

XI

JUNE, 1857

(ÆT. 39)

June 1. P. M. — To Hill.

The weather has been less reliable for a few weeks past than at any other season of the year. Though fair in the forenoon, it may rain in the afternoon, and the continuance of the showers surpasses all expectation. After several days of rain a fair day may succeed, and you close your eyes at night on a starlit sky, but you awake unexpectedly to a steady rain in the morning.

The morus at the Lee house is apparently the same with that at Howe's and Pratt's, and the berries are now three quarters of an inch long. I see no staminate blossoms. It must have been out several days. It is undoubtedly the *Morus rubra*, our only native one, for the *nigra* has lobed leaves and is a smaller tree, rare, and not quite hardy enough to do well in New England, they say.¹

The second thorn on Hill will evidently open tomorrow. It is altogether smooth while the first has downy peduncles, and its sepals are about entire while those of the first are cut-fringed. That largest and earliest thorn is now in full bloom, and I notice that its

¹ I read in Michaux, June 12, that the sexes of the *rubra* are usually separate, and that the fruit of the black is three or four times as large as this.

bloom is much whiter at a little distance than that of an apple tree, which has a blue tinge (or, earlier, rosaceous). This thorn has pink anthers, seen close at hand. The leaves are very evenly distributed amid the bloom. I see a swamp white [oak] fully and abundantly out, apparently a day or two; so the chestnut oak (which begins to shed pollen in house June 2d; its young reddish leaves resemble the young *Q. Chinquapin*, and its bloom, and apparently it opens with it in similar places) may be put apparently with the white oak. But it grows in a rather late place.

P. arbutifolia var. *erythrocarpa* in house; perhaps a day or two earlier in some places.

A red-wing's nest, four eggs, low in a tuft of sedge in an open meadow. What Champollion can translate the hieroglyphics on these eggs? It is always writing of the same character, though much diversified. While the bird picks up the material and lays the egg, who determines the style of the marking? When you approach, away dashes the dark mother, betraying her nest, and then chatters her anxiety from a neighboring bush, where she is soon joined by the red-shouldered male, who comes scolding over your head, chattering and uttering a sharp *phé phée-e*.

I hear the note of a bobolink concealed in the top of an apple tree behind me. Though this bird's full strain is ordinarily somewhat trivial, this one appears to be meditating a strain as yet unheard in meadow or orchard. *Paulo majora canamus*. He is just touching the strings of his theorbo, his glassichord, his water organ, and one or two notes globe themselves and fall

in liquid bubbles from his teeming throat.¹ It is as if he touched his harp within a vase of liquid melody, and when he lifted it out, the notes fell like bubbles from the trembling strings. Methinks they are the most *liquidly* sweet and melodious sounds I ever heard. They are refreshing to my ear as the first distant tinkling and gurgling of a rill to a thirsty man. Oh, never advance farther in your art, never let us hear your full strain, sir. But away he launches, and the meadow is all bespattered with melody. His notes fall with the apple blossoms, in the orchard. The very divinest part of his strain dropping from his overflowing breast *singultim*, in globes of melody. It is the foretaste of such strains as never fell on mortal ears, to hear which we should rush to our doors and contribute all that we possess and are. Or it seemed as if in that vase full of melody some notes sphered themselves, and from time to time bubbled up to the surface and were with difficulty repressed.

June 2. Sterile buttonwood, not yet *generally*, but some apparently several days at least.

It was a portion of the natural surface of the earth itself which jutted out and became my roof the other day. How fit that Nature should thus shelter her own children! The first drops were dimpling the pond even as the fishes had done.

The grass is flaming up through the shallow water on the meadows.

It is very warm till 3 P. M., and then a washing breeze

¹ [Channing, p. 96.]

arises, and before night probably distant thunder-showers have cooled the air, for after dark we see the flashes called heat lightning in the north, and hear the distant thunder. Geraniums bring thunder.

That bobolink's song affected me as if one were endeavoring to keep down globes of melody within a vase full of liquid, but some bubbled up irrepressible, — kept thrusting them down with a stick, but they slipped and came up one side.

A young sparrow already flies.

Drove this afternoon to Painted-Cup Meadow.

A tanager yesterday.

June 3. P. M. — To White Cedar Swamp.

Salix lucida out of bloom, but *S. nigra* still in bloom. I see a large branch of *S. lucida*, which has been broken off probably by the ice in the winter and come down from far up-stream and lodged, butt downward, amid some bushes, where it has put forth pink fibres from the butt end in the water, and is growing vigorously, though not rooted in the bottom. It is thus detained by a clump of bushes at high water, where it begins to sprout and send its pink fibres down to the mud, and finally the water, getting down to the summer level, leaves it rooted in the bank.

The first cratægus on Hill is in many instances done, while the second is not fairly or generally in bloom yet. The pitch pine at Hemlocks is in bloom. The sterile flowers are yellowish, while those of the *P. resinosa* are dark-purple. As usual, when I jar them the pollen rises in a little cloud about the pistillate flowers and the

tops of the twigs, there being a little wind. The bass at the Island will not bloom this year.¹ The racemed andromeda (*Leucothoë*) has been partly killed, — the extremities of the twigs, — so that its racemes are imperfect, the lower parts only green. It is not quite out; probably is later for this injury.

The ground of the cedar swamp, where it has been burnt over and sprouts, etc., have sprung up again, is covered with the *Marchantia polymorpha*. Now shows its starlike or umbrella-shaped fertile flowers and its shield-shaped sterile ones. It is a very rank and wild-looking vegetation, forming the cuticle of the swamp's foundation.

I feel the suckers' nests with my paddle, but do not see them on account of the depth of the river. Many small devil's-needles, like shad-flies, in bushes.

Early potatoes are being hoed. The gardener is killing the piper grass.

I have several friends and acquaintances who are very good companions in the house or for an afternoon walk, but whom I cannot make up my mind to make a longer excursion with; for I discover, all at once, that they are too gentlemanly in manners, dress, and all their habits. I see in my mind's eye that they wear black coats, considerable starched linen, glossy hats and shoes, and it is out of the question. It is a great disadvantage for a traveller to be a gentleman of this kind; he is so ill-treated, only a prey to landlords. It would be too much of a circumstance to enter a strange town or house with such a companion. You could not

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travel incognito; you might get into the papers. You should travel as a common man. If such a one were to set out to make a walking-journey, he would betray himself at every step. Every one would see that he was trying an experiment, as plainly as they see that a lame man is lame by his limping. The natives would bow to him, other gentlemen would invite him to ride, conductors would warn him that this was the second-class car, and many would take him for a clergyman; and so he would be continually pestered and balked and run upon. You would not see the natives at all. Instead of going in quietly at the back door and sitting by the kitchen fire, you would be shown into a cold parlor, there to confront a fireboard, and excite a commotion in a whole family. The women would scatter at your approach, and their husbands and sons would go right up to hunt up their black coats, — for they all have them; they are as cheap as dirt. You would go trailing your limbs along the highways, mere bait for corpulent innholders, as a pickerel's [*sic*] leg is trolled along a stream, and your part of the profits would be the frog's. No, you must be a common man, or at least travel as one, and then nobody will know that you are there or have been there. I would not undertake a simple pedestrian excursion with one of these, because to enter a village, or a hotel, or a private house, with such a one, would be too great a circumstance, would create too great a stir. You could only go half as far with the same means, for the price of board and lodgings would rise everywhere; so much you have to pay for wearing that kind of coat. Not that the difference is in

the coat at all, for the character of the scurf is determined by that of the true liber beneath. Innkeepers, stablers, conductors, clergymen, know a true wayfaring man at first sight and let him alone. It is of no use to shove your gaiter shoes a mile further than usual. Sometimes it is mere shiftlessness or want of originality, — the clothes wear them; sometimes it is egotism, that cannot afford to be treated like a common man, — they wear the clothes. They wish to be at least fully appreciated by every stage-driver and schoolboy. They would like well enough to see a new place, perhaps, but then they would like to be regarded as important public personages. They would consider it a misfortune if their names were left out of the published list of passengers because they came in the steerage, — an obscurity from which they might never emerge.

June 4. P. M. — To Bare Hill.

The early potentilla is now erect in the June grass. *Salix tristis* is going to seed, showing some cotton; also some *S. rostrata*. I am surprised to see some kind of fish dart away in Collier's veronica ditch, for it about dries up and has no outlet.

I observed yesterday, the first time this year, the lint on the smooth surface of the Assabet at the Hemlocks, giving the water a stagnant look. It is an agreeable phenomenon to me, as connected with the season and suggesting warm weather. I suppose it to be the down from the new leaves which so rapidly become smooth. There *may be a little* pitch pine pollen with it now. The current is hardly enough to make a clear streak

in it here and there. The stagnant-looking surface, where the water slowly circles round in that great eddy, has the appearance of having been dusted over. This lint now covers my clothes as I go through the sproutlands, but it gets off remarkably before long. Each under side of a leaf you strike leaves the mark of its lint on your clothes, but it is clean dirt and soon wears off.

One thing that chiefly distinguishes this season from three weeks ago is that fine serene undertone or earth-song as we go by sunny banks and hillsides, the creak of crickets, which affects our thoughts so favorably, imparting its own serenity. It is time now to bring our philosophy out of doors. Our thoughts pillow themselves unconsciously in the troughs of this serene, rippling sea of sound. Now first we begin to be peripatetics. No longer our cars come in contact with the bold echoing earth, but everywhere recline on the spring cushion of a cricket's chirp. These rills that ripple from every hillside become at length a universal sea of sound, nourishing our ears when we are most unconscious.

In that first apple tree at Wyman's an apparent hairy woodpecker's nest (from the size of the bird), about ten feet from ground. The bird darts away with a shrill, loud chirping of alarm, incessantly repeated, long before I get there, and keeps it up as long as I stay in the neighborhood. The young keep up an incessant fine, breathing peep which can be heard across the road and is much increased when they hear you approach the hole, they evidently expecting the old bird.

I perceive no offensive odor. I saw the bird fly out of this hole, May 1st, and probably the eggs were laid about that time. *Vide* it next year.

In the high pasture behind Jacob Baker's, soon after coming out of the wood, I scare up a bay-wing. She runs several rods close to the ground through the thin grass, and then lurks behind tussocks, etc. The nest has four eggs, dull pinkish-white with brown spots; nest low in ground, of stubble lined with white horse-hair.

Carya glabra, apparently a day at least.

Oldenlandia on Bare Hill, along above wall opposite the oak, a rod or more off and westerly. Apparently several days at least, but it appears not to do well. It has a dry, tufted look, somewhat like young savory-leaved aster, on the bare rocky hill and in the clear spaces between the huckleberry bushes. Reminds me of a heath. Does not blossom so full as once I saw it. Arethusa. Crimson fungus (?) on black birch leaves, as if bespattered with blood.

