MISS EDITH MAKES IT PLEASANT FOR BROTHER JACK.

"'CRYING!' Of course I am crying, and I guess you'd be crying too
If people were telling such stories as they tell about me, about *you.*
Oh yes, you can laugh, if you want to, and smoke as you didn't care how,
And get your brains softened like Uncle's.—Dr. Jones says you're gettin' it now.

"Why don't you say 'stop!' to Miss Ilsey? she cries twice as much as I do.
And she's older and cries just from meanness—for a ribbon or anything new.
Ma says it's her 'sensitive nature.' Oh my! No, I sha'n't stop my talk!
And I don't want no apples nor candy, and I don't want to go take a walk!

"I know why you're mad! Yes, I do, now! You think that Miss Ilsey likes *you.*
And I've heard her *repeatedly* call you the bold-facest boy that she knew;
And she'd 'like to know where you learnt manners.' Oh yes! Kick the table—that's right!
Spill the ink on my dress, and then go 'round telling Ma that I look like a fright!

"What stories? Pretend you don't know that they're saying I broke off the match
'Twixt old Money-grubber and Mary, by saying she called him 'Crosspatch'!
When the only allusion I made him about sister Mary was she
Cared more for his cash than his temper, and you know, Jack, *you* said that to me!

"And it's true! But it's *me* and I'm scolded and Pa says if I keep on I might
By and by get my name in the papers! Who cares! Why 'twas only last night
I was reading how Pa and the sheriff were selling some lots, and it's plain
If it's awful to be in the papers why Papa would go and complain.

"You think it aint true about Ilsey? Well, I guess I know girls—and I say
There's nothing I see about Ilsey to show she likes you anyway!
I know what it means when a girl who has called her cat after a boy
Goes and changes its name to another's. And she's done it—and I wish you joy!"

DAYS AND NIGHTS IN CONCORD.

FROM MANUSCRIPT PAPERS BY HENRY D. THOREAU.*

[The time of year is August and September.]

I DO not remember any page which will tell me how to spend this afternoon. I do not so much want to know how to economize time as how to spend it; by what means to grow rich. How to extract its honey from the flower of the world,—that is *my* every-day business. I am as busy as a bee about it. Do I not impregnate and intermix the flowers, produce rarer and finer varieties, by transferring my eyes from one to another? It is with flowers I would deal. The art of spending a day! If it is possible that we may be addressed, it behooves us to be attentive. So by the dawning or radiance of beauty are we advertised where are the honey and the fruit of thought, of discourse and of action. The discoveries which we make abroad are special and particular; those which we make at home are general and significant. My profession is to be always on the alert, to find God in nature, to know his lurking-places, to attend all the oratorios, the operas in nature. Shall I not have words as fresh as my thought? Shall I use any other man's word? A genuine thought or feeling can find expression for itself if it have to invent hieroglyphics. It has the universe for type-metal.

Since I perambulated the "bounds of the

* Other extracts from this journal may be found in "Thoreau, the Poet-Naturalist," published by Roberts Brothers, Boston.

town," I find that I have in some degree confined myself (my vision and my walks). On whatever side I look off, I am reminded of the mean and narrow-minded men whom I have lately met there. What can be uglier than a country occupied by groveling, coarse and low-lived men?—no scenery can redeem it. Hornets, hyenas and baboons are not so great a curse to a country as men of a similar character. It is a charmed circle which I have drawn about my abode, having walked not with God, but the devil. I am too well aware when I have crossed this line. * * * * * *

The Price-Farm road is one of those everlasting roads, which the sun delights to shine along in an August afternoon, playing truant; which seem to stretch themselves with terrene jest as the weary traveler travels them on; where there are three white sandy furrows *(liræ)*, two for the wheels and one between them for the horse, with endless green grass borders between, and room on each side for blueberries and birches; where the walls indulge in freaks, not always parallel to the ruts, and golden-rod yellows all the path, which some elms began to border and shade over, but left off in despair, it was so long. From no point of which can you be said to be at any definite distance from a town. * * *

Old Cato says well,—*patrem familias vendacem, non emacem esse oportet.* These Latin terminations express better than any English I know, the greediness as it were, and tenacity of purpose, with which the husbandman and householder is required to be a seller and not a buyer; with mastiff-like tenacity, these lipped words collect in the sense, with a certain greed. Here comes a laborer from his dinner to resume his work at clearing out a ditch, notwithstanding the rain, remembering, as Cato says, *per ferias potuisse fossas veteres tergeri.* One would think I were come to see if the steward of my farm had done his duty.

