

## VII

SEPTEMBER, 1853

(ÆT. 36)

*Sept. 1. Thursday. P. M. — To Dugan Desert and Ministerial Swamp.*

The character of the past month, as I remember, has been, at first, very thick and sultry, dogdayish, the height of summer, and throughout very rainy, followed by crops of toadstools, and latterly, after the dog-days and most copious of the rains, autumnal, somewhat cooler, with signs of decaying or ripening foliage. The month of green corn and melons and plums and the earliest apples, — and now peaches, — of rank weeds. As July, perchance, has its spring side, so August has its autumnal side.

Was that the cackling of hens I heard, or the clicking of a very distant hand-organ?

Methinks the silvery cinquefoil is of late much more abundant. Is there any cessation to it? The green-briar berries begin to turn. Some large maples along the river are beginning to redden. I observe the stillness of the air and the smoothness of the water of late. The *Hieracium Canadense* is, methinks, the largest and handsomest flower of its genus, large as the fall dandelion; the *paniculatum* the most delicate. To-day and yesterday quite warm, or hot, again.

I am struck again and again by the richness of the

meadow-beauty lingering, though it will last some time, in little dense purple patches by the sides of the meadows. It is so low it escapes the scythe. It is not so much distinct flowers (it is so low and dense), but a colored patch on the meadow. Yet how few observe it! How, in one sense, it is wasted! How little thought the mower or the cranberry-raker bestows on it! How few girls or boys come to see it!

That small aster which I call *A. Tradescanti*, with crowded racemes, somewhat rolled or cylindrical to appearance, of small white flowers a third of an inch in diameter, with yellow disks turning reddish or purplish, is very pretty by the low roadsides, resounding with the hum of honey-bees; which is commonly despised for its smallness and commonness, — with crowded systems of little suns. The *Polygonum articulatum*, apparently not for some time yet. The large epilobium still plenty in flower in Tarbell's cleared swamp. Hazel bushes are now browned or yellowed along wall-sides in pastures; blackberry vines also are reddening. The *Solidago nemoralis* has commonly a long, sharply triangular head of small crowded flowers, evenly convex and often, if not commonly, recurved through a quarter of a circle, very handsome, solid-looking, recurved golden spear-heads. But frequently it is more erect and branched. What is that alga-like plant covering the ground in Tarbell's Swamp where lately burnt over, with close mats a rod in diameter, with fruit now two or three inches high, star-like, and little cups on the green thallus? <sup>1</sup> I see now puffballs, now

<sup>1</sup> *Marchantia polymorpha*.

four inches through, turned dark from white, and ripe, fill the air with dust four or five feet high when I kick them. Saw a red squirrel cutting off white pine cones. He had strewn the ground with them, as yet untouched, under the tree. He has a *chirrup* exactly like a partridge. Have made out *Aster multiflorus* by roadside beyond Badger house; probably not long out. It is distinguished by its hoariness, and its large herbaceous spreading calyx-tips and its crowded, somewhat rigid linear leaves, not tapering at base, low with a stout stem. A solidago by Marlborough road (*S. puberula?* or *neglecta?*), *stricta*-like, but panicle upright with short erectish racemes and lower leaves serrate, and five or six inches long; not long out. Should think it *stricta* if not for form of head; more like *puberula*, though this an imperfect one, in press.<sup>1</sup> I think my white daisy, which is still quite fresh in some places, must be *Erigeron strigosus*, for the hairs are minute and appressed, though the rays are not twice as long as the calyx-scales. I have seen no purplish ones since spring. *Aster undulatus* begins to be common. Johnswort, the large and common, is about done. That is the common polypody whose single fronds, six or eight inches long, stand thick in moss on the shelving rock at the Island.

The river nowadays is a permanent mirror stretching without end through the meadows, and unfailingly when I look out my window across the dusty road, I see it at a distance with the herbage of its brink reflected in it. There it lies, a mirror uncracked, unsoiled.

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* Aug. 24th and Sept. 11th.

Plants or weeds very widely dispersed over the globe command a certain respect, like *Sonchus oleraceus*, Oregon, New Zealand, Peru, Patagonia, etc.; *Sicyos angulatus*, New Zealand, Australia, Hawaiian Islands, etc.; *Polygonum aviculare*, *Chenopodium album*, and *Polygonum Persicaria*, Oregon and Egypt; also many others, according to Pickering.

