Congress appropriated $30,000 for the Secretary of War to import camels and dromedaries from the Orient and test them in Texas for military purposes. Iowa, Michigan, Indiana, Delaware, Nebraska, New York, and New Hampshire passed prohibition laws, most of which were repealed the moment the tide of reform receded. Henry Bessemer received his first patent for his process of producing steel. The war in Kansas went on throughout the year, nor was it resolved by the adoption in December of a state constitution that prohibited slavery. The Arctic expedition of Dr. Elisha Kane returned after severe hardships. California wrote a law imposing a “passenger tax” of $50 on every Chinese entering the state. Our country’s imports totaled $257,809,000, our exports $192,751,000. There were 1,307 banks reporting their assets and liabilities; their total resources were $816,729,000.

Thoreau gradually so expanded his journalizing that a printed volume of more than 500 pages is needed to contain his observations for the year as preserved in the standard edition of his works. He is the “reporter of woods and fields”—never exclusively so and never dully so, but nevertheless a hard-working reporter rather than a poet. Putnam’s Monthly published four selections from Cape Cod, “The Shipwreck,” “Stage-Coach Views,” “The Plains of Nanset” (a Putnam misprint for “Nauset”), and “The Beach.” There were to have been more parts, but Thoreau and the editor disagreed about the price and the tone of the articles. (During his life Thoreau made four trips to Cape Cod, two with his friend Ellery Channing and two by himself. The first trip, in 1849 with Channing, was the main basis for the series of articles.) A
little over a year after the publication of *Walden* the publisher Ticknor sent Thoreau his profits. The check was for $51.60; 344 copies had been sold during the year, and Thoreau received fifteen cents on each. A high light of the year was Thomas Cholmondeley’s gift of a library of Hindu classics in translation, which fed Thoreau’s interest in the East. This was the year of his only serious illness since his student days at Harvard. He became sick in spring, rested through the summer, and by fall was almost—but not quite—his old self again. His illness bore the marks of tuberculosis; whatever it was, Thoreau would never feel so well after this year as before.

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**From Daniel Ricketson**

Shanty, Brooklawn, Thursday p.m., Jan. 4, 1855.

Dear Walden,—

We should be glad to hear of your safe arrival home from your “perils by land and by flood,” and as we are not likely to know of this unless you receive a strong hint, I just drop a line for that end. Your visit, short as it was, gave us all at Brooklawn much satisfaction. I should be glad to have you come again next summer and cruise around with me. I regret I was unusually unwell when you were here, as you undoubtedly perceived by my complaints. I am just starting for a walk, and as I expect to pass our village post-office, thought it a good time to write you. I trust you and your comrade [Ellery] Channing will have many good times this winter. I may possibly drop in on you for a few hours at the end of this month, when I expect to be in Boston. Excuse haste.

Yours very truly,

Daniel Ricketson.

P.S. Mrs. R. and children sent kind regards.

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Text, Ricketson, p. 36.
To Daniel Ricketson

Concord Mass Jan 6th 1855

Mr Ricketson,

I am pleased to hear from the shanty whose inside and occupant I have seen. I had a very pleasant time at Brooklawn, as you know,—and thereafter at Nantucket. I was obliged to pay the usual tribute to the sea, but it was more than made up to me by the hospitality of the Nantucketers. Tell Arthur [Ricketson] that I can now compare notes with him, for though I went neither before nor behind the mast, since we hadn’t any—I went with my head hanging over the side all the way.

In spite of all my experience I persisted in reading to the Nantucket people the lecture which I read at New Bedford, and I found them to be the very audience for me. I got home Friday night after being lost in the fog off Hyannis.

I have not yet found a new jackknife but I had a glorious skating with Channing the other day on the skates found long ago.

Mr Cholmondley sailed for England direct in the America on the 3d—after spending a night with me. He thinks even to go to the east & enlist!

Last night I returned from lecturing at Worcester.

I shall be glad to see you when you come to Boston, as will also my mother & sister who know something about you as an abolitionist. Come directly to our house.

Please remember me to Mrs Ricketson, & also to the [young folks]

Yrs

Henry D Thoreau

MS., Huntington, printed in Ricketson, pp. 36–37. The bracketed final portion is not in the manuscript; a note, apparently in Sanborn’s hand, says, “The close given for autograph to Mary Wall.”

From Daniel Ricketson

Shanty, Brooklawn, 9 Jan., ’55.

Dear Walden,—

I have just received your very welcome reply. I am also happy to learn of your safe arrival home, and was much amused by your account of your voyage to Nantucket—also that you found an appreciative audience there.

You address me as Mr. Ricketson. What did I do while you were here to warrant so much reverence—I pass for a rather aristocratic man among big folk, but didn’t suppose you knew it! You should have addressed “Dear Brooklawn.” Johnson in his Tour to the Hebrides says they have a custom, in those isles, of giving their names to their chieftains or owners—as Col. Rusay, Much, etc., of which they are the Lairds. You are the true and only Laird of Walden, and as such I address you. You certainly can show a better title to Walden Manor than any other.

It is just as we lawyers say, and you hold the fee. You didn’t think of finding such knowing folks this way, although you had travelled a good deal in Concord.

By the way, I have heard several sensible people speak well of your lecture before the New Bedford Lyceum, but conclude it was not generally understood.

My son Arthur and I have begun a series of pilgrimages to old farmhouses—we don’t notice any short of a hundred years old.

I am much obliged to you and your mother for your kind invitation. My intention is to attend the Anti-slavery meetings in Boston, Wednesday and Thursday, 24th and 25th this month, and shall endeavor to get up to Concord for part of a day.

I wish you would come to Boston at that time. You will find me at the Tremont House, where I shall hope to see you.

Mrs. Ricketson and the “young folks” wish to be kindly remembered to you.

I have had a present of a jackknife found upon a stick of timber in an old house, "built in" and supposed to have been left there by the carpenter. The house is over one hundred years old, and the knife is very curious.
So I conclude this rambling epistle, 

Yours exceedingly,

“Mr. Ricketson.”

Present my compliments to Mr. Channing.

Text, Ricketson, pp. 37–38.

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**FROM THOMAS CHAMONDELEY**

Hodnet Salop Tuesday 1855

My dear Thoreau

You will be glad to hear that I am safe at my Mother’s home in Salop after a most disagreeable passage to England in the steamer America.

