

## II

SEPTEMBER, 1856

(ÆT. 39)

Sept. 1. P. M. — With R. W. E. to Saw Mill and *Solidago odora*.

He has just had four of his fir trees next his house cut, they shaded his windows so. They were set out by Coolidge, E. thinks twenty-eight years ago. The largest has thirty-seven annual rings at the base and measures at one foot from the ground forty-six and a half inches in circumference; has made, on an average, about half an inch of wood in every direction.

There is no *Bidens cernua*, if that is it, by the Turnpike. It was apparently killed by the recent high water. *Solidago latifolia* not out quite.

We go admiring the pure and delicate tints of fungi on the surface of the damp swamp there, following up along the north side of the brook past the right of the old camp. There are many very beautiful lemon-yellow ones of various forms, some shaped like buttons, some becoming finely scalloped on the edge, some club-shaped and hollow, of the most delicate and rare but decided tints, contrasting well with the decaying leaves about them. There are others also pure white, others a wholesome red, others brown, and some even a light indigo-blue above and beneath and throughout. When colors come to be taught in the schools, as they should

be, both the prism (or the rainbow) and these fungi should be used by way of illustration, and if the pupil does not learn colors, he may learn fungi, which perhaps is better. You almost envy the wood frogs and toads that hop amid such gems, — some pure and bright enough for a breastpin. Out of every crevice between the dead leaves oozes some vehicle of color, the unspent wealth of the year, which Nature is now casting forth, as if it were only to empty herself.

Cobush berries appear now to be in their prime, and arum berries, and red choke-berries, which last further up in this swamp, with their peculiar glossy red and squarish form, are really very handsome. A few medeola berries ripe. The very dense clusters of the smilacina berries, finely purple-dotted on a pearly ground, are very interesting; also the smaller and similar clusters of the two-leaved convallaria. Many of the last and a few of the first are already turned red, clear semiluculent red. They have a pleasant sweetish taste.

Cistus flowers well out again in the old camp path, now nearly all grown up. I notice that the birches have sprung up in close, straight rows in the old ruts there.

I think it stands about thus with asters and golden-rods now: —

The early meadow aster is either quite withered or much the worse for the wear, partly on account of the freshet.

*Diplopappus cornifolius*, not seen of late.

*D. umbellatus*, perhaps in prime or approaching it, but not much seen.

*A. patens*, apparently now in prime and the most abundant of the larger asters.

- A. macrophyllus*, probably past prime.  
*A. acuminatus*, not seen at all.  
*A. Radula*, rather past prime.  
*A. dumosus*, very common, most so of the small white, and in prime.  
*D. linariifolius*, hardly noticed.  
*A. undulatus*, hardly one seen yet open, a late aster.  
*A. corymbosus*, in prime, or maybe past.  
*A. laevis*, just beginning.<sup>1</sup>  
*A. Tradescanti*, got to be pretty common, but not yet in prime.  
*A. puniceus*, hardly yet in prime.<sup>2</sup>  
*A. longifolius*, hardly one seen yet.  
*A. multiflorus*, not one seen yet.<sup>3</sup>  
*Solidago stricta*, still very abundant, though probably a little past prime.  
*S. gigantea*, say in prime.  
*S. nemoralis*, not quite in prime, but very abundant.  
*S. altissima*, perhaps in prime.  
*S. odora*, in prime, or maybe a little past.  
*S. puberula*, just beginning, rare in any case.  
*S. bicolor*, not quite in prime, but common.  
*S. lanceolata*, in prime, or past.<sup>4</sup>  
*S. latifolia*, not yet at all.  
*S. casia*, just begun.  
*S. speciosa*, not at all yet.

Sept. 2. P. M. — To Painted-Cup Meadow.

Clear bright days of late, with a peculiar sheen on the leaves, — light reflected from the surface of each one, for they are grown and worn and washed smooth at last, no infantile downiness on them. This, say ever since August 26th, and we have had no true dog-day

<sup>1</sup> Can this be the same open July 13th?

<sup>2</sup> Vide Sept. 5.

<sup>3</sup> (Oct. 8th) *A. miser* (omitted). If I mistake not it began to be common about Sept. 1st.

<sup>4</sup> Vide Sept. 5.

weather since the copious rains began, or three or four weeks. A sheeny light reflected from the burnished leaves as so many polished shields, and a steady creak from the locusts these days. Frank Harding has caught a dog-day locust which lit on the bottom of my boat, in which he was sitting, and z-ed there. When you hear him you have got to the end of the alphabet and may imagine the &. It has a mark somewhat like a small writing *w* on the top of its thorax.

A few pigeons were seen a fortnight ago. I have noticed none in all walks, but G. Minott, whose mind runs on them so much, but whose age and infirmities confine him to his wood-shed on the hillside, saw a small flock a fortnight ago. I rarely pass at any season of the year but he asks if I have seen any pigeons. One man's mind running on pigeons, [he] will sit thus in the midst of a village, many of whose inhabitants never see nor dream of a pigeon except in the pot, and where even naturalists do not observe [them], and he, looking out with expectation and faith from morning till night, will surely see them.

I think we may detect that some sort of preparation and faint expectation preceded every discovery we have made. We blunder into no discovery but it will appear that we have prayed and disciplined ourselves for it. Some years ago I sought for Indian hemp (*Apocynum cannabinum*) hereabouts in vain, and concluded that it did not grow here. A month or two ago I read again, as many times before, that its blossoms were very small, scarcely a third as large

as those of the common species, and for some unaccountable reason this distinction kept recurring to me, and I regarded the size of the flowers I saw, though I did not believe that it grew here; and in a day or two my eyes fell on [it], aye, in three different places, and different varieties of it. Also, a short time ago, I was satisfied that there was but one kind of sunflower (*divaricatus*) indigenous here. Hearing that one had found another kind, it occurred to me that I had seen a taller one than usual lately, but not so distinctly did I remember this as to name it to him or even fully remember it myself. (I rather remembered it afterward.) But within that hour my genius conducted me to where I had seen the tall plants, and it was the other man's new kind. The next day I found a third kind, miles from there, and, a few days after, a fourth in another direction.

It commonly chances that I make my most interesting botanical discoveries when I [am] in a thrilled and expectant mood, perhaps wading in some remote swamp where I have just found something novel and feel more than usually remote from the town. Or some rare plant which for some reason has occupied a strangely prominent place in my thoughts for some time will present itself. My expectation ripens to discovery. I am prepared for strange things.

My father asked John Legross if he took an interest in politics and did his duty to his country at this crisis. He said he did. He went into the wood-shed and read the newspaper Sundays. Such is the dawn of the literary taste, the first seed of literature that is planted

in the new country. His grandson may be the author of a Bhagvat-Geeta.

I see bright-yellow blossoms on perfectly crimson *Hypericum angulosum* in the *S. lanceolata* path. By the Indian hemp at the stone bridge, am surprised to see the *Salix lucida*, a small tree with very marked and handsome leaves, on the sand, water's edge, at the great eddy. The branches of an inch in diameter are smooth and ash-colored, maple-like; the recent shoots stout and yellowish-green, very brittle at base. The leaves are the largest of any willow I have seen, ovate-oblong or ovate-lanceolate, with a long, narrow, tapering point (cuspidate), some on vigorous shoots, two and a half by seven inches wide in the blade, glandular-serrate, with pedicellate glands at the rounded base, thick, smooth, and glossy above, smooth and green beneath, with broad crescent-shaped, glandular-toothed stipules at base of petioles, five eighths to one inch long. According to Emerson, "Sir W. J. Hooker says it is one of the most generally diffused of all the willows in British North America."