June 5. P. M. — To Gowing's Swamp and Poplar Hill.

The shad-flies were very abundant probably last evening about the house, for this morning they are seen filling and making black every cobweb on the side of the house, blinds, etc. All freshly painted surfaces are covered with them. The surface of pools and ditches also is remarkably thick with them. The living ones are on the bushes which I pluck, far from any water.

I find one *Vaccinium Oxycoecus* open. The petals

are not white like the common, but pink like the bud. That low reedy sedge about the edge of the central pool in the swamp is just out of bloom and shows the seeds.¹

I see a great many tortoises in that pool, showing their heads and backs above water and pursuing each other about the pool. It is evidently their copulating-season. Their shells are yellow-spotted, and their throats are of a reddish yellow (?). Are they the *Emys guttata*?² It is a wonder how they made their way to this water through so many twiggy bushes and over so many tussocks. How should they know of such a wild water? To this wild water, then, the tortoises which inhabit the swamps resort in their breeding-season, and are there undisturbed. You would think it almost the labor of a lifetime for a tortoise to make its way from the surrounding shrubbery to this water, and how do they know that there is water here?

The larch cones are still very beautiful against the light, but some cones, I perceive, are merely green. Some apparent beach plum (?) almost completely out of bloom, ten to twelve feet high, along the wall behind Adolphus Clark's. This is the largest I know of. Lambkill. The mocker-nuts on Mrs. Ripley's hill apparently a day or more. Some red maples are much more fertile than others. Their keys are now very conspicuous. But such trees have comparatively few leaves and have grown but little as yet.

¹ Scheuchzeria.

² Probably, for I have found two on the sphagnum close by it since. *Vide* 1860, May or June.

At evening, paddle up Assabet. There are many ephemera in the air; but it is cool, and their great flight is not yet. Pincushion gall on oak.

I am interested in each contemporary plant in my vicinity, and have attained to a certain acquaintance with the larger ones. They are cohabitants with me of this part of the planet, and they bear familiar names. Yet how essentially wild they are! as wild, really, as those strange fossil plants whose impressions I see on my coal. Yet I can imagine that some race gathered those too with as much admiration, and knew them as intimately as I do these, that even they served for a language of the sentiments. *Stigmariæ* stood for a human sentiment in that race's flower language. Chickweed, or a pine tree, is but little less wild. I assume to be acquainted with these, but what ages between me and the tree whose shade I enjoy! It is as if it stood substantially in a remote geological period.

June 6. 8 A. M. — To Lee's Cliff by river.

Salix pedicellaris off Holden's has been out of bloom several days at least. So it is earlier to begin and to end than our *S. lucida*.

This is June, the month of grass and leaves. The deciduous trees are investing the evergreens and revealing how dark they are. Already the aspens are trembling again, and a new summer is offered me. I feel a little fluttered in my thoughts, as if I might be too late. Each season is but an infinitesimal point. It no sooner comes than it is gone. It has no duration. It simply gives a tone and hue to my thought. Each annual

phenomenon is a reminiscence and prompting. Our thoughts and sentiments answer to the revolutions of the seasons, as two cog-wheels fit into each other. We are conversant with only one point of contact at a time, from which we receive a prompting and impulse and instantly pass to a new season or point of contact. A year is made up of a certain series and number of sensations and thoughts which have their language in nature. Now I am ice, now I am sorrel. Each experience reduces itself to a mood of the mind. I see a man grafting, for instance. What this imports chiefly is not apples to the owner or bread to the grafter, but a certain mood or train of thought to my mind. That is what this grafting is to me. Whether it is anything at all, even apples or bread, to anybody else, I cannot swear, for it would be worse than swearing *through glass*. For I only see those other facts as through a glass darkly.

Cratægus Crus-Galli, maybe a day. Early iris. *Viburnum Lentago*, a day or more. *Krigias*, with their somewhat orange yellow, spot the dry hills all the forenoon and are very common, but as they are closed in the afternoon, they are but rarely noticed by walkers. The long mocker-nut on *Conantum* not yet out, and the second, or round, one will be yet later. Its catkins are more grayish.

I see many great devil's-needles in an open wood, — and for a day or two, — stationary on twigs, etc., standing out more or less horizontally like thorns, holding by their legs and heads (?). They do not incline to move when touched, and their eyes look whitish and

opaque, as if they were blind. They were evidently just escaped from the slough. I often see the slough on plants and, I think, the pupa in the water, as at Callitriche Pool.

As I sit on Lee's Cliff, I see a pe-pe on the topmost dead branch of a hickory eight or ten rods off. Regularly, at short intervals, it utters its monotonous note like *till-till-till*, or *pe-pe-pe*. Looking round for its prey and occasionally changing its perch, it every now and then darts off (phoebe-like), even five or six rods, toward the earth to catch an insect, and then returns to its favorite perch. If I lose it for a moment, I soon see it settling on the dead twigs again and hear its *till, till, till*. It appears through the glass mouse-colored above and head (which is perhaps darker), white throat, and narrow white beneath, with no white on tail.

There is a thorn now in its prime, *i. e.* near the beaked hazel, *Conantum*, with leaves more wedge-shaped at base than the *Crataegus coccinea*; apparently a variety of it, between that and *Crus-Galli*. (In press.)

A kingbird's nest, with two of its large handsome eggs, very loosely set over the fork of a horizontal willow by river, with dried everlasting of last year, as usual, just below Garfield's boat. Another in black willow south of long cove (east side, north of Hubbard's Grove) and another north of said cove. A brown thrasher's nest, with two eggs, on ground, near lower lentago wall and toward Bittern Cliff. The *Ranunculus Purshii* is in some places abundantly out now and quite showy. It must be our largest ranunculus (flower).

June 7. Sunday. P. M. — To river and Ponkawasset with M. Pratt.

Now I notice many bubbles left on the water in my wake, as if it were more sluggish or had more viscosity than earlier. Far behind me they rest without bursting. Pratt has got the *Calla palustris*, in prime, — some was withering, so it may have been out ten days,¹ — from the bog near Bateman's Pond; also *Oxalis violacea*, which he says began about last Sunday, or May 31st, larger and handsomer than the yellow, though it blossoms but sparingly. Red huckleberry about same time. It is sticky like the black. His geranium from Fitzwilliam is well in bloom. It seems to be herb-robot, but without any offensive odor! (?)

A small elm in front of Pratt's which he says three years ago had flowers in flat cymes, like a cornel!² I have pressed some leaves.

At the cross-wall below N. Hunt's, some way from road, the red cohush, one plant only in flower, the rest going to seed. Probably, therefore, with the white. It has slender pedicels and petals shorter than the white. Garlic grows there, not yet out. *Rubus triflorus* still in bloom there.

At the base of some hellebore, in a tuft a little from under the east edge of an apple tree, below violet wood-sorrel, a nest well made outside of leaves, then grass, lined with fine grass, very deep and narrow, with thick sides, with four small somewhat cream-colored eggs with small brown and some black spots chiefly toward

¹ Or more, for it is past prime the 9th.

² He must be mistaken.

larger end. The bird, which flew off quickly, made me think of a wren and of a Maryland yellow-throat, though I saw no yellow.¹

June 8. P. M. — To Saw Mill Brook.

White actæa done there. There are two good-sized black walnuts at Cyrus Smith's, by wall, out apparently a day. When I split the twigs they seemed hollowed by a worm or disease, the pith being (as is said of the butternut also) in plates. The fertile flower is probably not obvious yet. That of the butternut is now very distinct with its crimson stigmas.

Mother was saying to-day that she bought no new clothes for John until he went away into a store, but made them of his father's old clothes, which made me say that country boys could get enough cloth for their clothes by robbing the scarecrows. So little it need cost to live.

June 9. A large fog. *Celastrus scandens*, maybe a day. *Triosteum*, apparently several days (not at all June 1st).

Both kinds of sap, yellow birch and black, are now, in some bottles, quite aromatic and alike; but this year, methinks, it has a more *swampy* taste and musty, and most of the bottles are merely sour.

P. M. — To Violet Sorrel and Calla Swamp.

A peewee's nest near wall by Shattuck's barn,

¹ It was a Maryland yellow-throat. Egg fresh. She is very shy and will not return to nest while you wait, but keeps up a very faint chip in the bushes or grass at some distance.

Merrick's pasture, at base of a dock; four eggs just on the point of being hatched. A regular nest of weak stubble set in ground.

In the sprout-land beyond the red huckleberry, an indigo-bird, which *chips* about me as if it had a nest there. This is a splendid and marked bird, high-colored as is the tanager, looking strange in this latitude. Glowing indigo. It flits from top of one bush to another, chirping as if anxious. Wilson says it sings, not like most other birds in the morning and evening chiefly, but also in the middle of the day. In this I notice it is like the tanager, the other fiery-plumaged bird. They seem to love the heat. It probably had its nest in one of those bushes.

The calla is generally past prime and going to seed.

I had said to Pratt, "It will be worth the while to look for other rare plants in Calla Swamp, for I have observed that where one rare plant grows there will commonly be others." Carrying out this design, this afternoon, I had not taken three steps into the swamp barelegged before I found the *Naumbergia thyrsiflora* in sphagnum and water, which I had not seen growing before. (Channing brought one to me from Hubbard's Great Meadow once.) It is hardly beginning yet. (In prime June 24th. *Vide* June 24th.)

The water in this Calla Swamp feels cold to my feet, and perhaps this is a peculiarity of it; on the north side a hill.

When I was at the yellow-throat's nest (as above) I heard that very loud sharp *phcet phcet* of a woodchuck (?) or rabbit which I have often heard before.

The hellebore was very much eaten off about the wall whence it proceeded. It was kept up from time to time while I stayed.

June 10. At R. W. E.'s a viburnum, apparently *nudum* var. *cassinoides* (?) (*pyrifolium* Pursh), four or five days at least. (Vide in press.) It agrees with Bigelow's account, except that the leaves are decidedly serrate and the calyx-segments not acute. Has but a very slight tendency to thorns!! Twigs of this year red. The cymes are nearly sessile; petioles, etc., very little rusty-dotted. Compare it with *prunifolium*, and see fruit. It stands in a row with E.'s pear trees and has been mistaken for one, which, when not in flower, it very much resembles. Probably came from Watson's with them. (On the 13th I see apparently the same at Watson's, Plymouth, which he calls, and imported as, *V. prunifolium*!)

P. M. — To White Cedar Swamp.

A wood tortoise making a hole for her eggs just like a *picta*'s hole. The *Leucothoë racemosa*, not yet generally out, but a little (it being mostly killed) a day or two.