I have accepted the offer of a Captaincy in the Salop Militia, & it is probable that we shall be sent before very long to relieve other troops who are proceeding to the seat of the war: but if the strife continues to consume men at its present rate of 1000 a week we shall be involved in it before the year is out by volunteering into the Line.

Meanwhile I shall use my best diligence to learn all I can of my men & prepare myself for the active service to which I impatiently look forward. Nothing can be more awful than the position of our poor army. At the present rate of mortality they will be finished up by the time they are most wanted; & it will be reserved for the French to take Sevastopol.

We are learning a tremendous lesson: I hope we shall profit by it & so far from retracting I trust we shall continue hostilities with greater energy & greater wisdom than before.

_I would rather see the country decimated than an unglorious or even an accommodating peace._

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**1855**

My passion is to see the fellow crushed or to die in the attempt.

Lord John [Russell] has resigned & the ministry is, we all think, breaking up. It was high time considering the mismanagement of Newcastle.

We are in the midst of a great snow (great at least for us). Colds are rife in the Parish so that “coughing drowns the Parson’s saw.”

I find the red brick houses are the most striking feature on revisiting this country. Though a great deal smaller than your elegant villas our cottages on the whole please my eyes & look more homely, a very suggestion of good cheer.

There is such a quietness & excessive sleepiness about Shropshire—the only excitement being an occasional alehouse brawl—that it is hardly possible to imagine we are at war!

The fact is the common people never see a newspaper—and such is their confidence in “the Queen’s army” that they believe prolonged resistance on the part of any power would be impossible & absurd. My cousin in the Crimea still survives contrary to my expectations. We have heard a good anecdote from him. Early on Christmas morning the remains of the regiment to which he belongs gathered painfully together, & as day dawned they all sung the fine English Carol “Christmas Awake.” It is rather touching.

I find all here quite well & hearty & hope your people will be the same when this arrives at Concord—a place I shall often revisit in spirit. Pray remember me to your father mother & sister—to Mr. Emerson, Channing & Do not forget your promise to come over sometime to England, which you will find a very snug & hospitable country—though perhaps decaying, & not on such a huge scale as America.

My romance—the Dream of my life—without which it is not worth living for me—is—a _glorious commonwealth_. I am persuaded that things must in their way to this, be greatly worse before they can become better. Turn it how you will, our English nation _no longer stands upon the Living Laws of the Eternal God_—we have turned ourselves to an empire & cotton bags & the leprous of prodigious manufacture. Let that all go & let us grow great men again instead of dressing up dolls for the market. I feel we are strong enough to live a better life than this one which now festers in all our joints.

So much for the confession of a thorough English conservative as you know me to be!
THE CORRESPONDENCE OF THOREAU

You have my directions: pray write. Your letter will be forwarded to wherever I may be.

Dear Thoreau
Ever affectionately yours
Thos Cholmondeley

Henry Thoreau Esq Concord Massachusetts U.S. North America

We are not sure when Cholmondeley wrote this letter. The manuscript is dated only “Tuesday 1855.” When Sanborn printed the letter in Cholmondeley (1893) he added “January 20”; when he referred to the letter in Familiar Letters of Thoreau (1894) and Familiar Letters (1906) he gave the date January 27. Neither fell on a Tuesday. February 20 did, but Thoreau had answered the letter on February 7. The normal interval for transatlantic mail and the ease of mistaking a handwritten “3” for a “7” suggest Tuesday, January 23. We assume that Sanborn did not invent the two dates he assigned. MS., Hosmer.

From Daniel Ricketson
Brooklawn, N. Bedford, 26 Jan., 1855.

Dear Sir,—
I fully intended to have gone to Boston yesterday; but not being very well, deferred it until to-day, and now we are visited by a severe snowstorm, so that I fear the railway track may be obstructed. I shall not, therefore, be able to reach Concord this time. My only fear is that you may have gone to Boston in expectation of meeting me there; but as I have not heard from you to this effect I have no very strong reason to think so, and hope that you have not. I should like very much to see Concord and its environs with the Laird of Walden, and hope at no very distant time to do so, should it meet his pleasure. I hope also to see your lordship again here, and to visit with you some of our rural retreats.

Yours,
D. Ricketson


Text, Ricketson, pp. 39-40.

From F. R. SANBORN

Hampton Falls, N.H., Jan'y 30th, '55.

My dear Sir,—
I have had it in mind to write you a letter ever since the day when you visited me, without my knowing it, at Cambridge. I saw you afterward at the Library, but refrained from introducing myself to you, in the hope that I should see you later in the day. But as I did not, will you allow me to seek you out, when next I come to Concord? The author of the criticism in the “Harvard Magazine” is Mr. [Edwin] Morton of Plymouth, a friend and pupil of your friend, Marston Watson, of that old town. Accordingly I gave him the book which you left with me, judging that it belonged to him. He received it with delight, as a gift of value in itself, and the more valuable for the sake of the giver.

We who at Cambridge look toward Concord as a sort of Mecca for our pilgrimages, are glad to see that your last book finds such favor with the public. It has made its way where your name has rarely been heard before, and the inquiry, “Who is Mr. Thoreau?” proves that the book has in part done its work. For my own part, I thank you for the new light it shows me the aspects of Nature in, and for the marvelous beauty of your descriptions. At the same time, if any one should ask me what I think of your philosophy, I should be apt to answer that it is not worth a straw. Whenever again you visit Cambridge, be assured,
TO DANIEL RICKETSON

Concord, February 1st, 1855.

Dear Sir,—

I supposed, as I did not see you on the 24th or 25th, that some track or other was obstructed, but the solid earth still holds together between New Bedford and Concord, and I trust that as this time you stayed away, you may live to come another day.

I did not go to Boston, for with regard to that place, I sympathize with one of my neighbors, an old man, who has not been there since the last war, when he was compelled to go—No, I have a real genius for staying at home.

I have been looking at Bewick’s tailpieces in the “Birds”—all they have of him at Harvard. Why will he be a little vulgar at times?

Yesterday I made an excursion up our river—skated some thirty miles in a few hours if you will believe it. So with reading and writing and skating the night comes round again.

Yours,

Henry D. Thoreau.

The elderly neighbor, according to Sanborn (Henry D. Thoreau, p. 274), was George Minott. The noted English illustrator Thomas Bewick prepared a History of British Birds. Text, Ricketson, p. 49.

TO F. B. SANBORN

Concord Feb 2nd '55

Mr F. B. Sanborn.