Captain Hubbard said on Sunday that he had plowed up an Indian gouge, but how little impression that had made on him compared with the rotting of his cranberries or the loss of meadow-grass! It seemed to me that it made an inadequate impression compared with many trivial events. Suppose he had plowed up five dollars!

The botanist refers you, for wild [*sic*] and we presume wild plants, further inland or westward to so many miles from Boston, as if Nature or the Indians had

any such preferences. Perchance the ocean seemed wilder to them than the woods. As if there were primarily and essentially any more wildness in a western acre than an eastern one!

The *S. lucida* makes about the eleventh willow that I have distinguished. When I find a new and rare plant in Concord I seem to think it has but just sprung up here,—that it is, and not I am, the newcomer,—while it has grown here for ages before I was born. It transports me in imagination to the Saskatchewan. It grows alike on the bank of the Concord and of the Mackenzie River, proving them a kindred soil. I see their broad and glossy leaves reflecting the autumn light this moment all along those rivers. Through this leaf I communicate with the Indians who roam the boundless Northwest. It tastes the same nutriment in sand of the Assabet and its water as in that of the Saskatchewan and Jasper Lake, suggesting that a short time ago the shores of this river were as wild as the shores of those.

We are dwelling amid these wild plants still, we are eating the huckleberries which lately only the Indian ate and dried, we are raising and eating his wild and nutritive maize, and if we have imported wheat, it is but our wild rice, which we annually gather with grateful awe, like Chippewas. Potatoes are our ground-nuts.

*Spiranthes cernua*, apparently some days at least, though not yet generally; a cool, late flower, growing with fringed gentian. I cannot yet even find the leaves of the latter — at the house-leek brook. I had come

to the Assabet, but could not wade the river, it was so deep and swift. The very meadow, poke-logan, was a quarter of a mile long and as deep as the river before. So I had come round over the bridge.

In Painted-Cup Meadow the ferns are yellowing, imbrowned, and crisped, as if touched by frost (?), yet it may be owing to the rains. It is evident that, at this season, excessive rain will ripen and kill the leaves as much as a drought does earlier. I think our strawberries recently set out have died, partly in consequence. Perhaps they need some dryness as well as warmth at this season. Plainly dog-days and rain have had the most to do as yet with the changing and falling of the leaves. So trees by water change earliest, sassafras at Cardinal Shore, for example, while those on hill are not turned red at all. These ferns I see, with here and there a single maple bough turned scarlet,—this quite rare.

Some of the small early blueberry bushes are a clear red (*Vaccinium Pennsylvanicum*), and the lingering clusters of blueberries contrast strangely with the red leaves of the *V. vacillans*. Smooth sumachs show quite red on dry, warm hillsides.

While I am plucking the almost spicy blueberries amid the crimson leaves there on the springy slope, the cows gather toward the outlet of their pastures and low for the herdsman, reminding me that the day is drawing to a close.

Centaurea will apparently be entirely done in a week.

How deceptive these maps of western rivers! Me-

thought they were scattered according to the fancy of the map-maker, — were dry channels at best, — but it turns out that the Missouri at Nebraska City is three times as wide as the Mississippi at Burlington, and Grasshopper Creek, perhaps, will turn out to be as big as the Thames or Hudson.

There was an old gentleman here to-day who lived in Concord when he was young and remembers how Dr. Ripley talked to him and other little boys from the pulpit, as they came into church with their hands full of lilies, saying that those lilies looked so fresh that they must have been gathered that morning! Therefore they must have committed the sin of bathing this morning! Why, this is as sacred a river as the Ganges, sir.

I feel this difference between great poetry and small: that in the one, the sense outruns and overflows the words; in the other, the words the sense.

Sept. 3. P. M. — To Hubbard's Swamp for *Viburnum nudum* berries.

The river smooth, though full, with the autumn sheen on it, as on the leaves. I see painted tortoises with their entire backs covered with perfectly fresh clean black scales, such as no rubbing nor varnishing can produce, contrasting advantageously with brown and muddy ones. One little one floats past on a drifting pad which he partly sinks.

I find one sassafras berry, dark-blue in its crimson cup, club-shaped. It is chiefly stone, and its taste is like that of *tar* (!), methinks, far from palatable.

So many plants, the indigenous and the bewildering variety of exotics, you see in conservatories and nurserymen's catalogues, or read of in English books, and the Royal Society did not make one of them, and knows no more about them than you! All truly indigenous and wild on this earth. I know of no mark that betrays an introduced plant, as none but the gardener can tell what flower has strayed from its parterre; but where the seed will germinate and the plant spring and grow, there it is at home.

Weeds are uncultivated herbaceous plants which do not bear handsome flowers.

*Polygala sanguinea* is now as abundant, at least, as at any time, and perhaps more conspicuous in the meadows where I look for fringed gentian.

Gathered four or five quarts of *Viburnum nudum* berries, now in their prime, attracted more by the beauty of the cymes than the flavor of the fruit. The berries, which are of various sizes and forms, — elliptical, oblong, or globular, — are in different stages of maturity on the same cyme, and so of different colors, — green or white, rose-colored, and dark purple or black, — *i. e.* three or four very distinct and marked colors, side by side. If gathered when rose-colored, they soon turn dark purple and are soft and edible, though before bitter. They add a new and variegated wildness to the swampy sprout-lands. Remarkable for passing through so many stages of color before they arrive at maturity. A singular and pleasing contrast, also, do the different kinds of viburnum and cornel berries present when compared with each other.

The white berries of the paniced cornel, soon and apparently prematurely dropping from its pretty fingers, are very bitter. So also are those of the *C. sericca*.

One carrion-flower berry is turning blue in its dense spherical cluster. Castile-soap galls are crowding the more legitimate acorn on the shrub oak.

*Sept. 4. P. M.* — To Miles Swamp, Conantum.

What are those small yellow birds with two white bars on wings, about the oak at Hubbard's Grove? *Aralia racemosa* berries just ripe, at tall helianthus by bass [?] beyond William Wheeler's; not edible. Indian hemp out of bloom. Butterflies in read a day or two. The crackling flight of grasshoppers. The grass also is all alive with them, and they trouble me by getting into my shoes, which are loose, and obliging me to empty them occasionally. Measured an archangelica stem (now of course dry) in Corner Spring Swamp, eight feet eight inches high, and seven and a quarter inches in circumference at ground. It is a somewhat zigzag stem with few joints and a broad umbelliferous top, so that it makes a great show. One of those plants that have their fall early. There are many splendid scarlet arum berries there now in prime,<sup>1</sup> forming a dense ovate head on a short peduncle; the individual berries of various sizes, between pear and mitre and club form, flattened against each other on a singular (now purple and white) core, which is hollow. What rank and venomous luxuriance in this swamp sproutland! *Viola pedata* again. I see where squirrels have

<sup>1</sup> And last ten days more at least.

eaten green sweet viburnum berries on the wall, together with hazelnuts. The former, gathered red, turn dark purple and shrivelled, like raisins, in the house, and are edible, but chiefly seed. The fever-bush is conspicuously flower-budded. Even its spicy leaves have been cut by the tailor bee, and circular pieces taken out. He was, perhaps, attracted by its smoothness and soundness. Large puffballs, sometime.