In Julius Smith's yard, a striped snake (so called) was running about this forenoon, and in the afternoon it was found to have shed its slough, leaving it half-way out a hole, which probably it used to confine it in. It was about in its new skin. Many creatures — devil's-needles, etc., etc. — cast their sloughs now. Can't I?

Farmer tells me to-day that he has seen a regular barn swallow with forked tail about his barn, which was *black*,

not rufous; also of an owl's nest in a pine, the young probably two or three weeks old. Vide June 24th.

June 12. Friday. 8.30 A. M. — Set out for CAPE COD.

EGGS.—

At Natural History Rooms.—

The egg found on ground in R. W. E.'s garden some weeks since cannot be the bobolink's, for that is about as big as a bay-wing's but more slender, dusky-white, with numerous brown and black blotches. The egg of the *Turdus solitarius* is lettered "*Swamp Robin*." Is this what they so call at New Bedford? The wood thrush's is a slender egg, a little longer than a catbird's and uniform greenish-blue. The yellow-shouldered sparrow's egg is size of Maryland yellow-throat's, white with brown spots, sometimes in a ring at the larger end. The Savannah sparrow's is about the same size, dirty-white with thick brown blotches. I find that the egg Farmer gave me for the "chicklisc's" is enough like the yellow-throat's to be it. Can he be thinking of the note, *whittichee*? Or is it the yellow-shouldered sparrow's egg? The egg of the hermit thrush¹ is about as big as that of Wilson's thrush, but darker green.

Some edible swallows' (?) nests, on a stick, side by side, shallow and small and shaped like oyster-shells, light-colored, but yet placed somewhat like the chimney swallows'.

Among the frogs in alcohol I notice the *Scaphiopus solitarius*, Cambridge!!

¹ Which variety?

Michaux says that mocker-nuts are of various sizes and forms, some round, some oblong. So I have found them. He also says that "the red-flowering maple [*Acer rubrum*]"¹ is the earliest tree whose bloom announces the return of Spring." This is a mistake, the white maple being much earlier.

I have not found the white spruce yet.

P. M. — At Watson's, Plymouth.

W. has several varieties of the English hawthorn (*oxyacantha*), pink and rose-colored, double and single, and very handsome now.

His English oak is almost entirely out of bloom, though I got some flowers. The biggest, which was set out in '49, is about thirty feet high, and, as I measured, just twenty inches in circumference at four inches from the ground. A very rapid growth.

I obtained there specimens of the plum-leaved willow, come well ditto, — because it comes on fast, — and *Salix rosmarinifolia*. Only some lingering bloom with the last.

He has the foreign *Betula alba* (much like our *populifolia*), its bark loosened up like our *papyracea*, but not so white; and what was sent him for *populifolia*, much like our *red birch*, the bark much like that of *alba* loosened up, but more reddish, the limbs red, leaves like a balm-of-Gilead somewhat, large (*vide press*). The *papyracea* leaves are unusually wedge-shaped at base, methinks.

The moosewood is chiefly fruiting, but some still

¹[The brackets are Thoreau's.]

in bloom. *Cornus sanguinea*, in its prime. Its bark is *bright-red* and greenish. That of *C. sericea* (not well named) is dark-purplish. The Oriental is later to bloom than ours or else smaller-fruited.

The American mountain-ash not yet out (Cheney's in Concord, a day or two, June 25th). Nuttall says its leaves are at last very smooth. I have hitherto observed the *Pyrus aucuparia*, or European, at Prichard's, Whiting's, etc.

W. has the *Crataegus prunifolius*, with its thorns (*vide herbarium*); *Castanea vesca*, Spanish chestnut, of which ours is made a variety merely; *Populus monilifera*, as he calls it, and another very like it.

Bayberry well out. *Senecio vulgaris* a common weed, apparently in prime. Honkenya and beach pea well out on Plymouth beach.

W. has a very flourishing and large white maple of his setting, and they stand in Plymouth streets also, very pretty.

June 13. I see large mosses on the beach, crimson and lighter, already spread on the sand. See children going a-flagging and returning with large bundles, for the sake of the inmost tender blade. They go miles for them here.

June 14. Sunday. 7 A. M. — To Clark's Island.

B. M. Watson tells me that he learns from pretty good authority that Webster once saw the sea-serpent. It seems it was first seen, in the bay between Manomet and Plymouth Beach, by a perfectly relia-

ble witness (many years ago), who was accustomed to look out on the sea with his glass every morning the first thing as regularly as he ate his breakfast. One morning he saw this monster, with a head somewhat like a horse's raised some six feet above the water, and his body the size of a cask trailing behind. He was careering over the bay, chasing the mackerel, which ran ashore in their fright and were washed up and died in great numbers. The story is that Webster had appointed to meet some Plymouth gentlemen at Manomet and spend the day fishing with them. After the fishing was [over], he set out to return to Duxbury in his sailboat with Peterson, as he had come, and on the way they saw the sea-serpent, which answered to the common account of this creature. It passed directly across their bows only six or seven rods off and then disappeared. On the sail homeward, Webster having had time to reflect on what had occurred, at length said to Peterson, "For God's sake, never say a word about this to any one, for if it should be known that I have seen the sea-serpent, I should never hear the last of it, but wherever I went should have to tell the story to every one I met." So it has not leaked out till now.

Watson tells me (and Ed. Watson confirms it, his father having probably been of the party) that many years ago a party of Plymouth gentlemen rode round by the shore to the Gurnet and there had a high time. When they set out to return they left one of their number, a General Winslow, asleep, and as they rode along homeward, amused themselves with conjecturing what

he would think when he waked up and found himself alone. When at length he awoke, he comprehended his situation at once, and, being somewhat excited by the wine he had drunk, he mounted his horse and rode along the shore to Saquish Head in the opposite direction. From here to the end of Plymouth Beach is about a mile and a quarter, but, it being low tide, he waded his horse as far as the beacon north of the channel, at the entrance to Plymouth Harbor, about three quarters of a mile, and then boldly swam him across to the end of Plymouth Beach, about half a mile further, notwithstanding a strong current, and, having landed safely, he whipped up and soon reached the town, having come only about eight miles, and had ample time to warm and dry himself at the tavern before his companions, who had at least twenty miles to ride about through Marshfield and Duxbury. And when they found him sitting by the tavern fire, they at first thought it was his ghost.

Mr. Ed. Watson's brother (half?), the one who used to live in his schooner, told me that he saw (I suppose not long before) a stream of what they call "kelp flies," supposed to be generated by the rotting kelp, flying along just under the bank, on the shore in Duxbury, some ten feet wide by six deep and of indefinite length, — for he did not know how long they would be passing, — and flying as close as they could conveniently. Ed. Watson had no doubt of it. They also have what they call menhaden flies. This was an offset to my account of the ephemerae.

Mr. Albert Watson's sons are engaged in lobster-

catching. One will get two hundred in a day. I was surprised to hear that their lobster-traps  were made in Vermont, costing something over a dollar apiece, — much timber, — but it seems they can be made cheaper there and sent down by railroad. They use sculpins, perch, etc., etc., for bait, catching it in a circular net with an iron rim. There were a couple of quarts of pine plugs or wedges in a boat, with which to plug the claws of the lobsters to prevent their fighting and tearing each other's claws off in the cars. There are large crates of latticework, six or eight feet square, sunk to a level with the water, in which they keep them fresh. They get three cents apiece for them, not boiled.

Saw them swim three horses across from Saquish Head to the island, a quarter of a mile or more. One rows a small boat while a man holds the bridle. At first the horses swam faster than the man could row, but soon they were somewhat drawn after the boat. They have sometimes driven a whole drove of cattle over at once.

Saw an abundance of horseshoe crabs on the Saquish shore, generally coupled, the rearmost or male (if that is he with two club feet) always the smaller. Often there were three or even four in a string, all moving about close to the shore, which apparently they affect. The pigs get a little nutriment out of them.

Looking from the island, the water is a light green over a shoal.

In a little red cedar grove, of young trees surrounding an old trunk, the only indigenous wood on the island, some three rods by two, and fifteen feet high,

I counted thirty-five crow blackbirds' nests, sometimes two or three near together in a tree, the young fluttering about and some dead beneath. The old in numbers were meanwhile coarsely chattering over our heads. The nests appeared to be made partly of the grassy seaweed.

E. Watson says that he saw a hen catch and devour a mouse, rather young, that was running across his barn floor.

In the shade of the orchard there, amid seaweed, a variety of whiteweed with more entire leaves, etc., and apparently without rays. Is it the Connecticut variety, with short rays?

Mr. Watson describes a sea turtle, as big as a mud turtle, found on the shore once. It had a large dent in its back, in which you [could] lay your hand, — a wound.

Evening. — At B. M. Watson's again. Hear a *new song*, very sweet and clear from what at first sounded like a golden robin, then a purple finch. It was not the first.

B. M. Watson speaks of an old lady named Cotton, now alive and over ninety, who is the Plymouth oracle. He says that his father-in-law Russell (whom I saw and who told me this once) knew a Cobb, who had seen Peregrine White.

Watson had a colt born about ten or eleven the last evening. I went out to see it early this morning, as it lay in the cold pasture. It got up alarmed and trotted about on its long large legs, and even nibbled a little grass, and behaved altogether as if it had been an in-

habitant of this planet for some years at least. They are as precocious as young partridges. It ran about most of the day in the pasture with its mother. Watson was surprised to see it so much larger than the night before. Probably they expand at once on coming to the light and air, like a butterfly that has just come out of its chrysalis.

June 15. Monday. A. M. — Walked to James Spooner's farm in a valley amid the woods; also to a swamp where white cedars once grew, not far behind the town, and now full of their buried trunks, though I hear of no tradition of trees there. In digging mud there recently, hog's bristles were found three or four feet deep. Watson told me of such places in Plymouth as "Small Gains" and "Shall I go naked?"

2 P. M. — Ride to Manomet with Watson and wife, through Manomet Ponds village, about eight miles. At the mouth of Eel River, the marsh vetchling (*Lathyrus palustris*), apparently in prime, some done. The curve of the shore on the east of Plymouth Beach is said to resemble the Bay of Naples. Manomet was quite a hill, over which the road ran in the woods. We struck the shore near Holmes's Hotel about half a mile north of Manomet Point.

