18th '53
Mr Eben J. Loomis,
Dear Sir,
Excuse me for delaying so long to thank you for the gift of the Nautical Almanack. I am glad of the opportunity it affords me to examine, and perhaps use, it soon. Other engagements have held me from it yet, but it looks full of celestial news, fit to circulate in the*

HDT

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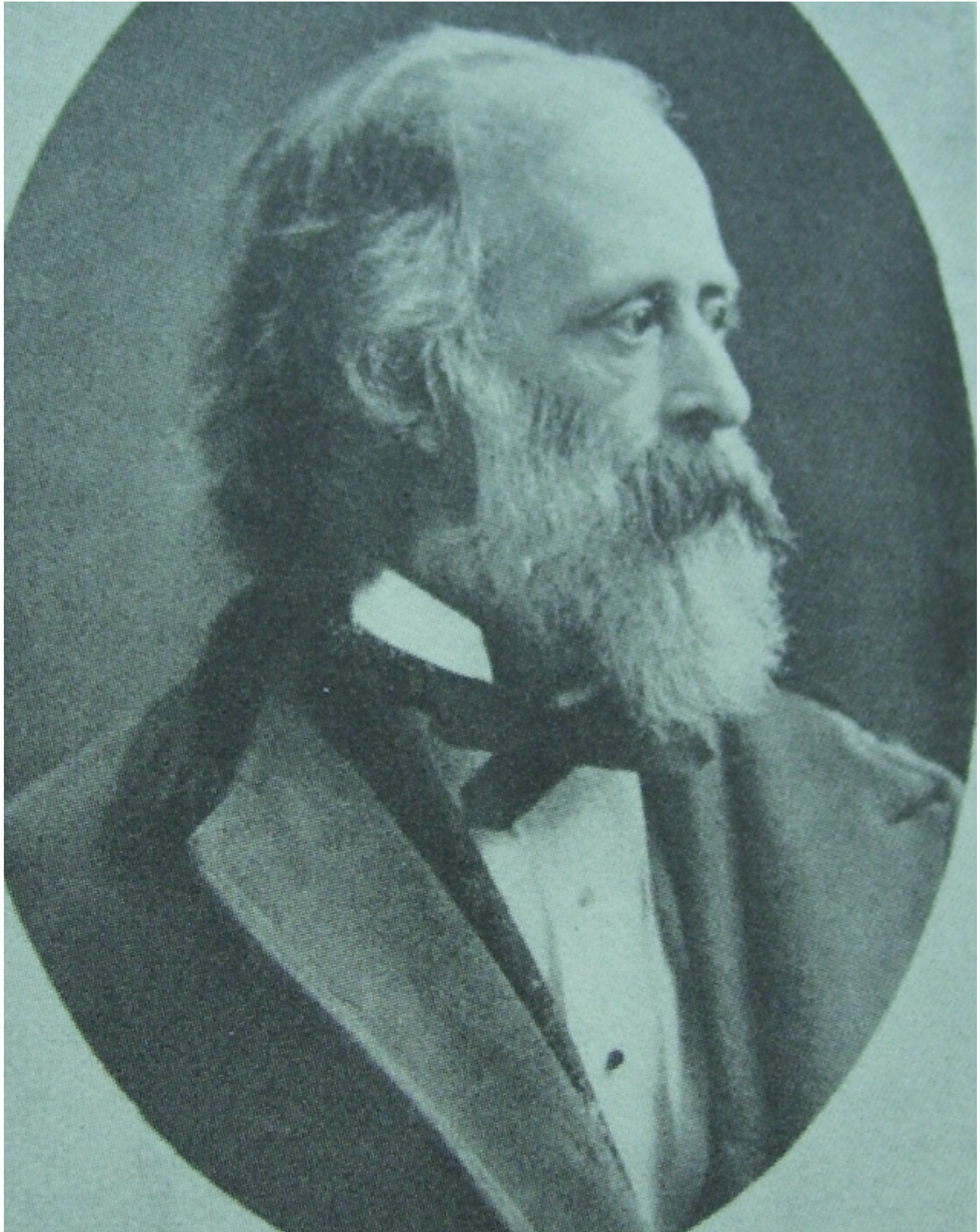
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*heavens, if not on earth. It is the argument of a great Poem.
Your sticks cut on the Battle Ground await the time when next you
shall walk this way.
Yrs
Henry D. Thoreau.*

He made an entry in his journal in regard to a Lewis. Was this Lewis blind, or was his horse blind? The Depot which Thoreau mentions here is the RR depot near the Thoreau boardinghouse? They had a sawing machine there?

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

Started at 6:30 o'clock. Came to Porters Rock in three miles, reached Bitterwood creek at noon. Some brush along this creek. Lost one of our cattle. After hunting about 2 hours found him ahead in a drove. Traveled till after sunset and camped at Heber Springs. Drove 19 miles today.

The Placer, [California Herald](#) reported that the Snyder & Brown Claim at Forest Hill was continuing to yield \$1,200-\$2,500 per day, and near the settlement known as Yankee Jim's, on a claim belonging to Col. McClure, who was able to pay big wages of \$40 to \$100 per day per laborer, 8 laborers had succeeded in cutting a channel through solid slate that was all of 200 feet long and 30 feet deep.



June 18, *Saturday*. 4 A.M. — By boat to Nawshawtuct: to Azalea Spring, or Pinxter Spring. No fog and very little dew, or perhaps it was a slight rain in the night. I find always some dew in low ground. There is a broad crescent of clear sky in the west, but it looks rainy in the east. As yet we are disappointed of rain. Almost all birds appear to join the early morning chorus before sunrise on the roost, the matin hymn. I hear now the robin [\[red\]](#), the chip-bird [[Chipping Sparrow](#) [\[red\]](#) [Spizella passerina](#) (chip-bird or hair-bird)], the blackbird [\[red\]](#), the martin [[Purple Martin](#) [\[red\]](#) [Progne subis](#)], etc., etc., but I see none flying, or, at last, only one wing in the air, not yet illustrated by the sun. As I was going up the hill, I was surprised to see rising above the June-grass, near a walnut, a whitish object, like a stone with a white top, or a skunk erect, for it was black below. It was an enormous toadstool, or fungus, a sharply conical parasol in the form of a sugar loaf, slightly turned up at the edges, which were rent half an inch in every inch or two. The whole height was sixteen inches. The pileus or cap was six inches long by seven in width at the rim, though it appeared longer than wide. There was no veil, and the stem was about one inch in diameter and naked. The top of the cap was white within and without, hoariest at top of the cone like a mountain-top, not smooth but with [a] stringy kind of scales turned upward at the edge, which declined downward, *i.e.* down the cap, into a coarse hoariness, as if the compact white fibres had been burst by the spreading of the gills and showed the black. As you looked up within, the light was transmitted between the trembling gills. It looked much like an old felt hat [that] is pushed up into a cone and its rim all ragged and with some meal shaken on to it; in fact, it was almost big enough for a child's head. It was so delicate and fragile that its whole cap trembled on the least touch, and, as I could not lay it down without injuring it, I was obliged to carry it home all the way in my hand and erect, while I paddled my boat with one hand. It was a wonder how its soft cone ever broke through the earth. Such growths ally our age to former periods, such as geology reveals. I wondered if it had not some relation to the skunk, though not in odor, yet in its colors and the general impression it made. It suggests a vegetative force which may almost make man tremble for his dominion. It carries me back to the era of the formation of the coal-measures — the age of the saurus and pleiosaurus and when bullfrogs were as big as bulls. Its stem had something massy about it like an oak, large in proportion to the weight it had to support (though not perhaps to the size of the cap), like the vast hollow columns under some piazzas, whose caps have hardly weight enough to hold their tops together. It made you think of parasols of Chinese

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mandarins; or it might have been used by the great fossil bullfrog in his walks. What part does it play in the economy of the world?

I see the curled fragments of some larger turtle's egg-shells on the high bank of the North River, near a cavity, proportionally large, in the black earth, where was once a coal pit. Was it not a mud turtle? They are more dusky-spotted. The panicked andromeda. The mullein yesterday. It hears inspection; is a rich yellow flower with dark-orange anthers, opening now in rings of five or six large flowers one inch in diameter around the spike, the next row of buds above just showing yellowish through downy floral leaves, like the saffron down through twilight clouds.

I have just been out (7.30 A.M.) to show my fungus. The milkman and the butcher followed me to inquire what it was, and children and young ladies addressed me in the street who never spoke to me before. It is so fragile I was obliged to walk at a funereal pace for fear of jarring it. It is so delicately balanced on its stem that it falls to one side across it on the least inclination; falls about like an umbrella that has lost its stays. It is rapidly curling up on the edge, and the rents increasing, until it is completely fringed, and is an inch wider there. It is melting in the sun and light, and black drops and streams falling on my hand and fragments of the black fringed rim falling on the sidewalk. Evidently such a plant can only be seen in perfection in the early morning. It is a creature of the night, like the great moths. They wish me to send it to the first of a series of exhibitions of flowers and fruits to be held at the court-house this afternoon, which I promise to do if it is presentable then. Perhaps it might be placed in the court-house cellar and the company be invited at last to walk down and examine it. Think of placing this giant parasol fungus in the midst of all their roses; yet they admit that it would overshadow and eclipse them all. It is to be remarked that this grew, not in low and damp soil, but high up on the open side of a dry hill, about two rods from a walnut and one from a wall, in the midst of and rising above the thin June-grass. The last night was warm; the earth was very dry, and there was a slight sprinkling of rain.

I believe the 14th was the first day I began to wear my single thin sack in my walk and at night sleep with both windows open; say, when the swamp-pink opens. The locust is done, and its shrivelled dirty-white petals cover the ground between the blades of grass like a crusting or sugaring of snow. Meadow-rue, with a rank, offensive smell like a strong-smelling dog. The floating-heart in river like a minute white lily, now at 5 A.M. Swamp blackberry probably now.

I think the blossom of the sweet-briar, now in prime, — eglantine, — is more delicate and interesting than that of the common roses, though smaller and paler and without their spicy fragrance; but its fragrance is in its leaves all summer, and the form of the bush is handsomer, curving over from a considerable height in wreaths sprinkled with numerous flowers. They open out flat soon after sunrise. Flowers whitish in middle, then pinkish-rose inclining to purple toward the edges.

The laurel of many varieties. I have now three differently marked or colored. Some a delicate calico, — a new print just washed and starched for a morning dress.


Carrion-flower now abundant. At first this morning there was no mist whatever, even on the water, but it was all smooth and dark; but when the sun fell on it a very slight vapor curled along it.

How far from our minds now the early blossoms of the spring, the willow catkins, for example! I put the parasol fungus in the cellar to preserve it, but it went on rapidly melting and wasting away from the edges upward, spreading as it dissolved, till it was shaped like a dish cover. By night, though kept in the cellar all the day, there was not more than two of the six inches of the height of the cap left, and the barrel-head beneath it and its own stem looked as if a large bottle of ink had been broken there. It defiled all it touched. The next morning the hollow stem was left perfectly bare, and only the hoary apex of the cone, spreading about two inches in diameter, lay on the ground beneath. Probably one night produced it, and in one day, — with all our pains, it wasted away. Is it not a giant mildew or mould? In the warm, muggy night the surface of the earth is mildewed. The mould, which is the flower of humid darkness and ignorance. The Pyramids and other monuments of Egypt are a vast mildew or toadstools which have met with no light of day sufficient to waste them away. Slavery is such a mould, and superstition, — which are most rank in the warm and humid portions of the globe. Luxor sprang up one night out of the slime of the Nile. The humblest, puniest weed that can endure the sun is thus superior to the largest fungus, as is the peasant's cabin to those foul temples. It is a temple consecrated to Apis. All things flower, both vices and virtues, but the one is essentially foul, the other fair. In hell, toadstools should be represented as overshadowing men. The priest is the fungus of the graveyard, the mildew of the tomb. In the animal world there are toads and lizards.

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P. M. — To Island by boat.

The first white lily to-day perhaps. It is the only bud I have seen. The river has gone down and left it nearly dry. On the Island, where a month ago plants were so fresh and early, it is now parched and crisp under my feet, and I feel the heat reflected from the ground and the dry scent of grass and leaves. So universally on dry and rocky hills where the spring was earliest, the autumn has already commenced. The panicked cornel, a day or two. Cranberry also a day or two, with its dry-looking curled flower. Found the nest of a cuckoo [**Black-billed Cuckoo**  *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*], — a long, slender, handsome bird, prob. St. Domingo cuckoo.— at the edge of the meadow on a bent sallow not in a crotch, covered by the broad shining leaves of a swamp white oak whose boughs stretched over it — two feet or more from the ground— The nest was made of dry twigs & was small for the size of the bird and very shallow — but handsomely lined with an abundance of what looked like the dry yellowish-brown (?) catkins of the hickory — which made a pleasing contrast with the surrounding grayish twigs. There were some worm eaten green leaves inwoven— It contained a single greenish white elliptical egg an inch or more long. The bird flew off a little way & *clow-clow-clowed*.



At the Flower Exhibition, saw the rhododendron plucked yesterday in Fitzwilliam, N.H. It was the earliest to be found there, and only one bud yet fully open. They say it is in perfection there the 4th of July, nearer Monadnock than the town. **Bigelow** says “the flowers form a terminal cluster or thyrus immediately above the leaves,” and, before expansion, form “a large compound bud, resembling a strobilus or cone.” These buds are very remarkable. *These* flowers were, I should say, a very pale rose-color, with permanent greenish spots on one side, as of fallen pollen. In the midst of such a profusion of roses, etc., I could not discriminate its odor well. It cannot be very remarkable in this respect.

This unexpected display of flowers culled from the gardens of the village suggests how many virtues also are cultivated by the villagers, more than meet the eye.

It would be an interesting subject, — the materials with which different birds line their nests, or, more generally, *construct* them. The hickory catkins, etc., of the cuckoo [**Black-billed Cuckoo**  *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*], the tympanum and large nest of the phoebe [**Bridge Pewee** (**Eastern Phoebe**  *Sayornis phoebe*)].

Saw to-night Lewis the blind man’s horse which works on the sawing machine at the Depot — now let out to graze along the road — but at each step he lifts his hind legs convulsively high from the ground — as if the whole earth were a tread-mill — continually slipping away from under him while he climbed its convex surface. It was painful to witness — but it was symbolical of the moral condition of his master and of all artisans in contradistinction from artists — all who are engaged in any routine — for to them also the whole earth is a tread-mill, and the routine results instantly in a similar painful deformity— The horse may bear the mark of his servitude on the muscles of his legs — the man on his brow.

8.30 P.M — To Cliffs.

Moon not quite full. Going across Depot Field. The western shy is now a crescent of saffron inclining to salmon, a little dunnish, perhaps. The grass is wet with dew. The evening star has come out, but no other. There is no wind. I see a nighthawk [**Common Nighthawk**  *Chordeiles minor* (Booming Nighthawk)] in the twilight, flitting near the ground. I hear the hum of a beetle going by. The greenish fires of lightning bugs are already seen in the meadow. I almost lay my hand on one amid the leaves as I get over the fence at the brook. I pass through Hubbardston [*sic*] along the side of a field of oats, which wet one leg. I perceive the smell of a burning far off by the river, which I saw smoking two days ago. The moon is laboring in a mackerel cloud, and my hopes are with her. Why do I hear no bullfrogs yet? Do they ever trump as early and as universally as on that their first evening? I hear the whip-poor-wills [**Whip-poor-will**  *Caprimulgus vociferus*] on different sides. White flowers alone show much at night, — white clover and white-weed. It is commonly still at night, as now. The day has gone by with its wind like the wind of a cannon-ball, and now far in the west it blows. By that dun-colored sky you may track it. There is no motion nor sound in the woods (Hubbard’s Grove) along which I am walking. The trees stand like great screens against the sky. The distant village sounds, are the barking of dogs, that animal with which man has allied himself, and the rattling of wagons — For the farmers have gone into to town a-shopping this Saturday night — The dog is the tamed wolf — as the villager is the tamed savage. But near, the crickets are heard in

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the grass, chirping from everlasting to everlasting, a mosquito sings near my ear, and the humming of a dor-bug drowns all the noise of the village, so roomy is the universe. The moon comes out of the mackerel cloud, and the traveller rejoices. How can a man write the same thoughts by the light of the moon, resting his foot on a rail by the side of a remote potato-field, that he does by the light of the sun, on his study table? The light is but a luminousness. My pencil seems to move through a creamy, mystic medium. The moonlight is rich and somewhat opaque, like cream, but the daylight is thin and blue, like skimmed milk. I am less conscious than in the presence of the sun; my instincts have more influence. I love the smell of that burning as a man may his pipe. It reminds me of a new country offering sites for the hearths of men. It is cheering as the scent of the peat fire of the first settler. The farmer has improved the dry weather to burn his meadow.

Might not rivers receive more various names? This now at length resounds with the trump of the bullfrog. Might it not be Bullfrog River, as we have "frog ponds" — it is one long frog pond — or Lily River? Those swift rivers like the Nashua have few bullfrogs or lilies, I suspect.

The moon is threatened by some mares'-tails. At Potter's sand-bank, the sand, though cold on the surface, commences to be warm two inches beneath, and the warmth reaches at least six inches deeper. The tortoise buries her eggs just deep enough to secure this greatest constant warmth. I hear a huckleberry-bird [~~Field Sparrow~~ **Spizella pusilla** (~~Rush Sparrow or juncoorum or George Minott's huckleberry bird~~)] now at half past nine. In Potter's low pasture, I pass through a cold stratum full of dewy fragrance and invigorating as the springy sides of mountains, but I soon again rise out of this cool basin. You pass through these refrigerators just as you would wade through a lake or at the bottom of a sea. I passed into and along the bottom of a lake of cold and dewy evening air. Anon, rising higher, here comes a puff of warm air, trivially warm, a straggler from the sun's retinue, now buffeted about by the vanguard night breezes. Tephrosia, a day or two. Before me, southward toward the moon, on higher land than I, but springy, I saw a low film of fog like a veil reflecting the moonlight, though none on lower ground which was not springy, and, up the river beyond, a battalion of fog rising white in the moonlight in ghost-like wisps, or like a flock of scared covenanters in a recess amid the hills. The loudest sound produced by man that I hear now is that of a train of cars passing through the town. The evening air is so favorable to the conveyance of sound, that a sudden whistle or scream of the engine, just startled me as much as it does near at hand, though I am nearly two miles distant from it. Passed two silent horses grazing in the orchard, and then a skunk prowling on the open hillside, probably probing for insects, etc. Though twenty or thirty feet off he stops repeatedly, erects his tail, and prepares to receive me. How he trusts in his weapon! Fair Haven Pond, seen now indistinctly in the moonlight, seems reduced to a shining surface of mud and slimy puddles, yet I distinguish a smoother and lighter sheen from its broad padded border. The oak leaves, as I look down this vista from the first rock, glisten in the moonlight, though not wet. Will they glisten thus in the fall?

The chief sounds now are the bullfrogs and the whip-poor-wills [**Whip-poor-will** **Caprimulgus vociferus**]. The er-er-roonk of the bullfrog actually sounds now without a pause from one end of this river to the other, and can be heard more than a mile on each side. I hear the beat of a partridge [**Ruffed Grouse** **Bonasa umbellus** (~~Partridge~~)] also. Is it not a result of the white man's intrusion and a sign of the wildness of the bird, that it is compelled to employ thus the night as well as the day? Though frogs and crickets and gnats fill the air with sound, these horses, great beasts as they are, I cannot detect by any sound they make, but by their forms against the sky. The Cliff rocks are warm to the hand. It is probably after ten. I just came through a moonlit glade in the woods on the side of the hill, where an aspen (*Populus grandidentata*) trembled and betrayed a rising wind. A cuckoo [**Black-billed Cuckoo** **Coccyzus erythrophthalmus**] I just heard, an imperfect note, and a wagon going over a bridge, I know not where. It is soon over, and the horse's hoofs and the wheels are no longer heard. That small segment of the arc which the traveller described is remarkably distinguished. Might not a policeman be stationed on a central hill at night, and when any robbery was committed, be notified of it by telegraph if possible, and so hear by what bridge the rogue left the town?


The night-warbler [**Ovenbird** **Seiurus aurocapillus**, or **Common Yellowthroat** **Geothlypis trichas?**], and again afterward. It is worth the while to walk thus in the night after a warm or sultry day to enjoy the fresh up-country, brake-like, springlike scent in low grounds. At night the surface of the earth is a cellar, a refrigerator, no doubt wholesomer than those made with ice by day. Got home at eleven.





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Part of this entry would later get copied into Thoreau's early lecture "[WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT](#)" It would get combined with an entry made on [July 6, 1852](#)  to form the following:

[Paragraph 25] I have been disappointed to find that one of the most intelligent farmers whom I know—who admits that he has property enough for his use without accumulating more, and talks of leaving off hard work, letting his farm, and spending the rest of his days more easily and better, cannot yet think of any method of employing himself but in work with his hands—only he would have a little less of it.¹ Much as he is inclined to speculation in conversation, giving up any work to it for the time, and wise as he is in many respects, he talks of working for a neighbor for a day now and then, and taking his dollar. "For," says he, "I would not like to spend my time sitting on the Mill-dam." That is one exchange. As if that were the only alternative. He has not even planned an essentially better life. He has advanced no further in this respect than his own oxen, for they too are tired and worn out by the old life. He reminded me of a horse which works in a sawing machine which I saw the other night—let out to graze along the road. At each step he lifted his hind legs convulsively, high from the ground—as if the whole earth were a tread-mill continually slipping away from under him, while he climbed its convex surface. It was painful to witness, but it was symbolical of the moral condition of his master—and indeed of all artizans, in contradistinction to artists—all who are engaged in any routine—for

**BRAD DEAN'S
COMMENTARY**

1. This farmer is identified in the journal source as [Edmund Hosmer](#).

 June 19, Sunday, [1853](#): A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

What a welcome day will that be that brings us safe through that we may all rest once more on the Sabbath. Started about the usual hour, reached Horse-shoe Creek by noon. This is a beautiful stream, just such a stream as I should like to live close by. The water is so clear that we can see the bottom where it is six feet deep. The bottom is covered with stone of a variety of colors. There are a few fish here. The water is rather swift to catch them. Some beautiful shade trees along its banks. Two miles farther is a very bad hill to ascend about 1 mile in length and nothing but rocks from bottom to top. Drove on 4 miles farther and camped. Just about this time there was a severe hail storm some rain, and quite a cool evening.