Pickering says that "the missionaries [at the Hawaiian Islands]<sup>1</sup> regarded as one main obstacle to improvement the extremely limited views of the natives in respect to style of living; 'a little fish and a little poi, and they were content.'" But this is putting the cart before the horse, the real obstacle being their limited views in respect to the object of living. A philosopher has equally limited views in their sense, but then he is not content with material comforts, nor is it, perhaps, quite necessary that he first be glutted with them in order to become wise. "A native, I was assured, 'could be supported for less than two cents a day.'" (They had adopted the use of coin.)

The savage lives simply through ignorance and idleness or laziness, but the philosopher lives simply through wisdom. In the case of the savage, the accompaniment of simplicity is idleness with its attendant vices, but in the case of the philosopher, it is the highest employment and development. The fact for the savage, and for the mass of mankind, is that it is better to plant, weave, and build than do nothing or worse; but the fact for the philosopher, or a nation

<sup>1</sup> [The bracketed portion is Thoreau's.]

loving wisdom, is that it is most important to cultivate the highest faculties and spend as little time as possible in planting, weaving, building, etc. It depends upon the height of your standard, and no doubt through manual labor as a police men are educated up to a certain level. The simple style is bad for the savage because he does worse than to obtain the luxuries of life; it is good for the philosopher because he does better than to work for them. The question is whether you can bear freedom. At present the vast majority of men, whether black or white, require the discipline of labor which enslaves them for their good. If the Irishman did not shovel all day, he would get drunk and quarrel. But the philosopher does not require the same discipline; if he shovelled all day, we should receive no elevating suggestions from him.

What a literary fame is that of Æsop, — an Æsopian fame! Pickering says: "A little to the west of Celebes, the literature of the Malay nation contains a translation of the Fables of Æsop; who, according to the unsatisfactory accounts we have of him, was one of the earliest of the Greek writers. And further, the fact may be noted, that the Æsopian style of composition is still in vogue at Madagascar. (See Ellis's Madagascar.)" A fame on its way round eastward with the Malay race to this western continent! A fame that travels round the world from west to east. P. gives California to the Malay race!

There are two kinds of simplicity, — one that is akin to foolishness, the other to wisdom. The philosopher's style of living is only outwardly simple, but inwardly

complex. The savage's style is both outwardly and inwardly simple. A simpleton can perform many mechanical labors, but is not capable of profound thought. It was their limited view, not in respect to *style*, but to the *object* of living. A man who has equally limited views with respect to the end of living will not be helped by the most complex and refined style of living. It is not the tub that makes Diogenes, the Jove-born, but Diogenes the tub.

Sept. 2. P. M. — Collected and brought home in a pail of water this afternoon the following asters and diplopappi, going by Turnpike and Hubbard's Close to Saw Mill Brook, and returning by Goose Pond: (1) *A. Tradescanti*, now well under way, most densely flowered, by low roadsides; (2) *dumosus*, perhaps the most prevalent of the small whitish ones, especially in wood-paths; (3) *Diplopappus linariifolius*, quite common; (4) *A. patens*, at present by far the most common of the decidedly purple asters, in dry ground; (5) *undulatus*, just begun to be common; (6) *acuminatus*, low whorl, leafy, under a shady copse, where it appears to have been rayless, scarce; (7) *longifolius*, within a few days quite common in low ground; and (8) *puniceus*, very common in like places for a good while; (9) *Radula*, now rather pale and stale in low grounds; (10) *miser*, not as yet widely dispersed, but common in Saw Mill Brook Path; (11) *Diplopappus umbellatus*, abundant in low grounds; (12) *lævis*, I did not chance to see in this walk, but found it common the next morning, on hillside by Moore's Swamp. These

twelve are all I know excepting *corymbosus*<sup>1</sup> in Miles Swamp and elsewhere, long time, not common; also *macrophyllus*, long since, not blooming this year; *multiflorus*, in dry roadsides, not yet (at least) common; and *Diplopappus cornifolius*, Bittern Cliff woods, probably out of bloom.

These twelve placed side by side, Sophia and I decided that, regarding only individual flowers, the handsomest was —

1st, *A. patens*, deep bluish-purple ("deep blue-purple" are Gray's very words), large!

2d, *lævis*, bright lilac-purple, large.

3d, perhaps *Radula*, pale bluish-purple, turning white, large!

4th, 5th, 6th. We could not easily decide between the next three, viz.: —

<i>D. linariifolius</i> , pale bluish-purple <sup>2</sup>	} some large.
<i>A. puniceus</i> , purplish-pink	
and <i>A. longifolius</i> , pale purple	

But we thought afterward that perhaps the *puniceus* should take precedence of the other two.

7th, *undulatus*, pale pinkish-purple, middle size.

8th, 9th, and 10th,

*dumosus*, white or bluish, small;

*Tradescanti*, white, very small;

*miser*, white, very small;

and I may add *multiflorus*, white (which we had not).