There I shouldered my pack and took leave of my friends,—who thought it a dreary place to leave me,—and my journey along the shore was begun. Following the rocky shore round the point, I went considerably round without knowing it. Found there many of

the small shells that R. W. E. brought from Pigeon Cove. Having got round the point, I found a smooth sandy shore with pretty high sand-banks, like the back side of the Cape (though less). The vegetation on the top of the bank, too, was similar. I could see scattered small houses on the road a little inland. The *Hudsonia tomentosa* was apparently in prime there. Passed a few fishers' boats on the sand, with a long rope and anchor carried high up, and one or two places where they land wood. Some three miles below Manomet, there appeared another blunt cape in front, which I avoided by going inland, falling into a small road near the coast, on which were two or three houses. Within a mile I crossed the stream or brook laid down on the map, by a rail, in low woods, leaving a wooded hill between me and the shore, then went along the edge of a swamp. It was pleasant walking thus at 5 P. M. by solitary sandy paths, through commonly low dry woods of oak or pine, through glistening oak woods (their fresh leaves in the June air), where the yellow-throat (or black-throat?¹) was heard and the wood thrush sang, and, as I passed a swamp, a bittern boomed. As I stood quite near, I heard distinctly two or three dry, hard sucks, as if the bird were drawing up water from the swamp, and then the sounds usually heard, as if ejecting it. From time to time passed a yellow-spot or a painted turtle in the path, for now is their laying-season. One of the former was laying. We had before been obliged to stop our horse for fear of running over one in the rut. Now is the time that they are killed in

¹ [That is, black-throated bunting. See June 16.]

the ruts all the country over. They are caught in them, the clumsy fellows, as in a trap. Now the tortoises are met with in sandy woods and, delaying, are run over in the ruts.

One old man directed me on my way through the "plewed" land. Was amused at the simple and obliging but evidently despairing way in which a man at the last house endeavored to direct me further on my way by cart-paths through the woods, he evidently not having any faith that I could keep the route, but, getting the general course by compass, I did.

Having left Ship's Pond and Centre Hill Pond and a cedar swamp on my left, I at length reached one Harlow's, to whom I was recommended, but his neighbors said that "he lived *alone* like a beast" there ten years. I put up at Samuel Ellis's, just beyond the Salt Pond near by, having walked six or seven miles from Manomet through a singularly out-of-the-way region, of which you wonder if it is ever represented in the legislature.

Mrs. Ellis agreed to take me in, though they had already supped and she was unusually tired, it being washing-day. They were accustomed to put up peddlers from time to time, and had some pies just baked for such an emergency. At first took me for a peddler and asked what I carried in my bag. I was interested in a young peddler who soon after arrived and put up with his horse and cart, a simple and well-behaved boy of sixteen or seventeen only, peddling cutlery, who said that he started from Conway in this State. In answer to my question how he liked ped-

dling, he said that he liked it on some accounts, it enabled him to see the world. I thought him an unusually good specimen of Young America. He found cutlery not good wares for that region; could do better where he came from, and was on his way to Boston for dry goods. Arranged to pay for his keeping partly in kind.

I saw menhaden skipping in the pond as I came along, it being connected with the sea.

Ellis, an oldish man, said that lobsters were plentier than they used to be, that one sometimes got three hundred and upward in a day, and he thought the reason was that they spawned in the cars and so the young were protected from fishes that prey on them. He told me of a man whom he had known, who once leaped upon a blackfish that had run or been driven ashore at the head of Buzzard's Bay, where they are very rare, in order to dispatch him, and as he was making a hole in the side of his head, he looked up and found himself a quarter of a mile from land, not having noticed any motion. The fish blowed blood with such force that it cut like a knife, and he saw his shirt-sleeve which appeared as if riddled with shot. He managed with his knife to head him toward shore again, and there landed. Told of finding a mud turtle so large that he walked with him standing on his back, though the turtle did not fairly stand up. He had killed a deer close by his house within two or three years. Hunters were then after it. Hearing the noise, he rushed into his house, seized his gun and fired hastily and carelessly, so as to mortally wound his dog (as well as the deer).

which he "would not have taken five dollars for!!" and had to dispatch at last. His wife and child also were nearly within range.

Speaking of the cold of last winter, he said he had no glass, but he knew it was extremely cold by seeing so great a fog on the sea in the morning as never before, which lasted unusually long. Said they fished on a shoal lying northeast, where there were seventeen fathoms of water, but when there was a fog on it, the fishes were gone, and he reckoned that the cold struck through.

Ellis told of a Boston man who thought he could catch some large trout in his brook with his fine tackling, but, as E. foretold, it broke, and the man offered five dollars apiece for the trout delivered in Boston, whether fresh or not. E. caught them soon after and sent them to Boston by water, but they, being spoiled by delay, were never delivered.

I heard him praying after I went to bed, and at breakfast the next morning —

(June 16) he gave thanks that we "of all the pale-faces were preserved alive." He was probably a Methodist. But the worst of it is that these evidences of "religion" are no evidence to the traveller of hospitality or generosity. Though he hears the sound of family prayer and sees sanctified faces and a greasy Bible or prayer-book, he feels not the less that he is in the hands of the Philistines, and perceives not the less the greasy and musty scent of a household whose single purpose is to scrape more pennies together, when it has already

more than enough for *its uses*, and it is to be preserved and abetted in this enterprise that they pray. What's the use of ushering the day with prayer, if it is thus consecrated to turning a few more pennies merely? All genuine goodness is original and as free from cant and tradition as the air. It is heathen in its liberality and independence on tradition. The accepted or established church is in alliance with the graveyards.

7 A. M. — I go along the sandy road through a region of small hills about half a mile from the sea, between slight gray fences, either post and rail, or slanting rails,  a foot apart, resting on two crossed stakes, the rails of unequal length, looking agreeably loose and irregular.

Within half a mile I come to the house of an Indian, a gray one-storied cottage, and there were two or three more beyond. They were just *beginning to build a meeting-house to-day!* Mrs. Ellis had told me that they were worthy people, especially such a family, that were members of the church, and the others were decent people, though they were not "professors of religion," — as if they were consequently less trustworthy. Ellis thought that if they should get angry with you they would n't make anything of taking your life. He had seen it in their eyes. The usual suspicion. I asked the way of an Indian whom I met in the road, a respectable-looking young man not darker than a sunburnt white man, with black eyes and the usual straight black hair of his race. He was apparently of mixed race, however. When I observed to him that he

was one of the aboriginal stock, he answered, "I suppose so." We could see even to Sandwich Meeting-house as we stood in the road, and he showed me where to turn up from the shore to go to Scusset.

I turned off to the seashore at his house, going down through shrubbery enlivened by the strain of the yellow-throat (or black-throat bunting?). The seringo and bay-wing were also very common near the sea to-day and yesterday.

The shore between Manomet and Sandwich has in it two or three rocky capes, which interrupt the view along it, but are not very obvious on the map, between which are successive curving sandy beaches, Bays of Naples of the approved pattern. Swallows have their nests in the high bank from time to time, as at Cape Cod. Crows are seen lazily flapping away from the shore on your approach. Even a robin was seeking its food there.

The piping plover, as it runs half invisible on the sand before you, utters a shrill peep on an elevated key (different birds on different keys), as if to indicate its locality from time to time to its kind, or it utters a succession of short notes as it flies low over the sand or water. Ever and anon stands still tremblingly, or teeteringly, wagtail-like, turning this way and that.

Now and then a rock or two occurs on the sandy shore left by the undermining of the bank, even as on our Assabet, and I used one to-day (as yesterday) in my bathing.

From time to time, summer and winter and far inland, I call to mind that peculiar prolonged cry of the

upland plover on the bare heaths of Truro in July, heard from sea to sea, though you cannot guess how far the bird may be, as if it were a characteristic sound of the Cape.

In a genuine Cape Cod road you see simple dents in the sand, but cannot tell by what kind of foot they were made, the sand is so light and flowing.

The whole length of the Cape the beach-flea is skipping and the plover piping.

Where I turned up to go to Scusset village I saw some handsome patches of *Hudsonia tomentosa* (not yet had seen the *ericoides*), its fine bright-yellow flowers open chiefly about the edges of the hemispherical mounds.

About 11 A. M. take the cars from Scusset to Sandwich. See in the marshes by the railroad the *Potentilla anserina*, now apparently in prime, like a buttercup.

Stopped on the northwest edge of Yarmouth and inquired of the ticket-master the way to Friends Village in the southeast part of the town. He never heard of it. A stage-driver said it was five miles, and both directed me first northerly a quarter of a mile to the main street and then down that easterly some two miles before I turned off; and when I declared it must be nearer to go across lots, the driver said he would rather go round than get over the fences. Thus it is commonly; the landlords and stage-drivers are bent on making you walk the whole length of their main street first, wherever you are going. They know no road but such as is fit for a coach and four. I looked despairingly at this straggling village whose street I must run the gantlet

of, — so much time and distance lost. Nevertheless, I turned off earlier than they directed, and found that, as usual, I might have taken a shorter route across the fields and avoided the town altogether.

With my chart and compass I can generally find a shorter way than the inhabitants can tell me. I stop at a depot a little one side of a village and ask the way to some place I am bound to. The landlords and stage-drivers would fain persuade me to go first down on to the main street and follow that a piece; and when I show them a shorter way on the map, which leaves their village on one side, they shrug their shoulders, and say they would rather go round than get over the fences. I have found the compass and chart safer guides than the inhabitants, though the latter universally abuse the maps. I do not love to go through a village street any more than a cottage yard. I feel that I am there only by sufferance; but I love to go by the villages by my own road, seeing them from one side, as I do theoretically. When I go through a village, my legs ache at the prospect of the hard gravelled walk. I go by the tavern with its porch full of gazers, and meet a miss taking a walk or the doctor in his sulky, and for half an hour I feel as strange as if I were in a town in China; but soon I am at home in the wide world again, and my feet rebound from the yielding turf.

I followed a retired road across the Cape diagonally some five miles to Friends Village, the southeast part of the town, on Bass River, over at first bare upland with pine plantations, gradually at last rising a low but very broad and flat-backed hill (German's?) in the

woods. The pine and oak woods were quite extensive, but the trees small. See the *Hudsonia ericoides*, with a *peduncle*. The road ran directly through woods the last half the way.

Passed Long Pond just before reaching Friends Village. Passed through the latter and crossed Bass River by a toll-bridge, and so on through Crowell Village, Grand Cove, to Isaiah Baker's in West Harwich, some eight miles from Yarmouth Depot.

Just after crossing Bass River, plucked a plant in the marsh by the roadside like (if not) mullein pink. At Swan Pond River in Dennis, where they were just completing a new bridge, plucked the *Potentilla anserina*, now apparently in prime, with a handsome leaf, silvery beneath, in the marsh.

From near Long Pond, Friends Village, thus far, and also the two miles further that I walked due east the next day, or for five miles at least, it was a continuous street, without a distinct village, the houses but a few rods apart all the way on each side. A sandy road, small houses, with small pine and oak wood close bordering the road, making the soil appear more fertile than in reality it is. As in Canada along the St. Lawrence, you never got out of the village, only came to a meeting-house now and then. And they told me there was another similar street parallel with this further north. But all this street had a peculiarly Sabbath-day appearance, for there was scarcely an inhabitant to be seen, and they were commonly women or young children, for the greater part of the able-bodied men were gone to sea, as usual. This makes them very

quiet towns. Baker said that half or three quarters of the men were gone.