The Reverend Dr. Bernard J. Bettelheim, physician and Church of England missionary to the Lew Chew mission at Naha, delivered a sermon on the topic of "Strangers" (after his time in the Far East, the Reverend Bettelheim would settle in the United States of America).

[Emily Dickinson](#) wrote to [Austin Dickinson](#):

Do you want to hear from me, Austin? I'm going to write to you

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altho' it dont seem much as if you would care to have me. I dont know why exactly, but things look blue, today, and I hardly know what to do, everything looks so strangely, but if you want to hear from me, I shall love very much to write - Prof Tyler has preached today, and I have been all day - Susie [Susan Gilbert] walked home from meeting with us, and was so disappointed at having not letter from you - It really seems very unsafe to depend upon Judge Conkey, and that Mr Eaton too, I should think quite hazardous - Dont wait for them next time. We received your notes and the Poems, for which we thank you, last week - Father seemed much pleased with this letter, and all of us laughed a little - The remark concerning Mr Ford seemed to please father mightily - I dont dont [sic] mean what I said, but your opposition to me - He told me you'd "hit me off nicely." You make me think of Dickens, when you write such letters as that - I am going to read it to Sue - I should have done before, but the afternoon it came, we had terrible thunder showers, and it rained all evening long, and yesterday afternoon Father wanted us all to ride, so I have not had opportunity - I walked with her last evening - She wore her new things today, and looked beautifully in them - a white straw hat, trimmed with Rouches - mantilla of fawn colored silk, very handsomely finished, and white Dress. She is going after Miss Bartlett tomorrow morning at 5 - and begins her Dressmaking tomorrow -

She says she shall just get thro' by the time you get home - So shall Vinnie and I - there must be no sewing then - We are all pretty well, and the weather is beautiful - If you were here I think you would be very happy, and I think we should, but time has wings, and you will be with us soon. We have been free from company by the "Amherst and Belchertown Railroad" since Joel went home, tho' we live in constant fear of some other visitation -

"Oh would some power the giftie gie" folks, to see themselves as we see them. Burns. I have read the poems, Austin, and am going to read them again, and will hand them to Susie - They please me very much, but I must read them again before I know just [what] I think of "Alexander Smith" - They are not very coherent, but there's good deal of exquisite frensy, and some wonderful figures, as ever I met in my life - We will walk about it again - The grove looks nicely, Austin, and we think must certainly grow - We love to got there - it is a charming place. Everything is singing now, and everything is beautiful that can be in it's life.

So Joel did'nt have a remarkable trip up here - wonder which enjoyed it the most - the pestilence, or the victims - Dont tell him what I said - And think besides Aunt Lavinia must be very busy - Guess "Father will be tired" when they next visit here. Jerry gets along nicely, takes first-rate care of the horse, and seems unusually grand after having a message from you. It has the same effect as a big mug of cider, and looks a good deal better. I am glad your eye has got well. You must use it carefully, for a little while - I hope you received your hat - I had not time to write you with it, for I did it up late last night, after having folks here all the evening, and I hope it did not seem strange to you.

The time for the New London trip has not been fixed upon -

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I sincerely wish it may wait until you get home from Cambridge, if you would like to go.

The cars continue thriving — a good many passengers seem to arrive from somewhere, tho' nobody knows from where — Father expects his new Buggy to come by the cars, every day now, and that will help a little — I expect all our Grandfathers and all their country cousins will come here to pass Commencement, and dont doubt the stock will rise several percent that week. If we children and Sue could obtain board for the week in some "vast wilderness," I think we should have good times. Our house is crowded daily with the members of this world, the high and the low, the bond and the free, the "poor in this world's goods," and the "almighty dollar,["] and "what in the world are they after" continues to be unknown — But I hope they will past away, as insects on vegetation, and let us reap together in golden harvest time — that is you and Susie and me and our dear sister Vinnie must have a pleasant time to be unmolested together, when your school days end. You must not stay with Howland after the studies cease — We shall be ready for you, and you must come home from school, not stopping to play by the way! Mother was much amused at the feebleness of your hopes of hearing from her — She got so far last week once, as to take a pen and paper and carry them into the kitchen, but her meditations were broken by the unexpected arrival of Col Smith and his wife, so she must try again — I'm sure you will hear from her soon. We all send our love to you, and miss you very much, and think of seeing you again very much, and love dear Sue constantly. Write me again soon. I have said a good deal today.

Emilie.



June 19. P.M. — To Flint's Pond.

I see large patches of blue-eyed grass in the meadow across the river from my window. The pine woods at Thrush Alley emit that hot dry scent, reminding me even of days when I used to go a-blackberrying. The air is full of the hum of invisible insects, and I hear a locust. Perhaps this sound indicates the time to put on a thin coat. But the wood thrush [Wood Thrush █ *Hylocichla mustelina*] sings as usual far in the wood. A blue jay [Blue Jay █ *Cyanocitta cristata*] and a tanager [Scarlet Tanager █ *Piranga olivacea*] come dashing into the pine under which I stand. The first flies directly away, screaming with suspicion or disgust, but the latter, more innocent, remains. The cuckoo [Black-billed Cuckoo █ *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*] is heard, too, in the depths of the wood. Heard my night-warbler [Ovenbird █ *Seiurus aurocapillus*, or Common Yellowthroat █ *Geothlypis trichas?*] on a solitary white pine in the Heywood Clearing by the Peak. Discovered it at last, looking like a small piece of black bark curving partly over the limb.





No fork to its tail. It appeared black beneath; was very shy, not bigger than a yellowbird [Yellow Warbler █ *Dendroica petechia*], and very slender.

In the middle of the path to Wharf Rock at Flint's Pond, the nest of a Wilson's thrush [Veery █ *Catharus fuscescens* (Wilson's Thrush)], five or six inches high, between the green stems of three or four goldenrods, made of dried grass or fibres of bark, with dry oak leaves attached loosely, making the whole nine or ten inches wide, to deceive the eye. Two blue eggs. Like an accidental heap. Who taught it to do thus? *Lobelia Dortmanna*, a day or two at most. No grass balls yet. That fine-rooted green plant on bottom sends up stems with black heads three or four inches. Do



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they become white? Every one who has waded about the shores of a pond must have been surprised to find how much warmer the water was close to the shore, where only three or four inches deep, than a little further out. I think I saw a young crow [**American Crow**  *Corvus brachyrhynchos*] not fully grown. Returned by Smith's Hill and the Saw Mill Brook. Got quite a parcel of strawberries on the hill. The hellebore leaves by the brook are already half turned yellow. Plucked one blue early blueberry. The strain of the bobolink [**Bobolink**  *Dolichonyx oryzivorus* ~~Rice-bird~~] now begins to sound a little rare. It never again fills the air as the first week after its arrival. At the season we apprehend no long storm, only showers with or without thunder.





June 20, Monday, 1853: Peace was agreed to by Great Britain and Burma.

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

Quite cool yet this morning, hail stones lying around our tents. Reached La Bonta by 2 o'clock, distance of 10 miles. Four miles this side is Red Bank creek, a good camp, good water, fuel plenty, and grass by going over the bluffs, to the right one mile. The roads have been very bad to-day. One would think these were the Black Hills if we had never seen nor heard of them before passing through them. It has been up one and down another all day long, scarcely a level place large enough to lock the wagon on.

On this day an 1841 painting by [Joseph Mallord William Turner](#) managed to sell itself at a Christie auction for £735 to Benjamin Godfrey Windus of Tottenham (a buyer evidently with more money than sense). The painting depicts an episode in Ovid's METAMORPHOSES in which the seagod Glaucus is seeking the sexual favors of the beautiful ocean nymph [Scylla](#). The painter depicts her as fleeing from the outstretched arms of this would-be lover, whose hopes had been dashed by jealous and vengeful Circe, who is herself in love with Glaucus. Circe, daughter of the Sun, has transformed Glaucus into a sea monster, as she would later transform Scylla into a rock. The painting can be viewed on a following screen.



June 20. Monday. 4 A.M. — No fog; sky mostly overcast; drought continues. I heard the robin [**American Robin**  *Turdus migratorius*] first (before the chip-bird [**Chipping Sparrow**  *Spizella passerina*]) this morning. Heard the chip-bird last evening just after sunset.

10 A.M. — To Assabet Bathing-Place.

I see wood tortoises in the path; one feels full of eggs. Those great greenish-white puffs on the panicked andromeda are now decaying. On the swamp-pink they are solid. The pitchers of the comandra seeds are conspicuous. Meadow-sweet out, probably yesterday. It is an agreeable, unpretending flower. Some of the stone nests are a foot above the water now, but uninjured. I can find nothing in them. The bosky bank shows bright roses from its green recesses; the small white flowers of the panicked andromeda; beneath, yellow lilies.

Found two lilies open in the very shallow inlet of the meadow. Exquisitely beautiful, and unlike anything else that we have, is the first white lily just expanded in some shallow lagoon where the water is leaving it, — perfectly fresh and pure, before the insects have discovered it. How admirable its purity! how innocently sweet its fragrance! How significant that the rich, black mud of our dead stream produces the water-lily, — out of that fertile slime springs this spotless purity! It is remarkable that those flowers which are most emblematical of purity should grow in the mud.

There is also the exquisite beauty of the small sagittaria, which I find out, maybe a day or two, —

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three transparent crystalline white petals with a yellow eye and as many small purplish calyx-leaves, four or five inches above the same mud.

Coming home at twelve, I see that the white lilies are nearly shut. The river has been some days full with weeds which drape and trail from my oars — I am now on foot — (the potamogeton), as if it were Charon's boat, and this a funeral procession down the Cocytus.

8 P.M. — Up North River to Nawshawtuct.

The moon full. Perhaps there is no more beautiful scene than that on the North River seen from the rock this side the hemlocks. As we look up-stream, we see a crescent-shaped lake completely embosomed in the forest. There is nothing to be seen but the smooth black mirror of the water, on



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which there is now the slightest discernible bluish mist, a foot high, and thickset alders and willows and the green woods without tit interstice sloping steeply upward from its very surface, like the sides of a bowl. The river is here for half a mile completely shut in by the forest. One hemlock, which the current has undermined, has fallen over till it lies parallel with the water, a foot or two above it and reaching two thirds across the stream, its extremity curving upward to the light, now dead. Here it has been a year or two, and it has only taken the place of others which have successively fallen in steal peen carried away by the stream. One lies now cast up on the shore. Some wild roses, so pale now in the twilight that they look strictly like great blackberry blossoms. I think *these* would look so at midday.

Saw a little skunk coming up the river-bank in the woods at the White Oak, at funny little fellow, about six inches long and nearly as broad. It faced me and actually compelled me to retreat before it for five minutes. Perhaps I was between it and its hole. Its broad black tail, tipped with white, was erect like a kitten's. It had what looked like a broad white band drawn tight across its forehead or top-head, from which two lines of white ran down, one on each side of its back, and there was a narrow white line down its snout. It raised its back, sometimes ran a few feet forward, sometimes backward, and repeatedly turned its tail to me, prepared to discharge its fluid like the old. Such was its instinct. And all the while: it kept up a fine grunting like a little pig or a squirrel. It reminded me that the red squirrel, the woodchuck, and the skunk all make a similar sound. Now there are young rabbits, skunks, and probably woodchucks.

Walking amid the bushes and the ferns just after moonrise, I am refreshed with many sweet scents which I cannot trace to their source. Hove the trees shoot! The tops of young pines toward the moon are covered with fine shoots some eighteen inches long. Will they grow much more this year? There is a peculiarly soft, creamy light round the moon, now it is low in the sky. The bullfrogs begin about 8.30. They lie at their length on the surface amid the pads. I touched one's nose with my finger, and he only gave a sudden froggish belch and moved a foot or two off. How hard to imitate their note exactly, —its sonorousness. Here, close by, it is like *er er ough, er er er ough*, with a sonorous trump which these letters do not suggest. On our return, having reached the reach by Merrick's pasture, we get the best view of the moon in the southeast, reflected in the water, on account of the length of the reach. The creamy light about it is also perfectly reflected; the path of insects on the surface between us and the moon is lit up like fire. The leafy-columned elms, planted by the river at foot of Prichard's field, are exceedingly beautiful, the moon being behind them, and I see that they are not too near together, though sometimes hardly a rod apart, their branches crossing and interlacing. Their trunks look like columns of a portico wreathed with evergreens on the evening of an illumination for some great festival. They are the more rich, because in this creamy light you cannot (list] ngui.sh the trunk from the verdure that drapes it.

This is the most sultry night we have had. All windows and doors are open in the village and scarcely a pimp is lit. I pass many families sitting in their yards. The shadows of the trees and houses are too extended, now that the moon is low in the heavens, to show the richest tracery.



June 21, Tuesday, 1853: A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

12 miles from camp is a fine branch and some springs. Two miles farther is La Prele River. Crossed the river about 2 o'clock, camped for the day, good grass 1-1/2 miles down stream after crossing.



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The [California Daily Union](#) reported that at Cherokee Corral, about 5 miles above French Corral on the Yuba River, the diggings were mostly in the banks with the miners washing the whole earth in sluices. They had a pipe rigged to a hose and a stream of water directed upon the hillside, which was coming tumbling down. Some of such sluices were three-quarters of a mile long. One company of 6 men took out in two months \$16,000 besides expenses. In many cases the hillsides were so much washed out that slides had become frequent and dangerous. Sometimes they would install a sluice that would begin with the output of another sluice, but by adding quicksilver, they would be able to make the sluice below yield nearly as well as the sluice above.

The Reverend [Samuel Ringgold Ward](#)'s first public gathering in England:

On the 21st the meeting was held, the Earl of Shaftesbury in the chair: and a Committee was formed, of which that distinguished nobleman consented to be Chairman; Rev. J. Sherman, and S.H. Horman-Fisher, Esq.,¹²³ Honorary Secretaries; and G.W. Alexander, Esq., Treasurer.

Thus, in a manner neither anticipated by myself nor by those who sent me to England, was my cause launched, so to speak, upon the broad sea of public British munificence, under such auspices and with such a prestige as favour the missions of but few colonists coming to this country, on any errand whatever. Deep and lasting are the obligations under which I was laid. I never shall forget those obligations; I never can cancel them. It is to me a great relief, in view of my own unworthiness of them, to know that they had infinitely less to do with me than with my people; and that, however unfortunate the latter were in the selection of their representative, they themselves are far more worthy of the distinguished consideration they received through him. I may be permitted to add, I have the satisfaction of knowing that the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada, who sent me here, have, on more occasions than one, testified their high appreciation of and cordial fraternal thanks for the manner in which the distinguished personages who contributed to our cause, and gave it the sanction of their great names, and laboured in its Secretariat and upon its Committee, served and forwarded the objects of my mission.¹²⁴

123. A most devoted friend of the Negro, and a gentleman who honours me with his personal friendship, tested in hours of trial and darkness.

124. The noble Earl of Shaftesbury had made his honoured name fragrant among all the lovers of freedom on the other side of the Atlantic, before this. His Lordship is now revered in every cabin in Canada.

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June 21. 4.30 A.M. — Up river for lilies.

"Upriver," "To Fairhaven," and "To Clamshell" were other common opening phrases. This signified a southward trip up the lakelike Sudbury River, which zigzagged between rocky cliffs and lush meadows. Its current could be detected only at narrows and shallows. Parallel lines of sweet-scented lily pads, aquatic flowers rooted in shoreline mud, and buttonbush swamps flanked the river for much of its length. With a breeze from the north or east, he would usually sail. Otherwise he would row.

— Professor Robert M. Thorson, THE BOATMAN, page 11

No dew even where I keep my boat. The driest night yet, threatening the sultriest day. Yet I see big crystalline drops at the tips or the bases of the pontederia, leaves. The few lilies begin to open about 5. The nest of a brown thrasher [Brown Thrasher Toxostroma rufum ~~Red-mavis~~] with three eggs, on some green-briar, perfectly concealed by a grape-vine running over it; eggs greenish-brown; nest of dry sticks, lined with fibres of grape bark and with roots. Bird scolded me much. Carpet-weed out. I have got a pan full of lilies open.

We have not had rain, except a mere sprinkling in the night of the 17th, since the 26th of May.

P.M. — To Conantum.

The warmest day yet. For the last two days I have worn nothing about my neck. This change or putting off of clothing is, methinks, as good an evidence of the increasing warmth of the weather as meteorological instruments. I thought it was hot weather perchance, when, a month ago, I slept with a window wide open and laid aside a comfortable, but by and by I found that I had got two windows open, and to-night two windows and the door are far from enough. *Hypericum perforatum* just out. This year the time when the locust was first heard was the time to put on summer clothes.

Early on the morning of the 18th the river felt lukewarm to my fingers when my paddle dipped deeper than usual. The galium with three small white petals (*G. trifidum*) has been out some time, and I find that erectish, broad-leaved, three-nerved, green-flowered one, perhaps *G. circeazans*, at Corner Spring. *Peltandra Virginica*, perhaps a week, for many of its flowers are effete and curved downward. The *Hypericum ellipticum*, by the riverside. The only violets I notice nowadays are a few white lanceolate ones in the meadows. The river has got down quite low, and the muddy shores are covered here and there with a sort of dark-brown paper, the dried filaments of confervæ which filled the water. Now is their fall. The bright little flowers of the *Ranunculus reptans* var. *filiformis* are seen peeping forth between its interstices. Calopogon out. I think it surpasses the pogonia, though the latter is sometimes high-colored and is of a handsome form; but it is inclined to be pale, is sometimes even white.





Now see many bright red amelanchier berries and some purple or dark-blue ones amid them. They [are] mostly injured by insects or apparently pecked and deformed by birds, but, from the few perfectly sound and ripe I have eaten to-day, I should pronounce them superior to either blueberries or huckleberries. Those of the *Botryapium* have a soft skin; of the shorter bush with a stiffer leaf, a tough skin. This is a little before blueberries. The paniced cornel is the only one of the cornels or viburnums that now is noticed in flower, generally speaking. The last of our cornels the *C. sericea*, I think it must be — is just beginning. The farmers have commenced haying. With this the summer culminates. The most extended crop of all is ready for the harvesting. Lint still comes off the leaves and shoots. It is so hot I have to lift my hat to let the air cool my head. I notice that that low, rather rigid fern, about two feet high, on the Great Hubbard Meadow, which a month ago was yellow, but now is green and in fruit, and with a harsh-feeling fruit atop, is decidedly inclined to grow in hollow circles from one foot to six or eight feet in diameter, — often, it is true, imperfect on one side, or, if large, filled up in the middle. How to account for it? Can it have anything to do with the hummocks deposited on the meadow? Many small stems near together in circles, *i.e.* not a single line. Is it the



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Osmunda spectabilis? Now I hear the spotted (?) flies about my head, — flies that settle and make themselves felt on the hand sometimes. The morning-glory still fresh at 3 P.M. A fine, large, delicate bell with waved border, some pure white, some reddened. The buds open perfectly in a vase. I find them open when I wake at 4 A.M. Is not this one of the eras or culminating places in the flower season? Not this till the sultry mornings come. Angelica, perhaps a day or more. Elder just opening. The four-leaved asclepias, probably some days. A rather handsome flower, with the peculiar fragrance of the milkweeds. Observed three or four sweet-briar bushes with white flowers of the usual size, by the wall under Conantum Cliff, -very slightly tinted with red or rose. In the paucity and form of prickles, at least, I make them answer to the *micrantha*, but not else. Is it intermediate? Opened at home in a vase in the shade. They are more distinctly rose-tinted. Leaves and all together in the water, they have a strong spirituous or rummy scent. There are no flowers nor flower-buds on the bass this year, though it was so full last year.

Where the other day I saw a pigeon woodpecker [**Yellow-shafted Flicker**  *Colaptes auratus* ~~Pigeon Woodpecker~~] tapping and enlarging a hole in the dead limb of an apple tree, when as yet probably no egg was laid, to-day I see two well-grown young woodpeckers [**Yellow-shafted Flicker**  *Colaptes auratus*] about as big as the old, looking out at the hole, showing their handsome spotted breasts and calling lustily for something to eat, or, it may be, suffering from the heat. Young birds in some situations must suffer greatly from heat these days, so closely packed in their nests and perhaps insufficiently shaded. It is a wonder they remain so long there patiently. I saw a yellowbird's nest [**Yellow Warbler**  *Dendroica petechia*] in the willows on the causeway this afternoon and three young birds, nearly ready to fly, overflowing the nest, all holding up their open bills and keeping them steadily open for a minute or more, on noise of my approach. Still see cherry-birds [**Cedar Waxwing**  *Bombycilla cedrorum* (~~Cherry-bird~~)] in flocks. Dogsbane and *Priuos verticillatus*. My white lilies in the pan are mostly withering the first day, the weather is so warm.

At sunset to Island.

