

IV

AUGUST, 1852

(ÆT. 35)

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 or the thrush for a long time. The peawai sings yet. *Early* apples are ripe, and the sopsivine scents my handkerchief before I have perceived any odor from the orchards.¹ 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.

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

¹ [See *Excursions*, p. 295; Riv. 362.]

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 dipped 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 sky, 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.

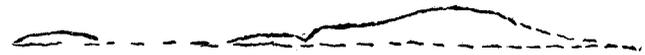
Before this, at 2 P. M., walked to Burnt Plain.

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 glowing 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 edge-wise 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.

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. Those 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 print 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 Novboracensis, iron-weed, by Flint's Bridge, began to open by July 31st; a tall plant with a broad fastigiata 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 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, are 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 multum*, 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 bushes. I hear

crows, the robin, huckleberry-birds, young bluebirds, etc.

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

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, *ter tweeter e et* or *e ee*, as it ricochets over, he and his russet (?) female. The chirp of the constant chip-bird and the plaintive strain of the lark, also. I must make a list of those birds which, like the lark and the robin, if they do not stay all the year, are heard to sing longest of those that migrate. The bobolink and thrasher, 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?¹ 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.²

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 sin-

¹ *Acalypha Virginica*, three-seeded mercury.

² [Walden, p. 96; Riv. 136, 137.]

gularly surprised when I read of the celebrated Henry Jenkins (who lived to be some 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.

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, per-

haps, 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 bittern 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 in its perfection, 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.

Aug. 6. 5 A. M. — I do not hear this morning the breathing of chip-birds nor the song of robins. 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, a huckleberry-bird or two, or chickadee, the scream of a flicker or a jay, or the caw of a crow, and commonly only an alarmed note of a robin. A solitary peawai may be heard, perchance, or a red-eye, but no thrashers, or catbirds, or oven-birds, or the jingle of the chewink. I hear the ominous twittering of the goldfinch 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. From 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 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 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 blossom, *i. e.* perhaps in the same proportion. With the goldenrod comes the goldfinch. About the time his cool twitter was heard, did not the bobolink, thrasher, catbird, oven-bird, veery, 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 more bracing and invigorating to bathe, though less luxurious. Methinks the water cannot again be as warm as it has been. *Erechtithites hieracifolia*, apparently a day or two. *Lepedeza capitata*. *Aralia racemosa*, how long? — potty 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?

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, as now, 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?

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? 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 and essential and 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 thought 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.

P. M. — To Heywood's Pond.

Ambrosia artemisiæfolia. July was a month of dry, torrid heat and drouth, especially the fore part. August, thus far, of gentle rain-storms and fogs, dog-days. Things mildew now. The sun is warm, but it is damp and cool in shade. The colored willow-herb is an interesting small flower, pink (?) or white, with its long seed-vessel, in railroad gutter by red house. Dodder (*Cuscuta Americana*) just out. *Cerasus Virginiana* is now dark, almost quite black, and rather edible. It was only red before. Elder-berries almost ripe. I notice now, along the North River, horse-mint, arrowhead, cardinal-flower, trumpet-weed (just coming out), water parsnip, skull-cap (*lateriflora*), monkey-flower, etc., etc. Rattlesnake-plantain is budded. Rivers meander most not amid rugged mountains, but through soft level

meadows. In some places the ground is covered now with the black umbelled berries of the sarsaparilla. The naked viburnum berries are now greenish-white. *Nabalus albus*, white lettuce, perhaps a week? Varies in leaves. *Spiranthes gracilis*, slender neottia, for some time. *Goodyera repens*, white-veined rattlesnake-plantain, some days (?). *Bartonia tenella* (*Centaurella*), apparently leafless plant, in path in Ministerial Swamp. *Hieracium Gronovii* (?). An aster near the lygodium, with numerous small white flowers, apparently either the umbelled or spreading of Bigelow, just opening. No man ever makes a discovery, ever [*sic*] an observation of the least importance, but he is advertised of the fact by a joy that surprises him. The powers thus celebrate all discovery. The squirrels are now devouring the hazelnuts fast. A lupine blossomed again.

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 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 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 *verbatim et literalim*, 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 note-book 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? ¹ 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 lineare*. The true (?) *Sium lineare*, probably last month.²

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.

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

¹ *Chelone glabra*.

² Vide July 8 [p. 203.]

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.

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

Aug. 15. Some birds fly in flocks. I see a dense, compact flock of bobolinks 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 fall, 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 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?

