The First Version of Walden

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A NOTE ON THE TEXT

WHAT follows is a transcript from Huntington Manuscript 924 of the version of *Walden* that Thoreau wrote in 1846–47. It reproduces only a very few of the many corrections and interlineations in the manuscript—only those which, on the evidence of handwriting and ink and context, Thoreau certainly made as he was writing this version. The few interlineations that have been included are printed in italics; any material Thoreau canceled when he made one of these interlineations is given in a footnote. The reasons for not including any other changes are: Thoreau made them at various times; in many cases they were by no means the final ones; and they are only a small portion of the innumerable changes between the first version and the final text of 1854. In other words, a transcript that included them would not represent any one definite stage of *Walden*.

Save for the few exceptions noted below, I have transcribed the manuscript literatim, in order to keep the flavor of Thoreau's actual work. I have not marked his slips (they include one in addition in his accounts) with "*sic*."

Spelling and grammar are as in the manuscript, save that apostrophes have been supplied if missing in possessives and verbal contractions. Capitalization is as in the manuscript, though at many points Thoreau's intention is doubtful. Punctuation is as in the manuscript, save that periods have been supplied at the ends

of sentences which lacked any other mark and quotation marks have been supplied where Thoreau inadvertently omitted them at the end of a quotation. Single words or very brief phrases that Thoreau inadvertently omitted at first have been inclosed in square brackets ([ ]); at one time or another he inserted all the words and phrases himself. Slips of the pen such as "brinks" for "bring" or "the the" have been corrected, but the manuscript reading is given in a note. The abbreviation "Ind" for "Indian" has been expanded silently in four places, and "Jan" for "January" in one.

The order of the leaves and pages of the extant manuscript is indicated by numbers followed by "r" (recto) or "v" (verso) and inclosed in brackets. Often there is a second number outside the brackets; this number is one of Thoreau's original page numbers; for example, "[23r] 39." indicates that the material following it is on the recto of the twenty-third leaf of the manuscript of this version, and that the recto was marked as the thirty-ninth page by Thoreau when he numbered the pages of the first version. (His renumbering after versions II and III is not reproduced.) A system of numbering in addition to Thoreau's original one is necessary since some leaves are missing, since he used two series of numbers for the pages of the first version—one series for the material of "Economy" and a second for the rest of the material—and since he added extra leaves after he had numbered the pages of "Economy." The extra leaves are marked by an asterisk, for example, [1r*].

Editorial comment on missing leaves and their probable contents is placed within brackets between sections of the text whenever necessary.

References to chapter and paragraph of the published text are given in the outside margin; there were no chapter headings or divisions in this version.

THE TEXT

[1r*] I should not presume to talk so much about myself and my affairs as I shall in this lecture if very particular and personal inquiries had not been made concerning my mode of life,—what some would call impertinent, but they are by no means imperti- *Economy* 2

Economy nent to me, but on the contrary very natural and pertinent, con-
2 sidering the circumstances. Some have wished to know what I got to eat—If I didn't feel kind o' lonesome—If I wasn't afraid—What I should do if I were taken sick—and the like. Others have been inquisitive to know what portion of my income I devoted to charitable purposes,—some who have large families, how many poor children I maintained. Some have not come to my house because I lived *there*—Others have come because I *lived* there—and others again, because *I*[1] lived there.

After I lectured here last winter[2] I heard that some had expected that I would answer some of these questions in my lecture—So I must ask all strangers, and all who have little or no interest in me in this [1v*] audience to pardon me, if I undertake to answer them in part now. In most lectures or stories the I, or first person is omitted; in this it will be inserted, that is the main difference. We are not apt to remember that it is after all always the first person that is speaking. Perhaps this lecture is more particularly addressed to the class of poor students; as for the rest of my audience, they will accept such portions as apply to them. I trust that none will stretch the seams in putting on the coat, for it may be of good service to him whom it fits.

3 I have travelled a good deal in Concord, and everywhere, in shops and offices and fields, the inhabitants have seemed to me to be doing penance in a thousand curious ways. What I had heard of Brahmens standing on one leg on the tops of pillars, looking in the face of the sun, dwelling at the roots of trees,—even the twelve labors of Hercules are nothing in comparison, for they were only twelve and had an end, but I [2r*] could never see that these men slew or captured any monster, or finished any labor. They have no "friend Iolas to burn, with a hot iron, the root" of the Hydra's head, but as soon as one head is crushed two spring up.

4 I see young men, my townsmen, whose misfortune it is to have inherited farms, houses, barns, cattle, and farming tools, for these are easier acquired than got rid of. Better if they had been born in

1. All Thoreau's italics.

2. Probably a reference to his lecture on Carlyle, at the Concord Lyceum, February 4, 1846.

the open pasture and suckled by a wolf, that they might have seen *Economy*
with clear eye what field they were called to labor in. Who made *4*
them serfs of the soil? Why should they eat their sixty acres, when man is condemned to eat only his peck of dirt? Why should they begin digging their graves as soon as they are born? They have got to live a man's life pushing all these things before them, and get on as well as they can. The portionless, who struggle with no such inherited incumbrances, find it labor enough to subdue and cultivate a few cubic feet of flesh.

But men labor under a mistake. [2v*][3] *5*

[3r] 3. But men labor under a mistake. The better part of the man is soon plowed into the soil for compost. By an apparent fate, soon called necessity, they are employed, as it says in an old book, laying up treasures which moth and rust will corrupt and thieves break through and steal.

It is a fool's life, as they will find when they get to the end of it.

Most men through mere ignorance and mistake are so occupied *6*
with the factitious cares and coarse labors of life that its finer fruits cannot be plucked by them. Actually the laboring man has not leisure for a lofty integrity day by day, he cannot afford to sustain the noblest relations. His labor would depreciate in the market. He has no time to be anything but a machine. How can he remember well his ignorance, and this his growth requires—who has so often to use his knowledge?

Some of you who hear me we all know are poor, find it hard to *7*
live, are sometimes, as it were, gasping for breath. I have no doubt that some of you [3v] who are here tonight are unable to pay for all the dinners you have actually eaten, or for the coats and shoes which are fast wearing or already worn out, and have come here to spend borrowed time, robbing your creditors of an hour.

3. 2 v was originally blank; in view of both the repetition of "But men labor under a mistake" and the page number "3" on 3r, I believe that these first two leaves replaced an original single leaf. On 2v Thoreau later wrote this note, probably in 1849: "To show how little men have considered what is the true end of life—or the nature of this living which they have to get—I need only remind you how many have within the last month started for California with the muck rake on their shoulders. According to the precepts of the received catechism—as if our life were a farce and God had cast down one of his handfuls of true believing [?] on to the mountains of California for men to scramble for."

Economy 7 It is very evident what mean and sneaking lives many of you live, always on the limits, trying to get into business and trying to get out of debt, a very ancient slough, called by the Latins *aes alienum*[4] another's brass, for some of their coins were made of brass, still living and dying and buried by this other's brass. Always promising to pay—promising to pay—to-morrow—and dying to-day insolvent.—Seeking to curry favor, to get custom by how many modes only not state prison offences—lying, flattering, voting, contracting yourselves into a nutshell of civility, or dilating into an atmosphere of thin and vaporous [4r] 5. generosity, that you may persuade your neighbor to let you make his shoes or his hat or his coat or his carriage or import his groceries for him. Making yourselves sick that you may lay up something against a sick day—something to be tuckt away in an old chest, or in a stocking behind the plastering, or more safely in the brick bank—no matter where, no matter how much or how little.

8 I sometimes wonder how we can be so frivolous almost as to attend to the gross form of Negro slavery, there are so many keen and subtle masters that enslave both north & south. It is bad to have a southern overseer, it is worse to have a northern one, but worst of all when you are yourself the slave-driver.

Ancient books, and some modern ones, talk of a divinity in man. Look at the teamster on the highway, wending to market by day or night,—how much of divinity is there in him? How godlike, how immortal is he? [4v] See how he cowers and sneaks, how vaguely and indefinitely all the day he fears—not being immortal nor divine, but the slave and prisoner of his own opinion of himself—a fame won by his own deeds.

10 When we consider, in the words of the Catechism, what is the chief end of man, and the necessaries & the means of life, it appears as if men had deliberately chosen this mode of living, preferring it; but not so, they really think that there is no choice left.—But it is not necessarily, it was not always so; alert and healthy natures remember that the sun rose clear.

It is never too late to give up our prejudices. No way of doing or thinking, however ancient, can be trusted. What every body

4. Thoreau's italics.

echoes, or in silence passes by as true today, may turn out to be *Economy*
sheer falsehood tomorrow, mere smoke of opinion falling back in *10*
cinders, which some had trusted for a cloud [5r] 7.[5] that would sprinkle fertile rain upon their fields—What old people say you can't do, you try and find that you can,—Age seems no better hardly so well qualified for an instructor as youth, for it has not profited so much as it has lost.

Men have left off rum safely and imprisoning for debt, and chattel slavery in some places, and several other things, but they are not inclined to leave off hanging men because they have not got accustomed to that way of thinking.

The whole ground of human life seems to some to have been *12*
gone over before us by our predecessors, both the heights & the valleys. Hippocrates has even left directions how we should cut our nails i. e. even with the ends of the fingers, neither longer nor shorter. The very tedium and ennui which presumes to have exhausted the variety & the joys of life is as old as Adam.

But man's capacities have never been measured, nor are we to judge of what he can do by any precedent, so little has been tried.

[5v] We might try our lives by a thousand simple tests greatly *13*
to our advantage—by any natural fact—by this, for instance, that the same sun that ripens my beans illumines at once a system of worlds like this. If I had known this it would have prevented some mistakes. This was not the light in which I hoed them.

The stars are the apexes of what singular triangles, what distant and various natures are perhaps beholding the same one at the same moment! The departing and the arriving spirit—the joyful & the sad—the innocent and happy child & the melancholy suicide, the northern farmer & the southern slave. These are trivial instances.

I think we may safely *trust*[6] a good deal more than we do. We *15*
may waive just so much care of ourselves as we devote elsewhere.

5. At this point the manuscript contains a torn leaf of version I paper that has on its recto a revised version of the first half of the material on this page; on its verso it has "Economy," 11, the last clause of "Economy," 82, a sentence not in the text, and the last half of "Economy," 13. I believe Thoreau wrote all this after he had finished I.

6. Thoreau's italics.

It appears from the above estimate that my food alone cost me about 27 cents a week. It consists at present of Rye & Indian meal without yeast—potatoes—rice—a very little salt pork, molasses & salt, and my drink water. *Economy 81*

Bread I at first made of pure Indian meal & salt, genuine hoe cakes which I baked before my fire out of doors upon a shingle or the end of a stick of timber sawed off in building my house, but it was apt to get smoked and to have a piney flavor. I tried flour also but have at last found a mixture of Rye & Indian [29r] 49. meal most convenient & agreeable. In cold weather it was no small amusement to bake several small loaves of this in succession, tending and turning them as carefully as an Egyptian his hatching eggs. They had to my senses a fragrance like manna—a real cereal fruit which I ripened—which I kept in as long as possible by wrapping them in cloths. *84*

I made a study of the various processes of this indispensable & ancient art of bread-making—consulting such authorities as offered, going back to the primitive days and first invention of the unleavened kind—when from the wildness of nuts and meats men first reached the innocence and refinement of this diet,—and coming gradually down through that accidental souring of the dough which taught the leavening process, and the various fermentations thereafter till you come to "good, sweet, wholesome, bread" the staff of life.

Leaven which some deem the soul of bread, the *spiritus*[24] which fills its [29v] cellular tissue, which is religiously preserved like the vestal fire—some precious bottle-full, I presume, first brought over on the May Flower did the business for America,—and its influence is still rising, swelling, spreading in cerealian billows over the land—this seed I regularly and faithfully procured from the village till at length one morning I forgot the rules, and scalded my yeast.—By which accident I discovered that even this was not indispensable—for my discoveries were not by the synthetic but analytic process—and I have gladly omitted it since, though most housewives earnestly assured me that safe and wholesome bread without yeast might not be—and elderly people prophesied a

24. Thoreau's italics.

Economy Suppose we choose the better part & fail,—whose failure is it?
15 Nature is after all as well adapted to our weaknesses, as to our talents. The incessant anxiety & strain of some persons is a well nigh incurable form of disease. We are made to [6r] 9. exaggerate the importance of what work we do and yet how much is not done by us, or what if we had been taken sick?—How vigilant we are? Determined not to live by faith if we can avoid it—all the day long on the alert, at night we unwillingly say our prayers and commit ourselves to uncertainties. So thoroughly and sincerely are we compelled to live, reverencing our life, and denying the possibility of change. This is the only way, we say; but there are as many ways as there can be drawn radii from one center. All change is a miracle to contemplate, but it is a miracle which is taking place every instant.

16 Let us consider for a moment what all this trouble and anxiety is about—what are the gross necessaries of life. I imagine it would be some advantage to live a primitive and frontier life, though in the midst of an outward civilization, if only to know what are after all the necessaries of life, and what methods society has taken [6v] to supply them. Even to look over the old Day Books of the merchants to see what it was that men most commonly bought at the stores—what are the grossest groceries. All the improvements of the ages do not carry a man backward or forward in relation to the great facts of his existence. As our skeletons are not to be distinguished from those of our ancestors.

17 To many creatures there is only one necessary of life—*food.*[7] To the bison of the prairie it is a few inches of palatable grass—unless he seeks the *shelter*[8] of the forest or the mountain's shadow. None of the brute creation require more than food and shelter.

For man, in this climate, the necessaries of life may be distributed under the several heads of Food Shelter Clothing and Fuel—for he has invented clothes and cooked food, and probably from the accidental discovery of the warmth of fire, at first a luxury, arose the present necessity to sit by it. We observe cats and dogs acquiring the same second nature.

7. Thoreau's italics.
8. Thoreau's italics.

[7r] 11. By Shelter & Clothing we legitimately retain our own *Economy* internal heat, but with Fuel or an external heat greater than our *17* own internal, cookery may properly be said to begin. From this list it appears that the expression "animal heat" is nearly syno[ny]mous with "animal life," for Shelter Clothing and Fuel warm us, so to speak from without, Food from within. The New Hollander who goes naked while the European shivers in his clothes, warms his whole body simply by putting his extremities closer to the fire than the former can bear. According to Liebig, man's body is a box stove, and food the fuel which keeps up the internal combustion in the lungs. In cold weather we eat more in warm less. The animal heat is in fact the result of a slow combustion, and disease & death take place when this is too rapid, or for want of fuel—or from some defect in the draught, the fire goes out.

The grand necessity then for our bodies is to keep warm—to *18* keep the vital heat in us. What pains accordingly do we take with our beds, which are our night clothes, robbing the nests of birds [7v] and their breasts, to prepare this shelter within a shelter, as the mole has its bed of grass and leaves at the end of its burrow.

The summer makes possible a sort of Elysian life to man. Fuel, except to cook his food, is then unnecessary. The sun is his fire, and many of the fruits are sufficiently cooked by its rays, while food generally is more various and more easily obtained, and clothing and shelter are half dispensed with even in our climate.

At the present day and in this country, a few implements, a knife—an axe—a spade—a wheelbarrow—&c and with the studious light stationary, and access to a few books rank next to necessaries, and can all be obtained at a trifling cost.

To the elevation and ennoblement of mankind what are called *19* the luxuries & many of the comforts of life are not only not indispensable, but positive hindrances. With [8r] respect to luxuries and comforts the wisest have ever lived a more simple and meagre life than[9] the poor. The ancient philosophers were a class of men than whom none were poorer in respect to outward riches, none so rich in respect to inward. We know not much about them. It is astonishing that *we*[10] can know as much as we do. None can be

9. MS: "than than."

10. Thoreau's italics.

Economy an impartial or wise observer of human life but from the vantage
19 ground of what *we*[11] should call voluntary poverty. Of a life of luxury the fruit is luxury, whether in agriculture or commerce, or literature, or art.

20 When a man is warmed by the several modes I have described, what more does he want? Not surely more warmth of the same kind, or more and richer food, larger and more splendid houses, finer and more abundant clothing, more numerous, incessant, and hotter fires, and the like, but to adventure on life now, his vacation having commenced. The soil, it seems, is suited to the seed, and it may germinate at length. Why has he rooted himself thus firmly in the earth but that he may rise in the same proportion into the heavens above, for the nobler plants bear their fruit at last in the air and light, [8v] far from the ground, and are not like the[12] humbler esculents, continually cut down at top that[13] they may make more root.

21 I do not mean to prescribe rules to strong and valiant natures, which will mind their own affairs in heaven or hell indifferently, and build more magnificently and spend more lavishly than Croesus, without ever impoverishing themselves, not knowing how they live—nor to those, if there are any, who find their encouragement and inspiration in precisely the present condition of society, and cherish it with the fondness and enthusiasm of lovers—not to those who are well employed under whatever circumstances, and they will know whether they are well employed or not—but to the mass of men who are discontented and idly complaining of the hardness of their lot and of the times, when they might improve them.—Why! there are some who complain most energetically of all because, as they say, they are doing their duty.—And to that seemingly wealthy, but most terribly impoverished class of all, who have accumulated dross but know not how to spend it, and thus have forged their own golden or silver fetters.

22 If I should undertake to tell how I have desired to spend my life in years past I [9r] 15. should probably only startle you who are somewhat acquainted with its actual history.

11. Thoreau's italics. 12. MS: "the the." 13. MS: "that that."

I will only hint at some of the enterprises I have cherished. *Economy*
In any weather at any hour of the day or night, I have been 23
anxious to improve the nick of time & notch it on my stick too—
to stand on the meeting of two eternities, the past & future, which
is precisely the present time—to toe that line. You will pardon
some obscurities—for I believe there are more secrets in my trade
than in most men's, and yet not voluntary ones either, but in-
separable from its very nature. I would gladly tell all I know
about it, & never paint "No Admittance" on my gate.

I long ago lost a hound—and a turtle dove and a bay horse— 24
and am still on their trail. Many's the traveller I have spoken con-
cerning them—describing their tracks and what calls they an-
swered to. I have met one or two who had heard the hound, and
the tramp of the horse, and even seen the dove disappear behind
a cloud, and they seemed as anxious to recover them as if they had
lost them themselves.

[9v] To anticipate not the sunrise & the dawn merely, but if 25
possible nature herself. How many mornings summer & winter
before yet any man was stirring about his business I have been
about mine. No doubt some of my hearers have met me returning
from this enterprise, farmers starting for Boston in the twilight, or
woodchoppers going to their work. To be sure I never assisted the
sun materially in his rising—but be sure it was of the last impor-
tance only to be present at it.

So many autumn aye & wintry days spent outside the town, 26
trying to hear what was in the wind, to hear and carry it express.
I well nigh sunk all my capital in it, and lost my own breath into
the bargain, running in the face of it. If it had concerned either of
the parties depend upon it it would have appeared in the Gazette
with the earliest intelligence—

At other times watching from the observatory of the Cliffs or
some tree—to telegraph any new arrival.

For a long time I was reporter to a journal of no very wide cir- 27
culation, and, as is too common, I got only my pains for my labor.
[10r] 17. Literary contracts are little binding.

For many years I was self appointed inspector of snow storms & 28
rain storms, and did my duty faithfully—Surveyor if not of high-

Economy ways then of forest paths, and all across lot routes, keeping them
28 open and ravines bridged & passable at all seasons, where the public-heel had testified to their utility.

29 I have looked after the wild stock of the town, which pastures in common which as everyone knows give you a good deal of trouble in the way of leaping fences—and have had an eye to the unfrequented nooks and corners of the farm—Though I did not always know whether Jonas or Solomon, worked in a particular field today—that was none of my business.

I have watered the red huckleberry—the sand-cherry & the nettle tree, the cornel, the white grape & the yellow violet—which might have withered else in dry seasons.

30 In short, I went on for a long time, I may say it without boasting, faithfully minding my business, [10v] till it became more and more evident that my townsmen would not after all admit me into the list of town officers, nor make my place a sinecure, with a moderate allowance.

My accounts indeed, which I can swear to have been faithfully kept, I have never got audited, still less accepted, still less paid
32 and settled. However I haven't set my heart on that.—I found in short that they were not likely to offer me any office in the Court House—any curacy or living anywhere else—but I must shift for myself.

So I turned my face more exclusively than ever to the woods where I was better known;—I determined to go into business at once, without waiting to acquire capital.[14]

33 Strict business habits I have always endeavored to acquire. They are indispensable to every man. If your trade is with the Celestial empire, then some small counting house on the coast, in some Salem harbor, will be fixture enough.

You will export such articles as the country affords, purely native products [11r] 19. much ice, and pine timber, and a little

14. Marked for insertion at this point was a scrap of version I paper which contains: "using such slender means as I had already got. [This phrase was probably added later.] My object in going to Walden Pond was not to live cheaply nor to live dearly there, but to transact some private business with the fewest obstacles—a business to be prevented from accomplishing which for want of a little common sense, a little enterprise and business talent, seemed not so sad as foolish."

granite, always in native bottoms. These will be good ventures. *Economy*

To oversee all the details yourself in person, to be at once pilot *33*
& captain and owner & underwriter, to buy and sell and keep the accounts,—to read every letter received and write or read every letter sent—to superintend the discharge of imports night & day —to be upon many parts of the coast almost at the same time.— Often the richest freight will be discharged upon a Jersey shore— To be your own telegraph unweariedly sweeping the horizon, speaking all passing vessels bound coast wise,—to keep up a steady dispatch of commodities—for the supply of such a distant & exorbitant market—to keep informed of the state of the markets—prospects of war and peace everywhere, and anticipate the tendencies of trade & civilization—taking advantage of the results, of all exploring expeditions—using new passages and all improvements in navigation. Charts to be studied, the [11v] position of reefs and new lights and buoys to be ascertained—and ever and ever the logarithmic tables to be corrected—for by the error of some calculator the vessel often splits upon a rock that should have reached a friendly pier—There is the untold fate of La Perouse—Universal science to be kept pace with—studying the lives of all great discoverers and navigators—great adventurers and merchants from Hanno and the Phoenicians down to our days. In fine account of stock to be taken from time to time, to know how you stand—It is a labor to task the faculties of a man— Such problems of profit & loss—of interest, of tare and tret, and gaugeing of all kinds in it—as demand a universal knowledge.

I have thought that Walden Pond would be a good place for *34*
business, not solely on account of the railroad and the ice-trade. It offers advantages which it may not [12r] 21. be good policy to divulge. It is a good port and a good foundation. No Neva marshes to be filled—though I suppose you must everywhere build on piles of your own driving. It is said that a flood tide with a westerly wind and ice in the Neva would sweep St. Petersburg from the face of the earth.

As this business was to be entered on without the usual capital, *35*
it may not be easy to conjecture where those means that will still be indispensable to every undertaking where to be obtained.

Economy 35 As for Clothing, perhaps we are oftener led by the love of novelty and a regard for the opinions of men in procuring it, than by a true utility. It was no doubt the strongest argument against the faith of the Millerites, that most of them continued to build and accumulate property so as to be prepared in case the world should not come to an end—But let him who has work to do reflect that the object of clothing is first [12v] to retain the animal heat—and secondly in this state of society to cover nakedness—*and how much of any important and necessary work might be accomplished without making any addition to his wardrobe!*[15]

The bank bill that is torn in two will pass if you save the pieces, if you have only got the essential piece with the signatures. Lowell & Manchester think you will let their broadcloth currency go when it is torn, but hold on, have an eye to the signature, clout the back of it, or if it is a transmittendum endorse the name of him from whom you received it.—No man ever stood the lower in my estimation for having a patch in his clothes. But there is certainly greater anxiety to have clean and whole clothes, than to have a sound conscience—though even if the rent is not patched perhaps the worst vice betrayed is improvidence.

Kings & Queens who wear a suit but once, though made by some tailor or dressmaker to their majesties, cannot know the [13r] 23. comfort of wearing a suit that fits. They are no better than wooden horses to hang the clean clothes on. Every day our garments become more assimilated to us, and receive the impress of the wearer's character. We know after all but few men, a great many coats and breeches. Dress a scarecrow in your last shift, you standing shiftless by, who would not soonest salute the scarecrow?

Above all, clothes brought in sewing a kind of work you may call endless.

36 A man who has at length found out something important to do will not have to get a new suit to do it in,—for him the old will do, that has lain dusty in the garret for an indefinite period. Old shoes will serve a hero longer than they have served his valet. Bare feet

15. Canceled: "and there will be found old clothes enough in everybody's garret to last till the millenium if he only has faith in *that*." Thoreau had underlined "that."

are the oldest of shoes, and he can make them do. Only they who go to soirees and legislative halls must have new coats, coats to turn as often as the man turns in them. *Economy* *36*

Who ever saw his old shoes, his old coat actually worn out, resolved into its primitive elements, so that it was [13v] not a deed of charity to bestow them on some poorer boy, by him to be bestowed on some poorer still, or shall we say richer, who can do with less?

I should say beware of all enterprises that require new clothes, and not rather a new wearer of clothes. If there is not a new man how can there be a new suit, and not rather a new miss-fit & non-suit—

If you have any enterprise before you, I say, try it in your old clothes.

All men want not something to do *with*,[16] but something to *do*[17] —or rather something to *be*.[18]

Once more I should advise never to procure a new suit of clothes however ragged or dirty the old, until you have so conducted, so enterprised or sailed in some way, that you feel like a new man in the old, and that to retain them would be keeping new wine in old bottles—thus the snake casts its slough—and the caterpillar its wormy coat by an internal industry and expansion. —Otherwise you would be found sailing under false colors.

[14r*][19] It is desirable that a man be clad so simply that he can lay his hands on himself in the dark, and live in all respects so compactly and prepared that if an enemy should take the city, he can, like the old philosopher, walk out the gate empty handed, without anxiety. *37*

While one thick garment is as good as three thin ones, and cheap clothing can be obtained at prices really to suit customers, while cowhide boots can be bought for 8 shillings a pair, a summer hat for 25 cents, and a winter cap for 5 shillings, or a better

16. Thoreau's italics.

17. Thoreau's italics.

18. Thoreau's italics.

19. According to the page numbers—23 on 13r and 25 on 15r—this is an extra leaf. Thoreau apparently put it in after canceling the first two paragraphs on 15r. He recopied them here on 14r, then continued on 14v and on the bottom of 15r, the top of which contained the two canceled paragraphs.

Economy may be homemade at a nominal cost, where is he so poor that
37 clad in such a suit *of his own earning*[20] there will not be found wise men to do him reverence.

39 Clothing has not in this country or any where in modern times risen to the dignity of an art. At present men make shift to wear what they can get. Like shipwrecked sailors they put on what they can find on the beach, and at a little distance laugh at each other's masquerade. Every generation laughs at the old [14v*] fashions, but follows religiously the new. We are amused at the pictures of Henry VIII and Queen Elizabeth, as much as if they were the
41 King & Queen of the cannibal islands.—I have little hesitation in saying that our factory system is not the best mode by which men may be clothed, and the condition of the operatives is becoming every day more and more like that of the English.—And it cannot be wondered at, since, as far as I have *heard or* observed the principal object is not that mankind may be well and worthily clad, but unquestionably that the corporation may be enriched. In the long run mankind hit only what they aim at.

40 The savage and childish taste of men and women for new prints & patterns keeps how many men shaking and squinting through kaleidoscopes that they may discover the particular figure which the skin deep taste of this generation requires today.—As if, after all, the Ethiopian could change his skin, or the leopard his spots.

When our garments are worn out we hang them up in the fields [15r] 25. to scare crows with, as if the reason why men scare crows was in their clothes. I have often experienced the difficulty of getting within gunshot of a crow.—It isn't because they smell powder.

44 [15v] *As for a Shelter*, If any one designs to construct a dwelling house, it behoves him to exercise a little Yankee shrewdness & care lest after all he find himself in a workhouse—a labyrinth—a museum—an almshouse—a prison—or a splendid Mausoleum instead.

42 Man does not live long in this world without finding out the comfort there is in a house—the domestic comforts—which phrase originally signified the satisfactions of the house more than of the

20. Thoreau's italics.

family. Though these must be extremely partial & transitory in *Economy*
those climates where the house is associated with winter or the *42*
rainy season chiefly, and for $\frac{2}{3}$ of the year, except for a parasol, is dispensed with. In our climate, in the summer season, the house was formerly only a covering at night. In the Indian gazettes the wigwam was the symbol of a day's march, and a row of them cut or painted on the bark of a tree signified that so many times they had camped.

Man was not made so large- [16r] 27. limbed and tough, but that he must seek to narrow his world, and wall in a space such as fits him. He found himself all bare and out of doors (and divested of prejudice, out of doors he is still, though that is a country we do not inhabit)—Though this was pleasant enough in serene & warm weather, by day-light the rainy season and the winter would perhaps have nipped his race in the bud, if he had not made haste to clothe himself with the shelter of a house. Adam and Eve according to the fable wore the bower before other clothes. Man sought a home, a place of warmth, first of physical warmth, then the warmth of the affections.

A tolerable house for a rude and hardy race that lived much out *44*
of doors was once made here almost entirely of such materials as nature furnished ready to their hands. According to the testimony of the first settlers of New England, an Indian wigwam was as comfortable in winter as an English house with all its wainscotting. It was sometimes 40 feet long, and carpeted and lined within & covered without with [16v] well-wrought embroidered mats & furnished with various utensils. They had advanced so far as to regulate the effect of the wind by a mat suspended over the hole *in the roof* which was moved by a string. Such a lodge was in the first instance constructed in a day or two, and taken down & put up in a few hours, and every family owned one.

In the savage state every man owns a shelter as good as the best, *45*
and sufficient for his ruder and simpler wants—but though the birds of the air have their nests, and the foxes their holes, in modern civilized society not more than one man in a hundred owns a shelter. The 99 pay an annual tax for this outside garment of all—indispensable summer & winter—which would buy a village of

Economy Indian wigwams, but now contributes to keep them poor as long
45 as they live.

But, answers one, by simply paying this tax, the poorest man secures an abode which is a palace compared [17r] 29. with the Indian's. An annual rent of from 20 to a hundred dollars entitles him to the benefit of all the improvements of centuries—Rumford fire-place—backplastering—Venetian blinds—copper-pump—spring-lock &c.

52 But while civilization has been improving our houses she has not equally improved the men who were to inhabit them. She has created palaces, but it was not so easy to create noblemen & kings.

53 Just in proportion as some have been placed in outward circumstances above the Indian—others have been degraded below it—The millions who built the pyramids for the tombs of the Pharaohs fed on garlic, and perhaps were left unburied themselves.—The mason who finishes the cornice of the palace returns at night

52 perchance to a hut not so good as a wigwam. And if the civilized man's pursuits are no worthier than the Indian's, if he is employed the greater part of his life in obtaining gross necessaries and comforts merely, why should he have a better dwelling [17v] than the former?

45 If civilization claims to have made a real advance in the welfare of man, she must show that she has produced better dwellings, without making them more costly—and the cost of a thing it will be remembered is the amount of life it requires to be exchanged for it—immediately or in the long run. An average house costs perhaps 1000 dollars, and to lay up this sum will require from 10 to 15 years of the laborer's life, even if he is not encumbered with a family. So that he must have spent more than half his life commonly before his wigwam will be earned. If we suppose him to pay a rent instead, this is but a doubtful choice of evils.

Would the savage have been wise to exchange his wigwam for a palace on these terms?

46 It will be perceived that I set down the whole advantage of holding this superflous value as a fund in store against the future —as far as the individual is concerned, to the score of funeral expenses merely.

[18r] 31. When I consider my neighbors the farmers of Con- *Economy*
cord who are at least as well off as the other classes, I find that for *49*
the most part they have been toiling for 10—20—or 30 years to
pay for their farms, and we may set down one half of that toil to
the cost of their houses—and commonly they have not paid for
them yet. They are endeavoring to solve the problem of a liveli- *50*
hood by a formula more complicated than the problem itself. To
get his shoe strings the farmer speculates in herds of cattle. This is
the reason he is poor—With exquisite skill he has set his traps with
hair springs to catch comfort & independence—and then as he
turned away got his own leg into them—This is the reason he is
poor—And for a similar reason we are all poor in respect to a
thousand savage comforts, though surrounded by luxuries.

Most men do not know what a house is (which is not to be won- *54*
dered at for I am not sure that there is one in the country) and
they are actually though needlessly poor all their lives [18v] be-
cause they think they must have such a one as their neighbors. As
if one were to wear any sort of coat the tailor might cut out for
him, or gradually leaving off palm-leaf hat or cap of wood chuck's
skin, complain of hard times because he could not afford to buy
him a crown.

Shall the respectable citizen thus gravely teach by precept and
example the necessity of the young man's providing himself with
a certain number of superfluous glow shoes & umbrellas, and
empty guest chambers for empty guests, before he dies?

There is no reason why our furniture should not be as simple as
the Arab's or the Indian's. At present our houses are cluttered and
defiled with it, and a good housewife would sweep out the greater
part into the dust hole, or leave her morning's work undone.

At first the thoughtful [&] wandering man plucked in haste the *56*
fruits which the boughs extended to him, and found in the sticks
and stones around him [19r] 33. his implements ready—to crack
the nut and build his shelter with, and he was still a sojourner in
nature. When he was refreshed with food and sleep he contem-
plated his journey again. He dwelt in a tent in this world—and
was either threading the vallies, or crossing the plains, or climbing
the mountain tops.

Economy 56 But lo! men have become the tools of their tools—the man who independently plucked the fruits when he was hungry, is become a farmer. Now the best works of art even, serve comparatively but to dissipate the mind, for they themselves represent transitionary and paroxismal not free & absolute thoughts. There is actually no place in this village for a work of art, a statue, for instance, if any had come down to us, to stand, for our lives, our houses & streets, furnish no proper pedestal for it. There is not a nail to hang a picture on, nor a shelf to receive the bust of a hero. When we consider how our houses are built and paid for, and their internal economy [19v] managed and sustained, who does not wonder that the floor does not give way under the visitor while he is admiring the gewgaws upon the mantel and let him through into the cellar—to some solid and honest, though earthy, foundation! Before we can adorn our houses with beautiful objects—the walls must be stript —and our lives must be stript, and beautiful housekeeping and beautiful living be laid for a foundation. Now what we call taste for the beautiful is most cultivated out of doors, where there is no house, and no housekeeper.

Compare 51 [20r*][21] I have often been struck by that fable of Momus. Momus was the god of pleasantry among the ancients. He was Jupiter's jester or fool, and many a time he set the gods in a roar. "He was continually employed in satirizing the gods, and whatever they did was freely turned to ridicule." Neptune—Minerva and Vulcan had a trial of skill. The first made a Bull;—the second a House; the third a Man. "Momus found fault with them all. He disliked the Bull because his horns were not placed before his eyes that he might give a surer blow." "He censured the House which Minerva had made because she had not made it moveable, by which means a bad neighborhood might be avoided." "With regard to Vulcan's Man, he said he ought to have made a window in his breast." "Venus herself was exposed

21. Originally 19v was followed by 21r (page 35 in Thoreau's numbering), which was only half filled at first. Sometime later, Thoreau filled the bottom half of 21r with a rough draft of the story of Momus. Then on the new leaf, 20r and 20v, he rewrote this story and copied, with very slight changes, the material of "Economy," 59, which was in the last eight lines of 19v and the first eleven lines of 21r. He canceled the last eight lines of 19v and all of 21r.

to his satire; and when the sneering god found no fault in the body of the naked goddess, he observed, as she retired, that the noise of her feet was too loud, and greatly improper in the goddess of beauty. These reflections were the cause that Momus was driven from heaven." What, think [20v*] you would Momus say if he were living in our day? And I am not sure but what he is. *Economy* *Compare* *51*

Though we are not so degenerate but that we might possibly live in a cave or a wigwam, or wear skins today, it is certainly better to accept the advantages, though so dearly bought, which the invention and industry of mankind offer. In such a neighborhood as this, boards and shingles, lime and bricks, are cheaper and more easily come at, than suitable caves, or whole logs, or bark in sufficient quantities, or even well-tempered clay and flat stones. I speak understandingly on this subject, for I have gone into it both theoretically and practically. *59*

With a little more wit we might use these materials so as to become richer than the richest now are, and make our civilization a blessing.

But to make haste to my own experiment. [21r] 35. [See note to 20r.]

[21v] Near the end of March 1845 [I borrowed an axe] and went down to the woods nearest to where I intended to build my house, and began to cut down some tall arrowy pines still in their youth for timber. The ice in the pond was not yet dissolved, though there were some open spaces, but it was all dark-colored and saturated with water. There were some slight flurries of snow during the days that I worked there, though when I came out upon the rail-road on my way home its yellow sand-heap stretched away gleaming in the hazy atmosphere, and the rails shone in the spring sun, & I heard the woodpecker & vireo & other birds already come to commence another year with us. *60*

They were pleasant spring days in which the winter of man's discontent was thawing as well as the earth, and the life that had lain torpid began to stretch itself. I remember that one day when my axe had come off, and I had cut a green hickory for a wedge, driving it with a stone and the handle, and had placed it [22r] 37. to soak in a pond hole in order to swell it, I saw a striped snake

Economy run into the water—and he lay on the bottom apparently without
60 inconvenience as long as I stayed there, which was more than 15 minutes, and I know not how much longer he remained there. I had previously seen them on frosty mornings in my path—with a portion of their bodies still numb & inflexible, waiting for the sun to thaw them.

On the first of April it rained and melted the ice in the pond, and in the early part of the day which was very foggy I heard a stray goose groping about over the pond & cackling as if lost—like the spirit of the fog.

61 So I went on for some days cutting and hewing timber, and also studs and rafters, all with my borrowed axe, not having many communicable or scholar-like thoughts—singing to myself—

> Men say they know many things
> But lo! they have taken wings,
> The arts & sciences,
> And a thousand appliances—
> The wind that blows
> Is all that anybody knows.

[22v] My days were not very long ones but I usually carried my dinner of bread & butter and read the newspaper in which it was wrapped at noon, sitting amid the green pine boughs, and to my bread was imparted some of their fragrance for my hands were covered with a thick coat of pitch. Before I had done I was more the friend than the foe of the pine tree, having become better acquainted with it, though I had cut down some of them. Sometimes a rambler of the wood was attracted by the sound of my axe, and we chatted pleasantly over the chips I had made.

62 By the middle of April for I made no haste in my work—but rather made the most of it—my house was framed and ready for the raising.

I had already bought the shanty of James Collins Irishman, for boards.—James Collins' shanty was considered an extra fine one. When I called to visit he was not at home, I walked about the outside, at first unobserved from [23r] 39. within, the window was so deep & high. The dirt was raised 5 feet all around as if it were

a compost heap. The roof was the soundest part, though a good deal warped and made brittle by the sun. Door sill there was none, but a perennial passage for hens under the door-board. Mrs. C came to the door & asked me to view it from the inside. The hens were driven in by my approach. It was dark, of small compass—peaked cottage roof, dirt floor mostly—dank—& aguish, here a board and there a board which would not bear removal. She lighted a lamp to show me the ceiling and the sides, and also that the board floor extended under the bed—warning me not to step into the cellar, a sort of dust hole 2 feet deep. In her own words they were "good boards overhead—good boards all around, good window" of two squares *originally*—only the cat passed out that way lately. There was a stove, a bed, & a place to sit—an infant in the house where it was born—a silk parasol—gilt-framed looking glass, and patent new coffee mill nailed to an [23v] oak sapling—all told. The bargain was soon concluded, for James had returned. I to pay $4.25 tonight, he to vacate at 5 tomorrow morning—selling to nobody else meanwhile—I to take possession at six. It were well he said to be there early and anticipate certain indistinct but wholly unjust claims on the score of ground rent and fuel,—this he assured me was the only incumbrance. At six I passed him and his family on the road. One large bundle held their all—bed—coffee mill—looking glass—hens—all but the cat, she took to the woods & became a wild cat, and, as I learned afterward, trod in a trap set for woodchucks and so became a dead cat at last. *Economy* *62*

I threw down the dwelling the same morning, drawing the nails and removed it to the pond side, by small cart loads, spreading the boards on the grass there, to bleach and warp back again in the sun. One early thrush gave me a note or two as I drove along the woodland path. *63*

I was informed treacherously,

[One leaf missing; it probably contained the rest of 63 and some of 64 and 65.]

[24r] 43. answered the same purpose as the Iliad. *65*

When I came to build my chimney—my bricks were old ones

House-Warming 5 and had to be cleaned with a trowel—so that I learned more than is usual of the manufacture of bricks & trowels—I filled the spaces between the bricks about the fire place with stones from the pond shore, and also made my mortar with the white sand from the 10 same place. Some whiter and cleaner sand for plastering I brought over from the opposite shore in a boat several cartloads at once with my spade and barrow, and I was very glad to avail myself of this sort of conveyance—a highway that never needs to be mended—and over which you pass with the heaviest loads without a jar or a scar.

Economy 69 I have a house 10 feet by 15—& 8 feet high—with a garrett & a closet, a large window on each side—two trap doors, one door at the end, and a fire place opposite.

The exact cost of my house, when completed, paying the usual price for the materials, but not counting the work, all of which was done [24v] by myself—was as follows

Boards	8.03½
Refuse shingles for roof & sides	4.00
Laths	1.25
2 2nd hand windows with glass	2.43
1000 old brick	4.00
2 casks of lime	2.40
Hair	.31
Mantle-tree iron	.15
Nails	3.90
Hinges & Screws	.14
Latch	.10
Chalk	1
Transportation	1.40
in all	$28.12½

[There followed here on the lower half of the page the beginning of paragraph 76, but Thoreau canceled it when he inserted the following two leaves with material of paragraphs 71, and 72, 73, and 74; he then copied the beginning of 76 on the verso of the second extra leaf; he had added one sentence to 76: "One farmer said it was good for nothing but to raise chipping squirrels on."]

[25r*] I intend to build me a house which will surpass any on *Economy*
the maine street in grandeur and luxury as soon as it pleases me as *71*
much and will cost me no more than my present one.