The white anemone is withering with drought; else would probably have opened. Return while the is setting behind thunder-clouds, which now over-shadow us. Between the heavy masses of clouds, mouse-colored, with dark-blue bases, the clear sky are a glorious cobalt blue, as [Sophia](#) calls it. How happens it that the sky never appears so intensely, brightly, memorably blue as when seen between clouds and, it may be, as now in the south at sunset? This, too, is like the blue in snow. For the last two or three days it has taken me all the forenoon to wake up.



June 22, Wednesday, [1853](#): A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

Cold and stormy this morning, snow, hail and rain falling. Forche Bois river 8 miles from camp. In this distance crossed 3 fine branches. Good grass by going one mile up stream. River not deep. Four miles farther and came to Platte River again. Drove 3 miles up the river and camped. Came 15 miles to-day.

The [California Daily Union](#) reported that 22 miles from Sacramento, at Prairie City a mile from the Lexington House, 5 miles from Mormon Island, and 7 miles from Salmon Falls, at the "Prairie Surface Diggings," discovered in the early part of May, there was a ditch in the process of construction to conduct the water of the South Fork River, that was expected to be completed at about the beginning of July. 600 gold prospectors had already taken the ground for two miles square and thrown up the dirt ready to be washed, when this stream of water made its first appearance.

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June 22. I do not remember a warmer night than the last. In my attic under the roof, with all windows and doors open, there was still not a puff of the usual coolness of the night. It seemed as if heat which the roof had absorbed during the day was being reflected down upon me. It was far more intolerable than by day. All windows being open, I heard the sounds made by pigs and horses in the neighborhood and of children who were partially suffocated with the heat. It seemed as if it -would be something to tell of, the experience of that night, as of the Black Hole of Calcutta in a degree, if one survived it.

This forenoon a smart, straight-down shower, from the eastward for ten or fifteen minutes, bordered round with thunder, — the first since May 26th. It did not touch the north part of the town. Some broad-leaved dock for a few days. Is it not the *obtusifolius*, front of Conantum house and by wall front of E. Wood's barn?

5:30P.M. — To Walden and Fair Haven Hill.

Epilobium shows some pale or pink purple flowers on its spike. *Trifolium arvense*. It is quite cool now, after the shower in the forenoon. Now is the time for young birds. You cannot go near any thicket but the old will scold at you, and you see the kingbird [Eastern Kingbird] *Tyrannus tyrannus* and the blackbird and swallows pursuing crows [American Crow] *Corvus brachyrhynchos* and hawks, for several weeks. I looked for the nest of the Maryland yellow-throat [Common Yellowthroat] *Geothlypis trichas*, but could not find it. Some animal has carried it off from the tuft of sedge, but I found one little egg which had dropped out. How many tragedies of this kind in the fields! Butter-and-eggs is a handsome yellow-spiked flower which would be better appreciated if it grew less profusely.

The sun down, and I am crossing Fair haven hill, sky overcast, landscape dark and still. I see the smooth river in the north reflecting two shades of light, one from the water, another from the surface of the pads which broadly border it on both sides, and the very irregular waving or winding edge of the pads, especially perceptible in this light, makes a, very agreeable border to distinguish, — the edge of the film which seeks to bridge over and inclose the river wholly. These pads are to the smooth water between like a calyx to its flower. The river at such an hour, seen half a, mile away, perfectly smooth and lighter than the sky, reflecting the clouds, is a paradisaical scene. are What the rivers around Damascus to this river sleeping around Concord? Are not the Musketaquid and the Assabet, rivers of Concord, fairer than the rivers of file plain?

And then the rich warble of the blackbird may still occasionally even at this season be heard. As I come over the hill, I hear the wood thrush [*Catharus mustelina*] singing his evening lay. This is the only bird whose note affects me like music, affects the flow and tenor of my thought, my fancy and imagination. It lifts and exhilarates me. It is inspiring. It is a medicative draught to my soul. It is an elixir to my eyes and a fountain of youth to all my senses. It changes all hours to an eternal morning. It banishes all trivialness. It reinstates me in my dominion, makes me the lord of creation, is the chief musician of my court. This minstrel sings in a time, a heroic age, with which no event in the village can be contemporary. How can they be contemporary when only the latter is temporary at all? How can the infinite and eternal be contemporary with the finite and temporal? So there is something in the music of the cow-bell, something sweeter and more nutritious, than in the milk which the farmers drink. This thrush's song is a ranz des vaches to me. I long for wildness, a nature which I cannot put my foot through, woods where the wood thrush for-ever sings, where the hours are early morning ones, and there is dew on the grass, and the day is forever unproved, where I might have a fertile unknown for a soil about me. I would go after the cows, I would watch the flocks of *Admetus* there forever, only for my board and clothes. A New Hampshire everlasting and unfallen. How wonderfully moral our whole life! There is never an instant's truce between virtue and vice. Goodness is the only investment that never fails. It is sung of in the music of the harp. This it is which thrills us. The harp is the travelling patterer for the Universe Insurance Company. One little goodness is all the assessment.

All that was ripest and fairest in the wilderness and the wild man is preserved and transmitted to us in the strain of the wood thrush. It is the mediator between barbarism and civilization. It is unrepentant as Greece.

I find my clothes covered with young caterpillars these days.

How wonderfully and admirably moral is our whole life! Though the youth at last grows indifferent, the laws of the universe are not indifferent; they are still and forever on the side of the most tender

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and sensitive.

Listen in every zephyr for some reproof. It is the sweetest strain of the music. It provokes by its proud remoteness. Its satire trembles round the world. We cannot touch a string, awake a sound, but it reproves us. Many an irksome noise in our neighborhood, go a long distance off, is heard as music and a proud sweet satire on the meanness of our life. Not a music to dance to, but to live by.

Low blueberries now begin to show on high hills. You may get a handful or two. Yet perhaps a greater proportion of the shad-berries are ripe. Blueberries always surprise us.

These are the longest days in the year. The sun rises about 4.30 o'clock [and sets] about 7.30, leaving about eight hours of night. The strawberries may perhaps be considered a fruit of the spring, for they have depended chiefly on the freshness and moisture of spring, and on high lands are already dried up, — a soft fruit, a sort of manna, which falls in June, and in the meadows they lurk at the shady roots of the grass. Now the blueberry, a somewhat firmer fruit, is beginning. Nuts, the firmest, will be the last. Is not June the month in which all trees and shrubs grow, — do far the greater part of their growing? Will the shoots add much to their length in July? Berries are ripening now, when young birds are beginning to fly generally. *Lysimachia stricta*, apparently by to morrow. I see froth nowadays on the panicked andromeda.

[William M. White](#)'s version of [Thoreau](#)'s journal entry is:

*As I come over the hill,
I hear the wood thrush singing his evening lay.*

*This is the only bird whose note affects me like music,
Affects the flow and tenor of my thought,
My fancy and imagination.*

It lifts and exhilarates me.

It is inspiring.

It is a medicative draught to my soul.

It is an elixir to my eyes

And a fountain of youth to all my senses.

It changes all hours to an eternal morning.

It banishes all trivialness.

It reinstates me in my dominion,

Makes me the lord of creation,

Is chief musician of my court.



June 23, Thursday, [1853](#): The *USS Susquehanna* and *USS Saratoga* returned from the Bonin (Ogasawara) Islands to their previous anchoring points.

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

Crossed Deer Creek three miles from camp. Plenty of good water, wood and fish. Fifteen miles from this is a deep muddy stream, tolerable good roads. Grass scarce. Sage brush for fuel.



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The Daily Dispatch of Richmond, Virginia reported on "Stoweism" and "Black Swanism" as they were manifesting themselves in Great Britain (extract below):

The New York Express administers to the subjects of Queen Victoria, who have gone deliberately mad about "Uncle Tom" and the "Black Swan," the most blistering flagellation we have met with for a long time. It contrasts the silly, but honest, enthusiasm of our countrymen with regard to Dickens, with the manufactured-to-order excitement now prevailing in England. First, it touches upon the reception of that "impudent nigger," Fred Douglass, who was treated on a perfect footing of equality, by haughty English ladies, whose condescension "scarcely amounts to a bow, when the brightest and most gifted white men of our land appear among them." "Those haughty dames," it says, "not only received him in their mansions, and sat with him at the same table, but appeared side by side with him in their public drives, contrasting with their snowy benevolence with the soot of his countenance, while white Englishmen in livery stood meekly behind the carriages that bore this precious load, edified by the dusky lesson of British equality, and promoted, doubtless, by the atmosphere which made the bouquets quite superfluous."

It introduces and [sic] especial admirer of Fred, in the person of a lady who has heretofore made not a little noise in the world, and who, we should have thought, might have been contented with the notoriety she has already acquired.

"Among these high born women, we are told, was Lady Byron - she, after driving the greatest poet of this century mad with her iron heartedness, subsided into a flood of gentle sympathies at the appearance of our Fred, and paraded London in an open carriage with this negro, side by side, on its silken cushions. Lady Byron must be fond of contrasts. - She who drove the handsomest man and the greatest genius of England from her side to make room for a characterless negro. But if the august widow falls into a caprice for a commemoration of her goodness in charcoal sketches in her old age, who shall not say it is the purest benevolence. She gave charity balls in her youth which her excited Lord deemed about as charitable as we think her appearance with the negro. But it is not the first time that such philanthropy has found root on a desolate hearthstone."

Next comes Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, who was invited to take possession, "for one morning" of Stafford House, "not," the writer says, "as a lady and a guest who is equal to equal," but as the high born of England received the Tom Thumbs and actresses whom "propinquity never makes nearer to august persons." As a proof that such is the character of her reception, no sooner is Stafford House cleared of her, than is it opened for the "Black Swan," who ruffles "her ebony plumage" in the aristocratic mansion quite as proudly as her predecessor had done before her. The writer cannot be induced to believe that there is any reality in all this outbreak of enthusiasm, or that its development has been caused by a novel which has awakened the sentimentality of a class "whose benevolence springs from novels and ends there." He thinks there is some more profound feeling at the bottom, and designates that feeling "the festering dislike which our

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respected mother entertains towards a nation that has thrown off her authority, and become not only independent of her, but her rival — the only rival of which she has any real cause to be jealous." "It is" he says "a jubilee over a pretext — though its foundation is in a fiction — by which a Republic can be held up to reprobation before the world." ...



June 23. 5 A.M. — Up Union Turnpike.

The- red morning-glory partly open at 5.45. Looking down on it, it is [a] regular pentagon, with sides but slightly incurved.

1.30 P.M. — To White Pond.

Sultry, dogdayish weather, with moist mists or low clouds hanging about, — the first of this kind we have had. I suspect it may be the result of a warm southwest wind met by a cooler wind from the sea. It is hard to tell if these low clouds most shade the earth or reflect its heat back upon it. At any rate a fresh, cool moisture and a suffocating heat are strangely mingled.

The *Specularia perfoliata* in flower at top of its leafy spikes for a few days, on Clamshell Hill, this side oaks. It is a rich-colored and handsome-shaped sort of lake-purple flower, — or color of a lilac violet. The lower and earlier flowers have no corollas. Perhaps one of the first-rate flowers, when many are open on the spike. Motherwort by roadside, probably yesterday. Pogonias are now very abundant in the meadow-grass, and now and then a calopogon is mixed with them. The last is broader and of more singular form, commonly with an unopened. bud above on one side. Devil's-needles of various kinds abundant, now perhaps as much as ever. Some smaller ones a brilliant green with black wings. That must be the flowering fern that grows in rings. Lupines not quite gone, though most are gone to seed. A skunk-cabbage leaf makes the best vessel to drink out of at a spring, it is so large, already somewhat dishing, oftenest entire, and grows near at hand, and, though its odor when the stem is cut off is offensive, it does not flavor the water and is not perceived in drinking.

Along Nut Meadow Brook stand now angelicas in flower, as high as your head, their great greenish umbels above their naked purple stems. Senecio is going and gone to seed. At Apple-Hollow Pond, the heart-leaf grows in small solid circles from a centre, now white with its small delicate flowers somewhat like minute water-lilies. Here are thousands of devil's-needles of all sizes hovering over the surface of this shallow pond in the woods, in pursuit of one another and their prey, and from time to time alighting on the bushes around the shore, — I hear the rustling of their wings, — while swallows are darting about in a similar manner twenty feet higher. Perhaps they descend and pick up a needle now and then. This might be called Heart-leaf Pond, if there were not so many of them. Wild radish, some time, for its jointed seed-vessels are two inches long.

The small caterpillars which I bring home on my clothes nowadays conic, off of the young oaks, black and probably others. Their leaves are made into sieves and riddled by them. The painted tortoise eggs which I saw being deposited by White Pond the 14th are now shrivelled shells on the surface. I every year, as to-day, observe the sweet, refreshing fragrance of the swamp-pink, when threading the woods and swamps in hot weather. It is positively cool. Now in its prime. There is another small, shallow Heart-leaf Pond, west of White, which countless devil's-needles are hovering over with rustling wing, and swallows and pewees no doubt are on hand. That very handsome cove in White Pond at the south end, surrounded by woods. Looking down on it through the woods in middle of this sultry dogdayish afternoon, the bay being' not so deep but that some reflection from the bottom affects it, the water is a misty bluish-green or glaucous color.' The rattlesnake and the wool grass have begun to bloom. The *e er ee er ter twee* is a pleasing wild note still pretty sure to be heard amid thick pine woods or on their edges, — rarely seen, though often heard.

After bathing I paddled to the middle in the leaky boat. The heart-leaf, which grows thinly here, is an interesting plant, sometimes floating at the end of a solitary, almost invisible, threadlike stem more than six feet long, and again many purplish stems intertwined into loose ropes, or like large skeins of silk, abruptly spreading at top, of course, into a perfectly flat shield, a foot or more [in] diameter, of small heart-shaped leaves, which rise and fall on their stems as the water is higher or lower. This perfectly horizontal disposition of the leaves in a single plane is an interesting and peculiar feature in water-plants of this kind. Leaves and flowers made to float on the dividing line



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between two elements. No water-bugs nor skaters, except a very few close to the shore, though the waves do not run much. Where the water is five or six feet deep, straight sticks on the bottom are made by the undulation on the surface to look like snakes in motion. The blue flags are past their prime here. Again I saw and heard the [hummingbird](#) [[Ruby-throated Hummingbird](#) [Archilochus colubris](#)] visit the blue flags. He announces himself by a sudden loud humming. Now, at about 5 P.M., only at long intervals is a bullfrog's trump heard. Some are white-throated, others yellow.

In the warm noons nowadays, I see the spotted small yellow eyes of the four-leaved loosestrife looking at me from under the birches and pines springing up in sandy upland fields. *Asclepias Cornuti*. Ours, I think, must be the *Cornus sericca*, not *stolonifera*. The willow by Hubbard's Bridge must be either *Salix discolor* or *eriocephala*; I think the former.

The other day I saw what I took to be a scarecrow in a cultivated field, and noticing how unnaturally it was stuffed out here and there and how ungainly its arms and legs were, I thought to myself, "Well, it is thus they make these things; they do not stand much about it;" but looking round again after I had gone by, I saw my scarecrow walking off with a real live man in it.

I was just roused from my writing by the engine's whistle, and, looking out, saw shooting through the town two enormous pine sticks stripped of their bark, just from the Northwest and going to Portsmouth Navy-Yard, they say. Before I could call Sophia, they had got round the curve and only showed their ends on their way to the Deep Cut. Not a tree grows now in Concord to compare with them. They suggest what a country we have got to back us up that way. A hundred years ago or more perchance the wind wafted a little winged seed out of its cone to some favorable spot, and this is the result. In ten minutes they were through the township, and perhaps not half a dozen Concord eyes rested on them during their transit.



June 24, Friday, [1853](#): On this day, or on the 4th, 27-year-old [Thomas Russell](#) got married with Mary Ellen "Nellie" Taylor, a daughter of the [Methodist Reverend Edward Thompson Taylor](#) of Boston. The children produced by this union would be: Ellen Taylor Russell on January 23, 1854, Mary Anne Russell on January 20, 1855 (who would die on May 6, 1894 in Munich, Bavaria), and Dora Walton Russell on August 31, 1861.

[Dr. Thomas Jarrold](#) died in Manchester, England.

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

To Platte River Bridge, 9 miles crossing, several fine branches in the distance. Stopped at noon opposite the bridge. Grass poor. Concluded rather than pay six dollars per wagon, we would ferry our wagons over. Drove 4 miles up the river and found excellent grass. Camped on the bank of the river. Went out and returned in a few minutes with an antelope. Laid still until Monday morning when commenced ferrying across the river. Got one wagon over and the wind arose very high which stopped us till Tuesday morning.



June 24. P.M. — Boated to Clamshell Hill.

My lilies in the pan have revived with the cooler weather since the rain. (It rained a little last night.) This is what they require that they may keep. Mayweed yesterday. The calopogon is a more bluish purple than the pogonia. The *Gnaphalium uliginosum* seems to be almost in blossom. Gratiola out in mud near river, — those bare, rather hard, muddy tracts on the edge of the meadow next the river, where mint grows and the mud has wide cracks, some nearly an inch wide, produced by the sun since the water went down. It is cooler and remarkably windy this afternoon, showing the under sides of

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the leaves and the pads, the white now red beneath and all green above. Wind northwest. Found what I take to be an Indian hoe at [Hubbard](#) Bathing-Place, sort of slate stone four or five eighths of an inch thick, semicircular, eight inches one way by four or more the other, chipped down on the edges.

At the Clamshell curve, great masses of a kind of fresh-water eel-grass have lodged against the potamogeton in mid-channel, as against a shore, half a foot deep, and stretch across the river, long, green, narrow, ribbon-like. It is *apparently* the *Vallisneria spiralis*, eel-grass, tape-grass. It grows at the bottom in shallow places, slanting and waving down-stream. But what has collected it here all at once? Is it this strong wind operating on shallow places at curves? Or is it that some animal - muskrat or what-not - has loosened it? Or have men been at work up-stream somewhere? Does it always happen at this season? By the botany it does not blossom till August. There were piles of dried heart-leaf on shore at the bathing-place, a foot high and more. Were they torn up and driven ashore by the wind? I suspect it is the wind in both cases. As storms at sea tear up and cast ashore the seaweeds from the rocks. These are our seaweeds cast ashore in storms, but I see only the eel-grass and the heartleaf thus served. Our most common in the river appears to be between the *Potamogeton natans* and *pulcher*; it answers to neither, but can be no other described. See it in fruit. I do not see the ranunculus flowers very abundant yet-will it not be this year? Then there is that long, somewhat cylindrical, fine-capillary and bladder-like leaved plant which I had wrongly thought belonged to the *Ranunculus*. Is it not a *Utricularia*?¹²⁵ All these, but especially the *R. Purshii*, have a strong fresh-water marsh smell, rather agreeable sometimes as a bottle of salts, like the salt marsh and seaweeds, invigorating to my imagination. In our great stream of distilled water going slowly down to ocean to be salted. *Sparganium*, some time. *Pontederia*, just out. The lower translucent, waved leaves of the potamogeton are covered with a sort of very minute black caddis-case. The peat[?]-black petioles of these leaves are much like seaweed. There are the heart-leaf ponds, but I cannot say the potamogeton rivers on account of the tautology, and, beside, I do not like this last name, which signifies that it grows in the neighborhood of rivers, when it is not a neighbor but an indweller. You might as well describe the seaweeds as growing in the neighborhood of the sea.

The brown thrasher's nest (*vide* 21st) has been robbed, probably by some other bird. It rested on a branch of a swamp-pink and some grape-vines, effectually concealed and protected by grape-vines and green-briar in a matted bower above it. The foundation of pretty stout twigs, eight or nine inches in diameter, surmounted by coarse strips of grape bark, giving form to the nest, and then lined with some harsh, wiry root-fibres; within rather small and shallow, and the whole fabric of loose texture, not easy to remove.

Also got a blackbird's nest whose inhabitants had flown, hung by a kind of small dried rush (?) between two button-bushes which crossed above it; of meadow-grass and sedge, dried *Mikania scandens* vine, horsetail, fish-lines, and a strip apparently of a lady's bathing-dress, lined with a somewhat finer grass; of a loose and ragged texture to look at. Green mikania running over it now.

A yellowbird's nest [**Yellow Warbler**  ***Dendroica petechia***] (*vide* 21st) in a fork of a willow on Hubbard's Causeway, resting chiefly on the leading branch; of fine grass, lined with hair, bottom outside puffing out with a fine, light, flax-like fibre, perhaps the bark of some weed, by which also it is fastened to the twigs. It is surprising that so many birds find hair enough to line their nests with. If I wish for a horsehair for my compass sights I must go to the stable, but the hair-bird [**Chipping Sparrow**  ***Spizella passerina***], with her sharp eyes, goes to the road.

The small white (perhaps *sometimes* violet or purplish) aster-like flower of Hubbard's meadow, for some days. If an aster, then the earliest one.

125. It is *Utricularia vulgaris*; now in bloom.

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June 25, Saturday, 1853: The keel was laid for the last full sail ship created for the US Navy, which would be the largest vessel built to “sloop” design to that date. This frigate would be named as the USS Constellation in honor of a ship that had previously been the companion ship of the USS Constitution, “Old Ironsides.” This was just prior to the adoption of steam propulsion as auxiliary power for all new warships. Designed as a “sloop-of-war,” this was very much larger than most other ships of that variety, designed large so that it could carry a very heavy battery of naval cannon.



A group that was opposed to performances by foreign composers and musicians in what they considered to be an Italian venue, Covent Garden, hissed a performance of Benvenuto Cellini in an Italian translation conducted by Hector Berlioz before Queen Victoria, Prince Albert, and the king and queen of Hanover, from the beginning of the performance to its end (Berlioz would cancel a performance scheduled for the following day).