The prevailing conspicuous flowers at present [August 21] are the early golden-rods, tansy, the life-everlastings, fleabane (though not for its flower), yarrow, rather dry; hardhack and meadow-sweet, both getting dry; also Mayweed, purple eupatorium, clethra, rhexia, thoroughwort, *Polygala sanguinea*, prunella and dogsbane (getting stale), touch-me-not (less observed), Canada snapdragon by road-sides, purple gerardia, horse-mint, veronica, marsh speedwell, tall crowfoot (still in flower), also the epilobium and cow-wheat.

Half an hour before sunset I was at Tupelo cliff, when, looking up from my botanizing (I had been examining the *ranunculus filiformis*, *conium maculatum*, *sium latifolium*, and the obtuse *galium* on the muddy shore), I saw the seal of evening on the river. There was a quiet beauty on the landscape at that hour, which my senses were prepared to appreciate. When I have walked all day in vain under the torrid sun, and the world has been all trivial, as well field and wood as highway, then at eve the sun goes down westward, and the dews begin to purify the air and make it transparent, and the lakes and rivers acquire a glassy stillness, reflecting the skies, the reflex of the day. Thus, long after feeding, the diviner faculties begin to be fed, to feel their oats, their nutriment, and are not oppressed by the body's load. Every sound is music now. How rich, like what we like to read of South American primitive forests, is the scenery of this river; what luxuriance of weeds, what depths of mud along its sides! These old ante-historic, geologic, ante-diluvian rocks, which only primitive wading-birds still lingering among us are worthy to tread! The season which we seem to live in anticipation of is arrived. With what sober joy I stand to let the water drip, and feel my fresh vigor, who have been bathing in the same tub which the muskrat uses,—such a medicinal bath as only nature furnishes! A fish leaps, and the dimple he makes is observed now. Methinks that for a great part of the time, as much as is possible, I walk as one possessing the advantages of human culture, fresh from the society of men, but turned loose into the woods, the only man in nature, walking and meditating, to a great extent, as if man and his customs and institutions were not. The cat-bird, or the jay, is sure of your whole ear now; each noise is like a stain on pure glass.

The rivers now,—these great blue subterranean heavens reflecting the supernal skies and red-tinged clouds; what unanimity between the water and the sky,—one only a little denser element than the other,—the grossest part of heaven! Think of a mirror on so large a scale! Standing on distant hills you see the heavens reflected, the evening sky in some low lake or river in the valley, as perfectly as in any mirror that could be; does it not prove how intimate heaven is with earth? We commonly sacrifice to supper this serene and sacred hour. Our customs turn the hour of sunset to a

trivial time, as to the meeting of two roads, one coming from the noon, the other leading to the night. It might be well if our reports were taken out-of-doors in view of the sunset and the rising stars; if there were two persons whose pulses beat together; if men cared for the *Kosmos* or beauty of the world, if men were social in a rare or high sense; if they associated on rare or high levels; if we took with our tea a draught of the dew-freighted, transparent evening air; if with our bread and butter we took a slice of the red western sky; if the smoking, steaming urn was the vapor on a thousand lakes and rivers and meads. The air of the valleys at this hour is the distilled essence of all those fragrances which during the day have been filling, and have been dispersed in the atmosphere,—the fine fragrances perchance which have floated in the upper atmospheres now settled to these low vales. I talked of buying Conantum once, but for want of money we did not come to terms. But I have farmed it, in my own fashion, every year since.