*Sept. 5. Friday.* To Brattleboro, Vt.

Will not the prime of goldenrods and asters be just before the first severe frosts?

As I ride along in the cars, I think that the ferns, etc., are browned and crisped more than usual at this season, on account of the very wet weather.

Found, on reaching Fitchburg that there was an interval of three and a half hours between this and the Brattleboro train, and so walked on, on the track, with shouldered valise. Had observed that the Nashua River in Shirley was about one mile west of Groton Junction, if I should ever want to walk there. Observed by railroad, in Fitchburg, low slippery elm shrubs with great, rough, one-sided leaves.

*Solidago lanccolata* past prime, a good deal. *Aster puniceus* in prime. About one mile from West Fitchburg depot, westward, I saw the paniced elder berries on the railroad but just beginning to redden, though it is said to ripen long before this. As I was walking through Westminster, I remembered that G. B. Emerson says that he saw a handsome clump of the *Salix lucida* on an island in Meeting-House Pond in this

town, and, looking round, I saw a shrub of it by the railroad, about one mile west of West Fitchburg depot, and several times afterward within a mile or two. Also in the brook behind Mr. Alcott's house in Walpole, N. H.

Took the cars again in Westminster. The scenery began to be mountainous and interesting in Royalston and Athol, but was more so in Erving. In Northfield first observed fields of broom-corn very common, *Sorghum saccharatum*, taller than corn. Alcott says they bend down the heads before they gather them, to fit them for brooms. Hereabouts women and children are already picking hops in the fields, in the shade of large white sheets, like sails.

Sept. 6. At Brattleboro.

Mr. Charles C. (?) Frost showed me a printed list of the flowers of B., furnished by him to a newspaper in B. some years since. He says he finds *Aster simplex* and *A. ptarmicoides* there (according to Oakes the latter is not found in New England out of Vermont), the latter now covered by the high water of the river; also *A. concinnus*, of Wood, perhaps (not in Gray) (*vide* specimen pressed); also *Solidago patula* and *serotina*, as well as *Canadensis* and *gigantea*. Also finds, he says, *Helianthus giganteus* (Oakes gives only *H. divaricatus* and *decapetalus* to Vermont), with quite small flowers, bank of river, behind town-house; and *decapetalus* and *strumosus*. Speaks of the fragrance of the dicksonia fern and the sensitiveness of the sensitive fern. If you take a tender plant by the stem, the warmth of your hand will cause the leaves to curl.

Thought my great dish-cover fungus a *Coprolus* (?) (so called from growing in dung?).

Read in Thompson's History of Vermont, which contains very good natural history, including a catalogue of the Plants of Vermont made by Oakes and, in the last edition, additional ones found by Frost.

A. M. — Walked down the railroad about a mile, returning partly by river-bank.

The depot is on the site of "Thunderbolt's" house. He was a Scotch highwayman. Called himself Dr. Wilson (?) when here. The prevailing polygonum in B. was a new one to me, *P. Pennsylvanicum*, but not roughish on the veins, apparently in prime, with the aspect of *P. Persicaria*, sometimes spreading and stretching four feet along a hillside, but commonly in rather low ground, roadsides. For the first time distinguish the *Aster cordifolius*, a prevailing one in B. and but just beginning to flower; like an *A. undulatus* with narrow-winged petioles and sharp-toothed leaves; amid bushes and edges of woods, sometimes four feet high, paniced.

I see the flowering raspberry still in bloom. This plant is quite common here. The fruit, now ripe, is red and quite agreeable, but not abundant. *Desmodium Canadense* still. Maple-leaved viburnum very abundant here, a prevailing shrub. Berries apparently now in prime, or a little earlier than this, ovoid, dull blue-black. Pluck some rose leaves by Connecticut (*vide* press), with now smooth, somewhat pear-shaped hips; not a sweet-briar. Also *Cornus circinata* berries, very light blue or bluish-white.

*Cirsium discolor*, roadside below depot, apparently in prime, much like *lanccolatum*, but smaller leaves, whitish beneath and inner scales unarmed.

Frost said that Dr. Kane left B. the morning of the day I arrived, and had given him a list of arctic plants brought home by him, which he showed me, — pages from his Report, in press.

The *Solidago Canadensis* very common, apparently in prime; also perfectly smooth ones with glaucous stems like some of ours. I am in doubt whether the last, or any that we have in Concord, is the *S. serotina* or *gigantea*. Frost says he distinguishes both, but Oakes does not give the *S. serotina* to Vermont. I should say *he* had but one kind, which varied from leaves rough above and on the veins beneath, and stems smooth below and pubescent above, to leaves quite smooth on both sides and stems very smooth and glaucous; rays also vary very much in size. Or are these only varieties of the *Canadensis*??

I find small grapes a third of an inch in diameter, many ripe, on the bank of the Connecticut, — pleasantly acid. Clusters three to four or five inches long. The leaves are sharply toothed and green on both sides. Is it the *Vitis cordifolia*?<sup>1</sup> I see also a vine with leaves rusty-downy beneath and not conspicuously toothed, with equally small now green grapes, apparently like ours. Is not this *V. æstivalis*? Of the latter the berries are said to be pleasant, and ripe in October.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Apparently it is, but berries already ripe.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* Oct. 27, 1856.

*Eupatorium ageratoides*, white snake-root, in rather low ground or on banks along riverside, apparently in prime. Apparently *Helianthus decapetalus*, or cut-toothed helianthus, the teeth much larger than with us. *Solidago arguta* very common, apparently in prime, with sharp-toothed, more or less elliptic leaves and slender terminal drooping racemes; size of *S. stricta*.

Sept. 7. Sunday.<sup>1</sup> At Brattleboro, Vt. A. M. — Climbed the hill behind Mr. Addison Brown's.

The leaves of the *Tiarella cordifolia* very abundant in the woods, but hardly sharp-lobed. Also observed the leaves of the *Hepatica triloba*. Was that *Sium lineare* in the pool on the hilltop? Oakes allows only *S. latifolium* to grow in Vermont. The seeds are apparently ribbed like ours. (*Vide* press.) Found the lemna mantling that pool. Mrs. Brown has found it in flower there. Flowering dogwood on hill.

P. M. — Up the bank of the Connecticut to West River, up that to a brook, and up that nearly to hospital.

The Connecticut, though unusually high (several feet more than usual), looks low, there being four or five or six rods of bare gravel on each side, and the bushes and weeds covered with clayey soil from a freshet. Not a boat to be seen on it. The Concord is worth a hundred of it for my purposes. It looks narrow as well as shallow. No doubt it is dwarfed by

<sup>1</sup> [The manuscript volume which begins with this date has on its first page, "The cold winter and warm February."]

the mountain rising directly from it in front, which, as usual, looking nearer than it is, makes the opposite shore seem nearer.

