

## VI

MARCH, 1852

(ÆT. 34)

*March 1.* Linnæus, speaking of the necessity of precise and adequate terms in any science, after naming some which he invented for botany, says, "Termini præservarunt Anatomiam, Mathesin, Chemiam, ab idiotis; Medicinam autem eorum defectus conculcavit." (Terms (well defined) have preserved anatomy, mathematics, and chemistry from idiots; but the want of them has ruined medicine.) But I should say that men generally were not enough interested in the first-mentioned sciences to meddle with and degrade them. There is no interested motive to induce them to listen to the quack in mathematics, as they have to attend to the quack in medicine; yet chemistry has been converted into alchemy, and astronomy into astrology.

However, I can see that there is a certain advantage in these hard and precise terms, such as the lichenist uses, for instance. No one masters them so as to use them in writing on the subject without being far better informed than the rabble about it. New books are not written on chemistry or cryptogamia of as little worth comparatively as are written on the *spiritual* phenomena of the day. No man writes on lichens, using the terms of the science intelligibly, without having something to say, but every one thinks himself competent to write

on the relation of the soul to the body, as if that were a *phanogamous* subject.

After having read various books on various subjects for some months, I take up a report on Farms by a committee of Middlesex Husbandmen, and read of the number of acres of bog that some farmer has redeemed, and the number of rods of stone wall that he has built, and the number of tons of hay he now cuts, or of bushels of corn or potatoes he raises there, and I feel as if I had got my foot down on to the solid and sunny earth, the basis of all philosophy, and poetry, and religion even. I have faith that the man who redeemed some acres of land the past summer redeemed also some parts of his character. I shall not expect to find him ever in the almshouse or the prison. He is, in fact, so far on his way to heaven. When he took the farm there was not a grafted tree on it, and now he realizes something handsome from the sale of fruit. These, in the absence of other facts, are evidence of a certain moral worth.

*March 2.* If the sciences are protected from being carried by assault by the mob, by a palisade or *chevaux-de-frise* of technical terms, so also the learned man may sometimes ensconce himself and conceal his little true knowledge behind hard names. Perhaps the value of any statement may be measured by its susceptibility to be expressed in popular language. The greatest discoveries can be reported in the newspapers. I thought it was a great advantage both to speakers and hearers when, at the meetings of scientific gentlemen at the

Marlborough Chapel, the representatives of all departments of science were required to speak intelligibly to those of other departments, therefore dispensing with the most peculiarly technical terms. A man may be permitted to state a very meagre truth to a fellow-student, using technical terms, but when he stands up before the mass of men, he must have some distinct and important truth to communicate; and the most important it will always be the most easy to communicate to the vulgar.

If anybody 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. But how much clearing of land and plowing and planting and building of stone wall is done every summer without being reported in the newspapers or in literature! Agricultural literature is not as extensive as the fields, and the farmer's almanac is never a big book. And yet I think that the history (or poetry) of one farm from a state of nature to the highest state of cultivation comes nearer to being the true subject of a modern epic than the siege of Jerusalem or any such paltry and ridiculous resource to which some have thought men reduced. Was it Coleridge? The Works and Days of Hesiod, the Eclogues and Georgics of Virgil, are but leaves out of that epic.

The turning a swamp into a garden, though the poet may not think it an improvement, is at any rate an enterprise interesting to all men.

A wealthy farmer who has money to let was here yesterday, who said that fourteen years ago a man came

to him to hire two hundred dollars for thirty days. He told him that he should have it if he would give proper security, but the other, thinking it exorbitant to require security for so short a term, went away. But he soon returned and gave the security. "And," said the farmer, "he has punctually paid me twelve dollars a year ever since. I have never said a word to him about the principle."

It will soon be forgotten, in these days of stoves, that we used to roast potatoes in the ashes, after the Indian fashion of cooking.

The farmer increases the extent of the habitable earth. He makes soil. That is an honorable occupation.

*March 3. Wednesday.* Moore's larch trees beyond Sleepy Hollow cut this winter. They were much decayed. The woodpeckers had stripped many of bark in pursuit of grubs. When the woodpeckers visit your woods in great numbers, you may suspect that it is time to cut them. The chopper does not complain of cutting the larch, but when he comes to the splitting there's the rub. The grain runs almost round a four-foot stick sometimes. They make good posts.

Are those poplars whose buds I have seen so much expanded for a week or more a new species to me? The river poplar?<sup>1</sup>

*March 4.* The gold-digger in the ravines of the mountains is as much a gambler as his fellow in the saloons of San Francisco. What difference does it

<sup>1</sup> No.

make whether you shake dirt or shake dice? If you win, society is the loser. The gold-digger is the enemy of the honest laborer, whatever checks and compensations a kind fate (?) has provided. The humblest thinker who has been to the mines sees and says that gold-digging is of the character of a lottery, that the reward is not proportionate to the labor, that the gold has not the same look, is not the same thing, with the wages of honest toil: but he practically forgets what he has seen, for he has seen only the fact, not the principle. He looks out for "the main chance" still; he buys a ticket in another lottery, nevertheless, where the fact is not so obvious. It is remarkable that among all the teachers and preachers there are so few moral teachers. I find the prophets and preachers employed in excusing the ways of men. My most reverend seniors — doctors, deacons, and the illuminated — tell me with a reminiscient smile, betwixt an aspiration and a shudder, not to be so tender about these things, — to lump all that, *i. e.* make a lump of gold of it. I was never refreshed by any advice on this subject; the highest I have heard was grovelling. It is not worth the while for you to undertake to reform the world in this particular. They tell me not to ask how my bread is buttered, — it will make me sick if I do, — and the like.<sup>1</sup>

It is discouraging to talk with men who will recognize no principles. How little use is made of reason in this world! You argue with a man for an hour, he

<sup>1</sup> [*Cape Cod, and Miscellanies*, pp. 464, 465, 468; *Misc.*, Riv. 265, 269, 270.]

agrees with you step by step, you are approaching a triumphant conclusion, you think that you have converted him; but ah, no, he has a habit, he takes a pinch of snuff, he remembers that he entertained a different opinion at the commencement of the controversy, and his reverence for the past compels him to reiterate it now. You began at the butt of the pole to curve it, you gradually bent it round according to rule, and planted the other end in the ground, and already in imagination saw the vine curling round this segment of an arbor, under which a new generation was to recreate itself; but when you had done, just when the twig was bent, it sprang back to its former stubborn and unhandsome position like a bit of whalebone.