This afternoon it mizzled a little. At the supper-table there was a youngish man who, looking very serious, at length observed to me, "Your countenance is very familiar to me, sir." "Where do you think you have seen me?" I asked. "It seems to me that I have been *consigned to you*," said he. This was said with such a serious tone and look that the suspicion crossed my mind that he meant spiritually, but I soon remembered where I was and the employment of the inhabitants.

Herring River was near by, and Baker sent a little boy to set an eel-pot for eels for breakfast. We had some of the herring for supper. He said that the eels went *down* the river in the spring, and *up* in the fall! That last winter many were found in holes under the ice (where passers broke through), left dry by the tide. He said it was a consideration with poor men who talked of migrating West that here shellfish and eels were abundant and easily obtained. Spoke of the large tract of wood running down the centre of the Cape from Sandwich, three miles wide and thirty long, and he declared repeatedly, since I looked surprised, that there was more wood in Barnstable County than in Ohio *County*. His father-in-law owned \$75,000 worth thereabouts. Wood was worth six dollars per cord.

June 17. This morning had for breakfast fresh eels from Herring River, caught in an eel-pot baited with horseshoe clams [*sic*] cut up.

Crossed Herring River, and went down to the shore

and walked a mile or more eastward along the beach. This beach seems to be laid down too long on the map. The sea never runs very much here, since this shore is protected from the swell by Monomoy. The Harbor (?) of West Harwich is merely some wharves protected by a shoal offshore. Passed a place where they had been taking bluefish with a seine and, as usual, had left their backbones on the beach. There was a scup also, a good fish. A fish hawk (?) or eagle sailed low directly over my head as I sat on the bank. The bank is quite low there. I could see Monomoy, very low and indistinct, stretching much further south than I expected. The wooded portions of this, and perhaps of Nauset Beach further north, looked like islets on the water. You could not distinguish much without a glass, but the lighthouse and fishermen's houses at the south end loomed very large to the naked eye.

I soon turned inland through the woods and struck north to the centre of Harwich. At a retired house where I inquired the road to Brewster, a woman told me that if I wanted to go to Brewster I had come a good deal out of my way, and yet she did not know where I had come from, and I was certainly taking the right course to keep in the way. But they presume that a traveller inquiring the way wishes to be anywhere but where he is. They take me for a roadster, and do not know where *my* way is. They take it for granted that my way is a direct one from village to village.

I go along the settled road, where the houses are interspersed with woods, in an unaccountably desponding mood, but when I come out upon a bare and soli-

tary heath am at once exhilarated. This is a common experience in my travelling. I plod along, thinking what a miserable world this is and what miserable fellows we that inhabit it, wondering what it is tempts men to live in it; but anon I leave the towns behind and am lost in some boundless heath, and life becomes gradually more tolerable, if not even glorious.

After passing the centre of Harwich, with its seminary, I struck north to the ponds between Harwich and Brewster. Saw some white pond-lilies open that had been dropped by the roadside. Disturbed a very large water snake sunning on the bank of a pond-hole.

At what is called on the map Hinckley's Pond, in Harwich, met with the first cranberry-patch. A man told me there were twelve acres here in all, in one body, owned by Albert Clark of Boston, and by others, and this was the largest patch on that part the Cape. They formed a handsome, perfectly level bed, a field, a redeemed meadow, adjoining the pond, the plants in perfectly straight rows eighteen inches apart, in coarse white sand which had been carted in. What with the runners and the moss, etc., between, they made a uniform green bed, very striking and handsome. Baker had complained that the cranberry vines were seriously injured by worms, would be, perhaps, destroyed. He and some others had turned theirs into English grass. They also are apt to become too thick and cease to bear well. They then sell them to others to set out for \$5.00 a square rod, as another informed me by the pond. This was a large and interesting pond.

A little further, I came to Long Pond, and passed be-

tween it and Bangs Pond by a low beach, and took my lunch on a pine hill with a flat summit, on the Brewster side of Long Pond, near the house of one Cohoon. This is a noble lake some two miles long, as a man there told me (the Historical Collections say the chain of ponds is three and two thirds miles long), with high, steep, sliding sand-banks, more or less wooded, and is the source of Herring River, which empties into the sound on the south. Connected with Bangs and Hinckley's Ponds. This high hill with a flat summit, on which was an open pitch pine wood, very suitable for picnics, appeared to be the best point to view it from. You could see at least three ponds at once. Situated about half-way between the two seas, on the shore of this noble lake, it appeared to be the best place for an *inland* hotel on the Cape. What was that slender, succulent, somewhat samphire-like plant in the sand-bank by this pond? After bathing, I abandoned the road and struck across the country northeast by chart and compass, for Orleans, passing between this and another large pond called Sheep Pond, on the north, the country being at first woody, then open.

After passing Sheep Pond I knocked at a house near the road from Brewster to Chatham to inquire the way to Orleans. This house was about a quarter of a mile from the road, in the fields, and the usual Sabbath-like serenity reigned around it. There was no beaten path through the grass to the front door, so I approached the back side. As I stood at the door while the woman was getting me a glass of water, I was struck by the peculiar neatness of the yellow painted floor, so clean,

perhaps, because the husband was gone to sea with his dirty boots. I inquired the way of another woman who lived on the road near by, who was just setting her dinner-table when I thought it must be mid-afternoon. She directed me by a road or cart-path through the woods that ran due southeast, but I knew better than to follow this long. Concluded she meant the south part of Orleans, and so I struck off northeast by fainter cart-paths through the woods. I kept on through uninterrupted wood by various paths somewhat east of north for about an hour, avoiding those that ran southeast, because I knew by the map that there were large ponds east of me which I must go round on the north. At length, seeing no end to the woods, laying down my pack, I climbed an oak and looked off: but the woods bounded the horizon as far as I could see on every side, and eastward it was several miles, for on that side I observed a great depression where a large pond lay concealed in the forest. All the life I could see was a red-tailed or hen hawk circling not far above my head. This gave me a new idea of the extent of Cape Cod woodland. After a while, travelling by compass alone, without path, I fell into a more beaten path than I had left, and came very unexpectedly upon a house on the shore of the pond, in the midst of the woods, in the most secluded place imaginable. There was a small orchard even. It was mid-afternoon, and, to judge from appearances and from the sounds, you would have supposed that only the hens and chickens were at home; but after my first knock I heard a slight stir within, and though all was

still immediately, they being afraid, I knew better than [to] give it up, but knocked all round the house at five doors in succession, there being two to a stoop, and by the time I got round to the first again there was a woman with a child in her arms there ready to answer my questions.

I found that I had not come out of my way.

Of the woods of the Cape which I walked through in Yarmouth, Dennis, Harwich, and Brewster, it is to be said that they are dry pine and oak woods, extensive but quite low, commonly, with an abundance of bear-berry and checkerberry in the more open parts, the latter forming an almost uninterrupted bed for great distances.

I soon came out on the open hills in the northeast part of Brewster, from which I overlooked the Bay, some two miles distant. This was a grand place to walk. There were two or three more of those peculiar ponds with high, shiny sand-banks, by which you detected them before you saw the water, as if freshly scooped out of the high plains or a table-land. The banks were like those of the sea on the Back Side, though on a smaller scale, and they had clear sandy shores. One pond would often be separated from another by low curving beaches or necks of land. The features of the surrounding landscape simple and obvious. The sod, so short and barren, affords the best ground for walking. Brewster is much more hilly than Eastham. The latter is, indeed, quite flat. In short, Brewster, with its noble ponds, its bare hills, gray with poverty-grass and lichens, and its secluded cottages, is a

very interesting town to an inlander. Saw a woman mending a fence nearly a mile from a house, using an axe.

Barber appears to be mistaken about seeing both seas from the county road in this town, — to have misunderstood the Massachusetts Historical Collections. I passed over some hills there where pine seed had recently been planted with a hoe only, about four feet apart. At first I thought the turtles had been laying their eggs there, but I observed them in straight lines and detected some little pines an inch high just up. Some of the Cape roads are repaired with the coarsest bushes and roots, with such earth as adheres to them.

Jeremiah's Gutter is what is called Boat Meadow River on the map. I saw the town bounds there. There, too, was somebody's Folly, who dug a canal, which the sand filled up again. About a mile north of this, I left the road and struck across west of the road to near the Eastham Meeting-house, crossing a part of that "beach" where once wheat grew, and by Great Pond, where a canal has been talked of. Passed some large tupelo trees. The greater part of Eastham an open plain, and also the southwest part of Wellfleet. Put up at the Traveller's Home (Cobb's), so called, at the Camp Ground, just within the woods.

Cobb says he has known formerly one man in Eastham export twelve hundred bushels of grain from his own farm. Twenty of corn to an acre is an average crop in a fair year in his neighborhood, which is better soil than usual. Thought likely there was not more raised in the town now than used. Cobb thought the

Nauset lights not of much use, because so often you could not see them, and if you could they would not prevent your coming ashore. Sailors preferred to depend on the "blue pigeon" (lead). He said that the inhabitants lived on the West or Bay Side, though no more fertile or fishy, because their harbors were there. On the Back Side they could not get off to fish more than once a fortnight, but on the West almost every day. He thought the Cape wasting on both sides there. That the Truro Insurance Company had a hard time to meet their payments. They import cedar posts from Maine, which, with rails, make a fence costing about seventy-five cents a rod, but they are not so durable as formerly, being made of younger trees.

According to Pratt's History, first camp-meeting in 1828.

June 18. Thursday. From Traveller's Home to Small's in Truro.

A mizzling and rainy day with thick driving fog; a drizzling rain, or "drisk," as one called it. I struck across into the stage-road, a quarter of a mile east, and followed that a mile or more into an extensive bare plain tract called Silver Springs, in the southwest part of Wellfleet, — according to Pratt, one third of Wellfleet was covered mostly with pines in 1844, — then turned off northeast through the bushes, to the Back Side, three quarters of a mile distant. The desert was about one hundred and fifteen rods wide on the bank where I struck it. You might safely say it was from thirty to one hundred rods or more in width. But the bank

was apparently not so high as in Truro. This was on that long Table-Land in Wellfleet. Where the bank was covered with coarse pebbles, however high, I judged that it could not have been formed by the wind, but rather the small sand-hills on the west edge of the desert were formed of its finer particles and remains, leaving the coarser parts here. However, I afterwards saw where, in the hollows more or less deep, the sand blown up from the beach had covered the dark stratum of the original surface ten feet deep with *fine sand*, which was now densely covered with bushes.

As I walked on the top of the bank for a mile or two before I came to a hollow by which to descend, though it rained but little, the strong wind there drove that and the mist against my unprotected legs so as to wet me through and plaster over the legs of my pants with sand. The wind was southeasterly.