The *Solidago Canadensis*, and the smooth three-ribbed one, and *nemoralis*, etc., the helianthus (apparently *decapetalus*), and *Aster* or *Diplopappus linariifolius*, *Vitis cordifolius* (?) (now beginning to be ripe) are quite common along the bank. On a bank-side on West River, *Urtica Canadensis*, apparently in prime and going to seed, the same that Mr. Whitlow once recommended as a substitute for hemp. Near by the phryma, or lopseed, with still a few small rose-white flowers. I at first thought it a *circæa*. Plenty of harebells thereabouts, and, by the brook, *Polygonum Virginianum*, three feet high, mostly gone to seed. Apparently *Cornus stolonifera* (?) by brook (*vide* press), with the *sericca*. *Aster macrophyllus* much past prime.

Sept. 8. Brattleboro. — Rains.

Frost gives me an aster which he thinks *A. concinnus* of Wood; grows in woods and yet longer leaved.

P. M. — Clearing up. I went a-botanizing by the Coldwater Path, for the most part along a steep wooded hillside on Whetstone Brook and through its interval.

In the last heavy rain, two or three weeks since, there was a remarkable freshet on this brook, such as has not been known before, the bridge and road carried away, the bed of the stream laid bare, a new channel being made, the interval covered with sand and gravel, and trees (buttonwood, etc.) brought

down; several acres thus buried. Frost escaped from his house on a raft. I observed a stream of large bare white rocks four or five rods wide, which at first I thought had been washed down, but it seems this was the former bed of the stream, it having worn a new channel further east.

Witch-hazel out, maybe a day or two, in some places, but the Browns do not think the fringed gentian out yet.

There for the first time I see growing indigenously the *Dirca palustris*, leather-wood, the largest on the low interval by the brook. I notice a bush there seven feet high. In its form it is somewhat like a quince bush, though less spreading, its leaves broad, like entire sassafras leaves; now beginning to turn yellow. It has a remarkably strong thick bark and soft white wood which bends like lead (Gray says it is brittle!), the different layers separating at the end. I cut a good-sized switch, which was singularly tough and flexible, just like a cowhide, and would answer the purpose of one admirably. The color of the bark is a very pale brown. I was much interested in this shrub, since it was the Indian's rope. Frost said that the farmers of Vermont used it to tic up their fences with. Certainly there can be no wood equal to it as a withe. He says it is still strong when dry. I should think it would be worth the while for the farmers to cultivate for this purpose. How often in the woods and fields we want a string or rope and cannot find one. This is the plant which Nature has made for this purpose. The Browns gave me some of the flowers, which ap-

pear very early in spring. Gray says that in northern New England it is called *wicopy*. Potter, in History of Manchester, says Indians sewed canoes with it. Beck says, "The bark has a sweetish taste, and when chewed excites a burning sensation in the fauces," and, according to Emerson, the bark of this family, "taken into the stomach causes heat and vomiting, or purging." According to the latter, cordage has been made from the bark of this family, also paper. Emerson says of this plant in particular, "The fresh bark produces a sensation of heat in the stomach, and at last brings on vomiting. . . . It has such strength that a man cannot pull apart so much as covers a branch of half or a third of an inch in diameter. It is used by millers and others for thongs." Indian cordage. I feel as if I had discovered a more indigenous plant than usual, it was so peculiarly useful to the aborigines.

On that wooded hillside, I find small-flowered asters, *A. miser*-like, hairy, but very long linear leaves; possibly the var. *hirsuta* of *A. miser* (Oakes gives of *A. miser*, only the var. *hirsuticaulis* to Vermont) or else a neighboring species, for they seem distinct. (*Vide press.*) There is the hobble-bush with its berries and large roundish leaves, now beginning to turn a deep dull crimson red. Also mountain maples, with sharp-lobed leaves and downy beneath, the young plants numerous. The *Ribes cynosbati*, or prickly gooseberry, with its bur-like fruit, dry and still hanging here and there. Also the ground-hemlock, with its beautiful fruit, like a red waxen cup with a purple (?)

fruit in it. By the edge of a ditch, where it had been overwhelmed and buried with mud by the later freshet, the *Solidago Muhlenbergii* in its prime. (*Vide press.*) Near by, on the bank of the ditch, leaves of coltsfoot. I had cut across the interval, but, taking to the Coldwater Path again near its southeast end, I found, at an angle in it near the canal, beech-drops under a beech, not yet out, and the *Equisetum scirpoides*, also radical leaves, very broad, perhaps of a sedge, some much longer. (*Vide press.*)

Gathered flowering raspberries in all my walks and found them a pleasant berry, large, but never abundant. In a wet place on the interval the *Veronica Americana*, according to Frost (*beccabunga* of some), not in bloom. Along this path observed the *Nabalus altissimus*, flowers in a long panicle of axillary and terminal branches, small-flowered, now in prime. Leaves apparently of *Oxalis Acetosella*. Large roundish radical leaves on the moist wooded hillside, which the Browns thought of the round-leaved violet. Low, flat-topped, very rough hairy, apparently *Aster acuminatus*. *Erigeron annuus*, broad, thin, toothed leaves. Also another, perhaps hirsute *A. miser*, with toothed leaves.

I hear that two thousand dollars' worth of huckleberries have been sold by the town of Ashby this season.

Also gathered on this walk the *Polypodium Dryopteris* and *Polystichum acrostichoides* and a short heavy-odored (like stramonium) plant with aspect of lilac, not in bloom. (*Vide press.*)

Sept. 9. Tuesday. 8 A. M. — Ascend the Chesterfield Mountain with Miss Frances and Miss Mary Brown.

The Connecticut is about twenty rods wide between Brattleboro and Hinsdale. This mountain, according to Frost, 1064 feet high. It is the most remarkable feature here. The village of Brattleboro is peculiar for the nearness of the primitive wood and the mountain. Within three rods of Brown's house was excellent botanical ground on the side of a primitive wooded hillside, and still better along the Coldwater Path. But, above all, this everlasting mountain is forever lowering over the village, shortening the day and wearing a misty cap each morning. You look up to its top at a steep angle from the village streets. A great part belongs to the Insane Asylum. This town will be convicted of folly if they ever permit this mountain to be laid bare. Francis [*sic*] B. says its Indian name is Wantastiquet, from the name of West River above. Very abundant about B. the *Gerardia tenuifolia*, in prime, which I at first mistook for the *purpurea*. The latter I did not see. High up the mountain the *Aster macrophyllus* as well as *corymbosus*. The (apparently) *Platanthera orbiculata* (?) leaves, round and flat on ground (*vide* press); another by it with larger and more oblong leaves. Pine-sap. A tuft of five-divided leaves, fifteen or eighteen inches high, slightly fern-like (*vide* press). *Galium circæzans* var. *lanccolatum*. Top of the mountain covered with wood. Saw Ascutney, between forty and fifty miles up the river, but not Monadnock on account of woods.

P. M. — To and up a brook north of Brown's house.

A large alternate cornel, four or five inches in diameter, a dark-gray stem. The kidney-shaped leaves of the *Asarum Canadense* common there. *Panax quinquefolium*, with peculiar flat scarlet fruit in a little umbel. *Clinopodium vulgare*, or basil, apparently flattened down by a freshet, rather past prime; and spearmint in brook just above. Close behind Brown's, *Liparis liliifolia*, or tway-blade, leaves and bulb.

A very interesting sight from the top of the mountain was that of the cars so nearly under you, apparently creeping along, you could see so much of their course.