I find three or four ordinary laborers today, putting up the necessary out-door fixtures for a magnetic telegraph. They carry along a basket of simple implements, like traveling tinkers, and with a little rude soldering and twisting and straightening of wire, the work is done. As if you might set your hired man with the poorest head and hands, with the greatest latitude of ignorance and bungling, to this work. All great inventions stoop thus low to succeed, for the understanding is but little above the feet. They preserve so low a tone, they are simple almost to coarseness and commonplaceness. Some one had told them what he wanted, and sent them forth with a coil of wire to make a magnetic telegraph. It seems not so wonderful an invention as a common cart or plow.

The buckwheat already cut [September 4] lies in red piles in the field. In the Marlboro' road I saw a purple streak like a stain on the red pine leaves and sand under my feet, which I was surprised to find was made by a dense mass of purple fleas, like snow-fleas. And now we leave the road and go through the woods and swamps toward Boon's pond, crossing two or three roads, and by Potter's house in Stow, still on the east side of the river. Beyond Potter's, we struck into the extensive wooded plain, where the ponds are found in Stow, Sudbury and Marlboro'; part of it is called Boon's Plain. Boon is said to have lived on or under Bailey's Hill, at the west of the pond, and was killed by the Indians, between Boon's and White's Pond, as he was driving his ox-cart. The oxen ran off to the Marlboro' garrison-house,—his remains have been searched for. There were two hen-hawks that soared and circled for our entertainment when we were in the woods on this plain, crossing each other's orbits from time to time, alternating like the squirrels in their cylinder, till, alarmed by our imitation of a hawk's shrill cry,—they gradually inflated themselves, made themselves more aërial, and rose higher and higher into the heavens, and were at length lost to sight; yet all the while earnestly looking, scanning the surface of the earth for a stray mouse or rabbit. We saw a mass of sunflowers in a farmer's patch; such is the destiny of this large coarse flower, the farmers gather it like pumpkins. We noticed a potato-field yellow with wild radish. Knight's new dam has so raised the Assabet as to make a permanent freshet, as it were, the fluviatile trees standing dead for fish-hawk perches, and the water stagnant for weeds to grow in. You have only to dam up a running stream to give it the aspect of a dead stream, and in some degree restore its primitive wild appearance. Tracts are thus made inaccessible to man and at the same time more fertile,—the last gasp of wildness before it yields to the civilization of the factory; to cheer the eyes of the factory people and educate them,—a little wilderness above the factory.

As I looked back up the stream, I saw the ripples sparkling in the sun, reminding me of the sparkling icy fleets which I saw last winter; and I thought how one corresponded to the other,—ice waves to water ones; the erect ice-flakes, were the waves stereotyped. It was the same sight, the same reflection of the sun sparkling from a myriad slanting surfaces; at a distance, a rippled water surface, or a crystallized frozen one. We climbed the high hills on the west side of the river, in the east and south-east part of Stow. I observed that the walnut-trees conformed in their branches to the slope of the hill, being just as high from the ground on the upper side as the lower. I saw what I thought a small red dog in the road, which cantered along over the bridge, and then turned into the woods; this decided me, this turning into the woods, that it was a fox, the dog of the woods. A few oaks stand in the pastures, still great ornaments. I do not see any young ones springing up to supply their places, and will there

be any a hundred years hence? We are a young people and have not learned by experience the consequences of cutting off the forest. I love to see the yellow knots and their lengthened stain on the dry, unpainted pitch-pine boards on barns and other buildings, as the Dugan house. The indestructible yellow fat, it fats my eyes to see it, worthy for art to imitate, telling of branches in the forest once.