11th, *Diplopappus umbellatus*, white, middle size.

<sup>1</sup> *Cordifolius*?

<sup>2</sup> Some, outdoors, have a lilac or violet tint.

12th. The *A. acuminatus* was without rays, rather large when present.

The first (*patens*) has broader rays than the second, paler within toward the large handsome yellow disk. Its rough leaves are not so handsome.

The *lavis* is more open and slender-rayed than the last, with a rather smaller disk, but, including its stem and leaves, it is altogether the most delicate and graceful, and I should incline to put it before the last.

The *Radula* has a large, coarse disk, turning brown, and at present is inclined to turn a dirty white. Its leaves are not handsome; sometimes double-rayed. Perhaps I should put this after the next two.

The *puniceus* is a very large bush full of flowers, great rounded masses, two or more feet in diameter, the very pretty pink flowers well relieved by the background of its dark-green leaves. A branch of it will, perhaps, make the greatest show of any of them at present. It has slender, rather open rays and grows upon me. It is peculiar for its color. Perhaps commonly more purplish and larger.

The *longifolius* is very densely rayed; rays too short in proportion to disk, and too pale. Some are very large bushes with a great profusion of buds now. Some are paler and have longer linear rays, split once or twice.

The *D. linariifolius* is interesting, with its commonly single flower, with very broad rays turned backward, or handsomer still when it has fifteen or twenty heads crowded together.

The *undulatus* has a very bushy spreading panicle of a great many middle-sized flowers of not many commonly slender and open rays. Often paler and broader than these.

The *Tradescanti* attracts attention in a vase, and carries off the palm with many, for its often perfect hollow pyramids of flowers with yellow or purplish disks.

The *dumosus*, too, is clearest white and neat. The *D. umbellatus*, a small sprig with its convex top, is a great ornament to the collection. The *miser* is like a broad-leaved and more spreading *Tradescanti* with still broader and more purplish disks, the rays turned back.

A strawberry blossoms again in meadow.

For three weeks the woods have had a strong musty smell from decaying fungi. The maple-leaved viburnum berries are a dark purple or black now. They are scarce. The red pyrus berries are ripe. The dense oval bunches of arum berries now startle the walker in swamps. They are a brilliant vermilion on a rich ground, seen where they have fallen off, which ground turns dark-purple. Saw an orange, and also a very bright yellow, slender fungus. *Solidago latifolia*, only a few out. The medeola berries are now dull glossy and almost blue-black; about three, on slender threads one inch long, arising in the midst of the cup formed by the purple bases of the whorl of three upper leaves. Hear the sharp *quiver* of pigeons at the Thrush Alley clearing. Mistook it for a jay at first, but saw the narrow, swift-flying bird soon. That low, thin, flat fern, already whitening, at Saw Mill Brook cannot be

the dicksonia, for the segments of its pinnæ are entire. *Solidago puberula* (?) just fairly begun on northwest (?) corner of Ministerial Clearing, behind Everett's; but it is not hoary and has a red stem; very neat and handsome. Found in Hubbard's Close Swamp and at Saw Mill Brook what is perhaps *Aspidium Filix-femina*, in fruit, and I think four other kinds which I could not make out, three in fruit. Also *Lycopodium lucidulum*, shining club-moss.

Sept. 3. Saturday. I saw this afternoon, on the chimney of the old Hunt house, in mortar filling an oblong square cavity apparently made when the chimney was, the date 1703.<sup>1</sup> The rafters in the garret are for the most part of oak hewn, and more slender (though sufficiently strong and quite sound) than any sawed ones I ever saw. Oak in the old houses, pine in the new.

The soapwort gentian out abundantly in Flint's Bridge Lane, apparently for a week; a surprisingly deep, faintly purplish blue. Crowded bunches of ten



or a dozen sessile and closed narrow or oblong diamond or sharp dome shape flowers. The whole bunch like many sharp domes of an Oriental city crowded together. I have here actually drawn my pen round one. It is the flowering of the sky. The sky has descended and kissed the earth. In (at top) a whorl of clear, smooth, rich green leaves. Why come these blue flowers thus

late in the year? A dome-like crowd of domelets.

<sup>1</sup> [See *Excursions*, p. 201; Riv. 247.]

Sophia saw last Monday morning (August 29th), going to Boston in the cars, the dew-like frost on the meadows. The hips of the sweet-briar begin to redden. Saw *Polygonum dumetorum* climbing to the top of birches and willows twelve feet high by the path to Peter's along river. It is a rampant climber.