In Cambridge College the mere rent of a student's room, which *72*
is no better than my own, is 30 dollars each year, though the corporation had the advantage of building 32 side by side and under one roof, and the occupant has the inconvenience of many and noisy neighbors, and a residence perhaps in the 4th story. If the college and the students had more wit in these respects the expense of getting an education would not only for the most part vanish, but less education would be needed, because more would already have been acquired. Just those conveniences which the student requires at Cambridge cost him or somebody else 10 times as great a sacrifice of life as they would with proper management on both sides.

The mode of founding a college is [25v*] to get up a subscription of dollars and cents and then employ Irishmen *or other operatives* actually to lay the foundations—to call in a contractor to make this a subject of speculation—while the students that are to be are *fitting themselves for*[22] it—and for these oversights succeeding generations have to pay, I think that it would undoubtedly be better for the students or those who desire to be benefitted by it, to lay the foundation themselves.

And so with a hundred modern improvements—there is an il- *73*
lusion about them. There is no positive advance. The devil goes on exacting compound interest to the last for his early interest and numerous investments in them. Men are in great haste to construct a magnetic telegraph from Maine to Louisiana—but Maine and Louisiana have nothing to communicate. I don't remember anything that Louisiana ever said. She is in such a predicament as the gentleman who was earnest to be introduced to a distinguished deaf woman, but when he was presented and *one end of* the ear trumpet put into his hand—had nothing to say.

[26r*] Men are mad to tunnel under the Atlantic, and bring the Old World some weeks nearer to the new—and perchance the first news that will leak through into the broad flapping American

22. Thoreau's italics.

Economy ear will be that the princess Adelaide has the whooping cough.

74 One says to me I wonder you don't lay up money—you love to travel—you might take the cars and go to Fitchburg today—and see the country. But I am wiser than that. I have learned that the swiftest traveller is he that goes afoot.—I say to my friend suppose we try, who will get there first—The fare is a dollar—that's a day's wages—I start now on foot and get there before night, you will in the meanwhile have earned your fare and get there sometime tomorrow. And so if the railroad reached round the world I think I should keep ahead of you. And as for seeing the country and getting experience, why I think I should have to cut your acquaintance altogether.

76 [26v*] Before I finished my house I planted about two acres and a half of light & sandy soil near it chiefly with beans, though I had a small patch of potatoes and corn, and a few turnips beside. The whole lot contains eleven acres, mostly growing up to pines and hickories, and was sold the preceeding season for 8 dollars and 8 cents an acre. The farmer said it was good for nothing but to raise chipping squirrels on. Upon this land I put no manure nor any quickener whatever, not [27r] 45. being the owner nor expecting to cultivate so much again, and I did not quite hoe it all once. I got out several cords of stumps in ploughing which supplied me with fuel for a long time, and left small rings of virgin mould, easily distinguished through the summer by the greater luxuriance of the beans there. I had to hire a team and a man for the ploughing though I held the plough for the most part myself. My farm outgoes were

Bean-Field *12*

Ploughing—harrowing—furrowing	$ 7.50
Beans for Seed	3.12½
Potatoes "	1.33
Peas	.40
Turnip seed	6
hoe	54
White line for crow fence	2
Horse cultivator and boy 3 hours	1.00
Horse and cart to get crop	.75
In all	$14.72½

I got 12 bushels of beans & 18 bushels of potatoes, beside some peas and green corn—The yellow corn and turnips were too late to come to any thing. My whole income from the farm was as follows *Economy 76*

	From 9 bushels *& 12 qts* of beans sold	$16.94	*Bean-Field 13*
[27v]	5 bushels of potatoes	2.50	
	9 " small " and few in the hills	2.25	
	grass	1.00	
	stalks	.75	
	In all	23.44	
		14.72½	
	net profit, not counting my labor	8.71½	

Beside produce consumed and on hand at the time this estimate was made to the amount of 4.50 which added to the last—makes the whole profit 13.21½. *Economy 76*

By Surveying—Carpentry & day labor in the village in the meanwhile I had earned *79*

..... 13.34

The expense of food, excepting potatoes and a few peas which I had raised,—for 8 months, from July 4th to March 1st—the time when this was written, though I have now lived there nearly 2 years—not counting the value of what was on hand at the last date, was

	Rice	1.73½
	Molasses	1.73
	Rye meal	1.04¾
	Indian "	.99¾
	Flour	.88
	Sugar	.80
	Lard	.65
[28r] 47.	Apples	.25
	Pork	.22
	Dried apple	.22

Sweet potatoes	.10
1 Pumpkin	6
Salt	3
1 watermelon	2
	8.74 all told

Economy 80 Clothing & some incidental expenses within the same dates amounted to 8.40¾
Oil & some household utensils 2.00

So that the whole pecuniary outgoes excepting for washing & mending, which, for the most part, as we say, were done out of the house, and their bills have not *yet* been received—was

House	28.12½
Farm	14.72½
Food	8.74
Clothing &c	8.40¾
Oil &c	2.00
in all	60.99¾

And to meet this I have for farm produce sold	23.44
on hand	4.50
Earned by day labor	13.34
	41.28

[28v] which subtracted from the sum of the outgoes 60.99¾ leaves
41.28

a balance of 19.71¾ on the one side, and on the other, beside the leisure & independence & health thus secured, a comfortable house for me as long as I choose to occupy it.—the 19.71¾ cents being the exact capital with which[23] I started and measure of expenses to be incurred.

23. MS: "which which."

Economy speedy period to the vital functions. Yet I find it not to be an es-
84 sential ingredient, and after going without it for a year am still in the land of the living.—And I am glad to escape the trivialness of carrying a bottle-full in my pocket, which would sometimes pop and discharge its contents to my discomfiture. It is simpler & more respectable to omit it. [30r] 51. Man is an animal who more than any other can adapt himself to all climates and circumstances.

85 Every New Englander might easily raise all his bread stuffs in this land of Rye & Indian corn, and not depend upon distant and fluctuating markets for them. Yet so far are we from simplicity and independence that in this village fresh and sweet meal is rarely sold in the shops—and hominy & corn in a still coarser form are hardly used by any. The farmer gives to his cattle and hogs the grain of his own producing, and buys flour which is at least no more wholesome at a greater cost at the store.

96 At present I maintain myself solely by the labor of my hands, and I find that by working about six weeks in a year I can meet all the expenses of living.

I have thoroughly tried school keeping and have found that my expenses were increased in a greater proportion than my salary, and I lost my time into the bargain. As I did not teach for the good of my fellow men, [30v] but simply for a livelihood, this was a failure—I have tried trade, but I found that it would take 10 years to get under way in that, and that then you would probably be on the way to the devil.

97 As I preferred somethings to others, and especially valued my freedom, and could fare hard and yet succeed well—I did not wish to spend my time in earning rich carpets or fine furniture—or delicate cookery, or a house in the Grecian or the Gothic style just yet.—If there are any to whom it is no interruption to acquire these things—and who know how to use them when acquired, I relinquish to them the pursuit—Some are industrious and love labor for its own sake—to such I have at present nothing to say. Those who would not know what to do with more leisure than they now enjoy—I would advise to work twice as hard as they do.

For myself I find that at present the occupation of a day laborer

is the most independent of any, especially when we consider that *Economy*
it requires only 30 or 40 days in a year to support one. The la- *97*
borer's day ends with the going down of the sun, and he is free
[31r*] to devote himself to his chosen pursuit, independent of his
labor. But his employer who speculates from month to month has
no respit from one year's end to another's.

One young man of my acquaintance who has inherited some *99*
acres remarked to me that he thought he should live as I do if he
had the means. I would not have any one adopt my mode of living
on any account—for, beside that before he has fairly learned it, I
may have found out another for myself—I desire that there may
be as many different persons in the world as possible—and they
say very truly that it takes all kinds to make a world—but I would
have each one be very careful to find out and pursue his *own*[25]
way—and not his father's or his mother's or his neighbor's in-
stead—The youth may build or plant or sail—only let him not be
hindered from doing that which he tells me he would like to do.

If he is reproved for being what he is he will find his only re-
source in being still more entirely what he is. Carry but yourself
[31v*] erect and your garments will trail as they should. Disturb
not the sailor with too many details, but let him be sure that he
keep his guiding star in his eye. It is by a mathematical point only
that we are wise, but that is sufficient guidance for all our life.

I have hitherto indulged very little in philanthropic enterprises *101*
—I have made some sacrifices to a sense of duty, and among others
have sacrificed this pleasure also—I may say without boasting
that I have never been inside of a theatre but once, and never
that I remember—subscribed a cent to any charitable object.

Professional men—Merchants—farmers—mechanics—labor-
ing men & women—speculators and jobbers of all kinds have at
various times tempted me just to take one turn at doing good to
mankind—but I have been wonderfully sustained and my virtue
is still unsullied in this respect.—Some have used all their arts to
persuade me to undertake the support of some poor family in the
town—

If I had nothing to do, for they say [32r*] the devil finds em-

25. Thoreau's italics.

Economy 101 ployment for the idle, I certainly should try my hand at some such pastime as that. When I have thought to indulge myself in this respect, and lay heaven under an obligation by maintaining certain poor persons, in all respects as comfortably as I maintain myself, and have even advanced so far as to make them the offer—they have one and all unhesitatingly preferred to remain poor.—While[26] my townsmen are devoted in so many ways to the good of their fellow men I trust that one at least may be spared to other and less humane pursuits.—As for Doing Good—that is one of the professions that are full. Moreover I did once try it fairly—and strange as it may seem, am satisfied that it does not agree with my constitution—I have a natural repugnance to it.—Probably I should not consciously and deliberately forsake my particular calling to do the good which society demands of me to save the universe from annihilation—and indeed a like steadfastness [32v*] elsewhere is all that now preserves it.

102 Men say practically begin where you are and such as you are, not aiming mainly to become better, and with kindness aforethought go about doing good. If I were to preach at all in this strain, I should say rather set about being good.—As if the sun should stop when he had kindled his fires up to the splendor of a moon or a star of the 6th magnitude, and go about like a Robin Goodfellow peeping in at every cottage window inspiring lunatics, and tainting meats and making darkness visible, instead of steadily increasing his genial heat and beneficence till he is of such brightness that no mortal can look him in the face, and then, and in the meanwhile too, going about the world in his own orbit doing it good, or rather, as a truer philosophy has discovered, the world going about him getting good.

When Phaeton, wishing to prove his heavenly birth by his beneficence, had the sun's chariot but one day [33r*] and drove out of the beaten track he burned several blocks of houses in the lower streets of heaven, and scorched the surface of the earth, and dried up every spring, and made the great desert of Sahara—till Jupiter at length hurled him headlong to the earth with a thunder bolt—and the sun through grief at his death did not shine for a year.

26. Originally "Why."

Why, if I knew for a certainty that a man was coming to my house with the conscious design of doing me good—I should run for my life—as from that dry and parching wind of the African deserts called the Simoon, which fills the mouth and nose and ears and eyes with dust till you are suffocated. *Economy 103*

I would not preach to men so strenuously and exclusively to practise kindness and humanity toward one another—to feed the hungry & clothe the naked, and the like, for the greater would include the less. A man is not a good man to me because he will feed me if I should be starving, or warm me if I should [33v*] be freezing, or pull me out of a ditch if I should ever fall into one—I can find you a Newfoundland dog that will do as much.

[34r*] Every class and order in the universe is the bearer of certain gifts to man. There is a whole class of musk-bearing animals —and each flower has its peculiar odor—and all these together go to make the general wholesome and invigorating atmosphere. So each man should take care to emit his fragrance, and perform some such office as hemlock boughs, and dried and healing herbs —I want the flower and fruit of a man—and that some fragrance *as* of fresh spring life be wafted over from him to me—This is consolation and that charity that hides a multitude of sins. *Compare 107*

He must serve another and a better use than any he can consciously render. We demand to discover at least some signs of life, some vegetation and putting forth of natural life in him. Some greenness, some flowering—some ripeness.

He must be a sort of appreciable wealth to us, or at least make us sensible of our own riches—In his degree an Apollo—a Mercury—a Ceres—a Minerva—or the bearer of divine gifts to me. He must [34v*] bring me the morning light untarnished, & the evening red undimmed—The hilarity of Spring in his mirth—the summer's serenity in his joy—the autumnal ripeness in his wisdom—and the repose and abundance of winter in his silence.

A man should impart his courage and not his despair—his health and ease and not his disease, and take care that this does not spread by contagion. It has been well said that our purest and loftiest joys have no memory of, or faith in, one another, and hence we need that he of our fellows who last travelled to the

Economy sources of the sun—drank at the well of life—or tasted the foun-
Compare *107* tain of God—should[27] communicate to us some of their inspiration.

109 If we would indeed reform mankind by truly Indian—Botanic —magnetic—or natural means—let us strive first to be as simple and well as Nature ourselves. It is rare that we are able to impart wealth to our fellows, and do not [35r*] surround them with our own castoff griefs as an atmosphere, and name it sympathy.

Compare *108* If we will think of it—there is no reformer on the globe—no such philanthropic, benevolent, & charitable man, now engaged in any good work any where, sorely afflicted by the sight of misery *around*[28] him, and animated by the desire to relieve it, who would not instantly and unconsciously sign off from these pure labors, and betake himself to purer, if he had but righted some obscure and perhaps unrecognised private grievance. Let but the spring come to him, let the morning rise over his couch, and he will forsake his generous companions, without apology or explanation—or the need of any.

Compare *107* I would say to the anxious philanthropist—Take up a little life into your pores—strike root and grow—endeavor to encourage the flow of sap in your veins—and help to clothe the human field with green.—If [35v*] your branches wither strike your roots wider and deeper—send your fibres into every kingdom of nature for its contribution, and make the most of that greenness and life which the gods allot you. Send forth your boughs into the ethereal and starry influences—and make firm your trunk against the elements.

Who can foretel what blossoms, what fruits, what private and public advantage may push up through this rind which we call a man.—The traveller may stand by him as a perennial fountain in the desert, and slake his thirst forever.

110 [36r*][29] For my own part I would fain be azad or free like the

27. MS: "should should."

28. Thoreau's italics.

29. This leaf is on version I paper, but the handwriting and ink raise some question as to whether Thoreau wrote this material before he had finished version I. 36v* has only three phrases on it: "Mercury's Reply to Poverty in Carew," "End of *Economy*," "S about Hollowell Farm." 36r is numbered "137"; this number is not part of any sequence in the manuscript.

green cypress tree—I read in the Gulistan or Flower Garden of Shaikh Sadi of Shiraz—that *Economy 110*

"They asked a wise man, saying; of the many celebrated trees which the Most High God has created lofty and umbrageous, they call none azad or free excepting the cypress, which bears no fruit; what mystery is there in this? He replied; each has its appropriate produce, and appointed season, during the continuance of which it is fresh and blooming, and during their absence dry and withered; to neither of which states is the cypress exposed, being always flourishing; and of this nature are the azads or religious independants;—Fix not thy heart on what is transitory; for the Dijlah or Tygris will continue to flow through Baghdad after the race of Khalifs is extinct: if thy hand has plenty, be liberal as the date tree; but if it affords nothing to give away, be an azad, or free man, like the cypress."

[37r] 1.[30] When I first went to the pond to live my house being unfinished for winter, and merely a defence against the rain, without plastering or chimney, uncluttered with furniture, and with walls of rough weather stained boards, and wide chinks which made it cool at night, was itself an inspiring object, and reacted on me the builder. From our village houses to this lodge on the shore of a beautiful lake in the midst of a green forest, where hardly any traces of man were visible, was a transition as from a dungeon to an open cage at least in a pleasant grove, where I could glimpse the light & the flowers through the bars, and odoriferous gales coursed through and through. It was so open and pervious to nature that it did not seem within doors where I sat, in unwholesome penetralia, but at most only behind a door in the rainiest weather. The fresh & pure air penetrated through a myriad chinks, and bathed myself and all things within as freely as it wandered amid the [37v] boughs and needles of the pines around, and I imbibed the influences of nature with as little alloy as a bird in its nest amid foliage. It was invigorating only to sit there and drink and be bathed in this unco[nta]minated cur- *Where I Lived 8* *Compare 9*

30. The second series of page numbers begins with this leaf and runs for the rest of this version; the numbers sometimes occur on the recto of a single leaf, sometimes on only the first page of a four-page folio.

Where I Lived rent. The atmosphere of our houses has usually lost some of its life
Compare 9 giving principle and it is necessary to our health and spirits frequently to go out, as we say, to take the air.

8 The upright white hewn studs and freshly planed door & window frames gave the house a clean and airy look, especially in the morning, when its timbers seemed saturated with the morning air, and as if by noon some sweet gum would exude from them, and incense go up from the roof. With its frame so slightly clad it seemed like a picture in outlines, a rudimental, airy and primitive hall, a crystallization around me, and reminded [me] of some mountain houses I had seen, which had this fresh auroral atmosphere about them. I had lodged in the house of a sawmiller on the Kanterskill mountains the previous summer, high up as the Pine Orchard, [38r] in the blue-berry & raspberry region, which had this ambrosial character. He was the miller of the Kanterskill Falls, & his family were clean & wholesome people like the house. The latter was not plastered but only lathed, and the inner doors were not hung. It was high-placed, airy, & perfumed; so high that only the winds that swept over the ridge of the Kanterskills passed through it.—The very light & atmosphere in which the most enduring works of art were composed.—On the tops of mountains, as everywhere to hopeful souls, it is always morning.—A clean and pure house which one would enter as naturally and gratefully as he would go under a shade, which might fitly adorn a mountain's brow—and entertain a travelling god, and where a goddess might trail her garment.—Such it seemed to me all our houses should be.

10 When I looked out on the face of the pond it reminded me of a tarn high up on the side of a mountain, and the whole region where I lived seemed more elevated than it actually [38v] was. The pond was like a mountain lake I had seen in the grey of the morning draped with mist, suspended in low weather from the dead willows and bare firs that stood here and there in the water. As the sun arose I saw it throwing off its nightly clothing of mist—and here and there by degrees its soft ripples or its smooth reflecting surface [was revealed]. The mists, like ghosts, were stealthily withdrawing in every direction into the woods, as if from the

breaking up of some nocturnal conventicle.—Both place and *Where I Lived*
time had undergone a revolution and I dwelt nearer to those eras *13*
in history which had attracted me, and as I had no clock nor
watch, but the sun & moon, I also lived in primitive time. Over
the south shore of the pond, which was a low hill covered with *12*
shrub oaks & scattered pines which seemed to rise to an illimitable
table-land—I seemed to look toward the country of the Tartars,
where tribes of men dwelt in tents.

Where I lived was as far off as many a region viewed nightly by *13*
astronomers. We are apt to imagine rare and delectable places
afar off [39r] 5. whither astronomers look, in some remote and
more celestial corner of the system, behind the constellation of
Cassiopeia's Chair, far from noise & disturbance. I imagined that
my house had its site actually in such a withdrawn, but forever
new and unprophaned part of the universe. If it were worth the
while to settle in those parts of the system near to the Pleiades or
the Hyades, or Orion or Aldeboran, then I was really there, or at
an equal remoteness from the life I had left behind—as near to the
immortal city—dwindled & twinkling with as fine a ray to my
nearest neighbor and only to be seen on moonless nights by him.
Such was that part of creation where I had squatted.

Every morning was a cheerful invitation to make my life of *14*
equal simplicity and purity with itself. The morning is to everyone
the season of his ideal life. Then, if ever, we can realize the life of
the Greeks—and we are all at some time good heathens enough to
acknowledge and worship their Aurora. The morning brings[31]
back the [39v] heroic ages—I got up early and bathed in the
pond—That was a religious exercise, and one of the best things I
did. So far the day was well spent—In some unrecorded hours of
solitude, sitting with door and windows open at very early dawn
when the stillness was audible, and the atmosphere contained the
auroral perfume I have mentioned, the faint hum of a mosquito,
making its invisible and unimaginable tour through the loaded
and drowsy air toward elysian realms, was a trumpet that recalled
what I had read of most ancient history and heroic ages. There
was somewhat of that I fancy the Greeks meant by ambrosial

31. MS: "brinks."

Where I Lived about it—more than Sybilline or Delphic. It expressed the infinite
14 and everlasting fertility of the κοσμος or world. It was θεῖον or divine. Only Homer could have named it.

The morning, which is the most memorable season of the day, is the awakening hour; then there is least somnolence in us, and for [40r] an hour at least some part of us seems to awake, which slumbers all the rest of the day & night. After a partial cessation[32] of his sensual life, the soul of man or its organs are reinvigorated each day, and the genius tries again what noble life it can make. All memorable events transpire in morning time, and in a morning atmosphere. Greek poetry and art, and the fairest and most memorable of the actions of men, date from that hour—for all poets and heroes like Memnon are the children of Aurora, and emit their music in the morning. If we are wakeful enough the evening and the morning are but one. The birds sing at morning & at evening, and their notes do not suggest on which side the sun is rising. There is no vaunt & no weariness in them. And to him who has kept pace with the sun it is a perpetual morning.

It matters not what the clocks say, or the attitudes and labors of men—morning is when I am awake and there is a dawn in me.

[40v] Moral reform & improvement are the effort to throw off sleep & somnolency. How is it that men give so poor an account of their day[33] if they have not been slumbering? They are not such poor calculators. If they had not been overcome with drowsiness they would have performed something. The millions are awake enough for physical labor—but only one in a million is awake enough for effective intellectual exertion—only one in a hundred million to a spiritual or divine life—To be awake is to be alive.

My thoughts, which are either the memory or the expectation
15 of my actions are the causes which determine life and death. I know of [no] more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by a conscious endeavor. It is something to be able to paint a particular picture, or to carve a statue, and so to make a few objects beautiful, but it is far more sublime to carve and paint the very atmosphere & medium through [41r]

32. MS first read: "sensation."

33. The words "their day" were written over an erasure, possibly of "themselves."

9. which we look, which morally we can do. To affect the quality of the day—that is the highest of arts. Every man is tasked to make his life, even in its details, worthy of the contemplation of his most elevated and critical hour. If we refused such paltry information as we get, the oracles would distinctly inform us how this might be done. *Where I Lived* *15*

I went down to the pond because I wished to live deliberately, *16* and front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not when I came to die discover that I that I had not lived. I did not want to live what was not life;—living is so dear.—Nor did I wish to practice resignation unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life—to live so sturdily and Spartan like as to put to rout all that was not life—to cut a broad swathe and shave close—to drive life into a corner, and if it proved [41v] to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world, and throw it in the teeth of the gods, or if it were sublime to know it by experience and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion. For all men it seems to me, are in a strange uncertainty about it, whether it is of the Devil or of God, and have somewhat hastily concluded that it is the chief end of man here to glorify God and Him only.[34]

[42r] 11. Still we live meanly like ants, though the fable tells us *17* that we[35] were long ago changed into men, like pigmies we fight with cranes—it is error upon error and clout upon clout, and our best virtue has for its occasion, a superfluous and evitable wretchedness.—Our life is frittered away by detail. Its dish consists almost entirely of fixings & very little of the chicken's meat. An honest man has hardly need to count more than his ten fingers, or in extreme cases he may add his ten toes, and lump the rest. Simplicity—Simplicity—Simplicity. I say instead of a million count half a dozen; and keep your accounts on your thumb nail. Let our affairs be as 2 or 3, and not a hundred or a thousand. In

34. At first the text ran from what is now 41v to what is now 44r, but before Thoreau numbered the pages, he canceled the last 15 lines of 41v; they contained the beginning of "Where I Lived," 23. He then wrote the material on the next four pages, copying the canceled lines of 41v on the bottom half of 43v.

35. MS: "we we."

Where I Lived *17*

the midst of this civilization, such are the clouds & storms, and quicksands, and thousand and one items to be allowed for, a man has to live, if he would not founder and go to the bottom & not make his port at all, by dead reckoning, and he must [42v] be a great calculator indeed who succeeds. Simplify—Simplify. Instead of 3 meals a day, if it be necessary eat but one, instead of a hundred dishes—5—and reduce other things in proportion. Our life is like a German confederacy made up of petty states—forever fluctuating and even a German cannot tell you how it is bounded at any moment.

The nation itself with all its so-called internal improvements, which by the way are all external and superficial—is just such an unwieldly and overgrown establishment cluttered with furniture and tripped up by its own traps, ruined by luxury and heedless expense & want of calculation as the million households in the land, and the only cure for it as for them is in a rigid economy—a stern & more than Spartan simplicity of life and grandeur of purpose. It lives too fast.—Men think that it is essential that the nation make lard oil—and export ice—and talk thro' a telegraph and ride 30 miles an hour—[43r] without a doubt, but whether we should live like chimpanzees & baboons or like men is a little uncertain. If we don't get out sleepers, and forge rails, and devote days and nights to the work, but go to tinkering upon our own lives to improve them who will build railroads? And if rail-roads are not built, how shall we get to heaven in season? When I first got a cinder in my eye I suspected that I was not going to heaven. But if we stay at home and mind our business who will want rail-roads? Did you ever think what these sleepers are that underlie the rail-road? Each one is a man—an Irish-man, or a Yankee-man—The rails are laid on them, and they are covered with sand, and the cars run smoothly over them!—They are sound sleepers I assure you—And every few years a new lot are laid down and run over. So that if a few have the pleasure of riding on a rail—the rest have the misfortune [43v] to be ridden upon. And when they run over a man that is walking in his sleep—a supernumerary sleeper in the wrong position *& wake him up*, they suddenly stop the cars, and make a hue and cry about it, as if this were an excep-

tion. I am glad to know that it takes a gang of men for every five miles to keep the sleepers down and level in their beds, as it is, for this is a sign that they may sometime get up again. *Where I Lived* *17*

Time is but the stream I go a fishing in. I drink at it, but while I drink I see the sandy bottom, and detect how shallow it is. Its thin current glides away, but eternity remains. I would drink deeper—fish in the sky—whose bottom is pebbly with stars. The Intellect is a cleaver; it discerns & splits, and rifts its way into the secret of things. I do not wish to be any more busy with my hands than is necessary—My head is hands & feet. I feel all my faculties concentrated in it. My instinct tells [44r] 15. me obscurely that my head is an organ for burrowing, as some creatures use their snout & fore paws—and with it I would mine & burrow my way through these hills. I cannot count one—I know not the first letter of the alphabet. I have always been regretting that I was not as wise as the day I was born. *23*

I think the richest vein is somewhere herabouts—so by the divining rod and thin rising vapors, I judge—and here I will begin to mine.

When I was fairly established in my house I sang this song, *Not in text*

I seek the Present Time,
No other clime,
Life in to-day,
Not to sail another way,
To Paris or to Rome,
Or farther still from home.
That man, whoe'er he is,
Lives but a moral death,
Whose life is not coeval
With his breath.
My feet forever stand
On Concord fields,
And I must live the life
[44v] Which their soil yields.
What are deeds done
Away from home?
What the best essay

Where I Lived
Not in text

On the Ruins of Rome?
The love of the new,
The unfathomed blue,
The wind in the wood,
All fortune good,
The sun-lit tree,
The small chicadee,
The dusty highways,
What Scripture says,
This pleasant weather
And all signs together—
The river's meander,
All things, in short,
Forbid me to wander
In deed or in thought,
In cold or in drouth,
Not seek the sunny South,
But make the whole tour
Of the sunny Present Hour.
For here if thou fail,
Where canst thou prevail?
If you love not
Your own land most,
You'll find nothing lovely
Upon a distant coast.

[45r] 17. If you love not
The latest sun-set,
What is there in pictures
Or old gems set?

If no man should travel
Till he had the means,
There'd be little travelling
For Kings or for Queens.
The means! What are they?
They are the wherewithal
Great expenses to pay;—

Where I Lived
Not in text

Life got, and some to spare,
Great works on hand,
And freedom from care.
Plenty of time well spent,
To use,—
Clothes paid for, and no rent
In your shoes;—
Something to eat,
And something to burn,
And, above all, no need to return;—
For they who come back,
Say have they not failed,
Wherever they've ridden
Or steamed it, or sailed?
All your grass hayed,—
All your debts paid,—
All your wills made?
[45v] Then you might as well have stayed,
For are you not dead,
Only not buried?

The way unto "Today,"
The railroad to "Here,"
They never'll grade that way,
Nor shorten it, I fear,
There are plenty of depots
All the world o'er,
But not a single station
At a man's door;
If we would get near
To the secret of things,
We shall not have to hear
When the engine bell rings.

Reading 1

It seems as if with a little more reflection all men would be essentially students & observers—For certainly his nature & destiny are equally interesting to every man. It is hard to tell if that

Reading 1 time which we really improve is past present or future. I might say that the student always studies antiques. In our studies we do not look forward but backward into antiquity with [46r] redoubled pauses. Where is that lost first page of history? We have never found the literature that dated from an antiquity sufficiently remote. The most adventurous student seeks the remotest antiquity—the history of a time, as it were, prior to time.—Or, if we prefer, such is the Protean character of things, we may say that he always interprets prophecies and oracles, and is interested solely in the future.—In accumulating property for ourselves, or our posterity, in founding a family, or a state, or acquiring fame, we are mortal, but in dealing with truth we are immortal, and need fear no change nor accident.—The oldest Egyptian or Hindoo philosopher raised a corner of the veil from the statue of divinity, and still the trembling robe remains raised, and I gaze upon as fresh a glory as he did, since it was I in him that was then so bold, and he in me that now reviews the vision. [46v] No dust has settled upon that robe—no time has elapsed since that divinity was revealed.

2 I kept a Homer on my table through the summer, though I only glanced at his page now and then. Incessant labor with my hands made more study impossible. Yet I sustained myself by the prospect of such reading in future. Here of course I could read the Iliad, if I would have books, as well as in Ionia, and not wish myself in Boston or New York—or London or Rome; in such a place as this rather Homer lived and sung.—I read one or two shallow books of travel in the intervals of my work, till that employment made me ashamed of myself, and I asked myself where it was then that I lived?

3 The student may read Homer or Aeschylus in the original Greek without danger of dissipation or luxuriousness, for to do so implies that he should in some measure emulate their heroes, and consecrate morning hours to their pages. The [47r] 21. heroic books, though printed in the character of our mother tongue, will always be in a language dead to degenerate times, and we must laboriously seek the meaning of each word and line, conjecturing a larger sense than common use permits out of what wisdom and

valor & generosity we have. The modern cheap & fertile press has done little to bring us nearer to the heroic writers of antiquity. They seem as solitary, and the letter in which they are printed as rare and curious as ever.—It is even worth the expense of youthful days & costly hours if you learn only some words of an ancient language, which are raised out of the trivialness of the street, to be perpetual suggestions & provocations. *Reading* 3

We sometimes speak as if the study of the classics would at length make way for more modern and practical studies, but the brave and adventurous student will always study classics in whatever language they may be [47v] written, and however ancient they may be.—For they have to be studied in the same spirit that we study nature. They are only valuable commentaries on her works,—never ancient, and never modern. What are the classics but the noblest recorded thought of man? They are the only oracles which have not decayed. There are such answers to the most modern inquiry in them as Delphi & Dodona never gave.—To read well, that is; to read true books in a true spirit is a noble exercise, and one that will task the reader more than any exercise the customs of the day esteem. It requires a training such as the athletes underwent, and the steady *intention*[36] of the whole life to their object. It is not enough even to be able to speak the language in which they are written. There is a memorable interval between the written and the spoken language—the language read and the lan- [48r] guage heard. The one is commonly transient—a sound —a tongue a dialect merely—almost brutish, and we learn it unconsciously, like the brutes, of our mothers. The other is the maturity and experience of this—If that is our mother tongue, this is our Father tongue—A reserved and select expression which is too significant to be heard by the ear. It does not wait to be heard, but is content with its own truth. The one is natural and convenient, the other is divine and instinctive. The noblest written words are as far behind or beyond the fleeting spoken language, as the firmament with its stars is behind the clouds. There are the stars and they who can may read them. The astronomers forever comment on and observe them. They are not exhalations like our 4

36. Thoreau's italics.

Reading daily colloquies & vaporous breath. When I ask myself whether
4 any unpremeditated speech or conversation of equal length, even by the wisest of mankind and the writers [48v] of books, would abide the myriad and impartial tests of time, which some rare & wonderful books have so triumphantly withstood, I cannot doubt the justice of this distinction.

3 Books must be read as deliberately and reservedly as they were written. The herd of men who merely spoke the Greek & Latin tongues in the middle ages were not entitled by the accident of birth, to read the works of genius, written in those languages—for these were not written in Greek or Latin peculiarly. The men who glibly spoke the language of the Roman and of the Greek, for their mother-tongue, did not learn their nobler dialects, but the very materials on which they were written, were waste paper to them, while they prized a cheap contemporary learning. The classics were virtually forgotten and lost. So distinct are the spoken & the written language. But when the several nations of Europe had acquired rude original [49r] 25. languages sufficient for conversation and the daily intercourse of life, then first learning revived, and scholars who were seers in their kind arose, who could discern from this remote standpoint the treasures of antiquity; and works of genius first began to be read, and perhaps found their truest *& fittest* audience when their language could no longer be spoken anywhere. What the multitude could not *hear*,[37] after the lapse of ages a few scholars *read*.[38] And a few scholars only are still reading them.

5 A word fitly written is the most choice and select of things. No wonder that Alexander carried the Iliad with him on his expeditions in a precious casket. It has something at once more intimate and more universal than any other work of art. It may be translated into every language, and breathed from every human mouth, and become anew the product as it were of our physical organs, as its sense is recognized by our intellectual ones. It is the work of art nearest to life itself. [49v] Such are the traces of Zoroaster & Confucius & Moses, indelible on the sands of the

37. Thoreau's italics.

38. Thoreau's italics.

remotest times. There are no monuments of antiquity comparable to the Classics for interest and importance. It is not necessary that the scholar should be an antiquarian to study them, for these works of art have such an immortality as the works of nature, and are modern at the same time that they are ancient, like the sun and stars, and occupy by right no small share of the present hour. *Reading* 5

As we are told, for instance, that "the serene sky and the brilliant sun of Greece merely communicate to the marble of Paros and Pentelicus a golden tint, resembling that of ripe corn, or the autumnal foliage," while in other climates "stone of the purest white soon turns black, or of a greenish hue," so time lends to the pure monuments of Grecian literature only a golden and mature tint. The poetry of the Greeks wears even now after [50r] 27. the lapse of more than 2000 summers only a cereal and autumnal hue. Enveloped still, as it were, in the inspiration which first breathed it, it carries its own serene & celestial atmosphere into all lands to protect them against the corrosions of time.

Books are the treasured wealth of the world, and the fit inheritance of generations & of nations. Books the oldest & the best stand naturally and rightfully on the shelves of every cottage. They do not have to plead their cause—but while they enlighten the reader the common sense of men will not refuse them.—The authors of great books dead or alive, are an invisible upper class and aristocracy in every civilized society, who exert the last and greatest influence.

Those who have not learned to read the ancient classics in the language in which they were written must have a very imperfect knowledge of the history of the human race—for of these after all it is remarkable that [50v] no transcript has ever been made into any tongue—unless our civilization itself be a transcript and expression of them—Homer was never to my knowledge printed in English, nor Sophocles—nor Horace even. These great Geniuses and wits who have rendered memorable a remote period of the world's history—now almost its early age—works as refined as solidly done, and as beautiful as the morning itself—for I think that later writers, say what we will of their genius, have never equalled the elaborate beauty—and wonderful skill in the steady 6

Reading & equable exercise of their art, the life-long, heroic labors &
6 literary architecture of the ancients. Not one in many thousands even of those who are said to have learned their language, have ever read them.

I know that it is advised by some to overlook at last and forget what ancient and heroic men have done, what wise and studious men have taught, what inspired poets have sung—

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9 [51r][39] only as far as easy reading—the primers and classbooks, and when we leave school the Little Reading and story books, which are for boys and beginners, and our reading & our conversation and thinking are all on a very low and inferior level—low statured & feeble and worthy only of pigmies & mannikins.

10 I aspire to be acquainted with wiser men than this our Concord soil has produced—whose names are hardly known here. Or shall I hear the name of Plato and never read his book? As if Plato were my townsman and I never saw him—my next neighbor, and I never heard him speak, or attended to the wisdom of his words. But how actually is it? His Dialogues which contain what was immortal in him, lie on the next shelf, and yet I never read them. *I describe my own case here.* We are under-bred and low-lived, and illiterate—and in this respect, I confess, I do not make any very broad distinction between the illiterateness of my townsman who cannot read at all, and the illiterateness of my townsman who [51v] has learned to read only what is for children & feeble intellects. We should be as good as the worthies of antiquity—but partly by first knowing how good they were. We are a race of titmen & soar but little higher in our intellectual flights than the columns of the daily paper.

11 There are words addressed to our condition which, if we could hear and understand would be as salutary as the morning or the spring to our lives, and possibly put a new aspect on the face of things. How many a man has dated a new era in his life, a second birth as it were from the reading of a book? The book exists for us

39. This leaf is in the Berg Collection, New York Public Library.

which will explain our miracles and reveal new ones. The at present unutterable things we shall find somewhere uttered. Moreover with wisdom we shall learn liberality. These same questions that disturb & puzzle & confound us—have in their turn occurred to all the wise men—not one has been omitted, and each has answered them, according to his ability in his [52r] 37. words & his life. They have had the same problems to solve.— The solitary hired man on a farm in the outskirts of Concord, who has had his second birth and peculiar religious experience, and is driven as he thinks into silent gravity and exclusiveness by his faith may think it is not true, but Zoroaster thousands of years ago travelled the same road and had the same experience, but he being wise knew it to be universal, and treated men accordingly, and is even said to have invented and established worship among men. Let him humbly commune with Zoroaster—and through the liberalizing influence of all the worthies with Jesus Christ himself—& let "our Church" go by the board. *Reading* 11

Most men have learned to read to serve a paltry convenience, as they have learned to cypher in order to keep accounts, and not be cheated in trade; but of reading as a noble intellectual exercise they know little or nothing. Yet this only is reading properly speaking—not that which lulls & soothes [52v] as a luxury, and suffers the nobler faculties to sleep the while, but what we have to stand on tip-toe to read, and devote our most alert & wakeful hours to—have to gird up our robes & train ourselves for—as the wrestler is trained for the combat. 7

Yet after all, while we are confined to books though the most classic and study only particular languages or provincialisms, we are apt to forget the language, or rather the expression, which all things every where, morning & evening and all events speak—which only is copious, for the tongue is only an accidental organ of speech serving equally the palate, and speech itself is partial, uttering but a small part of the meaning with which the silence is fraught.—I mean the language which things speak originally and without metaphor—such as the life of a man hears & his instincts speak—and at length through all his actions he learns to mutter. *Sounds* 1

I read very little however during the summer, for my [53r] 2

Sounds 2 thoughts would run upon my labor mainly, or rather where they pleased, and I had not leisure to drill myself. I only read one sentence of Homer to a week of hoeing—as for instance how Ajax struggled with the Trojans to ward off fire from the ships of the Greeks, while Patroclus was supplicating Achilles for his armor & his Myrmidons. I read no more than this—at once—still remembering & repeating it—but I imagined more things than are in Homer while I hoed.

Sometimes in a spring morning when the season of work had not yet arrived *or later in the summer when it was already past*[40] having performed my accustomed ablutions, I sat in my sunny door way from the earliest dawn, wrapt in a reverie, amid the pines and hickories and sumacks, while the birds sang around and flitted noiseless over my head and out at the open window—in undisturbed solitude & stillness, except when a bough fell like a fan broken by its own weight, in my sumack grove, when the atmosphere was perfume & incense, and every sound the key [53v] to unheard harmonies, until by the sun's rays falling in at my west window, or the noise of some traveller on the distant highway, I was reminded of the lapse of time. I am sensible that I waxed and grew in these intervals, as corn grows in the night, and they were far better than any work of my hands. I realized what the oriental philosophers meant by contemplation & the forsaking of works. It was quite impossible to have performed anything, and wise persons would not propose that any deed should be substituted therefor. They were little intervals during which I journeyed, and anticipated other states of existence.

For the most part indeed I knew not how the hours went. I was accustomed to say to myself—certainly I am not living that heroic life I had dreamed of, and yet all my veins are full of life, and nature whispers no reproach. The day advanced as if to light some work of mine—and I defer to other men in my thought, as if there were somewhere busier [54r] 41. men. It was morning, and lo! it is now evening, and nothing memorable is accomplished. Yet my nature is almost content with this. What are these pines & these birds about? What is this pond adoing? I must know a little

40. Originally read "season of work was past or had not yet arrived."

Where I Lived about it—more than Sybilline or Delphic. It expressed the infinite
14 and everlasting fertility of the κοσμος or world. It was θεῖον or divine. Only Homer could have named it.

The morning, which is the most memorable season of the day, is the awakening hour; then there is least somnolence in us, and for [40r] an hour at least some part of us seems to awake, which slumbers all the rest of the day & night. After a partial cessation[32] of his sensual life, the soul of man or its organs are reinvigorated each day, and the genius tries again what noble life it can make. All memorable events transpire in morning time, and in a morning atmosphere. Greek poetry and art, and the fairest and most memorable of the actions of men, date from that hour—for all poets and heroes like Memnon are the children of Aurora, and emit their music in the morning. If we are wakeful enough the evening and the morning are but one. The birds sing at morning & at evening, and their notes do not suggest on which side the sun is rising. There is no vaunt & no weariness in them. And to him who has kept pace with the sun it is a perpetual morning.

It matters not what the clocks say, or the attitudes and labors of men—morning is when I am awake and there is a dawn in me.

[40v] Moral reform & improvement are the effort to throw off sleep & somnolency. How is it that men give so poor an account of their day[33] if they have not been slumbering? They are not such poor calculators. If they had not been overcome with drowsiness they would have performed something. The millions are awake enough for physical labor—but only one in a million is awake enough for effective intellectual exertion—only one in a hundred million to a spiritual or divine life—To be awake is to be alive.