Aug. 16. P. M. — Down river in boat with George Bradford.

Zizania aquatica, Indian or Canadian rice, or water oats, like slender corn. How long?

Hibiscus Moscheutos (?), marsh hibiscus, apparently, N. Barrett's. Perchance has been out a week. I think it must be the most conspicuous and showy and at the same time rich-colored flower of this month. It is not so conspicuous as the sunflower, but of a rarer color, — "pale rose-purple," they call it, — like a hollyhock. It is surprising for its amount of color, and, seen unex-

pectedly amid the willows and button-bushes, with the mikania twining around its stem, you can hardly believe it is a flower, so large and tender it looks, like the greatest effort of the season to adorn the August days, and reminded me of that great tender moth, the *Attacus 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 and luxuriant soil. It requires these vaporous dog-days.

Galeopsis Tetrakit, common hemp-nettle, in roadside by Keyes's. 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 pervades 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 causeway lake-color, but behind they are a dead dark blue. I must look for the rudbeckia which Bradford says he found yesterday behind Joe Clark's.

Aug. 17. Twenty minutes before 5 A. M. — To Cliffs and Walden.

Dawn. No breathing of chip-birds nor singing of robins as in spring, but still the cock crows lustily. The creak of the crickets sounds louder. As I go along

the back road, hear two or three song sparrows. This morning's 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, it being about sunrise, and after, on the Cliff, the phœbe note of a chickadee, a night-warbler, a creeper (?), and a pewee (?), and, later still, the huckleberry-bird and red-eye, but all few and faint.

Cannot distinguish the steam of the engine toward Waltham from one of the morning fogs over hollows in woods. *Lespedeza violacea* var. (apparently) *angustifolia* (?), *sessiliflora* of Bigelow. Also another *L. violacea*, or at least violet, perhaps different from what I saw some time since. *Gerardia pedicularia*, bushy *gerardia*, 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 and wild, than usual this year, because the rose-bugs had not done so much harm.

Aug. 18. 3 P. M. — To Joe Clark's and Hibiscus Bank.

I cannot conceive how a man can accomplish anything worthy of him, unless his very breath is sweet to

him. He must be particularly alive. As if a man were himself and 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 something royal about the month of August. Its is a more ingrained and perhaps more tropical heat than that of July. Though hot, it is not so suffocating and unveiled a blaze. The vapors in the air temper it somewhat. But we have had some pretty cool weather within a week or two, and the evenings generally are cooler. As I go over the hill behind Hunt's, the North River has a glassy stillness and 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 mountains can be seen. The locust is heard. The fruits are ripening. Ripe apples here and there scent the air. Huckleberries probably have begun to spoil. I see those minute yellow cocoons on the grass. Hazelnuts; methinks it is time to gather them if you would anticipate the squirrels. The clematis and mikania belong to this month, filling the crevices and rounding the outline of leafy banks and hedges.

Perceived to-day and some weeks since (August 3d) the strong invigorating aroma of green walnuts, astringent and bracing to the spirits, the fancy and imagination, suggesting a tree that has its roots well in amid the bowels of nature. Their shells are, in fact and from association, 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 and 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 and northern. Fragrant stones which the trees bear.

The hibiscus flowers are seen a quarter of a mile off over the water, like large roses, now that these high colors are rather rare. Some are exceedingly delicate and pale, almost white, just rose-tinted, others a brighter pink or rose-color, and all slightly plaited (the five large petals) and 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 four inches in diameter, as large as water-lilies, rising amid and above the button-bushes and willows, with a large light-green tree-like leaf and a stem half an inch in diameter, apparently 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 oaks, the ethereal and buoyant *Salix Purshiana*, — the first and last resting on the water and giving the river a full appearance, — and the hibiscus flowers adorning the shores, contrasting with the green across the river, close to the water's edge, the meadows being just shorn, 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, pump-maker'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 and pretty blue flower in the yard. *Rumex obtusifolius*, for weeks, apparently.

Elizabeth Hoar shows me the following plants which she brought from the White Mountains the 16th: *Chiogenes hispidula*, creeping snow-berry, also called *Gaultheria* and also *Vaccinium hispidulum*, in fruit, with a partridge-berry scent and taste; *Taxus Canadensis*, ground hemlock, with red cup-shaped berries, very handsome and 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 and steadiness amid the prostrate trunks, — and you could not avoid seeing it any more than a child, — in blossom; *Oxalis Aetosella*, in blossom; *Arenaria Granlandica*, also in bloom, in tufts like houstonia; *Lonicera ciliata*, probably, with a double red fruit. She also brought lichens and mosses and 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; and 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 and its leaves acquiring an autumnal tint. Lichens and 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 fifty 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?