This world is a place of business. What an infinite bustle! I am awaked almost every night by the panting of the steam-engine. It interrupts my dreams. There is no sabbath. It would be glorious to see mankind at leisure for once.<sup>1</sup>

Concord Fight! Two killed on the patriots' side, and Luther Blanchard wounded! Why, here every ant was a Buttrick, — "Fire! for God's sake, fire!" — and thousands shared the fate of Davis and Hosmer. I have no doubt it was a principle they fought for as much as our ancestors, and not a threepenny tax on their tea.<sup>2</sup>

10 A. M. — Up river on ice to Fair Haven Pond.

The steam of the steam-engine rises to heaven this

<sup>1</sup> [*Cape Cod, and Miscellanies*, p. 456; *Misc.*, Riv. 254.]

<sup>2</sup> [*Walden*, p. 255; Riv. 358. See also pp. 209–212 of this volume.]

clear morning. The other day, when the weather was thick, I observed that it hugged the earth. Was the air lighter then? Some refer the music of the telegraph harp to the electricity passing along the wire! others, to the air passing through the glasses. The air is fresher and the sky clearer in the morning. We have this morning the clear, cold, continent sky of January. The river is frozen solidly, and I do not have to look out for openings. Now I can take that walk along the river highway and the meadow which leads me under the boughs of the maples and the swamp white oaks, etc., which in summer overhang the water. There I can now stand at my ease, and study their phenomena, amid the sweet-gale and button-bushes projecting above the snow and ice. I see the shore from the waterside. A liberal walk, so level and wide and smooth, without underbrush. I easily approach and study the boughs which usually overhang the water. In some places where the ice is exposed, I see a kind of crystallized, chaffy snow like little bundles of asbestos on its surface. I seek some sunny nook on the south side of a wood, which keeps off the cold wind, among the maples and the swamp white oaks which are frozen in, and there sit and anticipate the spring, and hear the chickadees and the belching of the ice. The sun has got a new power in his rays after all, cold as the weather is. He could not have warmed me so much a month ago, nor should I have heard such rumblings of the ice in December. I see where a maple has been wounded the sap is flowing out. Now, then, is the time to make sugar.

If I were to paint the short days of winter, I should

represent two towering icebergs, approaching each other like promontories, for morning and evening, with cavernous recesses, and a solitary traveller, wrapping his cloak about him and bent forward against a driving storm, just entering the narrow pass. I would paint the light of a taper at midday, seen through a cottage window half buried in snow and frost, and some pale stars in the sky, and the sound of the woodcutter's axe. The icebergs with cavernous recesses. In the foreground should appear the harvest, and far in the background, through the pass, should be seen the sowers in the fields and other evidences of spring. The icebergs should gradually approach, and on the right and left the heavens should be shaded off from the light of midday to midnight with its stars. The sun low in the sky.

I look between my legs up the river across Fair Haven. Subverting the head, we refer things to the heavens; the sky becomes the ground of the picture, and where the river breaks through low hills which slope to meet each other a quarter of a mile off, appears a mountain pass, so much nearer is it to heaven. We are compelled to call it something which relates it to the heavens rather than the earth. But I think that the mirage is not so great in the morning. Perhaps there is some advantage in looking at the landscape thus at this season, since it is a plain white field hence to the horizon.

I cut my initials on the bee tree. Now, at 11.30 perhaps, the sky begins to be slightly overcast. The northwest is the god of the winter, as the southwest of the summer. Interesting the forms of clouds, often, as now, like flames, or more like the surf curling before it breaks,

reminding me of the prows of ancient vessels, which have their pattern or prototype again in the surf, as if the wind made a surf of the mist. Thus, as the fishes look up at the waves, we look up at the clouds. It is pleasant to see the reddish-green leaves of the lambkill still hanging with fruit above the snow, for I am now crossing the shrub oak plain to the Cliffs.

I find a place on the south side of this rocky hill, where the snow is melted and the bare gray rock appears, covered with mosses and lichens and beds of oak leaves in the hollows, where I can sit, and an invisible flame and smoke seems to ascend from the leaves, and the sun shines with a genial warmth, and you can imagine the hum of bees amid flowers. That is a near approach to summer. A summer heat reflected from the dry leaves, which reminds you of the sweet-fern and those summer afternoons which are longer than a winter day. Though you sit on a mere oasis in the snow.

I love that the rocks should appear to have some spots of blood on them, Indian blood at least; to be convinced that the earth has been crowded with men, living, enjoying, suffering, that races passed away have stained the rocks with their blood, that the mould I tread on has been animated, aye, humanized. I am the more at home. I farm the dust of my ancestors, though the chemist's analysis may not detect it. I go forth to redeem the meadows they have become. I compel them to take refuge in turnips.

The snow is melting on the rocks; the water trickles down in shining streams; the mosses look bright; the first awakening of vegetation at the root of the saxi-

frage. As I go by the farmer's yard, the hens cackle more solidly, as if eggs were the burden of the strain.

A horse's fore legs are handier than his hind ones; the latter but fall into the place which the former have found. They have the advantage of being nearer the head, the source of intelligence. He strikes and paws with them. It is true he kicks with the hind legs, but that is a very simple and unscientific action, as if his whole body were a whip-lash and his heels the snapper.

The constant reference in our lives, even in the most trivial matters, to the superhuman is wonderful. If a portrait is painted, neither the wife's opinion of the husband, nor the husband's of the wife, nor either's opinion of the artist — not man's opinion of man — is final and satisfactory. Man is not the final judge of the humblest work, though it be piling wood. The queen and the chambermaid, the king and the hired man, the Indian and the slave, alike appeal to God.

Each man's mode of speaking of the sexual relation proves how sacred his own relations of that kind are. We do not respect the mind that can jest on this subject.

If the husband and wife quarrel over their coffee, if the pie is underdone, if your partner treads on your toes, there is a silent appeal to the just and eternal gods, — or to time and posterity, at least.

*March 5.* It is encouraging to know that, though every kernel of truth has been carefully swept out of our churches, there yet remains the dust of truth on their walls, so that if you should carry a light into

them they would still, like some powder-mills, blow up at once.

The only man in Concord who has interested himself in the spiritual knockers, who has had them at his house, is Dr. Dillingham!!

3 P. M. — To the beeches.

A misty afternoon, but warm, threatening rain. Standing on Walden, whose eastern shore is laid waste, men walking on the hillside a quarter of a mile off are singularly interesting objects, seen through this mist, which has the effect of a mirage. The persons of the walkers black on the snowy ground, and the horizon limited, makes them the more important in the scene. This kind of weather is very favorable to our landscape. I must not forget the lichen-painted boles of the beeches.

So round even to the white bridge, where the red maple buds are already much expanded, foretelling summer, though our eyes see only winter as yet. As I sit under their boughs, looking into the sky, I suddenly see the myriad black dots of the expanded buds against the sky. Their sap is flowing. The elm buds, too, I find are expanded, though on earth are no signs of spring.