The epigæa was very abundant on the hill behind Brown's and elsewhere in B. The *Populus monilifera* grows on West River, but I did not see it. The *Erigeron Philadelphicus* I saw pressed, with innumerable fine rays. Scouring-rush was common along the Coldwater Path and elsewhere.

The most interesting sight I saw in Brattleboro was the skin and skull of a panther (*Felis concolor*) (cougar, catamount, painter, American lion, puma), which was killed, according to a written notice attached, on the 15th of June by the Saranac Club of Brattleboro, six young men, on a fishing and hunting excursion. This paper described it as eight feet in extreme length and weighing one hundred and ten pounds. The Brattleboro newspaper says its body was "4 feet 11 inches in length, and the tail 2 feet 9 inches; the animal weighed 108 pounds." I was surprised at its great size and apparent strength. It gave one a new idea of our American forests and the vigor of nature here. It

was evident that it could level a platoon of men with a stroke of its paw. I was particularly impressed by the size of its limbs, the size of its canine teeth, and its great white claws. I do not see but this affords a sufficient foundation for the stories of the lion heard and its skins seen near Boston by the first settlers. This creature was very catlike, though the tail was not tapering, but as large at the extremity as anywhere, yet not tufted like the lion's. It had a long neck, a long thin body, like a lean cat. Its fore feet were about six inches long by four or five wide, as set up.

I talked with the man who shot him, a Mr. Kellogg, a lawyer. They were fishing on one of the Saranac Lakes, their guide being the Harvey Moody whom Hammond describes, when they heard the noise of some creature threshing about amid the bushes on the hillside. The guide suspected that it was a panther which had caught a deer. He reconnoitred and found that it was a panther which had got one fore paw (the left) in one of his great double-spring, long toothed or hooked bear-traps. He had several of these traps set (without bait) in the neighborhood. It fell to Kellogg's lot to advance with the guide and shoot him. They approached within six or seven rods, saw that the panther was held firmly, and fired just as he raised his head to look at them. The ball entered just above his nose, pierced his brain, and killed him at once. The guide got the bounty of twenty-five dollars, but the game fell to his employers. A slice had been sheared off one side of each ear to secure this with. It was a male. The guide thought it an old

one, but Kellogg said that, as they were returning with it, the inhabitants regarded it as common; they only kicked it aside in the road, remarking that [it] was a large one.

I talked also with the Mr. Chamberlin who set it up. He showed me how sharp the edges of the broad grinders were just behind the canine teeth. They were zigzag, thus:  and shut over the under, scraping close like shears and, as he proved, would cut off a straw clean. This animal looked very thin as set up, and probably in some states of his body would have weighed much more. Kellogg said that, freshly killed, the body *showed the nerves* much more than as set up. The color, etc., agreed very well with the account in Thompson's History of Vermont, except that there was, now at least, no yellow about the mouth or chin, but whitish. It was, in the main, the universal color of this family, or a little browner. According to Thompson, it is brown-red on the back, reddish-gray on the sides, whitish or light-ash on the belly; tail like the back above, except its extremity, which is brownish-black, not tufted; chin, upper lip, and inside of ears, yellowish-white. Hairs on back, short, brownish tipped with red; on the belly, longer, lighter, tipped with white; hairs of face like back with whitish hairs intermingled. Canines conical, claws pearly-white. Length, nose to tail, four feet eight inches; tail, two feet six inches; top of head to point of nose, ten inches; width across forehead, eight inches. Length of fore legs, one foot two inches; hind, one foot four inches. Weight usually about one

hundred pounds. The largest he ever knew was seven feet in extreme length and weighed one hundred and eighteen pounds. One had been known to leap up a precipice fifteen feet high with a calf in his mouth. *Vide* Lawson, Hunter, and Jefferson in Book of Facts. Hunter when near the Rocky Mountains says, "So much were they to be apprehended . . . that no one ever ventured to go out alone, even on the most trifling occasion." He makes two kinds.

Emmons makes the extreme length of one of the largest cougars nine feet four inches, and the greatest length of the canine tooth of the upper jaw from the gum nine tenths of an inch. I think that the teeth of the one I saw were much larger. Says it is cowardly and "rarely if ever attacks man;" that a hunter met five in St. Lawrence County, N. Y., and, with his dog and gun only, killed three that day and the other two the next. Yet he will follow a man's track a great distance. Scream at evening heard for miles. Thinks about 45° its northern range.<sup>1</sup>

Sept. 10. 10.30 A. M. — Took the cars to Bellows Falls, through Dummerston, Putney, and Westminster.

Looked at the falls and rocks. River higher than usual at this season, yet could cross all but about twenty feet on the rocks. Some pot-holes of this form:

 real pot-holes, but commonly several curves commingled, thus:  or the whole Found, spreading prostrate on the rocks amid the

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* forward, Oct. 4th and 25th.

pot-holes, apparently a small willow,<sup>1</sup> with shining dark-red stems and smooth, spatulate, rather obtuse serrate leaves. (*Vide* press.) I read that salmon passed these falls but not shad. When the water is lowest, it is contracted to sixteen feet here, and Peters's, an old history of Connecticut, says it was so condensed that you could not thrust a crowbar into it. It did me good to read his wholesale hearty statements,—strong, living, human speech, so much better than the emasculated modern histories, like Bancroft's and the rest, cursed with a style.<sup>2</sup> I would rather read such histories, though every sentence were a falsehood, than our dull emasculated reports which bear the name of histories. The former, having a human breath and interest behind them, are nearer to nature and to truth, after all. The historian is required to feel a human interest in his subject and to so express it. President Dwight, speaking of the origin of those pot-holes, says, "The river now is often fuller than it probably ever was before the country above was cleared of its forests: the snows in open ground melting much more suddenly, and forming much greater freshets, than in forested ground." (Vol. ii, page 92.)

Ascended the Fall Mountain with a heavy valise on my back, against the advice of the toll-man. But when I got up so soon and easily I was amused to remember his anxiety. It is seven hundred and fifty feet high, according to Gazetteer. Saw great red oaks on this hill, particularly tall, straight, and bare of limbs,

<sup>1</sup> *Prunus depressa*.

<sup>2</sup> [Channing, p. 272. C. puts "Prescott's" for "Bancroft's."]

for a great distance, amid the woods. Here, as at Brattleboro, a fine view of the country immediately beneath you; but these views lack breadth, a distant horizon. There is a complete view of the falls from this height.

Saw a pair of middle-sized black hawks hovering about this cliff, with some white spots, with peculiar shrill snapping notes like a gull, a new kind to me.

Descending the steep south end of this hill, I saw an apparent *Corydalis glauca*, mostly withered, three feet or more, and more than usually broad and stout in proportion. (*Vide press.*) My shoes were very smooth, and I got many falls descending, battering my valise. By the railroad below, the *Solanum nigrum*, with white flowers but yet green fruit.

Just after crossing Cold River, bathed in the Connecticut, evidently not far from site of the old Kilbourn fort. Clay-muddy shore. Near the site of the old Bellows Fort, saw completely purple *Polygala verticillata* abundant in road.