My thoughts, which are either the memory or the expectation
15 of my actions are the causes which determine life and death. I know of [no] more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by a conscious endeavor. It is something to be able to paint a particular picture, or to carve a statue, and so to make a few objects beautiful, but it is far more sublime to carve and paint the very atmosphere & medium through [41r]

32. MS first read: "sensation."

33. The words "their day" were written over an erasure, possibly of "themselves."

Where I Lived *17*

the midst of this civilization, such are the clouds & storms, and quicksands, and thousand and one items to be allowed for, a man has to live, if he would not founder and go to the bottom & not make his port at all, by dead reckoning, and he must [42v] be a great calculator indeed who succeeds. Simplify—Simplify. Instead of 3 meals a day, if it be necessary eat but one, instead of a hundred dishes—5—and reduce other things in proportion. Our life is like a German confederacy made up of petty states—forever fluctuating and even a German cannot tell you how it is bounded at any moment.

The nation itself with all its so-called internal improvements, which by the way are all external and superficial—is just such an unwieldly and overgrown establishment cluttered with furniture and tripped up by its own traps, ruined by luxury and heedless expense & want of calculation as the million households in the land, and the only cure for it as for them is in a rigid economy—a stern & more than Spartan simplicity of life and grandeur of purpose. It lives too fast.—Men think that it is essential that the nation make lard oil—and export ice—and talk thro' a telegraph and ride 30 miles an hour—[43r] without a doubt, but whether we should live like chimpanzees & baboons or like men is a little uncertain. If we don't get out sleepers, and forge rails, and devote days and nights to the work, but go to tinkering upon our own lives to improve them who will build railroads? And if rail-roads are not built, how shall we get to heaven in season? When I first got a cinder in my eye I suspected that I was not going to heaven. But if we stay at home and mind our business who will want rail-roads? Did you ever think what these sleepers are that underlie the rail-road? Each one is a man—an Irish-man, or a Yankee-man—The rails are laid on them, and they are covered with sand, and the cars run smoothly over them!—They are sound sleepers I assure you—And every few years a new lot are laid down and run over. So that if a few have the pleasure of riding on a rail—the rest have the misfortune [43v] to be ridden upon. And when they run over a man that is walking in his sleep—a supernumerary sleeper in the wrong position *& wake him up*, they suddenly stop the cars, and make a hue and cry about it, as if this were an excep-

Where I Lived
Not in text

On the Ruins of Rome?
The love of the new,
The unfathomed blue,
The wind in the wood,
All fortune good,
The sun-lit tree,
The small chicadee,
The dusty highways,
What Scripture says,
This pleasant weather
And all signs together—
The river's meander,
All things, in short,
Forbid me to wander
In deed or in thought,
In cold or in drouth,
Not seek the sunny South,
But make the whole tour
Of the sunny Present Hour.
For here if thou fail,
Where canst thou prevail?
If you love not
Your own land most,
You'll find nothing lovely
Upon a distant coast.

[45r] 17. If you love not
The latest sun-set,
What is there in pictures
Or old gems set?

If no man should travel
Till he had the means,
There'd be little travelling
For Kings or for Queens.
The means! What are they?
They are the wherewithal
Great expenses to pay;—

Reading 1 time which we really improve is past present or future. I might say that the student always studies antiques. In our studies we do not look forward but backward into antiquity with [46r] redoubled pauses. Where is that lost first page of history? We have never found the literature that dated from an antiquity sufficiently remote. The most adventurous student seeks the remotest antiquity—the history of a time, as it were, prior to time.—Or, if we prefer, such is the Protean character of things, we may say that he always interprets prophecies and oracles, and is interested solely in the future.—In accumulating property for ourselves, or our posterity, in founding a family, or a state, or acquiring fame, we are mortal, but in dealing with truth we are immortal, and need fear no change nor accident.—The oldest Egyptian or Hindoo philosopher raised a corner of the veil from the statue of divinity, and still the trembling robe remains raised, and I gaze upon as fresh a glory as he did, since it was I in him that was then so bold, and he in me that now reviews the vision. [46v] No dust has settled upon that robe—no time has elapsed since that divinity was revealed.

2 I kept a Homer on my table through the summer, though I only glanced at his page now and then. Incessant labor with my hands made more study impossible. Yet I sustained myself by the prospect of such reading in future. Here of course I could read the Iliad, if I would have books, as well as in Ionia, and not wish myself in Boston or New York—or London or Rome; in such a place as this rather Homer lived and sung.—I read one or two shallow books of travel in the intervals of my work, till that employment made me ashamed of myself, and I asked myself where it was then that I lived?

3 The student may read Homer or Aeschylus in the original Greek without danger of dissipation or luxuriousness, for to do so implies that he should in some measure emulate their heroes, and consecrate morning hours to their pages. The [47r] 21. heroic books, though printed in the character of our mother tongue, will always be in a language dead to degenerate times, and we must laboriously seek the meaning of each word and line, conjecturing a larger sense than common use permits out of what wisdom and

Reading daily colloquies & vaporous breath. When I ask myself whether
4 any unpremeditated speech or conversation of equal length, even by the wisest of mankind and the writers [48v] of books, would abide the myriad and impartial tests of time, which some rare & wonderful books have so triumphantly withstood, I cannot doubt the justice of this distinction.

3 Books must be read as deliberately and reservedly as they were written. The herd of men who merely spoke the Greek & Latin tongues in the middle ages were not entitled by the accident of birth, to read the works of genius, written in those languages—for these were not written in Greek or Latin peculiarly. The men who glibly spoke the language of the Roman and of the Greek, for their mother-tongue, did not learn their nobler dialects, but the very materials on which they were written, were waste paper to them, while they prized a cheap contemporary learning. The classics were virtually forgotten and lost. So distinct are the spoken & the written language. But when the several nations of Europe had acquired rude original [49r] 25. languages sufficient for conversation and the daily intercourse of life, then first learning revived, and scholars who were seers in their kind arose, who could discern from this remote standpoint the treasures of antiquity; and works of genius first began to be read, and perhaps found their truest *& fittest* audience when their language could no longer be spoken anywhere. What the multitude could not *hear*,[37] after the lapse of ages a few scholars *read*.[38] And a few scholars only are still reading them.

5 A word fitly written is the most choice and select of things. No wonder that Alexander carried the Iliad with him on his expeditions in a precious casket. It has something at once more intimate and more universal than any other work of art. It may be translated into every language, and breathed from every human mouth, and become anew the product as it were of our physical organs, as its sense is recognized by our intellectual ones. It is the work of art nearest to life itself. [49v] Such are the traces of Zoroaster & Confucius & Moses, indelible on the sands of the

37. Thoreau's italics.

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6 literary architecture of the ancients. Not one in many thousands even of those who are said to have learned their language, have ever read them.

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9 [51r][39] only as far as easy reading—the primers and classbooks, and when we leave school the Little Reading and story books, which are for boys and beginners, and our reading & our conversation and thinking are all on a very low and inferior level—low statured & feeble and worthy only of pigmies & mannikins.

10 I aspire to be acquainted with wiser men than this our Concord soil has produced—whose names are hardly known here. Or shall I hear the name of Plato and never read his book? As if Plato were my townsman and I never saw him—my next neighbor, and I never heard him speak, or attended to the wisdom of his words. But how actually is it? His Dialogues which contain what was immortal in him, lie on the next shelf, and yet I never read them. *I describe my own case here.* We are under-bred and low-lived, and illiterate—and in this respect, I confess, I do not make any very broad distinction between the illiterateness of my townsman who cannot read at all, and the illiterateness of my townsman who [51v] has learned to read only what is for children & feeble intellects. We should be as good as the worthies of antiquity—but partly by first knowing how good they were. We are a race of titmen & soar but little higher in our intellectual flights than the columns of the daily paper.

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Sounds 2 thoughts would run upon my labor mainly, or rather where they pleased, and I had not leisure to drill myself. I only read one sentence of Homer to a week of hoeing—as for instance how Ajax struggled with the Trojans to ward off fire from the ships of the Greeks, while Patroclus was supplicating Achilles for his armor & his Myrmidons. I read no more than this—at once—still remembering & repeating it—but I imagined more things than are in Homer while I hoed.

Sometimes in a spring morning when the season of work had not yet arrived *or later in the summer when it was already past*[40] having performed my accustomed ablutions, I sat in my sunny door way from the earliest dawn, wrapt in a reverie, amid the pines and hickories and sumacks, while the birds sang around and flitted noiseless over my head and out at the open window—in undisturbed solitude & stillness, except when a bough fell like a fan broken by its own weight, in my sumack grove, when the atmosphere was perfume & incense, and every sound the key [53v] to unheard harmonies, until by the sun's rays falling in at my west window, or the noise of some traveller on the distant highway, I was reminded of the lapse of time. I am sensible that I waxed and grew in these intervals, as corn grows in the night, and they were far better than any work of my hands. I realized what the oriental philosophers meant by contemplation & the forsaking of works. It was quite impossible to have performed anything, and wise persons would not propose that any deed should be substituted therefor. They were little intervals during which I journeyed, and anticipated other states of existence.

For the most part indeed I knew not how the hours went. I was accustomed to say to myself—certainly I am not living that heroic life I had dreamed of, and yet all my veins are full of life, and nature whispers no reproach. The day advanced as if to light some work of mine—and I defer to other men in my thought, as if there were somewhere busier [54r] 41. men. It was morning, and lo! it is now evening, and nothing memorable is accomplished. Yet my nature is almost content with this. What are these pines & these birds about? What is this pond adoing? I must know a little

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more and be forever ready. Instead of singing like the birds, I sometimes silently smile at my incessant good fortune. As the field-sparrow has its trill sitting on the hickory before my door, so have I my chuckle or suppressed warble, which he may hear out of my nest. I don't know that I bear any flowers or fruits. Methinks if the birds & flowers try me by their standard I shall not be found wanting, but men try one another not so. *Sounds* 2

Man is still like a plant, and his satisfactions are like those of a vegetable. His rarest life is least his own. I am not the worker but the work. The elements are working their will with me.

I seemed to have this advantage in my mode of life over those who were obliged to look abroad for amusement—to theaters and to society, [54v] that my life itself was now my amusement, and never ceased to be novel. It was a drama of many scenes which would never end. If we were always getting our living and regulating our lives according to the last and divinest mode we had learned—we should never be weary of living. Follow your genius closely enough, and it will not fail to show you a fresh prospect every hour. 3

Housework was a pleasant pastime. When my floor was dirty I rose early and setting all my furniture out of doors on the grass, dashed water upon the floor, and sprinkled white sand from the pond upon it, and then with a broom I scrubbed it clean & white, and by the time the villagers had broken their fast, the morning sun had dried my house sufficiently to allow me to move in again —and my meditations were almost uninterrupted—I trust that none of my hearers will be so uncharitable as to look into my house now—after hearing this, at the end of an unusually dirty winter, with [55r] critical housewife's eyes, for I intend to celebrate the first bright & unquestionable spring morning by scrubbing my house with sand until it is as white as a lily—or, at any rate, as the washer-woman said of her clothes, as white as a "wiolet."

It was pleasant to see my whole household effects out on the grass, making a little pile like a gipsey's pack; and my 3 legged table from which I did not remove the books & pen & ink, standing amid the pines & hickories *bed & bedstead making but one budget.*

Sounds 3 They seemed glad to get out themselves, and as if unwilling to be brought in.—I was sometimes tempted to stretch an awning over them, and take my seat there. It was worth the while to see the sun shine on these things, and the free wind blow upon them. So much more beautiful any beautiful thing looks out of doors than in the house. A bird sits on the next bough—life-everlasting grows under the table, and blackberry vines run round its legs, pine cones & chestnut burrs, and strawberry [55v] leaves are strewn about. It looked as if this was the way these forms came to be transferred to our furniture—to tables chairs & bedsteads—because these once stood in their midst.

2 A man must find his own occasions in himself. The natural day is very calm, and will hardly reprove his indolence. If there was no elevation in our spirits the pond would not seem elevated like a mountain tarn, but a low pool, a silent muddy water & place for fishermen.

Where I Lived 21 If men would steadily observe realities only and not allow themselves to be deluded, life would be like a fairy tale, and the Arabian Nights Entertainments. If we respected only what was inevitable and had a right to be, music and poetry would resound along the streets. When we are calm & wise & unhurried, we perceive that only great and worthy things have any permanent & absolute existence—that [56r] 45. petty fears and petty pleasures are but the shadow of the reality. By closing the eyes and slumbering and consenting to be deceived by shows men establish and confirm their daily life of routine and habit everywhere which still is built on purely imaginary foundations. A more intimate and truer experience, a more practical wisdom teaches men that the trivial and commonplace are not real but apparent and superficial merely. The reality is sublime & exhilarating—If men would discriminate always and never be deluded by appearances, life would never be mean nor unworthy.—Shams and delusions are esteemed for soundest truths—while reality is fabulous. We are not prepared for the truth. Children who play life discern its true law & relations more clearly than men who fail to live it worthily but think they are wiser by experience.

All the gold all the silver we want is reality—this is sublime &

inspiring. Appearance whether [56v] fair or foul is equally shallow *Where I L*
and dangerous—I perceive that we inhabitants of Concord live *21*
this mean life, that we do, because our vision does not penetrate the surface of things—we think that that *is* which *appears*[41] to be. If a man should walk through the village and see only the reality where think you would the mill-dam go to? If he should give us an account of the realities he beheld there we should not recognize the place by his description. Look at a meeting-house, or a court-house—or a jail—or a shop or a dwelling house and say what this thing really is before a true gaze, and they would all go to pieces in your account of them. Men esteem truth remote in the outskirts of the system, behind the furthest star, before Adam and after the last man.—In eternity there is indeed something true and sublime. But all these times & places & occasions are now. God himself culminates in the

[At some time after he had numbered the pages, Thoreau apparently removed one leaf here; it contained pages 47 and 48 of his numbering; he finished the sentence at the end of 56v on the bottom of 58v, but he did not complete the unfinished sentence on 58v. The handwriting on 58v is not that of version I.]

[58v] present moment and will never be more divine in the lapse of all the ages—And after all we are enabled to apprehend at all what is sublime and noble only by the perpetual instilling and drenching of the reality that surrounds us.

I think that the universe really needs no patching from us—and its Maker no condolence. Let us remember that God is well

[57r] 49. Why should we live with such hurry and waste of life? *18*
We are determined to starve before we are hungry. Men say[42] that a stitch in time saves nine, and so they take a thousand stitches today to save nine tomorrow. Let us spend one day as *22*
deliberately as nature and not be thrown off the track by every nut-shell and mosquito's wing that falls on the rails.

Let us rise early, and fast, or break fast gently. Let company come and let company go—let the bells ring and the children cry—determined to make a day of it—Why should we knock

41. Thoreau's italics.

42. MS: "say say."

Where I Lived under and go with the stream? Let us not be upset and over-
22 whelmed in that terrible rapid and whirlpool called a dinner—
situated in the meridian shallows.

Weather this danger and you are safe for the rest of the way is down hill. With unrelaxed nerves—with morning vigor sail by it—looking another way—tied to the mast like Ulysses. If the engine whistles let it whistle [57v] till it is hoarse for its pains—why should we run?—We will consider what kind of music it is like—

18 As for work we haven't any of any consequence—Men have the St. Vitus dance and can't possibly keep their heads still. Why, if I should only give a few pulls at the bell rope yonder—fiery like—that is without setting the bell, there is not a man on his farm in the outskirts of the town—notwithstanding that press of engagements which was his excuse so many times this morning, nor a boy nor a woman—I might almost say, but will forsake all and follow that sound, and not as we must all confess, if we are honest—to do a deed of charity or neighborliness, & save property from the flames—but to see it burn—since burn it must—and [we] be it known, did not set it on fire, or to see it put out and have a hand in it—if that is done as handsomely—yes, even if it were the very meeting house over our heads. [58r] Hardly a man takes a half hour's nap after dinner but when he wakes, he holds up his head and asks what's the news—Some give directions to be waked every half hour doubtless for no other purpose.—and then to pay for it they tell what they have dreamed.

19 I think that there are very few important communications made through the Post Office—and I never read any memorable news in a newspaper in my life.

There was such a rush I hear the other day, at one of the offices to learn the foreign news by the last arrival, as broke several large squares of plate glass belonging to the establishment. News which I seriously think a ready wit might write[43] a 12 month or 12 years beforehand with sufficient accuracy—If one may judge who rarely looks into the newspapers, I should say—that nothing new does ever happen in foreign parts—as for Spain for instance, if

43. MS: "right."

you know how to throw in Don Carlos [58v] and the Infanta— *Where I Li*
and Don Pedro & Seville & Granada—from time to time in the *19*
right proportions—and serve up a bullfight when other entertainments fail it will be true to the letter, and give as good an idea of the exact state or ruin of things in Spain as the most succinct and lucid report under this head in the newspapers. [See above for rest of 58v]

[59r] 53. If you stand right fronting & face to face to a fact— *22*
you will see the sun glimmer on both its surfaces, as if it were a cimeter, and feel its sweet edge dividing you through the heart and marrow—and so you will happily conclude your mortal career.

Be it life or death we crave only reality. If we are really dying let us hear the rattle in our throats and feel cold in the extremeties —If we are alive, let us go about our business.

I am glad to remember as I sit by my door that I too am a re- *Sounds*
mote descendant of a heroic race of men of whom there is tradition—in one sense a fellow wanderer and survivor of Ulysses, for *Not in text*
instance. My life passes amid the pines of New England. The pitch pine grows before my door unlike any glyph I have seen sculptured or painted. Where are the heroes whose exploits shall appear to posterity sculptured on monuments amid [59v] such natural forms as these—as heroes and demigods amid the lotuses and palms of the east. What new marks shall we add to the Red Pipestone Quarry?

In my front-yard grow the black-berry and strawberry & the *4*
life-everlasting—Johnswort & golden rod—& shruboak and sandcherry & blue-berry and ground-nut. The sumacks grew luxuriantly about my house—pushing up through the embankment I had made, and growing 5 or 6 feet the first season. Its broad pinnate tropical leaf was pleasant *though strange* to look upon. The large buds suddenly pushing out *late in the spring* from dry and brittle sticks which had seemed to be dead, developed themselves as it were by magic into graceful green & tender boughs an inch in diameter—and sometimes as I sat at my window—so heedlessly did they grow and tax their brittle stems—I heard a fresh & green bough [60r] suddenly fall to the ground,

Sounds when there was not a breath of air, broken off at its foot by its own
4 weight.

In the fall the large masses of red berries which when in flower had attracted many wild bees to my house, gradually assumed their bright scarlet & velvety hue, and by their weight again bent down and broke the tender limbs.

5 I sit at my window this summer afternoon like a priest of Isis and observe the phenomena of 3000 years ago still unimpaired. The sacred hawks are circling about this temple—the tantivy of wild pigeons an ancient race of birds gives a voice to the air—flying by twos and threes athwart my view or perching restless on the white pine boughs behind my house—a fish hawk dimples the glassy surface of the pond, and brings up a fish—a muskrat steals out of the marsh before my door and seizes a frog in the pond—the sedge [60v] is bending under the weight of the reed-birds flitting here and there—and for the last half hour I have heard the rattle of rail-road cars, now dying away and then reviving like the beat of a partridge—conveying travellers from Boston to the country—or the faint rattle and tinkle which mark the passage of a carriage or team along the distant highway—For I did not live in such an outlandish and out of the way place as that boy who, as I hear, was put out to a farmer in the east part of the town, but ere long ran away and came home again, quite down at the heel, and homesick—He had never seen such a dull, and out of the world place—the folks were all gone away—why you couldn't
7 even hear the whistle.—The whistle of the steam engine penetrated my woods summer & winter—[61r] 57. sounding like the scream of a hawk sailing over some farmer's yard—informing me that many restless city merchants were arriving within the circle of the town or adventurous country traders from the other side. As they come under one horizon they shout their warning to get off the track to the other, heard sometimes through the circles of two towns—Here come your groceries country—your rations countrymen—Nor is there any man so independent on his farm as can say them nay—And here's your pay for them—screams the countryman's whistle—Timber like long catapults going 20 miles an hour against the city walls—and chairs enough to seat all the

weary and heavy laden that dwell within ye.—With such huge *Sounds*
and lumbering civility, the country hands a chair to the city. All 7
the Indian huckle-berry hills are stript—all the cranberry meadows are raked into the city. Up comes the [61v] cotton, down goes the woven cloth—up comes the silk—down goes the woollen—up come the books—but down goes the wit that writes them.

When I meet the engine with its train of cars moving off with 8
planetary motion—or rather like a comet, for the beholder knows not if with that velocity & that direction it will ever revisit this system—for its orbit does not look like a returning curve—with its steam cloud like a banner streaming behind in golden & silver wreaths—like many a fleecy cloud that I have seen in a summer day—high in the heavens—unfolding its masses to the light—as if this travelling demigod would ere long take the sunset sky for the livery of his train—When I hear the iron horse make the hills echo with his snort like thunder—shaking the earth with his feet, and breathing fire and smoke from his nostrils—What kind of winged horse or fiery dragon they will [62r] put into the new mythology I don't know—It seems as if the earth had got a race now worthy to inhabit it—If all were as it seems, and men made the elements their servants for noble ends. If the cloud that hangs over the engine were the perspiration of heroic deeds—or as innocent and and beneficent to men as that which hovers over the farmer's fields—then the elements and nature herself would cheerfully accompany men on their errands, and be their escort.

The stabler of the iron horse was up early this winter morning 9
by the light of the stars amid the mountains, to fodder and harness his steed—Fire too was awakened thus early to put the vital heat in him and get him off—If the enterprise were as innocent as it is early!—If the snow lies deep they strap on his snow-shoes, and with the giant plow, plow a furrow from the mountains to the seaboard, in which the cars like a following drill-barrow [62v] sprinkle all the restless men & floating merchandise in the country for seed. All the day the Firesteed flies over the country stopping only that his master may rest, and I am awakened by his tramp and defiant snort at midnight, when in some remote glen

Sounds 9 in the woods he fronts the elements, encased in ice and snow and will only reach his stall with the morning star—to start once more on his travels without rest or slumber.—Or perchance at evening I hear him in his stable blowing off the superfluous energy of the day, that he may calm his nerves, and cool his liver & brain for a few hours of iron slumber.—If the enterprise were as heroic and commanding as it is protracted & unwearied!

11 What recommends commerce to me is its enterprise and bravery—It does not fold its hands & pray to Jupiter. I see these men every day go about

[Four leaves are missing. They surely contained a few more lines of 11 (most of that paragraph was probably added in version II), and they must have had the beginning of the following passage on the cock. For the rest, they probably included some of paragraphs 10, 12, 13, 14, and 17, but there is no evidence as to what parts.]

Not in text [63r] 69. going & coming—with brave thoughts exalting him—and fancies rushing thick upon him—crowing long memoriter wise of his Indian origin & wild descent—he flew like a bird up into the branches of a tree, and went to roost there.—And I who had witnessed this passage in his private history immediately wrote these verses, & inscribed them to him.

Poor bird! destined to lead thy life
Far in the adventurous west,
And here to be debarred to-night
From thy accustomed nest;
Must thou fall back upon old instinct now,—
Well nigh extinct under man's fickle care?
Did Heaven bestow its quenchless inner light
So long ago, for thy small want to-night?
Why stands't upon thy toes to crow so late?
The moon is deaf to thy low feathered fate;
Or dost thou think so to possess the night,
And people the drear dark with thy brave sprite?
And now with anxious eye thou look'st about,
While the relentless shade draws on its veil,
For some sure shelter from approaching dews,

Sounds
Not in text

And the insidious steps of nightly foes.
I fear imprisonment has dulled thy wit,
Or ingrained servitude extinguished it.
But no,—dim memory of the days of yore,
By Brahmapootra & the Jumna's shore,
Where thy proud race flew swiftly o'er the heath,
And sought its food the jungle's shade beneath,—
Has taught thy wings to seek yon friendly trees,
As erst by Indus' banks & far Ganges.

[63v] I am perhaps the only inhabitant of the town or of the state *22*
who does not hear the cock crow. Even the sailor on the Atlantic and Pacific is awakened by this familiar sound. I keep neither dog, cat, cow, pig, nor hens—so that there is a deficiency of domestic sounds—neither the churn—nor the spinning wheel—nor even the singing of the kettle, nor the hissing of the urn, nor children crying—to comfort one. An old-fashioned man would have lost his senses and died of ennui—Not even rats in the wall—for they are starved out, but only squirrels on the roof and under the floor—A whippoorwill on the ridge-pole, a blue jay screaming in the yard—a hare or woodchuck under the house—a screech-owl or a cat-owl behind it—a flock of wild geese or a laughing loon in the pond—a fox to bark in the night—But not even a lark or an oriole—those wild plantation birds ever visit my [64r] 71. clearing. No cockrils to crow nor hens to cackle in the yard—no yard! but unfenced nature reaching up to your very sills. A young forest growing up under your windows & wild sumacks and blackberry vines breaking through into your cellar—Sturdy pitch-pines rubbing and creaking against the shingles for want of room—their roots reaching quite under the house—Instead of a scuttle or a blind blown off in the gale—a pine tree snapped off or torn up by the roots behind your house for fuel. Instead of no path to the front yard gate in the great snow, no gate, no front yard—and no path to the civilized world.

Sometimes I hear the bells, the Lincoln bell—the Acton bell— *15*
the Bedford bell & the Concord bell, when the wind is fair—a faint and sweet almost natural melody. An invention worth importing into the wilderness.

Sounds Not in text

Now up they go, ding,
Then down again, dong,
And awhile they swing
[64v] To the same old song,
And the metal goes round 't a single bound,
A-lulling the fields with its measured sound—
Till the tired tongue falls with a lengthened boom,
As solemn & loud as the crack of doom.
Then changed is their measure to tone upon tone,
And seldom it is that one sound comes alone,
For they sing out their peals in a mingled throng,
And the breezes waft the loud ding dong along.

Bean-Field 7 On gala days the town fires its great guns which echo like pop guns to these woods—and the waifs & loose strains of martial music occasionally penetrate thus far. To me away there in my bean-field at the other end of the town the big guns sounded as if a puff ball had burst, and when there was a military turnout of which I was ignorant I have sometimes had a vague sense all the day of some sort of itching and disease in the horizon, as if some eruption would break out there soon, either scarletina or canker-rash—until some more favorable puff of wind making haste over the fields and up the Wayland road brought me information of the trainers

[Two leaves missing; they undoubtedly contained the last part of the above paragraph and the first part of the following one; and probably paragraphs 8 and 9 of "The Bean-Field."]

Sounds 21 [65r] 77. aldermanic with his chin upon a pad, which serves for a napkin to his drooling chaps, under this northern shore quaffs a deep draught of the once scorned water, and passes round the cup, with the ejaculation—troonk—tr-r-r-oonk—tr-r-r-oonk. A[nd] straight way comes over the water from some distant cove the same pass-word repeated where the next in seniority and girth has gulped down to his mark. And when this observance has made the circuit of the shores then ejaculates the master of ceremonies with satisfaction tr-r-r-oonk—and each in his turn repeats the

same—down to the least distended, leakiest, & flabbiest paunched —that there be no mistake—And then the bowl goes round again and again until the sun disperses the morning mist, and only the patriarch is not under the pond—but vainly bellowing Troonk—from time to time & pausing for a reply. *Sounds* *21*

When other birds are still the owls take up the strain—like [65v] mourning women their ancient U-lu-lu. Their dismal scream is truly Ben Jonsonian—wise midnight hags. It is no honest and blunt Tu-whit to-who—of the poets, but without jesting a most solemn graveyard ditty—the mutual consolations of suicide lovers remembering the pangs and the delights of supernal love in the infernal groves. Yet I love to hear their wailing—their doleful responses trilled along the woodside, reminding me sometimes of music and singing birds, as if it were the dark and tearful side of music—the regrets and sighs that would fain be sung.—They are the spirits—the low spirits and melancholy forebodings of fallen souls that once in human shape night-walked the earth, and did the deeds of darkness, now expiating with their wailing hymns and threnodies their sins, in the scenery of their transgressions.—They give me a new sense of the vastness and the mystery of that nature which is our common dwelling—Oh-o-o-o-o-o—that I never had been bor- *18*

[One leaf missing; probably contained the end of "Sounds," 18, and beginning of "Solitude," 1.]

[66r] 81. rabbit roam the fields & woods without fear. We associate wildness with the night—and silence—But the repose is never complete; nature has her watchmen who are links connecting the days of animated life. *Solitude* *1*

There seems always to be sufficient space about us. Our horizon is never quite at our elbows. The *thick* wood is not just at my door —nor the pond—but somewhat is always clearing—appropriated and fenced in some way & familiar & worn by us—reclaimed from nature. For what reason have I this vast range and circuit in nature—a square mile and more of unfrequented forest for my privacy, abandoned to me by men? Surely we do not live crowded.—My nearest neighbor is more than a mile distant, and *3*

Solitude 3 no house is visible from within half a mile of my own—I have my horizon bounded by woods all to myself. I have a distant view of the railroad where it touches the pond on the one hand, and of the fence which skirts the woodland road on the other. [66v] But for the most part it is as solitary where I live as on the prairies. It is as much Asia or Africa as New England. I have as it were, my own sun & moon and stars, and a little world all to myself. At night there was never a traveller passed my house, or knocked at my door, more than if I were the first or last man, unless it were in the spring when some came occasionally from the village to fish for pouts in the pond, and they plainly fished much more in the Walden pond of their own natures and baited their hooks with darkness, but they soon retreated usually with light baskets

"And left the vale to solitude & me."

and the dark kernel of the night was never prophaned by any human neighborhood. I believe that men are generally still a little afraid of the dark—though the witches are hung—& christianity and candles are invented.

4 Yet I experienced occasionally that the most sweet and tender, [67r] the most innocent and encouraging society may be found in every natural object—even for the poor misanthrope and the most melancholy man. There can be no very black melancholy to him who lives in the midst of nature, and has his senses still. There was never yet such a storm but it was Aeolian music to a healthy and innocent ear. Nothing can rightly compel a simple and brave man to a vulgar sadness. While I enjoy the friendship of the seasons—I trust that nothing can make life a burthen to me. The gentle rain which waters my beans and keeps me in the house to-day, is not drear and melancholy but good for me too. Though it prevents my hoeing them it is of far more worth than my hoeing.

Sometimes when I compare myself with other men it seems as if I were more favored by the gods than they and beyond any deserts I am conscious of. As if I had a warrant & surety at their hands which my fellows have not—[67v] and were especially guided & guarded.

I have never felt lonely or in the least oppressed by a sense of

solitude but once, and that was a few weeks after I went to the pond to live—when for an hour I doubted if the near neighborhood of man was not essential to a serene and healthy life. To be alone was something unpleasant. But I was at the same time conscious of a slight insanity in my mood, and seemed to foresee my recovery. In the midst of a gentle rain while these thoughts prevailed there suddenly seemed such sweet & beneficent society in nature—in the very pattering of the drops, and in every sound and sight around my house, an infinite and unaccountable friendliness all at once like an atmosphere sustaining me, as made the fancied advantages of human neighborhood insignificant—and I have never [68r] 85. thought of them since. Every little pine needle expanded and swelled with sympathy—and befriended me. I was so distinctly made aware of the presence of something kindred to me, even in scenes which we are accustomed to call wild and dreary, and also that the nearest of blood to me and humanest was not a person nor a villager, that I thought no place could ever be strange to me. *Solitude 4*

Yet I think that I love society as much as most, and am apt enough to fasten myself like a blood-sucker for the time to any full-blooded man that comes in my way. I am naturally no hermit—but should probably sit out the sturdiest frequenter of the bar-room, if my business called me that way. *Visitors 1*

Not in text

What do we ask?
Some worthy task;
Never to run
Till that be done,
That never done
[68v] Under the sun.
By might & main
Health and strength gain,
So to give nerve
To our slenderness,
Yet some mighty pain
We would sustain,
So to preserve

Visitors
Not in text

Our tenderness.
Strength like the rock
To withstand every shock,
Yet not be deceived,
Of suffering bereaved—
Occasion to gain
To shed human tears,
And to entertain
Still demonic fears.
Not once for all
Forever blest,
Still to be cheered
Out of the west,
Not from our heart
To banish all sighs,
Still be encouraged
By the sun-rise—
For earthly pleasures,
Celestial pains—
Heavenly losses,
For earthly gains.
[69r] Must we still eat
The bread we have spurned?
Must we rekindle
The faggots we've burned?

Solitude
12

I find it healthy to be alone the greatest part of the time. To be in company ever with the best is soon wearisome and dissipating. I love to be alone. I never found the companion that was so companionable as solitude. We are for the most part more lonely when we go abroad amongst folks, than when we stay in our chambers. A man thinking or working is always alone let him be where he will. The farmer can work alone in the field or the woods all day hoeing or chopping wood, and not feel lonesome, because he is employed, but when he comes home at night he cannot sit down in a room alone, at the mercy of his thoughts, but must be where he can "see the folks," and recreate and remuner-

ate himself for his day's solitude. And hence he wonders how the *Solitude*
student can sit alone in the house all night and most of the day *12*
without [69v] ennui and the blues, but he does not realize that the student, though in the house, is still at work in *his*[44] field, and chopping in *his*[45] woods, as the farmer in his, and in his turn seeks the same recreation & society that he does.

Society is commonly too cheap—We meet at very short inter- *13*
vals, not having had time to acquire any new value for each other. We meet at meals 3 times a day, and give each other a new taste of that old musty cheese that we are. We have had to agree on a certain set of rules—called etiquette and politeness to make this frequent meeting tolerable—and that we need not come to open war. We meet at the post office and at the sociable, and about the fireside every night—We meet incessantly and live thick, and are in each other's way, and stumble over one another—And I think that we thus lose some respect for one another. Certainly less frequency would suffice for [70r] 89. all important and hearty communications. Consider the girls in a factory never alone—hardly in their dreams. It would be better if there were but one inhabitant to a square mile—as where I live. The value of a man is not in his skin that we should touch him. Solitude is not measured by the *12*
miles of space that intervene between a man and his fellows—The diligent student in one of the crowded hives of Cambridge College is as solitary as a dervish in the desert.[46]

I have a great deal of company in my house—especially in the *15*
morning when nobody calls. I will suggest a few comparisons—so that some one may convey an idea of my situation. I am no more alone than the loon in the pond that laughs aloud—or than Walden pond itself. What company has that lonely lake, I pray?

44. Thoreau's italics.

45. Thoreau's italics.

46. The following preliminary draft of several sentences of "Solitude," 14, is on a scrap of paper pasted to 70r at this point; Thoreau did it at later date: "I have heard of a man lost in the woods and dying from famine and exhaustion at the foot of a tree whose loneliness was relieved by the grotesque visions, by which owing to bodily weakness and a diseased imagination he was surrounded and which he believed to be relieved [real]. There are those who owing to bodily & mental health & strength are continually cheered by the like society and never realize that they are alone."

Solitude 15 And yet it has not the blue devils, but the blue angels in it—in the azure tint of its waters. I am no more lonely than the north star. The sun is alone, except in thick weather when there sometimes seem to be two, but one is a mock sun. God [70v] is alone, but the Devil, he is by no means alone, he sees a great deal of company. The earth is alone—& Heaven is alone—but Hell is not at all, but when Heaven receives company or goes a visiting. *Cor ne edito*[47] "eat not the heart," said Pythagoras. You must eat something else to be sure. I am no more lonesome than a mullein in a pasture—or a bean-leaf, or sorrel, or a single dandelion—or a horse-fly—or a bumble bee. I am no more lonesome than the mill-brook —or a weather cock—or the South wind—or an April shower or a January thaw, or the only spider in a new house.

16 I have occasional visits in the long winter evenings when the snow falls fast and the wind howls in the wood from an old settler and original proprietor who is reported to have dug Walden pond, and stoned it, and fringed it with pine woods, who tells me stories of old time and of new eternity—and[48] between us we pass a cheerful evening—with social mirth & pleasant views of things, even without apples [71r] or cider.—A most wise and humorous friend whom I love much. Who keeps himself more secret than ever did Goffe or Whalley, and though he is thought to be dead none can show where he is buried.

An elderly dame too dwells in my neighborhood, invisible to most persons, in whose odorous herb garden I love to stroll sometimes, gathering simples, and listening to her fables. For she has a genius of unequalled fertility and invention, and her memory runs back further than the mythology, and she can tell me the original of every fable, and on what fact every one is founded—for the incidents occurred when she was a little girl.—A ruddy and lusty old dame who delights in all weathers and seasons—and is likely to outlive all her children yet.

17 The indescribable innocence & beneficence of nature—of sun and wind & rain—of summer & winter—such health—such cheer, they afford forever, and such sympathy have they ever with our race—that all nature would be affected—and the [71v] sun's

47. Thoreau's italics.

48. MS: "and and."

brightness fade—and the winds would sigh humanely—and the clouds weep rain—and the woods shed their leaves and put on mourning in mid summer if any man should ever for a just cause grieve.—Shall I not have intelligence with the earth? Am I not partly leaves and vegetable mould myself? God is my father & my friend—men are my brothers—but nature is my mother & my sister. *Solitude* *17*

What is the pill that will keep us well—serene—contented? Not my or thy great-grandfather's—but our great grandmother Nature's universal vegetable botanic medicines—by which she has kept herself young always and outlived so many old Parrs in her day—and fed her health with their decaying fatness—For my panacea—instead of one of those quack phials of a mixture dipped out of Acheron & the dead sea which come out of those long low black schooner looking wagons which we sometimes see made [72r] 93. to carry bottles—let me have a draught of undiluted morning air. *18*

Morning Air! If men will not drink of this at the fountain head of the day—why then we must even bottle up some and sell it in the shops for the benefit of those who have lost their subscription ticket to morning time in this world. But remember that it will not keep quite till noonday even in the coolest cellar—but drive out the stopples long ere that & follow westward the steps of Aurora.

I am no worshipper of Hygeia, who was the daughter of that old herb doctor Æsculapius, and who is represented on monuments "holding a serpent in one hand and in the other a cup, out of which the serpent sometimes drank"—but rather of Hebe—cup-bearer to Jupiter—who was the daughter of Juno & wild lettuce, & "had the power of restoring gods & men to the vigor of youth." She was probably the only thoroughly sound-conditioned healthy & robust young lady that ever walked this globe, and wherever she came it was spring.

[72v] As for men, they will hardly fail one anywhere. I have had more of their society since I lived in the woods than at any other period of my life. I met many men there under more favorable circumstances than I could anywhere else. *Visitors* *7*

Who should come to my lodge this morning but a true Homeric *8*

Visitors or Paphlagonian man—Alek Therien—he calls himself—a Cana-
8 dian—a wood-chopper and post maker—who can hole 50 posts in a day—who made his last supper on a wood-chuck which his dog caught. He too has heard of Homer and "If it were not for books" would "not know what to do rainy days"—though perhaps he has not read one wholly through for many rainy seasons. Some priest who could pronounce the Greek itself, taught him to read his verse in the testament at Nicolèt, away by the Trois Riviers once, and now I must translate to him while he holds the book, Achilles' reproof of Patroclus for his sad countenance.

[73r] "Why are you in tears Patroclus? like a young girl & &"

> Or have you alone heard some news from Phthia?
> They say that Menoetius lives yet, son of Actor,
> And Peleus lives, son of Æacus, among the Myrmidons,
> Either of whom dead, we should greatly grieve."

He says "that's good." He has a great bundle of white oak bark under his arm for a sick man, gathered this Sunday morning. "I suppose there is no harm in going after such a thing today?"

He had heard of Homer. Homer was a great writer, though what his writing was about under the sun he did not know.

I have since seen Therien many times. A more simple and natural man I never saw. Vice and disease which cast such a sombre moral hue over the world, had hardly any existence for him. He left Canada and his father's house a dozen years ago to work in the states, and earn money to buy a farm with at last, perhaps in
10 his native country. He interested me because he was so happy—so solitary—so quiet. [73v] He was a well of good humor & happiness which overflowed at his eyes. His mirth was without alloy. I
12 heard that a wise man asked him if he didn't want the world to be changed, and he answered with a chuckle of surprise, in his Canadian accent—not knowing that the question had ever been entertained before—"no—he liked it well enough."—It would suggest many things to a philosopher to have dealings with him.
11 He had been instructed only in that innocent & ineffectual way in which the Catholic priests teach the aborigines—In which the pupil is never educated to the degree of consciousness, but only to

the degree of trust & reverence—and a child is not made a man, *Visitors*
but kept a child. When nature made him she gave him content- *11*
ment for his portion, a strong body and health and propped him,
as it were, on every side with reverence & reliance—that he might
live out his 3 score years and ten a child—He was about 28 *8*
[74r] 97. years old—stout & sluggish, with a strong thick fleshy &
sunburnt neck & dark bushy hair & dull sleepy & quiet blue eye
—breathed hard and smelled of his work. He wore a flat grey
cloth cap—a dingy wool-colored great coat which draped and
concealed his body—& cow-hide boots. He was strong-limbed
and a great consumer of meat, usually carrying his dinner to his
work—a couple of miles past my house—in a tin pail—cold meats
—often cold woodchucks which his dog had caught, and coffee in
a stone bottle which dangled by a string, & sometimes he offered
me a drink. He came along early, crossing my beanfield, though
without any anxiety or haste to get to his work, such as Yankees
exhibit. Frequently he would leave his dinner in the bushes, when
his dog had caught a woodchuck *by the way*, and go back a mile
and a half to dress it, and leave it in the cellar of the [74v] house
where he boarded—often deliberating for half an hour whether
he could not sink it in the pond safely till nightfall—loving to
dwell long upon these themes. He would say as he went by in the
morning, "How thick the pigeons are! If working every day were
not my trade, I could get all the meat I should want by hunt[ing].
—Pigeons—woodchucks—rabbits—partridges, by George, I
could get all I should want for a week in one day."