Karl Marx wrote in the New-York Daily Tribune that “English interference [in India] having placed the spinner in Lancashire and the weaver in Bengal, or sweeping away both Hindoo spinner and weaver, dissolved these small semi-barbarian semi-civilized communities, by blowing up their economical basis, and thus produced the greatest, and to speak the truth, the only social revolution ever heard of in Asia” (such attitudes were common in Europe). He also wrote that “they transformed a self-developing social state into never changing natural destiny, and thus brought about a brutalizing worship of nature, exhibiting its degradation in the fact that man, the sovereign of nature, fell down on his knees in adoration of Kanuman (Hanuman), the monkey, and Sabbala, the cow.”

The Placer, California Herald reported about the river bank and mountain sides, and river bed, at the gold-digging site known as Volcano Bar, where Volcano Creek enters the Middle Branch of American River. About 3 miles north of that location, Ladies Canyon crossed forming a junction with Mad Canyon and emptying into the Middle Fork of American River near Gray Eagle City. For about 4 miles, Mad Canyon and Ladies Canyon was comparable with places that had been reporting gold-recovery at \$12 per day per miner. The bar at the mouth of Mad Canyon was noteworthy. About a mile upstream from it was Pleasant Bar, where gold was being found on hillsides to the height of 150 feet above the river. Half a mile upstream from that there was a village, at Pleasant Bar, where coarse gold had been found in the hillside in great abundance 150 feet above low water level. Then there was Bird Valley, situated about 4 miles east of the mouth of Volcano Creek.






June 25. Saturday. P.M. — To Assabet Bathing-Place.

Great orange lily beyond stone bridge. Found in the Glade (?) Meadows an unusual quantity of amelanchier berries, — I think of the two common kinds, — one a taller bush, twice as high as my head, with thinner and lighter-colored leaves and larger, or at least some-what softer, fruit, the other a shorter bush, with more rigid and darker leaves and dark-blue berries, with often a sort of woolliness on them. Both these are now in their prime. These are the first berries after strawberries, or the first, and I think the sweetest, *bush* berries. Somewhat like high blueberries, but not so hard. Much eaten by insects, worms, etc. As big as the largest blueberries or peas. These are the “service-berries” which the Indians of the north and the Canadians use. *La poire* of the latter (*vide* Indian

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books, No. 6, p. 13). They by a little precede the early blueberry (though Holbrook brought two quarts of the last day before yesterday), being now in their prime, while blueberries are but just *beginning*. I never saw nearly so many before. It is a very agreeable surprise. I hear the cherry-birds [Cedar Waxwing  *Bombycilla cedrorum* (Cherry-bird)] and others about me, no doubt attracted by this fruit. It is owing to some peculiarity in the season that they bear fruit. I have picked a quart of them for a pudding. I felt all the while I was picking them, in the low, light, wavy shrubby wood they make, as if I were in a foreign country. Several old farmers say, "Well, though I have lived seventy years, I never saw nor heard of them." I think them a delicious berry, and no doubt they require only to be more abundant every year to be appreciated.

I think it must be the purple finch [Purple Finch  *Carpodacus purpureus* (American Linnet)], — with the crimson head and shoulders, — which I see and hear singing so sweetly and variedly in the gardens, — one or two to-day. It sits on a bean-pole or fence-pick[et]. It has a little of the martin [Purple Martin  *Progne subis*] warble and of the canary-bird.



June 26, Sunday, 1853: [Emily Dickinson](#) wrote to [Austin Dickinson](#):

I shall have you a little, Austin, to send by Father tomorrow, tho' you havnt yet answered my long letter which went to you last Monday, and I've been looking for something from you for a good many days. This valise did'nt get to us till a long time after you sent it, and so 'twas a good while Austin, before you heard from us, but you dont know all about it now, and I hope you dont care. But we felt so sorry to disappoint you by not sending the things which you requested to have us. Sue did'nt hear yesterday, so we are all in a tantrum to know the meaning of that.

If you ever get where we are again, we shall tell you how many letters are missing by the way, and never reach you, and we shall ask you too how many have gone to us, which we have not received. It is cold here today, Austin, and the west wind blows — the windows are shut at home, and the fire burns in the kitchen. How we should love to see you, how pleasant it would be to walk to the grove together. We will walk there, when you get home. We all went down this morning, and the trees look beautifully. Every one is growing, and when the west wind blows, the pines lift their light leaves and make sweet music. Pussy goes down there too, and seems to enjoy much in her own observations. Mr Dwight has not answered yet — he probably will this week. I do think he will come Austin, and shall be so glad if he will. Did Susie write you how Vinnie went to South Hadley with Bowdoin, and she came to stay with me? And how we sewed together, and talked of what would be? We did sew and talk together, and she said she should tell you what a sweet time we had. Emmons asked me to ride yesterday afternoon, but I'd promised to go somewhere else, so he asked me to go this week, and I told him I would. Has father written you that Edwin Pierce, our neighbor, was arrested last week, for beating a servant girl, tried, and fined two dollars and costs? Vinnie and I heard the whipping, and could have testified, if the Court had called upon us. Also Dea Cowan's son George was detected while breaking into the Bonnet Shop, the other night, and is to be tried next Wednesday. Mr Frank Conkey

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is absent, and the criminal desiring his services, the parties consent to wait.

What do you think of Amherst? Dont you think your native place shows evident marks of progress? Austin – home looks beautifully – we all wish you here always, but I hope 'twill seem only dearer for missing it so long. Keep well and happy, Austin, and remember us all you can, and much love from home and Emilie.

Austin – are you willing to get me another bottle of medicine, if it wont trouble you too much, and send it to me by father? I enclose the prescription. You can get it at Mr Burnett's, but dont get it, Austin, unless it's convenient for you.

Mr and Mrs Godfrey have moved into the Baker house, across the road, and we're so glad to get them back again.



June 26. Very cool day. Had for dinner a pudding made of service-berries. It was very much like a rather dry cherry pudding without the stones. A slight hail-storm in the afternoon. *Euphorbia maculata*. Our warmest night thus far this year was June 21st. It began to be cooler the 24th.

5.30 A.M. — To Cliffs. Carrot by railroad. Mine apparently the *Erigeron strigosus*, yet sometimes tinged with purple. The tephrosia is an agreeable mixture of white, straw-color, and rose pink; unpretending. What is the result of that one leaf (or more), much and irregularly, or variously, divided and cut, with milk in it, in woods, either a lactuca or prenatlies, probably, one foot or more high. Such is oftenest the young man's introduction to the forest and wild. He goes thither at first as a hunter and fisher, until at last the naturalist or poet distinguishes that which attracted him and leaves the gun and fishing-rod behind. The mass of men are still and always young in this respect. I have been surprised to observe that the only obvious employment which ever to my knowledge detained at Walden Pond for a whole half-day, unless it was in the way of business, any of my "fellow-citizens," whether fathers or children of the town, with just one exception, was fishing. They might go there a thousand times, perchance, before the sediment of fishing would sink to the bottom and leave their purpose pure, — before they began to angle for the pond itself. Thus, even in civilized society, the embryo man (speaking intellectually) passes through the hunter stage of development. They did not think they were lucky or well paid for their time unless they got a long string of fish, though they had the opportunity of seeing the pond all the while. They measured their success by the length of a string of fish. The Governor faintly remembers the pond, for he went a-fishing there when he was a boy, but now he is too old and dignified to go a-fishing, and so he knows it no longer. If the Legislature regards it, it is chiefly to regulate the number of hooks to be used in fishing there; but they know nothing about the hook of hooks. At Cliffs. — The air is warmer, but wonderfully clear after the hail-storm. I do not remember when I have seen it more clear. The mountains and horizon outlines on all sides are distinct and near. Nobscot has lost all its blue, is only a more distant hill pasture, and the northwest mountains are too terrestrial a blue and firmly defined to be mistaken for clouds. Billerica is as near as Bedford commonly. I see new spires far in the south, and on every side the horizon is extended many miles. It expands me to look so much farther over the rolling surface of the earth. Where I had seen or fancied only a hazy forest outline, I see successive swelling hills and remote towns. So often to the luxurious and hazy summer in our minds, when, like Fletcher's "Martyrs in Heaven," we,

"estranged from all misery
As far as Heaven and Earth discoasted lie,
Swelter in quiet waves of immortality,"

some great chagrin succeeds, some chilling cloud comes over. But when it is gone, we are surprised to find that it has cleared the air, summer returns without its haze, we see infinitely further into the horizon on every side, and the boundaries of the world are enlarged.

A beautiful sunset about 7.30; just clouds enough in the west (we are on Fair Haven Hill); they arrange themselves about the western gate. And now the sun sinks out of sight just on the north side

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of Watatic, and the mountains, north and south, are at once a dark indigo blue, for they had been darkening for an hour or more. Two small clouds are left on the horizon between Watatic and Monadnock, their sierra edges all on fire. Three minutes after the sun is gone, there is a bright and memorable afterglow in his path, and a brighter and more glorious light falls on the clouds above the portal. His car, borne further round, brings us in the angle of exsidence. Those little sierra clouds look like two castles on fire, and I see the fire through ruined windows. The low west horizon glows now, five or six minutes after sunset, with a delicate salmon-color tinged with rose, deepest where the sun disappeared, and fading off upward; and north and south are dark-blue cloud islands in it. When I invert my head these delicate salmon-colored clouds look like a celestial Sahara sloping gently upward, an inclined plane upward, to be travelled by caravans bound heavenward, with blue oases in it.



June 27, Monday, 1853: There was a hay fire on the vessel *Edwin Forrest* off Happy Valley, [California](#), in which the loss would be estimated at \$2,000.

The [California](#) Academy of Sciences was incorporated, meetings of which were to be held in the office of the Superintendent of Common Schools, Colonel Nevins, at 622 Clay Street in San Francisco.



June 27: 4.30 A.M. — To Island by river.

The cuckoo's [**Black-billed Cuckoo** [Coccyzus erythrophthalmus](#)] nest is robbed, or perhaps she broke her egg because I found it. Thus three out of half a dozen nests which I have revisited have been broken up. It is a very shallow nest, six or eight inches in diameter by two and a half or three deep, on a low bending willow, hardly half an inch deep within; concealed by overhanging leaves of a swamp white oak on the edge of the river meadow, two to three feet from the ground, made of slender twigs which are prettily ornamented with much ramalina lichen, lined with hickory catkins and pitch pine needles. I have described the rest before.

Saw a little pickerel with a minnow in his mouth. It was a beautiful little silver-colored minnow, two inches long, with a broad stripe down the middle. The pickerel held [it] crosswise near the tail, as he had seized it, and as I looked down on him, he worked the minnow along in his mouth toward the head, and then swallowed it head foremost. Was this instinct? Fishermen should consider this in giving form to their bait. The pickerel does not swallow the bait at once, but first seizes it, then probably decides how it can best be swallowed, and no doubt he lets go again in disgust some baits of which he can make neither head nor tail.

The radical leaves (four?) of the floating-heart are triangularly or wedge ovate, on petioles one to two inches long. The two large potamogetons now common on river (the smaller apparently not long in flower), with ovate or elliptical floating leaves sometimes salmon-color, belong to one or two of the first three of [Gray](#). The smaller has its immersed leaves long, narrowly linear, and semi-cylindrical; those of the largest are pellucid, lanceolate, and waved. That sort of ostrich feather on the bottom appears to be the *Potamogeton Robbinsii*. What is that foul, submerged, densely whorled and capillary-leaved and forked utricularia like but bladderless plant? Then there is a pinnate and cut-leafed plant on the bottom. Is it radical leaves of a proserpinaca? or a milfoil? I find a little bug between the calyx and petals of white lilies which have not opened. It has eaten holes in them.

The dogsbane is one of the more interesting little flowers.



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June 28, Tuesday, 1853: [Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed some land and buildings for John B. Moore.

In the Volksgarten of Vienna, a waltz by [Johann Baptist Strauss II](#), Vermählungs-Toaste op.136, was performed for the initial time.



At the Stockton Street Presbyterian Church in San Francisco, the [Reverend William Speer](#), who had been a Presbyterian minister in Canton, addressed the issue of the relations, past and present, of [China](#) and [California](#).

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

By 2 o'clock we were all over safe and ready to start, made 8 miles this evening and camped again on the Platte. Not much grass.



June 28. Nettle out a few days. Pepper-grass, a week or more. Catnep, also, a few days. We have warmer weather now again.



June 29, Wednesday, 1853: The Reverend James Sherman invited the Reverend [Samuel Ringgold Ward](#) to come with him in his carriage to Cheshunt College to speak at their anniversary dinner, which had the Lord Mayor of London, Challis, as chairperson.

When [Giacomo Meyerbeer](#) called on Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka in Paris, they discussed opera, Gluck in particular (they would not meet again).

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

After following the river for about 4 miles we took our final leave of the Platte River at Red Buttes. Here we filled our kegs and watered our stock. No good water in 17 miles. 11 miles from the river we passed Rock Avenue. One mile farther we passed Alkali swamps and springs. Water and grass poisonous, land miry and roads bad. One mile to the left is good grass and one mile to the north-west is a good spring at the foot of some hills. Sage brush for fuel. 4 miles farther is a small branch, good water not much grass, 3 miles farther we passed willow springs, not very good camp. One mile more and were on the top of Prospect Hill, here we had a fine view of the surrounding country and sweet water mountains. 3 miles farther is Bad Slough, there we found good water and camped after a hard drive of 26 miles. Pretty good grass one mile to the left.



June 29. Jersey tea, just beginning. *Asclepius obtusifolia*, a day or two. *Sericocarpus conyzoides*.

June 30, Thursday, 1853: A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra, her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

Fine morning this. Made quite an early start. Six miles ahead is a fine branch of good water. 2 miles farther is greasewood creek. Good water, grass scarce, sage for fuel. To alkali grounds 6 miles. Lakes of alkili on both sides of the road. Water and grass both very poisonous. After this we crossed a dry branch, and 2 miles due west of this we found good grass and water and camped.

In New-York, Pierre Toussaint died at the age of 87 (the body would be placed in the crypt below the main altar of St Patrick's Cathedral on Fifth Avenue, a place usually reserved for bishops of the Archdiocese of New York).



June 30. Succory on the bank under my window, probably from flowers I have thrown out within a year or two. A rainbow in the west this morning. Hot weather.

SUMMER 1853

Summer 1853: When distribution of rations ceased, the Utes and the Jicarilla Apaches began a revolt and Brigadier General John Garland of the US Army's Department of New Mexico ordered their suppression.

WHITE ON RED, RED ON WHITE

Summer 1853: Brownson's Quarterly Review, No. 2

CATHOLICISM

- I. The Spiritual Not for the Temporal
II. Life of Mrs. Eliza A. Seton
III. A Consistent Protestant
IV. The Love of Mary
V. Dangers which Threaten Catholics
VI. Ethics of Controversy
VII. Literary Notices and Criticisms

MAGAZINES

ORESTES AUGUSTUS BROWNSON

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➡ Summer 1853: During the 7th meeting of Louis Agassiz's American Association for the Advancement of Science, in Cleveland, Henry Thoreau and 239 others were elected to membership.¹²⁶ These people were worse than the church from which he had been forced to formally sign off. To prevent becoming entangled with this new church of science, he would have to repeat himself, write to them and again formally sign off.

Herman Melville probably wrote "The Paradise of Bachelors and the Tartarus of Maids" between the late summer of this year and the early spring of the following year (it would be published in 1855).

➡ Summer 1853: George "Crum" Speck (1822-1914, a son of black jockey Abraham "Crum" Speck with Catherine, a Huron woman),¹²⁷ a chef at Moon's Lake Lodge in trendy Saratoga Springs, New York, responded to a customer who has objected that his French fries were too thick by creating the 1st potato chips (for years these thin slivers would therefore be referred to as "Saratoga chips").



<http://www.ideafinder.com/history/inventions/potatochips.htm>

➡ Summer 1853: The Reverend William Silsbee went to Europe (he would return during September 1854).

Moncure Daniel Conway spent the summer boarding in a house on Ponkawatset Hill so he could chat with Waldo Emerson, and read in Montaigne, Giovanni Bocaccio's *DECAMERON*, Browning, Shakespeare, and Richard Hurrell Froude's *NEMESIS OF FAITH*.

Being homeless in the North, my summer vacation (1853) was passed at Concord. The Emersons found for me a very pleasant abode at "Hillside," on Ponkatasset Hill, about a mile out of the village, where Ellery Channing once lived, and where he wrote his poem on New England. Two sisters, the Misses Hunt, educated ladies, received me into this pleasant cottage, where I was the only boarder. These ladies were cousins of Miss Martha Hunt, whose suicide in Concord River and the recovery of her body are described in Hawthorne's "Blithedale Romance." They were troubled because G.W. Curtis, in his "Homes of American Authors," had suggested that Martha's suicide was due to the contrast between her transcendental ideals and the coarseness of her home. They described the family of their cousin as educated people. One of these sisters walked with me to the river and pointed out all the places connected with the tragedy, and some years later another cousin drowned herself there.

Emerson introduced me to his friends. First of all he took me to Henry Thoreau, who lived in the village with his parents and his sister. The kindly and silent pencil-maker, his father, John Thoreau, was French in appearance, and Henry resembled him physically; but neither parent impressed me as possessing mental

126. He was listed as "Thoreau, Henry D., Concord, Mass." Joseph Lovering, ed., *PROCEEDINGS OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE. SEVENTH MEETING, HELD AT CLEVELAND, OHIO, JULY, 1853* (Cambridge: Joseph Lovering; New York: G.P. Putnam & Co., 1856), page xiii.

127. Penelope Stowell, Sharon Watts (Illustrator). *JUMP AT THE SUN*, 2005



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qualities that could account for such a rare spirit as Henry. He was thirty-six when I met him. He received me pleasantly, and asked what we were studying at Cambridge. I answered, "The Scriptures." "Which?" he asked. Emerson said, "You will find our Thoreau a sad pagan." Thoreau had long been a reverent reader of Oriental scriptures, and showed me his bibles, translated from various languages into French and English.

[Emerson](#) talked to him about the *BHAGAVAD GITA*, the *DESATIR*, and the *GULISTAN* and introduced him to interesting women.

During this summer of rustication in Concord, [Conway](#) would be going on a number of saunters in Walden Woods with [Henry Thoreau](#). During their discussions Thoreau evidently apprised Conway of the investigation he was conducting into the touristy scenery aesthetic of the [Reverend William Gilpin](#), that of the "picturesque" — for in 1869 Conway would write stupidly of Thoreau as having amounted to a sort of American Gilpin:

The pleasantest association I have hitherto had with the New Forest was that it had been the haunt of one whose name I had heard from the lips of Henry Thoreau — one who might almost be thought of as having reappeared in Thoreau — William Gilpin, author, artist, man of science, and clergyman. The descendant of that Bernard Gilpin, the pupil of Erasmus, whom the death of Mary unbound beside the stake upon which he was about to suffer, William Gilpin received the surplice almost as an hereditary mantle; but his heart worshiped with truest enthusiasm amidst these forest aisles. His works on the trees, forests, and general scenery of England, illustrated by his own pencil (with which he was almost as skillful as his brother, Sawney Gilpin, the painter of animals), still have a value which few works written in the last century on subjects related to science possess.

He was an Oxonian, and upward of fifty years old when he received his living — (he was poor, and had married an undowered girl because he loved her) — in the village of Boldre, which was worth £700 — a snug sum in 1777. An earnest, simple, and impressive preacher, a warm-hearted, industrious man, healthy and cheerful, he set to work in this wilderness; and while having an artist's eye, and a singular subtlety of observation, he divined the treasures of thought and beauty every where. He transmuted the money their publication brought him into schools for day-laborers. He was thus able to endow the schools at Boldre, Brockenhurst, and elsewhere, which still exist. In the Boldre school the day-laborers' children are taught free, the endowment being for twenty boys to be taught reading, writing, and ciphering, and the same number of girls reading, sewing, and spinning. In addition, the boys receive annually a jacket, breeches, and green vest, and the girls a black petticoat and green frock. The "green" was meant to be a kind of uniform. Near Brockenhurst Howard, the philanthropist, lived and labored three years, and the place became part of the parish in which Gilpin worked in the same spirit during the twenty-seven years of his life in the New Forest, where now his works succeed him in beneficent influence.... Gilpin had the same disposition with Thoreau — the disposition, one may call it, of all men of genius — to find a glory in things generally regarded as mean... He finds



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an especial beauty in the notes of the woodpecker and the jay.... Gilpin sometimes, though not like Thoreau always, saw the landscape tinted by "the light that never was on sea or land."

SOUTH-COAST SAUNTERINGS

An extraordinary letter had been received by the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society. A "Deacon Gregg," a wealthy abolitionist, had sent in \$1,000 for the support of "an Orthodox Anti-Slavery Minister." They had chosen [Daniel Foster](#) to receive this support, and when they notified him, they included a 1st check in the amount of \$100. Just days earlier Foster had preached on the topic "The Bible, Not an Inspired Book," and William Lloyd Garrison had published this in [The Liberator](#). Foster therefore turned down the check, saying "I cannot honestly take the fund for I am not in any possible sense in which I suppose Mr. Gregg used the term — an Orthodox minister." However, a few months he proposed that the Anti-Slavery Society employ him as one of their "lecturing agents" at \$12 a week plus expenses. In the initial year of this work, [Foster](#) would deliver 300 lectures in 87 different locations and would turn over to the Society \$400 after deducting his expenses. However, prior to Foster going into this line of work, some disaffected members of the Society had split into other factions, one of which they termed the "Liberty Party." Foster began to sell copies of this disaffected group's literature, Goodell's "Slavery & Anti Slavery," on his lecture tours. When challenged on this toward the middle of the year by the Reverend [Samuel Joseph May, Jr.](#) and [William Lloyd Garrison](#), he resigned:

"Let Posterity Judge":

Anti-Slavery History and the Foster-May Controversy of 1853

by Bradley P. Dean

From 1833 until 1840 organized anti-slavery activity in the United States was carried on under the aegis of a single national organization: the American Anti-Slavery Society. As early as 1837, however, signs of disunity within abolitionist ranks began to appear as a consequence of dissent among the more religiously and politically orthodox members of the Society to the views of William Lloyd Garrison and some of his followers on the issues of women's rights and non-resistance, the latter of which has been described as "a radical pietism that rejected the use of physical force in human relationships, stressed the potential for individual spiritual perfection on earth, and pledged sole allegiance to the moral government of God."¹²⁸ In 1839, after almost two years of often bitter controversy between the Garrisonians and the dissenting members in Massachusetts, the latter formed the Massachusetts Abolition Society; and the following year dissenting members nationwide broke away from the American Anti-Slavery Society and established the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society.