I find myself inspecting little granules, as it were, on the bark of trees, little shields or apothecia springing from a thallus, such is the mood of my mind, and I call it studying lichens. That is merely the prospect which is afforded me. It is short commons and innutritious. Surely I might take wider views. The habit of looking at things microscopically, as the lichens on the trees and rocks, really prevents my seeing aught

else in a walk. Would it not be noble to study the shield of the sun on the thallus of the sky, cerulean, which scatters its infinite sporules of light through the universe? To the lichenist is not the shield (or rather the apothecium) of a lichen disproportionately large compared with the universe? The minute apothecium of the *pertusaria*, which the woodchopper never detected, occupies so large a space in my eye at present as to shut out a great part of the world.

*March 6.* La Hontan, hunting moose (*original*) in Canada in 1686, says, facing a cruel north wind in winter, "One of my soldiers told me that it was necessary to have blood of *eau-de-vie*, body of brass, and eyes of glass, to resist a cold so sharp (*âpre*)."

3 P. M. — To Harrington's.

Old Mr. Joe Hosmer chopping wood at his door. He is full of meat. Had a crack with him. I told him I was studying lichens, pointing to his wood. He thought I meant the wood itself. Well, he supposed he'd had more to do with wood than I had. "Now," said he, "there are two kinds of white oak. Most people would n't notice it. When I've been chopping, say along in March, after the sap begins to start, I'll sometimes come to an oak that will color my axe steel-blue like a sword-blade. Well, that oak is fine-grained and heavier than the common, and I call it blue white oak, for no other blues my axe so. Then there are two kinds of black oak, or yellow-bark. One is the mean black oak, or bastard. Then there's a kind of red oak smells like urine three or four days old." It was really respectable in

him that he avoided using the vulgar name of this oak. In an old man like him it was a true delicacy. Of this red oak he told me a story. There was old Mr. Joe Derby. He came after houses were built. He settled near the present Derby place. Well, his manteltree was very large, of red oak hewn square, — they used wood in those days, — and in course of time it had become charred with heat, and you could break coals off it. He could remember the house; it was more than a hundred years old. Well, when they pulled it down, old Mr. Derby told him that he split it up and put

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been the track of an otter near the Clamshell Hill, for it looks too large for a mink, — nearly an inch and a half in diameter and nearly round. Occasionally it looked as if a rail had been drawn along through the thin snow over the ice, with faint footprints at long intervals. I saw where he came out of a hole in the ice, and tracked him forty rods, to where he went into another. Saw where he appeared to have been sliding.

Found three or four *parmelias* (*caperata*) in fruit on a white oak on the high river-bank between TARBELL'S and HARRINGTON'S.

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I remember a few words that I had with a young Englishman in the citadel, who politely undertook to do the honors of Quebec to me, whose clear, glowing Eng-

lish complexion I can still see. Perhaps he was a chaplain in the army. In answer to his information, I looked round with a half-suppressed smile at those preparations for war, Quebec all primed and cocked for it, and at length expressed some of my surprise. "Perhaps you hold the opinions of the Quakers," he replied. I thought, if there was any difference between us, it might be that I was born in modern times.

*March 7. Sunday.* A very pleasant, spring-promising day. Yet I walked up the river on the ice to Fair Haven Pond. As I cross the snow (2 p. m.) where it lies deepest in hollows, its surface honeycombed by the sun, I hear it suddenly sink under and around me with a crash, and look about for a tree or roof from which it may have fallen. It has melted next the earth, and my weight makes it fall. In one instance, when I jumped over a wall on to snow nearly three feet deep, I heard this loud and startling crash and looked round in vain to discover the cause of it. I hear it settle over many rods.

At 9 o'clock p. m. to the woods by the full moon.

The ground is thinly covered with a crusted snow, through which the dead grass and weeds appear, telling the nearness of spring. Though the snow-crust between me and the moon reflects the moon at a distance, westward it is but a dusky white; only where it is heaped up into a drift, or a steep bank occurs, is the moonlight reflected to me as from a phosphorescent place. I distinguish thus large tracts an eighth of a mile distant in the west, where a steep bank sloping

toward the moon occurs, which glow with a white, phosphorescent light, while all the surrounding snow is comparatively dark, as if shaded by the woods. I looked to see if these white tracts in the distant fields corresponded to openings in the woods, and found that they were places where the crystal mirrors were so disposed as to reflect the moon's light to me.

Going through the high field beyond the lone graveyard, I see the track of a boy's sled before me, and his footsteps shining like silver between me and the moon. And now I come to where they have coasted in a hollow in this upland bean-field, and there are countless tracks of sleds, and I forget that the sun shone on them in their sport, as if I had reached the region of perpetual twilight, and their sport appears more significant and symbolical now, more earnest. For what a man does abroad by night requires and implies more deliberate energy than what he is encouraged to do in the sunshine. He is more spiritual, less animal or vegetable, in the former case.

The student of lichens has his objects of study brought to his study on his fuel without any extra expense.

It is rather mild to-night. I can walk without gloves. As I look down the railroad, standing on the west brink of the Deep Cut, I seem to see in the manner in which the moon is reflected from the west slope covered with snow, in the sort of misty light as if a fine vapor were rising from it, a promise or sign of spring. This stillness is more impressive than any sound, — the moon, the stars, the trees, the snow, the sand when bare, —

a monumental stillness, whose void must be supplied by thought. It extracts thought from the beholder, as the void under a cupping-glass raises a swelling. How much a silent mankind might suggest! There is no snow on the trees. The moon appears to have waned a little, yet, with this snow on the ground, I can plainly see the words I write. What a contrast there may be between this moon and the next!

I do not know why such emphasis should be laid on certain events that transpire, why my news should be so trivial; considering what one's dreams and expectations are, why the developments should be so paltry. The news I hear for the most part is not news to my genius. It is the stalest repetition. These facts appear to float in the atmosphere, insignificant as the sporules of fungi, and impinge on my thallus; some neglected surface of my mind affords a basis for them, and hence a parasitic growth. We should wash ourselves clean of such news. Methinks I should hear with indifference if a trustworthy messenger were to inform me that the sun drowned himself last night.<sup>1</sup>

*March 9.* A warm spring rain in the night.

3 P. M. — Down the railroad.

Cloudy but springlike. When the frost comes out of the ground, there is a corresponding thawing of the man. The earth is now half bare. These March winds, which make the woods roar and fill the world with life and bustle, appear to wake up the trees out of their

<sup>1</sup> [*Cape Cod, and Miscellanies*, pp. 471, 472; *Misc.*, Riv. 274]



winter sleep and excite the sap to flow. I have no doubt they serve some such use, as well as to hasten the evaporation of the snow and water.

