

## III

NOVEMBER, 1854

(ET. 37)

*Nov. 1.* It is a little cooler.

*Nov. 2. Thursday.* P. M. — By boat to Clamshell.

I suspect the clams are partly gone down. May not this movement contribute to compel the muskrats to erect their cabins nearer the brink or channel, in order still to be near their food? Other things being equal, they would have to swim further than before to get the clams in the middle, but now, in addition, the water is beginning to rise and widen the river.

I see larks hovering over the meadow and hear a faint note or two, and a pleasant note from tree sparrows (?).

Sailing past the bank above the railroad, just before a clear sundown, close to the shore on the east side I see a second fainter shadow of the boat, sail, myself, and paddle, etc., directly above and upon the first on the bank. What makes the second? At length I discovered that it was the reflected sun which cast a higher shadow like the true one. As I moved to the west side, the upper shadow rose, grew larger and less perceptible: and at last when I was so near the west shore that I could not see the reflected sun, it disappeared; but then there appeared one upside down in its place!

*Nov. 4.* Saw a shrike in an apple tree, with apparently a worm in its mouth. The shad-bush buds have expanded into small leaflets already. This while surveying on the old Colburn farm.

*Nov. 5. Sunday.* To White Pond with Charles Wheeler.

Passing the mouth of John Hosmer's hollow near the river, was hailed by him and Anthony Wright, sitting there, to come and see where they had dug for money. There was a hole six feet square and as many deep, and the sand was heaped about over a rod square. Hosmer said that it was dug two or three weeks before, that three men came in a chaise and dug it in the night. They were seen about there by day. Somebody dug near there in June, and then they covered up the hole again. He said they had been digging thereabouts from time to time for a hundred years. I asked him why. He said that Dr. Lee, who lived where Joe Barrett did, told him that old Mr. Wood, who lived in a house very near his (Hosmer's), told him that, one night in Captain Kidd's day, three pirates came to his house with a pair of old-fashioned deer-skin breeches, both legs full of coin, and asked leave to bury it in his cellar. He was afraid, and refused them. They then asked for some earthen pots and shovels and a lanthorn, which he let them have. A woman in the house followed the pirates at a distance down the next hollow on the south, and saw them go along the meadow-side and turn up this hollow, and then, being alone and afraid, she returned. Soon after

the men returned with the tools and an old-fashioned hat full of the coin (holding about a quart), which they gave to Wood. He, being afraid, buried it in his cellar, but afterward, becoming a poor man, dug it up and used it. A bailiff made some inquiry hereabouts after the pirates.

Hosmer said that one thing which confirmed the diggers in their belief was the fact that when he was a little boy, plowing one day with his father on the hill-side, they found three old-fashioned bottles bottom upward but empty under the plow. Somebody consulted Moll Pitcher, who directed to dig at a certain distance from an apple tree on a line with the bottles, and then they would find the treasure.

I think it is the fox-colored sparrow I see in flocks and hear sing now by wood-sides.

*Nov. 6.* Surveying on Colburn place.

It is suddenly cold. Pools frozen so as to bear, and ground frozen so that it is difficult, if not impossible, to force down a stake in plowed ground. Was that a fish hawk I saw flying over the Assabet, or a goshawk? White beneath, with slender wings.

*Nov. 8.* I can still rake clams near the shore, but they are chiefly in the weeds, I think. I see a snipe-like bird by riverside this windy afternoon, which goes off with a sound like creaking tackle.

*Nov. 10.* P. M. — Sail to Ball's Hill with W. E. C. See where the muskrats have eaten much ponte-

deria root. Got some donacia grubs for Harris, but find no chrysalids. The sight of the masses of yellow hastate leaves and flower-buds of the yellow lily, already four or six inches long, at the bottom of the river, reminds me that nature is prepared for an infinity of springs yet.

*Nov. 11.* Minott heard geese go over night before last, about 8 P. M. Therien, too, heard them "yelling like anything" over Walden, where he is cutting, the same evening. He cut down a tree with a flying squirrel on it; often sees them. Received this evening a letter in French and three "ouvrages" from the Abbé Rougette in Louisiana.