Now is the season for those comparatively rare but beautiful wild berries which are not food for man. If we so industriously collect those berries which are sweet to the palate, it is strange that we do not devote an hour in the year to gathering those which are beautiful to the eye. It behooves me to go a-berrying in this sense once a year at least. Berries which are as beautiful as flowers, but far less known, the fruit of the flower. To fill my basket with the neglected but beautiful fruit of the various species of cornels and viburnums, poke, arum, medeola, thorns, etc.

Saw at the floral show this afternoon some splendid specimens of the sunflower, king of asters, with the disk filled with ligulate flowers.

Sept. 4. 5.30 A. M. — To Nawshawtuct by river.

Roman wormwood's yellow dust on my clothes. Hear a warbling vireo, — something rare. I do not succeed in making two varieties of *Polygonum amphibium*. All mine, from three inches above water and floating to three feet high on dry land, are apparently one. The first, at any rate, must be *aquaticum*, — floating, nearly smooth, and leaves more heart-shaped. It appears by insensible gradations to pass into the other. See one or two lilies yet. The fragrance of a

grape-vine branch, with ripe grapes on it, which I have brought home, fills the whole house. This fragrance is exceedingly rich, surpassing the flavor of any grape.

P. M. — To Cliffs *via* Hubbard's Swamp.

The skunk-cabbage fruit lies flat and black now in the meadow. The *Aster miser* is a pretty flower, with its commonly wide and loose branches, variegated or parti-colored with its white rays and broad purplish (and yellow) disks giving it a modestly parti-colored look, with green leaves of sufficient breadth to relieve the flowers.

Would it not be worth the while to devote one day each year to collecting with pains the different kinds of asters, — perhaps about this time, — and another to the goldenrods?

In Potter's dry pasture I saw the ground black with blackbirds (troopials?). As I approach, the front rank rises and flits a little further back into the midst of the flock, — it rolls up on the edges, — and, being thus alarmed, they soon take to flight, with a loud rippling rustle, but soon alight again, the rear wheeling swiftly into place like well-drilled soldiers. Instead of being an irregular and disorderly crowd, they appear to know and keep their places and wheel with the precision of drilled troops.

The lycopodium now sheds its pollen commonly. The hawks are soaring at the Cliffs. I think I never hear this peculiar, more musical scream, such as the jay appears to imitate, in the spring, only at and after midsummer when the young begin to fly. In Hubbard's

Swamp Path. Probably *Solidago speciosa*, though not yet in blossom there, very broad leaves, the radical-like plantain, covering the ground, and for the most part no more.

Carried a pail this afternoon to collect goldenrods and berries. The skunk-cabbage common. Hazels high time to gather; bushes browned. After handling some beaked hazelnuts the other day, observed my hand covered with extremely fine, shining, glass-like bristles. Arum in prime. The crowded clusters of shrub oak acorns are very handsome now, the rich, wholesome brown of the cups contrasting with the now clear green acorns, sometimes twenty-four with a breadth of three inches. China-like berries of cornel along the river now abundant, some cymes wholly white; also the paniced there and in swamps, though its little red (?) fingery stems are oftenest bare, but are pretty enough, perhaps, to take the place of the berries. The black choke-berries, as also choke-cherries, are stale. The two-leaved Solomon's-seal has just begun to redden; so the largest one. The creeping juniper berries are now a hoary green but full-grown. The scarlet thorn is in many places quite edible and now a deep scarlet. Polygonum and medecola now. Green-briar only begins to turn. *Viburnum nudum* rather stale. Clintonia probably about gone. Carrion-flower in prime. Maple viburnum fully ripe, like the *dentatum*. *Aralia hispida* getting old. Feverwort now. Rose hips generally beginning; and the two primroses beginning. Elder in prime, and cranberry. Smooth sumach stale. Celtis green.

There are, perhaps, four kinds of goldenrod in C. Hubbard's Swamp Path <sup>1</sup> which I am not certain about: one, which I have called *S. puberula*, with reddish stem; another, tall and slender, smooth, with a pyramidal panicle with four to six broad rays, leaves lanceolate, dwindling to mere bracts, appressed and entire above, *virgata*-like, which I will call *S. virgata*, — though its leaves are not entire, — till I examine the *stricta* again; <sup>2</sup> also another, with thin lanceolate leaves, symmetrically tapering at each end, rough on the edges and serrate, with, I believe, six or seven rays



(specimen now withered), and this I have already named for convenience *ulmifolia*, but the leaves are not elm-like.<sup>3</sup> Also another, with eight to twelve (?) rays and much narrower leaves than the above three, very taper-pointed, sessile, and with margined petiole and wavy upper, entire lower, lanceolate-spatulate, and toothed slightly near end. Has the *stricta* leaflets in the axils?<sup>4</sup>

Sept. 5. To Framingham.