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

When I hear the telegraph harp, I think I must read the Greek poets. This sound is like a brighter color, red, or blue, or green, where all was dull white or black. It prophesies finer senses, a finer life, a golden age. It is the poetry of the railroad, the heroic and poetic thoughts which the Irish laborers had at their toil now got expression, — that which has made the world mad

so long. Or is it the gods expressing their delight at this invention?

The flowing sand bursts out through the snow and overflows it where no sand was to be seen. I see where the banks have deposited great heaps, many cartloads, of clayey sand, as if they had relieved themselves of their winter's indigestions, and it is not easy to see where they came from.<sup>1</sup>

Again it rains, and I turn about.

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

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

*March 10.* I was reminded, this morning before I rose, of those undescribed ambrosial mornings of summer which I can remember, when a thousand birds were heard gently twittering and ushering in the light, like the argument to a new canto of an epic and heroic poem. The serenity, the infinite promise, of such a morning! The song or twitter of birds drips from the

<sup>1</sup> [*Walden*, pp. 336, 340; Riv. 470, 476.]

leaves like dew. Then there was something divine and immortal in our life. When I have waked up on my couch in the woods and seen the day dawning, and heard the twittering of the birds.

P. M. — Through Deep Cut to Cliffs.

The mingled sand and water flowing down the bank, the water inclines ever to separate from the sand, and while the latter is detained by its weight and by friction beneath and on the sides, the water flows in a semi-cylindrical channel which it makes for itself, still carrying much sand with it. When the flowing drop of sand and water in front meets with new resistance, or the impetus of the water is diminished, perhaps by being absorbed, the drop of sand suddenly swells out laterally and dries, while the water, accumulating, pushes out a new sandy drop on one side and forms a new leafy lobe, and by other streams one is piled upon another. I have not observed any cylindrical canals this year. Did I ever? In some places when the sand has gone as far as it can flow, or the water prevails, the latter makes a true rivulet, which wears a channel through the sand it has washed down.

I see flocks of a dozen bluebirds together. The warble of this bird is innocent and celestial, like its color. Saw a sparrow, perhaps a song sparrow, flitting amid the young oaks where the ground was covered with snow. I think that this is an indication that the ground is quite bare a little further south. Probably the spring birds never fly far over a snow-clad country. A wood-chopper tells me he heard a robin this morning. I see the reticulated leaves of the rattlesnake-plantain in the

woods, quite fresh and green. What is the little chickweed-like plant already springing up on the top of the Cliffs? There are some other plants with bright-green leaves which have either started somewhat or have never suffered from the cold under the snow. Summer clenches hands with summer under the snow. I am pretty sure that I heard the chuckle of a ground squirrel among the warm and bare rocks of the Cliffs. The earth is perhaps two thirds bare to-day. The mosses are now very handsome, like young grass pushing up. Heard the phœbe note of the chickadee to-day for the first time. I had at first heard their *day-day-day* ungratefully, — ah! you but carry my thoughts back to winter, — but anon I found that they too had become spring birds; they had changed their note. Even they feel the influence of spring.

I see cup lichens (*cladonias*) with their cups beset inside and out with little leafets like shellwork.

The *Populus grandidentata* on the Cliffs, in a warm position, shows no cotton yet like that on Harrington's road.

March 11. 2 P. M. — To White Pond to sound it.

That dull-gray-barked willow shows the silvery down of its forthcoming catkins. I believe that I saw blackbirds yesterday. The ice in the pond is soft on the surface, but it is still more than a foot thick. Is that slender green weed which I draw up on my sounding-stone where it is forty feet deep and upward *Nitella gracilis* (allied to *Chara*), described in London?

The woods I walked in in my youth are cut off. Is

it not time that I ceased to sing? My groves are invaded. Water that has been so long detained on the hills and uplands by frost is now rapidly finding its level in the ocean. All lakes without outlet are oceans, larger or smaller.

*March 12.* According to Linnæus, very many plants become perennial and arborescent in warm regions which with us are annual, as *Tropæolum*, *Beta*, *Majonara*,<sup>1</sup> *Malva arborea*, etc., for duration often depends more on the locality than on the plant. So is it with men. Under more favorable conditions the human plant that is short-lived and dwarfed becomes perennial and arborescent.

Linnæus thus classifies *solum* as it respects plants (I omit the explanation, etc.):<sup>2</sup>—

1. *Mare*.
2. *Littora maris*.
3. *Fontes*.
4. *Fluvii*.
5. *Ripæ Fluviorum et Lacuum*.
6. *Lacus aqua pura repleti, fundo consistenti gaudent*. (Walden and others?)
7. *Stagna et Fossæ fundo limoso et aqua quæta sunt repleta*.
8. *Paludes humo lutosæ laxæ et aqua refertæ, æstate siccæscunt*. (Very wet meadows?)
9. *Cespitosæ Paludes, refertæ humo mixta Sphagno, tectæ tuberbis* (hummocks?), *cinctæ aqua limosa, profunda*. (Peat meadows?)
10. *Inundata loca hyeme repleta aqua, æstate putrida exsiccata, imbribus interitum suffusa*. (Round Pond on Marlborough road and Goose Pond?)

<sup>1</sup> [Now *Origanum*.]

<sup>2</sup> [In *Philosophia Botanica*.]

11. *Uliginosa mihi sunt loca spongiosa, aqua putrida laborantia, colonis invisæ, nec segetis, nec fœni proventui apta, innotescentia propriis plantis*. (Swamps?)
12. *Alpes*.
13. *Rupes*. (Cliffs, etc.?)
14. *Montes et Colles sabulosi, aridi, steriles, aquam vix admittunt*.
15. *Campi aprici ventis expositi, sicci, asperi sunt*. (Most of our pastures? Parts of Cape Cod?)
16. *Sylvæ umbrosæ terra sabulosa sterili refertæ*. (Most of our woods?)
17. *Nemora ad radices Montium, inter Lucos, humo spongiosa tecta, umbrosa semper, exhalantia continuo aerem humidiusculum, ventis minime expositum, Plantas Vernales, frigoris et caloris impatientes, alunt*. (Our primitive woods?)
18. *Prata Herbis luxuriantia, campis depressis, convallibusque constant*. (Low rich grass grounds?)
19. *Pascua differunt a pratis, quod steriliora, sicciora et magis sabulosa*. (A low pasture?)
20. *Arca*. (Fields at rest.)
21. *Agri terra subacta lacta gaudent*. (Cultivated fields?)
22. *Versuræ s. Margines agrorum, tanquam prata (!!) stercorata considerantur*.
23. *Culta*. (Rich soil in gardens?)
24. *Fimeta*. (Dung-heaps?)
25. *Ruderata*.