Historians have identified three fairly distinct factions in the anti-slavery controversies of 1837-1840; and, taking into consideration the apparently inevitable permutations of reformers and their organizations, each of these three factions remained fairly distinct throughout the course of the abolition movement. One faction consisted of the Garrisonians or radical abolitionists of the "Old Organization," as the American Anti-Slavery Society was often called after the schism of 1840. The

128. Richard O. Curry and Lawrence B. Goodheart, "The Complexities of Factionalism: Letters of Elizur Wright, Jr. on the Abolitionist Schism, 1837-1840," in *The Abolitionists*, ed. Richard O. Curry (Hinsdale, Illinois: Dryden Press, 1973), p. [170].

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other two factions consisted of the dissenters, who were usually lumped together as members of the "New Organization" as a consequence, apparently, of the anti-Garrisonian sentiments they shared. But the two factions can be distinguished from one another on the basis of the nature of their objections to what was widely perceived to be the Garrisonian agenda. The members of one of the anti-Garrisonian factions strongly objected to the views of some of the Garrisonians on the issues of women's rights and non-resistance in so far as these views were religiously unorthodox. The members of the other anti-Garrisonian faction, on the other hand, objected to the apolitical position of some of the Garrisonians, a position which eschewed the use of the ballot box or any other instrument of civil government as a means of achieving emancipation.

As the controversies of 1837-1840 receded into the past, each of the three factions moved to consolidate their respective positions in the movement. The Garrisonians retained control of the American Anti-Slavery Society and regarded the members of the other two factions as "heretics" and "apostates" from the anti-slavery cause. The religiously orthodox or evangelical abolitionists consolidated their control of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society in the early 1840s, while most of the prominent political abolitionists helped organize and establish the Liberty Party as what they hoped would be a viable and honorable alternative to the two major political parties. A fairly loose alliance between the evangelical and the political abolitionists continued throughout the 1840s and 1850s; but this alliance was often strained and, one suspects, was primarily maintained as a sort of common defense against the very vocal, confrontational, and splenetic Garrisonians, who always insisted on making no distinction between the two anti-Garrisonian factions.

By the early 1850s the crises of 1837-1840 had become the stuff of anti-slavery history, and when William Goodell published his 580-page *Slavery and Anti-Slavery* in 1852, twelve chapters (116 pages) were given over to an account of the controversies of 1837-1840 and the consequences of those controversies. Goodell's account, though, is clearly biased against the Garrisonians—especially against Garrison himself—and is just as clearly biased in favor of the political abolitionists, particularly those who, like Goodell himself, were instrumental in organizing the Liberty Party.¹²⁹ Goodell was at least aware of the danger of his position as a participant in the activities he chronicled, as is clear from the remark he made just before he began treading, as he expressed it, on the

129. Goodell had relatively little to say about the evangelical abolitionists of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society; however, he implicitly contrasted that Society to the American Anti-Slavery Society when he claimed of the former, "If it has not been a pioneer of new aggressive movements, ecclesiastical or political, it has not chosen the policy of interposing obstacles to them" (*Slavery and Anti-Slavery*, p. 510). An indication of the alliance between some of the evangelical abolitionists and some of the political abolitionists is the fact that Goodell's book was published by William Harned, who was at the time the General Agent for the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. This, of course, tended to support the Garrisonians' claim that there was no distinction between the two anti-Garrisonian factions; but later, after the Garrisonians pointed out the fact that Goodell's book was published by the General Agent of their rival Society, Goodell insisted that Harned had merely lent Goodell "his name on the title page of [*Slavery and Anti-Slavery*], as is customary when a publishing author has no business place of his own in the city" ("Letter from William Goodell," *Liberator*, 21 October 1853, p. 2, col. 6 [TLS to Samuel May, Jr.; Francis Jackson; and Robert Wallcut; 3 October 1853]).



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"delicate ground" of recent anti-slavery history:

It is, perhaps, difficult, for one who has been an earnest actor in such scenes, to write the history of them without some bias. We claim no exemption from such influences, and can only promise our best efforts at impartiality and fairness, consoling ourselves with the thought that no one but an earnest actor would be likely to see clearly all that is to be seen. We must write as we see, and must see with our own eyes,—leaving it with others to judge, and to write, too, if they shall think fit. (William Goodell, *Slavery and Anti-Slavery; A History of the Great Struggle in Both Hemispheres; With a View of the Slavery Question in the United States* [New York: William Harned, 1852], p. 456)

Unfortunately, though, Goodell's "best efforts at impartiality and fairness" were singularly unsuccessful. Time and again he presented facts and statements, usually gleaned from various newspapers of the time, in a highly selective manner; and he commented on those facts and statements in what can only be described as an unabashedly partisan fashion. When discussing the "political course of the American Anti-Slavery Society since its revolution of 1844," for example, Goodell asked how that Society's standard of political ethics and action compared "with the standard of other anti-slavery societies, and with the standard of the Liberty Party," a question which he immediately answered by asserting, "No anti-slavery society that we know of has a lower standard, in this respect, than the American Society. The Liberty Party has a much higher one" (*Slavery and Anti-Slavery*, p. 534). This answer was almost a matter of course, though, because Goodell's question followed on the heels of his discussion of the American Anti-Slavery Society's "test of membership." Goodell had scornfully pointed out that anyone except slaveholders could join that Society; and he had given the substance of a remark by Garrison to the effect that "assent to the anti-slavery principles of the Society was the proper test of membership, and ... each member must be left free to judge whether or not he honored his principles in his practice, so long as he did not become a slaveholder" (*Slavery and Anti-Slavery*, p. 533). Such a liberal, non-restrictive criterion for membership was anathema to Goodell because instead of voting for the Liberty Party's candidates, members of the American Anti-Slavery Society "might vote for slaveholders, and hold religious fellowship with them, and remain in the Society" (*Slavery and Anti-Slavery*, p. 533). From a non-partisan perspective, though, what Goodell here considered a vice could be considered one of the Garrisonians' more attractive virtues.

Goodell's book, then, contains a history of organized anti-slavery activity in America prior to 1852, but it is a view of that activity as seen from the perspective of an anti-Garrisonian political abolitionist. Considering the anti-Garrisonian bias of the book, it is not surprising that the *Liberator*, usually so prompt to voice Garrisonian opinion on any anti-slavery matter, had nothing whatever to say about Slavery and Anti-Slavery in the months after that book was published. The Garrisonians were apparently content to ignore the book

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entirely—at least until 11 April 1853, when Samuel May, Jr., the General Agent of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, learned that one of that Society's lecturing agents had been selling the book at a substantial discount during Society-sponsored meetings. May immediately wrote to that agent, who was then lecturing at Ware, Massachusetts, and told him: "I am so confident that the B[oard] of Managers would strenuously object to any of their agents selling this book—which represents the American Anti Slavery Society & its doings in the falsest way—that I do not hesitate to ask you to give up the sale of the book entirely" (quoted in ALS to Samuel May, Jr., 18 April 1853; Boston Public Library [May Collection; MS.B.1.6, vol. 4, No. 64]).

The lecturing agent who received May's letter was Daniel Foster, and in order to understand the sort of man Foster was—and thus better understand why he acted as he later did—it will be useful to give a brief sketch of his life prior to 1853.

Unlike May, who had been a prominent member of the Garrisonian faction during the controversies of 1837-1840, Foster did not participate in those controversies at all. In 1837 he was a freshman at Dartmouth College, and he continued his studies there until the end of his junior year, 1840, when he went to teach in western Kentucky. According to his own testimony, he taught school in Kentucky for two years and, while there, "became an abolitionist from a settled conviction of the inherent sinfulness of Slavery, a conviction forced upon me by what I saw of the evil-workings of the system" ("The Mission of Christianity & the Field for Christian Effort in Kansas" Massachusetts Historical Society [Foster Collection; MS notebook 2, pp. 1-63 (odd-numbered pages only)], p. 53).

Foster returned from Kentucky in 1842 and taught at the Henniker Academy in Henniker, New Hampshire, for a year before moving to Hopkinton, Massachusetts, to teach in an academy there (Pugsley, F. L. "Historical Sketch of Henniker Academy and High School." Granite Monthly, 17 [1894], p. 346; Foster, Daniel, Farewell Sermon, Preached October 20, 1850, to the Union Evangelical Church, of Chester, Massachusetts. Springfield, Mass.: George W. Wilson, 1850, p. 7). Dartmouth awarded him a B.A. in 1845, and two years later he was licensed to preach by the Harmony Association of Congregationalist Ministers (Kenneth C. Cramer, TLS to author, 20 August 1985; collection of author; Farewell Sermon, p. 7). Of this period in his life, Foster later said: Soon after entering the ministry, I had an opportunity of settling advantageously over a Congregational Church, some eight miles from Boston, could I have only set aside my convictions of duty respecting slavery, and the Mexican war which was then in full operation. But this I could not then do, and God forbid I ever should yield my sense of duty in this matter. When I took upon me the office of the ministry, I entered into a solemn covenant with my Lord and Saviour to remember the suffering slave as bound, branded, driven, bought, and sold with him. In that covenant I promised, as I hoped for mercy, to make all my religious efforts and sympathies, as far as possible, felt for the oppressed and against the oppressor. (Farewell Sermon, pp. 7-8)

This position forced Foster to abandon his "denominational

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prejudices" and to accept the pastorate of an anti-slavery church in Salem for a scant salary of \$260 a year (Farewell Sermon, p. 8). Plagued by the pecuniary difficulties that he was to experience for the remainder of his life, Foster resigned his Salem pastorate in August 1848 and moved to nearby Danvers, where he became the pastor of a fledgling anti-slavery church and taught school to supplement his meager preacher's salary (Farewell Sermon, pp. 8-9). During the presidential campaign of 1848 he worked for the Free-Soil Party and became Corresponding Secretary for the North Danvers Free-Soil Club (D. Hamilton Hurd, comp. *History of Essex County, Massachusetts ...* [Philadelphia: J. W. Lewis & Co., 1888]: 1:53). His anti-slavery sentiments got him involved in two controversies in Danvers, and as a consequence of the bitter feeling aroused by these controversies, he was dismissed from his teaching position (see Frank C. Damon, "Rev. Daniel Foster and What an Editor Said of Him in 1849," *Salem Daily News*, 1 April 1927; Frank C. Damon, "Rev. Daniel Foster on the School Board Not Made a Teacher." *Salem News*, 2 April 1927; and Daniel Foster, *The Military Encampment at North Danvers, A Discourse Delivered August [sic] 9, 1849* [N.p.: n.p., n.d.]; the only known original of this latter item, a pamphlet, is at the Danvers Archival Center, Danvers, Mass.; Foster actually delivered his "Military Encampment" discourse on 9 September 1849). Deep in debt and unable to support himself on his pastor's salary, he spent the month of December 1849 "in New York, lecturing and preaching" (Farewell Sermon, p. 22). The following month he preached at the Trinitarian Church in Concord, Massachusetts, and at the Fourth Congregational Church in Chester, Massachusetts, hoping to become pastor of one or the other church (Maria Thoreau, ALS to Prudence Ward, 16 January 1850, typescript in Collection of Thomas Blanding, Concord, Mass.; Farewell Sermon, p. 36). When the members of the church in Chester agreed to change their "Confession of Faith" and their "Covenant" to reflect Foster's abolition and temperance principles, they changed the name of the church to the Union Evangelical Church and hired him as their pastor (Farewell Sermon, pp. 51-54). Nine months later, though, Foster left the church after a bitter dispute with Kyle Forbes, the principal deacon of the church and an influential member of the Whig Party in eastern Massachusetts (Farewell Sermon). Once again, Foster's views on slavery had embroiled him in controversy and led to his resignation.

From November 1850 to February 1851, Foster made occasional trips around New England preaching and lecturing, and in early March of 1851 he left Chester to become pastor of the Concord Trinitarian Church (Diary for 13 March 1851 to 21 May 1851, MHi, Foster Collection, MS notebook 1, p. 3). On 10 April he delivered "A Fast Day Discourse" at that church, blasting the new Fugitive Slave Law as "infernal" and insisting that he would "disobey that law, by aiding the fugitive slave, and by active obstructions in the way of the abominable kidnapper, although the Constitution of my country should sanction the laws in all the length and breadth of its immeasurable infamy" (*Our Nations Sins and the Christian's Duty. A Fast Day Discourse ... Delivered April 10th, 1851* [Boston: White and Potter, 1851], p. 27). Two days later he made good on his claim by dramatically

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stepping onto a bale of cotton on Boston's Long Wharf and uttering a brief but powerful prayer to a crowd of about one hundred abolitionists who had illegally assembled on the wharf to watch helplessly as the Boston Police and the State Militia ushered Thomas Sims onto a ship to be taken back to slavery (Austin Bearse, *Reminiscences of Fugitive-Slave Law Days in Boston* [New York: Arno Press, 1969 (1880)], p. 28; Vincent Y. Bowditch, *The Life and Correspondence of Henry Ingersoll Bowditch* [New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1970 (1902)], 1:223; Leonard W. Levy, "Sims' Case: The Fugitive Slave Law in Boston in 1851," *Journal of Negro History*, 35 [January 1950]: 69-72; Daniel Foster, [Prayer at Sims' Rendition], *Boston Daily Morning Commonwealth*, 14 April 1851, p. 4, col. 3; Daniel Foster, [Prayer at Sims' Rendition] *Liberator*, 18 April 1851, p. 2, col. 4; Daniel Foster, *Diary for 13 March 1851 to 21 May 1851*, pp. 32-33, 35-43). This act made Foster something of a celebrity, if not a hero, and earned for him the accolades of such prominent men as Charles Sumner, Henry Bowditch, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Edmund Quincy, Wendell Phillips, and William Lloyd Garrison (Charles Sumner, TLS to Daniel Foster, 14 February 1858, Mass. Historical Society [Foster Collection]; Henry Ingersoll Bowditch, TLS to Daniel Foster, 14 November 1851, Mass. Historical Society [Foster Collection]; Ralph Waldo Emerson, *The Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. William H. Gilman, et al. [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960-], 13:265; Henry D. Thoreau, *The Journal of Henry D. Thoreau*. 14 vols., eds. Bradford Torrey and Francis H. Allen [Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1906], 3:16; Henry D. Thoreau, ALS [palimpsest] to Daniel Foster [?], undated, Houghton Library, Harvard University [bMS Am 278.5 (1B)].; Daniel Foster, ALS to Wendell Phillips and Edmund Quincy, 16 November 1851, Houghton Library, Harvard University [bMS Am 1953 (557)]; Gideon Longprobe [W. L. Garrison (?)], "Dr. Lord's Reply," *Liberator*, 23 January 1852, p. 4, cols. 2-3). In late October Foster further ingratiated himself to Bowditch, Quincy, Phillips, and Garrison when he delivered a sermon titled "The Bible Not an Inspired Book" (Daniel Foster, "The Bible not an Inspired Book: A Sermon." *Liberator*, 14 November 1851, p. 1, cols. 2-6; p. 2, cols. 1-3; Henry Ingersoll Bowditch, TLS to Daniel Foster, 14 November 1851; Daniel Foster, ALS to Wendell Phillips and Edmund Quincy, 16 November 1851, Houghton Library, Harvard University [bMS Am 1953 (557)]; Gideon Longprobe [W. L. Garrison (?)], "Dr. Lord's Reply," *Liberator*, 23 January 1852). At about the same time Foster received one hundred dollars, the first installment of a one-thousand-dollar bequest from a Deacon Gregg for the support of "an Orthodox Antislavery minister" (Daniel Foster, ALS to Wendell Phillips and Edmund Quincy, 16 November 1851, Houghton Library, Harvard University [bMS Am 1953 (557)]). Gregg had entrusted his bequest to the care of Quincy and Phillips, both of whom were members of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society's Board of Managers, and they in turn had selected Foster as the recipient of the bequest and had sent him the one hundred dollars (Daniel Foster, ALS to Wendell Phillips and Edmund Quincy). But on 16 November 1851, two days after his sermon on the bible appeared in the *Liberator*, Foster wrote to Quincy and Phillips saying, "I cannot honestly take the fund ...



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for this reason, I am not in any possible sense in which I suppose Mr. Gregg used the term an Orthodox Minister" (Daniel Foster, ALS to Wendell Phillips and Edmund Quincy). Foster then went on to confess that "the most pressing necessity" had induced him to spend the one hundred dollars he had received, and he promised Quincy and Phillips that he would pay the money back "in the course of one or two years" (Daniel Foster, ALS to Wendell Phillips and Edmund Quincy, 16 November 1851). Five months later Foster submitted to the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society Board of Managers a proposal to become one of their lecturing agents and deliver a course of four lectures "weekly in such place as you might select" (ALS to Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Board of Managers, 15 April 1852, Boston Public Library [May Collection; MS.B.1.6, vol. 13, No. 6]). He proposed, in addition, the following conditions:

I would also endeavor to collect funds for the society & get subscriptions for the Liberator. I should be willing to have my compensation in part dependent upon my success in your service. If that would warrant I should wish to receive twelve dollars per week & my expenses, Six dollars to be credited to the refunding of the \$100. I am owing to your treasury & six to be paid in money to myself. I think I could so manage my current work that this enterprise would not be any great expense to the Antislavery Society. (ALS to Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Board of Managers, 15 April 1852)

The Board immediately accepted Foster's proposal, and for the next twelve months he "lectured 300 times in 87 different places & collected for the Society over [his] travelling & personal expenses \$400."¹³⁰ In addition, as he later said, "I took with me Garrison's Writings, [Horace Mann's] published letters & addresses on slavery, Sumner's Orations the white Slave & some other similar books for circulation among the people. When Wm Goodell's 'Slavery & Anti-Slavery' & his 'Slave Code' was [sic] published I took these also. During the year I have distributed 1500 copies of these books selling them, at a great discount from the regular price in order to spread them as widely as possible" (ALS to Horace Mann, 17 May 1853. MHi [Mann Collection]).

Foster received May's letter of 11 April 1853 on Friday, 15 April, but he did not answer it until Monday, 18 April, after he had had two full days at home to think about it and, perhaps, to talk the matter over with his wife Dora Foster. In his response to May's request that he "give up the sale of [Goodell's] book entirely," Foster wrote:

I have read [the book] carefully through & am satisfied that it is calculated to accomplish great & lasting good. According to my understanding of matters it is, in the main, a true & impartial history of the Great Struggle which it relates. There is prejudice against

130. Quoted from Daniel Foster, ALS to Horace Mann, 17 May 1853, Mass. Historical Society [Mann Collection]. Foster documented his activities as a lecturing agent for the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society with astonishing thoroughness by regularly writing accounts of his lecturing activities and sending them to Garrison, who published them in [The Liberator](#). These letters and a few other items documenting Foster's activities from April 1852 to April 1853 are cited in "Sources for a Biography of Daniel Foster," from item 100 to item 137.



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the Old Organization just as there is in the minds of the Garrisonians against the New Organization. There are unhappy differences & feuds between those men in the great Anti Slavery party which have been fostered & fought out long enough. They must be laid aside & forgotten ... or the people will lay aside & forget the men who insanely crucify Freedom by their contentions. (ALS to Horace Mann, 17 May 1853, Mass. Historical Society [Mann Collection])

Then, after expressing his love for both Garrison and Goodell, Foster told May, "And, therefore, if the Board of Managers forbid my selling this book I shall act no longer as agent of the society. Till I hear from you I shall not offer the book" (ALS to Horace Mann, 17 May 1853).

In his reply of 22 April, May told Foster that he was "sometimes a little too hasty" and suggested that "an hour's candid talk with either Garrison, or Phillips" would satisfy Foster that Goodell's account of anti-slavery history was biased "against the American Antislavery Society, its members, & its operations" (ALS to Daniel Foster, 22 April 1853, Boston Public Library [May Collection; MS.B.1.6, vol. 4, No. 65]). May then asserted:

As to the forgetting, & overlooking, & coming together, of which you speak,—no one knows, better than yourself, that to this end there must be mutual confidence, and no compromise of what we believe right & duty.— On honourable ground, we are not indisposed to union with anybody; we have gotten an infidel and fanatical name, because we would not set up a theological or a political creed for ourselves & our associates. And we are a handful, because we would not compromise the truth, for the sake of union and numbers.— W. Goodell has falsified important matters of Anti-Slavery history. Let him see to that. Let it not be ours to aid in such a work, especially where he libels our cause and ourselves. (ALS to Daniel Foster, 22 April 1853)

Nowhere in his letter to Foster, though, does May support with facts his claim that Goodell falsified (as opposed to misrepresented) anti-slavery history; and it is very clear from the letter that Foster, if he wanted to continue in the employ of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, would have to stop selling Goodell's book. Accordingly, when Foster wrote back to May on 25 April, he began, "I infer from your last letter that I am required as an agent of the Massachusetts Anti Slavery society to refrain from selling Goodell's 'Slavery & Anti Slavery.' I cannot consent to this and therefore must give up my agency & act upon my own responsibility in the anti slavery field" (ALS to Samuel May, Jr., 25 April 1853, Boston Public Library [May Collection; MS.B.1.6, vol. 4, No. 67]).