Dear Sir,

I fear that you did not get the note which I left with the Librarian for you, and so will thank you again for your politeness. I was sorry that
I was obliged to go into Boston almost immediately. However, I shall be glad to see you whenever you come to Concord, and I will suggest nothing to discourage your coming, so far as I am concerned, trusting that you know what it is to take a partridge on the wing.

You tell me that the author of the criticism is Mr. Morton. I had heard as much, & indeed guessed more. I have latterly found Concord nearer to Cambridge than I believed I should, when I was leaving my Alma Mater, and hence you will not be surprised if even I feel some interest in the success of the Harvard Magazine.

Believe me

Yrs truly

Henry D. Thoreau

Edwin Morton, who prepared the criticism of Walden and the Week for his college monthly, was a member of the Harvard class of 1855. MS., C. Waller Barrett.

To THOMAS CHOLMONDELEY

Concord Mass. Feb 7 1855

Dear Cholmondeley,

I am glad to hear that you have arrived safely at Hodnet, and that there is a solid piece of ground of that name which can support a man better than a floating plank in that to me as yet purely historical England.

But have I not seen you with my own eyes, a piece of England herself? And has not your letter come out to me thence? I have now reason to believe that Salop is as real a place as Concord, with, at least, as good an underpinning of granite floating in liquid fire. I congratulate you on having arrived safely at that floating isle, after your disagreeable passage in the steamer America. I naturally dream of a glorious private life. No—I am not patriotic. I shall not meddle with the gem of the Antilles; Gen. Quitman cannot count on my aid [in capturing Cuba], alas for him! nor can Gen. Pierce.

I still take my daily walk or skate over Concord fields or meadows, and on the whole have more to do with nature than with man. We have not had much snow this winter, but have had some remarkably cold weather, the mercury Feb 6 not rising above 6° below zero during the day, and the next morning falling to 25°. Some ice is still 20 inches thick about us. A rise in the river has made uncommonly good skating which I have improved to the extent of some 30 miles at a time, 15 out & 15 in.

Emerson is off westward, enlightening the Hamiltonians & others, mingling his thunder with that of Niagara. Since his themes are England & slavery some begin to claim him as a practical man.

Channing still sits warming his 5 wits—his sixth you know is always lumber—over that stove, with the dog down cellar.
Lowell has just been appointed Professor of Belles Lettres in Harvard University, in place of Longfellow, resigned, and will go very soon to spend another year in Europe before taking his seat.

I am from time to time congratulating myself on my general want of success as a lecturer—apparent want of success, but is it not a real triumph? I do my work clean as I go along, and they will not be likely to want me anywhere again. So there is no danger of my repeating myself and getting to a barrel of sermons which you must upset & begin again with.

My father & mother & sister all desire to be remembered to you, & trust that you will never come within range of Russian bullets.

Of course I would rather think of you as settled down there in Shropshire, in the camp of the English people, making acquaintance with your men—striking at the root of the evil—perhaps assaulting that rampart of cotton bags that you told of. But it makes no odds where a man goes or stays if he is only about his business.

Let me hear from you, wherever you are, and believe me yours ever in the good fight,—whether before Sebastopol or under the wreken—

Henry D. Thoreau.

MS., Richard Cholmondeley.

TO ELIZABETH OAKES SMITH

Concord, Feb. 19, '55

My Dear Madam,

I presume you will like an early, though it should be an unfavorable, answer to your note. After due consultation and inquiry, I am sorry to be obliged to say that we cannot make it worth your while to come to Concord at this season. The curators of the Lyceum, before which you lectured three years ago, tell me that they have already exceeded their means—our N. E. towns are not so enterprising as some Western ones, in this respect—and Mr. [Daniel?] Foster’s society,

Mrs. Smith was a professional feminist and one of the earliest lecturers of her sex in America. MS., Daniel J. Bernstein.

To Dr. Thaddeus W. Harris

Concord Mass Feb 27 1855

Dear Sir,

I return to the Library, by Mr Frost, the following books, viz.

Wood’s N. E. Prospect,

Sagard’s “Histoire du Canada,”

& Bewick’s “British Birds.”

Yrs respectfully

Henry D. Thoreau

MS., C. Waller Barrett; previously unpublished.
TO CHARLES SUMNER

Concord Mar. 12 1855

Dear Sir

Allow me to thank you for the Comp'd'm of the U. S. census, which has come safely to hand. It looks as full of facts as a chestnut of meat. I expect to nibble at it for many years. I read with pleasure your pertinent Address before the Merc. Lit. Association, sent me long ago.

Yes truly
Henry D. Thoreau

Charles Sumner.

MS., Harvard; previously unpublished.

TO GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS

Mr. Editor

... I see that I was not careful enough to preserve the past tense. I suppose that your objection will be avoided by writing the passage this,—"Not one of those moderate Calvanist..." By "Scripture" I mean the bible. I suspected that the line was derived from Elliot's Indian bible. It will be better if it is printed "the Scripture"...

Apparently Thoreau herein made some attempt to compromise the controversy with Curtis over his "heretical" views in Cape Cod, appearing serially in Putnam's. The passage in question may be found in Cape 374

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Mr. Editor

... I see that I was not careful enough to preserve the past tense. I suppose that your objection will be avoided by writing the passage this,—"Not one of those moderate Calvanist, said to be common in the writers day, who, by giving up or explaining away the peculiar doctrines of the party, became, like a porcupine disarmed of its quills, but a consistent Calvanist..." By "Scripture" I mean the bible. I suspected that the line was derived from Elliot's Indian bible. It will be better if it is printed "the Scripture"...

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To TICKNOR & FIELDS

Concord Ap. 30th 1855

Gentlemen,

Is it not time to republish "A Week on the Concord & Merrimack Rivers"? You said you would notify me when it was; but I am afraid that it will soon be too late for this season.

I have, with what were sent to you, about 250 bound, and 450 in sheets.

Yrs truly
Henry D. Thoreau

The recipient has been identified in the Berg collection as James Monroe & Co., who originally published the Week in 1849. But since Thoreau purchased all the remaining copies from them in 1853, and since, according to F. H. Allen in his Bibliography of Henry David Thoreau (p. 4), Thoreau sent Fields twelve copies of the book on October 18, 1854, it is almost certain that the letter was to Ticknor & Fields. The book was not republished until 1862. Dr. Raymond Adams, in his Thoreau Newsletter for March 1942, questions the disposal of the 250 bound copies. Did Ticknor & Fields unbind them and then, re-binding them, issue them along with the 450 copies bound from the sheets as the 1862 edition? Dr. Adams concludes that, since the 1862 edition is extremely rare, in all probability they were destroyed to get them out of the way.