If others had cultivated their intellectual faculties till they *11*
astonished him—his physical contentment and endurance—like
the cousin to the pine & the rock was equally astonishing to them.
I asked him once if he was not sometimes tired at night after work-
ing all day, and he answered with a sincere and serious look—
quite truthful—"Gorrappit I never was tired in my life." It
sounded like the triumph of the physical [75r] man. It suggested
what a rigorous and true training might accomplish for all.

Sometimes I saw him at his own work in the woods felling trees, *10*
and he would greet me with a laugh of irrepressible satisfaction
and a salutation in Canadian French—though he spoke English

Visitors as well—and when I asked him in which he thought now, or if he
10 spoke aloud to himself which language he used—You know we sometimes talk to ourselves—"Yer—sometimes" answered he—He said it was in English. When I approached him he would suspend his work and with half suppressed mirth lie along the trunk of a tree he had felled and peeling off the inner pine bark, roll it up in a ball, and chew it—while he laughed & talked.—Such an exuberance of animal spirits had he that he would sometimes tumble down and roll on the ground with laughter—at any thing which [75v] made him think and tickled him. Sometimes when at leisure he would amuse himself all day in the woods with a little pocket pistol, firing salutes of powder to himself, at regular intervals as he travelled—and would occasionally steal up behind my house and fire a stout charge—& laugh loudly at my surprise. He loved also to frighten his dog when alone with him in the woods—by pointing his pistol at him & firing powder only.

13 His only books were an almanack and an arithmetic—in which last especially he was quite expert. The former was a sort of universal lexicon to him—which he supposed contained an abstract of human knowledge—I loved to sound him on all the reforms of the day—and he rarely failed to look at them in the most simple & practical light—and as they concerned him. He had never heard of such things before. He allowed that he might dispense with many articles of commerce to [76r] 101. advantage. He had worn the homemade Vermont gray—and that was good—If I didn't like factories—was it necessary to send abroad for our drink? Did he ever drink anything beside water which the country afforded? He had soaked hemlock leaves in water and drank it in Canada, and that was better than water in warm weather. Could he do without money? And he showed the convenience of money in such a way as to suggest and coincide with the most philosophical accounts of the origin of this institution & the very derivation of the word *pecunia*.[49] If an ox were his property & he wished to get needles or thread at the store he thought it would be inconvenient and impossible soon to go on mortgaging some fraction of the creature each time to that amount.

49. Thoreau's italics.

Speaking of Plato's definition of a man one day, he said that the knee of the cock turned the other way from man's, and that was an important difference. [76v] He was so simply & naturally humble that humility was no distinct quality in him—nor could he conceive of it. Wiser men were demigods to him. He particularly reverenced the writer and the preacher. Their performances were miracles. When I told him that I wrote a good deal he thought for a long time that it was merely the hand writing I meant. I asked him if he ever wished to write his thoughts—He said that he had read and written letters for those who could not —but he never tried to write thoughts—no—he could not—he could not tell what to put first—it would kill him & then there was spelling to be attended to at the same time. *Visitors* 13 11

He would exclaim sometimes—"How I love to talk! By George, I could talk all day. You make me think of things I never thought of before." 13

Sometimes there would come half a dozen men to my house at once—healthy and sturdy working [77r] men, descended from sound bodies of men, and still transmitting arms & legs & bowels from remote generations to posterity. They had a rude wisdom and courtesy which I love. I met them so often in the woods—that they began to look upon me at last as one of their kin. One a handsome younger man a sailor-like—Greek-like man—says to me to-day—"Sir, I like your notions—I think I shall live so myself. Only I should like a wilder country, where there is more game. I have been among the Indians near Apallachicola. I have lived with them. I like your kind of life. Good-day, I wish you success and happiness." *Not in text*

They came in troops on Sundays in clean shirts, with washed hands & faces, and fresh twigs in their hands.

There appeared in some of these men even at a distance, a genuine magnanimity equal to Greek or Roman, of unexplored and uncontaminated descent—The expression of their grimmed & sunburnt features made me think of Epaminondas of Socrates & Cato. [77v] The most famous philosophers & poets seem in some respects infantile beside the easy and successful life of natural men. These faces—homely—hard and scarred like the rocks,

Visitors Not in text but human & wise—embracing Copt, and Mussulman and all tribes & nations. One is a pacha or Sultan—Selim—or Mustapha or Mahmoud in disguise.

Circumstances and employment may conceal for a season but they do not essentially alter the finer qualities of our nature. I observe among these men when I meet them[50] on the road an ineradicable refinement & delicacy—as old as the sun & moon.—A fineness which is commonly thought to adorn the drawing rooms only. There is no more real rudeness in laborers & washer women—than in gentlemen and ladies. Under some ancient wrinkled, almost forlorn visage of an Indian chieftain slumbers all that was ever writ or spoken of man. You can tell a nobleman's head though he may be shovelling gravel beneath it six rods off in the midst of a gang [78r] 105. with a bandanna handkerchief tied about it. Such as are to succeed the worthies of history. Their humble occupation which allows them to take no airs upon themselves seems their least disadvantage.—Civilization seems to make bright only the superficial film of the eye. Most men are wrecked upon their consciousness.

2 I had 3 chairs in my house—1 for solitude—2 for friendship 3—for society. When visitors came in larger and unexpected numbers there was but the 3d chair for them all—but they generally economized the room by standing up. It is astonishing how many great men and women a small house will contain. I have had 25 or 30 souls and bodies at once under my roof—and yet we often parted without being aware that we had come very near to one other. Our houses generally with their huge halls & garretts & cellars, seem to me extravagantly large for their inhabitants. One would certainly be somewhat astonished, if when [78v] the herald blew his summons before the Middle-sex House he should see come creeping out over the piazza for all inhabitants a ridiculous mouse.

3 One inconvenience I sometimes experienced in so small a house —the difficulty of getting to a sufficient distance from my guest when we began to utter the big thoughts in big words. You want room for your thoughts to get into sailing trim and run a course or

50. MS: "them them."

Visitors were a forsaken habit—but we naturally practiced abstinence.
5 To copy an old joke—we were hungry enough for one but not enough for 20—and this was never felt to be an offence against hospitality, but the most proper and considerate course. The waste and decay of physical life which so often needs repair seemed miraculously retarded—and the vital vigor stood its ground. I could entertain thus a thousand as well as 20, and I am not aware that any ever went away disappointed or hungry from my house—when they found me at home. So easy is it—though many house-keepers doubt it—to establish new and better customs in the place of the old—to quote the lines which one of my visitors inscribed upon a yellow walnut leaf—and which make part of the motto of my house—

> "Arrived there, the little house they fill,
> Ne looke for entertainment, where none was:
> Rest is their feast, and all things at their will:
> The noblest mind the best contentment has."

6 [80v] When Winslow—afterward Governor of the Plymouth colony went with a companion on a visit of ceremony to Massassoit on foot through the woods, and arrived tired and hungry they were well received by the king—but nothing was said about eating that day. When the night arrived to quote their own words "He laid us on the bed with himself & his wife, they at the one end, and we at the other, it being only planks laid a foot from the ground, and a thin mat upon them. Two more of his chief men, for want of room, pressed by and upon us; so that we were worse weary of our lodging than of our journey." At one o'clock the next day Massassoit "brought two fishes that he had shot" about "thrice as big as a bream." "These being boiled there were at least forty looked for a share in them. The most ate of them. This meal only we had in two nights and a day; and had not one of us bought a partridge, we had taken our journey fasting." For fear they should be lightheaded for want of sleep on account of "the [81r] savages' barbarous singing (for they used to sing themselves asleep)" and for want of food, and that they might get home while they had strength to travel—they departed. The fact was—the

Bean-Field my presence and influence is seen in these bean leaves and corn-
2 blades, and potatoe vines.

3 I planted about 2 acres and a half of upland and as it was only about 15 years since the land was cleared and I myself had got out 2 or 3 cords of stumps, I did not give it any manure, but in the course of the summer it appeared by the arrowheads which I turned up in hoeing that an extinct nation had anciently dwelt here and planted beans ere white men came to cut & clear the land, and so to some extent had [82v] exhausted the soil for this very crop. However, as it had lain fallow so long I got a good crop.

4 Before yet any woodchuck or squirrel had run across the road, or the sun had got above the shrub oaks, while all the dew was on—though the farmers said that would never do—I began to level the ranks of haughty weeds in my beanfield, and throw dust upon their heads.—Early in the morning I worked barefooted—dabbling like a plastic artist in the dewy & crumbling sand, but later in the day the sand blistered my feet.—There the sun lighted me to hoe beans—pacing slowly backward & forward over that yellow gravelly upland, between the long green rows 15 rods—the one end terminating in a shrub-oak copse where I could rest in the shade, the other in a blackberry field where the green berries deepened their tints by the time I had made another bout—Removing the weeds—putting fresh soil about the bean stems & encouraging this weed I had sown—making the yellow soil [83r] express its summer thoughts in bean leaves & blossoms, rather than in wormwood and piper and millet grass—making the earth say beans instead of grass—This was my work. As I had little aid from horses or cattle—or hired men or boys—or improved implements in husbandry, I was much slower and became much more intimate with my beans than is usual. But labor of the hands—even when pursued to the verge of drudgery, is never the worst form of idleness. It has a constant and imperishable moral—to the scholar it yields a classic result—to the literary it is literary. It is oftenest honest & honorable.

A very *agricola laboriosus*[52] was I to travellers bound westward

52. Thoreau's italics.

Bean-Field the seed he cries "Drop it—drop it—cover it up—cover it up—
5 pull it up—pull-it-up—pull-it-up." But this was not corn, and so it was safe from such enemies as he. You may wonder what his rigmarole—his amateur Paganini performances on one string or on 20 have to do with your planting and yet prefer it to leached ashes or plaster.

6 As I drew a still fresher soil about my rows with my hoe—I disturbed the ashes of unrecorded nations who in primeval days lived under these heavens—and their small implements of war and hunting were brought to the light of this modern day—They lay mingled with other natural stones some of which bore the marks of having been burned by the Indian fires, and some had only been burned by the sun—and also with bits of pottery and glass brought by the recent cultivators of the soil.

[85r] When my hoe tinkled against the stones in my bean-field —that music *echoed to the woods & the sky &* was an accompaniment to my labor which yielded an instant and immeasurable crop—*It was no longer beans that I hoed, nor I that hoed beans,* and I confess that I sometimes remembered with pity my acquaintances who had gone to the city to attend the oratorios—The night-hawk circled over head in the sunny afternoons—like a mote in the eye, or in heaven's eye—falling from time to time with a swoop & a sound as if the heavens were rent—torn at last to very rags & tatters—and yet a seamless cope remains. Small imps that fill the air & lay their eggs on the ground—on bare rocks on the tops of bare hills, where few have found them. In their flight they were graceful and slender—like waves & ripples caught up from the pond—as leaves are raised by the wind—to float in the heavens—such kindredship is in nature. The hawk is aerial brother of the wave which he sails over and surveys [85v] those his perfect air inflated wings answering to the elemental unfledged pinions of the sea.—When I pause to lean upon my hoe these sights & sounds I saw and heard anywhere in the row—the inexhaustible entertainment which the country offers.—Sometimes I was attracted by the passage of wild pigeons from this wood to that, with their slight tantivy & carrier haste—or from under some rotten stump my hoe turned up a sluggish portent[ous] outlandish spotted

Bean-Field common white bush bean about the first of June in rows 3 feet
14 [87r] by 18 inches apart, being careful to select fresh round & unmixed seed. First look out for worms & supply vacancies by planting afresh. Then look out for woodchucks, if it is an exposed place for they will nibble off the earliest tender leaves almost clean as they go, and again when the young tendrils make their appearance they have notice of it and will shear them off with both buds and young pods, sitting erect like a squirrel. But above all harvest as early as possible, if you would escape frosts and have a fair and saleable crop. You may save much loss by this means.

15 This further experience also I gained. I said to myself I will not plant beans and corn with so much industry another summer, but such seeds, perhaps, if the seed is not lost, as sincerity—truth—simplicity—faith—innocence—and see if they will not grow in this soil even with less toil & manurance and sustain me. [87v] Commonly men will only be brave as their fathers were brave, but why should not the New Englander try new adventures—& not lay so much stress on his grain his potatoe and grass crop, and his orchards! raise other crops than these?—We should in some degree be cheered and fed if when we met a man we were sure to see that some of these qualities we so much prize, but which are for the most part broadcast and floating in the air had taken root and grown in him. Here comes such a subtle and ineffable quality, for instance, as truth or justice, though the slightest amount of it, along the road. We should never stand upon ceremony with sincerity. We should never cheat and insult—and banish one another by our manners—if there were present the kernel of worth & friendliness—We should not meet thus in haste. Most men I do not meet at all for they seem not to have time—they are busy about their beans.

16 [88r] 125. Husbandry was anciently a sacred art but it is pursued with heedlessness and haste by us. Our object is to have large farms and large crops. Our thoughts on this subject should be as slow as the pace of oxen. The difference between the ancients and us may be seen in their different treatment of their fellow laborer the ox. We are accustomed to say that the ox is more profitable than the horse, because it not only costs less to keep it, but when it

Bean-Field husbandry is degraded with us and the farmer leads the meanest
17 of lives. He knows not nature but as a robber. We are apt to forget that the sun looks on our cultivated fields, & on the prairies and forests without distinction. They reflect and absorb his rays alike. In the light of the [89v] sun the earth is all equally cultivated like a garden and yields every where to an irresistible civilization.—What though I value the seed of these beans & harvest that in the fall of the year,—this broad field which I have looked at so long—looks not to me as the farmer but away from me to influences more genial to it. It matters little after all whether the fields fill the barns of the husbandmen. The true husbandman will cease from anxiety—as the chestnut woods are not concerned whether they bear chestnuts this year or not—and finish his labor with every day relinquishing all claim to the produce of his fields—The landscape is deformed when there is an attempt to appropriate what cannot be appropriated.

Village After sitting still in my house or working in my field in the fore-
1 noon, I usually bathed again in the pond swimming across one of its coves for a stint, and shook the dust of labor from my feet & clothes, and [90r] 129. for the afternoon was as free as the bird that has built its nest and reared its brood.

Every day or two—I strolled to the village to hear some of the gossip which is incessantly going on here—either circulating from mouth to mouth, or from newspaper to newspaper—and which taken in homeopathic doses was really as refreshing in its way as the rustle of leaves and the peeping of frogs. As I walked in the woods to see the birds & squirrels—so I walked in the village to see the men and boys—instead of the wind among the pines I heard the carts rattle.

The village seemed to me a great news room, and one side to support it—as at Redding and Company's in State Street—they kept nuts & raisins—salt & meal and other groceries.—Some have such a vast appetite for the former commodity—and such sound digestive organs that they can sit forever in public avenues without stirring and let it simmer and whisper through them like the Etesian winds—or as if inhaling ether—it only producing numbness [90v] and insensibility to pain, without affecting the

Village more terrible standing invitation to call at every one of these
1 houses—and company expected about these times—For the most part I escaped wonderfully from these dangers either by proceeding at once boldly and without deliberation to the goal as is recommended to those who run the gauntlet—or by keeping my thoughts on high things like Orpheus—who "loudly singing the praises of the gods, to his lyre, drowned the voices [92r] 133. of the Sirens, and kept out of danger."—Sometimes I bolted suddenly & nobody could tell my whereabouts, for I did not stand much about gracefulness, and never hesitated at a fence or a hole in a wall. I was even accustomed to make an irruption into some houses where I was well entertained, and after learning the *kernels & very* last seine-full of news—what had subsided—and the prospects of war and peace & whether the world was likely to hold together much longer—I was let out through the rear avenues, and so escaped to the woods again.

Ponds Sometimes having had a surfeit of human society & gossip—
1 and worn out all my village friends—I rambled still further westward than I habitually dwell—"to fresh woods and pastures new" —into unfrequented parts of the town—to solitary swamps and meadows, and pine woods & oak-thickets and rocky pastures—or while the sun was setting made my supper of huckleberries & blueberries on Fair-Haven hill—and laid up a store for several days.

2 Sometimes, after my hoeing [92v] was done for the day I joined some impatient companion who had been fishing since morning on the pond—as silent and motionless as a duck or a floating leaf—who after practicing various kinds of philosophy—had concluded commonly by the time I arrived that he belonged to the ancient sect of Coenobites.

4 Occasionally after staying in a villager's parlor till the family had all retired—I have returned to the woods, and spent the hours of midnight fishing in a boat on the pond by moonlight—serenaded by owls and the barking of foxes, and hearing from time to time the note of the woodcock or the booming of snipes a mile off circling over the river meadows, or the croak of a bittern close at hand. These private hours were very memorable & valu-

Ponds [94r] midst of pine woods—without any visible inlet or outlet but
5 by the clouds and by evaporations. Successive nations have drank
8 at it and passed away. Perhaps on that spring morning when Adam & Eve were driven out of Eden Walden pond was already in existence, and even then breaking up in a gentle spring rain—accompanied with mist and a southerly wind—and covered with myriads of ducks and geese that had not heard of the fall.—Even then it had commenced its periodical rise and fall, and had clarified its waters, and had colored them of the hue they now wear—and obtained a patent of heaven to be the only Walden pond in the world,—and distiller of celestial dews—Who knows in how many unremembered nations' literatures this has been the Castalian fountain—or what nymphs presided over it in the golden age!

7 It is surrounded by a belt of paving stones extending a rod or two into the water, and then the bottom is pure sand, except in the deepest parts—or where [94v] it is more than 40 feet deep where there is usually a little sediment and a bright green weed is brought up on anchors.

6 It is so pure and clear that the bottom can easily be seen in 25 or 30 feet of water. Once in the winter, many years ago, when I had been cutting holes through the ice in order to catch pickerel, as I stepped ashore I heaved my axe back on to the ice—but as if some evil genius had directed it, it slid 4 or 5 rods directly into one of the holes—where the water was 20 feet deep. Out of curiosity I lay down on the ice and looked through the hole, when I saw the axe a little on one side, standing on its head—with its helve erect and gently swaying to and fro with the pulse of the pond—and there it might have stood erect & swaying till in the course of time the handle rotted off if I had not disturbed it. Is a thing lost when you know where it is—and how to get it? Making another hole directly over the axe with an ice chisel which I had—and cutting down the

[Probably three leaves missing; they undoubtedly contained the rest of "The Ponds," 6, and probably "Baker Farm," 3 and 4.]

Baker Farm [95r] 147. hoping to get a sight of the well bottom—to complete
5 my survey of the premises—but there, alas, are shallow quick-

Higher Laws [96r] 151. revives from time to time, but always when I have done
5 I feel that it would have been better if I had not fished. I think I
am not mistaken. It is a faint intimation—yet so are the first
streaks of morning. It tempts me continually because it is a means
of becoming acquainted with nature—not only with fishes—but
with night and water—and the scenery—which I should not
otherwise see under the same aspects.—and occasionally, though
3 not so often, because I wish to add fish to my fare for variety—I
actually fish sometimes as naturally—and from the same kind of
1 necessity—as the first fishermen did. I love sometimes to take rank
hold on life, and spend my day more as the animals do. The
novelty and adventure that are in this pursuit recommend it to
3 me. Whatever humanity I may conjure up against it is all facti-
tious, & concerns my philosophy more than my actual feelings—
not that I am less humane than [96v] others—but I do not per-
ceive that these are affected very much. I do not pity the fishes nor
1 the worms. This is habit. But the ramble by the river and meadow
seems to be incomplete, and to want a sufficient aim for itself—
without this purpose. The traveller of the prairie is a hunter—of
the head-waters of the Missouri & Columbia—a trapper. Those
who go to the Falls of St. Mary are fishermen. The traveller who
is only a traveller learns things by the halves, and at 2d hand—
3 and is poor authority.—When *some of* my friends have asked me
anxiously about their boys—whether they should let them hunt
or not—I have answered yes—remembering that it was the best
5 part of my education. There is unquestionably this instinct in me
which belongs to the lower order of creation. Yet with every year
I am less a fisherman, though without more humanity. When I
have caught my fish & cooked them, I have gained nothing by it,
but perhaps lost

[One leaf missing; probably contained material of "Higher Laws," but there is no evidence as to what.]

7 [97r] 155. If I listen to the faintest but constant suggestions of my
genius I see not to what extremes or insanity it would lead me.—
And yet that way as I grow more resolute and faithful my road
lies. The faintest assured objection which one healthy man feels

Brute Neighbors 9 legs inside clinging to the flesh. It would run readily up the sides of the room by short impulses like a squirrel—which it resembled considerably in its motions. At length as I leaned [98v] my elbow on the bench one day, it ran up my clothes, and along my sleeve, and round and round the paper which held my dinner while I kept it close dodging and playing at bo-peep with it, and when at last I held still a piece of cheese between my thumb and finger, it came and nibbled it, sitting in my hand, and then cleaned its face and paws like a fly, and walked away.

Winter Animals 13 There were scores of pitch pines in my field from 1 to three inches in diameter, which had been gnawed by the mice the previous winter. A Norwegian winter it was for them—for the snow lay long & deep, and they had to mix a large proportion of pine [bark] meal with their other diet. These trees were alive and apparently flourishing at mid-summer, and had many of them grown a foot—though completely girdled—and sometimes laid bare for the space of a foot—but now after the lapse of another winter I perceive that such are already without exception dead. For this

[One leaf missing; certainly contained some of "Brute Neighbors," 11, and possibly some of 10, on the partridge.]

Brute Neighbors 11 [99r] 161. cled round and round me—nearer and nearer, till within 4 or 5 feet, pretending broken wings & legs, to attract my attention—and get off her young—who had already taken up their march with faint peep single file through the swamp as she directed. I frequently heard the young afterward, when I could not see the parent.

So much lives free, though secret and skulking in the woods.

Here too the pigeons sat over the spring—or fluttered from bough to bough of the white pine over my head in the heat of the day.

There is always a wild and yet a wilder life somewhere sustaining itself at any moment than we allow for—which corresponds to the rareness of some of our thoughts.

I have formerly seen the racoon in the woods behind my house and probably still hear their whinnering at night.

Winter Animals sleep well—and the cracking of the ground by the frost—these were other memorable sounds in a winter night.

3 *4* Sometimes in clear nights I heard the foxes, as they ranged over the snow crust in search of a partridge or other game—barking raggedly and demonically—like forest dogs—as [if] laboring with some anxiety—struggling to be dogs outright and run freely in the streets. They seemed to me like imperfect & rudimental men—burrowing men—still standing on their defence—awaiting their transformation. Sometimes one came near to my window at night —attracted by the light, and barked a vulpine curse at me—and then retreated.

5 Usually the red squirrel waked me in the dawn coursing over the roof and up and down the sides of my house, by fits & starts, as if sent out of the woods on purpose to arouse me. During [101r] the winter, I threw out some sweet corn which had never got ripe upon the snow crust by my door, and was amused by watching the motions of the various animals that were baited by it. In the twilight and the night the rabbits came regularly and made a hearty meal. By day-light & in fact all day long the red squirrels came and went, and afforded me much entertainment by their manoeuvres. One would approach at first warily through the shrub oaks running over the snow by fits and starts like a leaf blown by the wind—now a few paces this way with wonderful speed and waste of energy, making inconceiva[ble] haste with his trotters, as if it were for a wager—never getting on more than half a rod at a time and then suddenly pausing with a ludicrous expression—and a gratuitous sommerset—as if all the eyes in the universe were fixed upon him—wasting more time in delay & circumspection—than would have sufficed [101v] to walk the whole distance.—I never saw one walk.—And then suddenly, before you could say Jack Robinson it would be in the tip top of a young pitch pine—screwing up its clock—and chiding all imaginary spectators—and soliloquizing & talking to the universe and itself—for no reason that I could ever detect, or itself was aware of—I suspect. At length it reached the corn—and selecting a suitable ear, would frisk about in the same uncertain trigonometrical way to the topmost stick in my wood-pile, before my

Winter Animals 14 [103r] I opened my door in the evening off they would go with a squeak and a bounce.—They only excited my pity near at hand. One evening one sat by [my] door three paces from me, at first trembling with fear, yet unwilling to move.—A poor wee thing—lean and bony—with ragged ears and sharp nose—scant tail & slender paws. It looked as if nature no longer contained the breed of nobler bloods, but the earth stood on its last legs. Its large eyes looked young & unhealthy—almost dropsical.—I took two steps —and lo! he scud away with an elastic spring over the snow crust—straightening its body and its limbs into graceful length, and soon put the forest between me and itself—The wild free venison—asserting his vigor and the dignity of nature—not without reason was his slenderness. Such then was his nature.

15 What is a country without rabbits and partridges? They are the most natural and simple [103v] animal products.—Ancient & venerable families known to antiquity as to modern times—of the very hue and substance of nature—nearest allied to leaves and to the ground—and especially to one another—it is either winged or it is legged. It is hardly as if you had seen a wild creature when a rabbit or a partridge burst away—but only a natural one—as much to be expected as rustling leaves.

[Thoreau canceled the first six or seven lines of "The Pond in Winter," 16, which at first followed here, when he decided to have material of "Former Inhabitants" come next; he probably canceled some more of "The Pond in Winter," 16, in the first of the three leaves that are missing at this point. Most of the material on these leaves probably consisted of material for the early paragraphs of "Former Inhabitants."]

Former Inhabitants 10 [104r] 189. men with earthen ware—and left descendents to succeed him. I was pleased when in mid-summer—a man who was carrying a load of pottery to market—stopped his horse against my field and inquired concerning Wyman—he said that he long ago bought a potter's wheel of him—and he wished to know what had become of him.

I had heard read[57] of the potter's clay and wheel in scripture, but I thought that latterly such as we used had either come down

57. The word "read" was canceled later.

Former Inhabitants 14 ning—& pottery business have thrived here—making the wilderness to bloom—and a numerous posterity have inherited the land of their ancestors? The sterile soil would at least have been proof against a lowland degeneracy. Again, [105v] perhaps, Nature will try, with me for a first settler—and my house raised 2 springs ago *15* to be the oldest in the hamlet.—And with such thoughts as these I lulled myself asleep.

Pond in Winter 3 Early in the morning while all things are crisp with frost, come men with fishing reels, and slender lunch—men of unquestionable faith,—and let down their fine lines through the snowy field to take pickerel and perch—Who pursue their trade with as much self-respect as any mechanic or farmer does his—wisely taught by their instinct to follow other fashions and trust other authorities than their townsmen. Wild men who frequent the river meadows and solitary ponds in the horizon—connecting links between towns—who in their goings & comings stitch towns together in parts where they would be ripped and with the hunter race prevent wild animals from multiplying.—Who sit and eat their luncheon in stout fear-noughts on the dry oak-leaves on the shore of the pond—as wise in natural lore—as the citizen is in artificial.

[Four leaves apparently missing; a good deal of the material may have been devoted to the freezing, melting, and qualities of Walden and other waters. See p. 99.]

Spring 1 [106r] 201. it was 36° or 3 degrees higher than Walden. In the middle $32\frac{1}{2}$ degrees. This difference of $3\frac{1}{2}$ degrees between the temperature of the deep water and the shallow in Flint's pond—and the fact that a great proportion of it is comparatively shallow —show why it should break up so much sooner than Walden.

The temperature of the river the same day was $32\frac{1}{2}$ the same with the middle of Flint's pond—and nearly the same with that of snow just melted and running in a sluice which[58] is 32 or freezing point. The temperature of Martwell Bigelow's well—which was neither the warmest nor the coldest that was tried—was 43—that *Ponds 13* of the boiling spring 45 or the warmest of any, but it is perhaps the coldest in summer when *shallow* & stagnant snow and surface water is not mixed with it.

58. MS: "which which."

Pond in Winter 17 looking farming tools—sleds plows—drill-barrows—turf-knives—spades—saws—rakes—and each [man] was armed with a double-pointed pike staff—such as are not described in the N. E. Farmer or the Cultivator.

At first I did not know [107v] whether they had come to sow a crop of winter rye, or some other kind of grain recently introduced from Iceland. As I saw no manure I judged that they meant to skim the land—thinking the soil was deep and had lain fallow long enough—as I had done with my field the year before. They said that a gentleman farmer, who was behind the scenes, wanted to double his money—which as I understood amounted to half a million already—but in order to cover each one of his dollars with another, he took off the only coat and the skin itself of Walden pond in the midst of a hard winter.—They went to work at once plowing, harrowing, rolling, furrowing, in admirable order, as if they were bent on making this a model farm but when I was looking sharp to see what kind of seed they dropt into the furrow —a gang of fellows by my side suddenly began to hook up the virgin mould itself—with a peculiar jerk—clean down to the sand—or rather

[One leaf missing; undoubtedly contained material for 17 and 18.]

18 [108r] 213. in the almanack—his shanty. In a good day they told me they could get out a thousand tons which was the yield of about one acre.

The ice was put to many novel uses. The horses ate their oats out of cakes of ice hollowed out like a bucket.

19 Ice is a curious subject for our contemplation. They have some in the houses at Fresh Pond 5 years old. Why is that a bucket of water soon becomes putrified, but frozen it remains sweet forever? One suggests that this is the difference between the affections and the intellect.

Spring 1 They have not been able to break up our pond any earlier than usual this year as they expected to—for she has got a thick new garment to replace the old.

Pond in Winter 20 From my window for 16 days I saw a hundred men at work, like busy husbandmen, with teams and horses, and apparently all

Visitors Not in text but human & wise—embracing Copt, and Mussulman and all tribes & nations. One is a pacha or Sultan—Selim—or Mustapha or Mahmoud in disguise.

Circumstances and employment may conceal for a season but they do not essentially alter the finer qualities of our nature. I observe among these men when I meet them[50] on the road an ineradicable refinement & delicacy—as old as the sun & moon.—A fineness which is commonly thought to adorn the drawing rooms only. There is no more real rudeness in laborers & washer women—than in gentlemen and ladies. Under some ancient wrinkled, almost forlorn visage of an Indian chieftain slumbers all that was ever writ or spoken of man. You can tell a nobleman's head though he may be shovelling gravel beneath it six rods off in the midst of a gang [78r] 105. with a bandanna handkerchief tied about it. Such as are to succeed the worthies of history. Their humble occupation which allows them to take no airs upon themselves seems their least disadvantage.—Civilization seems to make bright only the superficial film of the eye. Most men are wrecked upon their consciousness.

2 I had 3 chairs in my house—1 for solitude—2 for friendship 3—for society. When visitors came in larger and unexpected numbers there was but the 3d chair for them all—but they generally economized the room by standing up. It is astonishing how many great men and women a small house will contain. I have had 25 or 30 souls and bodies at once under my roof—and yet we often parted without being aware that we had come very near to one other. Our houses generally with their huge halls & garretts & cellars, seem to me extravagantly large for their inhabitants. One would certainly be somewhat astonished, if when [78v] the herald blew his summons before the Middle-sex House he should see come creeping out over the piazza for all inhabitants a ridiculous mouse.

3 One inconvenience I sometimes experienced in so small a house —the difficulty of getting to a sufficient distance from my guest when we began to utter the big thoughts in big words. You want room for your thoughts to get into sailing trim and run a course or

50. MS: "them them."

Visitors were a forsaken habit—but we naturally practiced abstinence.
5 To copy an old joke—we were hungry enough for one but not enough for 20—and this was never felt to be an offence against hospitality, but the most proper and considerate course. The waste and decay of physical life which so often needs repair seemed miraculously retarded—and the vital vigor stood its ground. I could entertain thus a thousand as well as 20, and I am not aware that any ever went away disappointed or hungry from my house—when they found me at home. So easy is it—though many house-keepers doubt it—to establish new and better customs in the place of the old—to quote the lines which one of my visitors inscribed upon a yellow walnut leaf—and which make part of the motto of my house—

> "Arrived there, the little house they fill,
> Ne looke for entertainment, where none was:
> Rest is their feast, and all things at their will:
> The noblest mind the best contentment has."

6 [80v] When Winslow—afterward Governor of the Plymouth colony went with a companion on a visit of ceremony to Massassoit on foot through the woods, and arrived tired and hungry they were well received by the king—but nothing was said about eating that day. When the night arrived to quote their own words "He laid us on the bed with himself & his wife, they at the one end, and we at the other, it being only planks laid a foot from the ground, and a thin mat upon them. Two more of his chief men, for want of room, pressed by and upon us; so that we were worse weary of our lodging than of our journey." At one o'clock the next day Massassoit "brought two fishes that he had shot" about "thrice as big as a bream." "These being boiled there were at least forty looked for a share in them. The most ate of them. This meal only we had in two nights and a day; and had not one of us bought a partridge, we had taken our journey fasting." For fear they should be lightheaded for want of sleep on account of "the [81r] savages' barbarous singing (for they used to sing themselves asleep)" and for want of food, and that they might get home while they had strength to travel—they departed. The fact was—the

Bean-Field my presence and influence is seen in these bean leaves and corn-
2 blades, and potatoe vines.

3 I planted about 2 acres and a half of upland and as it was only about 15 years since the land was cleared and I myself had got out 2 or 3 cords of stumps, I did not give it any manure, but in the course of the summer it appeared by the arrowheads which I turned up in hoeing that an extinct nation had anciently dwelt here and planted beans ere white men came to cut & clear the land, and so to some extent had [82v] exhausted the soil for this very crop. However, as it had lain fallow so long I got a good crop.

4 Before yet any woodchuck or squirrel had run across the road, or the sun had got above the shrub oaks, while all the dew was on—though the farmers said that would never do—I began to level the ranks of haughty weeds in my beanfield, and throw dust upon their heads.—Early in the morning I worked barefooted—dabbling like a plastic artist in the dewy & crumbling sand, but later in the day the sand blistered my feet.—There the sun lighted me to hoe beans—pacing slowly backward & forward over that yellow gravelly upland, between the long green rows 15 rods—the one end terminating in a shrub-oak copse where I could rest in the shade, the other in a blackberry field where the green berries deepened their tints by the time I had made another bout—Removing the weeds—putting fresh soil about the bean stems & encouraging this weed I had sown—making the yellow soil [83r] express its summer thoughts in bean leaves & blossoms, rather than in wormwood and piper and millet grass—making the earth say beans instead of grass—This was my work. As I had little aid from horses or cattle—or hired men or boys—or improved implements in husbandry, I was much slower and became much more intimate with my beans than is usual. But labor of the hands—even when pursued to the verge of drudgery, is never the worst form of idleness. It has a constant and imperishable moral—to the scholar it yields a classic result—to the literary it is literary. It is oftenest honest & honorable.

A very *agricola laboriosus*[52] was I to travellers bound westward

52. Thoreau's italics.

Bean-Field the seed he cries "Drop it—drop it—cover it up—cover it up—
5 pull it up—pull-it-up—pull-it-up." But this was not corn, and so it was safe from such enemies as he. You may wonder what his rigmarole—his amateur Paganini performances on one string or on 20 have to do with your planting and yet prefer it to leached ashes or plaster.

6 As I drew a still fresher soil about my rows with my hoe—I disturbed the ashes of unrecorded nations who in primeval days lived under these heavens—and their small implements of war and hunting were brought to the light of this modern day—They lay mingled with other natural stones some of which bore the marks of having been burned by the Indian fires, and some had only been burned by the sun—and also with bits of pottery and glass brought by the recent cultivators of the soil.

[85r] When my hoe tinkled against the stones in my bean-field —that music *echoed to the woods & the sky &* was an accompaniment to my labor which yielded an instant and immeasurable crop—*It was no longer beans that I hoed, nor I that hoed beans,* and I confess that I sometimes remembered with pity my acquaintances who had gone to the city to attend the oratorios—The night-hawk circled over head in the sunny afternoons—like a mote in the eye, or in heaven's eye—falling from time to time with a swoop & a sound as if the heavens were rent—torn at last to very rags & tatters—and yet a seamless cope remains. Small imps that fill the air & lay their eggs on the ground—on bare rocks on the tops of bare hills, where few have found them. In their flight they were graceful and slender—like waves & ripples caught up from the pond—as leaves are raised by the wind—to float in the heavens—such kindredship is in nature. The hawk is aerial brother of the wave which he sails over and surveys [85v] those his perfect air inflated wings answering to the elemental unfledged pinions of the sea.—When I pause to lean upon my hoe these sights & sounds I saw and heard anywhere in the row—the inexhaustible entertainment which the country offers.—Sometimes I was attracted by the passage of wild pigeons from this wood to that, with their slight tantivy & carrier haste—or from under some rotten stump my hoe turned up a sluggish portent[ous] outlandish spotted

Bean-Field common white bush bean about the first of June in rows 3 feet
14 [87r] by 18 inches apart, being careful to select fresh round & unmixed seed. First look out for worms & supply vacancies by planting afresh. Then look out for woodchucks, if it is an exposed place for they will nibble off the earliest tender leaves almost clean as they go, and again when the young tendrils make their appearance they have notice of it and will shear them off with both buds and young pods, sitting erect like a squirrel. But above all harvest as early as possible, if you would escape frosts and have a fair and saleable crop. You may save much loss by this means.

15 This further experience also I gained. I said to myself I will not plant beans and corn with so much industry another summer, but such seeds, perhaps, if the seed is not lost, as sincerity—truth—simplicity—faith—innocence—and see if they will not grow in this soil even with less toil & manurance and sustain me. [87v] Commonly men will only be brave as their fathers were brave, but why should not the New Englander try new adventures—& not lay so much stress on his grain his potatoe and grass crop, and his orchards! raise other crops than these?—We should in some degree be cheered and fed if when we met a man we were sure to see that some of these qualities we so much prize, but which are for the most part broadcast and floating in the air had taken root and grown in him. Here comes such a subtle and ineffable quality, for instance, as truth or justice, though the slightest amount of it, along the road. We should never stand upon ceremony with sincerity. We should never cheat and insult—and banish one another by our manners—if there were present the kernel of worth & friendliness—We should not meet thus in haste. Most men I do not meet at all for they seem not to have time—they are busy about their beans.

16 [88r] 125. Husbandry was anciently a sacred art but it is pursued with heedlessness and haste by us. Our object is to have large farms and large crops. Our thoughts on this subject should be as slow as the pace of oxen. The difference between the ancients and us may be seen in their different treatment of their fellow laborer the ox. We are accustomed to say that the ox is more profitable than the horse, because it not only costs less to keep it, but when it

Bean-Field husbandry is degraded with us and the farmer leads the meanest
17 of lives. He knows not nature but as a robber. We are apt to forget that the sun looks on our cultivated fields, & on the prairies and forests without distinction. They reflect and absorb his rays alike. In the light of the [89v] sun the earth is all equally cultivated like a garden and yields every where to an irresistible civilization.—What though I value the seed of these beans & harvest that in the fall of the year,—this broad field which I have looked at so long—looks not to me as the farmer but away from me to influences more genial to it. It matters little after all whether the fields fill the barns of the husbandmen. The true husbandman will cease from anxiety—as the chestnut woods are not concerned whether they bear chestnuts this year or not—and finish his labor with every day relinquishing all claim to the produce of his fields—The landscape is deformed when there is an attempt to appropriate what cannot be appropriated.

Village After sitting still in my house or working in my field in the fore-
1 noon, I usually bathed again in the pond swimming across one of its coves for a stint, and shook the dust of labor from my feet & clothes, and [90r] 129. for the afternoon was as free as the bird that has built its nest and reared its brood.

Every day or two—I strolled to the village to hear some of the gossip which is incessantly going on here—either circulating from mouth to mouth, or from newspaper to newspaper—and which taken in homeopathic doses was really as refreshing in its way as the rustle of leaves and the peeping of frogs. As I walked in the woods to see the birds & squirrels—so I walked in the village to see the men and boys—instead of the wind among the pines I heard the carts rattle.

The village seemed to me a great news room, and one side to support it—as at Redding and Company's in State Street—they kept nuts & raisins—salt & meal and other groceries.—Some have such a vast appetite for the former commodity—and such sound digestive organs that they can sit forever in public avenues without stirring and let it simmer and whisper through them like the Etesian winds—or as if inhaling ether—it only producing numbness [90v] and insensibility to pain, without affecting the

Village more terrible standing invitation to call at every one of these
1 houses—and company expected about these times—For the most part I escaped wonderfully from these dangers either by proceeding at once boldly and without deliberation to the goal as is recommended to those who run the gauntlet—or by keeping my thoughts on high things like Orpheus—who "loudly singing the praises of the gods, to his lyre, drowned the voices [92r] 133. of the Sirens, and kept out of danger."—Sometimes I bolted suddenly & nobody could tell my whereabouts, for I did not stand much about gracefulness, and never hesitated at a fence or a hole in a wall. I was even accustomed to make an irruption into some houses where I was well entertained, and after learning the *kernels & very* last seine-full of news—what had subsided—and the prospects of war and peace & whether the world was likely to hold together much longer—I was let out through the rear avenues, and so escaped to the woods again.

Ponds Sometimes having had a surfeit of human society & gossip—
1 and worn out all my village friends—I rambled still further westward than I habitually dwell—"to fresh woods and pastures new" —into unfrequented parts of the town—to solitary swamps and meadows, and pine woods & oak-thickets and rocky pastures—or while the sun was setting made my supper of huckleberries & blueberries on Fair-Haven hill—and laid up a store for several days.

2 Sometimes, after my hoeing [92v] was done for the day I joined some impatient companion who had been fishing since morning on the pond—as silent and motionless as a duck or a floating leaf—who after practicing various kinds of philosophy—had concluded commonly by the time I arrived that he belonged to the ancient sect of Coenobites.

4 Occasionally after staying in a villager's parlor till the family had all retired—I have returned to the woods, and spent the hours of midnight fishing in a boat on the pond by moonlight—serenaded by owls and the barking of foxes, and hearing from time to time the note of the woodcock or the booming of snipes a mile off circling over the river meadows, or the croak of a bittern close at hand. These private hours were very memorable & valu-

Ponds [94r] midst of pine woods—without any visible inlet or outlet but
5 by the clouds and by evaporations. Successive nations have drank
8 at it and passed away. Perhaps on that spring morning when Adam & Eve were driven out of Eden Walden pond was already in existence, and even then breaking up in a gentle spring rain—accompanied with mist and a southerly wind—and covered with myriads of ducks and geese that had not heard of the fall.—Even then it had commenced its periodical rise and fall, and had clarified its waters, and had colored them of the hue they now wear—and obtained a patent of heaven to be the only Walden pond in the world,—and distiller of celestial dews—Who knows in how many unremembered nations' literatures this has been the Castalian fountain—or what nymphs presided over it in the golden age!