He gives examples of the plants which grow in each locality.

I have learned in a shorter time and more accurately the meaning of the scientific terms used in botany from a few plates of figures at the end of the "*Philosophia Botanica*," with the names annexed, than a volume of explanations or glossaries could teach. And, that the alternate pages to the plates may not be left blank, he has given on them very concise and important in-

struction to students of botany. This lawgiver of science, this systematizer, this methodist, carries his system into his studies in the field. On one of these little pages he gives some instruction concerning *herbatio*, or what the French called *herborisations*, — we say botanizing. Into this he introduces law and order and system, and describes with the greatest economy of words what some would have required a small volume to tell, all on a small page; tells what dress you shall wear, what instruments you shall carry, what season and hour you shall observe, — *viz.* “from the leafing of the trees, Sirius excepted, to the fall of the leaf, twice a week in summer, once in spring, from seven in the morning till seven at night,” — when you shall dine and take your rest, etc., in a crowd or dispersed, etc., how far you shall go, — two miles and a half at most, — what you shall collect and what kind of observations make, etc., etc.

Railroad to Walden, 3 p. m.

I see the *Populus* (apparently *tremuloides*, not *grandidentata*) at the end of the railroad causeway, showing the down of its ament. Bigelow makes it flower in April, the *grandidentata* in May.

I see the sand flowing in the Cut and hear the harp at the same time. Who shall say that the primitive forces are not still at work? Nature has not lost her pristine vigor, neither has he who sees this. To see the first dust fly is a pleasant sight. I saw it on the east side of the Deep Cut.

These heaps of sand foliage remind me of the lacini-

ated, lobed, and imbricated thalluses of some lichens, — somewhat linear-laciniate. It cannot make much odds what the sand is, for I have seen it in the soil of our garden. They come out from the interior of the earth like bowels — a rupture in the spring — and bury the snow. The crust of the snow is completely concealed with the sand for an eighth of a mile. They also remind me sometimes of masses of rockweed on the rocks. At any moment the creative stream will be seen flowing in a restricted channel or artery, but it is forming new lobes, and at last, in the ditch, it forms sands, as at the mouths of rivers, in which the outlines of the different lobes are almost lost, are dissipated into mere shaded outlines on the flat floor.<sup>1</sup>

Bent has left the chestnuts about Walden till the sap is well up, that the bark may peel. He has cut the other trees. I saw the ants crawling about torpidly on the stump of an oak which had been sawed this winter. The choppers think they have seen them a fortnight.

The whistling of the wind, which makes one melancholy, inspires another.

The little grain of wheat, *triticum*, is the noblest food of man. The lesser grains of other grasses are the food of passerine birds at present. Their diet is like man's.

The gods can never afford to leave a man in the world who is privy to any of their secrets. They cannot have a spy here. They will at once send him packing. How can you walk on ground when you see through it?

The telegraph harp has spoken to me more distinctly and effectually than any man ever did.

<sup>1</sup> [*Walden*, pp. 336, 337; Riv. 470, 471.]

*March 14. Sunday.* Rain, rain, rain; but even this is fair weather after so much snow. The ice on Walden has now for some days looked white like snow, the surface being softened by the sun. I see a flock of black-birds and hear their *conquerees*. The ground is mostly bare now. Again I hear the chickadee's spring note. I remember that one spring, when I travelled in Maine, the woods were ringing with it, as I rode in the stage, *phæ-be*.<sup>1</sup>

Charlevoix baptized a dying infant on the bank of the Illinois River, 1721. He writes, "I confess to you, Madame, that though my travels should be altogether useless else, I should not regret the fatigues and dangers of it, since, according to all appearances, if I had not come to Pimiteouy, this infant would never have entered heaven, where I do not doubt it will be presently."<sup>2</sup> Celebrated historian.

*March 15.* This afternoon I throw off my outside coat. A mild spring day. I must lie to the Great Meadows. The air is full of bluebirds. The ground almost entirely bare. The villagers are out in the sun, and every man is happy whose work takes him outdoors. I go by Sleepy Hollow toward the Great Fields. I lean over a rail to hear what is in the air, liquid with the bluebirds' warble. My life partakes of infinity. The air is as deep as our natures. Is the drawing in of this vital air attended with no more glorious results than I witness? The air is a velvet cushion against which I press my

<sup>1</sup> Probably white-throat sparrow.

<sup>2</sup> [*Histoire de la Nouvelle France*.]

ear. I go forth to make new demands on life. I wish to begin this summer well; to do something in it worthy of it and of me; to transcend my daily routine and that of my townsmen; to have my immortality now, that it be in the *quality* of my daily life; to pay the greatest price, the greatest tax, of any man in Concord, and enjoy the most!! I will give all I am for *my* nobility. I will pay all my days for *my* success. I pray that the life of this spring and summer may ever lie fair in my memory. May I dare as I have never done! May I persevere as I have never done! May I purify myself anew as with fire and water, soul and body! May my melody not be wanting to the season! May I gird myself to be a hunter of the beautiful, that naught escape me! May I attain to a youth never attained! I am eager to report the glory of the universe; may I be worthy to do it; to have got through with regarding human values, so as not to be distracted from regarding divine values. It is reasonable that a man should be something worthier at the end of the year than he was at the beginning.

Yesterday's rain, in which I was glad to be drenched, has advanced the spring, settled the ways, and the old footpath and the brook and the plank bridge behind the hill are suddenly uncovered, which have [been] buried so long; as if we had returned to our earth after an absence, and took pleasure in finding things so nearly in the state in which we left them.

We go out without our coats, saunter along the street, look at the aments of the willow beginning to appear and the swelling buds of the maple and the elm. The Great Meadows are water instead of ice. I see the ice

on the bottom in white sheets. And now one great cake rises amid the bushes (behind Peter's). I see no ducks.

Most men find farming unprofitable; but there are some who can get their living anywhere. If you set them down on a bare rock they will thrive there. The true farmer is to those who come after him and take the benefit of his improvements, like the lichen which plants itself on the bare rock, and grows and thrives and cracks it and makes a vegetable mould, to the garden vegetable which grows in it.

*March 16.* Before sunrise.

With what infinite and unwearied expectation and proclamation the cocks usher in every dawn, as if there had never been one before! And the dogs bark still, and the thallus of lichens springs, so tenacious of life is nature.