MS., Berg
Concord June 27th 1855

Mr Blake,

I have been sick and good for nothing but to lie on my back and wait for something to turn up, for two or three months. This has compelled me to postpone several things, among them writing to you to whom I am so deeply in debt, and inviting you and [Theo] Brown to Concord—not having brains adequate to such an exertion. I should feel a little less ashamed if I could give any name to my disorder, but I cannot, and our doctor cannot help me to it, and I will not take the name of any disease in vain. However, there is one consolation in being sick, and that is the possibility that you may recover to a better state than you were ever in before. I expected in the winter to be deep in the woods of Maine in my canoe long before this, but I am so far from that that I can only take a languid walk in Concord streets.

I do not know how the mistake arose about the Cape Cod excursion. The nearest I have come to that with anybody is that about a month ago Charming proposed to me to go to Truro, on Cape Cod, with him & board there awhile, but I declined. For a week past however I have been a little inclined to go there & sit on the sea-shore a week or more, but I do not venture to propose myself as the companion of him or of any peripatetic man. Not that I should not rejoice to have you and Brown or C. sitting there also. I am not sure that C. really wishes to go now—and as I go simply for the medicine of it, while I need it, I should not think it worth the while to notify him when I am about to take my bitters.

Since I began this, or within 5 minutes, I have begun to think that I will start for Truro next Saturday morning—the 30th. I do not know at what hour the packet leaves Boston, nor exactly what kind of accommodation I shall find there. I received a letter from Cholmondeley last winter, which I should like to show you, as well as his book. He said that he had "accepted the offer of a captaincy in the Salop Militia," and was hoping to take an active part in the war before long.

I thank you again and again for the encouragement your letters are to me. But I must stop this writing, or I shall have to pay for it.

Yours Truly

H. D. Thoreau

There being no packet, I did not leave Boston till last Thursday, though I came down on Wednesday, and Channing with me. There is no public house here; but we are boarding with Mr. James Small, the keeper, in a little house attached to the Highland Lighthouse. It is true the table is not so clean as could be desired, but I have found it much superior in that respect to the Provincetown hotel. They are what is called "good livers." Our host has another larger and very good house, within a quarter of a mile, unoccupied, where he says he can accommodate several more. He is a very good man to deal with,—has often been the representative of the town, and is perhaps the most intelligent man in it. I shall probably stay here as much as ten days longer: board $3.50 per week. So you and [Theo] Brown had better come down forthwith. You will find either the schooner Melrose or another, or both, leaving Commerce Street, or else T Wharf, at 9 A.M. (it commonly means 10), Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays,—if not other days. We left about 10 A.M., and reached Provincetown at 5 P.M.,—a very good run. A stage runs up the Cape every morning but Sunday, starting at

North Truro, July 8, 1855.
4½ A.M., and reaches the postoffice in North Truro, seven miles from Provincetown, and one from the lighthouse, about 6 o’clock. If you arrive at P. before night, you can walk over, and leave your baggage to be sent. You can also come by cars from Boston to Yarmouth, and thence by stage forty miles more—through every day, but it costs much more, and is not so pleasant. Come by all means, for it is the best place to see the ocean in these States. I hope I shall be worth meeting.

Text, Familiar Letters of Thoreau, pp. 303-4.

To H. G. O. Blake

The Correspondence of Thoreau

You say that you hope I will excuse your frequent writing. I trust you will excuse my infrequent and curt writing until I am able to resume my old habits, which for three months I have been compelled to abandon. Methinks I am beginning to be better. I think to leave the Cape next Wednesday, and so shall not see you here; but I shall be glad to meet you in Concord, though I may not be able to go before the mast, in a boating excursion. This is an admirable place for coolness and sea-bathing and retirement. You must come prepared for cool weather and fogs.

P.S.—There is no mail up till Monday morning.

Thoreau is evidently still in North Truro. Text, Familiar Letters of Thoreau, pp. 304-5.

1855

To Messrs. Dix & Edwards

Concord Aug 3d 1855

Messrs. Dix & Edwards

Your check for thirty-five dollars in payment for my article in the August number of Putnam’s Monthly has come duly to hand—for which accept the acknowledgments of

Yrs respectfully
Henry D. Thoreau

P.S. Will you please forward the following note to the Editor

“The Beach,” now a part of Cape Cod, appeared in the August 1855 number of Putnam’s Monthly Magazine. MS. facsimile, Clara Louise Dentler, A Privately-owned Collection of Letters, Autographs, and Manuscripts with Many Association Items (Florence, Italy, a.d., Plate VII). “The following note” has not been included in the facsimile, and we have been unable to trace it.

To George William Curtis

Mr. Editor

Will you allow me to trouble you once more about my Cape Cod paper. I would like to substitute the accompanying sheets for about ten pages of my MS, in the Chapter called “The Beach Again”...

Thoreau finally withdrew the manuscript of Cape Cod before the chapter “The Beach Again” could be published. Text, Catalogue of the Graham Sale (New York, Parke-Bernet, April 30, 1958), p. 119. The letter is dated Concord, August 8, 1855 in the catalogue.
From HORACE GREELEY

New York, Aug. 17, 1855.

Friend Thoreau,

There is a very small class in England who ought to know what you have written, and for whose sake I want a few copies of "Walden" sent to certain periodicals over the water—for instance, to

Westminster Review,
8 King Win. St. Strand London.
The Reasoner, 147 Fleet St. London
Gerald Massey, office of The News
Edinburgh.
—Willy, Esq. of
Dickens's Household Words,
Fleet St. London.

I feel sure your publishers would not throw away copies sent to these periodicals; especially if your "Week on the Concord and Merrimac" could accompany them. Chapman, Ed Westminster Rev. expressed surprise to me that your book had not been sent him, and I could find very few who had read or seen it. If a new edition should be called for, try to have it better known in Europe; but have a few copies sent to those worthy of it at all events.

Yours,
Horace Greeley

H. D. Thoreau, Concord, Mass.

To HORACE GREELEY

Concord Sep 7th 55

Friend Greeley,

I have just returned from Boston where I showed your note to [William D.] Ticknor. He says he will put the books into the next package which he sends to England. I did not send a single copy of Walden across the water, though Fields did two or three, to private persons alone I think.

Thank you for the suggestion.