7 It is surrounded by a belt of paving stones extending a rod or two into the water, and then the bottom is pure sand, except in the deepest parts—or where [94v] it is more than 40 feet deep where there is usually a little sediment and a bright green weed is brought up on anchors.

6 It is so pure and clear that the bottom can easily be seen in 25 or 30 feet of water. Once in the winter, many years ago, when I had been cutting holes through the ice in order to catch pickerel, as I stepped ashore I heaved my axe back on to the ice—but as if some evil genius had directed it, it slid 4 or 5 rods directly into one of the holes—where the water was 20 feet deep. Out of curiosity I lay down on the ice and looked through the hole, when I saw the axe a little on one side, standing on its head—with its helve erect and gently swaying to and fro with the pulse of the pond—and there it might have stood erect & swaying till in the course of time the handle rotted off if I had not disturbed it. Is a thing lost when you know where it is—and how to get it? Making another hole directly over the axe with an ice chisel which I had—and cutting down the

[Probably three leaves missing; they undoubtedly contained the rest of "The Ponds," 6, and probably "Baker Farm," 3 and 4.]

Baker Farm [95r] 147. hoping to get a sight of the well bottom—to complete
5 my survey of the premises—but there, alas, are shallow quick-

Higher Laws [96r] 151. revives from time to time, but always when I have done
5 I feel that it would have been better if I had not fished. I think I
am not mistaken. It is a faint intimation—yet so are the first
streaks of morning. It tempts me continually because it is a means
of becoming acquainted with nature—not only with fishes—but
with night and water—and the scenery—which I should not
otherwise see under the same aspects.—and occasionally, though
3 not so often, because I wish to add fish to my fare for variety—I
actually fish sometimes as naturally—and from the same kind of
1 necessity—as the first fishermen did. I love sometimes to take rank
hold on life, and spend my day more as the animals do. The
novelty and adventure that are in this pursuit recommend it to
3 me. Whatever humanity I may conjure up against it is all facti-
tious, & concerns my philosophy more than my actual feelings—
not that I am less humane than [96v] others—but I do not per-
ceive that these are affected very much. I do not pity the fishes nor
1 the worms. This is habit. But the ramble by the river and meadow
seems to be incomplete, and to want a sufficient aim for itself—
without this purpose. The traveller of the prairie is a hunter—of
the head-waters of the Missouri & Columbia—a trapper. Those
who go to the Falls of St. Mary are fishermen. The traveller who
is only a traveller learns things by the halves, and at 2d hand—
3 and is poor authority.—When *some of* my friends have asked me
anxiously about their boys—whether they should let them hunt
or not—I have answered yes—remembering that it was the best
5 part of my education. There is unquestionably this instinct in me
which belongs to the lower order of creation. Yet with every year
I am less a fisherman, though without more humanity. When I
have caught my fish & cooked them, I have gained nothing by it,
but perhaps lost

[One leaf missing; probably contained material of "Higher Laws," but there is no evidence as to what.]

7 [97r] 155. If I listen to the faintest but constant suggestions of my
genius I see not to what extremes or insanity it would lead me.—
And yet that way as I grow more resolute and faithful my road
lies. The faintest assured objection which one healthy man feels

Brute Neighbors 9 legs inside clinging to the flesh. It would run readily up the sides of the room by short impulses like a squirrel—which it resembled considerably in its motions. At length as I leaned [98v] my elbow on the bench one day, it ran up my clothes, and along my sleeve, and round and round the paper which held my dinner while I kept it close dodging and playing at bo-peep with it, and when at last I held still a piece of cheese between my thumb and finger, it came and nibbled it, sitting in my hand, and then cleaned its face and paws like a fly, and walked away.

Winter Animals 13 There were scores of pitch pines in my field from 1 to three inches in diameter, which had been gnawed by the mice the previous winter. A Norwegian winter it was for them—for the snow lay long & deep, and they had to mix a large proportion of pine [bark] meal with their other diet. These trees were alive and apparently flourishing at mid-summer, and had many of them grown a foot—though completely girdled—and sometimes laid bare for the space of a foot—but now after the lapse of another winter I perceive that such are already without exception dead. For this

[One leaf missing; certainly contained some of "Brute Neighbors," 11, and possibly some of 10, on the partridge.]

Brute Neighbors 11 [99r] 161. cled round and round me—nearer and nearer, till within 4 or 5 feet, pretending broken wings & legs, to attract my attention—and get off her young—who had already taken up their march with faint peep single file through the swamp as she directed. I frequently heard the young afterward, when I could not see the parent.

So much lives free, though secret and skulking in the woods.

Here too the pigeons sat over the spring—or fluttered from bough to bough of the white pine over my head in the heat of the day.

There is always a wild and yet a wilder life somewhere sustaining itself at any moment than we allow for—which corresponds to the rareness of some of our thoughts.

I have formerly seen the racoon in the woods behind my house and probably still hear their whinnering at night.

Winter Animals sleep well—and the cracking of the ground by the frost—these were other memorable sounds in a winter night.

3 *4* Sometimes in clear nights I heard the foxes, as they ranged over the snow crust in search of a partridge or other game—barking raggedly and demonically—like forest dogs—as [if] laboring with some anxiety—struggling to be dogs outright and run freely in the streets. They seemed to me like imperfect & rudimental men—burrowing men—still standing on their defence—awaiting their transformation. Sometimes one came near to my window at night —attracted by the light, and barked a vulpine curse at me—and then retreated.

5 Usually the red squirrel waked me in the dawn coursing over the roof and up and down the sides of my house, by fits & starts, as if sent out of the woods on purpose to arouse me. During [101r] the winter, I threw out some sweet corn which had never got ripe upon the snow crust by my door, and was amused by watching the motions of the various animals that were baited by it. In the twilight and the night the rabbits came regularly and made a hearty meal. By day-light & in fact all day long the red squirrels came and went, and afforded me much entertainment by their manoeuvres. One would approach at first warily through the shrub oaks running over the snow by fits and starts like a leaf blown by the wind—now a few paces this way with wonderful speed and waste of energy, making inconceiva[ble] haste with his trotters, as if it were for a wager—never getting on more than half a rod at a time and then suddenly pausing with a ludicrous expression—and a gratuitous sommerset—as if all the eyes in the universe were fixed upon him—wasting more time in delay & circumspection—than would have sufficed [101v] to walk the whole distance.—I never saw one walk.—And then suddenly, before you could say Jack Robinson it would be in the tip top of a young pitch pine—screwing up its clock—and chiding all imaginary spectators—and soliloquizing & talking to the universe and itself—for no reason that I could ever detect, or itself was aware of—I suspect. At length it reached the corn—and selecting a suitable ear, would frisk about in the same uncertain trigonometrical way to the topmost stick in my wood-pile, before my

Winter Animals 14 [103r] I opened my door in the evening off they would go with a squeak and a bounce.—They only excited my pity near at hand. One evening one sat by [my] door three paces from me, at first trembling with fear, yet unwilling to move.—A poor wee thing—lean and bony—with ragged ears and sharp nose—scant tail & slender paws. It looked as if nature no longer contained the breed of nobler bloods, but the earth stood on its last legs. Its large eyes looked young & unhealthy—almost dropsical.—I took two steps —and lo! he scud away with an elastic spring over the snow crust—straightening its body and its limbs into graceful length, and soon put the forest between me and itself—The wild free venison—asserting his vigor and the dignity of nature—not without reason was his slenderness. Such then was his nature.

15 What is a country without rabbits and partridges? They are the most natural and simple [103v] animal products.—Ancient & venerable families known to antiquity as to modern times—of the very hue and substance of nature—nearest allied to leaves and to the ground—and especially to one another—it is either winged or it is legged. It is hardly as if you had seen a wild creature when a rabbit or a partridge burst away—but only a natural one—as much to be expected as rustling leaves.

[Thoreau canceled the first six or seven lines of "The Pond in Winter," 16, which at first followed here, when he decided to have material of "Former Inhabitants" come next; he probably canceled some more of "The Pond in Winter," 16, in the first of the three leaves that are missing at this point. Most of the material on these leaves probably consisted of material for the early paragraphs of "Former Inhabitants."]

Former Inhabitants 10 [104r] 189. men with earthen ware—and left descendents to succeed him. I was pleased when in mid-summer—a man who was carrying a load of pottery to market—stopped his horse against my field and inquired concerning Wyman—he said that he long ago bought a potter's wheel of him—and he wished to know what had become of him.

I had heard read[57] of the potter's clay and wheel in scripture, but I thought that latterly such as we used had either come down

57. The word "read" was canceled later.

Former Inhabitants 14 ning—& pottery business have thrived here—making the wilderness to bloom—and a numerous posterity have inherited the land of their ancestors? The sterile soil would at least have been proof against a lowland degeneracy. Again, [105v] perhaps, Nature will try, with me for a first settler—and my house raised 2 springs ago *15* to be the oldest in the hamlet.—And with such thoughts as these I lulled myself asleep.

Pond in Winter 3 Early in the morning while all things are crisp with frost, come men with fishing reels, and slender lunch—men of unquestionable faith,—and let down their fine lines through the snowy field to take pickerel and perch—Who pursue their trade with as much self-respect as any mechanic or farmer does his—wisely taught by their instinct to follow other fashions and trust other authorities than their townsmen. Wild men who frequent the river meadows and solitary ponds in the horizon—connecting links between towns—who in their goings & comings stitch towns together in parts where they would be ripped and with the hunter race prevent wild animals from multiplying.—Who sit and eat their luncheon in stout fear-noughts on the dry oak-leaves on the shore of the pond—as wise in natural lore—as the citizen is in artificial.

[Four leaves apparently missing; a good deal of the material may have been devoted to the freezing, melting, and qualities of Walden and other waters. See p. 99.]

Spring 1 [106r] 201. it was 36° or 3 degrees higher than Walden. In the middle $32\frac{1}{2}$ degrees. This difference of $3\frac{1}{2}$ degrees between the temperature of the deep water and the shallow in Flint's pond—and the fact that a great proportion of it is comparatively shallow —show why it should break up so much sooner than Walden.

The temperature of the river the same day was $32\frac{1}{2}$ the same with the middle of Flint's pond—and nearly the same with that of snow just melted and running in a sluice which[58] is 32 or freezing point. The temperature of Martwell Bigelow's well—which was neither the warmest nor the coldest that was tried—was 43—that *Ponds 13* of the boiling spring 45 or the warmest of any, but it is perhaps the coldest in summer when *shallow* & stagnant snow and surface water is not mixed with it.

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Pond in Winter 20 From my window for 16 days I saw a hundred men at work, like busy husbandmen, with teams and horses, and apparently all

Pond in Winter 21 the Hesperides. It makes the periplus of Hanno—and floating by Ternate and Tidore and the mouth of the Persian Gulf, it melts in the tropic gales of the Indian seas, and is landed in ports of which Alexander heard only the names.

Spring 3 The ice in the pond at length begins to be honey-combed, and I can set my heel in it as I walk.[63] Fogs and rains & warmer suns are gradually melting the snows. The days have grown sensibly longer and we see how we shall get through the winter without adding to our woodpile—for large fires are now no longer necessary—and I am on the alert for the first signs of spring—if I can hear the striped squirrels bark—or the chance note of some migratory bird.

On the 13th of March after I had heard the song sparrow and the black-bird the ice was still a foot thick on the pond. As the weather grew warmer, it [110v] was not sensibly worn away by the water, nor broken up & floated off as in rivers, but became porous & honey-combed and *saturated with*[64] water—so that you could put your foot through it when 7 or 8 inches thick—though it was melted for half a rood, around the shore but by tomorrow [?] evening—after a warm rain followed by fog it would have wholly disappeared—all gone off with the fog—Last year I went across the middle 5 days before it had disappeared entirely. In 1845

House-Warming 12 Walden broke up on the 1st of April in 1846 on the 25th [of][65] March—it froze entirely over the former year on the 22nd of Dec.—last year on the 16 of December—in both years a week or two later than Flint's pond and the river probably on account of

Spring 1 its greater depth. The sun warms shallow water through ice a foot thick—as you may make a burning glass with a piece of ice and kindle a fire with it from the sun. The ice in the shallowest

[One leaf missing; it probably contained more of "Spring," 1, and the first part of 4.]

4 [111r] river—and he dropped down without obstruction, from Sudbury, where he lived, to Fair Haven pond, which he found, unexpectedly, was covered with a firm field of ice. It was a very

63. Thoreau first wrote "began," "could set," and "walked"; exactly when he changed them to the present tense is uncertain.

64. The words "imbibed more" were canceled. 65. MS had ditto mark.

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Spring 11 various Composite. The beauty of the drooping and sheaf-like head of the rush all men have admired in all ages—and it must have some such near and unaccountable relation to human life, as astronomy has to those laws and figures which first existed in the mind of man.

All the phenomena of winter are suggestive of an inexpressible tenderness, and fragile delicacy—We are accustomed to hear this king almost tyrant described as rude and boisterous—but with the gentleness of a lover he adorns the tresses of summer.

5 [112v] At length the sun's rays have attained the right angle, and warm winds blow up mist and rain and melt the snow banks —and the sun dispersing the mist smiles on a chequered landscape of russet and white—smoking with incense—through which the traveller picks his way from islet to islet cheered by the music of a myriad rills and rivulets whose veins are filled with the blood of *Compare 6* winter which they are bearing off.—As I go back and forth over the rail-road through the deep cut I have seen where the clayey sand *like lava* had flowed down when it thawed and as it streamed it assumed the forms of vegetation, of vines and stout pulpy leaves —unaccountably interesting and beautiful—which methinks I have seen imitated somewhere in bronze—as if its course were so to speak a diagonal between fluids & solids—and it were hesitating whether to stream in to a river, or into vegetation—for vegetation too is such a stream as a river, only of slower current.

Spring 13 [113r] The first sparrow of spring—the year beginning with younger hope than ever—the faint silvery warblings heard over the bare and moist fields from the song-sparrow—the blue-bird— and the red-wing as if the last flakes of winter tinkled as they fell— What at such a time are histories—chronologies—traditions, and all written revelations?

The brooks sing carols and glees to the spring—the marsh-hawk —sailing low over the meadow—is already seeking the first slimy life that awakes. The sough of melting snow is heard in all dells and on all hillsides—and by the sunny river banks—and the ice dissolves apace in all ponds. The earth sends forth an inward heat to greet the returning sun—not yellow like the sun—but green is the color of its flame.

Spring plaint and mutual consolations. As I stood at the door I could
15 hear the rush of their wings as driving toward my house, they suddenly spied my light, and with hushed clamor wheeled and
16 settled in the pond. In the morning I watched them from my door through the mist sailing in the middle of the pond, 50 rods off—so large and tumultuous that the pond seemed like an artificial pond for their amusement. But when I stood on the shore—they at once rose up with a flapping of wings, at the signal of their commander, and when they had got into rank circled about over my head—29 of them, and then steered straight to Canada with a regular clank clank from the commodore at intervals,—trusting to break their fast in muddier pools.

A compact flock of ducks also rose up at the same time and took the route to the north in the wake of their noisier cousins.

[One leaf missing; it probably contained paragraph 17 and part of 19; 18, part of 19, 20, and 21 were added in later versions.]

22 [115r] 231. On the 29th of April, as I was fishing from the banks of the river near the Nine-Acre-Corner bridge, standing on the quaking grass and willow roots, where the muskrats burrow, I heard a singular rattling or perhaps shuttle-like sound, not musical but almost like the rattling sticks which boys play with their fingers, when, looking up I observed a very slight & graceful hawk, like a night-hawk, alternately soaring like a ripple and tumbling a rod or two over and over, and showing the under side of its wings which gleamed like a satin ribbon in the sun, and was of the pearly color of the inside of a shell. This sight reminded me of falconry and what nobleness and poetry is associated with that sport. The Merlin it seemed to me it might be named. It was the most etherial flight I had ever witnessed. It did not simply flutter like a butterfly, nor soar like the noblest hawks, but it sported with [115v] proud reliance in the fields of air; mounting again and again with its strange chuckle it repeated its free and beautiful fall, turning over and over like a kite. It was most high and lofty tumbling, as if it had never set its foot on terra-firma. It seemed to have no companion in the universe,—sporting there alone,—and to need none, but the morning and the ether with which it

Spring organizations that can be so serenely squashed out of existence
24 like soft pulp,—tadpoles which herons gobble up, and tortoises and toads run over by a wheel in the road; and that sometimes it has rained flesh & blood! [117r] 235. With the liability to accident we must see the trivialness of it, and the little account that is to be made of it. The impression made upon a wise man is of universal innocence—Poison is not poisonous after all, nor are any wounds fatal. Compassion is a very untenable ground to occupy long at a time. It must be very expeditious. Its works will not bear to be stereotyped.

25 Early in May or by the last of April, the oaks hickories—maples and other trees just putting out amidst the pine woods around the pond gave them the appearance, especially in cloudy days, of the sun just breaking through mists and shining on them. Their green bursting buds and expanding leaves scattered a slight brightness like sun shine over the hill sides.

When the oaks are in the gray
Then Farmers plant away.

The 3rd or 4th of May I saw a loon in the pond—and during the first week of this month I heard the whippoorwill—the brown-thrasher—the veery—the wood pewee, the chewink, and other birds—the wood thrush I had heard [117v] long before—The pollen of the pitch pine already covered the pond, and the stones and rotten wood along the shore with its yellow dust—

And so the seasons went rolling on into summer as one rambles into higher & higher grass—

26 Thus was my first year's life in the woods completed.[68]

68. This is clearly the end of version I. Two additional leaves of light-blue paper contain material that Thoreau developed further in "Conclusion," 16 and 17; but the material is in no respect an integral part of version I, and the handwriting and ink are certainly not those of version I. There is no clear evidence as to when Thoreau wrote this material.

Visitors Not in text but human & wise—embracing Copt, and Mussulman and all tribes & nations. One is a pacha or Sultan—Selim—or Mustapha or Mahmoud in disguise.

Circumstances and employment may conceal for a season but they do not essentially alter the finer qualities of our nature. I observe among these men when I meet them[50] on the road an ineradicable refinement & delicacy—as old as the sun & moon.—A fineness which is commonly thought to adorn the drawing rooms only. There is no more real rudeness in laborers & washer women—than in gentlemen and ladies. Under some ancient wrinkled, almost forlorn visage of an Indian chieftain slumbers all that was ever writ or spoken of man. You can tell a nobleman's head though he may be shovelling gravel beneath it six rods off in the midst of a gang [78r] 105. with a bandanna handkerchief tied about it. Such as are to succeed the worthies of history. Their humble occupation which allows them to take no airs upon themselves seems their least disadvantage.—Civilization seems to make bright only the superficial film of the eye. Most men are wrecked upon their consciousness.

2 I had 3 chairs in my house—1 for solitude—2 for friendship 3—for society. When visitors came in larger and unexpected numbers there was but the 3d chair for them all—but they generally economized the room by standing up. It is astonishing how many great men and women a small house will contain. I have had 25 or 30 souls and bodies at once under my roof—and yet we often parted without being aware that we had come very near to one other. Our houses generally with their huge halls & garretts & cellars, seem to me extravagantly large for their inhabitants. One would certainly be somewhat astonished, if when [78v] the herald blew his summons before the Middle-sex House he should see come creeping out over the piazza for all inhabitants a ridiculous mouse.

3 One inconvenience I sometimes experienced in so small a house —the difficulty of getting to a sufficient distance from my guest when we began to utter the big thoughts in big words. You want room for your thoughts to get into sailing trim and run a course or

50. MS: "them them."

two before they make their port. The bullet of your thought must *Visitors* have overcome its lateral and ricochet motion and have fallen *3* into its last and steady course, before it falls into the ear of the hearer, else it may plough out through the side of his head. Our sentences wanted room to unfold and form their columns in the interval. We need a considerable neutral ground—though it be disputed territory, for individuals like nations must have suitable broad and natural boundaries between them.—The [79r] reason why the Kilkenny cats quarrelled and ate each other all up but the tails in that hollow sphere, certainly is that there was not room in that small space for their several spheres to revolve.

We were so near that we couldn't hear and we couldn't speak low enough to be heard—As when you throw two stones into calm water, but so near that they break each other's undulations. If we are very loquacious & loud talkers then we can afford to stand very near together—cheek by jowl—& shoulder to shoulder. But if we speak reservedly and thoughtfully we want to be further apart. But if we would be silent we must commonly be so far apart that we cannot possibly hear each other's voices in any case.

As the conversation began to assume a loftier and grander tone we gradually shoved our chairs further apart till they touched the wall in opposite corners—and then sometimes there was not room [79v] enough. If you don't want the fire to smoke you mustn't stand too near it—so as to divert the current of the chimney's inspiration.

My best room, always ready for company—on whose carpet the *4* sun rarely fell—for its green blinds were kept always closed, was the pine wood behind my house. There when distinguished guests came in summer days I took them—and nature was my domestic that swept the floor and dusted the furniture, and kept the things in order.

If one guest came he sometimes partook of my frugal meal, and *5* it was no interruption to conversation to be stirring a hasty pudding in the meanwhile or watching the rising and maturing of a loaf of bread in the ashes in the meanwhile. But if 20 came and sat in my house there was nothing said about dinner—though there might be bread enough for two—more than if eating [80r] 109.

Visitors were a forsaken habit—but we naturally practiced abstinence.
5 To copy an old joke—we were hungry enough for one but not enough for 20—and this was never felt to be an offence against hospitality, but the most proper and considerate course. The waste and decay of physical life which so often needs repair seemed miraculously retarded—and the vital vigor stood its ground. I could entertain thus a thousand as well as 20, and I am not aware that any ever went away disappointed or hungry from my house—when they found me at home. So easy is it—though many house-keepers doubt it—to establish new and better customs in the place of the old—to quote the lines which one of my visitors inscribed upon a yellow walnut leaf—and which make part of the motto of my house—

> "Arrived there, the little house they fill,
> Ne looke for entertainment, where none was:
> Rest is their feast, and all things at their will:
> The noblest mind the best contentment has."

6 [80v] When Winslow—afterward Governor of the Plymouth colony went with a companion on a visit of ceremony to Massassoit on foot through the woods, and arrived tired and hungry they were well received by the king—but nothing was said about eating that day. When the night arrived to quote their own words "He laid us on the bed with himself & his wife, they at the one end, and we at the other, it being only planks laid a foot from the ground, and a thin mat upon them. Two more of his chief men, for want of room, pressed by and upon us; so that we were worse weary of our lodging than of our journey." At one o'clock the next day Massassoit "brought two fishes that he had shot" about "thrice as big as a bream." "These being boiled there were at least forty looked for a share in them. The most ate of them. This meal only we had in two nights and a day; and had not one of us bought a partridge, we had taken our journey fasting." For fear they should be lightheaded for want of sleep on account of "the [81r] savages' barbarous singing (for they used to sing themselves asleep)" and for want of food, and that they might get home while they had strength to travel—they departed. The fact was—the

Indians had nothing to eat themselves—and they were wiser than to think that apologies & ceremony could supply the place of food and so said nothing about it—This was a time of fasting with them. At another time when Winslow visited them—he[51] got as much to eat as he got little before. *Visitors* 6

Meanwhile my beans, whose continuous length of row was 7 miles already planted were impatient to be hoed. What was the meaning of this so steady and self respecting labor I knew not. I came to love my rows—my beans—so many more than I want. Why should I raise them? This had been my curious labor all summer—why—only heaven knows. To make this portion of the earth's surface which yielded only blackberries and Johnswort and cinqfoil—sweet wild fruits and pleasant flowers, produce [81v] instead this pulse. What shall I learn of beans or beans of me? I cherish them I hoe them early & late I have an eye to them, and this is my day's work. It is a fine broad leaf to look upon. My auxiliaries are the dews and rains to water this dry soil—and what fertility is in the soil itself, which for the most part is lean and effete. My enemies are worms, cool days, and most of all woodchucks. They have nibbled for me a quarter of an acre clean. But what right had I to oust Johnswort and the rest, and break up their ancient herb garden? But soon the remaining beans will be too tough for them, and will go on to meet new foes. *Bean-Field* 1

24 years ago I was brought from the city to this very pond— through this very field—so much further into the world I had but recently entered. It is one of the most ancient scenes stamped on the tablets of my memory. That woodland vision for a long time occupied my dreams. [82r] 113. The country then was the world —the city only a gate to it. And now tonight my flute has waked the echoes over this very water. One generation of pines has fallen and I have cooked my supper with their stumps—and a new growth of oaks and pines is rising all around the pond to greet other infants' eyes. Almost the same Johnswort springs from the same perennial root in this pasture. Even I have at length helped to clothe that fabulous landscape of my dreams, and the result of 2

51. The word "he" was written over "they."

Bean-Field my presence and influence is seen in these bean leaves and corn-
2 blades, and potatoe vines.

3 I planted about 2 acres and a half of upland and as it was only about 15 years since the land was cleared and I myself had got out 2 or 3 cords of stumps, I did not give it any manure, but in the course of the summer it appeared by the arrowheads which I turned up in hoeing that an extinct nation had anciently dwelt here and planted beans ere white men came to cut & clear the land, and so to some extent had [82v] exhausted the soil for this very crop. However, as it had lain fallow so long I got a good crop.

4 Before yet any woodchuck or squirrel had run across the road, or the sun had got above the shrub oaks, while all the dew was on—though the farmers said that would never do—I began to level the ranks of haughty weeds in my beanfield, and throw dust upon their heads.—Early in the morning I worked barefooted—dabbling like a plastic artist in the dewy & crumbling sand, but later in the day the sand blistered my feet.—There the sun lighted me to hoe beans—pacing slowly backward & forward over that yellow gravelly upland, between the long green rows 15 rods—the one end terminating in a shrub-oak copse where I could rest in the shade, the other in a blackberry field where the green berries deepened their tints by the time I had made another bout—Removing the weeds—putting fresh soil about the bean stems & encouraging this weed I had sown—making the yellow soil [83r] express its summer thoughts in bean leaves & blossoms, rather than in wormwood and piper and millet grass—making the earth say beans instead of grass—This was my work. As I had little aid from horses or cattle—or hired men or boys—or improved implements in husbandry, I was much slower and became much more intimate with my beans than is usual. But labor of the hands—even when pursued to the verge of drudgery, is never the worst form of idleness. It has a constant and imperishable moral—to the scholar it yields a classic result—to the literary it is literary. It is oftenest honest & honorable.

A very *agricola laboriosus*[52] was I to travellers bound westward

52. Thoreau's italics.

Economy sources of the sun—drank at the well of life—or tasted the foun-
Compare *107* tain of God—should[27] communicate to us some of their inspiration.

109 If we would indeed reform mankind by truly Indian—Botanic —magnetic—or natural means—let us strive first to be as simple and well as Nature ourselves. It is rare that we are able to impart wealth to our fellows, and do not [35r*] surround them with our own castoff griefs as an atmosphere, and name it sympathy.

Compare *108* If we will think of it—there is no reformer on the globe—no such philanthropic, benevolent, & charitable man, now engaged in any good work any where, sorely afflicted by the sight of misery *around*[28] him, and animated by the desire to relieve it, who would not instantly and unconsciously sign off from these pure labors, and betake himself to purer, if he had but righted some obscure and perhaps unrecognised private grievance. Let but the spring come to him, let the morning rise over his couch, and he will forsake his generous companions, without apology or explanation—or the need of any.

Compare *107* I would say to the anxious philanthropist—Take up a little life into your pores—strike root and grow—endeavor to encourage the flow of sap in your veins—and help to clothe the human field with green.—If [35v*] your branches wither strike your roots wider and deeper—send your fibres into every kingdom of nature for its contribution, and make the most of that greenness and life which the gods allot you. Send forth your boughs into the ethereal and starry influences—and make firm your trunk against the elements.

Who can foretel what blossoms, what fruits, what private and public advantage may push up through this rind which we call a man.—The traveller may stand by him as a perennial fountain in the desert, and slake his thirst forever.

110 [36r*][29] For my own part I would fain be azad or free like the

27. MS: "should should."

28. Thoreau's italics.

29. This leaf is on version I paper, but the handwriting and ink raise some question as to whether Thoreau wrote this material before he had finished version I. 36v* has only three phrases on it: "Mercury's Reply to Poverty in Carew," "End of *Economy*," "S about Hollowell Farm." 36r is numbered "137"; this number is not part of any sequence in the manuscript.

Where I Lived rent. The atmosphere of our houses has usually lost some of its life
Compare 9 giving principle and it is necessary to our health and spirits frequently to go out, as we say, to take the air.

8 The upright white hewn studs and freshly planed door & window frames gave the house a clean and airy look, especially in the morning, when its timbers seemed saturated with the morning air, and as if by noon some sweet gum would exude from them, and incense go up from the roof. With its frame so slightly clad it seemed like a picture in outlines, a rudimental, airy and primitive hall, a crystallization around me, and reminded [me] of some mountain houses I had seen, which had this fresh auroral atmosphere about them. I had lodged in the house of a sawmiller on the Kanterskill mountains the previous summer, high up as the Pine Orchard, [38r] in the blue-berry & raspberry region, which had this ambrosial character. He was the miller of the Kanterskill Falls, & his family were clean & wholesome people like the house. The latter was not plastered but only lathed, and the inner doors were not hung. It was high-placed, airy, & perfumed; so high that only the winds that swept over the ridge of the Kanterskills passed through it.—The very light & atmosphere in which the most enduring works of art were composed.—On the tops of mountains, as everywhere to hopeful souls, it is always morning.—A clean and pure house which one would enter as naturally and gratefully as he would go under a shade, which might fitly adorn a mountain's brow—and entertain a travelling god, and where a goddess might trail her garment.—Such it seemed to me all our houses should be.

10 When I looked out on the face of the pond it reminded me of a tarn high up on the side of a mountain, and the whole region where I lived seemed more elevated than it actually [38v] was. The pond was like a mountain lake I had seen in the grey of the morning draped with mist, suspended in low weather from the dead willows and bare firs that stood here and there in the water. As the sun arose I saw it throwing off its nightly clothing of mist—and here and there by degrees its soft ripples or its smooth reflecting surface [was revealed]. The mists, like ghosts, were stealthily withdrawing in every direction into the woods, as if from the

Where I Lived about it—more than Sybilline or Delphic. It expressed the infinite
14 and everlasting fertility of the κοσμος or world. It was θεῖον or divine. Only Homer could have named it.

The morning, which is the most memorable season of the day, is the awakening hour; then there is least somnolence in us, and for [40r] an hour at least some part of us seems to awake, which slumbers all the rest of the day & night. After a partial cessation[32] of his sensual life, the soul of man or its organs are reinvigorated each day, and the genius tries again what noble life it can make. All memorable events transpire in morning time, and in a morning atmosphere. Greek poetry and art, and the fairest and most memorable of the actions of men, date from that hour—for all poets and heroes like Memnon are the children of Aurora, and emit their music in the morning. If we are wakeful enough the evening and the morning are but one. The birds sing at morning & at evening, and their notes do not suggest on which side the sun is rising. There is no vaunt & no weariness in them. And to him who has kept pace with the sun it is a perpetual morning.

It matters not what the clocks say, or the attitudes and labors of men—morning is when I am awake and there is a dawn in me.

[40v] Moral reform & improvement are the effort to throw off sleep & somnolency. How is it that men give so poor an account of their day[33] if they have not been slumbering? They are not such poor calculators. If they had not been overcome with drowsiness they would have performed something. The millions are awake enough for physical labor—but only one in a million is awake enough for effective intellectual exertion—only one in a hundred million to a spiritual or divine life—To be awake is to be alive.

My thoughts, which are either the memory or the expectation
15 of my actions are the causes which determine life and death. I know of [no] more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by a conscious endeavor. It is something to be able to paint a particular picture, or to carve a statue, and so to make a few objects beautiful, but it is far more sublime to carve and paint the very atmosphere & medium through [41r]

32. MS first read: "sensation."

33. The words "their day" were written over an erasure, possibly of "themselves."

Where I Lived *17*

the midst of this civilization, such are the clouds & storms, and quicksands, and thousand and one items to be allowed for, a man has to live, if he would not founder and go to the bottom & not make his port at all, by dead reckoning, and he must [42v] be a great calculator indeed who succeeds. Simplify—Simplify. Instead of 3 meals a day, if it be necessary eat but one, instead of a hundred dishes—5—and reduce other things in proportion. Our life is like a German confederacy made up of petty states—forever fluctuating and even a German cannot tell you how it is bounded at any moment.

The nation itself with all its so-called internal improvements, which by the way are all external and superficial—is just such an unwieldly and overgrown establishment cluttered with furniture and tripped up by its own traps, ruined by luxury and heedless expense & want of calculation as the million households in the land, and the only cure for it as for them is in a rigid economy—a stern & more than Spartan simplicity of life and grandeur of purpose. It lives too fast.—Men think that it is essential that the nation make lard oil—and export ice—and talk thro' a telegraph and ride 30 miles an hour—[43r] without a doubt, but whether we should live like chimpanzees & baboons or like men is a little uncertain. If we don't get out sleepers, and forge rails, and devote days and nights to the work, but go to tinkering upon our own lives to improve them who will build railroads? And if rail-roads are not built, how shall we get to heaven in season? When I first got a cinder in my eye I suspected that I was not going to heaven. But if we stay at home and mind our business who will want rail-roads? Did you ever think what these sleepers are that underlie the rail-road? Each one is a man—an Irish-man, or a Yankee-man—The rails are laid on them, and they are covered with sand, and the cars run smoothly over them!—They are sound sleepers I assure you—And every few years a new lot are laid down and run over. So that if a few have the pleasure of riding on a rail—the rest have the misfortune [43v] to be ridden upon. And when they run over a man that is walking in his sleep—a supernumerary sleeper in the wrong position *& wake him up*, they suddenly stop the cars, and make a hue and cry about it, as if this were an excep-

Where I Lived
Not in text

On the Ruins of Rome?
The love of the new,
The unfathomed blue,
The wind in the wood,
All fortune good,
The sun-lit tree,
The small chicadee,
The dusty highways,
What Scripture says,
This pleasant weather
And all signs together—
The river's meander,
All things, in short,
Forbid me to wander
In deed or in thought,
In cold or in drouth,
Not seek the sunny South,
But make the whole tour
Of the sunny Present Hour.
For here if thou fail,
Where canst thou prevail?
If you love not
Your own land most,
You'll find nothing lovely
Upon a distant coast.

[45r] 17. If you love not
The latest sun-set,
What is there in pictures
Or old gems set?

If no man should travel
Till he had the means,
There'd be little travelling
For Kings or for Queens.
The means! What are they?
They are the wherewithal
Great expenses to pay;—

Reading 1 time which we really improve is past present or future. I might say that the student always studies antiques. In our studies we do not look forward but backward into antiquity with [46r] redoubled pauses. Where is that lost first page of history? We have never found the literature that dated from an antiquity sufficiently remote. The most adventurous student seeks the remotest antiquity—the history of a time, as it were, prior to time.—Or, if we prefer, such is the Protean character of things, we may say that he always interprets prophecies and oracles, and is interested solely in the future.—In accumulating property for ourselves, or our posterity, in founding a family, or a state, or acquiring fame, we are mortal, but in dealing with truth we are immortal, and need fear no change nor accident.—The oldest Egyptian or Hindoo philosopher raised a corner of the veil from the statue of divinity, and still the trembling robe remains raised, and I gaze upon as fresh a glory as he did, since it was I in him that was then so bold, and he in me that now reviews the vision. [46v] No dust has settled upon that robe—no time has elapsed since that divinity was revealed.

2 I kept a Homer on my table through the summer, though I only glanced at his page now and then. Incessant labor with my hands made more study impossible. Yet I sustained myself by the prospect of such reading in future. Here of course I could read the Iliad, if I would have books, as well as in Ionia, and not wish myself in Boston or New York—or London or Rome; in such a place as this rather Homer lived and sung.—I read one or two shallow books of travel in the intervals of my work, till that employment made me ashamed of myself, and I asked myself where it was then that I lived?

3 The student may read Homer or Aeschylus in the original Greek without danger of dissipation or luxuriousness, for to do so implies that he should in some measure emulate their heroes, and consecrate morning hours to their pages. The [47r] 21. heroic books, though printed in the character of our mother tongue, will always be in a language dead to degenerate times, and we must laboriously seek the meaning of each word and line, conjecturing a larger sense than common use permits out of what wisdom and

Reading daily colloquies & vaporous breath. When I ask myself whether
4 any unpremeditated speech or conversation of equal length, even by the wisest of mankind and the writers [48v] of books, would abide the myriad and impartial tests of time, which some rare & wonderful books have so triumphantly withstood, I cannot doubt the justice of this distinction.

3 Books must be read as deliberately and reservedly as they were written. The herd of men who merely spoke the Greek & Latin tongues in the middle ages were not entitled by the accident of birth, to read the works of genius, written in those languages—for these were not written in Greek or Latin peculiarly. The men who glibly spoke the language of the Roman and of the Greek, for their mother-tongue, did not learn their nobler dialects, but the very materials on which they were written, were waste paper to them, while they prized a cheap contemporary learning. The classics were virtually forgotten and lost. So distinct are the spoken & the written language. But when the several nations of Europe had acquired rude original [49r] 25. languages sufficient for conversation and the daily intercourse of life, then first learning revived, and scholars who were seers in their kind arose, who could discern from this remote standpoint the treasures of antiquity; and works of genius first began to be read, and perhaps found their truest *& fittest* audience when their language could no longer be spoken anywhere. What the multitude could not *hear*,[37] after the lapse of ages a few scholars *read*.[38] And a few scholars only are still reading them.

5 A word fitly written is the most choice and select of things. No wonder that Alexander carried the Iliad with him on his expeditions in a precious casket. It has something at once more intimate and more universal than any other work of art. It may be translated into every language, and breathed from every human mouth, and become anew the product as it were of our physical organs, as its sense is recognized by our intellectual ones. It is the work of art nearest to life itself. [49v] Such are the traces of Zoroaster & Confucius & Moses, indelible on the sands of the

37. Thoreau's italics.

38. Thoreau's italics.

Reading & equable exercise of their art, the life-long, heroic labors &
6 literary architecture of the ancients. Not one in many thousands even of those who are said to have learned their language, have ever read them.

I know that it is advised by some to overlook at last and forget what ancient and heroic men have done, what wise and studious men have taught, what inspired poets have sung—

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9 [51r][39] only as far as easy reading—the primers and classbooks, and when we leave school the Little Reading and story books, which are for boys and beginners, and our reading & our conversation and thinking are all on a very low and inferior level—low statured & feeble and worthy only of pigmies & mannikins.

10 I aspire to be acquainted with wiser men than this our Concord soil has produced—whose names are hardly known here. Or shall I hear the name of Plato and never read his book? As if Plato were my townsman and I never saw him—my next neighbor, and I never heard him speak, or attended to the wisdom of his words. But how actually is it? His Dialogues which contain what was immortal in him, lie on the next shelf, and yet I never read them. *I describe my own case here.* We are under-bred and low-lived, and illiterate—and in this respect, I confess, I do not make any very broad distinction between the illiterateness of my townsman who cannot read at all, and the illiterateness of my townsman who [51v] has learned to read only what is for children & feeble intellects. We should be as good as the worthies of antiquity—but partly by first knowing how good they were. We are a race of titmen & soar but little higher in our intellectual flights than the columns of the daily paper.

11 There are words addressed to our condition which, if we could hear and understand would be as salutary as the morning or the spring to our lives, and possibly put a new aspect on the face of things. How many a man has dated a new era in his life, a second birth as it were from the reading of a book? The book exists for us

39. This leaf is in the Berg Collection, New York Public Library.

Sounds 2 thoughts would run upon my labor mainly, or rather where they pleased, and I had not leisure to drill myself. I only read one sentence of Homer to a week of hoeing—as for instance how Ajax struggled with the Trojans to ward off fire from the ships of the Greeks, while Patroclus was supplicating Achilles for his armor & his Myrmidons. I read no more than this—at once—still remembering & repeating it—but I imagined more things than are in Homer while I hoed.

Sometimes in a spring morning when the season of work had not yet arrived *or later in the summer when it was already past*[40] having performed my accustomed ablutions, I sat in my sunny door way from the earliest dawn, wrapt in a reverie, amid the pines and hickories and sumacks, while the birds sang around and flitted noiseless over my head and out at the open window—in undisturbed solitude & stillness, except when a bough fell like a fan broken by its own weight, in my sumack grove, when the atmosphere was perfume & incense, and every sound the key [53v] to unheard harmonies, until by the sun's rays falling in at my west window, or the noise of some traveller on the distant highway, I was reminded of the lapse of time. I am sensible that I waxed and grew in these intervals, as corn grows in the night, and they were far better than any work of my hands. I realized what the oriental philosophers meant by contemplation & the forsaking of works. It was quite impossible to have performed anything, and wise persons would not propose that any deed should be substituted therefor. They were little intervals during which I journeyed, and anticipated other states of existence.

For the most part indeed I knew not how the hours went. I was accustomed to say to myself—certainly I am not living that heroic life I had dreamed of, and yet all my veins are full of life, and nature whispers no reproach. The day advanced as if to light some work of mine—and I defer to other men in my thought, as if there were somewhere busier [54r] 41. men. It was morning, and lo! it is now evening, and nothing memorable is accomplished. Yet my nature is almost content with this. What are these pines & these birds about? What is this pond adoing? I must know a little

40. Originally read "season of work was past or had not yet arrived."

Where I Lived *17*

the midst of this civilization, such are the clouds & storms, and quicksands, and thousand and one items to be allowed for, a man has to live, if he would not founder and go to the bottom & not make his port at all, by dead reckoning, and he must [42v] be a great calculator indeed who succeeds. Simplify—Simplify. Instead of 3 meals a day, if it be necessary eat but one, instead of a hundred dishes—5—and reduce other things in proportion. Our life is like a German confederacy made up of petty states—forever fluctuating and even a German cannot tell you how it is bounded at any moment.