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 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 dracena 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 brink 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 paniced (?) hedysarum apparently will blossom in a week. *Gerardia purpurea* at Forget-me-not Brook. *Eupatorium pubescens*, between this and the first of August.

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 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. amplexi-*

caulis (or *patens* (Gray)?) 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.

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 reckoned among the warmest in the year, *scalding* hot. That will apply very well to the greatest heat 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 leucophyllum*, with the aspect of a lettuce but bluish flowers, seven feet high with a panicle two feet by ten inches? Cat-tails ripe. The common epilobium holds not a neat flower but rich-colored.

Moralists say of men, By their fruits ye shall know them, but botanists say of plants, By their flowers ye shall know them. This is very well generally, but they

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

The leaves of the dogbane are turning yellow. There are as few or fewer birds heard than flowers seen. The red-eye still occasionally. Agrimony still. "The dry, pearly, and almost incorruptible heads of the Life Everlasting." Ah! this is a truly elysian flower now, beyond change and decay, not lusty but immortal, — pure ascetics, suggesting a widowed virginity. *Bidens frondosa* in corn-fields under Bear Hill, west side. The large kind. *Polygonum arifolium*, a very large scratchweed, 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 root-stocks! 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 bitter-sweet 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.

Aug. 22. Sunday. The ways by which men express themselves are infinite, — the literary through their writings, and often they do not mind with what

air they walk the streets, being sufficiently reported otherwise. But some express themselves chiefly by their gait and carriage, with swelling breasts or elephantine roll and elevated brows, making themselves moving and adequate signs of themselves, having no other outlet. If their greatness had signalized itself sufficiently in 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 gnaphalium 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 forgot-

ten, along with that of flowers.¹ Is not the high black-berry our finest berry? I gather very sweet ones which weigh down the vines in sprout-lands. The arum berries are mostly devoured, apparently by birds. The two-leaved Solomon's-seal berries begin to be red. *Rumex Hydrolapathum* (?) by Jenny's Brook. *Hieracium Canadense*, apparently Bigelow's *Kalmiana*, which Gray says is not Linnæus's. Marlborough road. The oval maple-leaved viburnum berries have got to be yellowish. The paniced cornel berries now white. The bushy gerardia is abundant on the White Pond road, beyond pond. What is that thistle in Brown's and Tarbell's meadows with no stem, only radical 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 axillary large red berries, though Gray says of this genus, its berries are black or blue?² 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*?³

Aug. 23. 3 P. M. -- To Assabet.

The river is eight and one twelfth feet below top of

¹ [Excursions, p. 295; Riv. 362.]

² Probably the large convallaria.

³ *Lampyris*?

truss.¹ 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.² 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 osier³ 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.

¹ Horizontal part (probably).

² This I calculate to be two inches below my summer level for 1859.

³ Silky.

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 the sound of a bird all the way to the woods. How dark the shadows of the 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 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 some-

thing 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 nor whip-poor-wills.

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 did not affect me; I did not know the persons he talked about. I have been disappointed from first to last in 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 trivial 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 to 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 companion 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 *accrifolium* 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 a 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.

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 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 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 Careyi*. 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 albus*, the last July (?).

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 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 oh, this dull, cloudy, breezy, thoughtful 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, or the peep of a robin, or the scream of a jay, to whom all seasons are indifferent, the mew of a catbird, the *link link* of a bobolink, or the twitter of a goldfinch, all faint and rare. The 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, 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 moods, 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?

Aug. 26. Rain. Rain.

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.

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; but, for music, reduced almost to the winter quire. Young partridges two thirds grown burst away. Globular galls on young oaks, green on one side, red on the other. *Elatine Americana*, small crypta [?], 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.¹ 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.² 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.³

¹ [*Walden*, p. 198; Riv. 279, 280.] ² [*Walden*, p. 196; Riv. 276.]

³ [*Walden*, pp. 200, 201; Riv. 283.]

The surrounding hills are from fifty to a hundred, and in one place perhaps two hundred, feet high, covered with wood.¹

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 leucopharum* 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.

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

¹ [Walden, p. 195; Riv. 275.]

August. What I called by this name before was not this. Now the red osier¹ 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 red² 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.

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

¹ River cornel.

² Silky.

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.¹

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.

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.