I am glad to hear that you are on this side again—though I should not care if you had been detained somewhat longer, if so we could have had a few more letters from Clichy.

Yrs
Henry D. Thoreau

Greeley, while on his European summer tour, sent back a series of travel letters, published in the New-York Tribune under the title "Europe Revisited." One of the liveliest, "Two Days at Clichy," was written from jail. Greeley was thrown into the famous French debtors' prison because he was a stockholder in the Crystal Palace Exposition in New York, to which a French sculptor named Lechesne had shipped a statue that was broken in the way. Under French law Greeley was liable for part of the damages Lechesne wanted. However, an imposing number of officials from the United States embassy came to Greeley's aid, and he was quickly released. MS., Morgan; previously unpublished.
From Daniel Ricketson

Brooklawn, Sunday p.m., Sept. 23d, 1855.

Dear Thoreau,-

Here am I at home again seated in my Shanty. My mind is constantly reverting to the pleasant little visit I made you, and so I thought I would sit down and write you.

I regret exceedingly that I was so interrupted in my enjoyment while at Concord by my "aches and pains." My head troubled me until I had got within about 20 miles of home, when the pain passed off and my spirits began to revive. I hope that your walks, &c, with me will not harm you and that you will soon regain your usual health and strength, which I trust the cooler weather will favor; would advise you not to doctor, but just use your own good sense. I should have insisted more on your coming on with me had I not felt so ill and in such actual pain the day I left—but I want you to come before the weather gets uncomfortably cool. I feel much your debtor, for through you and your Walden I have found my hopes and strength in those matters which I had before found none to sympathize with. You have more than any other to me discovered the true secret of living comfortably in this world, and I hope more and more to be able to put it into practice, in the mean time you will be able to extend your pity and charity. You are the only "millionaire" among my acquaintance. I have n't lost sight of Solon Ilsmer, the wisest looking man in Concord, and a real "feelosopher"! I want you to see him and tell him not to take down the old house, where the feelosophers met. I think I should like to have the large chamber, for an occasional sojourn to Concord. It might be easily tinkered up so as to be a comfortable roost for a feelosopher—a few old chairs, a table, bed, &c, would be all-sufficient, then you and C. could come over in your punt and rusticate. What think of it? In the mean time come down to Brooklawn, and look about with me. As you are a little under the weather, we will make our peregrinations with horse and wagon.

How charmingly you, Channing, and I dovetailed together! Few men smoke such pipes as we did—the real Calumet—the tobacco that we smoked was free labor produce. I have n’t lost sight of Solon Hosmer, the wisest looking man in Concord, and a real "feelosopher"? I want you to see him and tell him not to take down the old house, where the feelosophers met. I think I should like to have the large chamber, for an occasional sojourn to Concord. It might be easily tinkered up so as to be a comfortable roost for a feelosopher—a few old chairs, a table, bed, &c, would be all-sufficient, then you and C. could come over in your punt and rusticate. What think of it? In the mean time come down to Brooklawn, and look about with me. As you are a little under the weather, we will make our peregrinations with horse and wagon.

With much regard to Channing and my kind remembrances to your parents and sister, I remain,

Yours very truly,

D’Ricketson.

Concord, September 26, 1855.

Mr. Blake,—

The other day I thought that my health must be better,—that I gave at last a sign of vitality,—because I experienced a slight chagrin. But I do not see how strength is to be got into my legs again. These months of feebleness have yielded few, if any, thoughts, though they have not passed without serenity, such as our sluggish Musketaquid suggests. I hope that the harvest is to come. I trust that you have at least warped up the stream a little daily, holding fast by your anchors at night, since I saw you, and have kept my place for me while I have been absent.

Mr. Ricketson of New Bedford has just made me a visit of a day and a half, and I have had a quite good time with him. He and Channing have got on particularly well together. He is a man of very simple tastes, notwithstanding his wealth; a lover of nature; but, above all, singularly frank and plain-spoken. I think that you might enjoy meeting him.

Sincerity is a great but rare virtue, and we pardon to it much complaining, and the betrayal of many weaknesses. R. says of himself, that
he sometimes thinks that he has all the infirmities of genius without the genius; is wretched without a hair-pillow, etc.; expresses a great and awful uncertainty with regard to "God," "Death," his "immortality"; says, "If I only knew," etc. He loves Cowper's "Task" better than anything else; and thereafter, perhaps, Thomson, Gray, and even Howitt. He has evidently suffered for want of sympathizing companions. He says that he sympathizes with much in my books, but much in them is naught to him,—"namby-pamby," "stuff," "mystical." Why will not I, having common sense, write in plain English always; teach men in detail how to live a simpler life, etc.; not go off into —? But I say that I have no scheme about it,—no designs on men at all; and, if I had, my mode would be to tempt them with the fruit, and not with the manure. To what end do I lead a simple life at all, pray? That I may teach others to simplify their lives,—and so all our lives be simplified merely, like an algebraic formula? Or not, rather, that I may make use of the ground I have cleared, to live more worthily and profitably? I would fain lay the most stress forever on that which is the most important,—imports the most to me,—though it were only (what it is likely to be) a vibration in the air. As a preacher, I should be prompted to tell men, not so much how to get their wheat-bread cheaper, as of the bread of life compared with which that is bran. Let a man only taste these loaves, and he becomes a skillful economist at once. He'll not waste much time in earning hirelings after all, but give to undrilled peasantry a country to fight for. The schools begin with what they call the elements, and where do they end?

I was glad to hear the other day that [T.W.] Higginson and _____ were gone to Ktaadn; it must be so much better to go to than a Woman's Rights or Abolition Convention; better still, to the delectable primitive mounts within you, which you have dreamed of from your youth up, and seen, perhaps, in the horizon, but never climbed.

But how do you do? Is the air sweet to you? Do you find anything at which you can work, accomplishing something solid from day to day? Have you put sloth and doubt behind, considerably?—had one redeeming dream this summer? I dreamed, last night, that I could vault over any height it pleased me. That was something; and I contemplated myself with a slight satisfaction in the morning for it.

Methinks I will write to you. Methinks you will be glad to hear. We will stand on solid foundations to one another,—I a column planted on this shore, you on that. We meet the same sun in his rising. We were built slowly, and have come to our bearing. We will not mutually fall over that we may meet, but will grandly and eternally guard the straits. Methinks I see an inscription on you, which the architect made, the stucco being worn off to it. The name of that ambitious worldly king is crumbling away. I see it toward sunset in favorable lights. Each must read for the other, as might a sailor-by. Be sure you are star-y-pointing still. How is it on your side? I will not require an answer until you think I have paid my debts to you.