From Strawberry Hill we caught the first, and but a very slight, glimpse of Nagog Pond, by standing on the wall. That is enough to relate of a hill, methinks,—that its elevation gives you the first sight of some distant lake. The horizon is remarkably blue with mist; looking from this hill over Acton, successive valleys filled with this mist appear, and are divided by darker lines of wooded hills. The shadows of the elms are deepened, as if the whole atmosphere were permeated by floods of ether, that give a velvet softness to the whole landscape; the hills float in it; a blue veil is drawn over the earth. Annursnac Hill had an exceedingly rich, empurpled look, telling of the juice of the wild grape and poke-berries. Noticed a large field of sunflowers for hens, in full bloom at Temple's, now—at six P. M.—facing the east. The larches in the front yards have turned red; their fall has come; the Roman wormwood *(ambrosia artemisiæfolia)* is beginning to yellow-green my shoes, intermingled with the blue-curls in the sand of grain-fields. Perchance some poet likened this yellow dust to the ambrosia of the gods.

Do not the songs of birds and the fire-flies go with the grass, whose greenness is the best symptom and evidence of the earth's health or youth? Perhaps a history of the year would be a history of the grass, or of a leaf, regarding the grass-blades as leaves. Plants soon cease to grow for the year, unless they may have a fall growth, which is a kind of second spring. In the feelings of the man, too, the year is already past, and he looks forward to the coming winter. It is a season of withering; of dust and heat; a season of small fruits and trivial experiences. But there is an aftermath, and some spring flowers bloom again. May my life be not destitute of its Indian Summer! I hear the locust still; some farmers are sowing their winter rye; I see the fields smoothly rolled. I see others plowing steep, rocky, and bushy fields for rolling. How beautiful the sprout-land! When you look down on it, the light-green of the maples shaded off with the darker red, enlivening the scene yet more. Surely this earth is fit to be inhabited, and many enterprises may be undertaken with hope, where so many young plants are pushing up. Shall man then despair? Is he not a sprout-land, too, after never so many searings and witherings? If you witness growth and luxuriance, it is all the same as if you grew luxuriantly. The woodbine is red on the rocks. The poke is a very rich and striking plant, cardinal in its rank, as in its color. The downy seeds of the groundsel are taking their flight; the calyx has dismissed them and quite curled back, having done its part.

When I got into Lincoln Road [September 11] I perceived a singular sweet scent in the air; but, though I smelled everything around, I could not detect it. It was one of the sweet scents which go to make up the autumn, which fed and dilated my sense of smell. I felt the better for it. Methinks that I possess the sense of smell in greater perfection than usual. How autumnal is the scent of wild grapes, now by the road-side! The cross-leaved polygala emits its fragrance as at will; you must not hold it too near, but on all sides and at all distances. The pendulous, drooping barberries are pretty well reddened. I am glad when the berries look fair and plump.

Windy autumnal weather is very exciting and bracing, clear and cold after a rain. The wind roars loudly in the woods, the ground is strewn with leaves, especially under the apple-trees. The surface of the river reflecting the sun is dazzlingly bright; the outlines of the hills are remarkably distinct and firm, their surfaces bare and hard, not clothed with a thick air. I notice one red maple, far brighter than the blossom of any tree in summer. What can be handsomer for a picture than our river scenery now? First, this smoothly shorn meadow on the west side of the stream, looking from the first Conantum cliff, with all the swaths distinct, sprinkled with apple-trees casting heavy shadows black as ink [9 A. M.], such as can be seen only in this clear air, this strong light,—one cow wandering restlessly about in it and lowing; then, the blue river, scarcely darker than, and not to be distinguished from, the sky, its waves driven southward (or up the stream), by the wind, making it appear to flow that way, bordered by willows and button-bushes; then the narrow meadow beyond, with varied lights and shades from its waving grass, each grass-blade bending south before the wintry blast, as if looking for aid in that

direction; then the hill, rising sixty feet to a terrace-like plain covered with shrub-oaks, maples, and other trees, each variously tinted, clad all in a livery of gay colors, every bush a feather in its cap; and further in the rear the wood-crowned cliffs, some two hundred feet high, whose gray rocks project here and there from amid the bushes, with its orchard on the slope, and the distant Lincoln Hills in the horizon. What honest, homely, earth-loving houses they used to live in, so low you can put your hands on the eaves behind!—the broad chimney, built for comfort, no alto or basso relievo! The air is of crystal purity,—both air and water so transparent, the fisherman tries in vain to deceive the fish with his baits. Walden plainly can never be spoiled by the wood-chopper; for, do what you will to the shore, there will still remain this crystal well. The intense brilliancy of the red, ripe maples, scattered here and there in the midst of the green oaks and hickories on its hilly shores, is quite charming. Alternating with yellow birches and poplars and green oaks, they remind one of a line of soldiers, red-coats and riflemen in green, mixed together.