The nation itself with all its so-called internal improvements, which by the way are all external and superficial—is just such an unwieldly and overgrown establishment cluttered with furniture and tripped up by its own traps, ruined by luxury and heedless expense & want of calculation as the million households in the land, and the only cure for it as for them is in a rigid economy—a stern & more than Spartan simplicity of life and grandeur of purpose. It lives too fast.—Men think that it is essential that the nation make lard oil—and export ice—and talk thro' a telegraph and ride 30 miles an hour—[43r] without a doubt, but whether we should live like chimpanzees & baboons or like men is a little uncertain. If we don't get out sleepers, and forge rails, and devote days and nights to the work, but go to tinkering upon our own lives to improve them who will build railroads? And if rail-roads are not built, how shall we get to heaven in season? When I first got a cinder in my eye I suspected that I was not going to heaven. But if we stay at home and mind our business who will want rail-roads? Did you ever think what these sleepers are that underlie the rail-road? Each one is a man—an Irish-man, or a Yankee-man—The rails are laid on them, and they are covered with sand, and the cars run smoothly over them!—They are sound sleepers I assure you—And every few years a new lot are laid down and run over. So that if a few have the pleasure of riding on a rail—the rest have the misfortune [43v] to be ridden upon. And when they run over a man that is walking in his sleep—a supernumerary sleeper in the wrong position *& wake him up*, they suddenly stop the cars, and make a hue and cry about it, as if this were an excep-

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more and be forever ready. Instead of singing like the birds, I sometimes silently smile at my incessant good fortune. As the field-sparrow has its trill sitting on the hickory before my door, so have I my chuckle or suppressed warble, which he may hear out of my nest. I don't know that I bear any flowers or fruits. Methinks if the birds & flowers try me by their standard I shall not be found wanting, but men try one another not so. *Sounds* 2

Man is still like a plant, and his satisfactions are like those of a vegetable. His rarest life is least his own. I am not the worker but the work. The elements are working their will with me.

I seemed to have this advantage in my mode of life over those who were obliged to look abroad for amusement—to theaters and to society, [54v] that my life itself was now my amusement, and never ceased to be novel. It was a drama of many scenes which would never end. If we were always getting our living and regulating our lives according to the last and divinest mode we had learned—we should never be weary of living. Follow your genius closely enough, and it will not fail to show you a fresh prospect every hour. 3

Housework was a pleasant pastime. When my floor was dirty I rose early and setting all my furniture out of doors on the grass, dashed water upon the floor, and sprinkled white sand from the pond upon it, and then with a broom I scrubbed it clean & white, and by the time the villagers had broken their fast, the morning sun had dried my house sufficiently to allow me to move in again —and my meditations were almost uninterrupted—I trust that none of my hearers will be so uncharitable as to look into my house now—after hearing this, at the end of an unusually dirty winter, with [55r] critical housewife's eyes, for I intend to celebrate the first bright & unquestionable spring morning by scrubbing my house with sand until it is as white as a lily—or, at any rate, as the washer-woman said of her clothes, as white as a "wiolet."

It was pleasant to see my whole household effects out on the grass, making a little pile like a gipsey's pack; and my 3 legged table from which I did not remove the books & pen & ink, standing amid the pines & hickories *bed & bedstead making but one budget.*

inspiring. Appearance whether [56v] fair or foul is equally shallow *Where I Live*
and dangerous—I perceive that we inhabitants of Concord live *21*
this mean life, that we do, because our vision does not penetrate the surface of things—we think that that *is* which *appears*[41] to be. If a man should walk through the village and see only the reality where think you would the mill-dam go to? If he should give us an account of the realities he beheld there we should not recognize the place by his description. Look at a meeting-house, or a court-house—or a jail—or a shop or a dwelling house and say what this thing really is before a true gaze, and they would all go to pieces in your account of them. Men esteem truth remote in the outskirts of the system, behind the furthest star, before Adam and after the last man.—In eternity there is indeed something true and sublime. But all these times & places & occasions are now. God himself culminates in the

[At some time after he had numbered the pages, Thoreau apparently removed one leaf here; it contained pages 47 and 48 of his numbering; he finished the sentence at the end of 56v on the bottom of 58v, but he did not complete the unfinished sentence on 58v. The handwriting on 58v is not that of version I.]

[58v] present moment and will never be more divine in the lapse of all the ages—And after all we are enabled to apprehend at all what is sublime and noble only by the perpetual instilling and drenching of the reality that surrounds us.

I think that the universe really needs no patching from us—and its Maker no condolence. Let us remember that God is well

[57r] 49. Why should we live with such hurry and waste of life? *18*
We are determined to starve before we are hungry. Men say[42] that a stitch in time saves nine, and so they take a thousand stitches today to save nine tomorrow. Let us spend one day as *22*
deliberately as nature and not be thrown off the track by every nut-shell and mosquito's wing that falls on the rails.

Let us rise early, and fast, or break fast gently. Let company come and let company go—let the bells ring and the children cry—determined to make a day of it—Why should we knock

41. Thoreau's italics. 42. MS: "say say."

you know how to throw in Don Carlos [58v] and the Infanta— *Where I Lived*
and Don Pedro & Seville & Granada—from time to time in the *19*
right proportions—and serve up a bullfight when other entertainments fail it will be true to the letter, and give as good an idea of the exact state or ruin of things in Spain as the most succinct and lucid report under this head in the newspapers. [See above for rest of 58v]

[59r] 53. If you stand right fronting & face to face to a fact— *22*
you will see the sun glimmer on both its surfaces, as if it were a cimeter, and feel its sweet edge dividing you through the heart and marrow—and so you will happily conclude your mortal career.

Be it life or death we crave only reality. If we are really dying let us hear the rattle in our throats and feel cold in the extremeties —If we are alive, let us go about our business.

I am glad to remember as I sit by my door that I too am a re- *Sounds*
mote descendant of a heroic race of men of whom there is tradition—in one sense a fellow wanderer and survivor of Ulysses, for *Not in text*
instance. My life passes amid the pines of New England. The pitch pine grows before my door unlike any glyph I have seen sculptured or painted. Where are the heroes whose exploits shall appear to posterity sculptured on monuments amid [59v] such natural forms as these—as heroes and demigods amid the lotuses and palms of the east. What new marks shall we add to the Red Pipestone Quarry?

In my front-yard grow the black-berry and strawberry & the *4*
life-everlasting—Johnswort & golden rod—& shruboak and sandcherry & blue-berry and ground-nut. The sumacks grew luxuriantly about my house—pushing up through the embankment I had made, and growing 5 or 6 feet the first season. Its broad pinnate tropical leaf was pleasant *though strange* to look upon. The large buds suddenly pushing out *late in the spring* from dry and brittle sticks which had seemed to be dead, developed themselves as it were by magic into graceful green & tender boughs an inch in diameter—and sometimes as I sat at my window—so heedlessly did they grow and tax their brittle stems—I heard a fresh & green bough [60r] suddenly fall to the ground,

weary and heavy laden that dwell within ye.—With such huge *Sounds*
and lumbering civility, the country hands a chair to the city. All *7*
the Indian huckle-berry hills are stript—all the cranberry meadows are raked into the city. Up comes the [61v] cotton, down goes the woven cloth—up comes the silk—down goes the woollen—up come the books—but down goes the wit that writes them.

When I meet the engine with its train of cars moving off with *8*
planetary motion—or rather like a comet, for the beholder knows not if with that velocity & that direction it will ever revisit this system—for its orbit does not look like a returning curve—with its steam cloud like a banner streaming behind in golden & silver wreaths—like many a fleecy cloud that I have seen in a summer day—high in the heavens—unfolding its masses to the light—as if this travelling demigod would ere long take the sunset sky for the livery of his train—When I hear the iron horse make the hills echo with his snort like thunder—shaking the earth with his feet, and breathing fire and smoke from his nostrils—What kind of winged horse or fiery dragon they will [62r] put into the new mythology I don't know—It seems as if the earth had got a race now worthy to inhabit it—If all were as it seems, and men made the elements their servants for noble ends. If the cloud that hangs over the engine were the perspiration of heroic deeds—or as innocent and and beneficent to men as that which hovers over the farmer's fields—then the elements and nature herself would cheerfully accompany men on their errands, and be their escort.

The stabler of the iron horse was up early this winter morning *9*
by the light of the stars amid the mountains, to fodder and harness his steed—Fire too was awakened thus early to put the vital heat in him and get him off—If the enterprise were as innocent as it is early!—If the snow lies deep they strap on his snow-shoes, and with the giant plow, plow a furrow from the mountains to the seaboard, in which the cars like a following drill-barrow [62v] sprinkle all the restless men & floating merchandise in the country for seed. All the day the Firesteed flies over the country stopping only that his master may rest, and I am awakened by his tramp and defiant snort at midnight, when in some remote glen

Sounds
Not in text

And the insidious steps of nightly foes.
I fear imprisonment has dulled thy wit,
Or ingrained servitude extinguished it.
But no,—dim memory of the days of yore,
By Brahmapootra & the Jumna's shore,
Where thy proud race flew swiftly o'er the heath,
And sought its food the jungle's shade beneath,—
Has taught thy wings to seek yon friendly trees,
As erst by Indus' banks & far Ganges.

[63v] I am perhaps the only inhabitant of the town or of the state *22*
who does not hear the cock crow. Even the sailor on the Atlantic and Pacific is awakened by this familiar sound. I keep neither dog, cat, cow, pig, nor hens—so that there is a deficiency of domestic sounds—neither the churn—nor the spinning wheel—nor even the singing of the kettle, nor the hissing of the urn, nor children crying—to comfort one. An old-fashioned man would have lost his senses and died of ennui—Not even rats in the wall—for they are starved out, but only squirrels on the roof and under the floor—A whippoorwill on the ridge-pole, a blue jay screaming in the yard—a hare or woodchuck under the house—a screech-owl or a cat-owl behind it—a flock of wild geese or a laughing loon in the pond—a fox to bark in the night—But not even a lark or an oriole—those wild plantation birds ever visit my [64r] 71. clearing. No cockrils to crow nor hens to cackle in the yard—no yard! but unfenced nature reaching up to your very sills. A young forest growing up under your windows & wild sumacks and blackberry vines breaking through into your cellar—Sturdy pitch-pines rubbing and creaking against the shingles for want of room—their roots reaching quite under the house—Instead of a scuttle or a blind blown off in the gale—a pine tree snapped off or torn up by the roots behind your house for fuel. Instead of no path to the front yard gate in the great snow, no gate, no front yard—and no path to the civilized world.

Sometimes I hear the bells, the Lincoln bell—the Acton bell— *15*
the Bedford bell & the Concord bell, when the wind is fair—a faint and sweet almost natural melody. An invention worth importing into the wilderness.

same—down to the least distended, leakiest, & flabbiest paunched —that there be no mistake—And then the bowl goes round again and again until the sun disperses the morning mist, and only the patriarch is not under the pond—but vainly bellowing Troonk—from time to time & pausing for a reply. *Sounds* 21

When other birds are still the owls take up the strain—like [65v] mourning women their ancient U-lu-lu. Their dismal scream is truly Ben Jonsonian—wise midnight hags. It is no honest and blunt Tu-whit to-who—of the poets, but without jesting a most solemn graveyard ditty—the mutual consolations of suicide lovers remembering the pangs and the delights of supernal love in the infernal groves. Yet I love to hear their wailing—their doleful responses trilled along the woodside, reminding me sometimes of music and singing birds, as if it were the dark and tearful side of music—the regrets and sighs that would fain be sung.—They are the spirits—the low spirits and melancholy forebodings of fallen souls that once in human shape night-walked the earth, and did the deeds of darkness, now expiating with their wailing hymns and threnodies their sins, in the scenery of their transgressions.—They give me a new sense of the vastness and the mystery of that nature which is our common dwelling—Oh-o-o-o-o-o—that I never had been bor- 18

[One leaf missing; probably contained the end of "Sounds," 18, and beginning of "Solitude," 1.]

[66r] 81. rabbit roam the fields & woods without fear. We associate wildness with the night—and silence—But the repose is never complete; nature has her watchmen who are links connecting the days of animated life. *Solitude* 1

There seems always to be sufficient space about us. Our horizon is never quite at our elbows. The *thick* wood is not just at my door —nor the pond—but somewhat is always clearing—appropriated and fenced in some way & familiar & worn by us—reclaimed from nature. For what reason have I this vast range and circuit in nature—a square mile and more of unfrequented forest for my privacy, abandoned to me by men? Surely we do not live crowded.—My nearest neighbor is more than a mile distant, and 3

solitude but once, and that was a few weeks after I went to the pond to live—when for an hour I doubted if the near neighborhood of man was not essential to a serene and healthy life. To be alone was something unpleasant. But I was at the same time conscious of a slight insanity in my mood, and seemed to foresee my recovery. In the midst of a gentle rain while these thoughts prevailed there suddenly seemed such sweet & beneficent society in nature—in the very pattering of the drops, and in every sound and sight around my house, an infinite and unaccountable friendliness all at once like an atmosphere sustaining me, as made the fancied advantages of human neighborhood insignificant—and I have never [68r] 85. thought of them since. Every little pine needle expanded and swelled with sympathy—and befriended me. I was so distinctly made aware of the presence of something kindred to me, even in scenes which we are accustomed to call wild and dreary, and also that the nearest of blood to me and humanest was not a person nor a villager, that I thought no place could ever be strange to me. *Solitude 4*

Yet I think that I love society as much as most, and am apt enough to fasten myself like a blood-sucker for the time to any full-blooded man that comes in my way. I am naturally no hermit—but should probably sit out the sturdiest frequenter of the bar-room, if my business called me that way. *Visitors 1*

Not in text

What do we ask?
Some worthy task;
Never to run
Till that be done,
That never done
[68v] Under the sun.
By might & main
Health and strength gain,
So to give nerve
To our slenderness,
Yet some mighty pain
We would sustain,
So to preserve

ate himself for his day's solitude. And hence he wonders how the *Solitude*
student can sit alone in the house all night and most of the day *12*
without [69v] ennui and the blues, but he does not realize that the student, though in the house, is still at work in *his*[44] field, and chopping in *his*[45] woods, as the farmer in his, and in his turn seeks the same recreation & society that he does.

Society is commonly too cheap—We meet at very short inter- *13*
vals, not having had time to acquire any new value for each other. We meet at meals 3 times a day, and give each other a new taste of that old musty cheese that we are. We have had to agree on a certain set of rules—called etiquette and politeness to make this frequent meeting tolerable—and that we need not come to open war. We meet at the post office and at the sociable, and about the fireside every night—We meet incessantly and live thick, and are in each other's way, and stumble over one another—And I think that we thus lose some respect for one another. Certainly less frequency would suffice for [70r] 89. all important and hearty communications. Consider the girls in a factory never alone—hardly in their dreams. It would be better if there were but one inhabitant to a square mile—as where I live. The value of a man is not in his skin that we should touch him. Solitude is not measured by the *12*
miles of space that intervene between a man and his fellows—The diligent student in one of the crowded hives of Cambridge College is as solitary as a dervish in the desert.[46]

I have a great deal of company in my house—especially in the *15*
morning when nobody calls. I will suggest a few comparisons—so that some one may convey an idea of my situation. I am no more alone than the loon in the pond that laughs aloud—or than Walden pond itself. What company has that lonely lake, I pray?

44. Thoreau's italics.

45. Thoreau's italics.

46. The following preliminary draft of several sentences of "Solitude," 14, is on a scrap of paper pasted to 70r at this point; Thoreau did it at later date: "I have heard of a man lost in the woods and dying from famine and exhaustion at the foot of a tree whose loneliness was relieved by the grotesque visions, by which owing to bodily weakness and a diseased imagination he was surrounded and which he believed to be relieved [real]. There are those who owing to bodily & mental health & strength are continually cheered by the like society and never realize that they are alone."

brightness fade—and the winds would sigh humanely—and the clouds weep rain—and the woods shed their leaves and put on mourning in mid summer if any man should ever for a just cause grieve.—Shall I not have intelligence with the earth? Am I not partly leaves and vegetable mould myself? God is my father & my friend—men are my brothers—but nature is my mother & my sister. *Solitude* *17*

What is the pill that will keep us well—serene—contented? Not my or thy great-grandfather's—but our great grandmother Nature's universal vegetable botanic medicines—by which she has kept herself young always and outlived so many old Parrs in her day—and fed her health with their decaying fatness—For my panacea—instead of one of those quack phials of a mixture dipped out of Acheron & the dead sea which come out of those long low black schooner looking wagons which we sometimes see made [72r] 93. to carry bottles—let me have a draught of undiluted morning air. *18*

Morning Air! If men will not drink of this at the fountain head of the day—why then we must even bottle up some and sell it in the shops for the benefit of those who have lost their subscription ticket to morning time in this world. But remember that it will not keep quite till noonday even in the coolest cellar—but drive out the stopples long ere that & follow westward the steps of Aurora.

I am no worshipper of Hygeia, who was the daughter of that old herb doctor Æsculapius, and who is represented on monuments "holding a serpent in one hand and in the other a cup, out of which the serpent sometimes drank"—but rather of Hebe—cup-bearer to Jupiter—who was the daughter of Juno & wild lettuce, & "had the power of restoring gods & men to the vigor of youth." She was probably the only thoroughly sound-conditioned healthy & robust young lady that ever walked this globe, and wherever she came it was spring.

[72v] As for men, they will hardly fail one anywhere. I have had more of their society since I lived in the woods than at any other period of my life. I met many men there under more favorable circumstances than I could anywhere else. *Visitors* *7*

Who should come to my lodge this morning but a true Homeric *8*

the degree of trust & reverence—and a child is not made a man, *Visitors*
but kept a child. When nature made him she gave him content- *11*
ment for his portion, a strong body and health and propped him,
as it were, on every side with reverence & reliance—that he might
live out his 3 score years and ten a child—He was about 28 *8*
[74r] 97. years old—stout & sluggish, with a strong thick fleshy &
sunburnt neck & dark bushy hair & dull sleepy & quiet blue eye
—breathed hard and smelled of his work. He wore a flat grey
cloth cap—a dingy wool-colored great coat which draped and
concealed his body—& cow-hide boots. He was strong-limbed
and a great consumer of meat, usually carrying his dinner to his
work—a couple of miles past my house—in a tin pail—cold meats
—often cold woodchucks which his dog had caught, and coffee in
a stone bottle which dangled by a string, & sometimes he offered
me a drink. He came along early, crossing my beanfield, though
without any anxiety or haste to get to his work, such as Yankees
exhibit. Frequently he would leave his dinner in the bushes, when
his dog had caught a woodchuck *by the way*, and go back a mile
and a half to dress it, and leave it in the cellar of the [74v] house
where he boarded—often deliberating for half an hour whether
he could not sink it in the pond safely till nightfall—loving to
dwell long upon these themes. He would say as he went by in the
morning, "How thick the pigeons are! If working every day were
not my trade, I could get all the meat I should want by hunt[ing].
—Pigeons—woodchucks—rabbits—partridges, by George, I
could get all I should want for a week in one day."

If others had cultivated their intellectual faculties till they *11*
astonished him—his physical contentment and endurance—like
the cousin to the pine & the rock was equally astonishing to them.
I asked him once if he was not sometimes tired at night after work-
ing all day, and he answered with a sincere and serious look—
quite truthful—"Gorrappit I never was tired in my life." It
sounded like the triumph of the physical [75r] man. It suggested
what a rigorous and true training might accomplish for all.

Sometimes I saw him at his own work in the woods felling trees, *10*
and he would greet me with a laugh of irrepressible satisfaction
and a salutation in Canadian French—though he spoke English

Speaking of Plato's definition of a man one day, he said that the knee of the cock turned the other way from man's, and that was an important difference. [76v] He was so simply & naturally humble that humility was no distinct quality in him—nor could he conceive of it. Wiser men were demigods to him. He particularly reverenced the writer and the preacher. Their performances were miracles. When I told him that I wrote a good deal he thought for a long time that it was merely the hand writing I meant. I asked him if he ever wished to write his thoughts—He said that he had read and written letters for those who could not —but he never tried to write thoughts—no—he could not—he could not tell what to put first—it would kill him & then there was spelling to be attended to at the same time. *Visitors* 13 11

He would exclaim sometimes—"How I love to talk! By George, I could talk all day. You make me think of things I never thought of before." 13

Sometimes there would come half a dozen men to my house at once—healthy and sturdy working [77r] men, descended from sound bodies of men, and still transmitting arms & legs & bowels from remote generations to posterity. They had a rude wisdom and courtesy which I love. I met them so often in the woods—that they began to look upon me at last as one of their kin. One a handsome younger man a sailor-like—Greek-like man—says to me to-day—"Sir, I like your notions—I think I shall live so myself. Only I should like a wilder country, where there is more game. I have been among the Indians near Apallachicola. I have lived with them. I like your kind of life. Good-day, I wish you success and happiness." *Not in text*

They came in troops on Sundays in clean shirts, with washed hands & faces, and fresh twigs in their hands.

There appeared in some of these men even at a distance, a genuine magnanimity equal to Greek or Roman, of unexplored and uncontaminated descent—The expression of their grimmed & sunburnt features made me think of Epaminondas of Socrates & Cato. [77v] The most famous philosophers & poets seem in some respects infantile beside the easy and successful life of natural men. These faces—homely—hard and scarred like the rocks,

Visitors were a forsaken habit—but we naturally practiced abstinence.
5 To copy an old joke—we were hungry enough for one but not enough for 20—and this was never felt to be an offence against hospitality, but the most proper and considerate course. The waste and decay of physical life which so often needs repair seemed miraculously retarded—and the vital vigor stood its ground. I could entertain thus a thousand as well as 20, and I am not aware that any ever went away disappointed or hungry from my house—when they found me at home. So easy is it—though many house-keepers doubt it—to establish new and better customs in the place of the old—to quote the lines which one of my visitors inscribed upon a yellow walnut leaf—and which make part of the motto of my house—

> "Arrived there, the little house they fill,
> Ne looke for entertainment, where none was:
> Rest is their feast, and all things at their will:
> The noblest mind the best contentment has."

6 [80v] When Winslow—afterward Governor of the Plymouth colony went with a companion on a visit of ceremony to Massassoit on foot through the woods, and arrived tired and hungry they were well received by the king—but nothing was said about eating that day. When the night arrived to quote their own words "He laid us on the bed with himself & his wife, they at the one end, and we at the other, it being only planks laid a foot from the ground, and a thin mat upon them. Two more of his chief men, for want of room, pressed by and upon us; so that we were worse weary of our lodging than of our journey." At one o'clock the next day Massassoit "brought two fishes that he had shot" about "thrice as big as a bream." "These being boiled there were at least forty looked for a share in them. The most ate of them. This meal only we had in two nights and a day; and had not one of us bought a partridge, we had taken our journey fasting." For fear they should be lightheaded for want of sleep on account of "the [81r] savages' barbarous singing (for they used to sing themselves asleep)" and for want of food, and that they might get home while they had strength to travel—they departed. The fact was—the

Bean-Field the seed he cries "Drop it—drop it—cover it up—cover it up—
5 pull it up—pull-it-up—pull-it-up." But this was not corn, and so it was safe from such enemies as he. You may wonder what his rigmarole—his amateur Paganini performances on one string or on 20 have to do with your planting and yet prefer it to leached ashes or plaster.

6 As I drew a still fresher soil about my rows with my hoe—I disturbed the ashes of unrecorded nations who in primeval days lived under these heavens—and their small implements of war and hunting were brought to the light of this modern day—They lay mingled with other natural stones some of which bore the marks of having been burned by the Indian fires, and some had only been burned by the sun—and also with bits of pottery and glass brought by the recent cultivators of the soil.

[85r] When my hoe tinkled against the stones in my bean-field —that music *echoed to the woods & the sky &* was an accompaniment to my labor which yielded an instant and immeasurable crop—*It was no longer beans that I hoed, nor I that hoed beans,* and I confess that I sometimes remembered with pity my acquaintances who had gone to the city to attend the oratorios—The night-hawk circled over head in the sunny afternoons—like a mote in the eye, or in heaven's eye—falling from time to time with a swoop & a sound as if the heavens were rent—torn at last to very rags & tatters—and yet a seamless cope remains. Small imps that fill the air & lay their eggs on the ground—on bare rocks on the tops of bare hills, where few have found them. In their flight they were graceful and slender—like waves & ripples caught up from the pond—as leaves are raised by the wind—to float in the heavens—such kindredship is in nature. The hawk is aerial brother of the wave which he sails over and surveys [85v] those his perfect air inflated wings answering to the elemental unfledged pinions of the sea.—When I pause to lean upon my hoe these sights & sounds I saw and heard anywhere in the row—the inexhaustible entertainment which the country offers.—Sometimes I was attracted by the passage of wild pigeons from this wood to that, with their slight tantivy & carrier haste—or from under some rotten stump my hoe turned up a sluggish portent[ous] outlandish spotted

Bean-Field husbandry is degraded with us and the farmer leads the meanest
17 of lives. He knows not nature but as a robber. We are apt to forget that the sun looks on our cultivated fields, & on the prairies and forests without distinction. They reflect and absorb his rays alike. In the light of the [89v] sun the earth is all equally cultivated like a garden and yields every where to an irresistible civilization.—What though I value the seed of these beans & harvest that in the fall of the year,—this broad field which I have looked at so long—looks not to me as the farmer but away from me to influences more genial to it. It matters little after all whether the fields fill the barns of the husbandmen. The true husbandman will cease from anxiety—as the chestnut woods are not concerned whether they bear chestnuts this year or not—and finish his labor with every day relinquishing all claim to the produce of his fields—The landscape is deformed when there is an attempt to appropriate what cannot be appropriated.

Village After sitting still in my house or working in my field in the fore-
1 noon, I usually bathed again in the pond swimming across one of its coves for a stint, and shook the dust of labor from my feet & clothes, and [90r] 129. for the afternoon was as free as the bird that has built its nest and reared its brood.

Every day or two—I strolled to the village to hear some of the gossip which is incessantly going on here—either circulating from mouth to mouth, or from newspaper to newspaper—and which taken in homeopathic doses was really as refreshing in its way as the rustle of leaves and the peeping of frogs. As I walked in the woods to see the birds & squirrels—so I walked in the village to see the men and boys—instead of the wind among the pines I heard the carts rattle.

The village seemed to me a great news room, and one side to support it—as at Redding and Company's in State Street—they kept nuts & raisins—salt & meal and other groceries.—Some have such a vast appetite for the former commodity—and such sound digestive organs that they can sit forever in public avenues without stirring and let it simmer and whisper through them like the Etesian winds—or as if inhaling ether—it only producing numbness [90v] and insensibility to pain, without affecting the

Ponds [94r] midst of pine woods—without any visible inlet or outlet but
5 by the clouds and by evaporations. Successive nations have drank
8 at it and passed away. Perhaps on that spring morning when Adam & Eve were driven out of Eden Walden pond was already in existence, and even then breaking up in a gentle spring rain—accompanied with mist and a southerly wind—and covered with myriads of ducks and geese that had not heard of the fall.—Even then it had commenced its periodical rise and fall, and had clarified its waters, and had colored them of the hue they now wear—and obtained a patent of heaven to be the only Walden pond in the world,—and distiller of celestial dews—Who knows in how many unremembered nations' literatures this has been the Castalian fountain—or what nymphs presided over it in the golden age!

7 It is surrounded by a belt of paving stones extending a rod or two into the water, and then the bottom is pure sand, except in the deepest parts—or where [94v] it is more than 40 feet deep where there is usually a little sediment and a bright green weed is brought up on anchors.

6 It is so pure and clear that the bottom can easily be seen in 25 or 30 feet of water. Once in the winter, many years ago, when I had been cutting holes through the ice in order to catch pickerel, as I stepped ashore I heaved my axe back on to the ice—but as if some evil genius had directed it, it slid 4 or 5 rods directly into one of the holes—where the water was 20 feet deep. Out of curiosity I lay down on the ice and looked through the hole, when I saw the axe a little on one side, standing on its head—with its helve erect and gently swaying to and fro with the pulse of the pond—and there it might have stood erect & swaying till in the course of time the handle rotted off if I had not disturbed it. Is a thing lost when you know where it is—and how to get it? Making another hole directly over the axe with an ice chisel which I had—and cutting down the

[Probably three leaves missing; they undoubtedly contained the rest of "The Ponds," 6, and probably "Baker Farm," 3 and 4.]

Baker Farm [95r] 147. hoping to get a sight of the well bottom—to complete
5 my survey of the premises—but there, alas, are shallow quick-

Brute Neighbors 9 legs inside clinging to the flesh. It would run readily up the sides of the room by short impulses like a squirrel—which it resembled considerably in its motions. At length as I leaned [98v] my elbow on the bench one day, it ran up my clothes, and along my sleeve, and round and round the paper which held my dinner while I kept it close dodging and playing at bo-peep with it, and when at last I held still a piece of cheese between my thumb and finger, it came and nibbled it, sitting in my hand, and then cleaned its face and paws like a fly, and walked away.

Winter Animals 13 There were scores of pitch pines in my field from 1 to three inches in diameter, which had been gnawed by the mice the previous winter. A Norwegian winter it was for them—for the snow lay long & deep, and they had to mix a large proportion of pine [bark] meal with their other diet. These trees were alive and apparently flourishing at mid-summer, and had many of them grown a foot—though completely girdled—and sometimes laid bare for the space of a foot—but now after the lapse of another winter I perceive that such are already without exception dead. For this

[One leaf missing; certainly contained some of "Brute Neighbors," 11, and possibly some of 10, on the partridge.]

Brute Neighbors 11 [99r] 161. cled round and round me—nearer and nearer, till within 4 or 5 feet, pretending broken wings & legs, to attract my attention—and get off her young—who had already taken up their march with faint peep single file through the swamp as she directed. I frequently heard the young afterward, when I could not see the parent.

So much lives free, though secret and skulking in the woods.

Here too the pigeons sat over the spring—or fluttered from bough to bough of the white pine over my head in the heat of the day.

There is always a wild and yet a wilder life somewhere sustaining itself at any moment than we allow for—which corresponds to the rareness of some of our thoughts.

I have formerly seen the racoon in the woods behind my house and probably still hear their whinnering at night.

Winter Animals 14 [103r] I opened my door in the evening off they would go with a squeak and a bounce.—They only excited my pity near at hand. One evening one sat by [my] door three paces from me, at first trembling with fear, yet unwilling to move.—A poor wee thing—lean and bony—with ragged ears and sharp nose—scant tail & slender paws. It looked as if nature no longer contained the breed of nobler bloods, but the earth stood on its last legs. Its large eyes looked young & unhealthy—almost dropsical.—I took two steps —and lo! he scud away with an elastic spring over the snow crust—straightening its body and its limbs into graceful length, and soon put the forest between me and itself—The wild free venison—asserting his vigor and the dignity of nature—not without reason was his slenderness. Such then was his nature.

15 What is a country without rabbits and partridges? They are the most natural and simple [103v] animal products.—Ancient & venerable families known to antiquity as to modern times—of the very hue and substance of nature—nearest allied to leaves and to the ground—and especially to one another—it is either winged or it is legged. It is hardly as if you had seen a wild creature when a rabbit or a partridge burst away—but only a natural one—as much to be expected as rustling leaves.

[Thoreau canceled the first six or seven lines of "The Pond in Winter," 16, which at first followed here, when he decided to have material of "Former Inhabitants" come next; he probably canceled some more of "The Pond in Winter," 16, in the first of the three leaves that are missing at this point. Most of the material on these leaves probably consisted of material for the early paragraphs of "Former Inhabitants."]

Former Inhabitants 10 [104r] 189. men with earthen ware—and left descendents to succeed him. I was pleased when in mid-summer—a man who was carrying a load of pottery to market—stopped his horse against my field and inquired concerning Wyman—he said that he long ago bought a potter's wheel of him—and he wished to know what had become of him.

I had heard read[57] of the potter's clay and wheel in scripture, but I thought that latterly such as we used had either come down

57. The word "read" was canceled later.

Pond in Winter 17 looking farming tools—sleds plows—drill-barrows—turf-knives—spades—saws—rakes—and each [man] was armed with a double-pointed pike staff—such as are not described in the N. E. Farmer or the Cultivator.

At first I did not know [107v] whether they had come to sow a crop of winter rye, or some other kind of grain recently introduced from Iceland. As I saw no manure I judged that they meant to skim the land—thinking the soil was deep and had lain fallow long enough—as I had done with my field the year before. They said that a gentleman farmer, who was behind the scenes, wanted to double his money—which as I understood amounted to half a million already—but in order to cover each one of his dollars with another, he took off the only coat and the skin itself of Walden pond in the midst of a hard winter.—They went to work at once plowing, harrowing, rolling, furrowing, in admirable order, as if they were bent on making this a model farm but when I was looking sharp to see what kind of seed they dropt into the furrow —a gang of fellows by my side suddenly began to hook up the virgin mould itself—with a peculiar jerk—clean down to the sand—or rather

[One leaf missing; undoubtedly contained material for 17 and 18.]

18 [108r] 213. in the almanack—his shanty. In a good day they told me they could get out a thousand tons which was the yield of about one acre.

The ice was put to many novel uses. The horses ate their oats out of cakes of ice hollowed out like a bucket.

19 Ice is a curious subject for our contemplation. They have some in the houses at Fresh Pond 5 years old. Why is that a bucket of water soon becomes putrified, but frozen it remains sweet forever? One suggests that this is the difference between the affections and the intellect.

Spring 1 They have not been able to break up our pond any earlier than usual this year as they expected to—for she has got a thick new garment to replace the old.

Pond in Winter 20 From my window for 16 days I saw a hundred men at work, like busy husbandmen, with teams and horses, and apparently all

Spring 11 various Composite. The beauty of the drooping and sheaf-like head of the rush all men have admired in all ages—and it must have some such near and unaccountable relation to human life, as astronomy has to those laws and figures which first existed in the mind of man.

All the phenomena of winter are suggestive of an inexpressible tenderness, and fragile delicacy—We are accustomed to hear this king almost tyrant described as rude and boisterous—but with the gentleness of a lover he adorns the tresses of summer.

5 [112v] At length the sun's rays have attained the right angle, and warm winds blow up mist and rain and melt the snow banks —and the sun dispersing the mist smiles on a chequered landscape of russet and white—smoking with incense—through which the traveller picks his way from islet to islet cheered by the music of a myriad rills and rivulets whose veins are filled with the blood of *Compare 6* winter which they are bearing off.—As I go back and forth over the rail-road through the deep cut I have seen where the clayey sand *like lava* had flowed down when it thawed and as it streamed it assumed the forms of vegetation, of vines and stout pulpy leaves —unaccountably interesting and beautiful—which methinks I have seen imitated somewhere in bronze—as if its course were so to speak a diagonal between fluids & solids—and it were hesitating whether to stream in to a river, or into vegetation—for vegetation too is such a stream as a river, only of slower current.

Spring 13 [113r] The first sparrow of spring—the year beginning with younger hope than ever—the faint silvery warblings heard over the bare and moist fields from the song-sparrow—the blue-bird— and the red-wing as if the last flakes of winter tinkled as they fell— What at such a time are histories—chronologies—traditions, and all written revelations?

The brooks sing carols and glees to the spring—the marsh-hawk —sailing low over the meadow—is already seeking the first slimy life that awakes. The sough of melting snow is heard in all dells and on all hillsides—and by the sunny river banks—and the ice dissolves apace in all ponds. The earth sends forth an inward heat to greet the returning sun—not yellow like the sun—but green is the color of its flame.

Spring organizations that can be so serenely squashed out of existence
24 like soft pulp,—tadpoles which herons gobble up, and tortoises and toads run over by a wheel in the road; and that sometimes it has rained flesh & blood! [117r] 235. With the liability to accident we must see the trivialness of it, and the little account that is to be made of it. The impression made upon a wise man is of universal innocence—Poison is not poisonous after all, nor are any wounds fatal. Compassion is a very untenable ground to occupy long at a time. It must be very expeditious. Its works will not bear to be stereotyped.

25 Early in May or by the last of April, the oaks hickories—maples and other trees just putting out amidst the pine woods around the pond gave them the appearance, especially in cloudy days, of the sun just breaking through mists and shining on them. Their green bursting buds and expanding leaves scattered a slight brightness like sun shine over the hill sides.

When the oaks are in the gray
Then Farmers plant away.

The 3rd or 4th of May I saw a loon in the pond—and during the first week of this month I heard the whippoorwill—the brown-thrasher—the veery—the wood pewee, the chewink, and other birds—the wood thrush I had heard [117v] long before—The pollen of the pitch pine already covered the pond, and the stones and rotten wood along the shore with its yellow dust—

And so the seasons went rolling on into summer as one rambles into higher & higher grass—

26 Thus was my first year's life in the woods completed.[68]

68. This is clearly the end of version I. Two additional leaves of light-blue paper contain material that Thoreau developed further in "Conclusion," 16 and 17; but the material is in no respect an integral part of version I, and the handwriting and ink are certainly not those of version I. There is no clear evidence as to when Thoreau wrote this material.

two before they make their port. The bullet of your thought must *Visitors* have overcome its lateral and ricochet motion and have fallen *3* into its last and steady course, before it falls into the ear of the hearer, else it may plough out through the side of his head. Our sentences wanted room to unfold and form their columns in the interval. We need a considerable neutral ground—though it be disputed territory, for individuals like nations must have suitable broad and natural boundaries between them.—The [79r] reason why the Kilkenny cats quarrelled and ate each other all up but the tails in that hollow sphere, certainly is that there was not room in that small space for their several spheres to revolve.

We were so near that we couldn't hear and we couldn't speak low enough to be heard—As when you throw two stones into calm water, but so near that they break each other's undulations. If we are very loquacious & loud talkers then we can afford to stand very near together—cheek by jowl—& shoulder to shoulder. But if we speak reservedly and thoughtfully we want to be further apart. But if we would be silent we must commonly be so far apart that we cannot possibly hear each other's voices in any case.

As the conversation began to assume a loftier and grander tone we gradually shoved our chairs further apart till they touched the wall in opposite corners—and then sometimes there was not room [79v] enough. If you don't want the fire to smoke you mustn't stand too near it—so as to divert the current of the chimney's inspiration.

My best room, always ready for company—on whose carpet the *4* sun rarely fell—for its green blinds were kept always closed, was the pine wood behind my house. There when distinguished guests came in summer days I took them—and nature was my domestic that swept the floor and dusted the furniture, and kept the things in order.

If one guest came he sometimes partook of my frugal meal, and *5* it was no interruption to conversation to be stirring a hasty pudding in the meanwhile or watching the rising and maturing of a loaf of bread in the ashes in the meanwhile. But if 20 came and sat in my house there was nothing said about dinner—though there might be bread enough for two—more than if eating [80r] 109.

Indians had nothing to eat themselves—and they were wiser than to think that apologies & ceremony could supply the place of food and so said nothing about it—This was a time of fasting with them. At another time when Winslow visited them—he[51] got as much to eat as he got little before. *Visitors* 6

Meanwhile my beans, whose continuous length of row was 7 miles already planted were impatient to be hoed. What was the meaning of this so steady and self respecting labor I knew not. I came to love my rows—my beans—so many more than I want. Why should I raise them? This had been my curious labor all summer—why—only heaven knows. To make this portion of the earth's surface which yielded only blackberries and Johnswort and cinqfoil—sweet wild fruits and pleasant flowers, produce [81v] instead this pulse. What shall I learn of beans or beans of me? I cherish them I hoe them early & late I have an eye to them, and this is my day's work. It is a fine broad leaf to look upon. My auxiliaries are the dews and rains to water this dry soil—and what fertility is in the soil itself, which for the most part is lean and effete. My enemies are worms, cool days, and most of all woodchucks. They have nibbled for me a quarter of an acre clean. But what right had I to oust Johnswort and the rest, and break up their ancient herb garden? But soon the remaining beans will be too tough for them, and will go on to meet new foes. *Bean-Field* 1

24 years ago I was brought from the city to this very pond— through this very field—so much further into the world I had but recently entered. It is one of the most ancient scenes stamped on the tablets of my memory. That woodland vision for a long time occupied my dreams. [82r] 113. The country then was the world —the city only a gate to it. And now tonight my flute has waked the echoes over this very water. One generation of pines has fallen and I have cooked my supper with their stumps—and a new growth of oaks and pines is rising all around the pond to greet other infants' eyes. Almost the same Johnswort springs from the same perennial root in this pasture. Even I have at length helped to clothe that fabulous landscape of my dreams, and the result of 2

51. The word "he" was written over "they."

through Lincoln & Wayland to nobody knows where.—They *Bean-Field*
sitting at their ease in gigs—with elbows on knees & reins loosely 4
hanging in festoons.—I the homestaying laborious native of the soil—and soon my homestead was out of their sight & thought. It was the only open & cultivated field for some dis- [83v] tance on either side, so they made the most of it—And sometimes the man in the field heard more than was meant for his ear, of travellers' gossip and comment—"Beans so late!—peas so late!"—for I continued to plant when others had begun to hoe—The ministerial husbandman had not suspected it—"Corn—my boy—for fodder —corn for fodder!"—"Does he *live*[53] there?" asks the black bonnet of the grey coat. And the hard featured farmer reins up his grateful dobbin—to know what he is doing where he sees no manure in the furrow, and recommends a little chip-dirt or any little waste stuff—or ashes or plaster. But here were two acres & a half of furrows, and only a hoe for cart and two hands to draw it—and chip dirt far away. Fellow travellers as they rattled by compared it aloud to the fields they had passed—so that I came to know how I stood in the agricultural world—This was one field [84r] 117. not in Mr. Coleman's report. And by the way—who estimates the value of the crop which nature yields in the fields unimproved by man. The crop of English hay is carefully weighed, the moisture calculated—the silicates and the potash; but in all dells and pond holes, in the woods & pastures & swamps grows a rich and various crop only ungathered and unimproved by man. Mine was, as it were, the connecting link between wild and cultivated fields—as some states are civilized—and others—half-civilized—and others savage or barbarous—so mine was, though not in a bad sense,—a half-cultivated field—They were beans cheerfully returning to their wild & primitive state, that I cultivated—while my hoe played the *Ranz des Vaches*[54] for them.