I have just got a letter from Ricketson, urging me to come to New Bedford, which possibly I may do. He says I can wear my old clothes there.

Let me be remembered in your quiet house.

Text, Familiar Letters of Thoreau, pp. 305-8; the catalogue of the Hathaway-Richardson sale (Charles F. Libbie & Co. May 9-10, 1911) fills in the blank near the end of the letter with the name "Brown"—probably Theo Brown.

To Daniel Ricketson

Concord Sep 27 '55

Friend Ricketson,

I am sorry that you were obliged to leave Concord without seeing more of it—its river and woods, and various pleasant walks, and its worthies. I assure you that I am none the worse for my walk with you, but on all accounts the better. Methinks I am regaining my health, but I would like to know first what it was that ailed me.

I have not yet conveyed your message to Homer, but will not fail to do so. That idea of occupying the old house is a good one—quite feasible, and you could bring your hair-pillow with you. It is an inn in Concord which I had not thought of—a philosophers inn. That large
chamber might make a man's ideas expand proportionately. It would be well to have an interest in 'some old chamber in' a deserted house in every part of the country which attracted us. There would be no such place to receive one's guests as that. If old furniture is fashionable, why not go the whole—house at once? I shall endeavor to make Hosmer believe that the old house is the chief attraction of his farm, & that it is his duty to preserve it by all honest appliances. You might take a lease of it in perpetuo, and done with it.

I am so wedded to my way of spending a day—require such broad margins of leisure, and such a complete wardrobe of old clothes, that I am ill fitted for going abroad. Pleasant is it sometimes to sit, at home, on a single egg all day, in your own nest, though it may prove at last to be an egg of chalk. The old coat that I wear is Concord—it is my morning robe and study gown, my working dress and suit of ceremony, and my night-gown after all. Cars sound like cares to me.

I am accustomed to think very long of going anywhere—am slow to move. I hope to hear a response of the oracle first. However I think that I will try the effect of your talisman on the iron horse next Saturday, and dismount at Tarkiln Hill. Perhaps your sea air will be good for me.

I conveyed your invitation to Channing but he apparently will not come. Excuse my not writing earlier—but I had not decided.

Yrs
Henry D. Thoreau.

MS., Huntington; beginning with the third paragraph additional punctuation is in an ink now blacker than Thoreau's.
I hope dear Thoreau you will accept this trifle from one who has received so much from you & one who is so anxious to become your friend & to induce you to visit England. I am just about to start for the Crimea, being now a complete soldier—but I fear the game is nearly played out—and all my friends tell me I am just too late for the fair. When I return to England (if ever I do return) I mean to buy a little cottage somewhere on the south coast where I can dwell in Emersonian leisure & where I have a plot to persuade you over.

Give my love to your Father & Mother & sister & my respects to Mr Emerson & Channing & the painter who gave me Webster's Head—

I think I never found so much kindness anywhere in all my travels as in your country of New England—and indeed—barring its youth—it is very like our old country in my humble judgment—

Adieu dear Thoreau & immense affluence to you.

Ever yours

Thos Cholmondeley.

P.S. Excuse my bad writing. Of course it is the Pen. Chapman will send a list of your books—by which you can see whether they are all right because I hate to have anything lost or wasted, however small.

The year must be 1855. Cholmondeley's gift left Liverpool November 10, 1855 (Thoreau's Journal, VIII, 38). For the place of writing there is no known evidence. MS., Berg.

To Daniel Ricketson

Concord Oct 12 1855

Mr Ricketson,

I fear that you had a lonely and disagreeable ride back to New Bedford, through the Carver woods & so on,—perhaps in the rain too, and I am in part answerable for it. I feel very much in debt to you & your family for the pleasant days I spent at Brooklawn. Tell Arthur & Walter [Walton; perhaps a slip of Thoreau's pen] that the shells which they gave me are spread out, and make quite a show to inland eyes. Methinks I still hear the strains of the piano the violin & the flageolet blend together. Excuse me for the noise which I believe drove you to take refuge in the shanty. That shanty is indeed a favorable place to expand in, which I fear I did not enough improve.

On my way through Boston I inquired for Gilpin's works at Little Brown & Co's, Monroe's, Ticknor's & Burnham's. They have not got them. They told me at Little Brown & Co's that his works (not complete) in 12 vols 8vo, were imported & sold in this country 5 or 6 years ago for about 15 dollars. Their terms for importing are 10 per cent on the cost. I copied from "The London Catalogue of Books, 1816-51" at their shop, the following list of Gilpin's books—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gilpin (Wm) Dialogues on Various Subjects 8vo</td>
<td>0-9-0</td>
<td>Cadell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essays on Picturesque Subjects 8vo</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposition of the New Testament 2 vols 8vo</td>
<td>0-16-0</td>
<td>Longman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest Scenery, by Sir T. D. Lauder 2 vols 8vo</td>
<td>0-18-0</td>
<td>Smith &amp; E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lectures on the Catechism, 12mo</td>
<td>0-6-0</td>
<td>Longman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lives of the Reformers 2 v. 12mo</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sermons Illustrative &amp; Practical 8vo</td>
<td>0-12-0</td>
<td>Hatchard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to Country Congregations, 4 v. 8vo</td>
<td>1-10-0</td>
<td>Longman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tour in Cambridge Norfolk &amp;c 8vo</td>
<td>0-15-0</td>
<td>Cadell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; of the River Wye, 12mo</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; with plate 8vo</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilpin (W S (?)) Hints on Landscape Gardening</td>
<td>0-17-0</td>
<td>Cadell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy. 8vo</td>
<td>1-0-0</td>
<td>Cadell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beside these I remember to have read 1 volume on Prints His Southern Tour (1775)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakes of Cumberland 2 vols</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highlands of Scotland &quot; &quot;</td>
<td>NB</td>
<td>There must be plates in every volume.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I still see an image of those Middleborough Ponds in my mind's eye—broad shallow lakes with an iron mine at their bottom—comparatively unexed by sails—only by Tom Smith & his squaw Sepeit's "sharper." I find my map of the state to be the best I have seen of that district. It is
a question whether the islands of Long Pond or Great Quitticus offer the most attractions to a Lord of the Isles. That plant which I found on the Shore of Long Pond chances to be a rare & beautiful flower—the *Sabbatia chloroides*—referred to Plymouth.