*Nov. 13.* It has rained hard the 11th, 12th, and 13th, and the river is *at last* decidedly rising. On Friday, 10th, it was still at summer level.

*Nov. 14.* The river is slightly over the meadows. The willow twigs on the right of the Red Bridge causeway are bright greenish-yellow and reddish as in the spring. Also on the right railroad sand-bank at Heywood's meadow. Is it because they are preparing their catkins now against another spring? The first wreck line — of pontederia, sparganium, etc. — is observable.

*Nov. 15.* The first snow, a mere sugaring which went off the next morning.

*Nov. 16.* P. M. — Sailed to Hubbard's Bridge.

Almost every muskrat's house is covered by the flood, though they were unusually high, as well as numerous, and the river is not nearly so high as last year. I see where they have begun to raise them another story. A few cranberries begin to wash up, and rails, boards, etc., may now be collected by wreckers.

*Nov. 17.* Paddled up river to Clamshell and sailed back.

I think it must have been a fish hawk which I saw hovering over the meadow and my boat (a raw cloudy afternoon), now and then sustaining itself in one place a hundred feet or more above the water, intent on a fish, with a hovering or fluttering motion of the wings somewhat like a kingfisher. Its wings were very long, slender, and curved in outline of front edge. I think there was some white on rump. It alighted near the top of an oak within rifle-shot of me and my boat, afterward on the tip-top of a maple by waterside, looking very large.

*Nov. 18.* Saw sixty geese go over the Great Fields, in one waving line, broken from time to time by their crowding on each other and vainly endeavoring to form into a harrow, honking all the while.

*Nov. 20.* To Philadelphia. 7 A. M., to Boston; 9 A. M., Boston to New York, by express train, land route.

See the reddish soil (red sandstone?) all through Connecticut. Beyond Hartford a range of rocky hills

crossing the State on each side the railroad, the eastern one very precipitous, and apparently terminating at East Rock at New Haven. Pleasantest part of the whole route between Springfield and Hartford, along the river; perhaps include the hilly region this side of Springfield. Reached Canal Street at 5 P. M., or candle-light.

Started for Philadelphia from foot of Liberty Street at 6 P. M., *via* Newark, etc., etc., Bordentown, etc., etc., Camden Ferry, to Philadelphia, all in the dark. Saw only the glossy panelling of the cars reflected out into the dark, like the magnificent lit façade of a row of edifices reaching all the way to Philadelphia, except when we stopped and a lantern or two showed us a ragged boy and the dark buildings of some New Jersey town. Arrive at 10 P. M.; time, four hours from New York, thirteen from Boston, fifteen from Concord. Put up at Jones's Exchange Hotel, 77 Dock Street; lodgings thirty-seven and a half cents per night, meals separate; not to be named with French's in New York; next door to the fair of the Franklin Institute, then open, and over against the Exchange, in the neighborhood of the printing-offices.

*Nov. 21.* Looked from the cupola of the State-House, where the Declaration of Independence was declared. The best view of the city I got. Was interested in the squirrels, gray and black, in Independence and Washington Squares. Heard that they have, or have had, deer in Logan Square. The squirrels are fed, and live in boxes in the trees in the winter. Fine

view from Fairmount water-works. The line of the hypotenuse of the gable end of Girard College was apparently deflected in the middle six inches or more, reminding me of the anecdote of the church of the Madeleine in Paris.

Was admitted into the building of the Academy of Natural Sciences by a Mr. Durand of the botanical department, Mr. Furness applying to him. The carpenters were still at work adding four stories (!) of galleries to the top. These four (Furness thought all of them, I am not sure but Durand referred to one side only) to be devoted to the birds. It is said to be the largest collection of birds in the world. They belonged to the son of Masséna (Prince of Essling?), and were sold at auction, and bought by a Yankee for \$22,000, over all the crowned heads of Europe, and presented to the Academy.<sup>1</sup> Other collections, also, are added to this. The Academy has received great donations. There is Morton's collection of crania, with (I suppose a *cast* from) an Indian skull found in an Ohio mound; a polar bear killed by Dr. Kane; a male moose not so high as the female which we shot; a European elk (a skeleton) about seven feet high, with horns each about five feet long and *tremendously*

<sup>1</sup> [The "Yankee" referred to was Dr. Thomas B. Wilson, once president of the Academy, and the sum named includes the prices of other purchases made by him, chief of which was that of the Gould collection of Australian birds. Fifty thousand francs was the amount paid for the Masséna collection. See Dr. Wilson's amusing account of the transaction as quoted by Mr. Witmer Stone in *The Auk*, 1899, p. 174. The original owners of this collection were General Masséna and his son Victor, Duke of Rivoli and Prince of Essling.]

heavy; grinders, etc., of the *Mastodon giganteum* from Barton County, Missouri; etc., etc. Zinzinger was named as of the geological department.