I observed, in a few stiller places behind a bar, a yellowish scum on the water close to the shore, which I suspect was the pollen of the pine, lately in full bloom, which had been wafted on to the ocean. Small thought at first that I referred to a scum like that which collects on salt-vats.

Stopped to dry me about 11 A. M. at a house near John Newcomb's, who they told me died last winter, ninety-five years old (or would have been now had he lived?). I had shortly before picked up a Mother-Carey's-chicken, which was just washed up dead on the beach. This I carried tied to the tip of my umbrella, dangling outside. When the inhabitants saw me come up from the beach this stormy day, with this emblem

dangling from my umbrella, and saw me set it up in a corner carefully to be out of the way of cats, they may have taken me for a crazy man. It is remarkable how wet the grass will be there in a misty day alone; more so than after a rain with us.

The Mother-Carey's-chicken was apparently about thirteen inches in alar extent, black-brown, with seven primaries, the second a little longer than the third; rump and vent white, making a sort of ring of white, breast ashy-brown, legs black with yellowish webs, bill black with a protuberance above.

I think there were more boat-houses in the hollows along the Back Side than when I first walked there. These are the simplest and cheapest little low, narrow, and long sheds, just enough to cover a boat, within the line of the bank at some hollow. But in my three walks there I never chanced to see a man about one of them, or any boating there.

Soon after leaving Newcomb's Hollow, I passed a hulk of a vessel about a hundred feet long, which the sea had cast up in the sand. She lay at high-water mark high up the beach, the ribs at her bows rising higher than my head above the sand; then for sixty or seventy feet there was *nothing* to be seen of her, and at last only the outline of her stern ribs projecting slightly above the sand for a short distance. Small suggested that this might be the hulk of the Franklin, lost there seven or eight years ago. They sometimes buy and break them up and carry them piecemeal up the bank, all which is a great job; or they burn them down to the sand and get out the iron alone. It was

an impressive sight to see, lying thus insignificant, the hulk of a large (? I walked five rods beside it) vessel which had been lost for years, now cast up and half buried in the sand, like a piece of driftwood. Apparently no longer regarded. It looked very small and insignificant under that impending bank.

In Newcomb's Hollow I had already entered a Humane house. A sign over the door said "For Cases of Distress only," and directed where the key of the life-boat was to be obtained. Mine was a case of distress. Within was a simple apartment containing the boat, a bench, a fireplace and chimney, an india-rubber bucket, a few armfuls of wood, a keg of rags, a tin case with matches and two candles and a candlestick over the fireplace, etc. Also an extract from the laws of the State to protect the property of the Humane Society. I did not look closely for oil or food. I actually sought the Humane house for shelter. It was with peculiar reflections that I contemplated these two candles and those matches prepared to keep the spark of life in some suffering fellow-creature. This was before I went to the house by Newcomb's.

The waves ran pretty well on account of the easterly wind. I observed how merely undulatory was the motion of the waves. A floating chip or the like on the back of the largest wave often was not advanced in the least toward the shore, however great the undulation.

I noticed dor-bugs washed up many miles south of the Highland Light.

I think it was north of Newcomb's Hollow that I

passed a perpendicular promontory of clay in the bank, which was conspicuous a good way through the fog.

Reached the Highland Light about 2 P. M. The *Smilacina racemosa* was just out of bloom on the bank. They call it the "wood lily" there. Uncle Sam called it "snake-corn," and said it looked like corn when it first came up.

Small says that the lighthouse was built about sixty years ago. He knows by his own age. A new lighthouse was built some twenty-five years ago. They are now building another still on the same spot.

He once drove some cattle up the beach on the Back Side from Newcomb's Hollow to Pamet River Hollow, — a singular road by which to drive cows, yet well fenced! They were rather wild and gave him some trouble by trying to get up the bank at first, though in vain. He could easily head them off when they turned. And also they wanted to drink the salt water. They did not mind the waves, and if the sea had been the other side, where they had belonged and wanted to go, would have taken to it.

The sea was not frozen there exactly as I had inferred from the papers last winter. Small never knew it to be frozen smooth there so as to bear, but there was last winter a mere brash of pieces several inches thick reaching out half a mile or more, but you cannot go out on it. It is worth the while to see the ice piled up on the shore.

Small says that the Truro fishermen who were lost in the great shipwreck were on the Nantucket Shoals. Four or five vessels were lost with all aboard. They

may have been endeavoring to reach Provincetown Harbor. He spoke of one of his neighbors who was drowned in Truro, and very soon after his bones were found picked clean by the beach-fleas. Thinks you could get off in a boat from the Back Side one day out of three at *the right tide*. He thinks that what we thought a shark may have been a big bass, since one was taken just alive soon after in that cove.

A youngish man came into Small's with a thick outside coat, when a girl asked where he got that coat. He answered that it was taken off a man that came ashore dead, and he had worn it a year or more. The girls or young ladies expressed surprise that he should be willing to wear [it] and said, "You 'd not dare to go to sea with that coat on." But he answered that he might just as well embark in that coat as any other.

They brought me an *Attacus Cceropia* which a boy had found in a swamp near by on the 17th. Its body was large like the one I have preserved, while the two I found to have come out in my chamber meanwhile, and to have laid their eggs, had comparatively small bodies.

One said there was a little bit of a rill of fresh water near Small's, though it could not be called a brook.

June 19. Friday. Fog still, but I walked about a mile north onward on the beach.

The sea was still running considerably. It is surprising how rapidly the water soaks into the sand, and is even dried up between each undulation. The sand has many holes in it, about an eighth of an inch over, which

seem to have been made by the beach-flea. These have a firm and as if artificial rim or curb, and it is remarkable that the waves flow two or three feet over them with force without obliterating them. They help soak up the water. As I walked along close to the edge of the water, the sea oscillating like a pendulum before me and each billow flowing with a flat white foaming edge and a rounded outline up the sand, it reminded me of the white toes of blue-stockinged feet thrust forward from under the garments in an endless dance. It was a contra-dance to the shore. Some waves would flow unexpectedly high and fill my shoes with water before I was aware of it. It is very exciting for a while to walk where half the floor before you is thus incessantly fluctuating.

There is frequently, if not for the most part, a bar just off the shore on which the waves first break and spend more or less of their violence, and I saw that the way to land in a boat at such a time would be to row along outside this bar and its breakers, till you came to an opening in it, then enter and row up or down within the bar to a comparatively safe place to land.

I turned up the first hollow. A piping plover peeped around me there, and feigned lameness,—though I at first thought that she was dusting herself on the sand,—to attract me away from her nest evidently.

Returned inland. The poverty-grass was fully out, in bright-yellow mounds or hillocks, more like painted clods than flowers, or, on the bare sandy hills and plains of the Cape, they looked like tufts of yellow

lichens on a roof. They indicate such soil as the *cladonia* lichen with us. If the soil were better they would not be found there. These hillocks are about as big as a large ant-hill — some have spread to eight or ten feet in diameter, but are flat and broken more or less — and commonly dead in the middle or perhaps one side, but I saw many perfect dense hemispheres of yellow flowers. As the sand gathers around them, they rise above it, and they seemed to bloom and flourish better when thus nearly buried in sand. A hemisphere eighteen inches in diameter would rest flat on the surface for six inches in width on the outside and be rather loosely rooted in the middle, for you could easily lift it all up. The *Hudsonia ericoides* was the most common, and the *tomentosa* appeared to be less in hillocks, *i. e.* more broken and dead. The poverty-grass emits a common sweetish scent as you walk over the fields. It blossoms on the edges first. You meet with it in Plymouth as you approach the peculiar soil of the Cape.

June 20. Saturday. Fog still.

A man working on the lighthouse, who lives at the Pond Village, says that he raised potatoes and pumpkins there where a vessel once anchored. That was when they let the salt water into the pond. Says the flags there now are barrel flags; that the chair flag is smaller, partly three-sided, and has no bur; perhaps now all gone. Speaking of the effect of oil on the water, this man said that a boat's crew came ashore safely from their vessel on the Bay Side of Truro some time

ago in a storm, when the wind blowed square on to the land, only by heaving over oil. The spectators did not think they would reach the shore without being upset. When I expressed some doubt of the efficacy of this, he observed in the presence of Small and others, "We always take a bottle of oil when looking for sea clams, and, pouring out a few drops, can look down six or seven feet."

We dined on halibut caught on the ledges some three miles off the Back Side.

There was a carpenter who worked on the lighthouse boarding at Small's, who had lived sixteen years on the extremity of Cape Ann. When I asked him about Salvages, he said it was a large bare rock, perhaps fifty yards long and a dozen feet high, about two miles from the shore at Sandy Bay, outside Avery's Rock. That he and all the inhabitants of the Cape always called it "Selvaygias." Did not know but it had something to do with salvage for wrecks. This man, who is familiar with the shore of New England north of Cape Cod, thought that there was no beach equal to this for grandeur. He thought August the most foggy month.

Small thought that the shore at the mouth of Pamet River about held its own.

I saw an extract in a Cape (*Yarmouth Register*) paper from a promised History of the Cape by Dr. Dix, an Englishman, who was owing Small for board, etc. (page 136 of it). There was also advertised "The Annals of Barnstable County and its several Towns," etc., by Frederick Freeman, to be in two volumes, 8vo. \$4.00. This will probably be out first.

A child asked concerning a bobolink, "What makes he sing so sweet, Mother? Do he eat flowers?"

Talked with an old lady who thought that the beach plums were better than cherries.

Visited the telegraph station, tended by one Hall, just north of the light. He has a small volume called the "Boston Harbor Signal Book," containing the names of some three thousand vessels, their owners, etc., and a code of signals. There were also the private signals of more than a hundred merchants on a large sheet on the wall. There was also a large volume called "The Universal Code of Signals," Marryat (Richardson, London), 1854, containing the names of some twenty thousand vessels of all nations, but chiefly English, and an extensive system of signalling, by which he could [carry on] a long conversation with a vessel on almost any subject. He said that he could make out the name seven miles off and the signal sometimes twenty miles.¹ Thought there would be a fog as long as the wind was southwest. "How is it in Boston?" I asked. "I will ask," said he. *Tick tick tick* — "Wind northeast and cloudy." (Here it was southwest and thick fog.) He thought that there [were] more vessels to be seen passing this point than any other in the United States. One day when telegraphing the passing vessels he put in "a fox passing," for there was one running between the station and the edge of the bank. I observed the name of the brig Leader displayed on

¹ The man at Hull July 24, 1851, said they could tell the kind of vessel thirty miles off, the number at masthead ten or twelve miles, name on hull six or seven miles.

a flag for me. The report was, "Brig Leader in." It *may* be a month before the vessel reaches Boston.