In a Description of Middleborough in the Hist. Coll. vol 3d 1810—signed Nehemiah Bennet Middleborough 1793—it is said: "There is on the easterly shore of Assawampsit Pond, on the shore of Betty’s Neck, two rocks which have curious marks thereon (supposed to be done by the Indians) which appear like the stepping of a person with naked feet which settled into the rocks, likewise the prints of a hand on several places, with a number of other marks; also there is a rock on a high hill a little to the eastward of the old stone fishing wear, where there is the print of a person’s hand in said rock."

It would be well to look at those rocks again more carefully—also at the rock on the hill.

I should think that you would like to explore Shipatuct Pond in Rochester [it] is so large & near. It is an interesting fact that the alewives used to ascend to it—if they do not still—both from Mattapoissett & through Great Quitticus.

There will be no trouble about the chamber in the old house, though, as I told you, Hosmer counts his coppers and may expect some compensation for it. He says: "Give my respect to Mr. R. & tell him that I cannot be at a large expense to preserve an antiquity or curiosity. Nature must do its work." "But" say I, ["It asks you only not to assist Nature."] I find that Channing is gone to his wife at Dorchester—perhaps for the winter—and both may return to Concord in the Spring.

Yrs
Henry D. Thoreau

MS., Huntington; beginning with the word "piano" in the first paragraph additional punctuation is in an ink now blacker than Thoreau's.
Brooklawn, Saturday noon, 13 Oct., 1855.

Dear Thoreau,—

I wrote a few lines to you this morning before breakfast, which I took to the post-office, but since, I have received yours of yesterday, which rather changes my mind as to going to Concord. I thank you for your kindness in procuring for me information concerning Gilpin's work, which I shall endeavor to procure.

My ride home, as you anticipate, was somewhat dull and dreary through Carver woods, but I escaped the rain which did not come on until after my arrival home, about tea-time. I think that you hurried away from Brooklawn. We had just got our affairs in good train. I hope, however, that you will soon be able to come again and spend several weeks, when we will visit the pond in Rochester which you mentioned, and review our rides and rambles. The Middleborough ponds and their surroundings never tire me. I could go every day for a long time to them. I give my preference to the isles in Long Pond—we must get the Indian name of this favorite lake of ours.

The principal reason for my changing my mind in regard to going to Concord is that you say Channing has gone, and perhaps for the winter. Although I intended to board and lodge at the Tavern, I expected to philosophize with you and C. by his wood-fire. But this is only a good reason for you to come to Brooklawn again. We have some weeks of good rambling weather yet before winter sets in. You will be very welcome to us all, and don't feel the least hesitation about coming if you have the desire to do so.

I am in the Shanty—Uncle James is here with me. He came up as soon as he heard you had gone. I have endeavored to convince him that you are perfectly harmless, but I think he still retains a portion of his fears. I think you would affiliate well if you should ever come together.

Yours truly,
D. Ricketson.

H. D. Thoreau, Esq., Concord, Mass.

Text, Ricketson, pp. 48-49.

MS., Abernethy (typescript).
Dear Thoreau,—

I received yours of the 16th inst. yesterday. I am very sorry that you did not conclude at once to come to Brooklawn and finish the visit which you so unceremoniously curtailed. But I cannot release you on so light grounds. I thought that you were a man of leisure. At any rate by your philosophy which I consider the best, you are so. You appear to be hugging your chains or endeavoring so to do. I approve of your courage, but cannot see the desperate need of your penance.

But I must appeal to you as a brother man, a philanthropist too. I am in need of help. I want a physician, and I send for you as the one I have the most confidence in.

You can bring your writing with you, but I can furnish you with stationery in abundance, and you can have as much time for "sucking your claws" as you wish.

Don't fail to come by Saturday noon the 20th.

Yours truly,

D. Ricketson.

I am in need of a physician—so Dr. Thoreau, come to my relief. I need dosing with country rides and rambles, lake scenery, cold viands and jack-knife dinners.

I find the following in Sterne's Koran, which is the best thing I have seen for a long time:—

"Spare diet and clear skies are Apollo and the Muses."

Text, Ricketson, p. 31.
THE CORRESPONDENCE OF THOREAU

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The books of Cholmondeley's shipment are described in detail in Walter Harding, Thoreau's Library (Charlottesville, 1957). MS. of letter, Berg; MS. of list, Abemethy (typescript); the italicized portions are Thoreau's annotations indicating to whom he wished the volumes given after his death.

From John Chapman

Strand London: 8 King William Street, Novr-2nd, 1855.

H D Thoreau Esqr,
Dear Sir

The parcel of books advised by me on the 26th of October, as having been sent by the "Asia" Steamer, from Liverpool, has been shut out of that vessel on account of her cargo being complete several days previous to her sailing. Under these circumstances I have therefore ordered the parcel to be shipped by the "Canada" of the 10th proximo, and trust that you will not experience any inconvenience from this unavoidable delay—

I am, dear Sir,

Yours very truly
John Chapman
A D Ferguson

I have written to Messrs Crosby Nichols & Co, Boston, respecting your package—

MS., Berg.

To Thomas Cholmondeley

Concord Nov. 8th 1855.

Dear Cholmondeley,

I must endeavor to thank you for your magnificent, your princely gift to me. My father, with his hand in his pocket, and an air of mystery and importance about him suggests that I have another letter from Mr. Cholmondeley, and hands me a ship letter. I open eagerly upon a list of books (made up in one parcel) for Henry D. &c &c; and my eye glances down a column half as long as my arm, where I already detect some eminences which I had seen or heard of, standing out like the peaks of the Himalayas. No! it is not Cholmondeley's writing.—But what good angel has divined my thoughts? Has any company of the faithful in England passed a resolution to overwhelm me with their munificent regards "Wilson's Rig Veda Sanhitu" [sic] Vols 1 & 2 8vo. "Translation of Mandukya Upanishads." I begin to step from pinnacle to pinnacle. Ah! but here it is "London, King William Street. truly yours John Chapman." Enclosed is the list. "Mr Thomas Cholmondeley" and now I see through it, and here is a hand I know and father was right after all. While he is
THE CORRESPONDENCE OF THOREAU