Spent the day in Cambridge Library. Walden is not yet melted round the edge. It is, perhaps, more suddenly warm this spring than usual. Mr. Bull thinks that the pine grosbeaks, which have been unusually numerous the past winter, have killed many branches of his elms by budding them, and that they will die and the wind bring them down, as heretofore. Saw a large flock of geese go over Cambridge and heard the robins in the College Yard.

The Library a wilderness of books. Looking over books on Canada written within the last three hundred years, could see how one had been built upon another, each author consulting and referring to his predecessors. You could read most of them without changing

your leg on the steps. It is necessary to find out exactly what books to read on a given subject. Though there may be a thousand books written upon it, it is only important to read three or four; they will contain all that is essential, and a few pages will show which they are. Books which are books are all that you want, and there are but half a dozen in any thousand. I saw that while we are clearing the forest in our westward progress, we are accumulating a forest of books in our rear, as wild and unexplored as any of nature's primitive wildernesses. The volumes of the Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth Centuries, which lie so near on the shelf, are rarely opened, are effectually forgotten and not implied by our literature and newspapers. When I looked into Purchas's Pilgrims, it affected me like looking into an impassable swamp, ten feet deep with sphagnum, where the monarchs of the forest, covered with mosses and stretched along the ground, were making haste to become peat. Those old books suggested a certain fertility, an Ohio soil, as if they were making a humus for new literatures to spring in. I heard the bellowing of bullfrogs and the hum of mosquitoes reverberating through the thick embossed covers when I had closed the book. Decayed literature makes the richest of all soils.

*March 17.* I catch myself philosophizing most abstractly when first returning to consciousness in the night or morning. I make the truest observations and distinctions then, when the will is yet wholly asleep and the mind works like a machine without friction.

I am conscious of having, in my sleep, transcended the limits of the individual, and made observations and carried on conversations which in my waking hours I can neither recall nor appreciate. As if in sleep our individual fell into the infinite mind, and at the moment of awakening we found ourselves on the confines of the latter. On awakening we resume our enterprise, take up our bodies and become limited mind again. We meet and converse with those bodies which we have previously animated. There is a moment in the dawn, when the darkness of the night is dissipated and before the exhalations of the day commence to rise, when we see things more truly than at any other time. The light is more trustworthy, since our senses are purer and the atmosphere is less gross. By afternoon all objects are seen in mirage.

Frank Brown showed me the pintail duck day before yesterday, which he had received from Duxbury. To-day the fox-colored sparrow on its way to Hudson's Bay.

*March 18.* This morning the ground is again covered with snow, and the storm still continues.

That is a pretty good story told of a London citizen just retired to country life on a fortune, who, wishing, among other novel rustic experiments, to establish a number of bee communities, would not listen to the advice of his under steward, but, asking fiercely "how he could be so thoughtless as to recommend a purchase of what might so easily be procured on the Downs, ordered him to hire ten women to go in quest of bees the next morning, and to prepare hives for the reception

of the captives. Early the next day the detachment started for the Downs, each furnished with a tin canister to contain the spoil; and after running about for hours, stunning the bees with blows from their straw bonnets, and encountering stings without number, secured about thirty prisoners who were safely lodged in a hive. But, as has been the fate of many arduous campaigns, little advantage accrued from all this fatigue and danger. Next morning the Squire sallied forth to visit his new colony. As he approached, a loud humming assured him that they were hard at work, when to his infinite disappointment, it was found that the bees had made their escape through a small hole in the hive, leaving behind them only an unfortunate humblebee, whose bulk prevented his squeezing himself through the aperture, and whose loud complaints had been mistaken for the busy hum of industry." You must patiently study the method of nature, and take advice of the under steward, in the establishment of all communities, both insect and human.

This afternoon the woods and walls and the whole face of the country wear once more a wintry aspect, though there is more moisture in the snow and the trunks of the trees are whitened now on a more southerly or southeast side. These slight falls of snow which come and go again so soon when the ground is partly open in the spring, perhaps helping to open and crumble and prepare it for the seed, are called "the poor man's manure." They are, no doubt, more serviceable still to those who are rich enough to have some manure spread on their grass ground, which the melting snow

helps dissolve and soak in and carry to the roots of the grass. At any rate, it is all the poor man has got, whether it is good or bad. There is more rain than snow now falling, and the lichens, especially the *Parmelia conspersa*, appear to be full of fresh fruit, though they are nearly buried in snow. The *Evernia jubata* might now be called even a *very* dark olive-green. I feel a certain sympathy with the pine or oak fringed with lichens in a wet day. They remind me of the dewy and ambrosial vigor of nature and of man's prime. The pond is still very little melted around the shore. As I go by a pile of red oak recently split in the woods and now wet with rain, I perceive its strong urine-like scent. I see within the trunks solid masses of worm or ant borings, turned to a black or very dark brown mould, purest of virgin mould, six inches in diameter and some feet long, within the tree, — the tree turned to mould again before its fall. But this snow has not driven back the birds. I hear the song sparrow's simple strain, most genuine herald of the spring, and see flocks of chubby northern birds with the habit of snowbirds, passing north.

A wise man will not go out of his way for information. He might as well go out of nature, or commit suicide.

I am glad to hear that naked eyes are of any use, for I cannot afford to buy a Munich telescope.

Probably the bees could not make industry attractive under the circumstances described above.

*March 19.* Observed as I stood with Channing on the brink of the rill on Conantum, where, falling a few

inches, it produced bubbles, our images, three quarters of an inch long and black as imps, appearing to lean toward each other on account of the convexity of the bubble. There was nothing but these two distinct black manikins and the branch of the elm over our heads to be seen. The bubbles rapidly burst and succeeded one another.

*March 20.* As to the winter birds, — those which came here in the winter, — I saw first that rusty sparrow-like bird flying in flocks with the smaller sparrows early in the winter and sliding down the grass stems to their seeds, which clucked like a hen, and F. Brown thought to be the young of the purple finch; then I saw, about Thanksgiving time and later in the winter, the pine grosbeaks, large and carmine, a noble bird; then, in midwinter, the snow bunting, the white snowbird, sweeping low like snowflakes from field to field over the walls and fences. And now, within a day or two, I have noticed the chubby slate-colored snowbird (*Fringilla hyemalis?*), and I drive the flocks before me on the railroad causeway as I walk. It has two white feathers in its tail.

It is cold as winter to-day, the ground still covered with snow, and the stars twinkle as in winter nights.

The fox-colored sparrow is about now.

*March 21.* Railroad causeway at Heywood's meadow.

The ice no sooner melts than you see the now red and yellow pads of the yellow lily beginning to shoot up from the bottom of the pools and ditches, for there



they yield to the first impulses of the heat and feel not the chilling blasts of March.