¹ [Walden, pp. 120-122; Riv. 171-173.]

This high water will retard the blossoming of the *Bidens Beckii*, perhaps. The pads are covered for the most part; only those which have very long stems are on the surface, the white lilies oftenest. Here and there is seen a blue spike of a *pontederia* still, but I do not see a single white lily. I should think this would put an end to them. It is a bright and breezy day. I hear the note of goldfinches. The shore is whitened in some places with dense fields of the *Polygonum hydropiperoides*, now in its prime, but the smaller rose-colored polygonum, 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 next the water, behind Hubbard's or Dennis's. I see crows feeding on 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, per-

chance by contrast, in the brilliant air. Is not the air a little more bracing than it was? Looking up the sparkling river, whose waves are flashing in the sun, it appears to be giving off its pure silver from the amalgam. The sky is more beautiful, a clearer blue, methinks, than for some time past, with light and downy clouds sailing all round a quarter of the way up it. The fields of bulrushes are now conspicuous, being left alone above the water. The balls of the button-bush have lost their bloom. From the shore I hear only the creak of crickets. The winds of autumn begin to blow. Now I can sail. The cardinal-flowers, almost drowned in a foot or two of water, are still very brilliant. The wind is Septemberish. That rush, reed, or sedge with the handsome head rises above the water. I pass boats now far from the shore and full of water. I see and hear the kingfisher with his disproportionate black [*sic*] head or crest. The pigeon woodpecker darts across the valley; a catbird mews in the alders; a great bittern flies sluggishly away from his pine tree perch on Tupelo Cliff, digging his way through the air. These and crows at long intervals are all the birds seen or heard.

How much he knows of the wind, its strength and direction, whose steed it is, — the sailor. With a good gale he advances rapidly; when it dies away he is at a standstill. The very sounds made by moving the furniture of my boat are agreeable, echoing so distinctly and sweetly over the water; they give the sense of being abroad. I find myself *at home* in new scenery. I carry more of myself with me; I am more entirely abroad, as when a man takes his children into the

fields with him. I carry so many me's with [me]. This large basket of melons, umbrella, flowers, hammer, etc., etc., all go with me to the end of the voyage without being the least incumbrance, and preserve their relative distances. Our capacity to carry our furniture with us is so much increased. There is little danger of overloading the steed. We can go completely equipped to fields a dozen miles off. The tent and the chest can be taken as easily as not. We embark; we go aboard a boat; we sit or we stand. If we sail, there is no exertion necessary. If we move in the opposite direction, we nevertheless progress. And if we row, we sit to an agreeable exercise, akin to flying. A student, of course, if it were perfectly convenient, would always move with his escriptorium 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.

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 chrysanthemoides*, now in blossom, like a sunflower, two inches in diameter, is for the most part far under water, blossoms and all. I see its drowned flowers far beneath the surface. Gunners out with their pants tucked into their boots. Pigeons fly over, and ducks. Poke berries ripe for some time. The various beauties of this plant now appear. Its stem is ripe, too, as if full of purple wine. It is so florid that the whole plant blossoms. In the fall, after so much sun, all leaves turn to petals and blossoms. The evening of the year is colored like the sunset. *Utricularia inflata*, or whorled bladderwort, numerous in Fair Haven Pond. I found it the same day of the month last year. I plucked a white lily pad above Lee's 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 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 the 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 sereneest, warmest, brightest part, and the most suggestive. Evening is fairer than morning. It is chaste eve, for it has sustained the trials of the day, but to the morning such praise was inapplicable. It is incense-breathing. Morning is full of promise and vigor. Evening is pensive. The serenity is far more remarkable to those who are on the water. That part of the sky just above the horizon seen reflected, apparently, some rods off from the boat is as light a blue as the actual, but it goes on deepening as your eye draws nearer to the boat, until, when you look directly down at the reflection of the zenith, it is lost in the blackness of the water. It passes 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 rowing, 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 casia*, blue-stemmed, not long. Waxwork berries orange now, not open. What mean the different forms of apocynum leaves? Have we more than one species? The fruit of the triosteum is orange-colored now at Tupelo Cliff. *Polygonum tenue*, slender (I should say upright) knot-grass, there, too (July?). *Polygonum dumetorum*, climbing false-buckwheat. Apparently *Bidens cernua* (?), but is it nodding, and are not its leaves ever trifid? Its achenia are not obovate. Were the pods of my corallorhiza long enough to be the *multiflora*? *Vide* that small lespedeza-like plant at Tupelo Cliff.