Near at hand upon the topmost spray of a birch, sings the 5
brown-thrasher—or red mavis as some love to call it—all the morning—glad of your society—[84v] that would find out another farmer's field if you were not there. While you are planting

53. Thoreau's italics.

54. Thoreau's italics.

through Lincoln & Wayland to nobody knows where.—They *Bean-Field*
sitting at their ease in gigs—with elbows on knees & reins loosely 4
hanging in festoons.—I the homestaying laborious native of the soil—and soon my homestead was out of their sight & thought. It was the only open & cultivated field for some dis- [83v] tance on either side, so they made the most of it—And sometimes the man in the field heard more than was meant for his ear, of travellers' gossip and comment—"Beans so late!—peas so late!"—for I continued to plant when others had begun to hoe—The ministerial husbandman had not suspected it—"Corn—my boy—for fodder —corn for fodder!"—"Does he *live*[53] there?" asks the black bonnet of the grey coat. And the hard featured farmer reins up his grateful dobbin—to know what he is doing where he sees no manure in the furrow, and recommends a little chip-dirt or any little waste stuff—or ashes or plaster. But here were two acres & a half of furrows, and only a hoe for cart and two hands to draw it—and chip dirt far away. Fellow travellers as they rattled by compared it aloud to the fields they had passed—so that I came to know how I stood in the agricultural world—This was one field [84r] 117. not in Mr. Coleman's report. And by the way—who estimates the value of the crop which nature yields in the fields unimproved by man. The crop of English hay is carefully weighed, the moisture calculated—the silicates and the potash; but in all dells and pond holes, in the woods & pastures & swamps grows a rich and various crop only ungathered and unimproved by man. Mine was, as it were, the connecting link between wild and cultivated fields—as some states are civilized—and others—half-civilized—and others savage or barbarous—so mine was, though not in a bad sense,—a half-cultivated field—They were beans cheerfully returning to their wild & primitive state, that I cultivated—while my hoe played the *Ranz des Vaches*[54] for them.

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Bean-Field the seed he cries "Drop it—drop it—cover it up—cover it up—
5 pull it up—pull-it-up—pull-it-up." But this was not corn, and so it was safe from such enemies as he. You may wonder what his rigmarole—his amateur Paganini performances on one string or on 20 have to do with your planting and yet prefer it to leached ashes or plaster.

6 As I drew a still fresher soil about my rows with my hoe—I disturbed the ashes of unrecorded nations who in primeval days lived under these heavens—and their small implements of war and hunting were brought to the light of this modern day—They lay mingled with other natural stones some of which bore the marks of having been burned by the Indian fires, and some had only been burned by the sun—and also with bits of pottery and glass brought by the recent cultivators of the soil.

[85r] When my hoe tinkled against the stones in my bean-field —that music *echoed to the woods & the sky &* was an accompaniment to my labor which yielded an instant and immeasurable crop—*It was no longer beans that I hoed, nor I that hoed beans,* and I confess that I sometimes remembered with pity my acquaintances who had gone to the city to attend the oratorios—The night-hawk circled over head in the sunny afternoons—like a mote in the eye, or in heaven's eye—falling from time to time with a swoop & a sound as if the heavens were rent—torn at last to very rags & tatters—and yet a seamless cope remains. Small imps that fill the air & lay their eggs on the ground—on bare rocks on the tops of bare hills, where few have found them. In their flight they were graceful and slender—like waves & ripples caught up from the pond—as leaves are raised by the wind—to float in the heavens—such kindredship is in nature. The hawk is aerial brother of the wave which he sails over and surveys [85v] those his perfect air inflated wings answering to the elemental unfledged pinions of the sea.—When I pause to lean upon my hoe these sights & sounds I saw and heard anywhere in the row—the inexhaustible entertainment which the country offers.—Sometimes I was attracted by the passage of wild pigeons from this wood to that, with their slight tantivy & carrier haste—or from under some rotten stump my hoe turned up a sluggish portent[ous] outlandish spotted

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Bean-Field common white bush bean about the first of June in rows 3 feet
14 [87r] by 18 inches apart, being careful to select fresh round & unmixed seed. First look out for worms & supply vacancies by planting afresh. Then look out for woodchucks, if it is an exposed place for they will nibble off the earliest tender leaves almost clean as they go, and again when the young tendrils make their appearance they have notice of it and will shear them off with both buds and young pods, sitting erect like a squirrel. But above all harvest as early as possible, if you would escape frosts and have a fair and saleable crop. You may save much loss by this means.

15 This further experience also I gained. I said to myself I will not plant beans and corn with so much industry another summer, but such seeds, perhaps, if the seed is not lost, as sincerity—truth—simplicity—faith—innocence—and see if they will not grow in this soil even with less toil & manurance and sustain me. [87v] Commonly men will only be brave as their fathers were brave, but why should not the New Englander try new adventures—& not lay so much stress on his grain his potatoe and grass crop, and his orchards! raise other crops than these?—We should in some degree be cheered and fed if when we met a man we were sure to see that some of these qualities we so much prize, but which are for the most part broadcast and floating in the air had taken root and grown in him. Here comes such a subtle and ineffable quality, for instance, as truth or justice, though the slightest amount of it, along the road. We should never stand upon ceremony with sincerity. We should never cheat and insult—and banish one another by our manners—if there were present the kernel of worth & friendliness—We should not meet thus in haste. Most men I do not meet at all for they seem not to have time—they are busy about their beans.

16 [88r] 125. Husbandry was anciently a sacred art but it is pursued with heedlessness and haste by us. Our object is to have large farms and large crops. Our thoughts on this subject should be as slow as the pace of oxen. The difference between the ancients and us may be seen in their different treatment of their fellow laborer the ox. We are accustomed to say that the ox is more profitable than the horse, because it not only costs less to keep it, but when it

Bean-Field husbandry is degraded with us and the farmer leads the meanest
17 of lives. He knows not nature but as a robber. We are apt to forget that the sun looks on our cultivated fields, & on the prairies and forests without distinction. They reflect and absorb his rays alike. In the light of the [89v] sun the earth is all equally cultivated like a garden and yields every where to an irresistible civilization.—What though I value the seed of these beans & harvest that in the fall of the year,—this broad field which I have looked at so long—looks not to me as the farmer but away from me to influences more genial to it. It matters little after all whether the fields fill the barns of the husbandmen. The true husbandman will cease from anxiety—as the chestnut woods are not concerned whether they bear chestnuts this year or not—and finish his labor with every day relinquishing all claim to the produce of his fields—The landscape is deformed when there is an attempt to appropriate what cannot be appropriated.

Village After sitting still in my house or working in my field in the fore-
1 noon, I usually bathed again in the pond swimming across one of its coves for a stint, and shook the dust of labor from my feet & clothes, and [90r] 129. for the afternoon was as free as the bird that has built its nest and reared its brood.

Every day or two—I strolled to the village to hear some of the gossip which is incessantly going on here—either circulating from mouth to mouth, or from newspaper to newspaper—and which taken in homeopathic doses was really as refreshing in its way as the rustle of leaves and the peeping of frogs. As I walked in the woods to see the birds & squirrels—so I walked in the village to see the men and boys—instead of the wind among the pines I heard the carts rattle.

The village seemed to me a great news room, and one side to support it—as at Redding and Company's in State Street—they kept nuts & raisins—salt & meal and other groceries.—Some have such a vast appetite for the former commodity—and such sound digestive organs that they can sit forever in public avenues without stirring and let it simmer and whisper through them like the Etesian winds—or as if inhaling ether—it only producing numbness [90v] and insensibility to pain, without affecting the

Village more terrible standing invitation to call at every one of these
1 houses—and company expected about these times—For the most part I escaped wonderfully from these dangers either by proceeding at once boldly and without deliberation to the goal as is recommended to those who run the gauntlet—or by keeping my thoughts on high things like Orpheus—who "loudly singing the praises of the gods, to his lyre, drowned the voices [92r] 133. of the Sirens, and kept out of danger."—Sometimes I bolted suddenly & nobody could tell my whereabouts, for I did not stand much about gracefulness, and never hesitated at a fence or a hole in a wall. I was even accustomed to make an irruption into some houses where I was well entertained, and after learning the *kernels & very* last seine-full of news—what had subsided—and the prospects of war and peace & whether the world was likely to hold together much longer—I was let out through the rear avenues, and so escaped to the woods again.

Ponds Sometimes having had a surfeit of human society & gossip—
1 and worn out all my village friends—I rambled still further westward than I habitually dwell—"to fresh woods and pastures new" —into unfrequented parts of the town—to solitary swamps and meadows, and pine woods & oak-thickets and rocky pastures—or while the sun was setting made my supper of huckleberries & blueberries on Fair-Haven hill—and laid up a store for several days.

2 Sometimes, after my hoeing [92v] was done for the day I joined some impatient companion who had been fishing since morning on the pond—as silent and motionless as a duck or a floating leaf—who after practicing various kinds of philosophy—had concluded commonly by the time I arrived that he belonged to the ancient sect of Coenobites.

4 Occasionally after staying in a villager's parlor till the family had all retired—I have returned to the woods, and spent the hours of midnight fishing in a boat on the pond by moonlight—serenaded by owls and the barking of foxes, and hearing from time to time the note of the woodcock or the booming of snipes a mile off circling over the river meadows, or the croak of a bittern close at hand. These private hours were very memorable & valu-

Ponds [94r] midst of pine woods—without any visible inlet or outlet but
5 by the clouds and by evaporations. Successive nations have drank
8 at it and passed away. Perhaps on that spring morning when Adam & Eve were driven out of Eden Walden pond was already in existence, and even then breaking up in a gentle spring rain—accompanied with mist and a southerly wind—and covered with myriads of ducks and geese that had not heard of the fall.—Even then it had commenced its periodical rise and fall, and had clarified its waters, and had colored them of the hue they now wear—and obtained a patent of heaven to be the only Walden pond in the world,—and distiller of celestial dews—Who knows in how many unremembered nations' literatures this has been the Castalian fountain—or what nymphs presided over it in the golden age!

7 It is surrounded by a belt of paving stones extending a rod or two into the water, and then the bottom is pure sand, except in the deepest parts—or where [94v] it is more than 40 feet deep where there is usually a little sediment and a bright green weed is brought up on anchors.

6 It is so pure and clear that the bottom can easily be seen in 25 or 30 feet of water. Once in the winter, many years ago, when I had been cutting holes through the ice in order to catch pickerel, as I stepped ashore I heaved my axe back on to the ice—but as if some evil genius had directed it, it slid 4 or 5 rods directly into one of the holes—where the water was 20 feet deep. Out of curiosity I lay down on the ice and looked through the hole, when I saw the axe a little on one side, standing on its head—with its helve erect and gently swaying to and fro with the pulse of the pond—and there it might have stood erect & swaying till in the course of time the handle rotted off if I had not disturbed it. Is a thing lost when you know where it is—and how to get it? Making another hole directly over the axe with an ice chisel which I had—and cutting down the

[Probably three leaves missing; they undoubtedly contained the rest of "The Ponds," 6, and probably "Baker Farm," 3 and 4.]

Baker Farm [95r] 147. hoping to get a sight of the well bottom—to complete
5 my survey of the premises—but there, alas, are shallow quick-

Higher Laws [96r] 151. revives from time to time, but always when I have done
5 I feel that it would have been better if I had not fished. I think I
am not mistaken. It is a faint intimation—yet so are the first
streaks of morning. It tempts me continually because it is a means
of becoming acquainted with nature—not only with fishes—but
with night and water—and the scenery—which I should not
otherwise see under the same aspects.—and occasionally, though
3 not so often, because I wish to add fish to my fare for variety—I
actually fish sometimes as naturally—and from the same kind of
1 necessity—as the first fishermen did. I love sometimes to take rank
hold on life, and spend my day more as the animals do. The
novelty and adventure that are in this pursuit recommend it to
3 me. Whatever humanity I may conjure up against it is all facti-
tious, & concerns my philosophy more than my actual feelings—
not that I am less humane than [96v] others—but I do not per-
ceive that these are affected very much. I do not pity the fishes nor
1 the worms. This is habit. But the ramble by the river and meadow
seems to be incomplete, and to want a sufficient aim for itself—
without this purpose. The traveller of the prairie is a hunter—of
the head-waters of the Missouri & Columbia—a trapper. Those
who go to the Falls of St. Mary are fishermen. The traveller who
is only a traveller learns things by the halves, and at 2d hand—
3 and is poor authority.—When *some of* my friends have asked me
anxiously about their boys—whether they should let them hunt
or not—I have answered yes—remembering that it was the best
5 part of my education. There is unquestionably this instinct in me
which belongs to the lower order of creation. Yet with every year
I am less a fisherman, though without more humanity. When I
have caught my fish & cooked them, I have gained nothing by it,
but perhaps lost

[One leaf missing; probably contained material of "Higher Laws," but there is no evidence as to what.]

7 [97r] 155. If I listen to the faintest but constant suggestions of my
genius I see not to what extremes or insanity it would lead me.—
And yet that way as I grow more resolute and faithful my road
lies. The faintest assured objection which one healthy man feels

Brute Neighbors 9 legs inside clinging to the flesh. It would run readily up the sides of the room by short impulses like a squirrel—which it resembled considerably in its motions. At length as I leaned [98v] my elbow on the bench one day, it ran up my clothes, and along my sleeve, and round and round the paper which held my dinner while I kept it close dodging and playing at bo-peep with it, and when at last I held still a piece of cheese between my thumb and finger, it came and nibbled it, sitting in my hand, and then cleaned its face and paws like a fly, and walked away.

Winter Animals 13 There were scores of pitch pines in my field from 1 to three inches in diameter, which had been gnawed by the mice the previous winter. A Norwegian winter it was for them—for the snow lay long & deep, and they had to mix a large proportion of pine [bark] meal with their other diet. These trees were alive and apparently flourishing at mid-summer, and had many of them grown a foot—though completely girdled—and sometimes laid bare for the space of a foot—but now after the lapse of another winter I perceive that such are already without exception dead. For this

[One leaf missing; certainly contained some of "Brute Neighbors," 11, and possibly some of 10, on the partridge.]

Brute Neighbors 11 [99r] 161. cled round and round me—nearer and nearer, till within 4 or 5 feet, pretending broken wings & legs, to attract my attention—and get off her young—who had already taken up their march with faint peep single file through the swamp as she directed. I frequently heard the young afterward, when I could not see the parent.

So much lives free, though secret and skulking in the woods.

Here too the pigeons sat over the spring—or fluttered from bough to bough of the white pine over my head in the heat of the day.

There is always a wild and yet a wilder life somewhere sustaining itself at any moment than we allow for—which corresponds to the rareness of some of our thoughts.

I have formerly seen the racoon in the woods behind my house and probably still hear their whinnering at night.

Winter Animals sleep well—and the cracking of the ground by the frost—these were other memorable sounds in a winter night.

3 *4* Sometimes in clear nights I heard the foxes, as they ranged over the snow crust in search of a partridge or other game—barking raggedly and demonically—like forest dogs—as [if] laboring with some anxiety—struggling to be dogs outright and run freely in the streets. They seemed to me like imperfect & rudimental men—burrowing men—still standing on their defence—awaiting their transformation. Sometimes one came near to my window at night —attracted by the light, and barked a vulpine curse at me—and then retreated.

5 Usually the red squirrel waked me in the dawn coursing over the roof and up and down the sides of my house, by fits & starts, as if sent out of the woods on purpose to arouse me. During [101r] the winter, I threw out some sweet corn which had never got ripe upon the snow crust by my door, and was amused by watching the motions of the various animals that were baited by it. In the twilight and the night the rabbits came regularly and made a hearty meal. By day-light & in fact all day long the red squirrels came and went, and afforded me much entertainment by their manoeuvres. One would approach at first warily through the shrub oaks running over the snow by fits and starts like a leaf blown by the wind—now a few paces this way with wonderful speed and waste of energy, making inconceiva[ble] haste with his trotters, as if it were for a wager—never getting on more than half a rod at a time and then suddenly pausing with a ludicrous expression—and a gratuitous sommerset—as if all the eyes in the universe were fixed upon him—wasting more time in delay & circumspection—than would have sufficed [101v] to walk the whole distance.—I never saw one walk.—And then suddenly, before you could say Jack Robinson it would be in the tip top of a young pitch pine—screwing up its clock—and chiding all imaginary spectators—and soliloquizing & talking to the universe and itself—for no reason that I could ever detect, or itself was aware of—I suspect. At length it reached the corn—and selecting a suitable ear, would frisk about in the same uncertain trigonometrical way to the topmost stick in my wood-pile, before my

Winter Animals 14 [103r] I opened my door in the evening off they would go with a squeak and a bounce.—They only excited my pity near at hand. One evening one sat by [my] door three paces from me, at first trembling with fear, yet unwilling to move.—A poor wee thing—lean and bony—with ragged ears and sharp nose—scant tail & slender paws. It looked as if nature no longer contained the breed of nobler bloods, but the earth stood on its last legs. Its large eyes looked young & unhealthy—almost dropsical.—I took two steps —and lo! he scud away with an elastic spring over the snow crust—straightening its body and its limbs into graceful length, and soon put the forest between me and itself—The wild free venison—asserting his vigor and the dignity of nature—not without reason was his slenderness. Such then was his nature.

15 What is a country without rabbits and partridges? They are the most natural and simple [103v] animal products.—Ancient & venerable families known to antiquity as to modern times—of the very hue and substance of nature—nearest allied to leaves and to the ground—and especially to one another—it is either winged or it is legged. It is hardly as if you had seen a wild creature when a rabbit or a partridge burst away—but only a natural one—as much to be expected as rustling leaves.

[Thoreau canceled the first six or seven lines of "The Pond in Winter," 16, which at first followed here, when he decided to have material of "Former Inhabitants" come next; he probably canceled some more of "The Pond in Winter," 16, in the first of the three leaves that are missing at this point. Most of the material on these leaves probably consisted of material for the early paragraphs of "Former Inhabitants."]

Former Inhabitants 10 [104r] 189. men with earthen ware—and left descendents to succeed him. I was pleased when in mid-summer—a man who was carrying a load of pottery to market—stopped his horse against my field and inquired concerning Wyman—he said that he long ago bought a potter's wheel of him—and he wished to know what had become of him.

I had heard read[57] of the potter's clay and wheel in scripture, but I thought that latterly such as we used had either come down

57. The word "read" was canceled later.

Former Inhabitants 14 ning—& pottery business have thrived here—making the wilderness to bloom—and a numerous posterity have inherited the land of their ancestors? The sterile soil would at least have been proof against a lowland degeneracy. Again, [105v] perhaps, Nature will try, with me for a first settler—and my house raised 2 springs ago *15* to be the oldest in the hamlet.—And with such thoughts as these I lulled myself asleep.

Pond in Winter 3 Early in the morning while all things are crisp with frost, come men with fishing reels, and slender lunch—men of unquestionable faith,—and let down their fine lines through the snowy field to take pickerel and perch—Who pursue their trade with as much self-respect as any mechanic or farmer does his—wisely taught by their instinct to follow other fashions and trust other authorities than their townsmen. Wild men who frequent the river meadows and solitary ponds in the horizon—connecting links between towns—who in their goings & comings stitch towns together in parts where they would be ripped and with the hunter race prevent wild animals from multiplying.—Who sit and eat their luncheon in stout fear-noughts on the dry oak-leaves on the shore of the pond—as wise in natural lore—as the citizen is in artificial.

[Four leaves apparently missing; a good deal of the material may have been devoted to the freezing, melting, and qualities of Walden and other waters. See p. 99.]

Spring 1 [106r] 201. it was 36° or 3 degrees higher than Walden. In the middle $32\frac{1}{2}$ degrees. This difference of $3\frac{1}{2}$ degrees between the temperature of the deep water and the shallow in Flint's pond—and the fact that a great proportion of it is comparatively shallow —show why it should break up so much sooner than Walden.

The temperature of the river the same day was $32\frac{1}{2}$ the same with the middle of Flint's pond—and nearly the same with that of snow just melted and running in a sluice which[58] is 32 or freezing point. The temperature of Martwell Bigelow's well—which was neither the warmest nor the coldest that was tried—was 43—that *Ponds 13* of the boiling spring 45 or the warmest of any, but it is perhaps the coldest in summer when *shallow* & stagnant snow and surface water is not mixed with it.

58. MS: "which which."

Pond in Winter 17 looking farming tools—sleds plows—drill-barrows—turf-knives—spades—saws—rakes—and each [man] was armed with a double-pointed pike staff—such as are not described in the N. E. Farmer or the Cultivator.

At first I did not know [107v] whether they had come to sow a crop of winter rye, or some other kind of grain recently introduced from Iceland. As I saw no manure I judged that they meant to skim the land—thinking the soil was deep and had lain fallow long enough—as I had done with my field the year before. They said that a gentleman farmer, who was behind the scenes, wanted to double his money—which as I understood amounted to half a million already—but in order to cover each one of his dollars with another, he took off the only coat and the skin itself of Walden pond in the midst of a hard winter.—They went to work at once plowing, harrowing, rolling, furrowing, in admirable order, as if they were bent on making this a model farm but when I was looking sharp to see what kind of seed they dropt into the furrow —a gang of fellows by my side suddenly began to hook up the virgin mould itself—with a peculiar jerk—clean down to the sand—or rather

[One leaf missing; undoubtedly contained material for 17 and 18.]

18 [108r] 213. in the almanack—his shanty. In a good day they told me they could get out a thousand tons which was the yield of about one acre.

The ice was put to many novel uses. The horses ate their oats out of cakes of ice hollowed out like a bucket.

19 Ice is a curious subject for our contemplation. They have some in the houses at Fresh Pond 5 years old. Why is that a bucket of water soon becomes putrified, but frozen it remains sweet forever? One suggests that this is the difference between the affections and the intellect.

Spring 1 They have not been able to break up our pond any earlier than usual this year as they expected to—for she has got a thick new garment to replace the old.

Pond in Winter 20 From my window for 16 days I saw a hundred men at work, like busy husbandmen, with teams and horses, and apparently all

Pond in Winter 21 the Hesperides. It makes the periplus of Hanno—and floating by Ternate and Tidore and the mouth of the Persian Gulf, it melts in the tropic gales of the Indian seas, and is landed in ports of which Alexander heard only the names.

Spring 3 The ice in the pond at length begins to be honey-combed, and I can set my heel in it as I walk.[63] Fogs and rains & warmer suns are gradually melting the snows. The days have grown sensibly longer and we see how we shall get through the winter without adding to our woodpile—for large fires are now no longer necessary—and I am on the alert for the first signs of spring—if I can hear the striped squirrels bark—or the chance note of some migratory bird.

On the 13th of March after I had heard the song sparrow and the black-bird the ice was still a foot thick on the pond. As the weather grew warmer, it [110v] was not sensibly worn away by the water, nor broken up & floated off as in rivers, but became porous & honey-combed and *saturated with*[64] water—so that you could put your foot through it when 7 or 8 inches thick—though it was melted for half a rood, around the shore but by tomorrow [?] evening—after a warm rain followed by fog it would have wholly disappeared—all gone off with the fog—Last year I went across the middle 5 days before it had disappeared entirely. In 1845

House-Warming 12 Walden broke up on the 1st of April in 1846 on the 25th [of][65] March—it froze entirely over the former year on the 22nd of Dec.—last year on the 16 of December—in both years a week or two later than Flint's pond and the river probably on account of

Spring 1 its greater depth. The sun warms shallow water through ice a foot thick—as you may make a burning glass with a piece of ice and kindle a fire with it from the sun. The ice in the shallowest

[One leaf missing; it probably contained more of "Spring," 1, and the first part of 4.]

4 [111r] river—and he dropped down without obstruction, from Sudbury, where he lived, to Fair Haven pond, which he found, unexpectedly, was covered with a firm field of ice. It was a very

63. Thoreau first wrote "began," "could set," and "walked"; exactly when he changed them to the present tense is uncertain.

64. The words "imbibed more" were canceled. 65. MS had ditto mark.

Pond in Winter 21 the Hesperides. It makes the periplus of Hanno—and floating by Ternate and Tidore and the mouth of the Persian Gulf, it melts in the tropic gales of the Indian seas, and is landed in ports of which Alexander heard only the names.

Spring 3 The ice in the pond at length begins to be honey-combed, and I can set my heel in it as I walk.[63] Fogs and rains & warmer suns are gradually melting the snows. The days have grown sensibly longer and we see how we shall get through the winter without adding to our woodpile—for large fires are now no longer necessary—and I am on the alert for the first signs of spring—if I can hear the striped squirrels bark—or the chance note of some migratory bird.

On the 13th of March after I had heard the song sparrow and the black-bird the ice was still a foot thick on the pond. As the weather grew warmer, it [110v] was not sensibly worn away by the water, nor broken up & floated off as in rivers, but became porous & honey-combed and *saturated with*[64] water—so that you could put your foot through it when 7 or 8 inches thick—though it was melted for half a rood, around the shore but by tomorrow [?] evening—after a warm rain followed by fog it would have wholly disappeared—all gone off with the fog—Last year I went across the middle 5 days before it had disappeared entirely. In 1845

House-Warming 12 Walden broke up on the 1st of April in 1846 on the 25th [of][65] March—it froze entirely over the former year on the 22nd of Dec.—last year on the 16 of December—in both years a week or two later than Flint's pond and the river probably on account of

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Spring 11 various Composite. The beauty of the drooping and sheaf-like head of the rush all men have admired in all ages—and it must have some such near and unaccountable relation to human life, as astronomy has to those laws and figures which first existed in the mind of man.

All the phenomena of winter are suggestive of an inexpressible tenderness, and fragile delicacy—We are accustomed to hear this king almost tyrant described as rude and boisterous—but with the gentleness of a lover he adorns the tresses of summer.

5 [112v] At length the sun's rays have attained the right angle, and warm winds blow up mist and rain and melt the snow banks —and the sun dispersing the mist smiles on a chequered landscape of russet and white—smoking with incense—through which the traveller picks his way from islet to islet cheered by the music of a myriad rills and rivulets whose veins are filled with the blood of *Compare 6* winter which they are bearing off.—As I go back and forth over the rail-road through the deep cut I have seen where the clayey sand *like lava* had flowed down when it thawed and as it streamed it assumed the forms of vegetation, of vines and stout pulpy leaves —unaccountably interesting and beautiful—which methinks I have seen imitated somewhere in bronze—as if its course were so to speak a diagonal between fluids & solids—and it were hesitating whether to stream in to a river, or into vegetation—for vegetation too is such a stream as a river, only of slower current.

Spring 13 [113r] The first sparrow of spring—the year beginning with younger hope than ever—the faint silvery warblings heard over the bare and moist fields from the song-sparrow—the blue-bird— and the red-wing as if the last flakes of winter tinkled as they fell— What at such a time are histories—chronologies—traditions, and all written revelations?

The brooks sing carols and glees to the spring—the marsh-hawk —sailing low over the meadow—is already seeking the first slimy life that awakes. The sough of melting snow is heard in all dells and on all hillsides—and by the sunny river banks—and the ice dissolves apace in all ponds. The earth sends forth an inward heat to greet the returning sun—not yellow like the sun—but green is the color of its flame.

salamander—a trace of Egypt and the Nile—yet our contem- *Bean-Field*
porary—Or when I rested in the shrub-oaks I watched a pair of *6*
henhawks circling high in the sky—alternately soaring & descending, approaching & leaving one another—as if they were the imbodiment of some of my own thoughts which soar as high & circle as majestically there.

It was a singular experience—that long acquaintance I culti- *10*
vated with [86r] 121. beans *what with planting & hoeing & harvesting and threshing and picking over and selling them.* I was determined to know beans. When they were growing I used to hoe from 5 o'clock till 12—and spent the rest of the day about other affairs. Consider the intimate and curious acquaintance one makes with various kinds of weeds—disturbing their delicate organizations so ruthlessly—and making such invidious distinctions with his hoe—levelling whole ranks of one species, and sedulously cultivating another.—That's Roman wormwood—that's pig-weed—that's sorrel—that's piper-grass—have at him chop him up—turn his roots up-ward to the sun—don't let him have a fibre in the shade —if you do he'll turn himself tother side up and be as green as a leek in 2 days.—A long war, not with cranes, but with weeds—those Trojans who had sun and rain and dews on their side. Daily the beans saw me come to their rescue armed with a hoe, and thin the ranks of their enemies, filling up the trenches with weedy dead. [86v] Many a lusty crest-waving Hector that towered a whole foot above his crowding comrades, fell before my weapon and rolled in the dust.

Those summer days which some of my contemporaries devoted *11*
to the fine arts in Boston or in Rome—and others to contemplation in India, and others to trade in London or in New York—I with the other farmers of New England devoted to husbandry.—Not that I wanted beans to eat—for I am by nature a Pythagorean—but perchance—as some must work in fields if only for the sake of tropes & expressions—to serve a parable-maker—one day.

However, it was on the whole a noble amusement—though my labor there had not much to do with the crop that was to be harvested in the fall.

This is the result of my experience in raising beans. Plant the *14*

Bean-Field common white bush bean about the first of June in rows 3 feet
14 [87r] by 18 inches apart, being careful to select fresh round & unmixed seed. First look out for worms & supply vacancies by planting afresh. Then look out for woodchucks, if it is an exposed place for they will nibble off the earliest tender leaves almost clean as they go, and again when the young tendrils make their appearance they have notice of it and will shear them off with both buds and young pods, sitting erect like a squirrel. But above all harvest as early as possible, if you would escape frosts and have a fair and saleable crop. You may save much loss by this means.

15 This further experience also I gained. I said to myself I will not plant beans and corn with so much industry another summer, but such seeds, perhaps, if the seed is not lost, as sincerity—truth—simplicity—faith—innocence—and see if they will not grow in this soil even with less toil & manurance and sustain me. [87v] Commonly men will only be brave as their fathers were brave, but why should not the New Englander try new adventures—& not lay so much stress on his grain his potatoe and grass crop, and his orchards! raise other crops than these?—We should in some degree be cheered and fed if when we met a man we were sure to see that some of these qualities we so much prize, but which are for the most part broadcast and floating in the air had taken root and grown in him. Here comes such a subtle and ineffable quality, for instance, as truth or justice, though the slightest amount of it, along the road. We should never stand upon ceremony with sincerity. We should never cheat and insult—and banish one another by our manners—if there were present the kernel of worth & friendliness—We should not meet thus in haste. Most men I do not meet at all for they seem not to have time—they are busy about their beans.

16 [88r] 125. Husbandry was anciently a sacred art but it is pursued with heedlessness and haste by us. Our object is to have large farms and large crops. Our thoughts on this subject should be as slow as the pace of oxen. The difference between the ancients and us may be seen in their different treatment of their fellow laborer the ox. We are accustomed to say that the ox is more profitable than the horse, because it not only costs less to keep it, but when it

is past labor we can slaughter it, and it will furnish food for our families—we treat it as a slave rather than as a servant. If other nations, as the Egyptians, have been idolators in this respect, and made animals objects of adoration, we have gone to the other and an equally fatal extreme—for every animal should be approached with a feeling of reverence.—"According to the early laws of Greece, the ploughing ox was held sacred, and was entitled when past service, to range the pastures in freedom [88v] and repose. It was forbidden, by the decrees of Triptolemus, to put to death this faithful ally of the labors of the husbandman, who shared the toils of ploughing & threshing. Whenever therefore an ox was slaughtered, he must first be consecrated or devoted as a sacrifice (ἱερειον), by the sprinkling of the sacrificial barley; this was a precaution against the barbarous practice of eating raw flesh (Βουφαγία). A peculiar sacrifice (Διιπόλια) at Athens, at which the slayer of the ox fled, and the guilty axe was thrown into the sea, on the sentence of the Prytanes, yearly placed before the people a visible type of the first beginnings of their social institutions." *Bean-Field 16*

Ancient writers on agriculture speak of such things as the "dignity of the herd." Varro suggests that the object of the Argonautic expedition was a ram's fleece—The golden apples of the Hesperides were by the ambiguity of language goats and sheep which Hercules imported. The stars and constellations [89r] 127. bear their names. The Ægean sea has its name from the goat—and famous mountains & straits—as the Bosphorus or ox-passage. Ovid makes Italy to be from *vitulas*.[55] The fine or tax (mulcta a mulgendo) anciently paid in kind refers to this. The oldest coins bore the figures of cattle—Our word pecuniary is from the Latin pecunia which is from *pecus*[56] or herd—which was the oldest currency or medium of exchange. Celebrated Roman families have derived their names from the same source. As Porcius Ovinius—Capritius—Equitius—Taurus—Capra—Vitulus &c.

By avarice and selfishness and a grovelling habit of regarding the soil as property or the means of acquiring property solely,

55. Thoreau's italics; he first wrote "*vitulis*."

56. Thoreau's italics.

Bean-Field husbandry is degraded with us and the farmer leads the meanest
17 of lives. He knows not nature but as a robber. We are apt to forget that the sun looks on our cultivated fields, & on the prairies and forests without distinction. They reflect and absorb his rays alike. In the light of the [89v] sun the earth is all equally cultivated like a garden and yields every where to an irresistible civilization.—What though I value the seed of these beans & harvest that in the fall of the year,—this broad field which I have looked at so long—looks not to me as the farmer but away from me to influences more genial to it. It matters little after all whether the fields fill the barns of the husbandmen. The true husbandman will cease from anxiety—as the chestnut woods are not concerned whether they bear chestnuts this year or not—and finish his labor with every day relinquishing all claim to the produce of his fields—The landscape is deformed when there is an attempt to appropriate what cannot be appropriated.

Village After sitting still in my house or working in my field in the fore-
1 noon, I usually bathed again in the pond swimming across one of its coves for a stint, and shook the dust of labor from my feet & clothes, and [90r] 129. for the afternoon was as free as the bird that has built its nest and reared its brood.

Every day or two—I strolled to the village to hear some of the gossip which is incessantly going on here—either circulating from mouth to mouth, or from newspaper to newspaper—and which taken in homeopathic doses was really as refreshing in its way as the rustle of leaves and the peeping of frogs. As I walked in the woods to see the birds & squirrels—so I walked in the village to see the men and boys—instead of the wind among the pines I heard the carts rattle.

The village seemed to me a great news room, and one side to support it—as at Redding and Company's in State Street—they kept nuts & raisins—salt & meal and other groceries.—Some have such a vast appetite for the former commodity—and such sound digestive organs that they can sit forever in public avenues without stirring and let it simmer and whisper through them like the Etesian winds—or as if inhaling ether—it only producing numbness [90v] and insensibility to pain, without affecting the

consciousness. I hardly ever failed when I rambled thro' the village to see a row of such worthies either sitting on a ladder sunning themselves—with their bodies inclined forward, and their eyes glancing along the line this way and that from time to time with a voluptuous expression of satisfaction—or else leaning against a barn with their hands in their pockets,—like caryatides as if to prop it up. *Village 1*

They being commonly out of doors, heard whatever was in the wind. These are the coarsest mills in which all gossip is first rudely digested or cracked up, before it is emptied into finer and more delicate hoppers—I could not help observing that the vitals of the village were the grocery—the bar-room—the post-office—and the Bank—and as a necessary part of the machinery—they kept a bell—a big gun—and a fire engine at convenient places.—And the houses were so arranged as to make [91r] the most of the world and of mankind in lanes and fronting one another so that every traveller had to run the gauntlet, and every man woman and child might get a lick at him. Of course those who were stationed nearest to the head of the line, where they could most see and be seen, and have the first slap at him, paid the highest prices for their places, and the few straggling inhabitants in the outskirts where long gaps in the line began to occur, where the traveller could get over walls and turn aside into cow paths, and so escape —paid a very slight ground or window tax.

I would here observe, in a parenthesis, that it costs me nothing for curtains—for I have no gazers to shut out but the sun & moon —and I am willing they should look in. The moon will not sour milk or taint meat of mine—nor will the sun injure my furniture or fade my carpet—and if he is sometimes too warm a friend—I find it still better economy to retreat [91v] behind some curtain which nature has provided than to add a single item to the details of house keeping.—It is best to avoid the beginnings of evil.—But to return to the village—Signs were hung out on all sides to allure the traveller—some to catch him by the appetite as the tavern & victualling cellar—some by the fancy as the dry-goods store & the jewellers—and others by the hair—or the feet—or the skirts as the barber—the shoemaker—or the tailor. Besides, there was a still *Economy 89* *Village 1*

Village more terrible standing invitation to call at every one of these
1 houses—and company expected about these times—For the most part I escaped wonderfully from these dangers either by proceeding at once boldly and without deliberation to the goal as is recommended to those who run the gauntlet—or by keeping my thoughts on high things like Orpheus—who "loudly singing the praises of the gods, to his lyre, drowned the voices [92r] 133. of the Sirens, and kept out of danger."—Sometimes I bolted suddenly & nobody could tell my whereabouts, for I did not stand much about gracefulness, and never hesitated at a fence or a hole in a wall. I was even accustomed to make an irruption into some houses where I was well entertained, and after learning the *kernels & very* last seine-full of news—what had subsided—and the prospects of war and peace & whether the world was likely to hold together much longer—I was let out through the rear avenues, and so escaped to the woods again.

Ponds Sometimes having had a surfeit of human society & gossip—
1 and worn out all my village friends—I rambled still further westward than I habitually dwell—"to fresh woods and pastures new" —into unfrequented parts of the town—to solitary swamps and meadows, and pine woods & oak-thickets and rocky pastures—or while the sun was setting made my supper of huckleberries & blueberries on Fair-Haven hill—and laid up a store for several days.

2 Sometimes, after my hoeing [92v] was done for the day I joined some impatient companion who had been fishing since morning on the pond—as silent and motionless as a duck or a floating leaf—who after practicing various kinds of philosophy—had concluded commonly by the time I arrived that he belonged to the ancient sect of Coenobites.

4 Occasionally after staying in a villager's parlor till the family had all retired—I have returned to the woods, and spent the hours of midnight fishing in a boat on the pond by moonlight—serenaded by owls and the barking of foxes, and hearing from time to time the note of the woodcock or the booming of snipes a mile off circling over the river meadows, or the croak of a bittern close at hand. These private hours were very memorable & valu-

able to me—anchored in 40 feet of water and 20 or 30 rods from the shore—surrounded sometimes by thousands of small perch and shiners—[93r] 135. dimpling the surface with their tails in the moonlight—communicating by a long flaxen line with mysterious vespertinal fishes which had their dwelling 40 feet below, or sometimes dragging 60 feet of line about the pond, as I drifted in the gentle night air—now and then feeling a slight vibration along it —indicative of some life prowling about its extremity—of dull uncertain blundering purpose there, and slow to make up its mind—at length you slowly raise, pulling hand over hand, some horned pout squeaking & squirming to the upper air.—It was very queer—in dark nights, when your thoughts had wandered to vast and cosmogonal themes in other spheres—to feel the *faint* jerk which came to interrupt your dreams and link you to nature again. *Ponds 4*

It seemed as if I might next cast my line upward into the air—as well as downward into this element which was hardly more dense.—

The main reason and inducement to fish was that it introduced me to the night and detained me there. [93v] Fishermen and hunters see nature at an advantage which the philosopher can never enjoy. They go through the fields with freedom and abandonment—not formally, and see nature without looking at her, as members of her family—without etiquette—& in a deshabille. *Higher Laws 1*

Flint's or Sandy pond our greatest lake and inland sea, containing 190 acres lies about a mile east of me, and a walk through the woods thither by such paths as the Indians used was sometimes my recreation in the summer. It was worth the while if only to feel the wind blow and see the waves run and remember the life of mariners. I went a nutting there in the fall one windy day when the nuts were dropping into the water and were washed ashore; and as I crept along its sedgey shore—the fresh spray blowing in my face I came upon the mouldering wreck of a boat, the sides gone and hardly more than the impression of its flat *Ponds 28*

[One leaf missing; it undoubtedly contained more of "The Ponds," 28, and a little of 5, and probably some material on the ground nut of "House-Warming," 1. See note 2, p. 101.]

Ponds [94r] midst of pine woods—without any visible inlet or outlet but
5 by the clouds and by evaporations. Successive nations have drank
8 at it and passed away. Perhaps on that spring morning when Adam & Eve were driven out of Eden Walden pond was already in existence, and even then breaking up in a gentle spring rain—accompanied with mist and a southerly wind—and covered with myriads of ducks and geese that had not heard of the fall.—Even then it had commenced its periodical rise and fall, and had clarified its waters, and had colored them of the hue they now wear—and obtained a patent of heaven to be the only Walden pond in the world,—and distiller of celestial dews—Who knows in how many unremembered nations' literatures this has been the Castalian fountain—or what nymphs presided over it in the golden age!

7 It is surrounded by a belt of paving stones extending a rod or two into the water, and then the bottom is pure sand, except in the deepest parts—or where [94v] it is more than 40 feet deep where there is usually a little sediment and a bright green weed is brought up on anchors.

6 It is so pure and clear that the bottom can easily be seen in 25 or 30 feet of water. Once in the winter, many years ago, when I had been cutting holes through the ice in order to catch pickerel, as I stepped ashore I heaved my axe back on to the ice—but as if some evil genius had directed it, it slid 4 or 5 rods directly into one of the holes—where the water was 20 feet deep. Out of curiosity I lay down on the ice and looked through the hole, when I saw the axe a little on one side, standing on its head—with its helve erect and gently swaying to and fro with the pulse of the pond—and there it might have stood erect & swaying till in the course of time the handle rotted off if I had not disturbed it. Is a thing lost when you know where it is—and how to get it? Making another hole directly over the axe with an ice chisel which I had—and cutting down the

[Probably three leaves missing; they undoubtedly contained the rest of "The Ponds," 6, and probably "Baker Farm," 3 and 4.]