From Ball's Hill [September 26th], the meadows, now smoothly shorn, have a quite imposing appearance, so spacious and level. There is a shadow on the sides of the hills surrounding (it is a cloudy day), and where the meadow meets them it is darkest. Now the sun in the west is coming out, and lights up the river a mile off so that it shines with a white light, like a burnished silver mirror. The poplar-tree on Miss Ripley's hill seems quite important to the scene. The patches of sunlight on the meadow look lividly yellow, as if flames were traversing it. It is a day for fishermen. The farmers are gathering in their corn. The climbing hemp-weed *(mikania scandens)*, and the button-bushes and the pickerel-weed are sere and flat with frost. We fell into the path printed by the feet of the calves. The note of the yellow-hammer is heard from the edges of the fields.

Sitting by the spruce swamp in Conant's woods, I am reminded that this is a perfect day to visit the swamp, with its damp, mistling, mildewy air, so solemnly still. There are the specter-like black spruce hanging with usnea lichens, and in the rear rise the dark green pines and oaks on the hill-side, touched here and there with livelier tints where a maple or birch may shine, —this luxuriant vegetation standing heavy, dark, somber, like mold in a cellar. * * *

Has one moon gone by unnoticed? It is peculiarly favorable to reflection,—a cold and dewy light in which the vapors of the day are condensed, and though the air is obscured by darkness it is more clear. Lunacy must be a cold excitement, not such insanity as a torrid sun on the brain would produce. But the moon is not to be judged alone by the quantity of light she sends us, but also by her influence on the thoughts. No thinker can afford to overlook her influence any more than the astronomer can. Has not the poet his spring-tides and his neap-tides, in which the ocean within him overflows its shores and bathes the dry land—the former sometimes combining with the winds of heaven to produce those memorable high tides which leave their mark for ages, when all Broad street is submerged and incalculable damage done the common shipping of the mind? I come out into the moonlit night where men are not, as if into a scenery, *anciently* deserted by men; the life of men is like a dream. It is three thousand years since night has had possession. Go forth and hear the crickets chirp at midnight. Hear if their dynasty is not an ancient one and well founded. I feel the antiquity of the night; she merely repossesses herself of her realms, as if her dynasty were uninterrupted, or she had underlaid the day. No sounds but the steady creaking of crickets, and the occasional crowing of cocks. I go by the farmer's houses and barns, standing there in the dim light under the trees, as if they lay at an immense distance, or under a veil. The farmer and his oxen are all asleep, not even a watch-dog is awake. The human slumbers; there is less of man in the world. To appreciate the moonlight, you must stand in the shade and see where a few rods or a few feet distant it falls in between the trees. It is a "milder day," made for some inhabitants whom you do not see. I am obliged to sleep enough the next night to make up for it (after being out)—*Endymionis somnum dormire*—to sleep an Endymion's sleep, as the ancients expressed it.

The fog on the lowlands (on the Corner Road) is never still. It now advances and envelops me as I stand to write these words before sunrise, then clears away with ever noiseless step. It covers the meadows like a web,—I hear the clock strike three. The light of Orion's belt seems to show traces of the blue day through which it

direction; then the hill, rising sixty feet to a terrace-like plain covered with shrub-oaks, maples, and other trees, each variously tinted, clad all in a livery of gay colors, every bush a feather in its cap; and further in the rear the wood-crowned cliffs, some two hundred feet high, whose gray rocks project here and there from amid the bushes, with its orchard on the slope, and the distant Lincoln Hills in the horizon. What honest, homely, earth-loving houses they used to live in, so low you can put your hands on the eaves behind!—the broad chimney, built for comfort, no alto or basso relievo! The air is of crystal purity,—both air and water so transparent, the fisherman tries in vain to deceive the fish with his baits. Walden plainly can never be spoiled by the wood-chopper; for, do what you will to the shore, there will still remain this crystal well. The intense brilliancy of the red, ripe maples, scattered here and there in the midst of the green oaks and hickories on its hilly shores, is quite charming. Alternating with yellow birches and poplars and green oaks, they remind one of a line of soldiers, red-coats and riflemen in green, mixed together.