This evening a little snow falls. The weather about these days is cold and wintry again.

*March 23.* I heard, this forenoon, a pleasant jingling note from the slate-colored snowbird on the oaks in the sun on Minott's hillside. Apparently they sing with us in the pleasantest days before they go northward.

Minott thinks that the farmers formerly used their meadow-hay better, gave it more sun, so that the cattle liked it as well as the English now.

As I cannot go upon a Northwest Passage, then I will find a passage round the actual world where I am. Connect the Behring Straits and Lancaster Sounds of thought; winter on Melville Island, and make a chart of Banks Land; explore the northward-trending Wellington Inlet, where there is said to be a perpetual open sea, cutting my way through flocs of ice.

*March 24.* The night of the 24th, quite a deep snow covered the ground.

*March 26.* Walden not melted about shore.

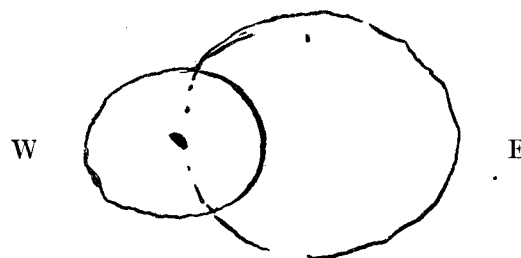
*March 28. Sunday.* A pleasant afternoon; cool wind but warm sun. Snow almost all gone. The yellow lily leaves are pushing up in the ditch beyond Hubbard's Grove (this is not so warm a place as Heywood's meadow under the causeway), hard-rolled and triangular, with a sharp point with which to pierce the mud;

green at the tips and yellow below. The leaf is rolled in from both sides to the midrib. This is, perhaps, to be regarded as the most obvious sign of advancing spring, for the skunk-cabbage may be seen in warm weather in January. The latter is the first conspicuous growth on the surface. It now shows its agreeably variegated, not yet unfolded, leaves in the meadows. Saw dead frogs, and the mud stirred by a living one, in this ditch, and afterward in Conantum Brook a living frog, the first of the season; also a yellow-spotted tortoise by the causeway side in the meadow near Hubbard's Bridge. Fresh-looking caddis-worm cases in the ditch.

The smoky maple swamps have now got a reddish tinge from their expanding buds.

I have not noticed any new movements among the farmers, unless a little more activity in carting out manure and spreading it on their grass grounds.

Observed a singular circle round the moon to-night between nine and ten, the moon being about half full,



or in its first quarter, and the sky *pretty* clear, — a very bright and distinct circle about the moon, and a second,

larger circle, less distinct, extending to the east of this, cutting the former and having the moon on its circumference or at least where its circumference would be. The inner circle is very contracted and more distinct on its eastern side, included within the larger, and it appears to shed a luminous mist from all sides.<sup>1</sup>

10.15 P. M. — The geese have just gone over, making a great cackling and awaking people in their beds. They will probably settle in the river. Who knows but they had expected to find the pond open?


*March 29.* An Eskimo, one of a littoral people, inquired with surprise of Sir John Richardson, "Are not all lands islands?"

Observed yesterday that Fair Haven Pond was covered with ice. Many plants which have been covered with snow now begin to show green about the roots, and so they push forward till the green prevails over the withered portion of their leaves. There are many of which you are doubtful whether they have been kept fresh and green under the snow, or have recently put forth their leaves in the spring. I observe to-day the buttercup, very common, the pasture thistle, etc., etc., what perhaps are chickweeds? The radical leaves of some, like sorrel, appear never to wither. Saw sportsmen out this morning, a boat on the meadows, men who heard the

<sup>1</sup> [If the drawing shows the way the moon and circles actually appeared, the letters W and E should evidently be transposed and "east" and "eastern" in the description should read "west" and "western."]

geese last night. It is but a day or two that I have seen a boat on the meadows. The water on them has looked very dark from the street. Their color depends on the position of the beholder in relation to the direction of the wind. There is more water and it is more ruffled at this season than at any other, and the waves look quite angry and black.

Going to the Second Division Brook.

There is an evident spring in the grass about springs and brooks, as at Tarbell's. Some mosses now in fruit. Icicles still form under the banks at night on the north side of hills, from the dripping of the melting snow during the day. The leaves of the rattlesnake-plantain continue green but not so distinctly reticulated. Struck Second Division Brook at the old dam. It is as deep as wide, three feet or more, with a very handsome sandy bottom, rapidly flowing and meandering. A very attractive brook, to trout, etc., as well as men. It not only meanders as you look down on it, but the line of its bottom is very serpentine, in this wise,  successively deep and shallow. There is a great volume of water for so small a show as it makes. The sands, where they are rippled, are agreeably diversified with the black sediment of decayed wood and leaves in the ripple-marks. This apparently is not a deep or a peat meadow, but has a sandy foundation. The only obvious signs of spring in the vegetation of this meadow are the just expanding downy buds of a rather late kind of slender willow that stands in the brook and, if this can be regarded as a spring

phenomenon, the green leaves of the cowslip everywhere. Saw two wood tortoises at the bottom of the brook, one upon another. The upper and larger one was decidedly bronze on the back; the under one, with more sharply grooved scales. The former, perhaps the male, with a decided depression of the sternum. Their legs a reddish orange. In the deeper parts of the brook, where, in the elbow of a meander, it had gullied under the bank, the surface was narrowest, and the dead grass almost met, making coverts for the trout. These tortoises crawled off very clumsily on the bottom. The flippers on one side were not both put forward at the same time, but one moved up to the other.

Found the mayflower budded, though mostly covered with snow. There commenced to fall, not hail, but cotton-like pellets of snow, or like crispy snow broken up into triangular prismical [*sic*] pieces.

The *Populus tremuloides*, the round fine-toothed leaved aspen, shows the influence of the spring, this and some of the willows, more than any other trees or shrubs. Over a sandy bottom the brook water has one color; over the black sediment of decayed leaves another.

What animal more clumsy than the tortoise? If it wishes to get into the brook, it crawls to its edge and then tumbles, lets itself fall, turning a somerset, perhaps, from the bank to the water, — resigns itself to mere gravity, drawing in its head and members.

March 30. Dug some parsnips this morning. They break off about ten inches from the surface, the ground being frozen there.

The Greek word *ζαρ* runs in my head in connection with the season and Richardson's Book.

The Cliffs remind me of that narrow place in the brook where two meadows nearly meet, with floating grass, though the water is deeper there under the bank than anywhere. So the Cliffs are a place where two summers nearly meet. Put up a bluebird-box, and found a whole egg in it. Saw a pewee from the railroad causeway.