Rode the last mile into Walpole with a lumberer, who said that when he commenced operations at Bellows Falls he thought that there was not more than one hundred thousand there, but they had already got out four millions. He imported some of those masts I had seen go through Concord from Canada West. They were rafted along Lake Erie (a Mr. Dorr of Buffalo afterward told me that he did this part with steamers, merely running an inch chain through the butt of each log and fastening the ends to a boom, which surrounded the whole, leaving the small ends to play) and in small rafts by canal to Albany, and

thence by railroad *via* Rutland to Portland, for the navy; and it cost only one third more to get them from Canada West than from Bellows Falls. Remembering the difficulty in old times of loading one of these sticks in New Hampshire for the King's Navy, this seemed the greatest triumph of the railroad.

In Walpole, the *Chenopodium Botrys*.

Sept. 11. P. M. — Walked over what Alcott calls Farm Hill, east of his house.

*Erigeron annuus*, four feet high, by roadside; also *Ranunculus Pennsylvanicus*, or bristly crowfoot, still in bloom. *Vide press.* A fine view of the Connecticut valley from the hilltop, and of Ascutney Mountain, but not of Monadnock. Descended a steep side of the hill by a cow-path, made with great judgment regularly zigzag, thus : well worn and deep. Visited the grave-yard and the founder's, Colonel Benjamin Bellows, grave-stone and more recent monument.

In the evening read an interesting pamphlet account of the Bellows family of Walpole, prepared by Dr. Bellows of New York, on occasion of the family gathering and erection of the monument. A large part of the inhabitants of Walpole are descendants of Colonel B. Bellows. The writer quotes from a paper in "the *Cheshire Gazette* of April 28, 1826," "understood to be prepared by our respected townsman, Dr. Morse," Dr. B. saying first, "A Mrs. Watson of Germantown, Pennsylvania, was alive in 1826, who resided in Wal-

pole in 1762, then only 8 years old," but she had a remarkable memory. He then quotes Morse, who states that her father came and built a house in Walpole in 1762. "The roof of the house was covered with bark, and the gable ends remained open some time, which enabled them to hear the barking of foxes, the howling of wolves, and the cries of the panther, while sitting before the fire. The latter resembled the voice of a woman in distress, and [seemed]<sup>1</sup> intended to decoy people into the woods, where the salutations of these roving gentry were apt to prove troublesome, unless prevented by the presence of fire-arms." According to this woman (and Morse), "a shad was taken near the falls which had a rattlesnake's head in its stomach."

Dr. B. states that there is a tradition that the founder, Colonel B., once killed, on Fall Mountain, two bears and a very large panther, which last alarmed him considerably. According to Morse and the woman, "a large portion of pin money was derived from the sale of golden thread, ginseng, and snakeroot, which were procured from their [the ladies']<sup>2</sup> own hands." This should probably be "lands," or the preposition, "by."

In Alcott's yard, sprung up from his bird's seed, hemp, like common except fragrant.<sup>3</sup>

These are the plants I obtained on this excursion:—

Panicled elder *berries*, Fitchburg.

*Aster concinnus* (?), Frost, Brattleboro.

<sup>1</sup> [This word is probably supplied by Thoreau.]

<sup>2</sup> [Thoreau's brackets.] <sup>3</sup> So is ours.

*Solidago Canadensis*.

*A. cordifolius*.

*Urtica gracilis* (?).

Pear-hipped rose.

*Vitis cordifolia*.

*Eupatorium ageratoides*.

*Helianthus decapetalus*.

*Solidago arguta*.

*A. tenuifolius* (?), Frost.

*Hepatica triloba*, leaves.

*Tiarella cordifolia*, leaves and dried stem.

*Sium lineare* (?).

*Urtica Canadensis*.

*Phryma leptostachya*.

*Campanula rotundifolia*.

*Polygonum Virginianum*.

*Cornus stolonifera* (?).

*Dirca palustris*, leaves.

*A. miser* var. *hirsuta* (?).

*Viburnum lantanoides*, leaves.

*Acer spicatum*, leaves.

*Ribes cynosbati*, in fruit.

*Taxus Canadensis*, in fruit.

*Solidago Muhlenbergii*.

*Tussilago Farfara*, leaves.

*Epiphegus Americana*.

*Equisetum scirpoides*.

*Veronica Americana*, not in flower.

*Nabalus altissimus*.

*Oxalis Acetosella*, leaves.

*Viola rotundifolia* (??), radical leaves.

*Erigeron annuus*.

*Polypodium Dryopteris*, in fruit.

Heavy scented plant.

*Gerardia tenuifolia*.

*Platanthera orbiculata* (?), out of bloom.

Tufted and divided leaves on mountain.

Aster, *longifolius*-like, on Island.

Sept. 14. P. A  
dinal Ditch.

Now for the A  
the Turnpike, s  
Some of them are  
later flowers!  
wound up her at  
do this year, and  
roadside, or mist  
flowers now hast  
knew every twig  
thing more was  
your surprise, the  
of little stars. T  
with their legions  
lain in ambush  
Call them trav  
small, worth a p  
and summer, in  
first, successively  
nettles and beggar  
meteoric shower,  
in whose aisles  
himself, elevate  
that his success  
by the sight of  
here and there, t  
pher has passed  
assiduity does not  
cessive crops on  
roadside ditches.

s Falls.

alpole.

alpole.

alpole.

pressed by the Browns:—

er.

ves.

me?).

ord.

Concord. — After all, I am  
ance of the same species  
untry, though our soil is  
think that no view I have  
ey, at Brattleboro or Wal-  
Concord from Nawshaw-

tuct. Here is a more interesting horizon, more va-  
riety and richness. Our river is much the most fertile  
in every sense. Up there it is nothing but river-valley  
and hills. Here there is so much more that we have  
forgotten that we live in a valley.

8 A. M. — Up Assabet.

Gathered quite a parcel of grapes, quite ripe. Diffi-  
cult to break off the large bunches without some  
dropping off. Yet the best are more admirable for  
fragrance than for flavor. Depositing them in the  
bows of the boat, they filled all the air with their  
fragrance, as we rowed along against the wind, as if  
we were rowing through an endless vineyard in its  
maturity.

The *Aster Tradescantii* now sugars the banks densely,  
since I left, a week ago. Nature improves this her  
last opportunity to empty her lap of flowers.

Ascended the hill. The barberries are abundant there,  
and already handsomely red, though not much more  
than half turned. Was surprised at the profusion of  
autumnal dandelions in their prime on *the top of the  
hill*, about the oaks. Never saw them thicker in a  
meadow. A cool, spring-suggesting yellow. They  
reserve their force till this season, though they begin  
so early. Cool to the eye, as the creak of the cricket  
to the ear.

The *Viburnum Lentago*, which I left not half turned  
red when I went up-country a week ago, are now quite  
black-purple and shrivelled like raisins on my table,  
and sweet to taste, though chiefly seed.

maybe owing to the rains. Meadow-sweet lingers yet!

What I must call *Bidens cernua*, like a small *chrysanthemoides*, is *bristly hairy*, somewhat connate and apparently regularly toothed. The hypericums generally appear to be now about done. I see none.

Sept. 16. P. M. — To Harris's Mill, Acton, with Father.

*Aster laevis* apparently in prime; very handsome its long, slanting, broad-topped wands by the roadside, even in dry soil, its rays longer and richer purple than usual. See a flock of pigeons dash by. From a stout breast they taper straightly and slenderly to the tail. They have been catching them a while.