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came to us. The sky at least is lighter on that side than in the west, even about the moon. Even by night the sky is blue and not black, for we see through the veil of night into the distant atmosphere. I see to the plains of the sun where the sunbeams are reveling. The crickets' song by the causeway is not so loud at this hour as at evening, and the moon is getting low. I hear a wagon cross on one of the bridges leading into the town. I smell the ripe apples many rods off beyond the bridge. Will not my townsmen consider me a benefactor if I conquer some realms from the night, if I can show them that there is some beauty awake while they are asleep; if I add to the domains of poetry; if I report to the gazettes anything transpiring in our midst worthy of man's attention? I will say nothing here to the disparagement of Day, for he is not here to defend himself.

I hear the farmer harnessing his horse and starting for the distant market, but no man harnesses himself and starts for worthier enterprises. One cock-crow tells the whole story of the farmer's life. I see the little glow-worms deep in the grass by the brookside. The moon shines dim and red, a solitary whip-poor-will sings, the clock strikes four, a few dogs bark, a few more wagons start for market, their faint rattling is heard in the distance. I hear my owl without a name, the murmur of the slow approaching freight-train as far off perchance as Waltham, and one early bird. The round red moon is disappearing in the west. I detect a whiteness in the east. Some dark, massive clouds have come over from the west within the hour, as if attracted by the approaching sun, and have arranged themselves raywise across the eastern portal as if to bar his coming. They have moved, suddenly and almost unobservedly, quite across the sky (which before was clear) from west to east. No trumpet was heard which marshaled and advanced the dark masses of the west's forces thus rapidly against the coming day. Column after column the mighty west sent forth across the sky while men slept, but all in vain.

The eastern horizon is now grown dun-colored, showing where the advanced guard of the night are already skirmishing with the vanguard of the sun,—a lurid light tinging the atmosphere there,—while a dark-columned cloud hangs imminent over the broad portal untouched by the glare. Some bird flies over, making a noise like the barking of a puppy (it was a cuckoo). It is yet so dark that I have dropped my pencil and cannot find it. The sound of the cars is like that of a rushing wind; they come on slowly; I thought at first a morning wind was rising.

The whip-poor-wills now begin to sing in earnest about half an hour before sunrise, as if making haste to improve the short time that is left them. As far as my observation goes they sing for several hours in the early part of the night, are silent commonly at midnight,—though you may meet them sitting on a rock or flitting silent about,—then sing again at just before sunrise. It grows more and more red in the east (a fine-grained red under the overhanging cloud), and lighter too, and the threatening clouds are falling off to southward of the sun's passage, shrunken and defeated, leaving his path comparatively clear. The increased light shows more distinctly the river and the fog. The light now (five o'clock) reveals a thin film of vapor like a gossamer veil cast over the lower hills beneath the cliffs, and stretching to the river, thicker in the ravines, thinnest on the even slopes. The distant meadows to the north beyond Conant's grove, full of fog, appear like a vast lake, out of which rise Annursnac and Ponkawtasset like wooded islands. And all the farms and houses of Concord are at the bottom of that sea. So I forget them, and my thought sails triumphantly over them. I thought of nothing but the surface of a lake, a summer sea over which to sail; no more would the voyager on the Dead Sea who had not the Testament think of Sodom and Gomorrah and cities of the plain. I only wished to get off to one of the low isles I saw in the midst of the sea (it may have been the top of Holbrook's elm) and spend the whole summer day there. Meanwhile the redness in the east had diminished and was less deep. And next the red was become a sort of yellowish or fawn-colored light, and the sun now set fire to the edges of the broken cloud which had hung over the horizon, and they glowed like burning turf.