Having occasion to-day to put up a long ladder against the house, I found, from the trembling of my nerves with the exertion, that I had not exercised that part of my system this winter. How much I may have lost! It would do me good to go forth and work hard and sweat. Though the frost is nearly out of the ground, the winter has not broken up in me. It is a backward season with me. Perhaps we grow older and older till we no longer sympathize with the revolution of the seasons, and our winters never break up.

To-day, as frequently for some time past, we have a raw east wind, which is rare in winter. I see as yet very little, perhaps no, new growth in the plants in open fields, but only the green radical leaves which have been kept fresh under the snow; but if I should explore carefully about their roots, I should find some expanding buds and even new-rising shoots. The farmers are making haste to clear up their wood-lots, which they have cut off the past winter, to get off the tops and brush, that they may not be too late and injure the young sprouts and lose a year's growth in the operation, also that they may be ready for their spring work.

From the Cliffs I see that Fair Haven Pond is open over the channel of the river, — which is in fact thus only revealed, of the same width as elsewhere, running from the end of Baker's Wood to the point of the Island. The slight current there has worn away the ice. I never knew before exactly where the channel was. It is pretty central. I perceive the hollow sound from the rocky ground as I tread and stamp about the Cliffs, and am reminded how much more sure children are to notice this peculiarity than grown persons. I remember when I used to make this a regular part of the entertainment when I conducted a stranger to the Cliffs. On the warm slope of the Cliffs the radical (?) leaves of the St. John's-wort (somewhat spurge-like), small on slender sprigs, have been evergreen under the snow. In this warm locality there is some recent growth nearest the ground. The leaves of the *Saxifraga vernalis* on the most mossy rocks are quite fresh. That large evergreen leaf sometimes mistaken for the mayflower is the *Pyrola rotundifolia* and perhaps some other species. What are those leaves in rounded beds, curled and hoary beneath, reddish-brown above, looking as if covered with frost? It is now budded, — a white, downy bud.<sup>1</sup>

*March 31.* Intended to get up early this morning and commence a series of spring walks, but clouds and drowsiness prevented. Early, however, I saw the clouds in the west, — for my window looks west, — suffused with rosy light, but that "flattery" is all forgotten

<sup>1</sup> The *Gnaphalium plantaginifolium* and *G. purpureum*.

now. How can one help being an early riser and walker in that season when the birds begin to twitter and sing in the morning?

The expedition in search of Sir John Franklin in 1850 landed at Cape Riley on the north side of Lancaster Sound, and one vessel brought off relics of Franklin, *viz.* "five pieces of beef, mutton, and pork bones, together with a bit of rope, a small rag of canvas, and a chip of wood cut by an ax." Richardson says: "From a careful examination of the beef bones, I came to the conclusion that they had belonged to pieces of salt-beef ordinarily supplied to the Navy, and that probably they and the other bones had been exposed to the atmosphere and to friction in rivulets of melted snow for four or five summers. The rope was proved by the ropemaker who examined it to have been made at Chatham, of Hungarian hemp, subsequent to 1841. The fragment of canvas, which seemed to have been part of a boat's swab, had the Queen's broad arrow painted on it; and the chip of wood was of ash, a tree which does not grow on the banks of any river that falls into the Arctic Sea. It had, however, been long exposed to the weather, and was likely to have been cut from a piece of drift-timber found lying on the spot, as the mark of the ax was recent compared to the surface of the wood, which might have been exposed to the weather for a century." "The grounds of these conclusions were fully stated in a report made to the Admiralty by Sir Edward Parry, myself, and other officers." Is not here an instance of the civilized man detecting the traces of a friend or foe

with a skill at least equal to that of the savage? Indeed it is in both cases but a common sense applied to the objects, and in a manner most familiar to the parties. The skill of the savage is just such a science, though referred sometimes to instinct.

Perhaps after the thawing of the trees their buds universally swell before they can be said to spring.

Perchance as we grow old we cease to spring with the spring, and we are indifferent to the succession of years, and they go by without epoch as months. Woe be to us when we cease to form new resolutions on the opening of a new year!

A cold, raw day with alternating hail-like snow and rain.

According to Gilpin, a copse is composed of forest trees mixed with brushwood, which last is periodically cut down in twelve or fourteen years.

What Gilpin says about copses, glens, etc., suggests that the different places to which the walker resorts may be profitably classified and suggest many things to be said. Gilpin prefers the continuous song of the insects in the shade of a copse to the buzzing vagrant fly in the glare of day. He says the pools in the forest must receive their black hue from clearness. I suppose he means they may have a muddy bottom or covered with dark dead leaves, but the water above must be clear to reflect the trees.

It would be worth the while to tell why a swamp pleases us, what kinds please us, also what weather, etc., etc., — analyze our impressions. Why the moaning of the storm gives me pleasure. Methinks it is be-

cause it puts to rout the trivialness of our fair-weather life and gives it at least a tragic interest. The sound has the effect of a pleasing challenge, to call forth our energy to resist the invaders of our life's territory. It is musical and thrilling, as the sound of an enemy's bugle. Our spirits revive like lichens in the storm. There is something worth living for when we are resisted, threatened. As at the last day we might be thrilled with the prospect of the grandeur of our destiny, so in these *first* days our destiny appears grander. What would the days, what would our life, be worth, if some nights were not dark as pitch, — of darkness tangible or that you can cut with a knife? How else could the light in the mind shine? How should we be conscious of the light of reason? If it were not for physical cold, how should we have discovered the warmth of the affections? I sometimes feel that I need to sit in a far-away cave through a three weeks' storm, cold and wet, to give a tone to my system. The spring has its windy March to usher it in, with many soaking rains reaching into April. Methinks I would share every creature's suffering for the sake of its experience and joy. The song sparrow and the transient fox-colored sparrow, — have they brought me no message this year? Do they go to lead heroic lives in Rupert's Land? They are so small, I think their destinies must be large. Have I heard what this tiny passenger has to say, while it flits thus from tree to tree? Is not the coming of the fox-colored sparrow something more earnest and significant than I have dreamed of? Can I forgive myself if I let it go to Rupert's Land before

I have appreciated it? God did not make this world in jest; no, nor in indifference. These migrating sparrows all bear messages that concern my life. I do not pluck the fruits in their season. I love the birds and beasts because they are mythologically in earnest. I see that the sparrow cheeps and flits and sings adequately to the great design of the universe; that man does not communicate with it, understand its language, because he is not at one with nature. I reproach myself because I have regarded with indifference the passage of the birds; I have thought them no better than I.

What philosopher can estimate the different values of a waking thought and a dream?

I hear late to-night the unspeakable rain, mingled with rattling snow against the windows, preparing the ground for spring.