Saw, in a meadow in Wayland, at a little distance,

<sup>1</sup> *Stricta* and *puberula*, etc., are there, August, 1859.

<sup>2</sup> This my early low-ground *stricta*-like.

<sup>3</sup> Probably form of *S. altissima*.

<sup>4</sup> *Vide* [p. 422].

what I have no doubt was an island of *Aster puniceus*, one rod in diameter, — one mass of flowers five feet high.

Sept. 7. R. W. E. brought from Yarmouth this week *Chrysopsis falcata* in bloom and *Vaccinium stamineum*, deerberry, or squaw huckleberry, — the last with green berries, some as large as cranberries, globular (not pear-shaped), on slender peduncles, not edible, in low ground.

Yesterday and to-day and day before yesterday, some hours of very warm weather, as oppressive as any in the year, one's thermometer at 93°.

Sept. 8. Roses, apparently *R. lucida*, abundantly out on a warm bank on Great Fields by Moore's Swamp, with *Viola pedata*.

Sept. 9. Half a bushel of handsome pears on the ground under the wild pear tree on Pedrick's land; some ripe, many more on tree. J. Wesson, who is helping me survey to-day, says that, when they dug the cellar of Stacy's shop, he saw where they cut through (with the spade) birches six inches in diameter, on which the Mill-Dam had been built; also that Nathan Hosmer, Sr., since dead, told him that he had cut meadow-grass between the bakehouse and the Middlesex Hotel. I find myself covered with green and winged lice from the birches.

Sept. 10. The pontederia and pads have already their fall look by river. It is not the work of frost. The *Aster*



*Tradescanti*, now in its prime, sugars the banks all along the riverside with a profusion of small white blossoms resounding with the hum of bees. It covered the ground to the depth of two feet over large tracts, looking at a little distance somewhat like a smart hoar frost or sleet or sugaring on the weeds. The banks are sugared with the *A. Tradescanti*.

Sept. 11. *Sunday*. Cool weather. Sit with windows shut, and many by fires. A great change since the 6th, when the heat was so oppressive. The air has got an autumnal coolness which it will not get rid of again.

P. M. — To Dugan's.

I think I can correct somewhat my account of the goldenrods of September 4th, [two] pages back. No. 2 may be *S. stricta*, after all. (*Vide* the one at Hosmer's ditch.) Is not the *puberula* of September 4th same with No. 2? Is not No. 3 one form of *S. altissima*? Doubt if I have seen *S. ulmifolia*. Is not No. 4 the true *S. puberula*? It is the same with that by Marlborough road, September 1st. The *speciosa* may not open for a week yet.

The present appearance of the solidago in Hosmer's ditch which may be *S. stricta*<sup>1</sup> is a stout erect red stem with entire, lanceolate, thick, fleshy, smooth sessile leaves above, gradually increasing in length downward till ten inches long and becoming toothed.<sup>2</sup> All parts very smooth. Not yet out. This apparently same with No. 2.

The *S. nemoralis* is not as fresh as a week ago. Per-

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* Nov. 3d and 4th.

<sup>2</sup> Not sharply.

haps that was the date for the goldenrods generally. Perhaps this is the time for asters. The conspicuous and handsome bluish masses of *A. puniceus*, erect or fallen, stretch in endless rows along the brook, often as high as your head; sometimes make islands in the meadow. *Polygonum articulatum* out, many of them, at the Desert. None out September 1st. Say, then, September 5th. *A. undulatus* is now in prime, very abundant along path-sides. The branches of its panicle are commonly of about equal length on different sides the stem, and as the flowers are crowded and stand vertically on the sides as well as horizontally above, they form one (or sometimes more) conical or pyramidal or cylindrical hollow panicles of middle-sized purplish flowers, roundly bunched.

Signs of frost last night in M. Miles's cleared swamp. Potato vines black. How much farther it is back to frost from the greatest heat of summer, *i. e.* from the 6th [of this month] back to the 1st of June, three months, than forward to it, four days!

Checkerberries are full-grown, but green. They must have been new mitchella berries, then, that I saw some time ago. River cornel berries have begun to disappear. In a stubble-field, I go through a very fine, diffusely branching grass now going to seed, which is like a reddish mist to my eyes, two feet deep, and trembling around me.

There is an aster in Hosmer's ditch, like *longifolius*, with linear leaves remotely toothed, red stem, smooth, three or four feet high, but scales not recurved and flowers much smaller, with many purplish disks.