The operator said that last winter the wind between his station and the bank blew him three rods through the air, and he was considerably hurt when he fell. A boy was blown head over heels. The fences were blown up, post and rail. There was no wind just this side the edge of the bank, but if you lay down there and extended your hand over the edge of the bank it would be blown suddenly upward, or if you cast off a large piece of wood it would be blown up thirty or forty feet high. Both boys and men often amuse themselves by running and trying to jump off the bank with their jackets spread, and being blown back. (Small confirmed this.) Hall said that he could not possibly jump off. *Sometimes* and in *some* places, pebbles as big as chestnuts are blown far over the bank.

Hall said that he saw very large flocks of geese; had counted as many as six hundred go by at once, reaching three miles; and sometimes alight on the water.

Talked with Uncle Sam, who was picking gooseberries on the bank, — for the sun shone a short time. He showed me some fossil shells imbedded in stone which he had picked up on the *high* bank, just south of the light, and laid on his pile of driftwood. He wanted to know something about them. Said that a lecturer down at Pamet River had said, as he was told, that the Norwegians who formerly came to this country cemented them together. He had come down to watch a piece of driftwood, perhaps a stump, which had been

lodged on a bar for a day or two. He was trying to make out what it was. There is something picked up on the shore of the Cape and advertised in every paper.

This was the third foggy day. It cleared up the next day noon, but the night after and the next day was foggy again. It is a serious objection to visiting or living on the Cape that you lose so many days by fog. Small said that a week of fog at this season would be nothing remarkable. You can see that the fog is local and of no great thickness. From time to time the sun almost or quite shines, and you can see half a mile, or to Provincetown even, and then, against all your rules, it thickens up again. An inlander would think [it] was going to clear up twenty times when it may last a week. Small said that they were very common with southerly winds, being blown up from Nantucket Shoals; that they were good for almost everything but corn, yet there was probably less rain there at this season than on the mainland. I have now visited the Cape four times in as many different years, once in October, twice in June, and once in July, having spent in all about one month there, and about one third the days were foggy, with or without rain. According to Alden (in Massachusetts Historical Collections, vol. v, First Series, page 57), Nantucket was discovered by a famous old Indian giant named Maushop, who waded the sea to it, and there filling his pipe with "poke," his smoke made fog. Whence that island is so much in the fog, and the aborigines on the opposite portion of the Cape, seeing a fog over the water at a distance, would say,

"There comes old Maushop's smoke." The Gloucester carpenter thought August the worst month for fog on the coast.

The fog lasted this time, with the exception of one afternoon and one or two slight breakings away, five days, or from Thursday morning till I reached Minot's Ledge, Monday noon. How much longer it continued on the Cape I do not know. The Cape people with whom I talked very generally denied that it [was] a phenomenon in any degree peculiar to the Cape. They said that it was just such weather at Boston. Indeed, some denied that it was fog at all. They said with some asperity that it was rain. Yet more rain would have fallen in a smart shower in the country in twenty minutes than in these five days on the Cape. When I got home I found that there had been an abundance [of] cloudy weather and rain within a week, but not one foggy day in Concord.

Small thought that Lieutenant Davis might have misunderstood him. He meant to say that the offshore current (three miles off) set down the Cape, and wrecks in it went down the coast, the inshore one sets up.

I noticed several lengths of fence hereabouts made chiefly of oars, very long ones.

A Cape Cod house is low, unpainted, shingled on the sides. They have many windows, even under the roofs to light the closets there, and as the chambers can only be lighted at one end, there are commonly two windows there. Once I saw a triangular blind under the peak, though there was no window beneath it. The windows commonly afford a view of the bay

or ocean, though the house may be sheltered by some hill, or they are very snugly placed in a hollow, apparently as secluded as among the New Hampshire hills.

June 21. Sunday. About noon it cleared up, and after dinner I set out for Provincetown, straight across the country to the Bay where the new road strikes it, directly through the pine plantation about one mile from the lighthouse. The pines have apparently not done so well here as in some other places on the Cape. I observed a tuft of crow-berry, together with poverty-grass, about one mile west of the light. This part of Truro affords singularly interesting and cheering walks for me, with regular hollows or dimples shutting out the sea as completely as if in the midst of the continent, though when you stand on the plain you commonly see the sails of vessels standing up or down the coast on each side of you, though you may not see the water. At first you may take them for the roofs of barns or houses. It is plain for miles without a tree, where the new telegraph-wires are a godsend to the birds, affording them something to perch upon. That solitude was sweet to me as a flower. I sat down on the boundless level and enjoyed the solitude, drank it in, the medicine for which I had pined, worth more than the bear-berry so common on the Cape. As I was approaching the Bay through a sandy hollow a mile east of High Head, I found two or three arrow-points and a rude axe or hammer, a flat-stone from the beach with a deep groove chipped around it.

The beach on the Bay Side was completely strewn

with seaweed (the grassy kind), which does not grow on the Atlantic side, as if the Bay were a meadow compared with the Atlantic. The beach was harder than the Back Side, the hardest part being on the weed at high-water line. The skulls and backbones of black-fish, their vertebræ and spinal processes, and disk-shaped bones, five inches in diameter, from the spine were strewn all along. These looked like rough crackers.¹

Also the ribs of whale (probably humpbacked), — they get humpback and finback and right whales, I heard, — six feet long, lay under the bank, hardly to be distinguished from their gray rails. Some of those whale ribs, ten inches wide, were from time to time set up in the sand, like mile stones (or bones); they seemed to answer that purpose along the new road. They had taken a whale in Provincetown Harbor on the previous 17th, and stripped off the blubber at one of the wharves. I saw many dogfish whose livers had been extracted.

At East Harbor River, as I sat on the Truro end of the bridge, I saw a great flock of mackerel gulls, one hundred at least, on a sandy point, whitening the

¹ The old traveller Lawson, in his account of the fishes of Carolina, says of the "Bottle-Nose," referring apparently to this fish, though this is the popular name for a different species in England, that "They are never seen to swim leisurely, as sometimes all other fish do, but are continually running after their prey in great shoals, like wild horses, leaping now and then above the water."

If those disk-shaped bones with nothing but muscle between them were really inserted between the vertebræ as it appeared, they must make the spine very flexible as well as wonderfully elastic and strong.

shore there like so many white stones on the shore and in the water, uttering all together their vibrating shrill note. They had black heads, light bluish-slate wings, and light rump and tail and beneath. From time to time all or most would rise and circle about with a clamor, then settle again on the same spot close together.

Soon after crossing the bridge, I turned off and ascended Mt. Ararat. It exhibited a remarkable landscape: on the one side the desert, of smooth and spotless palest fawn-colored sand, slightly undulating, and beyond, the Atlantic; on the other, the west, side, a few valleys and hills, *densely* clothed with a short, almost moss-like (to look down at) growth of huckleberry, blueberry, bear-berry, josh-pear (which is so abundant in Provincetown), bayberry, rose, checker-berry, and other bushes, and beyond, the Bay. All these bushes formed an even and dense covering to the sand-hills, much as bear-berry alone might. It was a very strange scenery. You would think you might be in Labrador, or some other place you have imagined. The shrubbery at the very summit was swarming with mosquitoes, which troubled me when I sat down, but they did not rise above the level of the bushes.

At the Pilgrim House, though it was not crowded, they put me into a small attic chamber which had two double beds in it, and only one window, high in a corner, twenty and a half inches by twenty-five and a half, in the alcove when it was swung open, and it required a chair to look out conveniently. Fortunately it was not

a cold night and the window could be kept open, though at the risk of being visited by the cats, which appear to swarm on the roofs of Provincetown like the mosquitoes on the summits of its hills. I have spent four memorable nights there in as many different years, and have added considerable thereby to my knowledge of the natural history of the cat and the bedbug. Sleep was out of the question. A night in one of the attics of Provincetown! to say nothing of what is to be learned in entomology. It would be worth the while to send a professor there, one who was also skilled in entomology. Such is your *Pilgerruhe* or Pilgrims'-Rest. Every now and then one of these animals on its travels leaped from a neighboring roof on to mine, with such a noise as if a six-pounder had fallen within two feet of my head, — the discharge of a catapult, — a twelve-pounder discharged by a catapult, — and then followed such a scrambling as banished sleep for a long season, while I watched lest they came in at the open window. A kind of foretaste, methought, of the infernal regions. I did n't wonder they gave quit-claim deeds of their land here. My experience is that you fare best at private houses. The barroom may be defined a place to spit.

“Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The cats take up the wondrous tale.”

At still midnight, when, half awake, half asleep, you seem to be weltering in your own blood on a battlefield, you hear the stealthy tread of padded feet belonging to some animal of the cat tribe, perambulating the roof within a few inches of your head.

I had already this evening called on Mr. Atwood, the Representative of the town and one of the commissioners appointed by the legislature to superintend the experiments in the artificial breeding of fishes. He said that he knew (I think) eighty-two kinds of fishes there.

When Mr. Pool, the Doorkeeper of the House of Representatives, — if that is his name and title, — who makes out a list of the Representatives and their professions, asked him his business, he answered, “Fisherman.” At which Pool was disturbed and said that no representative had ever called himself a fisherman before. It would not do to print it so. And so Atwood is put down as “Master Mariner”!! So much for American democracy. I reminded him that Fisherman had been a title of honor with a large party ever since the Christian Era at least. When next we have occasion to speak of the apostles I suppose we should call them “Master Mariners”!

Atwood said that his brother here took the bone shark recently which I read was thirty feet long. Fog again at night.

June 22. Monday. Took the steamer Acorn [?] about 9 A. M. for Boston, in the fog. The captain said that the mate to the whale taken on the 17th had been about the steamer all night. It was a thick fog with some rain, and we saw no land nor a single sail, till near Minot’s Ledge. The boat stopped and whistled once or twice. The monotony was only relieved by the numerous petrels, those black sea-swallows, incessantly

skimming over the undulating [surface], a few inches above and parallel with it, and occasionally picking some food from it. Now they dashed past our stern and now across our bows, as if we were stationary, though going at the rate of a dozen knots an hour. It is remarkable what great solitudes there may be on this bay, notwithstanding all its commerce, and going from Boston to Provincetown you might be wrecked in clear weather, without being seen by any passing vessel. Once, when the fog lifted a little and the boat was stopped, and the engine whistled, I thought that I saw an open sea without an object for three or four miles at least. We held on, and it suddenly thickened up again, and yet in three minutes, notwithstanding the fog, we saw the light-boat right ahead. This shows how deceptive and dangerous fogs are. I should have said we might have run half an hour without danger of striking any object.

The greatest depth in the Bay between Long Point, Provincetown, and Manomet, Plymouth, according to Coast Survey charts, is about twenty-five fathoms.