On 27 April, the same day May received Foster's letter of 25 April, he attended a regular meeting of the Board of Managers and "laid the matter before them" by reading all the letters that had passed between himself and Foster during the preceding two and a half weeks. At that meeting, the Board members



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unanimously passed the following resolutions:

Resolved, That Mr. Daniel Foster be directed to cease from the sale of Goodell's "Slavery & Antislavery" while acting as an Agent of this Society, in view of the falsification of antislavery history, & the mis-statements as to the action of the American Anti Slavery Society & its members, contained in that work.

Resolved, That the agents of this society be instructed to consult the General Agent as to the books they take out for sale, and to offer none which are not approved of by the Board of Managers, through their General Agent. (ALS to Daniel Foster, 29 April 1853, Boston Public Library [May Collection; MS.B.1.6, vol. 4, p. 68])

May communicated these resolutions to Foster in a letter of 29 April and told him, "As your last note was written to me on the supposition that the Board of Managers had then acted on this subject of Mr. Goodell's book, and as your resignation, therein contained, was offered on that supposition; and as they had not then acted upon the subject, I do not feel that we are authorised to accept your resignation, on the strength of that note" (ALS to Daniel Foster, 29 April 1853). He then asked Foster to write back to him on that subject and also to let him know "whether [Foster] wrote to Mr. Lewis Tappan [the president of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society], or other persons, in New York, to obtain a quantity of [Goodell's] book for sale" (ALS to Daniel Foster, 29 April 1853). May also wanted Foster to let him know "what number of them [the books] you have sold, while travelling as an agent of this Society" (ALS to Daniel Foster, 29 April 1853). Foster did not respond to this letter, perhaps because he soon after spoke with May at the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society offices in Boston. When the two men spoke to each other, May again urged Foster to have a talk with Garrison or Phillips, but Foster told him that he probably would not change his opinion of the book (Samuel J. May, Jr., "Statement," *Liberator*, 15 July 1853, p. 3, cols. 3-4). He also told May that he would have liked to have been present at the Board meeting of 27 April and that he would cease circulating Goodell's book "if convinced that its strictures were untrue" ("Letter from Rev. Daniel Foster," *Liberator*, 29 July 1853, p. 2, cols. 3-4 [TLS to Garrison and May, 18 July 1853]).

Foster made this last remark in connection with his plans to continue lecturing against slavery in the immediate future, but on his "own responsibility," as he expressed it, "untrammelled by party, sect, or organized Society" (ALS to Horace Mann, 17 May 1853). He began, as he later said, by calling "on a few friends in Boston, Marlboro, Concord, Westminster, Gardner, Winchendon, & Fitchburg, proposing to devote myself to this work, & asking pledges to secure me a salary of \$600. for [a] year[']s services as a lecturer" (ALS to Horace Mann, 17 May 1853). On 19 June he spoke three times in Lowell, and the theme of his third lecture was the necessity of union among abolitionists. The next day he asked one of the editors of the *Lowell American* for a pledge and explained the circumstances

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that had compelled him to give up his agency with the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society. The editor asked what objections the Board of Managers had to Goodell's book, and Foster read to him the Board's resolutions of 27 April, adding that in the book "Goodell had generally introduced these facts, which are denied, by quotations from the Liberator or [the American Anti-Slavery] Standard, or by referring to the source in which the proof of the correctness of his statements could be found" ("Letter from Rev. Daniel Foster," Liberator, 29 July 1853). Foster went on to tell the editor of his "readiness to give up the book, if convinced that Mr. Goodell was guilty of false statements" and added that he had not been "invited to attend the Board meeting at which this matter was decided" ("Letter from Rev. Daniel Foster," Liberator, 29 July 1853). Three days later, the Lowell American printed an account of Foster's lectures and added an account of his difficulties with the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, concluding with the remark, "This act of ostracising Mr. Foster for circulating Goodell's work, seems rather odd, to say the least, for a body of men who hold to the greatest liberty of speech and action, and go in for discussion in its broadest sense" ("Anti-Slavery Lecture by Daniel Foster," Liberator, 15 July 1853, p. 3, col. 3; reprinted from the Lowell Tri-Weekly American and the Worcester Spy). The following day the Worcester Daily Spy repeated the American's account of Foster's difficulties in its columns and concluded with this remark: "Thus it is, that these immaculate advocates of free discussion attempt to play the Pope, on a small scale, wherever they have the power to do so" ("Anti-Slavery Lecture by Daniel Foster," Liberator, 15 July 1853).

The remarks from these two Worcester newspapers came to the attention of the Garrisonians, of course, and May began preparing a statement on the issue to publish in the Liberator. That statement appeared on 15 July, and Garrison added in a separate paragraph his opinion that May's statement was "a complete refutation of the charges made by those papers against the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Board. Mr. Foster was not dismissed from his agency, nor requested to leave, but he impulsively threw up his commission, rather than cease selling a book which the Board, by their fidelity to the American Anti-Slavery Society, and their regard for the truth of history, could not sanction" (Samuel J. May, Jr., "Statement," Liberator, 15 July 1853).

The day after May's statement appeared in the Liberator, William Goodell wrote to May and called on him "to substantiate or retract" the "grave charges" of the Board that his book contained, as their resolution of 27 April stated, "falsifications of anti-slavery history and mis-statements as to the action of the American Anti-Slavery Society and its members" (William Lloyd Garrison, "Letter from William Goodell," Liberator, 29 July 1853, p. 2, col. 3 [TLS to Samuel May, Jr., 16 July 1853]). May wrote back to Goodell on 26 July saying that he would lay Goodell's "letter before the [Board of] Managers ... at an early day; submitting it to their decision" ("Letter from William Goodell," Liberator, 29 July 1853, p. 2, col. 3 [TLS to Goodell, 26 July 1853]). Foster responded to May's



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statement in a long letter of 18 July, saying in part:

In a merchantile point of view, I own the right of the Massachusetts A. S. Society to employ agents to 'peddle' this or that book, and to keep out of their cart any other book opposed to their Society. But suppose we look at it in a higher point of view. Here is a moral Society, founded on the most perfect liberty of Christianity, organized to set free the enslaved. It builds a free platform; it preaches a free gospel; it invites free discussion; it challenges free inquiry; it censures the sects and the parties because they discourage free investigation, and are not willing to have the people look on all sides of a question that interests the public mind. For a quarter of a century, a struggle goes on between those who hold those noble principles, and the narrow-minded sectarians and partizans who would keep man in bondage. At length, a history of this great movement is written, by one who has suffered and toiled and sacrificed, in the very van of the reform, as one of its chief supporters and ablest advocates. Among other things narrated therein are the mistakes of a band of these reformers, on the question of political action and church organizations, and the influences which led them into these mistakes. Now, shall these men say to their agents, 'You shall not circulate this book, because it censures us'? Or shall they say even, 'You shall not spread this book in the land, because these censures are demonstrably unjust to us'? No! a thousand times, No! Let them carry out their principles, and allow the people to read and judge for themselves. Let them abide in the calm trust that truth will triumph and right be done, as they so nobly profess to believe. Now see how the thing is done in this particular case. The book is pronounced a false history. The agent is told that he shall not circulate it; but he must take the simple word of one man, or of a body of men, without a particle of proof that such is the case, and comply with the command. There is Mr. Goodell's word, and various documents which seem to corroborate his word, and there is the agent's own conviction on the other side. What shall the agent do? In such a case as this, Daniel Foster, not 'impulsively,' but calmly and conscientiously, threw up his agency, and threw himself upon the people, with the truth and energy God gave to him. I see not how a true abolitionist could do otherwise. ("Letter from Rev. Daniel Foster," *Liberator*, 29 July 1853)

May replied to Foster on 26 July by again tracing the history of their dispute and insisting that Foster had resigned before 27 April, the date the Board of Managers met and passed its resolution to require him as an agent of the Society not to sell Goodell's book. On the issue of free speech, May had only this to say: "Mr. Foster thinks that we are bound, by the principles of the free platform on which we profess to stand, to circulate this book, notwithstanding it contains, as we believe,

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statements which do the greatest injustice to men and women, living and dead, whom we revere as the apostles and martyrs of the anti-slavery cause. I can only say that our ideas of liberty, moral duty, and fidelity to our principles, differ on this point radically from Mr. Foster's" ("Reply of Mr. May," *Liberator*, 29 July 1853, p. 2, col. 5 [TLS to Garrison, 26 July 1853]).

May's remarks of 26 July were the last ones made in the Foster-May controversy, but the issues raised by that controversy were not yet settled. Of these issues, the principal one was whether Goodell's book falsified or misstated the facts of anti-slavery history in America, as May and other Garrisonians claimed. At no time during the fourteen-week controversy between May and Foster had anyone substantiated the Garrisonian claim with evidence or examples from Goodell's book.

On 30 August, just over a month after May turned Goodell's request for substantiation or retraction of the charges against his book over to them, the members of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society Board of Managers issued their statement on the matter. Astonishingly, they said that they did not "feel called upon ... to give an elaborate refutation of [the book's] errors, misstatements, injurious innuendoes and implications respecting the American Anti-Slavery Society, and its auxiliaries"; nor did they "deem it necessary to go into an examination of the motives of Mr. Goodell, in writing that portion of his History which relates to the American Anti-Slavery Society" (Francis Jackson, "Goodell's Anti-Slavery History," *Liberator*, 2 September 1853, p. 2, col. 2). They did, however, assert, "To all who are familiar with the facts in the case, and whose vision is clear, [Goodell's book] must bear upon its face the design to forestall and control the judgment of posterity, in depreciating those who have been untiring and uncompromising in their efforts to exterminate the slave system, and in exalting those whose religious narrowness of mind and sectarian malignity have made them zealous in fomenting divisions in the anti-slavery ranks, and unscrupulous in the means they have used to accomplish their purpose" (Jackson, "Goodell's Anti-Slavery History").

This remarkable statement was bound to draw a response from Goodell, who was vacationing in "the country" during the month of September. When he returned from his vacation, he read the statement in the *Liberator* and wrote to the members of the Board on 3 October, telling them, "One of the strongest and most valuable attestations that my book of History can receive, is the unconscious and unintentional testimony of those who find fault with it, who charge upon it 'mis-statements' and 'errors,' declaring it to be 'untrue and untrustworthy'—yet who, nevertheless, being called upon to 'substantiate or retract' those charges, decline, on mature deliberation, to do so, or even to bring forward any definite specifications of them. This invaluable testimony, gentlemen, you have furnished me" ("Letter from William Goodell," *Liberator*, 21 October 1853, p. 2, col. 6 [TLS to Samuel May, Jr.; Francis Jackson; and Robert Wallcut; 3 October 1853]). He then went on to sum up his final position on the matter this way:

Impartial readers of my book will see that I have not written as a partizan, (in a controversy in which I never enlisted,) nor with any view to disparage your Society, nor to build up its



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rival—that, while dissenting from the position and policy of both, and pointing out what I conceived to be their defects, I have given cheerful and ample credit to both for their important labors—at the same time showing, as a full history of anti-slavery efforts must needs do, that since the division of 1840, a very great portion of the anti-slavery labor of the country (political, ecclesiastical and moral) has been conducted outside of either of these National Societies, and without their cooperation. Such an impartial history must, of course, oppose the exclusive claims of your Society and its affiliated bodies, and their unsparing denunciation of all anti-slavery efforts and organizations except their own. If this be the real 'head and front of my offending,' be it so. Let the public and let posterity judge between us. ("Letter from William Goodell," *Liberator*, 21 October 1853)

The Board of Managers met on 12 October and voted, first, "That Mr. Garrison be requested to publish in *THE LIBERATOR* the letter of Mr. Goodell" and, second, "That no reply to said letter is necessary" because the Board and "other friends of the American Anti-Slavery Society, [had] repeatedly, since 1840, made detailed Statements of the course pursued by the Seceders, and of their plots against the integrity of the movement" (Robert F. Walcutt, "Letter from William Goodell," *Liberator*, 21 October 1853, p. 2, col. 6). Soon after the Board's votes and Goodell's letter appeared in the *Liberator*, the Wesleyan printed in its columns the following article under the title "Slavery and Anti-Slavery":

Of this work, by Mr. Goodell, we have sold many copies. Seeing an impeachment of its veracity, by the Mass. A. S. Society, in the matter of the division of the American A. S. Society in 1840, we have waited the response of Mr. Goodell. He did respond, asking specifications of incorrectness from those who make the charge. The managers of the Mass. A. S. Society decline to sustain their charge by any attempt at proof. They assume that it is abundant and already long before the public during the 13 years past since the division, and therefore need not be repeated.

This is uncandid and unfair. 'The public' of to-day furnishes thousands of readers who are not familiar with the occurrences of thirteen years ago, or less. This present public have been informed by that Society, through numerous channels, that William Goodell's history is false and unreliable. This is necessarily injurious to his pecuniary interests and his reputation as a man. And it demands full proof or frank retraction.

To fall back on the expositions of years gone by, of which thousands know nothing, as a justification of charges made against an elaborate work of to-day, to which work such expositions had no allusion, as the work did not then exist, is to trifle with the public. And to make public assaults upon the reputation of an important work, and then refuse to attempt to sustain these charges, is unjust to the author. It may suit their conceptions of official dignity, but it will not in any wise dignify their position. It would be more creditable to them to point out the facts misstated or omitted, even at this late day. And we anticipated that they might be able to do so. It would,



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however, seem to be otherwise. ("Mr. Goodell's Book," *Liberator*, 4 November 1853, p. 2, col. 6 [Reprint from *The Wesleyan*, 27 October 1853])

Garrison reprinted this article in the *Liberator* with almost one full column of his own commentary, reasserting the position of the Board of Managers by claiming, "We humbly conceive that the Public has no right to ask that we should go over this ground again" and asserting that "New Organization is dead, long ago" and "does not need killing over again" ("Mr. Goodell's Book," *Liberator*, 4 November 1853). Garrison then went on to have the final word in the controversy when he summed up the Garrisonian position on New Organization and on Goodell's book:

The subject has long since lost its interest. All that we said of New Organization has been justified by its conduct and its fate. What we prophesied has become history. It has passed away, and new enemies stand in the field, quite enough to occupy our attention and our hands. And if a man, in the garb of a friend, affecting impartiality to give a keener point to his blow, which, after all, he rather indicates than delivers like a man,

Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike,
Just hints a fault, and hesitates dislike;

if such a man choose to put the gloss of our enemies upon the facts he proposes to relate historically, all that we feel called upon to do is, to interpose our denial between his statement and his readers. We can afford to wait for justice. The history of the Anti-Slavery Cause will yet be truly written. And it will record this passage in its history truly, as well as all others. ("Mr. Goodell's Book," *Liberator*, 4 November 1853)

Of the many issues raised during the Foster-May controversy of 1853, only one is as important now as it was then: the issue of anti-slavery history itself and how "posterity" or historians would and do "judge" or interpret that history. This issue was important in 1853, though, for a very different reason than it is now. Its importance then derived from the fact that abolitionist leaders looked to posterity for a vindication of their anti-slavery principles and activities. These leaders were acutely aware of themselves as the principal actors in a real-life drama that would be carefully scrutinized by future historians, and this awareness caused them to vie for the sympathies of "posterity," as they so often referred to those future historians.

In spite of their assertions to the contrary, what so rankled the leaders of the Garrisonian faction about Goodell's *Slavery and Anti-Slavery* was not any errors or misstatements of facts contained in the book. Goodell had very carefully selected his facts from newspapers, reports, and other documents, many of them published by the Garrisonians themselves. This selective method of documentation made it virtually impossible for the Garrisonians to substantiate their claims against Goodell without pointing to more or less insignificant errors, and this would have made their complaints appear ridiculous. Their complaint, though, that Goodell's book contained "injurious innuendoes and implications respecting the American Anti-

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Slavery Society, and its auxiliaries" was certainly legitimate; but for them to show the extent to which Goodell had misrepresented them would have required a lengthy, elaborate, point-by-point review of much of the book. Instead of doing this, the Garrisonians decided "to interpose [their] denial between" the book and its readers, and to await the justice which they were confident future historians would accord them. What really rankled the Garrisonians about Goodell's book, then, was the misrepresentations it contained—misrepresentations which to them clearly evinced "the design to forestall and control the judgment of posterity" against them and for the anti-Garrisonian "New Organization."


This complaint by the Garrisonians that Goodell was attempting to "control the judgment of posterity" is undeniably legitimate, but Goodell was making such an attempt because he thought the Garrisonians had themselves been trying to control the judgment of posterity. Goodell's opinion on this matter was well founded, and many passages in his book show that he was attempting to set the historical record straight. He claimed in his book that "the leading feature" of the American Anti-Slavery Society was its claim that it and its auxiliaries represented "the only genuine abolitionists in the country" (Slavery and Anti-Slavery, p. 512), and a substantial portion of his commentary about the Society was given over to showing that this exclusive claim was palpably false. After examining the political position of the Liberty Party, for example, Goodell examined the political position of the American Anti-Slavery Society and concluded by observing, "Posterity will compare such political ethics with those of the Liberty party, and decide upon the claims of the [American Anti-Slavery Society] to represent the only true abolitionism of America, and whether the [Liberty party] gave evidence of apostacy from the anti-slavery cause, in not acting with them" (Slavery and Anti-Slavery, p. 525). As has been pointed out, though, Goodell did not wait for posterity to make the comparison; just nine pages later he flatly asserted that the Garrisonians' standard of political ethics was lower than any "anti-slavery society that we know of" (Slavery and Anti-Slavery, p. 534). In a similar fashion, after turning from his consideration of the Garrisonians' course on political action and before considering their course on church action, Goodell noted, "The facts of the case must be impartially presented. In no other way can these problems be solved, or posterity put in possession of any trustworthy history of the anti-slavery movement in America" (Slavery and Anti-Slavery, pp. 541-542). Clearly, each party in the dispute over what would constitute a true history of American abolitionism saw the other as attempting to control the judgment of posterity, and each made efforts to forestall or invalidate the other's attempts. This, of course, is why the issue of anti-slavery history as it was raised during the Foster-May controversy is important today. In effect, abolitionist leaders, conscious of themselves as historical figures, were by the early 1850s actively lobbying for the sympathies of historians, and this raises a number of implications that historians of the American anti-slavery movement would do well to consider.





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JULY 1853

 July 1853: This month's issue of [Harper's New Monthly Magazine](#).

CONSULT THIS ISSUE

 July 1853: [Henry Thoreau](#) surveyed for Silas Holden a houselot on Bedford Road near Mary Rice and the Meeting House which would later be turned around to become the Catholic Church on the Common. On this survey, now at the Concord Free Public Library, he indicated the location of Beck Stow's Swamp. 

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

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

(The official copy of this survey of course had become the property of the person or persons who had hired this Concord town surveyor to do their surveying work during the 19th Century. Such materials have yet to be recovered.)

View this particular personal working draft of a survey in fine detail:



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http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/Thoreau_surveys/7c.htm



He was working on his WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS manuscript:

Saffron
Walden

My townsmen have all heard the tradition, ^{^the oldest} people tell me that they heard it in their youth, that anciently the Indians were ~~carousing or~~ holding a pow-wow upon a hill here, which rose as high into the heavens as the pond now sinks deep into the earth, and they used much profanity, as the story goes, though this vice ~~as I learn from the best authority,~~ is one of which the Indians were never guilty, and while they were thus engaged the hill shook and suddenly sank, and only one old squaw, named Walden, escaped, and from her the pond was named. It has been conjectured that when the hill shook these stones rolled down its side and became the present shore. It is very certain, at any rate, that once there was no pond there, and now there is one; ^{^and} this Indian fable does not in any respect conflict with the account of that ancient settler whom I have mentioned, who remembers so well when he first came here with his divining rod, saw a thin vapor rising from the sward, and the hazel pointed steadily downward, and he concluded to dig a well here. If the name was not derived from that of some English locality, ^{^Saffron Walden} ^{^for instance} ^{^perhaps} ~~I have conjectured that~~ ^{^who knows but} it was called, originally, Walled-in Pond.

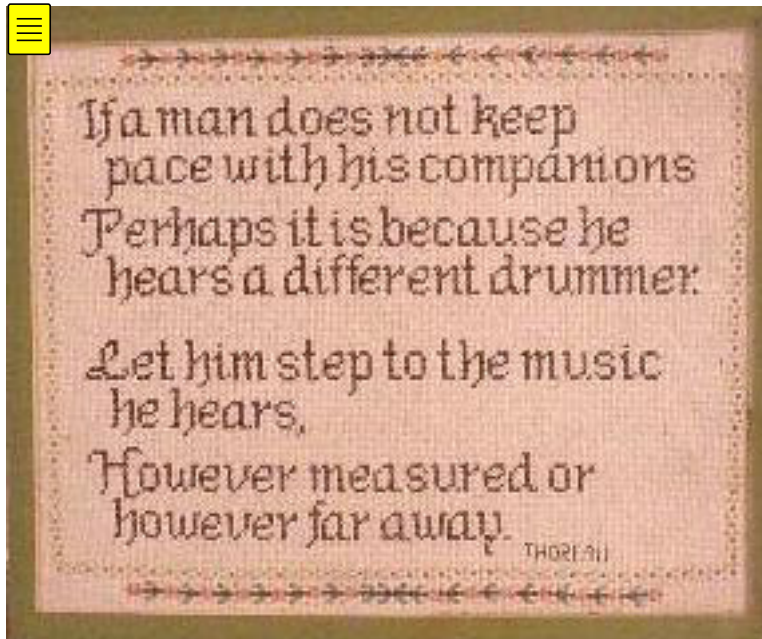
Ah, the pickerel of Walden! when I see them lying on the ice, or in the well which the fisherman cuts in the ice, making a little hole to admit the water, I am always surprised by their rare beauty, as if they were fabulous fishes.... as if they were the pearls, the animalized *nuclei* or crystals of the Walden water. They, of course, are Walden all over and all through; are themselves small Waldens in the animal kingdom, Waldenses..... in this deep and capacious spring, far beneath the rattling teams and chaises and tinkling sleighs that travel the Walden road, this great gold and emerald fish swims.... Easily, with a few convulsive quirks, they give up their watery ghosts, like a mortal translated before his time to the thin air of heaven.