Sept. 12. I was struck this afternoon with the beauty of the *Aster corymbosus* with its corymbed flowers, with seven or eight long slender white rays pointed at both ends, ready to curl, shaving-like, and purplish disks, — one of the more interesting asters. The *Smilacina racemosa* berries are well red now; probably with the two-leaved.

It occurred to me when I awoke this morning, feeling regret for intemperance of the day before in eating fruit, which had dulled my sensibilities, that man was to be treated as a musical instrument, and if any viol was to be made of sound timber and kept well tuned always, it was he, so that when the bow of events is drawn across him he may vibrate and resound in perfect harmony. A sensitive soul will be continually trying its strings to see if they are in tune. A man's body must be rasped down exactly to a shaving. It is of far more importance than the wood of a Cremona violin.

[Here follows an account of Thoreau's second excursion to the Maine woods, which began September 13th. As the story is told elsewhere, virtually in the language of the Journal, it is here omitted, with the exception of a few scattered sentences and paragraphs which for one reason or another were not used in the paper entitled "Chesuncook."]

Sept. 16. Friday. He [Joe Atean or Aitteon]<sup>1</sup> said the stone-heaps (though we saw none) were made by chub.

<sup>1</sup> [In the Journal the name of the guide appears as Atean, and Thoreau "thought it might be the French Étienne, though Joe pronounced

Sept. 17. Saturday.

The head [of the moose],<sup>1</sup> measuring from the root of the ears to the end of the nose or upper lip

	2 feet	2½ inches
Head and neck (from nose to breast (?) direct)	4 "	3½ "
Fore leg below level of body	4 "	9½ "
Height behind (from the tips of the hoofs to top of back)	6 "	11 "
Height from tips of hoofs to level with back above shoulders <sup>2</sup>	7 "	5 "
Extreme length (from nose to tail)	8 "	2 "

The ears 10 inches long.

Sept. 18. Sunday. One end of the log hut<sup>3</sup> was a camp, with the usual fir floor and log benches and a clerk's office. I measured one of the many batteaux lying about, with my two-foot ash rule made here. It was not peculiar in any respect that I noticed.

Extreme length	31 feet
Extreme width	5½ "
Width of bottom	2½ "
Length of "	20½ "
" " bow	6½ "
" " stern	3½ "
Depth within	17 inches.

Sept. 19. Monday. I looked very narrowly at the vegetation as we glided along close to the shore, and it *At*, etc." This is probably a more correct spelling than the Aitteon of the book. Mrs. Fannie Hardy Eckstorm in *The Penobscot Man* (Boston, 1904) gives a considerable account of this man and his exploits and spells his name "Attien."

<sup>1</sup> [See *Maine Woods*, p. 126; Riv. 153.]

<sup>2</sup> [See *ibid.*, where Thoreau says this measurement was incorrect.]

<sup>3</sup> [Ansell Smith's. See *Maine Woods*, pp. 137-144; Riv. 167-176.]

now and then made Joe turn aside for me to pluck a plant, that I might see what was primitive about our Concord River.

*Sept. 20. Tuesday.* About Hinckley's camp I saw the *Fringilla hyemalis*; also a bird a little smaller, maybe, brownish and yellowish, with some white tail-feathers, which I think makes the *tull-tull* sound, hopping on the wood-pile. Is not this the myrtle-bird? Their note interested me because I formerly had many a chase in a spring morning in the direction of this sound, in vain, to identify the bird. The lumberers said it came round the camps, and they gave it a vulgar name. Also, about the carry, a chubby sparrow with dark-brown or black stripes on the head. Saw a large and new woodpecker, probably the red-headed, making a noise like the pigeon woodpecker.

There was one woman on board, who got in at the Kineo House, who looked oddly in the one saloon for gentlemen and ladies, amid the red shirts of the lumbermen. It rained very hard while we were aboard the steamer. We had a small sloop in tow, and another stopped to speak with us, to inquire after a man who was missing. A fortnight before, he had left his horse and carriage at Sawyer's, saying that he was going to get a moose and should be back in two days. He set out in a birch alone from the south end of the lake. At length they had sent the horse home, which brought on his friends, who were now looking for him and feared that he was lost in the lake. It

was not very wise to set out in a canoe from the south end of the lake to kill a moose in two days. They thought that if he had fallen in with one Whitton, a hunter, he was safe enough.