Get home at 5 P. M.¹

It seems that Sophia found an *Attacus Cecropia* out in my chamber last Monday, or the 15th. It soon went to laying eggs on the window-sill, sash, books, etc., of which *vide* a specimen. Though the window was open (blinds closed), it did not escape. Another was seen at the window outside the house on the south side (mother’s chamber) on the 21st, which S. took in, supposing it the first which had got out, but she

¹ *Vide* July 7th.

found the first still in the chamber. This, too, she says, went right to laying eggs. I am not sure whether this, too, came from the other cocoon. Neither was quite so large as the one I had. The second had broken off the better part of its wings. Their bodies were quite small, perhaps because they were empty of eggs. I let them go. The eggs are large, pretty close together, glued to the wood or paper.

June 23. Skinner, the harness-maker, tells me that he found a black duck's nest Sunday before the last, *i. e.* the 14th, with perhaps a dozen eggs in it, a mere hollow on the top of a tussock, four or five feet within a clump of bushes forming an islet (in the spring) in Hubbard's great meadow. He scared up the duck when within a few feet. Pratt says he knows of a black walnut at Hunt's on Ponkawtasset.

P. M. — Looked for the black duck's nest, but could find no trace of it. Probably the duck led her young to the river as soon as hatched. What with gunners, dogs, pickerel, bullfrogs, hawks, etc., it is a wonder if any of them escape.

Small *rudbeckia, i. e. hirta*, at Hubbard's Bath.

June 24. Wednesday. P. M. — To Farmer's Owl-Nest Swamp.

Melvin thinks there cannot be many black ducks' nests in the town, else his dog would find them, for he will follow their trail as well as another bird's, or a fox. The dog once caught five black ducks here but partly grown. Farmer was hoeing corn with his Irishmen.

The crows had got much of it, and when he came to a vacant hill he took a few beans from his pocket — for each hoer had a pocketful — and dropped them there, so making his rows complete. Melvin was there with his dog, which had just caught a woodchuck. M. said that he once saw a fox jump over a wall with something in his mouth, and, going up, the fox dropped a woodchuck and a mouse, which he had caught and was carrying home to his young. He had eaten the head of the woodchuck. When M. looked there the next morning they were gone.

Went to Farmer's Swamp to look for the screech owl's¹ nest Farmer had found. You go about forty-five rods on the first path to the left in the woods and then turn to the left a few rods. I found the nest at last near the top of a middling-sized white pine, about thirty feet from the ground. As I stood by the tree, the old bird dashed by within a couple of rods, uttering a peculiar mewling sound, which she kept up amid the bushes, a blackbird in close pursuit of her. I found the nest empty, on one side of the main stem but close to it, resting on some limbs. It was made of twigs rather less than an eighth of an inch thick and was almost flat above, only an inch lower in the middle than at the edge, about sixteen inches in diameter and six or eight inches thick, with the twigs in the midst, and beneath was mixed sphagnum and sedge from the swamp beneath, and the lining or flooring was coarse strips of grape-vine bark; the whole pretty firmly matted together.

¹ [The situation of the nest and Thoreau's description of the notes indicate a long-eared owl rather than a screech owl.]

How common and important a material is grape-vine bark for birds' nests! Nature wastes nothing. There were white droppings of the young on the nest and one large pellet of fur and small bones two and a half inches long. In the meanwhile, the old bird was uttering that hoarse worried note from time to time, somewhat like a partridge's, flying past from side to side and alighting amid the trees or bushes. When I had descended, I detected one young one two thirds grown perched on a branch of the next tree, about fifteen feet from the ground, which was all the while staring at me with its great yellow eyes. It was gray with gray horns and a dark beak. As I walked past near it, it turned its head steadily, always facing me, without moving its body, till it looked directly the opposite way over its back, but never offered to fly. Just then I thought surely that I heard a puppy faintly barking at me four or five rods distant amid the bushes, having tracked me into the swamp, — *what what, what what what*. It was exactly such a noise as the barking of a very small dog or perhaps a fox. But it was the old owl, for I presently saw her making it. She repeated [*sic*] perched quite near. She was generally reddish-brown or partridge-colored, the breast mottled with dark brown and fawn-color in downward strings [*sic*], and had plain fawn-colored thighs.

Found there the *Calla palustris*, out of bloom, and the naumbergia, now in prime, which was hardly begun on the 9th at Bateman Pond Swamp. This was about four or five rods southerly of the owl tree. The large hastate tear-thumb is very common there; and

what is that large, coarse, flag-like sedge, with two ridges to its blade? Just out of bloom. In dense fields in water, like the flag.

I think that this is a cold swamp, *i. e.* it is springy and shady, and the water feels more than usually cold to my feet.

Returning, heard a fine, clear note from a bird on a white birch near me, — *whit whit, whit whit, whit whit*, (very fast) *ter phe phe phe*, — sounding perfectly novel. Looking round, I saw it was the huckleberry-bird, for it was near and plain to be seen.

Looked over Farmer's eggs and list of names. He has several which I have not. Is not his "chicklisee," after all, the Maryland yellow-throat? The eggs were numbered with a pen, — 1, 2, 3, etc., — and corresponding numbers written against the names on the cover of the pasteboard box in which were the eggs. Among the rest I read, "*Fire never redder*." That must be the tanager. He laughed and said that this was the way he came to call it by that name: Many years ago, one election-day, when he and other boys, or young men, were out gunning to see how many birds they could kill, Jonathan Hildreth, who lived near by, saw one of these birds on the top of a tree before him in the woods, but he did not see a deep ditch that crossed his course between him and it. As he raised his gun, he exclaimed, "Fire never redder!" and, taking a step or two forward, with his eye fixed on the bird, fell headlong into the ditch, and so the name became a byword among his fellows.

June 25. Most of the mountain-ash trees on the street are the European, as Prichard's, Whiting's, etc. The American ones (*Pyrus Aucuparia* is the European) in Cheney's (from Winchendon) row have only opened within a day or two; that American one in Mrs. Hoar's yard, apparently a week. The fruit of the European one is as large as small peas already.

P. M. — To Gowing's Swamp. White pine effete. *Gaylussacia dumosa* apparently in a day or two.¹

June 26. Friday. Stand over a bream's nest close to the shore at Hubbard's rear wood. At length she ventures back into it, after many approaches. The apparent young bream, hardly half an inch long, are hovering over it all the while in a little school, never offering to swim away from over that yellow spot; such is their instinct. The old one at length returns and takes up her watch beneath, but I notice no recognition of each other.²

The largest tupelo I remember in Concord is on the northerly edge of Staples's clearing. See a pack of partridges as big as robins at least. I must be near bobolinks' nests many times these days, — in E. Hosmer's meadow by the garlic and here in Charles Hubbard's, — but the birds are so overanxious, though you may be pretty far off, and so shy about visiting their nests while you are there, that you watch them in vain. The female flies close past and perches near you on a rock or stump and chirps *whit tit, whit tit, whit it tit tit te* incessantly.

¹ Not quite in prime July 2d.

² Some nests are high and dry July 5th.

Some of the *Salix Torreyana* by railroad is cordate and some not. The sterile one there is not, nor those near it.

June 27. P. M. — Up Assabet.

See apparently a young bobolink fluttering over the meadow. The garlic not even yet quite.

In the Wheeler meadow, the bushy one southwest of Egg Rock, the coarse sedge¹ — I think the same with that in the Great Meadows — evidently grows in patches with a rounded outline; *i. e.*, its edge is a succession of blunt, rounded capes, with a very distinct outline amid the other kinds of grass and weeds.

I cannot find one of the three bits of white cotton string which I tied to willows in that neighborhood in the spring, and I have no doubt that the birds, perhaps crow blackbirds, have got every one for their nests. I must drive down a stake for a mark next time.

June 28. *Geum Virginianum* some time, apparently, past its prime by red cohosh. It was not nearly out June 7th; say, then, the 18th.

I hear on all hands these days, from the elms and other trees, the twittering peep of young gold robins, which have recently left their nests, and apparently indicate their locality to their parents by thus incessantly peeping all day long.

Observed to-night a yellow wasps' (?) nest, made of the same kind of paper with the hornets', in horizontal strips, some brownish, some white. It was broad

¹ Wool-grass.

cone-shape, some two inches in its smallest diameter, with a hole at the apex beneath about one half inch [in] diameter, and was suspended to the sheathing overhead within the recess at Mrs. Brown's front door. She was afraid of the wasps, and so I brushed it off for her. It was apparently the same kind of nest that I observed first a few days since, of the same size, under the peak of our roof, just over my chamber windows. (The last is now five inches in diameter, July 7th.) It contained only one comb about one and one eighth inches in diameter suspended from above, and this was surrounded by about two thin coverings of paper an eighth of an inch or more apart. The wasps looked at first like bees, with yellow rings on the abdomen. The cells contain what look and move like white grubs.

(July 7th, watching the nest over my window, I see that the wasps are longer than honey-bees and have a white place between the abdomen and breast. There are commonly three or four visible at once about the nest, and they are continually bringing down new layers of paper from the top about a sixth of an inch distant from the last, building downward on all sides at once evenly and beginning, or starting, a new one before they have finished the first.¹ They have turned the entrance a little outward; *i. e.*, have built the successive layers a little over its inner side, *i. e.* that toward the house, so that it partly faces outward. They are continually arriving and departing, and one or two commonly are at work at once on the edge of the

¹ July 14, these new layers are coming down like new leaves, investing it.

new curtain or layer. What becomes of the first layers surrounding the comb within? Do they steadily cut them away and use them on the outside, and build new and larger combs beneath? Some that come forth appear to have something white like the paper in their mouths, at any rate.)

There is one in Mr. Smith's bank, one side open and flat against the ground. One of his men thinks they will not sting him if he holds his breath.

June 29. A. M. — Up Assabet with Blake.

Allium Canadense in house and probably in field.¹ The river is now whitened with the down of the black willow, and I am surprised to see a minute plant abundantly springing from its midst and greening it, — where it has collected in denser beds against some obstacle as a branch on the surface, — like grass growing in cotton in a tumbler.²

P. M. — Walk to Lee's Cliff.

Small rough sunflower, the common, at Bittern Cliff. Where I took shelter under the rock at Lee's Cliff, a phœbe has built her nest, and it now has five eggs in it, nearly fresh.

June 30. A. M. — To Ball's Hill.

Yesterday afternoon it was remarkably cool, with

¹ Possibly earlier in field, for I find it all withered there July 7th, though none visibly out before, — as if frost-bitten even.

² It is the young willow. *Vide* July 9th. On July 7th I see scarcely any left on the water. June 26, 1860.

wind, it being *easterly*, and I anticipated a sea-turn. There was a little, a blue mistiness, ere long. The coolness continues, and this morning the sky is full of clouds, but they look to me like dog-day clouds and not rain-threatening. It does not rain.