William Monroe is said to have been the first who raised teasels about here. He was very sly about it, and fearful lest he should have competitors. At length he lent his wagon to a neighbor, who discovered some teasel seed on the bottom, which he carefully saved and planted, and so competed with Monroe.

Sept. 18. P. M. — By boat to Conantum, barberrying.

*Diplopappus linariifolius* in prime. River gone down more than I expected after the great rise, to within some eighteen inches of low-water mark, but on account of freshet I have seen no *Bidens Beckii* nor *chrysanthemoides* nor *Polygonum amphibium* var. *aquaticum* in it, nor elsewhere the myriophyllums this year. The witch-hazel at Conantum just begun here and there; some may have been out two or three days. It is apparently

later with us than the fringed gentian, which I have supposed was out by September 7th. Yet I saw the witch-hazel out in Brattleboro September 8th, then apparently for a day or two, while the Browns *thought* the gentian was not out. It is still a question, perhaps, though unquestionably the gentian is now far more generally out here than the hazel. Lespedezas, *violacea*, *hirta*, *Stuevei*, etc., — at Blackberry Steep, done. *Solidago casia* in prime at Bittern Cliff Wood.

The barberries are not fairly turned, but I gather them that I may not be anticipated, — a peck of large ones. I strip off a whole row of racemes at one sweep, bending the prickles and getting as few leaves as possible, so getting a handful at once. The racemes appear unusually long this season, and the berries large, though not so thick as I have seen them. I consider myself a dextrous barberry-picker, as if I had been born in the Barberry States. A pair of gloves would be convenient, for, with all my knack, it will be some days before I get all the prickles out of my fingers. I get a full peck from about three bushes.

Scared up the same flock of four apparent summer ducks, which, what with myself, a belated (in season) haymaker, and a fisherman above, have hardly a resting-place left. The fisherman takes it for granted that I am after ducks or fishes, surely.

I see no traces of frost yet along the river. See no *pontederia* fall, for they are covered with water. The *Cornus sericea* is most changed and drooping. Smilacina berries of both kinds now commonly ripe, but not so edible as at first, methinks.

Sept. 19. Am surprised to find the *Polygonum Pennsylvanicum* abundant, by the roadside near the bank. First saw it the other day at Brattleboro. This makes, as I reckon, twenty polygonums that I know, all but *cilinode* and *Virginianum* in Concord. Is not this a late kind? It grows larger than the *Persicaria*. Observed an *Aster undulatus* behind oak at foot of hill on Assabet, with lower leaves not heart-shaped, but thus:



Gathered just half a bushel of barberries on hill in less than two hours, or three pecks to-day and yesterday in less than three hours. It is singular that I have so few, if any, competitors. I have the pleasure also of bringing them home in my boat. They will be more valuable this year, since apples and cranberries are scarce. These barberries are more than the apple crop to me, for we shall have them on the table daily all winter, while the two barrels of apples which we lay up will not amount to so much.

Also, what is the pear crop to the huckleberry crop? They make a great ado about their pears, those who get any, but how many families raise or buy a barrel of pears all told? The pear crop is insignificant compared with the huckleberry crop. The one does not concern me, the other does. I do not taste more than six pears annually, and I suspect the majority fare worse than I, but nature heaps the table with berries for six weeks or more. Indeed the apple crop is not so important as the huckleberry crop. Probably the apples consumed in this town do not amount to more than one barrel a family, but what is this to a month

or more of huckleberrying for every man, woman, and child, and the birds into the bargain? They are not unprofitable in a pecuniary sense. I hear that some of the inhabitants of Ashby have sold two thousand dollars' worth the past season.

Sept. 20. Melvin says that there are many teal about the river now.

Rain in afternoon. Rain again in the night, hard.

Sept. 21. P. M. — To Cliffs.

*Asclepias Cornuti* discounting. The seeded parachutes which I release soon come to earth, but probably if they waited for a stronger wind to release them they would be carried far. *Solidago nemoralis* mostly done. *Aster undulatus* in prime, in the dry woods just beyond Hayden's, large slanting, pyramidal panicles of some lilac-tinged, others quite white, flowers, size of *Diplopappus linariifolius*. *Solidago altissima* past prime. Prinos berries. I hear of late faint *chewink* notes in the shrubbery, as if they were meditating their strains in a subdued tone against another year. *A. dumosus* past prime.

Am surprised to see on top of Cliffs, where Wheeler burned in the spring and had cut rye, by a large rock, some very large perfectly fresh *Corydalis glauca*, still well in bloom as well as gone to seed, two and a half feet high and five eighths of an inch thick at base. There are also many large tufts of its glaucous leaves on the black burnt ground which have not come to flower, amid the rye stubble. The bumblebees are

sucking its flowers. Beside the young oak and the sprouts, poke-weed, erechthites, and this corydalis even are common there. How far is this due to the fire, aside from the clearing? Was not the fireweed seed sown by the wind last fall, blown into the woods, where there was a lull which caused it to settle? Perhaps it is fitted to escape or resist fire. The wind which the fire creates may, perchance, lift

The *Asclepias, obtusifolia* is turned yellow. I see its often perfectly upright slender pod five inches long, thus:<sup>1</sup> big stump, a yellow color, which Gray apparently with the place for white gold-swarming with honey-bees.

it again out of harm's way. On top of Cliff, behind the white goldenrod, var. *concolor*, which Gray refers to Pennsylvania, apparently with the place for white goldenrod, now in its prime and

swarming with honey-bees. Scare up turtle doves in the stubble. Uva-ursi berries quite ripe. Find, for first time in Concord, *Solanum nigrum*, berries apparently just ripe, by a rock northwest of corydalis. Thus I have within a week found in Concord two of the new plants I found up-country. Such is the advantage of going abroad, — to enable [you] to detect your own plants. I detected them first abroad, because there I was *looking for the strange*.

It is a warm and very hazy day, with wreaths of mist in horizon.

<sup>1</sup> It soon bursts in my chamber and shows its beautiful straw-colored lining. A fairy-like casket, shaped like a canoe, with its closely packed imbricated brown seeds, with their yet compressed silvery parachutes like finest unsoiled silk in the right position *above* them, ready to be wafted some dry and breezy day to their destined places.

Saw, in the cow-killer on railroad, a small mountain-ash naturalized!

Sept. 22. A rainy day. Tried some pennyroyal tea, but found it too medicinal for my taste. Yet I collect these herbs, biding the time when their use shall be discovered.

Sept. 23. Rainy day.

Sept. 24. P. M. — To Saw Mill Brook.

Not a sign of an artichoke flower yet below Moore's! May they not be earlier elsewhere?

At brook, cohush and arum berries still fresh, and *Viburnum acerifolium* berries. Apparently *Asplenium Thelypteroides*, a large fern, its under side covered with linear fruit.

Methinks it stands thus with goldenrods and asters now: —

- Early *S. stricta*, done some time.
- Swamp " " *probably* past prime.
- My *S. gigantea* (?), *probably* done.
- S. nemoralis*, about done.
- S. altissima*, much past prime.
- S. odora*, not seen but *probably* done.
- S. puberula*, say in good condition, or in prime.
- S. bicolor* and var. *concolor*, in prime.
- S. lanceolata*, say done.
- S. latifolia*, in prime.
- S. casia*, in prime.
- S. speciosa* (none the 15th).<sup>1</sup>
- Early meadow aster, say done long time.