In Philadelphia and also New York an ornamental tree with bunches of seed-vessels supplying the place of leaves now. I suppose it the ailanthus, or Tree of Heaven. What were those trees with long, black sickle-shaped pods? I did not see Steinhäuser's Burd family<sup>1</sup> at St. Stephen's Church. The American Philosophical Society is described as a company of old women.

In the narrow market-houses in the middle of the streets, was struck by the neat-looking women market-ers with full cheeks. Furness described a lotus identical with an Egyptian one as found somewhere down the river below Philadelphia; also spoke of a spotted chrysalis which he had also seen in Massachusetts. There was a mosquito about my head at night. Lodged at the United States Hotel, opposite the Girard (formerly United States) Bank.

Nov. 22. Left at 7.30 A. M. for New York, by boat to Tacony and rail *via* Bristol, Trenton, Princeton (near by), New Brunswick, Rahway, Newark, etc. Uninteresting, except the boat. The country very level, — red sandstone (?) sand, — apparently all New Jersey except the northern part. Saw wheat stubble and winter wheat come up like rye. Was that Jamestown-weed with a prickly bur? Seen also in Connecticut.

<sup>1</sup> [A marble group entitled "The Angel of the Resurrection," erected to the memory of the children of Edward Shippen Burd.]

Many Dutch barns. Just after leaving Newark, an extensive marsh, between the railroad and the Kill, full of the *Arundo Phragmites*, I should say, which had been burnt over.

Went to Crystal Palace; admired the houses on Fifth Avenue, the specimens of coal at the Palace, one fifty feet thick as it was cut from the mine, in the form of a square column, iron and copper ore, etc. Saw sculptures and paintings innumerable, and armor from the Tower of London, some of the Eighth Century. Saw Greeley; Snow, the commercial editor of the *Tribune*; Solon Robinson; Fry, the musical critic, etc.; and others. Greeley carried me to the new opera-house, where I heard Grisi and her troupe. First, at Barnum's Museum, I saw the camelopards, said to be one eighteen the other sixteen feet high. I should say the highest stood about fifteen feet high at most (twelve or thirteen ordinarily). The body was only about five feet long. Why has it horns, but for ornament? Looked through his diorama, and found the houses all over the world much alike. Greeley appeared to know and be known by everybody; was admitted free to the opera, and we were led by a page to various parts of the house at different times. Saw at Museum some large flakes of cutting arrowhead stone made into a sort of wide cleavers, also a hollow stone tube, probably from mounds.

*Nov. 26.* What that little long-sharp-nosed mouse I found in the Walden road to-day? Brown above, gray beneath, black incisors, five toes with claws on

each foot, long snout with small blunt black extremity, many mustachios, eyes far forward, feet light or dirty white, tail  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches long, whole length  $3\frac{3}{4}$  inches; on causeway.

*Nov. 28.* Paddled to Clamshell.

Still very clear and bright as well as comfortable weather. River not so high as on the 16th.

Were those plover which just after sunset flew low over the bank above the railroad and alighted in the opposite meadow, with some white in tails like larks, gray birds, rather heavier than robins?

*Nov. 30.* P. M. — Sail down river.

No ice, but strong cold wind; river slightly over meadows. Was that large diver which was on the edge of the shore and scooted away down-stream as usual, throwing the water about for a quarter of a mile, then diving, some time afterward flying up-stream over our head, the goosander or red-breasted merganser? It was large, with, I should say, a white breast, long reddish bill, bright-red or pink on sides or beneath, reddish-brown crest, white speculum, upper part of throat dark, lower white with breast.