Why should we be in such desperate haste to succeed, and in such desperate enterprises? If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away. It is not important that he should mature as soon as an apple-tree or an oak. Shall he turn his spring into summer? If the condition of things which we were made for is not yet, what were any reality which we can substitute? We will not be shipwrecked on a vain reality. Shall we with pains erect a heaven of blue glass over ourselves, though when it is done we shall be sure to gaze still at the true ethereal heaven far above, as if the

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former were not?



July 1853: The Reverend Edward Strong Dwight (1820-1890) began his pastorate in Amherst, Massachusetts.

Nathaniel Hawthorne and family moved from Concord to Liverpool. In England, Nathaniel will find himself offended by the blank regularity of the typical English lawn, which had been created by a device known as the “lawnmower” that had been much in use there since it was patented in 1830.



The Reverend Samuel Ringgold Ward went on a lecture tour in England:

As I was under no engagement to labour for the Committee on Sunday, I accepted of an offer kindly made me by the Committee of the Colonial Missionary Society, through its excellent Secretary, Rev. Thomas James, to urge the claims of that very important charity, on the first day of the week. Thus the field of my labours and circle of my acquaintance were enlarged greatly; and as my appearance anywhere, as I understood the matter, brought the slave to mind, I hope that, in that service, I did not mar the great chief object of my coming hither. Occasionally, too, I was honoured by invitations to speak for the London Missionary Society; while kindred charities, along with these, seemed to regard me as public property; and, ere I



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knew it, I had the name of a respectable successful beggar. The duty of travelling in these causes called me into almost every county in England, into the pulpits of the most distinguished Dissenting divines in the land, into company with some of England's noblest sons and daughters, into contact with representatives of the different classes of pro-slavery men in England, whether exotics or natives – in a word, into a sphere of active usefulness which I had before never dared to covet. It is, as it should be, in America and in the colonies, regarded as a matter of importance, for a man wishing to improve both his head and his heart, to visit England. There is so much to be learned here, civilization being at its very summit – society, in consequence, presenting every attraction, and every form of social improvement and instruction. Here, too, is so much of historic recollection. England, indeed, is a book, ancient, mediæval, and modern, in itself. One cannot but agree with those who hold the opinion that the best specimens of the Colonial or the American gentleman need European travel for their finishing. English travel, in more ways than one, is the best, choicest portion of European travel. I came to England knowing this, and hoping to enjoy and appreciate it in some degree; but to be associated with that band who have no equals in this world and no superiors in any age, the leaders of the benevolent schemes of England – to be acknowledged by them as a coadjutor – to be permitted to share with them in those smaller, lighter portions of their work, for which alone I had any sort of even seeming qualifications – was what I had no right to expect, but what I felt the honour of all the more. Before I had been one month in England, I had been upon the platforms of the Bible, Tract, Sunday School, Missionary, Temperance, and Peace, as well as the Anti-Slavery, Societies. To the last, in my native country, Negroes are freely admitted, invited, as a matter of course. Who ever saw one of sable hue upon the platforms of the others? Never, as an equal brother man, was I welcomed to the national platforms of any of them, until I became a resident of Canada.

Russia occupied the Danubian provinces of Turkey, following the orders of Czar Nicholas I, and hostilities between the two countries escalated. By November the two countries would be officially at war.

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 July 1853: From this month until September, [Jefferson Davis](#) would be traveling extensively in the Northeast.

During this month, and then on February 1, 1854, [Henry Thoreau](#) was making extensive surveys that show the Middlesex Agricultural Society, Reuben Brown's farm with its Sleepy Hollow, and all of the existing houses to the Charles Gordon and William Pedrick farms on Old Bedford Road to Bedford. Thoreau also did some surveying for Silas Holden.



While surveying the Bedford Road, he was working on his [WALDEN](#) manuscript:

My townsmen have all heard the tradition, [^]the oldest people tell me that they heard it in their youth, that anciently the Indians were ~~carousing or~~ holding a pow-wow upon a hill here, which rose as high into the heavens as the pond now sinks deep into the earth, and they used much profanity, as the story goes, though this vice ~~as I learn from the best authority,~~ is one of which the Indians were never guilty, and while they were thus engaged the hill shook and suddenly sank, and only one old squaw, named Walden, escaped, and from her the pond was named. It has been conjectured that when the hill shook these stones rolled down its side and became the present shore. It is very certain, at any rate, that once there was no pond there, and now there is one; [^]and this Indian fable does not in any respect conflict with the account of that ancient settler whom I have mentioned, who remembers so well when he first came here with his divining rod, saw a thin vapor rising from the sward, and the hazel pointed steadily downward, and he concluded to dig a well here. If the name was not derived from that of some English locality, [^]Saffron Walden [^]for instance [^]perhaps ~~I have conjectured that~~ [^]who knows but it was called, originally, Walled-in Pond.

Saffron
Walden



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WALDEN: Some have been puzzled to tell how the shore became so regularly paved. My townsmen have all heard the tradition, the oldest people tell me that they heard it in their youth, that anciently the Indians were holding a pow-wow upon a hill here, which rose as high into the heavens as the pond now sinks deep into the earth, and they used much profanity, as the story goes, though this vice is one of which the Indians were never guilty, and while they were thus engaged the hill shook and suddenly sank, and only one old squaw, named Walden, escaped, and from her the pond was named. It has been conjectured that when the hill shook these stones rolled down its side and became the present shore. It is very certain, at any rate, that once there was no pond here, and now there is one; and this Indian fable does not in any respect conflict with the account of that ancient settler whom I have mentioned, who remembers so well when he first came here with his divining rod, saw a thin vapor rising from the sward, and the hazel pointed steadily downward, and he concluded to dig a well here. As for the stones, many still think that they are hardly to be accounted for by the action of the waves on these hills; but I observe that the surrounding hills are remarkably full of the same kind of stones, so that they have been obliged to pile them up in walls on both sides of the railroad cut nearest the pond; and, moreover, there are most stones where the shore is most abrupt; so that, unfortunately, it is no longer a mystery to me. I detect the paver. If the name was not derived from that of some English locality, -Saffron Walden, for instance,- one might suppose that it was called, originally, **Walled-in** Pond.

Ah, the pickerel of Walden! when I see them lying on the ice, or in the well which the fisherman cuts in the ice, making a little hole to admit the water, I am always surprised by their rare beauty, as if they were fabulous fishes.... as if they were the pearls, the animalized *nuclei* or crystals of the Walden water. They, of course, are Walden all over and all through; are themselves small Waldens in the animal kingdom, Waldenses..... in this deep and capacious spring, far beneath the rattling teams and chaises and tinkling sleighs that travel the Walden road, this great gold and emerald fish swims.... Easily, with a few convulsive quirks, they give up their watery ghosts, like a mortal translated before his time to the thin air of heaven. (284-5)

WALDEN Draft F

Ostensibly in retaliation for the murder of Greek Orthodox monks by Roman Catholic monks in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Bethlehem earlier in the year, but actually in a move to secure for Russia the strategic advantage of year-round ice-free ports, Russian troops occupied Turkish provinces in Roumania.

Read  Henry Thoreau's Journal for July 1853 (æf. 35-36)



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July 1, Friday, 1853: The Boston police, who had been marked with a hat badge in addition to their watchhook, acquired a lapel badge in the shape of a brass star.

In New-York, Latting Observatory opened. One might view, from this platform fully 315 feet above the surface of the earth, see all the way to Queens, Staten Island, and the State of New Jersey! The tower could accommodate 1,500 people at a time (counting those who were trudging up its many steps, those who were standing on its 75-square-foot top platform, and those who were trudging down its many steps, a task which was being said to constitute good exercise).

The Cape Colony received a constitution which provided for a legislative council.

At about this point the Albany, New-York Northern Rail Road went out of business.

William Speiden, Jr. accompanied a few officers in a whaleboat up the Junk River and went on board a Japanese junk.

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

Made quite an early start again. "Independence Rock" 2 miles ahead. Struck Sweet Water River 1 mile before we reached the rock. This rock is another curiosity. It is about 300 yds. long, by 100 yds wide and about 100 feet high. It is composed of beautiful white granite, and was named by a party of Americans passing it on the 4th of July, who chose the top of this rock and held their celebrations. Before leaving it they inscribed this name upon it with each of their names under that. There are upwards of several hundred names inscribed on the top and sides of it. All have a curiosity to climb to its top. It is situated on the north side of Sweet Water River. The northwest end is shaped like a dome, rather broken at the top, but it gradually slopes off to the ground which is level all around it. We forded the river 1 mile above the rock. Four miles farther is the "Devil's Gate" at the right of the road. This is one of the greatest among the many curiosities of nature. The river here runs through perpendicular rocks about 300 feet high in a channel from 50 to 80 feet wide. These rocks are granite also. Upon looking at this it would seem that it had been made expressly for that purpose by the blowing and blasting of many months; but not so, it is the great, the wondrous work of nature. The road here passes around the point of the mountain between two cliffs of rocks and strikes the river again. One-half mile ahead is a small creek. The road follows up the river 26 miles. Plenty of grass and water, fuel sage, camped in this distance. Traveled 18 miles to-day.



July 1: I am surveying the Bedford road these days, and have no time for my Journal. Saw one of those great pea-green emperor moths, like a bird, fluttering over the top of the woods this forenoon, 10 A.M., near Beck Stow's. Gathered the early red blackberry in the swamp or meadow this side of Pedrick's, where I ran a pole down nine feet. It is quite distinct from the evergreen one and is without prickles. Fruit red, middle-sized, with a few, perhaps ten or twelve, large globules. May be the *Rubus trifloras*, but not growing on hills.



July 2, Saturday, 1853: The wedding of local newspaperman Patrick Purdy Hull with [Lola Montez](#), at the Mission Dolores in San Francisco, [California](#). Lola's show opened at the American Theatre.

Russian forces crossed the River Prut into Turkish territory, occupying Moldavia and Wallachia.

The side-wheel steam frigate *USS Mississippi*, *USS Susquehanna*, and *USS Saratoga* stood out of Naha Harbor taking the *USS Plymouth* in tow.

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

Saturday the 2nd. Up the river for eight miles this morning, roads very sandy, wind blowing so hard we can scarcely see. Our eyes, nose, mouth and victuals all have the benefit of it. Camped on the bank of the river after a drive of 17 miles.

The Placer, [California Herald](#) reported that at a place called Gold Hill, during the previous week, a couple of miners had gone to work at their long toms and after filling them up with dirt, the heat being oppressive, had taken refuge in the shade. Returning to their long toms and taking out the contents of the riffle's box, about one pan-full of dirt altogether, and washing down that pan of dirt, they recovered more than 2 ounces of pure, bright gold.

There are almost as many miners about Gold Hill now as there was during the winter. On Tuesday, we saw a sluice erecting on the flat below town, which will be a quarter of a mile long. It is owned by Smith & Co. Also the miners of neighbor towns of Oro City and Virginia are making money. There is a demand for labors.



July 2: Cooler to-day. *Polygonum Persicaria*. The *Ranunculus Purshii* is very rarely seen now. I hear a harsh *keow* from a bittern flying over the river. The peetweets [**Spotted Sandpiper** [Actitis macularia](#)] are quite noisy about the rocks in Merrick's pasture when I approach; have eggs or young there, which they are anxious about. The tall anemone in blossom, and no doubt elsewhere much earlier, — a week or ten days before this, — but the drought has checked it here. Saw on a maple leaf floating on the Assabet a kind of large aphides, thickly covering it. It was thickly coated with a mass of down, for their tails were like swan's-down, and, as they were constantly in motion, just stirring at least, it was as if there was a wind on it. Thimble-berries probably a day or two.



July 3, Sunday, 1853: A wagon train was bringing 19-year-old [Elizabeth Julia Ellison Goltra](#), her husband Nelson Goltra, and their 1-year-old Emily Marie Goltra (Wilkins) across the Great Plains of the United States of America:

Sunday is here again. But the weary traveler knows no rest. We had a very good camp last night, except water. This river is so strongly impregnated with alkali that it is hardly fit to use, but we have no other. We can see the saleratus oozing out from its bottom and banks, almost as white as snow. We use as little of the water as possible. We left the river for six miles



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and then touched it again at a ford. Here are two roads. The right hand crosses the river and goes around the mountain to avoid fording the river several times. This is the best road if the river can be forded at this point. We took the left hand road, after following the river a half a mile, we left it for 8 miles, then up it three miles and camped. Traveled 18 miles today over a very sandy road.

The Daily Alta California of San Francisco reported the arrival of the steamer *Ohio*, Captain Briggs, from the port of Los Angeles, California. This steamer, plus Wells, Fargo & Co., were to be credited with having supplied the northern part of the state with the following detailed information current as of June 25th — although, the paper added rather gratuitously, none of it happened to be of much interest:

FROM LOS ANGELES.

Fourteen Days Later Intelligence.

By the steamer *Ohio*, Capt. Briggs, we have news from Los Angeles to the 25th ult. We are under obligations to Wells, Fargo & Co., for early delivery of our exchanges.

The Star insists upon having a regular weekly line of coast steamers to San Francisco, not only to carry the mail but likewise to carry the fruit of that section of country to the market.

There is no news of interest. The greater part of the intelligence is composed of robberies and murders. The criminals and the victims appear to be generally Indians and Sonorians. We make the following extracts from the Star.

RUST IN WHEAT. — We are told that the wheat crop in this county will be materially lessened in consequence of rust, the blighting effects of which are particularly severe at San Bernardino. One of the Mormons informs us that one-half of their wheat is destroyed by rust.

TROUT. — There is glorious fishing at the head of the San Gabriel; ditto at the Mission Viejo. One day this week a gentleman of this city caught fifty as fine trout as ever bit at hook.

A GOOD INVESTMENT. — Two bears were purchased in this city, a few days ago, and have been taken to San Francisco for exhibition. The buyer will make a fortune.

On Thursday evening, June 9, about 7 o'clock, four men, supposed to be Sonorenes, having with them about forty head of horses, arrived at the rancho of Andreae Ibaria, about twenty miles from San Luis Rey, and without provocation fired upon the family, wounding one person in the leg. They had tied three men living on the rancho, and after plundering the house of wearing apparel and some money, started off [*sic*] for San Marco, where they killed two bullocks. The following day they were pursued by a party from San Diego until dark, when being unable to follow the trail, the pursuit was abandoned. Messages were sent to several Indian tribes directing them to capture the marauders. It is supposed the robbers have gone into the mountains about San Marco to dry their beef. Five horses were stolen from Santa Margarita on Wednesday, one of which was found tied out between Ibaria's and



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San Marco.

JOAQUIN. — Many men of veracity assert positively that Joaquin Murietta and his band are now somewhere between San Juan Capistrano and San Diego bound down to lower California. That Joaquin passed through this city is just as certain as anything else; and it is equally certain that no one was frightened. The citizens of San Diego, while in pursuit of Joaquin, came as near the rogue as to stampede a dozen of his horses. an advertisement in this paper describes four, for which owners are wanted.

COURT OF SESSIONS. — The Court of Sessions met on Monday, and passed sentence upon Firman Valdez, convicted of assault with intent to kill; one year in the State prison. An indictment against Nasario Dominguez created a good deal of amusement. It was intended by the grand jury to indict him for stealing a cow, but the District Attorney, in drawing up the presentment, being in doubt whether the animal was a cow or a steer, left certain blanks for the jury to fill. By some hocus pocus or other, not yet explained, the blanks were filled out by other hands in than those of the jury, and when the indictment was read to the accused lo! he was charged with stealing a "squaw, having the brands and ear marks," etc. This indictment was quickly kicked out of court.

In consequence of some informality in the drawing of the grand jury, numerous indictments were set aside, to the great relief of the accused parties, and the eternal disgust of the District Attorney.

SHOOTING. — An Indian. suspected of having furnished tools to a prisoner, in order to aid his escape, was shot by the jailer, Mr. Whitehorne, through the head and legs yesterday afternoon. The Indian lives, and may recover, the ball having glanced round the skull. We presume there will be a legal investigation of the transaction.

Two men shooting at a dog, accidentally hit a boy in the arm. Our limits are insufficient to contain the different versions of this affair.

MURDER. — Information has been received of the assassination of Yiaro Morille, an honest and industrious man, who for the last four years has been in charge of the rancho of San Rafael, belonging to Hon. Abel Stearns of this city. A short time since Mr Stearns paid to Morille a large sum of money, and the murderers probably supposed that he had a portion of it about his person. The persons suspected of the murder, Taos. Whitley, Juanito Ramirez and one Gonzales, have been arrested and are now in custody on the rancho where the murder was committed. San Rafael is situated on the frontier of Lower California.

SENT AWAY. — Firmin Valdez and Picardilla, sentenced to imprisonment in the penitentiary, were sent on their way yesterday, in charge of Deputy Sheriff Osburn. Valdez was convicted at the recent sitting of the Court of Sessions in this town; Picardilla is a refugee from Mariposa.

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July 3: Elder is now in its prime. Buttercups are almost gone. Clover is blackened. The umbelled pyrola, apparently yesterday, as well as the *P. rotundifolia* and the *P. elliptica*, or shin-leaf. The *P. secunda*, or one-sided pyrola, is already out of bloom.

The oven-bird's nest in Laurel Glen [**Ovenbird**  *Seiurus aurocapillus*] is near the edge of an open



pine wood, under a fallen pine twig and a heap of dry oak leaves. Within these, on the ground, is the nest, with a dome-like top and an arched entrance of the whole height and width on one side. Lined within with dry pine-needles.

Mountain laurel lingers in the woods still. The chestnut behind my old house site is fully out, and apparently has been partly so for several days. There are no flowers on bass trees commonly this year. Smooth sumach just opening and already resounding with bees. The water-target appears to be in its prime, its flowers rising above the water. Remarkable for the thick jelly on its leaves and stem. A smaller potamogeton is in flower there, — the small globose white flower. Why is it so often already torn up by the roots? Poke a day or two in favorable places. Dogsbane and Jersey tea are among the prevailing flowers now. The *Utricularia vulgaris* now yellows low muddy water, as near the Lincoln bound by Walden. The *Vaccinium rarillans* a day or two ripe. Black huckleberries. Tansy on the causeway. The Canada thistle. The pinweeds have a reddish look, as if in flower.



Our national birthday, Monday the 4th of July, 1853: [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#)'s 49th birthday.



The [California Daily Union](#) reported that lack of water in Mosquito Canyon during the summer season had necessitated the suspension of many gold-mining operations:

A ditch that would supply an abundance of water through that vicinity would prove excellent paying property. A very large amount of gold was taken out of this canyon during the last eight



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months, and much will be taken out the coming winter.

There was a fire at the corner of Clay Street and Kearny Street in [San Francisco](#), in which the loss would be estimated at \$6,000.

At a celebration dinner at Washington Hall in Springfield, Massachusetts, everyone stood up and cheered for one of the aged guests: the Reverend Jonathan Smith, who in the army of the Revolution had been a chaplain.

The American expedition members of our far-eastern fleet celebrated the 77th anniversary of our independence from Britain by firing off an impressive 17-gun salute. Well, they supposed it to be impressive. They were themselves impressed.

In Abington, Massachusetts there was a “Know Nothing Anti-Slavery celebration.”

In Norwalk, Connecticut, [Phineas Taylor Barnum](#) began the celebrations by delivering an address before a crowd of 10,000.

In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the cornerstone of the West Philadelphia Institute was set into place. Some 10,000 citizens visited Independence Hall, with each celebrant entitled to sit for a moment in the chair of John Hancock. At the Chestnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia, the comedietta “My [Uncle Sam](#)” was performed.

In New-York, a 95-year-old, Daniel Spencer, “an old patriot of the Revolution, hailing from Canajoharie, New York,” was an honored participant in the celebration.

In Williamsburg, Virginia, Captain Taft’s Company of Light Artillery fired off a national salute of 32 guns.

Some 500 residents of [Baltimore](#) went on an excursion to nearby Annapolis, where a fight occurred between them and a group of local Annapolis people, resulting in two deaths and several injuries.

[CELEBRATING OUR B-DAY](#)



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

This is indeed a beautiful morning to celebrate the anniversary of our Independence, but to us it is like all other days, the same work to do. Drove 18 miles today and have not much grass for our cattle to-night. Passed Ice-Springs at the right of the road. It is said ice can be found here at any season of the year by digging 2 or 3 feet deep. We saw some of it near the top of the ground.



July 4: The cotton-grass at Beck Stowe’s. Is it different from the early one? High blueberries begin. The oval-leaved drosera in bloom. *Campanula aparinoides*. I see now a later (?) rose in lower, wetter ground. *Polygala sanguinea*. The weeds are now so thick in the river — potamogetons, heart-leaf, *Ranunculus Purshii*, eel-grass, etc., etc. — as almost to conceal the stream and seriously to obstruct the passage of my boat. *Polygonum sagittatum*. The cymbidium now perhaps in its prime.