*Sept. 21.* Started at 7 A. M., Wednesday. In Guilford I went into a clapboard-mill on the Piscataquis. In this town we took a new route, keeping the north side of the Piscataquis at first, through Foxcroft, Dover (quite a town), Garland, Charleston, East Corinth, Levant, Glenburn, and Hermon, to Bangor. Saw robins in flocks going south. Rode in the rain again. A few oaks near Bangor. Rained all day, which prevented the view of Ktaadn, otherwise to be seen in very many places. Stumps cut high, showing the depth of the snows. Straight roads and long hills. The country was level to the eye for twenty or thirty miles toward the Penobscot Valley. Most towns have an academy. Even away up toward the lake we saw a sort of gallows erected near one for the pupils to exercise upon.<sup>1</sup> I had not dreamed of such degeneracy so hard upon the primitive wilderness. The white pines near Bangor perfectly parti-colored and falling to-day. Reached Bangor at dark.

*Sept. 22. Thursday.* He<sup>2</sup> had made speeches at the Legislature. He and a companion were once put into

<sup>1</sup> [Maine Woods, p. 98; Riv. 118.]

<sup>2</sup> [Governor Neptune of the Penobscot tribe. See Maine Woods, pp. 162-165; Riv. 199-203.]

the bootblacks' room at the hotel in Portland, when attending the Legislature. In the morning they walked off in disgust to see the Governor of the State. He asked what was the matter. They said they could not stay there; there was too much boot there; Indians did not like boot any more than white man. The Governor saw the matter righted.

Behind one house, an Indian had nearly finished one canoe and was just beginning another, outdoors. I looked very narrowly at the process and had already carefully examined and measured our birch. We asked this Indian his name. He answered readily and pleasantly, "My name is Old John Pennyweight."<sup>1</sup> Said he got his bark at the head of Passadumkeag, fifty miles off. Took him two days to find one tree that was suitable; had to look very sharp to be sure the bark was not imperfect. But once he made two birches out of one tree. Took the bark off with a shovel made of rock maple, three or four inches wide. It took him a fortnight or three weeks to complete a canoe after he had got the materials ready. They sometimes made them of spruce bark, and also of skins, but they were not so good as birch. Boats of three hides were quicker made. This was the best time to get the birch bark. It would not come off in the winter. (I had heard Joe say of a certain canoe that it was made of summer bark.) They scrape all the inner bark off, and in the canoe the bark is wrong side outward.

<sup>1</sup> [Maine Woods, p. 165; Riv. 203.]




He had the ribs of a canoe, all got out of cedar, — the first step in making a canoe, after materials [have been] brought together, — and each one shaped for the particular place it was to hold in the canoe. As both ends are alike, there will be two ribs alike. These two were placed close together, and the next in succession each way were placed next on each side, and thus tied up in bundles of fourteen to sixteen till all were made. In the bundle I examined, they were two and a half inches wide in the middle and narrowing to the ends. He would untie a bundle, take out the inmost, or longest, or several, and place them on their ends in a very large iron kettle of hot water over a fire, turning them from time to time. Then, taking one of the inmost or longest ones, he bent and shaped it with much labor over his knee, giving it with his eyes the shape it was to have in the canoe. It was then tied firmly and held in that shape with the reddish cedar bark. Sometimes he was obliged to tie a straight piece of wood on tangent-wise to the rib, and, with a bark tie, draw out a side of the rib to that.





Then each succeeding smaller rib in one half the bundle is forced into this. The first bundles of fourteen or sixteen making two bundles of steamed and bent and tied-up ribs; and thus all are left to dry in that shape.

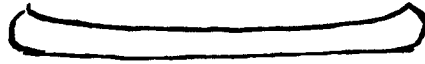
I was sorry that I could not be there to witness the next step in making a canoe, for I was much struck by the *method* of this work, and the process deserves to be minutely described, — as much, at least, as most


of the white man's arts, accounts of which now fill the journals. I do not know how the bark is made to hug so tightly the ribs, unless they are driven into place somewhat like a hoop. One of the next things must be to make the long, thin sheathing of cedar, less than half an inch thick, of pieces half the length of the birch, reaching each way close together beneath the ribs, and quite thin toward the edges of the canoe. However, I examined the canoe that was nearly done with minuteness. The edge or taffrail is composed first of two long strips of cedar, rather stout, one on each side. Four narrow hardwood (rock maple) cross-bars, artfully shaped so that no strength may be wasted, keep these apart, give firmness to the whole, and answer for seats. The ends of the ribs come up behind or outside this taffrail and are nailed to it with a single nail. Pennyweight said they formerly used wooden pegs.<sup>1</sup> The edge of the bark