It is remarkable that animals are often obviously, manifestly related to the plants which they feed upon or live among, as caterpillars, butterflies, tree-toads, partridges, chewinks. I noticed a yellow spider on a golden-rod,—as if every condition might have its expression in some form of animated being. I have seen the small mulleins in the fields for a day or two as big as a ninepence; rattlesnake grass is ripe; a stalk of purple eupatorium, eight feet, eight inches high, with a large convex corymb

(hemispherical) of many stories, fourteen inches wide, and the width of the plant, from tip of leaf to tip of leaf, two feet, the diameter of its stalk one inch at the ground. Is not disease the rule of existence? There is not a lily-pad floating in the river but has been riddled by insects. Almost every tree and shrub has its gall, oftentimes esteemed its chief ornament, and hardly to be distinguished from its fruit. If misery loves company, misery has company enough. Now at midsummer find me a perfect leaf or fruit. The difference is not great between some fruits in which the worm is always present and those gall-fruits which were produced by the insect. The prunella leaves have turned a delicate claret or lake color by the road-side [September 1st]. I am interested in these revolutions as much as in those of kingdoms. Is there not tragedy enough in the autumn? The pines are dead and leaning red against the shore of Walden Pond (which is going down at last), as if the ice had heaved them over. Thus by its rising it keeps an open shore. I found the succory on the railroad. May not this and the tree primrose, and other plants, be distributed from Boston on the rays of the railroads? The feathery-tailed fruit of the fertile flowers of the clematis are conspicuous now. The shorn meadows looked of a living green as we came home at eve, even greener than in spring. This reminds me of the "*fenum cordum*," the aftermath "*sicilimenta de pratis*," the second mowing of the meadow, in Cato. I now begin to pick wild apples.

I walk often in drizzly weather, for then the small weeds (especially if they stand on bare ground), covered with rain-drops like beads, appear more beautiful than ever,—the hypericums, for instance. They are equally beautiful when covered with dew, fresh and adorned, almost spirited away in a robe of dew-drops. The air is filled with mist, yet a transparent mist, a principle in it which you might call flavor, which ripens fruits. This haziness seems to confine and concentrate the sunlight, as if you lived in a halo,—it is August. Some farmers have begun to thresh and to winnow their oats. Not only the prunella turns lake, but the *hypericum virginicum* in the hollows by the road-side, a handsome blush, a part of the autumnal tints. Ripe leaves acquire red blood. Red colors touch our blood and excite us as well as cows and geese. We brushed against the *polygonum arcuatum*, with its spikes of reddish-white flowers,—a slender and tender plant which loves the middle of dry and sandy, not-much-traveled roads; to find that the very stones bloom, that there are flowers we rudely brush against which only the microscope reveals. The dense fog came into my chamber early, freighted with light, and woke me. It was one of those thick fogs which last well into the day. The farmers' simple enterprises! They improve this season, which is the driest, their haying being done, and their harvest not begun, to do these jobs,—burn brush, build walls, dig ditches, cut turf, also topping corn and digging potatoes. Sometimes I smell these smokes several miles off, and, by their odor, know it is not a burning building, but withered leaves and the rubbish of the woods and swamps. Methinks the scent is a more oracular and trustworthy inquisition than the eye. When I criticise my own writing I go to the scent, as it were. It reveals what is concealed from the other senses. By it I detect earthiness.