<sup>1</sup> Not quite out the 26th of September.

*Diplopappus cornifolius*, not seen of late.  
*D. umbellatus*, still abundant.  
*A. patens*, some still fresh but not common.  
*A. macrophyllus*, not observed of late.  
*A. acuminatus*, not observed at all in C.  
*A. Radula*, probably about done, not seen of late.  
*A. dumosus*, considerably past prime.  
*D. linariifolius*, in prime, abundant.  
*A. undulatus*, in prime, abundant.  
*A. corymbosus*, still fresh though probably past prime.  
*A. larvis*, probably still in prime.  
*A. Tradescanti*, in prime.  
*A. puniceus*, still in prime (??).  
*A. longifolius*, in prime.  
*A. multiflorus*, in prime.<sup>1</sup>

Sept. 25. The river has risen again considerably (this I believe the fourth time), owing to the late copious rains. This before the farmers have succeeded in their late attempt to get their meadow-hay after all.

It had not got down before this last rain but to within some eighteen inches, at least, of the usual level in September.

P. M. — To Harrington road.

A golden-crowned thrush runs off, a few feet at a time, on hillside on Harrington road, as if she had a nest still! The haws of the common [thorn] are now very good eating and handsome. Some of the *Crataegus Crus-Galli* on the old fence line between Tarbell and T. Wheeler beyond brook are smaller, stale, and not good at all. The urtica just beyond Widow Hosmer's barn appears the same with that I called *U. gracilis* (?) in Brattleboro.

<sup>1</sup> Oct. 8. *A. miser* (omitted), say still in prime or very common.

Sept. 27. The bluebird family revisit their box and warble as in spring.

P. M. — To Clamshell by boat.

*Solidago speciosa* not quite out!! *Viburnum nudum* berries are soon gone. I noticed none to speak of in Hubbard's Swamp, September 15th. Start up a snipe in the meadow. Bathed at Hubbard's Bath, but found the water very cold. Bathing about over.

It is a very fine afternoon to be on the water, somewhat Indian-summer-like. I do not know what constitutes the peculiarity and charm of this weather; the broad water so smooth, notwithstanding the slight wind, as if, owing to some oiliness, the wind slid over without ruffling it. There is a slight coolness in the air, yet the sun is occasionally very warm. I am tempted to say that the air is singularly clear, yet I see it is quite hazy. Perhaps it is that transparency it is said to possess when full of moisture and before or after rain. Through this I see the colors of trees and shrubs beginning to put on their October dress, and the creak of the mole cricket sounds late along the shore.

The *Aster multiflorus* may easily be confounded with the *A. Tradescanti*. Like it, it whitens the roadside in some places. It has purplish disks, but a less straggling top than the *Tradescanti*.

Sept. 28. P. M. — To old mill-site behind Ponkawtasset.

Poke berries in the sprout-land east of the red huckleberry still fresh and abundant, perhaps a little past prime. I never saw so many. The plants stand

close together, and their drooping racemes three to five inches long, of black or purplish-black berries (ending in red and less [an indecipherable word]), almost crowd one another, hanging around the bright-purple, now for the most part bare, stems. I hear some birds about, but see none feeding on the berries. I could soon gather bushels there.

The arum berries are still fresh and abundant, perhaps in their prime. A large cluster is two and a half inches long by two wide and rather flattish. One, which has ripened prematurely, the stalk being withered and drooping, resembles a very short thick ear of scarlet corn. *This* might well enough be called snake-corn. These singular vermilion-colored berries, about a hundred of them, surmount a purple bag on a peduncle six or eight inches long. It is one of the most remarkable and dazzling, if not the handsomest, fruits we have. These were by violet wood-sorrel wall. How many fruits are scarlet now! — barberries, prinors, etc.

A flock of virco-like, somewhat yellowish birds, very neat, white beneath and olive above, in garden.

Sept. 29. P. M. — To Grape Cliff.

The pea-vine fruit is partly ripe, little black-dotted beans, about three in a pod.

I can hardly clamber along the grape cliff now without getting my clothes covered with desmodium ticks, — there especially the *rotundifolium* and *paniculatum*. Though you were running for your life, they would have time to catch and cling to your clothes, — often

the whole row of pods of the *D. paniculatum*, like a piece of a saw blade with three teeth. You pause at a convenient place and spend a long time picking them off, which it took so short a time to attach. They will even cling to your hand as you go by. They cling like babes to the mother's breast, by instinct. Instead of being caught and detained ourselves by birdlime, we are compelled to catch these seeds and carry them with us. These almost invisible nets, as it were, are spread for us, and whole coveys of desmodium and bidens seeds and burs steal transportation out of us. I have found myself often covered, as it were with an imbricated scaly coat of the brown desmodium seeds or a bristling *chevaux-de-frise* of beggar-ticks, and had to spend a quarter of an hour or more picking them off at some convenient place; and so they got just what they wanted, deposited in another place. How surely the desmodium, growing on some rough cliff-side, or the bidens, on the edge of a pool, prophesy the coming of the traveller, brute or human, that will transport their seeds on his coat!

I am late for grapes; most have fallen. The fruit of what I have called *Vitis astivalis* has partly fallen. It is dark-purple, about seven sixteenths of an inch in diameter, very acid and commonly hard. Stem and petiole smooth and purplish, but leaf not smooth or green beneath. Should not this be called frost grape, rather than the earlier one I ate at Brattleboro? Grapes are singularly various for a wild fruit, like many cultivated ones.

Dr. Reynolds told me the other day of a Canada

lynx (?) killed in Andover, in a swamp, some years ago, when he was teaching school in Tewksbury; thought to be one of a pair, the other being killed or seen in Derry. Its large track was seen in the snow in Tewksbury and traced to Andover and back. They saw where it had leaped thirty feet! and where it devoured rabbits. Was on a tree when shot. Skin stuffed somewhere.<sup>1</sup>

*Sept. 30.* Cattle-Show. An overcast, mizzling, and rainy day.

Minott tells of a General Hull, who lived somewhere in this county, who, he remembers, called out the whole division once or twice to a muster. He sold the army under him to the English in the last war, — though General Miller of Lincoln besought [him] to let him lead them, — and never was happy after it, had no peace of mind. It was said that his life was in danger here in consequence of his treason. Once, at a muster in front of the Hayden house, when there was a sham fight, and an Indian party took a circuit round a piece of wood, some put green grapes into their guns, and he, hearing one whistle by his head, thought some one wished to shoot him and ordered them to disperse, — dismissed them.

Speaking of the meadow-hay which is lost this year, Minott said that the little they had got since the last flood before this was good for nothing, would only poison the cattle, being covered with the dried slime and filth of the freshet. When you mowed it there

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* September, 1860.

arose a great dust. He spoke of this grass, thus left over winter to next year, as "old fog." Said that Clark (Daniel or Brooks) asked him the other day what made so many young alders and birches and willows spring up in the river meadows of late years; it did n't use to be so forty or fifty years ago; and he told him that in old times, when they were accustomed to take something strong to drink, they did n't stand for such shrubs but mowed all clear as they went, but now, not feeling so much energy for want of the stimulant, when they came to a bush, though no bigger than a pipe-stem, they mowed all round it and left it standing.