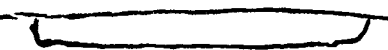
 is brought up level with this, and a very slender triangular cleat of cedar is nailed on over it and flush with the surface of the taffrail. Then there are ties of split white spruce bark (looking like split bamboo) through the bark, between the ribs, and around these two strips of cedar, and over the two strips one flat and thin strip covering the ties, making smooth work and coming out flush with the under strips.  Thus the edge of the canoe is completed.  Owing to the form of the canoe, there must be some seams near the edge on the sides about eighteen inches apart, and pieces


<sup>1</sup> Polis canoe in '57 had them.

of bark are put under them. The edges of the bark are carefully sewed together at the ends  with the same spruce roots, and, in our canoe, a  strip of canvas covered with pitch was laid (doubled) over the edge. They use rosin now, but pitch formerly. Canoe is

 nearly straight on bottom—straight

in principle—and not so rounded the other way as is supposed.  *Vide* this section in middle.

The sides  bulge out an inch or so beyond the rail. There is an additional piece of bark, four or five inches wide, along each side in the middle for four or five feet, for  protection, and a

similar protecting strip for eighteen inches on each side at the ends. The canoe rises about one foot in the last five or six feet. There is an oval piece of cedar  for stiffness inside, within a foot of each end, and near this the ribs are bent short to breaking. Beyond there are not ribs, but sheaths and a small keel-like piece, and the hollow is filled with shavings. Lightness, above all, is studied in the construction. Nails and rosin were all the modern things I noticed. The maker used one of those curved knives, and worked very hard at bending the knees.

Went into a batteau manufactory. Said they made knees of almost anything; that they were about worn out in one trip up river. Were worth fourteen or sixteen dollars, lumber being high. Weigh three hundred (?) [pounds], just made, though he did n't know

exactly about it. Long spike poles, with a screw in the spike to make it hold.

Sept. 23. *Friday*. Walked down the riverside this forenoon to the hill where they were using a steam-shovel at the new railroad cut, and thence to a hill three quarters of a mile further. Saw *Aster undulatus*, *Solidago nemoralis*, fragrant everlasting, silvery cinquefoil, small white birch, *Lobelia inflata*, both kinds of primrose, low cudweed, lactuca, *Polygonum cilinode* (apparently out of bloom), yellow oxalis. I returned across the fields behind the town, and over the highest hill behind Bangor, and up the Kenduskieg, from which I saw the Ebecme Mountains in the northwest and hills we had come by. The arbor-vitæ is the prevailing shrub.

Sept. 24. *Saturday*. Saw Ktaadn from a hill about two miles northwest of Bangor on the road to Pushaw. It is about eighty miles from Bangor. This was the nearest point from which we made out to see it. In the afternoon, walked up the Kenduskieg. White golden-rod, fall dandelion, hog peanut, *Solidago arguta*<sup>1</sup> and *altissima*, *Aster macrophyllus* (?), and red maple (?). Witch-hazel well out. *Epilobium coloratum*, *Solidago squarrosa*, *S. latifolia*, *Aster cordifolius* (?).

Sept. 25. *Sunday*. Dined with Lowell. Said the largest pine Goddard's men cut last winter scaled in the woods forty-five hundred feet board measure,

<sup>1</sup> That is, probably *gigantea*.

and was worth ninety dollars at the Bangor boom, Oldtown. They cut a road three miles and a half for this alone. They do not make much of a path, however. From L. I learned that the untouched white pine timber which comes down the Penobscot waters is to be found at the head of the East Branch and the head waters of the Allegash, about Eagle Lake and Chamberlain, etc., and Webster Stream. But Goddard had bought the stumpage in eight townships in New Brunswick. They are also buying up townships across the Canada line.

Sept. 26 and 27. Monday and Tuesday I was coming to Boston and Concord. Aboard the steamer Boston were several droves of sheep and oxen and a great crowd of passengers.

Sept. 28. *Wednesday*. In Concord.

The elm leaves are falling. The fringed gentian was out before Sunday; was (some of it) withered then, says Edith Emerson.

Sept. 29. *Thursday*. Cool and windy. Wind roars in the trees. *Viola cucullata*, *Aster puniceus* and *longifolius* still. *Solidago speciosa* out in Hubbard's Swamp since I went away, — say ten days ago. This must be a late one, then. *Diplopappus linariifolius*, *Aster undulatus*, and a few small ones. Red oak acorns fall. The witch-hazel at Lee's Cliff, in a fair situation, has but begun to blossom; has not been long out, so that I think it must be later than the gentian. Its

leaves are yellowed. Barberry ripe. Sumachs and maples changed, but not trees generally. Bluets still. *Viburnum Lentago* berries yet. Lambkill blossoms again.

*Sept. 30. Friday.* Saw a large flock of black ducks flying northwest in the form of a harrow.