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I am attracted by the peculiar glaucous leaves of the rhodora. Noli-me-tangere. The beauty of some butterflies,— dark steel-blue with a light-blue edge. *Circæa*, some time, the small one, at Corner Spring. Parsnips. The bass appears now — or a few trees— to have bloomed here and there prematurely. The gall on the leaves of the slippery elm is like fruit. The greater plantain, a few days. The fine feathery tail of the *Equisetum sylvaticum* (?) nowadays in damp woods, near Corner Spring. The *Potamogeton hybridus* (?) in fruit and flower; though the spike is cylindrical like *P. heterophyllus*, yet the petioles are shorter than the floating leaves. What is the apparently wholly immersed potamogeton, upright with linear-lanceolate leaves? (No flower nor fruit now.) Also what is that small upright, round, tapering plant, three inches high, at bottom of river, with apparently bristle-formed leaves arranged alternately crosswise, visibly cellular? At Lee's Cliff, under the slippery elm, *Parietaria Pennsylvanicum*, American pellitory, in flower, and near by *Anychia dichotoma*, forked chickweed (*Queria* [*sic*]) also in flower.



July 5, Tuesday, 1853: [Cecil John Rhodes](#) was born in Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, England.

The 1st practical glider was flown across Brompton Dale, near Scarborough, Great Britain, by an unwilling John Appleby, an employee of the inventor, George Cayley (the flight was successful and no one was hurt). Cayley would be the 1st to study and write about aerodynamics.

The Reverend [Issachar J. Roberts](#) 罗孝全 left [Canton](#) for Nanking by way of [Shanghai](#), accompanied by a son and a nephew of the Taiping Southern King (Mrs. Roberts would close up the Uettung [Baptist](#) Church and follow her husband to Shanghai during August).

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

Another fine morning, beautiful and cool, fine weather for traveling. We left the river this morning and reached it again in about 5 miles over a graveley road. Forded the river twice in going up it 6 miles, then left it and struck across the bluffs winding around and through them over rocks enough to tear our wagons to pieces. Six miles farther we found some lakes on the left of the road, water not good. Three and one-half miles farther we came to a fine branch and camped. Not much grass, and sage for fuel.



July 5: Raspberries, some days.

Such a habit have cows in a pasture of moving forward while feeding that, in surveying on the Great Fields to-day, I was interrupted by a herd of a dozen cows, which successively passed before my line of vision, feeding forward, and I had to watch my opportunity to look between them. Sometimes, however, they were of use, when they passed behind a birch stake and made a favorable background against which to see it.



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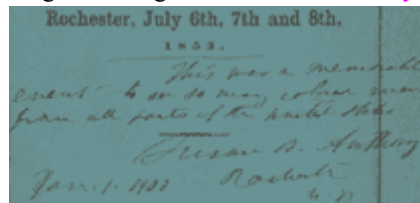
July 6, Wednesday, 1853: The 1,021-ton 180x36-foot clipper ship *Northern Light* with Captain Freeman Hatch of Eastham, Massachusetts at the helm had agreed to a speed competition with the captain of the clipper *Contest*. The *Contest* had departed San Francisco for New York on March 12th whereas the *Northern Light* had not departed that harbor for Boston until the following day, but on this 38th day of their passage, off Cape Horn, the *Northern Light* overtook the *Contest* (it was, you see, traveling entirely without cargo).

The crews of our various American vessels in Japanese waters engaged in target practice.

The Wisconsin state legislature incorporated the [Fox and Wisconsin River Improvement Company](#).

[Lola Montez](#) performed in Sacramento, [California](#).

The 10th national National Convention of Colored Men began in Rochester, New York. Among the more than 100 delegates was [William Cooper Nell](#) as a representative from Massachusetts, who was appointed Vice President pro-tem and member of the Business Committee. [Frederick Douglass](#) was present and would publish the proceedings.¹³¹ Below is Douglass's neighbor [Susan B. Anthony](#)'s copy:¹³²



[William Wells Brown](#), a free man since 1847, published in London [CLOTEL; OR, THE PRESIDENT'S DAUGHTER: A NARRATIVE OF SLAVE LIFE IN THE UNITED STATES](#), which depicted fictional slave daughters of [Thomas Jefferson](#) with his slave Currer. (This would be republished in heavily revised versions in 1860 as *MIRALDA, OR THE BEAUTIFUL QUADROON: A ROMANCE OF AMERICAN SLAVERY FOUNDED ON FACT*, in 1864 as *CLOTELLE: A TALE OF THE SOUTHERN STATES*, and in 1867 as *CLOTELLE; OR THE COLORED HEROINE. A TALE OF THE SOUTHERN STATES*. Later American editions would feature Clotel as the daughter of a Southern Senator.)

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

Started at daylight this morning to find better grass. Two miles from camp is strawberry creek, and 4 miles farther is snow creek. Banks of snow on each side from 10 to 15 feet deep. Here we stopped to let our cattle graze. Their feet are very sore traveling over so much gravel. Two miles farther we came to willow creek, and 5 miles more and we found the last crossing of Sweet Water River. Here we camped again, found pretty good grass up a hollow to the right of it, near the snow top mountains. Sage for fuel.



July 6: I can sound the swamps and meadows on the line of the new road to Bedford with a pole, as if they were water. It may be hard to break through the crust, but then it costs a very slight effort to force it down, sometimes nine or ten feet, where the surface is dry. Cut a straight sapling,

131. PROCEEDINGS OF THE COLORED NATIONAL CONVENTION HELD IN ROCHESTER JULY 6TH, 7TH, AND 8TH, 1853. Rochester: Frederick Douglass, 1853.

132. At some point during this year [Susan B. Anthony](#) requested transfer from the Easton, New York Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Hicksite) to the Rochester Monthly Meeting (Hicksite). Despite this [Quaker](#) affiliation, she would be during her adult life a long-term attender at the Unitarian Church in Rochester.

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an inch or more in [diameter]; sharpen and peel it that it may go down with the least obstruction. The larch grows in both Moore's and Pedrick's swamps. Do not the trees that grow there indicate the depth of the swamp? I drink at the black and sluggish run which rises in Pedrick's Swamp and at the clearer and cooler one at Moore's Swamp, and, as I lie on my stomach, I am surprised at the quantity of decayed wood continually borne past. It is this process which, carried on for ages, formed this accumulation of soil. The outlets of a valley being obstructed, the decayed wood is no longer carried off but deposited near where it grew.



July 7, Thursday, 1853: The ship *Niagara* of the Cunard Line was given a cannonade as it left Boston harbor, because of the presence on board of the popular author, office-holder, and birthday-boy, [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#).

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

How beautiful the sun rises and peeps over the hills to guide and cheer the weary traveler. Ten miles from camp and over a good road we glide almost imperceptibly through the South Pass (of the Rocky Mountains), hardly knew when we were through as it has scarcely any ascent or descent. Three miles farther and we came to the Pacific Springs. No grass here, a very barren country. We followed down the Pacific Springs creek some 2 miles and camped and drove our stock about 3 miles to the left toward some very high hills. Tolerable good grass. Sage for fuel.



July 7: Very dry weather. Every traveller, horse, and cow raises a cloud of dust. It streams off from their feet, white and definite in its outline, like the steam from a locomotive. Those who walk behind a flock of sheep must suffer martyrdom. Now is that annual drought which is always spoken of as something unprecedented and out of the common course.

Is that a utricularia which fills the water at the north end of Beck Stowe's? Sarsaparilla berries are ripe.

Paddled up the river this evening. It is remarkable that, in pushing a boat up a river with a sandy bottom, the sound of the oar on the sand should be communicated so distinctly through the oar to the air. It is perhaps as distinct as if no water intervened. We have cool nights now after warm days, — cooler than in June. You cannot safely wear your thin coat into evening outdoors. The *Asclepias incarnate*, or water asclepias now.



July 8, Friday, 1853: Mary Keyes was born to Martha Prescott Keyes and [John Shepard Keyes](#).

Early in July we had another daughter Mary, born on the 8th and Martha got up nicely from her confinement, and was soon able to enjoy the shorter drives with me—

J.S. KEYES AUTOBIOGRAPHY



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On the Oregon Trail, some camping utensils, a powder horn, and fragments of clothing were discovered. In a pocket of the pantaloons there was found a gold watch and key. To all appearances someone had been killed there but no papers providing a clue to a name were to be discovered.

Grand Duke Carl Friedrich of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach died at Belvedere Castle and was succeeded by his son Carl Alexander.

Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#)'s heavily armed flagship USS *Mississippi* and its squadron of 3 accompanying vessels came to anchor in deep water off Oragawa (Uraga), in Tokyo's [Edo Bay, Japan](#). When boats approached and signed for these vessels to depart, they were ignored and returned to shore. William Speiden, Jr. wrote that "they must certainly have all come to the opinion that we were a queer sort of people." That night the watch officer, Lieutenant John K. Duer, observed a puzzling sky object:

During the watch from midnight to 4 A.M. a very remarkable [meteor](#) was seen. It made its appearance in the south and west and illuminated the whole atmosphere. The spars, sails and hulls of the ships in company as well as our own reflected its glare as distinctly as though a blue light were burning from each at the same time. From the south and west about 15 degrees above the horizon it pursued a north-easterly course in a direct line for a long distance, when it fell gradually toward the sea and disappeared. Its shape was that of a large blue sphere with a red wedge-shaped tail, which it could be easily observed was formed of ignited particles, and resembled the sparks of a rocket as they appear upon its explosion.

The black vessels would lie menacingly in Tokyo Bay, silent, for a period of time, and then suddenly the Commodore would open negotiations by giving representatives of the Emperor 3 days to deliver a letter to their supreme leader — or else.

US MILITARY INTERVENTIONS

Commodore Matthew Perry's mission included establishing trade links and ensuring the humane treatment of shipwrecked whalers. Underlying purpose included the acquisition of the coaling stations that United States opium dealers such as the Perkins and the Delanos needed to speed communications between San Francisco and [Shanghai](#). After the treaty would be signed during March 1854, the festivities would include a sumo tournament. According to an article published in the [Harper's New Monthly Magazine](#) issue of May 1856, "The heralds... summoned the antagonists, and one having taken his place in the ring, he assumed an attitude of defense, with one leg in advance as if to steady himself, and his body, with his head lowered, placed in a position as if to receive an attack. Immediately after, in rushed the other, bellowing loudly like a bull, and making at once for the man in the ring, dashed, with his head lowered and thrust forward, against his opponent, who bore the shock with the steadiness of a rock, although the blood streamed down his face from his bruised forehead, which had been struck in the encounter. This manoeuvre was repeated again and again, one acting always as the opposing and the other as the resisting force, and thus they kept up this brutal contest until their foreheads were besmeared with blood, and the flesh of their breasts rose in great swollen tumors from the repeated blows." Koyanagi, "the reputed bully of the capital," would be among the sumotori in attendance.

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

This morning while Nelson and one of the others were herding cattle they discovered some fragments of clothes and camping utensils, and upon examination found a gold watch and key in an



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old pantaloons pocket. From the appearance of things they supposed some one had been murdered, but could find no papers to give any clue to his name. His clothing, camping apparatus, powder-horn etc. were lying scattered about. Laid by all day to-day on account of our cattle's feet. Started at sunset to travel all night.



July 8: Large [penothera](#). Toads are still heard occasionally at evening. To-day I heard a hylodes peep (perhaps a young one), which have so long been silent.



July 9, Saturday, [1853](#): [Hector Berlioz](#) departed London after conducting Benvenuto Cellini.

The 4 American warships off Tokyo were brought "in a line so as to bear directly upon the town." William Speiden, Jr. noted that during the evening of this intimidating display of force they could sight the grandeur of Mount Fuji clearly because the clouds had lifted. The official Narrative of the Expedition (1856) would later state that "the question of landing by force was left to be decided by the development of succeeding events." [Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) kept the ships at battle readiness and the crew "drilled as thoroughly as they are in time of active war." A corps of [Japanese](#) artists approached by boat to sketch the strange American steam vessels. Kayama Yezaimen, governor of Uruga, arrived with other [Japanese](#) authorities to seek audience with Perry. These officials were informed that the expedition wished to have a letter delivered to the Emperor of [Japan](#). A messenger was sent to inform the Emperor of the presence of the war ships and the stated request. Negotiations regarding the letter and a possible meeting between [Japanese](#) and American representatives would continue over the following days.

The Placer, [California Herald](#) learned from a correspondent that 13 miles from Auburn, below Barnes Bar on the North Fork of American River, a couple of miners had been averaging from 4 to 30 ounces of gold per day.

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

Arrived at Little Sandy at sunrise this morning. Passed Dry Sandy 9 miles from Pacific Springs and the Junction of California and Salt Lake road 7 miles from Dry Sandy. Stopped at Little Sandy and had breakfast. No grass here. Drove on to Big Sandy 5 miles farther and camped for the day, to let our cattle rest for crossing the Desert which commences here at Big Sandy. Drove 3 miles down this stream and found good grass.



[THOREAU MADE NO ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL FOR JULY 9TH]



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July 10, Sunday, 1853: Treaty for the free navigation of the Parana River and the Uruguay River, between the United States of America and Argentina.

[READ THE FULL TEXT](#)

During this day and the following one, [Japanese](#) boats kept close company with the American expedition vessels as they surveyed the bay.

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

Laid by all day to-day.



July 10: *Galium asprellum*, probably about the 5th or 6th. The side-flowering scutellaria now. Hedge-nettle, a day or two. *Lysimachia lanceolata* var. *hybrida*, some days. Yellow lily now common (since the 4th). The large real-vessels of the blue flag conspicuous. The rainbow rush has been in bloom for some time. *Epilobium coloratum*. A rough eupatorium budded at Hubbard's burning. *Ludwigia palustris*, probably for ten days. *Rubus Canadensis* now. The red capsules of the *Hypericum ellipticum* begin to show in low lands. The cardinal-flower shows red. At Cardinal Shore a large *Polygonum amphibium*, seven feet long, left by the water, creeping over the shore and rooting in it at the joints; not yet in flower.

The bream poised over its sandy nest on waving fin — how aboriginal! So it has poised here and watched its ova before this New World was known to the Old. Still I see the little cavities of their nests along the shore.

Lycopodium sinuatum. water horehound.



July 11, Monday, 1853: There is a small bay on the coast north of Sydney, Australia near the Macquarie Lighthouse that is now known as Rosa Gulley. According to the "Ship News" column of The Standard of London for October 25, 1853, that name evidently dates to the events of this day. The 164-ton Italian timber brig *Rosa* had left Sydney during October 1852 under command of Captain Ferren, and had accumulated a cargo of 20 tons of coconut oil. While at Halls Island in the Kingsmill Group the chief officer had gone ashore to trade and meanwhile, in exchange for tobacco, the *Rosa's* water casks were filled and brought out to the vessel by the islanders. According to later reports by surviving crewmen, when there was only a single water cask left ashore some 15 of the natives had demanded more for their services, and this being refused, had killed Captain Ferren, the ship's mate, and 4 other crewmen with clubs. The 2d mate and 3 surviving crewmen then gunned down approximately 20 of the islanders before escaping by cutting away their anchor (maybe some of this story you will be willing to credit, while other parts you may suppose have been subject to self-justification?). The 2d mate, although unacquainted with navigation, had managed to get the *Rosa* to within 40 miles of Sydney, where a passing schooner had given them directions to the harbor. Arriving off Sydney in a storm, they found themselves too close to the cliffs. Dropping an anchor, they attempted to ride out the wild sea, but at 3.00 P.M. the anchor line parted and *Rosa* struck the cliffs near a small gully at South Head. The surviving 6 crewmen jumped overboard and were saved, as the *Rosa* went to pieces, not a vestige being left in a few moments.

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

This morning about 4 o'clock a company of 5 wagons joined us, being driven from their camp (2 miles below) by the Indians. Laid still all day today. Some of our cattle are lame. Had a



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fine shower this evening.



July 11: Rain last night.

The aromatic trichostema now springing up. *Guaphalium uliginosum* now. Hydrocotyle, some days. Agrimony, also, some days. Button-bush. *Centaurea nigra*, some time, Union Turnpike, against E. Wood's, low ground, and *Ludwigia alternifolia*, apparently just begun, at entrance to poke-logan near Assabet Bathing-Place. The Small crypta already in fruit. I find in the river, especially near the Assabet Bathing-Place, a ranunculus some of whose leaves are capillary, others merely wedge-cut or divided. Is it not the *R. aquatilis*? But I see no flowers.



July 12, Tuesday, 1853: [Frances Richard Gourgas](#) died.

[Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry](#) was refusing to meet with anyone of less than imperial Japanese rank. Therefore US commanders Franklin Buchanan and [Chief of Staff Henry Allen Adams, Captain of the Fleet](#) met with Kayama Yezaimen in the presence of interpreters, and were informed that [Commodore Perry](#) and his delegation of American officials would be received on a small island by officials appointed by the Emperor of [Japan](#) to negotiate, in order to allow him to hand over in a suitably dignified manner the letter he was hand-carrying from the President of the United States of America. A party was sent out to survey the island where the Japanese delegation was agreeing to receive the Commodore, and the surveyors proceeded to designate the small bay of that island as "Reception Bay."

In [San Francisco](#), the [Daily Alta California](#) reported on "Local Matters" such as the sale of pews in the First Congregational Church:

LOCAL MATTERS.

SALE OF PEWS. — At the sale of pews last evening in the First Congregational Church, the whole amount of premiums paid for choice of seats reached the sum of \$3,800. The first choice was taken by D.H. Haskell, Esq, at \$400. About fifty pews were sold at an advance on the appraised value. Notice was given that the Trustees would be in attendance at the Church every evening during the week, and that those wishing to rent pews would then be able to select their seats.

A VULTURE CAUGHT. — Officer Nugent succeeded in arresting in Sacramento, and bringing to this city last night, a man known here as Tom Lyons, who is one of the flock of vultures that hover in the region of Pacific wharf to pounce upon the unwary stranger. Lyons has been identified by the miner who was robbed of \$402 on Saturday morning last, as the one who first accosted him upon the wharf and afterwards robbed him of his little "pile."

HORSE THIEF. — Capt. M'Donald arrested yesterday a person by the name of Daniel McMillen, who is charged with stealing cattle in Tuolumne county, to the value at one time of \$1700, and at another about \$800.

POLICE COURT. — Before Recorder Baker.— July 11.
After the gallant "Major" had seated his flock, not forgetting to give the ladies the best places, the business of the Court

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commenced by calling upon—

James Cross, to answer to the charge of getting beastly drunk. James was found spread across the crossing, and rumor had whispered in the officers' ears that he was dead, but after they had felt of his pulse and such like et ceteras, they concluded a little switching would start him, which in fact it did. James looked very penitent, and pledged his honor that he was never drunk before; in fact he stated boldly that he had never drank any intoxicating liquor, before that day! Jeems looking very dismal, was allowed to cross the Major's path this time scott free.

John Chinaman was charged with helping himself to a nice pair of pants, and showed his good taste by taking them from the door of Keys & Co. The proof was positive as to his guilt, but the case was continued until to-day, to give John a chance to explain through an interpreter why he takes this dangerous course to show his preference for American costume.

Mr. Golden and Mrs. Golden were charged with being very disorderly, especially Mr. G. An English lady, "fat, fair and forty," declared that Golden was going to shoot her twice, was going to throw a tumbler at her 'ead, in fact vary the performances in this weak, piping time of peace, by various other little eccentricities. Mr. Golden took great pride in stating that he "never was 'intoxicated' in his life; that he drank as much liquor as any other man, but he was used to it, and had been since he was ten years of age (?)." It was one of those free and easy cases all round so the Golden couple were allowed to depart upon payment of costs.

Mary Holt was the e [sic] as a vagrant. "Molly" has managed to live about ten months out of the last twelve in the station home; she was released but a few days since, but Mary can not keep from paying her devoirs to the "rosy god."

"Tis true, 'tis pity, and pity 'tis, 'tis true."

for Mary has been a fine, buxom looking lass; she was sent back to her *mouton*, the city prison, to be detained there six months.

Eden was another of the fair (?) sex, and sat cheek by jowl with Mary Holt; in fact she was a kindred spirit, and as spiritually inclined; but to hide her blushes, or so as not to disgrace the name of the gentle, lilly white sex, she had assumed the complexion of a negro, or had been born dark, for she was as black as the bottle she loved so well; her wooly head was encased in the ubiquitous plaid, cotton kerchief. She had been a slave; would get drunk all the time; her former mistress could not drive her away. She would call and did call a gentleman all the vile names that speech could frame; said gent's going to take a big club and kill her the next time (?) she appeared to be a regular "Topsy," and "Oh! I's so bad," seemed to be standing waiting to pop out from behind her ivory gates. The Recorder asked her if she had anything to say "Yeth indeedy, ise got a heap to say; 'taint neffen like it" "That will do, sit down. I shall send you below for 30 days." "No, no sir." "Sit down!"

Jean Dedeuvre was bound over to keep the peace in the sum of \$1000. towards a Mr. Cunningham or his workmen, and especially



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one that he had threatened to shoot for putting shanties on property, to the ownership of which as a matter of course there are several claimants.

Rose Church, charged with an assault with a deadly weapon, not appearing, her bail was declared forfeited.



July 12: White vervain. Checkerberry, maybe some days. Spikenard, not quite yet. The green-flowered lanceolate-leaved orchis at Azalea Brook will soon flower. Either *Gymnadenia tridentata* or *Platanthera flava*. *Circæa alpina* (?) there, but nearly eighteen inches high. *Lycopus Virginicus*, not open in shade; probably in a day or two. Wood horse-tail very large and handsome there.

GO TO THE FOLLOWING YEAR
(37TH YEAR OF HDT'S LIFE)