Baker Farm [95r] 147. hoping to get a sight of the well bottom—to complete
5 my survey of the premises—but there, alas, are shallow quick-

sands, and rope broken & bucket irrecoverable—Meanwhile the right culinary vessel was selected—water was seemingly distilled and at length, after consultation and long delay, passed out to the thirsty one—not yet suffered to cool—nor yet to settle—such gruel sustains life here I thought—so shutting my eyes and excluding the motes by a skillful undercurrent—I drank to genuine hospitality the heartiest draught I could.—I am not squeamish in such cases where manners are concerned. *Baker Farm* 5

My haste to catch pickerel wading in retired meadows in sloughs and bog holes, in forlorn & savage places seemed for an instant trivial to me who had been sent to school & college but as I ran down the hill to the pond—with the rain-bow over my shoulder—and some slight tinkling sounds borne to my ear through the cleansed air—from I know not what quarter *my Genius said—grow wild according to thy nature like these ferns & brakes which endeavor not to become English hay. Let the thunder rumble in thy own tongue—what if it brings ruin to farmers' crops in season that is not its errand to thee. Take shelter under the cloud while they flee to carts & sheds* & I said to myself—Why not live always a rude and frontier life—full of adventures and hard work—learn much—travel much—though [95v] it be only through these woods & fields! There is no other country than this—here is the field and the man.—The daily boundaries of life are expanded & dispersed and I see in what field I stand. Roam far and wide—grasp at life and conquer it. Learn much and live. You are really free—stay till late in the night—be unwise and daring. See many men far & near in their fields & cottages before the sun sets—though as if many more were to be seen—Rest not every night in villages nor in the same place. The noblest life is continuous and unintermitting without pauses or waste. Men come meanly home at night only from the next field or street where their household echoes haunt—and their life pines because it breathes its own breath over again. But we should go beyond our shadow at sunrise, and come home from far—from adventures and perils—from enterprises and discoveries every day. 6 8

[One leaf missing here; probably contained "Baker Farm," 9, and perhaps some of "Higher Laws," 1, as well as the beginning of 5.]

Higher Laws [96r] 151. revives from time to time, but always when I have done
5 I feel that it would have been better if I had not fished. I think I
am not mistaken. It is a faint intimation—yet so are the first
streaks of morning. It tempts me continually because it is a means
of becoming acquainted with nature—not only with fishes—but
with night and water—and the scenery—which I should not
otherwise see under the same aspects.—and occasionally, though
3 not so often, because I wish to add fish to my fare for variety—I
actually fish sometimes as naturally—and from the same kind of
1 necessity—as the first fishermen did. I love sometimes to take rank
hold on life, and spend my day more as the animals do. The
novelty and adventure that are in this pursuit recommend it to
3 me. Whatever humanity I may conjure up against it is all facti-
tious, & concerns my philosophy more than my actual feelings—
not that I am less humane than [96v] others—but I do not per-
ceive that these are affected very much. I do not pity the fishes nor
1 the worms. This is habit. But the ramble by the river and meadow
seems to be incomplete, and to want a sufficient aim for itself—
without this purpose. The traveller of the prairie is a hunter—of
the head-waters of the Missouri & Columbia—a trapper. Those
who go to the Falls of St. Mary are fishermen. The traveller who
is only a traveller learns things by the halves, and at 2d hand—
3 and is poor authority.—When *some of* my friends have asked me
anxiously about their boys—whether they should let them hunt
or not—I have answered yes—remembering that it was the best
5 part of my education. There is unquestionably this instinct in me
which belongs to the lower order of creation. Yet with every year
I am less a fisherman, though without more humanity. When I
have caught my fish & cooked them, I have gained nothing by it,
but perhaps lost

[One leaf missing; probably contained material of "Higher Laws," but there is no evidence as to what.]

7 [97r] 155. If I listen to the faintest but constant suggestions of my
genius I see not to what extremes or insanity it would lead me.—
And yet that way as I grow more resolute and faithful my road
lies. The faintest assured objection which one healthy man feels

will at length prevail over the arguments & customs of mankind. *Higher Laws 7*
—No man ever followed his genius till it misled him. Though the result were bodily weakness, yet no man perhaps can say that the consequences were to be regretted—for these were a life in conformity to higher principles.—If the day and the night are such that you greet them with joy—and life emits a fragrance like flowers and sweet scented herbs—more elastic—more immortal—more starry—that is your success. All nature is your congratulation—and you have cause momentarily to bless yourself. The greatest gains and values are furthest from being appreciated. We can easily come to doubt if they [97v] exist. We soon forget them. They are the highest reality. The facts most astounding & most real are never communicated by man to man. The true harvest of my daily life is somewhat as intangible and indescribable as the tints of morning or evening. It is a little star-dust caught. It is a segment of the rainbow I have clutched.

Generally I was the friend and defender of such of the brute creation as were my neighbors. Walden was formerly a place of eagles—and the woods are still extensive & various. I amused myself with watching what life still remains—my only companions. *Brute Neighbors* *Not in text*

While I was building my house a pair of robins were forward to take advantage of this protection against birds of prey and built their nest in one day in a pitch pine which I had left growing against the rear within 3 feet of my ham- [98r] 157. mer and though the scraps of shingles were falling all over the tree—and there they dwelt, till at length some boys destroyed the eggs. *Compare 10*

Sometimes a phoebe came and looked in at my door or window to see if my house was enough like a cave for her—sustaining herself on humming wings with her talons clenched as if she held by the air, while she surveyed the premises—and frequently she flitted through and out at the opposite window. *Spring 25*

A long-eared-red-bellied field mouse had her nest underneath my house, and before I had laid the second floor, and swept out the shavings, would come out to pick up the crumbs at my feet when I took my lunch. It had probably never seen a man before, and soon became quite familiar. It would come out regularly at lunch time, and run over my shoes and up my clothing, and my *Brute Neighbors 9*

Brute Neighbors 9 legs inside clinging to the flesh. It would run readily up the sides of the room by short impulses like a squirrel—which it resembled considerably in its motions. At length as I leaned [98v] my elbow on the bench one day, it ran up my clothes, and along my sleeve, and round and round the paper which held my dinner while I kept it close dodging and playing at bo-peep with it, and when at last I held still a piece of cheese between my thumb and finger, it came and nibbled it, sitting in my hand, and then cleaned its face and paws like a fly, and walked away.

Winter Animals 13 There were scores of pitch pines in my field from 1 to three inches in diameter, which had been gnawed by the mice the previous winter. A Norwegian winter it was for them—for the snow lay long & deep, and they had to mix a large proportion of pine [bark] meal with their other diet. These trees were alive and apparently flourishing at mid-summer, and had many of them grown a foot—though completely girdled—and sometimes laid bare for the space of a foot—but now after the lapse of another winter I perceive that such are already without exception dead. For this

[One leaf missing; certainly contained some of "Brute Neighbors," 11, and possibly some of 10, on the partridge.]

Brute Neighbors 11 [99r] 161. cled round and round me—nearer and nearer, till within 4 or 5 feet, pretending broken wings & legs, to attract my attention—and get off her young—who had already taken up their march with faint peep single file through the swamp as she directed. I frequently heard the young afterward, when I could not see the parent.

So much lives free, though secret and skulking in the woods.

Here too the pigeons sat over the spring—or fluttered from bough to bough of the white pine over my head in the heat of the day.

There is always a wild and yet a wilder life somewhere sustaining itself at any moment than we allow for—which corresponds to the rareness of some of our thoughts.

I have formerly seen the racoon in the woods behind my house and probably still hear their whinnering at night.

In the fall the loon came as usual to moult and bathe himself in the pond, making the woods ring with his wild laughter [99v] before I had risen—at rumor of whose arrival all Concord sportsmen are on the alert, in gigs & on foot—two by two—and three by three—with patent rifles & patches and conical balls—and spy-glass or pin-hole on barrell. They come rustling through the woods—like October leaves—at least 10 to one seeming already to hear the loon laugh. Some station themselves on this side of the pond—some on that—for the poor loon cannot be omnipresent, if he dive here—he must come up there. But now the kind October wind rises, rustling the leaves and ruffling the surface [of the water] so that no loon can be seen or heard though our sportsmen sweep the pond with spy glasses, and make the woods ring with their discharges. The waves generously rise and dash angrily taking sides with all water-fowl.—But no thanks to the rising wind this time—for the dweller by the pond heard when the loon went off in that morning rain without loud long hearty

Brute Neighbors 16

[Five leaves missing; these leaves and the one leaf missing between leaves 102 and 103 probably contained material for "House-Warming," 18, and "Winter Animals," 7, 9, and 10. See p. 98.]

[100r] 173. with the most harsh and tremendous noise I ever heard from any inhabitant of the wood, responded at regular intervals to the goose, as if determined to disgrace and expose this intruder from Hudson's bay, by exhibiting a greater compass and volume of voice in a native, & boo-hoo him out of Concord horizon. It was the most thrilling concert I ever heard—What do you mean by alarming the citadel at this time of night—consecrated to me—Do you think I am ever caught napping at such an hour as this, and that I have not got lungs and a larynx as well as yourself? boo hoo! boo hoo! boo-hoo!

Winter Animals 2

I hardly ever opened my door in a winter or even in a summer evening without hearing the note of this owl—though never so near at hand and loud before.

The booming of the ice in the pond—my great bed-fellow in that part of Concord—as if it were restless in its bed, and would [100v] fain turn over—It was hypsy, and nervous and did not

3

Winter Animals sleep well—and the cracking of the ground by the frost—these were other memorable sounds in a winter night.

3 *4* Sometimes in clear nights I heard the foxes, as they ranged over the snow crust in search of a partridge or other game—barking raggedly and demonically—like forest dogs—as [if] laboring with some anxiety—struggling to be dogs outright and run freely in the streets. They seemed to me like imperfect & rudimental men—burrowing men—still standing on their defence—awaiting their transformation. Sometimes one came near to my window at night —attracted by the light, and barked a vulpine curse at me—and then retreated.

5 Usually the red squirrel waked me in the dawn coursing over the roof and up and down the sides of my house, by fits & starts, as if sent out of the woods on purpose to arouse me. During [101r] the winter, I threw out some sweet corn which had never got ripe upon the snow crust by my door, and was amused by watching the motions of the various animals that were baited by it. In the twilight and the night the rabbits came regularly and made a hearty meal. By day-light & in fact all day long the red squirrels came and went, and afforded me much entertainment by their manoeuvres. One would approach at first warily through the shrub oaks running over the snow by fits and starts like a leaf blown by the wind—now a few paces this way with wonderful speed and waste of energy, making inconceiva[ble] haste with his trotters, as if it were for a wager—never getting on more than half a rod at a time and then suddenly pausing with a ludicrous expression—and a gratuitous sommerset—as if all the eyes in the universe were fixed upon him—wasting more time in delay & circumspection—than would have sufficed [101v] to walk the whole distance.—I never saw one walk.—And then suddenly, before you could say Jack Robinson it would be in the tip top of a young pitch pine—screwing up its clock—and chiding all imaginary spectators—and soliloquizing & talking to the universe and itself—for no reason that I could ever detect, or itself was aware of—I suspect. At length it reached the corn—and selecting a suitable ear, would frisk about in the same uncertain trigonometrical way to the topmost stick in my wood-pile, before my

window, looking me in the face—and there sit for hours nibbling at first voraciously ear after ear and throwing the half naked cobs about wastefully—till at length it grew dainty and played with its food—tasting only the inside of the kernel—and the ear which was held balanced over the stick by one paw slipped from its careless grasp, and fell to the ground—when it would [102r] 177. look over at it uncertain—as if suspecting that it had life—with a mind not made up, whether to get it again, or a new one or be off. And so the little impudent fellow would waste many an ear in a forenoon—till at last seizing some longer & plumper one—considerably bigger than itself—and skilfully balancing it—it would set out with it to the woods—like a tiger with a buffaloe—by the same zigzag course and with frequent pauses.—He scratched along with it as if it were too heavy for him & falling all the while —making its fall a diagonal between a perpendicular and horizontal—being determined to put it through at any rate. A singularly frivolous and whimsical fellow. And so he would get off with it to where he lived and carry it to the top of a pine tree 40 or 50 rods distant—and I afterwards noticed the cobs strewn about the woods in various directions. *Winter Animals 5*

All the emotions and the life of the [102v] squirrel imply spectators—They grew at last to be quite familiar and sometimes stepped upon my shoe when that was the nearest way. Sometimes they got under my house two at a time—directly under my feet as I sat writing—and kept up the queerest chuckling & chirruping—and vocal pirouetting and gurgling sounds that ever were heard—and when I stamped they only chirruped the louder—as if past all fear and respect in their mad prank—and defying all humanity to stop them.—No you don't—Chickaree! They were wholly deaf to my arguments—or failed to perceive their force—and fell into a strain of invective that was irresistible. *Spring 12*

At length also the jays arrive—whose discordant scream had been [heard] long before, as they were warily making their approaches—a quarter of a mile off—and in a stealthy sneaking and cowardly manner—they drew near flitting from tree to tree—and picked up the kernels which *Winter Animals 6*

[One leaf missing; see note between 99v and 100r.]

Winter Animals 14 [103r] I opened my door in the evening off they would go with a squeak and a bounce.—They only excited my pity near at hand. One evening one sat by [my] door three paces from me, at first trembling with fear, yet unwilling to move.—A poor wee thing—lean and bony—with ragged ears and sharp nose—scant tail & slender paws. It looked as if nature no longer contained the breed of nobler bloods, but the earth stood on its last legs. Its large eyes looked young & unhealthy—almost dropsical.—I took two steps —and lo! he scud away with an elastic spring over the snow crust—straightening its body and its limbs into graceful length, and soon put the forest between me and itself—The wild free venison—asserting his vigor and the dignity of nature—not without reason was his slenderness. Such then was his nature.

15 What is a country without rabbits and partridges? They are the most natural and simple [103v] animal products.—Ancient & venerable families known to antiquity as to modern times—of the very hue and substance of nature—nearest allied to leaves and to the ground—and especially to one another—it is either winged or it is legged. It is hardly as if you had seen a wild creature when a rabbit or a partridge burst away—but only a natural one—as much to be expected as rustling leaves.

[Thoreau canceled the first six or seven lines of "The Pond in Winter," 16, which at first followed here, when he decided to have material of "Former Inhabitants" come next; he probably canceled some more of "The Pond in Winter," 16, in the first of the three leaves that are missing at this point. Most of the material on these leaves probably consisted of material for the early paragraphs of "Former Inhabitants."]

Former Inhabitants 10 [104r] 189. men with earthen ware—and left descendents to succeed him. I was pleased when in mid-summer—a man who was carrying a load of pottery to market—stopped his horse against my field and inquired concerning Wyman—he said that he long ago bought a potter's wheel of him—and he wished to know what had become of him.

I had heard read[57] of the potter's clay and wheel in scripture, but I thought that latterly such as we used had either come down

57. The word "read" was canceled later.

unbroken from those days—or that they grew on trees like gourds somewhere. *Former Inhabitants 12*

Now only a dent in the earth marks the site of most of these dwellings—with buried wall stones—and strawberries raspberries & thimbleberries growing in the sunny sward there—some pitchy pine or gnarled oak in the chimney nook—and the sweet scented black birch waves where the door stone was—Sometimes the well dent is visible, where once a spring oozed—now dry and tearless grass—or *it is* covered deep not to be discovered till some late [104v] day, with a flat stone under the sod, when the last of the race departed.

These dents—like deserted fox-burrows—old holes—are all that is left where once was the stir and bustle of human life—and man's destiny was being consummated—& fate, free-will, fore-knowledge absolute—in some dialect or other were all in turns discussed.—"Cato and Brister—as tradition says—pulled wool."

Still grows the vivacious lilack a generation after the door and *13* lintel and the sill are gone—unfolding still its early sweet-scented blossom in the spring—to be plucked by the musing traveller—planted and tended once by children's hands—in front-yard plot —now standing by wall-sides in retired pastures—and giving place to new-rising forests.—The last of that stirp—sole survivor of that family. Little did the dusky children think that the little slip with its two eyes only which they stuck in the ground in the shadow of the house—and daily watered—would root itself [105r] so, and outlive them, and house itself in the rear that shaded it—and grown man's garden and orchard, and tell their story to the lone wanderer a half century after they were dead—blossoming as fair, smelling as sweet, as in that first spring. I mark its still tender—civil—cheerful lilack colors.

But this small village—germ of something more why did it fail *14* —while Concord grows apace? Were there no natural advantages —no water privileges—forsooth? Aye—only the deep Walden pond and cool Brister's spring—privilege to drink long & healthy draughts at these—all unimproved by these men, but to dilute their glass. They were universally a thirsty race. Might not the basket—stable-broom mat-making—corn parching—linen-spin-

Former Inhabitants 14 ning—& pottery business have thrived here—making the wilderness to bloom—and a numerous posterity have inherited the land of their ancestors? The sterile soil would at least have been proof against a lowland degeneracy. Again, [105v] perhaps, Nature will try, with me for a first settler—and my house raised 2 springs ago *15* to be the oldest in the hamlet.—And with such thoughts as these I lulled myself asleep.

Pond in Winter 3 Early in the morning while all things are crisp with frost, come men with fishing reels, and slender lunch—men of unquestionable faith,—and let down their fine lines through the snowy field to take pickerel and perch—Who pursue their trade with as much self-respect as any mechanic or farmer does his—wisely taught by their instinct to follow other fashions and trust other authorities than their townsmen. Wild men who frequent the river meadows and solitary ponds in the horizon—connecting links between towns—who in their goings & comings stitch towns together in parts where they would be ripped and with the hunter race prevent wild animals from multiplying.—Who sit and eat their luncheon in stout fear-noughts on the dry oak-leaves on the shore of the pond—as wise in natural lore—as the citizen is in artificial.

[Four leaves apparently missing; a good deal of the material may have been devoted to the freezing, melting, and qualities of Walden and other waters. See p. 99.]

Spring 1 [106r] 201. it was 36° or 3 degrees higher than Walden. In the middle $32\frac{1}{2}$ degrees. This difference of $3\frac{1}{2}$ degrees between the temperature of the deep water and the shallow in Flint's pond—and the fact that a great proportion of it is comparatively shallow —show why it should break up so much sooner than Walden.

The temperature of the river the same day was $32\frac{1}{2}$ the same with the middle of Flint's pond—and nearly the same with that of snow just melted and running in a sluice which[58] is 32 or freezing point. The temperature of Martwell Bigelow's well—which was neither the warmest nor the coldest that was tried—was 43—that *Ponds 13* of the boiling spring 45 or the warmest of any, but it is perhaps the coldest in summer when *shallow* & stagnant snow and surface water is not mixed with it.

58. MS: "which which."

As I was desirous of recovering the long lost bottom of Walden pond, before the ice broke up last winter,[59] I surveyed it carefully with compass and chain, and sounding line, and found it to contain a little over 61½ acres, and [106v] to be 102 feet deep in the middle. As I sounded through the ice I could determine the shape of the bottom with greater accuracy than is possible in harbors which do not freeze over—and was astonished at its general regularity—In the *deepest part*[60] it was more level than any field which is exposed to the sun and wind and the plow. In one instance on a line arbitrarily chosen it did not vary more than one foot in 30 rods—and generally near the middle I could calculate the variation for each 100 feet before hand within a few inches. Some are accustomed to speak of deep and dangerous holes in running streams and ponds—but these are contrary to the law of nature, the tendency of water being to level all inequalities unless there are rocks in the way. *Pond in Winter* 6 8

Indeed the regularity of the bottom and its conformity to the shores and the range of the neighboring hills, was so perfect that a distant promontory betrayed itself by the soundings even in the middle, and its direction was determined by observing the opposite shore. Cape

[Three leaves missing; they probably contained some of the material of paragraphs 9 through 15, and certainly the beginning of 16.]

[107r] 209. house of fishes, and carts off their very element and air, held fast with chains and stakes like corded wood all through the favoring winter air, to wintry cellars to underlie the summer there. It looks blue as amethyst or solidified azure afar off as it is drawn through the streets. They are a merry race, these ice cutters full of jest & sport—and when I went among them they were wont to invite me to saw pit-fashion with them—I standing underneath. *16*

This winter,[61] as you all know, there came a hundred men of Hyperborean extraction swoop down on to our pond one morning with a shriek from the engine—with many carloads of ungainly *17*

59. Later changed to "early in 1846."

60. The word "middle" was canceled.

61. Later changed to "In the winter of 46 & 7."

Pond in Winter 17 looking farming tools—sleds plows—drill-barrows—turf-knives—spades—saws—rakes—and each [man] was armed with a double-pointed pike staff—such as are not described in the N. E. Farmer or the Cultivator.

At first I did not know [107v] whether they had come to sow a crop of winter rye, or some other kind of grain recently introduced from Iceland. As I saw no manure I judged that they meant to skim the land—thinking the soil was deep and had lain fallow long enough—as I had done with my field the year before. They said that a gentleman farmer, who was behind the scenes, wanted to double his money—which as I understood amounted to half a million already—but in order to cover each one of his dollars with another, he took off the only coat and the skin itself of Walden pond in the midst of a hard winter.—They went to work at once plowing, harrowing, rolling, furrowing, in admirable order, as if they were bent on making this a model farm but when I was looking sharp to see what kind of seed they dropt into the furrow —a gang of fellows by my side suddenly began to hook up the virgin mould itself—with a peculiar jerk—clean down to the sand—or rather

[One leaf missing; undoubtedly contained material for 17 and 18.]

18 [108r] 213. in the almanack—his shanty. In a good day they told me they could get out a thousand tons which was the yield of about one acre.

The ice was put to many novel uses. The horses ate their oats out of cakes of ice hollowed out like a bucket.

19 Ice is a curious subject for our contemplation. They have some in the houses at Fresh Pond 5 years old. Why is that a bucket of water soon becomes putrified, but frozen it remains sweet forever? One suggests that this is the difference between the affections and the intellect.

Spring 1 They have not been able to break up our pond any earlier than usual this year as they expected to—for she has got a thick new garment to replace the old.

Pond in Winter 20 From my window for 16 days I saw a hundred men at work, like busy husbandmen, with teams and horses, and apparently all

the implements of farming—such a picture as we see on the first page of the almanack—and when I looked out I thought of the fable of [108v] the lark and the reapers & the parable of the sower and such like things—And now they are all gone, and in 16 days more perchance I shall look from the same window on the pure sky-blue Walden water there, reflecting the clouds and the trees, and sending up its evaporations in solitude—and no traces will appear that a man has ever stood there.—Or I shall see perchance a solitary fisher in his boat—like a floating leaf—pursuing the contemplative man's recreation, and beholding his form reflected in the waves where lately a hundred men securely labored —or I shall hear a solitary loon laugh as he dives and plumes himself there. *Pond in Winter* *20*

Thus it appears that the sweltering inhabitants of Charleston and New Orleans & Havanna of Madras and Bombay and Calcutta—drink at my well. *21*

In the morning I bathe my intellect in the stupendous & cosmogonal philosophy of the Bhagvat-Geeta—since whose composition years of the gods have elapsed—and in comparison with which this [109r] modern world and its literature seem puny and trivial—and I doubt if these things are not to be referred to another state of existence than this of ours—so remote are that religion & sublimity from our conceptions.—I lay down the book and go to my well for water, and lo! there I meet the servant of the Brahmen priest of Brahma & Veeshnoo & Indra, who still sit in his temple on the Ganges reading the Vedas—the descendant of the religious devotee who once dwelt at the roots of trees with his crust and his water jug.

I meet his servant come to draw water for his master, and our buckets grate together in the same well.

The pure Walden water is mingled with the sacred water of the Ganges. With favoring winds it is wafted past the site of the fabulous [109v][62] [110r] 217. islands of Atlantis and the islands of

62. It appears that 109v was originally blank. Later, Thoreau copied the last lines of "The Pond in Winter," 21, that are on 110r on the bottom of 109r and top of 109v. This change clearly marked the separation between this chapter and "Spring." Thoreau probably made the change when he was adding to the beginning of "Spring" and dividing his book into chapters.

Pond in Winter 21 the Hesperides. It makes the periplus of Hanno—and floating by Ternate and Tidore and the mouth of the Persian Gulf, it melts in the tropic gales of the Indian seas, and is landed in ports of which Alexander heard only the names.

Spring 3 The ice in the pond at length begins to be honey-combed, and I can set my heel in it as I walk.[63] Fogs and rains & warmer suns are gradually melting the snows. The days have grown sensibly longer and we see how we shall get through the winter without adding to our woodpile—for large fires are now no longer necessary—and I am on the alert for the first signs of spring—if I can hear the striped squirrels bark—or the chance note of some migratory bird.

On the 13th of March after I had heard the song sparrow and the black-bird the ice was still a foot thick on the pond. As the weather grew warmer, it [110v] was not sensibly worn away by the water, nor broken up & floated off as in rivers, but became porous & honey-combed and *saturated with*[64] water—so that you could put your foot through it when 7 or 8 inches thick—though it was melted for half a rood, around the shore but by tomorrow [?] evening—after a warm rain followed by fog it would have wholly disappeared—all gone off with the fog—Last year I went across the middle 5 days before it had disappeared entirely. In 1845

House-Warming 12 Walden broke up on the 1st of April in 1846 on the 25th [of][65] March—it froze entirely over the former year on the 22nd of Dec.—last year on the 16 of December—in both years a week or two later than Flint's pond and the river probably on account of

Spring 1 its greater depth. The sun warms shallow water through ice a foot thick—as you may make a burning glass with a piece of ice and kindle a fire with it from the sun. The ice in the shallowest

[One leaf missing; it probably contained more of "Spring," 1, and the first part of 4.]

4 [111r] river—and he dropped down without obstruction, from Sudbury, where he lived, to Fair Haven pond, which he found, unexpectedly, was covered with a firm field of ice. It was a very

63. Thoreau first wrote "began," "could set," and "walked"; exactly when he changed them to the present tense is uncertain.

64. The words "imbibed more" were canceled. 65. MS had ditto mark.

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Spring 11 various Composite. The beauty of the drooping and sheaf-like head of the rush all men have admired in all ages—and it must have some such near and unaccountable relation to human life, as astronomy has to those laws and figures which first existed in the mind of man.

All the phenomena of winter are suggestive of an inexpressible tenderness, and fragile delicacy—We are accustomed to hear this king almost tyrant described as rude and boisterous—but with the gentleness of a lover he adorns the tresses of summer.

5 [112v] At length the sun's rays have attained the right angle, and warm winds blow up mist and rain and melt the snow banks —and the sun dispersing the mist smiles on a chequered landscape of russet and white—smoking with incense—through which the traveller picks his way from islet to islet cheered by the music of a myriad rills and rivulets whose veins are filled with the blood of *Compare 6* winter which they are bearing off.—As I go back and forth over the rail-road through the deep cut I have seen where the clayey sand *like lava* had flowed down when it thawed and as it streamed it assumed the forms of vegetation, of vines and stout pulpy leaves —unaccountably interesting and beautiful—which methinks I have seen imitated somewhere in bronze—as if its course were so to speak a diagonal between fluids & solids—and it were hesitating whether to stream in to a river, or into vegetation—for vegetation too is such a stream as a river, only of slower current.

Spring 13 [113r] The first sparrow of spring—the year beginning with younger hope than ever—the faint silvery warblings heard over the bare and moist fields from the song-sparrow—the blue-bird— and the red-wing as if the last flakes of winter tinkled as they fell— What at such a time are histories—chronologies—traditions, and all written revelations?

The brooks sing carols and glees to the spring—the marsh-hawk —sailing low over the meadow—is already seeking the first slimy life that awakes. The sough of melting snow is heard in all dells and on all hillsides—and by the sunny river banks—and the ice dissolves apace in all ponds. The earth sends forth an inward heat to greet the returning sun—not yellow like the sun—but green is the color of its flame.

Spring plaint and mutual consolations. As I stood at the door I could
15 hear the rush of their wings as driving toward my house, they suddenly spied my light, and with hushed clamor wheeled and
16 settled in the pond. In the morning I watched them from my door through the mist sailing in the middle of the pond, 50 rods off—so large and tumultuous that the pond seemed like an artificial pond for their amusement. But when I stood on the shore—they at once rose up with a flapping of wings, at the signal of their commander, and when they had got into rank circled about over my head—29 of them, and then steered straight to Canada with a regular clank clank from the commodore at intervals,—trusting to break their fast in muddier pools.

A compact flock of ducks also rose up at the same time and took the route to the north in the wake of their noisier cousins.

[One leaf missing; it probably contained paragraph 17 and part of 19; 18, part of 19, 20, and 21 were added in later versions.]

22 [115r] 231. On the 29th of April, as I was fishing from the banks of the river near the Nine-Acre-Corner bridge, standing on the quaking grass and willow roots, where the muskrats burrow, I heard a singular rattling or perhaps shuttle-like sound, not musical but almost like the rattling sticks which boys play with their fingers, when, looking up I observed a very slight & graceful hawk, like a night-hawk, alternately soaring like a ripple and tumbling a rod or two over and over, and showing the under side of its wings which gleamed like a satin ribbon in the sun, and was of the pearly color of the inside of a shell. This sight reminded me of falconry and what nobleness and poetry is associated with that sport. The Merlin it seemed to me it might be named. It was the most etherial flight I had ever witnessed. It did not simply flutter like a butterfly, nor soar like the noblest hawks, but it sported with [115v] proud reliance in the fields of air; mounting again and again with its strange chuckle it repeated its free and beautiful fall, turning over and over like a kite. It was most high and lofty tumbling, as if it had never set its foot on terra-firma. It seemed to have no companion in the universe,—sporting there alone,—and to need none, but the morning and the ether with which it

Spring organizations that can be so serenely squashed out of existence
24 like soft pulp,—tadpoles which herons gobble up, and tortoises and toads run over by a wheel in the road; and that sometimes it has rained flesh & blood! [117r] 235. With the liability to accident we must see the trivialness of it, and the little account that is to be made of it. The impression made upon a wise man is of universal innocence—Poison is not poisonous after all, nor are any wounds fatal. Compassion is a very untenable ground to occupy long at a time. It must be very expeditious. Its works will not bear to be stereotyped.

25 Early in May or by the last of April, the oaks hickories—maples and other trees just putting out amidst the pine woods around the pond gave them the appearance, especially in cloudy days, of the sun just breaking through mists and shining on them. Their green bursting buds and expanding leaves scattered a slight brightness like sun shine over the hill sides.

When the oaks are in the gray
Then Farmers plant away.

The 3rd or 4th of May I saw a loon in the pond—and during the first week of this month I heard the whippoorwill—the brown-thrasher—the veery—the wood pewee, the chewink, and other birds—the wood thrush I had heard [117v] long before—The pollen of the pitch pine already covered the pond, and the stones and rotten wood along the shore with its yellow dust—

And so the seasons went rolling on into summer as one rambles into higher & higher grass—

26 Thus was my first year's life in the woods completed.[68]

68. This is clearly the end of version I. Two additional leaves of light-blue paper contain material that Thoreau developed further in "Conclusion," 16 and 17; but the material is in no respect an integral part of version I, and the handwriting and ink are certainly not those of version I. There is no clear evidence as to when Thoreau wrote this material.

warm spring day, and he was astonished to see such a body of ice remaining. Not seeing any ducks he hid his boat on the backside of an island in the pond, and then concealed himself in the bushes on the south side to await them. The ice was melted out 3 or 4 rods from the shore, and there was a smooth and warm sheet of water, with a muddy bottom such as the ducks love within, and he thought it likely that some would be along pretty soon. After he had lain still there about an hour he suddenly heard a low[66] and seemingly very distant sound, but singularly grand and impressive, and unlike anything he had ever heard before, gradually swelling and increasing as if it would have a universal and memorable ending—a sullen rush and roar, which seemed to him, all at once, like the sound [111v] of a vast body of fowl coming in to settle there—and seizing his gun he started up with excitement and found that the whole body of the ice had started while he lay there, and drifted in to the shore, and the sound he had heard was made by its edge grating on the shore and at first gently nibbling and crumbling off—and at length heaving up and scattering its wrecks along the island to a considerable height before it became still and silent again. *Spring 4*

But we must not let the winter go so easily. When the ground is completely bare of snow and a few warm days have dried its surface, it is pleasant to compare the faint tender signs of the infant year just peeping forth, with the stately beauty of the withered vegetation which has withstood the winter—the various thistles and other strong stemmed plants which have not even yet sown their seeds—and graceful reeds and rushes whose winter is more gay and stately than their [112r] 223. summer—as if not till then was their beauty ripe.—Wild oats perchance and life-everlasting whose autumn has now arrived—those unexhausted granaries of winter, whose seeds entertain the earliest birds. *11*

I never tire of admiring their arching drooping and sheaflike tops. They bring back the summer to our winter memories—and are among the forms which art loves to perpetuate. They are an antique style—older than Greek or Egyptian—a lighter and more graceful Ionic—a richer Corinthian—a simpler Doric—a more

66. MS originally read "slow."

Spring 11 various Composite. The beauty of the drooping and sheaf-like head of the rush all men have admired in all ages—and it must have some such near and unaccountable relation to human life, as astronomy has to those laws and figures which first existed in the mind of man.

All the phenomena of winter are suggestive of an inexpressible tenderness, and fragile delicacy—We are accustomed to hear this king almost tyrant described as rude and boisterous—but with the gentleness of a lover he adorns the tresses of summer.

5 [112v] At length the sun's rays have attained the right angle, and warm winds blow up mist and rain and melt the snow banks —and the sun dispersing the mist smiles on a chequered landscape of russet and white—smoking with incense—through which the traveller picks his way from islet to islet cheered by the music of a myriad rills and rivulets whose veins are filled with the blood of *Compare 6* winter which they are bearing off.—As I go back and forth over the rail-road through the deep cut I have seen where the clayey sand *like lava* had flowed down when it thawed and as it streamed it assumed the forms of vegetation, of vines and stout pulpy leaves —unaccountably interesting and beautiful—which methinks I have seen imitated somewhere in bronze—as if its course were so to speak a diagonal between fluids & solids—and it were hesitating whether to stream in to a river, or into vegetation—for vegetation too is such a stream as a river, only of slower current.

Spring 13 [113r] The first sparrow of spring—the year beginning with younger hope than ever—the faint silvery warblings heard over the bare and moist fields from the song-sparrow—the blue-bird— and the red-wing as if the last flakes of winter tinkled as they fell— What at such a time are histories—chronologies—traditions, and all written revelations?

The brooks sing carols and glees to the spring—the marsh-hawk —sailing low over the meadow—is already seeking the first slimy life that awakes. The sough of melting snow is heard in all dells and on all hillsides—and by the sunny river banks—and the ice dissolves apace in all ponds. The earth sends forth an inward heat to greet the returning sun—not yellow like the sun—but green is the color of its flame.

The grass flames up on all hillsides like a spring fire. Grass is the *Spring* symbol of perpetual youth its blade like a long green ribbon— *13* longer than was ever woven in the factories of men—streaming from the sod into the summer—checked [113v] indeed by the frost, but anon pushing on again—lifting its last year's spear of withered hay with the fresh life below.—It is as steady a growth as the rill which oozes out of the ground, and indeed is almost identical with that—for in the fertile and growing days of June, when the rills are dry—the grass blades are their channels—and from year to year the herds drink at this green stream—and the mower cuts from this outwelling supply—what their several needs require.—So our human life but dies down to the surface of nature —but puts forth its green blade still to eternity.

The change from storm & winter to fair and serene weather, *15* from dark and sluggish hours to bright and elastic ones, is a memorable crisis which all things proclaim. It is instantaneous—at last. Suddenly an influx of light fills the house—though the clouds of winter still over hang it *and the eaves are dripping with sleety rain.* I look out on the pond which was [114r] 227. cold grey ice but yesterday—and already the signs of fair weather were there and it was become a calm & smooth lake, full of promise as a summer evening—seeming to have some intelligence with distant horizons, as if a summer evening sky was already reflected in its bosom, though none was visible over head—I heard a robin in the distance the first I had heard for many a thousand years, methinks, whose sound has the same meaning it was wont to have. But where does the minstrel really perch, who could ever find the twig he sits on? This at least is not the *turdus migratorius.*[67] The pitch pines about my house, which had so long drooped—suddenly looked brighter, more green & more alive and erect, as if entirely cleansed by the rain—and fitted once more to express immortal beauty, and make a part of this world which is called κοσμος. I knew that it would not rain any more.

As it grew darker, I was startled by the clank of geese fly[ing] low over the woods—like weary travellers late getting in from southern lakes, and indulging at last in unre- [114v] strained com-

67. Thoreau's italics.

Spring plaint and mutual consolations. As I stood at the door I could
15 hear the rush of their wings as driving toward my house, they suddenly spied my light, and with hushed clamor wheeled and
16 settled in the pond. In the morning I watched them from my door through the mist sailing in the middle of the pond, 50 rods off—so large and tumultuous that the pond seemed like an artificial pond for their amusement. But when I stood on the shore—they at once rose up with a flapping of wings, at the signal of their commander, and when they had got into rank circled about over my head—29 of them, and then steered straight to Canada with a regular clank clank from the commodore at intervals,—trusting to break their fast in muddier pools.

A compact flock of ducks also rose up at the same time and took the route to the north in the wake of their noisier cousins.

[One leaf missing; it probably contained paragraph 17 and part of 19; 18, part of 19, 20, and 21 were added in later versions.]

22 [115r] 231. On the 29th of April, as I was fishing from the banks of the river near the Nine-Acre-Corner bridge, standing on the quaking grass and willow roots, where the muskrats burrow, I heard a singular rattling or perhaps shuttle-like sound, not musical but almost like the rattling sticks which boys play with their fingers, when, looking up I observed a very slight & graceful hawk, like a night-hawk, alternately soaring like a ripple and tumbling a rod or two over and over, and showing the under side of its wings which gleamed like a satin ribbon in the sun, and was of the pearly color of the inside of a shell. This sight reminded me of falconry and what nobleness and poetry is associated with that sport. The Merlin it seemed to me it might be named. It was the most etherial flight I had ever witnessed. It did not simply flutter like a butterfly, nor soar like the noblest hawks, but it sported with [115v] proud reliance in the fields of air; mounting again and again with its strange chuckle it repeated its free and beautiful fall, turning over and over like a kite. It was most high and lofty tumbling, as if it had never set its foot on terra-firma. It seemed to have no companion in the universe,—sporting there alone,—and to need none, but the morning and the ether with which it

played. It seemed not lonely, but made all the earth lonely be- *Spring*
neath it, though it had no mate in the world. Where was the *22*
parent that hatched it, its kindred, and its father in the heavens? The tenant of the air, it seemed related to the earth but by an egg hatched some time in the crevice of a crag,—or was its native nest made in the angle of a cloud, woven of the rain-bow's trimmings and the sunset sky, and lined with some soft haze caught up from earth? Its eyrie was perchance some cliffy cloud.

Beside this I got a rare [116r] mess of golden and silver, and *23*
bright cupreous fishes—which looked like a string of jewels—This spring ramble was very invigorating and purgative of wintry fumes and dumps.

Our village life would stagnate, I think, if it were not for the *24*
unexplored forests and meadows which surround it. We need the tonic of wildness,—to wade sometimes in meadows where only the bittern and the meadow-hen lurk, and hear the booming of the snipe; to smell the whispering sedge where only some wilder & more solitary fowl builds her nest, and the mink crawls with its belly close to the ground.

At the same time that we are earnest to learn and explore all things, we require that all things should be mysterious and unexplorable by us that land and sea be infinitely wild, unsurveyed and unfathomed by us. We can never have enough of nature. We must be refreshed by the sight of inexhaustible vigor, vast features and titanic—the sea coast with its wrecks, the wilderness with its living and [116v] its decaying trees,—the thunder cloud—and the rain that lasts 3 weeks and produces freshets. We need to witness our own limits transgressed, and some life pasturing freely where we never wander. We are cheered when we observe the vulture feeding on the carrion that disgusts and disheartens us, and deriving health & strength from the repast. There was a dead horse in the hollow by the path to my house, which compelled me sometimes to go round & out of my way, especially in the night when the air was heavy; but the assurance it gave me of the strong appetite and inviolable health of nature was my consolation for this. —I love to see nature so rife with life that myriads can be afforded to be sacrificed, and suffered to prey on one another—the tender

Spring organizations that can be so serenely squashed out of existence
24 like soft pulp,—tadpoles which herons gobble up, and tortoises and toads run over by a wheel in the road; and that sometimes it has rained flesh & blood! [117r] 235. With the liability to accident we must see the trivialness of it, and the little account that is to be made of it. The impression made upon a wise man is of universal innocence—Poison is not poisonous after all, nor are any wounds fatal. Compassion is a very untenable ground to occupy long at a time. It must be very expeditious. Its works will not bear to be stereotyped.

25 Early in May or by the last of April, the oaks hickories—maples and other trees just putting out amidst the pine woods around the pond gave them the appearance, especially in cloudy days, of the sun just breaking through mists and shining on them. Their green bursting buds and expanding leaves scattered a slight brightness like sun shine over the hill sides.

When the oaks are in the gray
Then Farmers plant away.

The 3rd or 4th of May I saw a loon in the pond—and during the first week of this month I heard the whippoorwill—the brown-thrasher—the veery—the wood pewee, the chewink, and other birds—the wood thrush I had heard [117v] long before—The pollen of the pitch pine already covered the pond, and the stones and rotten wood along the shore with its yellow dust—

And so the seasons went rolling on into summer as one rambles into higher & higher grass—

26 Thus was my first year's life in the woods completed.[68]

68. This is clearly the end of version I. Two additional leaves of light-blue paper contain material that Thoreau developed further in "Conclusion," 16 and 17; but the material is in no respect an integral part of version I, and the handwriting and ink are certainly not those of version I. There is no clear evidence as to when Thoreau wrote this material.