The jays scream on the right and left as we go by, flitting and screaming from pine to pine. I hear no lark sing at evening as in the spring, only a few distressed notes from the robin. I saw a pigeon-place on George Heywood's cleared lot, with the six dead trees set up for the pigeons to alight on, and the brush-house close by to conceal the man. I was rather startled to find such a thing going now in Concord. The pigeons on the trees looked like fabulous birds, with their long tails and their pointed breasts. I could hardly believe they were alive and not some wooden birds used for decoys, they sat so still, and even when they moved their necks I thought it was the effect of art. I scare up the great bittern in the meadow by the Heywood brook near the ivy. He rises buoyantly as he flies against the wind, and sweeps south over the willow, surveying. I see ducks or teal flying silent, swift and straight, the wild creatures! The partridge and the rabbit, they still are sure to thrive like true natives of the soil, whatever revolutions occur. If the forest is cut off many bushes spring up which afford them concealment. In these cooler, windier, crystal days the note of the jay sounds a little more native.

I found on the shores of the pond that singular willow-herb in blossom, though its petals were gone. It grows up two feet from a large woody horizontal root, and drops over to the sand again, meeting which, it puts a myriad rootlets from the side of its stem, fastens itself and curves upward again to

the air, thus spanning or looping itself along. The bark, just above the ground, thickens into a singular cellular or spongy substance, which at length appears to crack nearer the earth, giving that part of the plant a winged or somewhat four-sided appearance. The caducous *polygala* is faded in cool places almost white; knot-grass or door-grass *(Polygonum aviculare)* is still in bloom. I saw the lambkill in flower (a few fresh blossoms), beautiful bright flowers, as of a new spring with it, while the seed-vessels, apparently of this year, hung dry below. The ripening grapes begin to fill the air with their fragrance.

I hear the red-wing blackbirds and meadow-larks again by the river-side [October 5], as if it were a new spring. They appear to have come to bid farewell. The birds seem to depart at the coming of the frost, which kills the vegetation and directly or indirectly the insects on which they feed. As we sailed up the river, there was a pretty good sized pickerel poised directly over the sandy bottom close to the shore, and motionless as a shadow. It is wonderful how they resist the slight current, and remain thus stationary for hours. He no doubt saw us plainly on the bridge,—in the sunny water, his whole form distinct and his shadow,—motionless as the steel-trap which does not spring till the fox's foot has touched it. In this drought you see the nests of the bream on the dry shore. The prinos berries are quite red, the dogwood by the Corner Road has lost every leaf, its branches of dry greenish berries hanging straight down from the bare stout twigs, as if their peduncles were broken. It has assumed its winter aspect,—a Mithridatic look. The black birch is straw-colored, the witch-hazel is now in bloom. The little conical burrs of the agrimony stick to my clothes; the pale lobelia still blooms freshly, and the rough hawk-weed holds up its globes of yellowish fuzzy seeds, as well as the panicled. The reclining sun falling on the willows and on the water, produces a rare soft light I do not often see—a greenish yellow. The milkweed seeds are in the air; I see one in the river which a minnow occasionally jostles. The butternuts have shed nearly all their leaves, and their nuts are seen black against the sky. The white-ash has got its autumnal mulberry hue. It contrasts strangely with the other shade-trees on the village street. It is with leaves as with fruits, and woods, and animals, and men,—when they are mature, their different characters appear. The elms are generally of a dirty or brownish yellow now. Some of the white pines have reached the acme of their fall; the same is the state of the pitch-pines. The shrub-oaks are almost uniformly of a deep red.

The reach of the river between Bedford and Carlisle, seen from a distance, has a singularly ethereal, celestial, or elysian look. It is of a light sky-blue, alternating with smoother white streaks, where the surface reflects the light differently, like a milk-pan full of the milk of Valhalla, partially skimmed; more gloriously and heavenly fair and pure than the sky itself. We have names for the rivers of Hell but none for the rivers of Heaven, unless the milky way may be one. It is such a smooth and shining blue, like a panoply of sky-blue plates.

Some men, methinks, have found only their hands and feet. At least, I have seen some who appeared never to have found their heads, but used them only instinctively. What shall we say of those timid folks who carry the principle of thinking nothing, and doing nothing, and being nothing, to such an extreme? As if in the absence of thought, that vast yearning of their natures for something to fill the vacuum, made the least traditionary expression and shadow of a thought to be clung to with instinctive tenacity. They atone for their producing nothing by a brutish respect for something.