gone to the market I will read a little further in this list "Nala & Dama-
yanta" "Bhagavita Purana," "Institutes of Menu."--
How they look far away and grand!
That will do for the present: a little at a time of these rich dishes. I
will look again by and by. "Per Asia" too they have come, as I read on
the envelope! Was there any design in that? The very nucleus of her
cargo, Asia carried them in her womb long ago. Was not the ship con-
scious of the freight she bore Juare her for nothing ye Jews; she and
all her passengers and freight are destined to float serene through what-
ever seas. Immobility itself is tossed on Atlantic billows to present the
gift to me. Was not there an omen for you? No Africa; no Europe—no
Baltic, but it would have sunk. And now we will see if America can
sustain it. Build new shelves—display, unfold your columns. What was
that dim peak that loomed for an instant far behind, representative of
a still loftier and more distant range. "Vishnu Purana," an azure moun-
tain in itself—gone again, but surely seen for once. And what was that
which dimmed the brightness of the day, like an apex of Cotopaxi's
cone, seen against the disk of the sun by the voyager of the South
American coast "Bhagavat Geeta"! whose great unseen base I can
faintly imagine spreading beneath. "History of British India nine vols"!
Chevalier Bunsen nine vols $80 cloth"!! Have at them! who cares for
numbers in a just cause England expects every man to do his duty. Be
sure you are right and then go ahead. I begin to think myself learned for
merely possessing such works: If there is not the wealth of the Indies, of
what stuff then is it made? They may keep their rupees this and that
of this is what the great company traded and fought for, to convey the
light of the East into the West:—this their true glory and success.
And now you have gone to the East or Eastward, having assisted its
light to shine westward behind you; have gone towards the source of
light to which I pray that you may get nearer and nearer.
Dec. Ist—
After a fortnights delay, owing to the cargo of the Asia being com-
plete when the parcel reached Liverpool, my Indian library was sent
by the Canada and at length reached my door complete and in good
order, last evening. After overhauling my treasures on the carpet,
wafting knee deep in Indian philosophy and poetry—with eager eyes
around ready to admire the splendid binding and illumination at least,
drawing them forth necessarily from amidst a heap of papers, every
scrap of which bore some evidence of having come from that fabulous
region the "Strand," not far this side Colchis toward which you are gone.
I placed them in the case which I had prepared, and went late to bed
dreaming of what had happened. Indeed it was exactly like the realiza-
tion of some dreams which I have had; but when I woke in the morning
I was not convinced that it was reality until I peeped out and saw their
bright backs. They are indeed there and I thank you for them. I am
glad to receive them from you, though notwithstanding what you say, if
I should stop to calculate I should find myself very much your debtor. I
shall not soon forget your generous entertainment of some thoughts
which I cherish and delight in an opportunity to express. If you thought
that you met with any kindness in New England I fear that it was partly
because you had lately come from New Zealand. At any rate excuse our
cold and hard New England manners, lay it partly to the climate: granite
and ice, you know, are our chief exports. B. (of the mountain)
was here when your note and the list of books arrived, and enjoyed the
perusal with me. E. whose constant enquiry for the last fortnight has
been, "Have your books come?" is about starting for the west on a lec-
turing tour. The papers say he be to lecture in nine cities on the Missis-
sippi.
I hope that the trumpet and the drum will sound to you as they do in
dreams, and that each night you may feel the satisfaction of having
fought worthily in a worthy cause.
I shall depend on hearing from you in the camp. My father and
mother and sister send their hearty good wishes. If I am ever rich
enough I shall think seriously of going to England and finding you out
in your cottage on the south shore. That you may return home safely
and in good time to carry out that project, your country's glory being
secured, is the earnest wish of one by whom you will ever be well
remembered.

Henry Thoreau.

MS., Berg, copy in an unknown hand; previously unpublished.
From Crosby & Nichols?

H D Thoreau Esq.
De Sir,
The parcel of books referred to in your letter of the 9th has not yet reached us. We suppose that our case who contained it was left behind at Liverpool and shall expect it by next Steamer.

This fragment was probably from Crosby & Nichols about Cholmondeley’s shipment of books. It seems unlikely that Thoreau could have received Cholmondeley’s letter of October 3 before October 9. And since he did not receive the books until November 30 (see his letter of November 8—December 1), he probably wrote the Boston firm on November 9. Therefore their letter was probably written shortly after that latter date. MS., Harvard, previously unpublished.

To H. G. O. Blake

Concord, December 9, 1855.

Mr. Blake,—

Thank you! thank you for going a-wooding with me,—and enjoying it,—for being warmed by my wood fire. I have indeed enjoyed it much alone. I see how I might enjoy it yet more with company,—how we might help each other to live. And to be admitted to Nature’s hearth costs nothing. None is excluded, but excludes himself. You have only to push aside the curtain.

I am glad to hear that you were there too. There are many more such voyages, and longer ones, to be made on that river, for it is the water of life. The Ganges is nothing to it. Observe its reflections,—no idea but is familiar to it. That river, though to dull eyes it seems terrestrial wholly, flows through Elysium. What powers bathe in it invisible to villagers! Talk of its shallowness,—that hay-carts can be driven through it at midsummer; its depth passeth my understanding. If, forgetting the allurements of the world, I could drink deeply enough of it; if, cast adrift from the shore, I could with complete integrity float on it, I should never be seen on the Mill-dam again. If there is any depth in me, there is a corresponding depth in it. It is the cold blood of the gods. I paddle and bathe in their artery.

I do not want a stick of wood for so trivial a use as to burn even, but they get it over night, and carve and gild it that it may please my eye. What persevering lovers they are! What infinite pains to attract and delight us! They will supply us with fagots wrapped in the daintiest packages, and freight paid; sweet-scented woods, and bursting into flower, and resounding as if Orpheus had just left them,—these shall be our fuel, and we still prefer to chaffeer with the wood-merchant!

The jug we found still stands draining bottom up on the bank, on the sunny side of the house. That river,—who shall say exactly whence it came, and whither it goes? Does aught that flows come from a higher source? Many things drift downward on its surface which would enrich a man. If you could only be on the alert all day, and every day! And the nights are as long as the days.

Do you not think you could contrive thus to get woody fibre enough to bake your wheaten bread with? Would you not perchance have tasted the sweet crust of another kind of bread in the mean while, which ever hangs ready baked on the bread-fruit trees of the world?

Talk of burning your smoke after the wood has been consumed! There is a far more important and warming heat, commonly lost, which precedes the burning of the wood. It is the smoke of industry, which is incense. I had been so thoroughly warmed in body and spirit, that when at length my fuel was housed, I came near selling it to the ashman, as if I had extracted all its heat.

You should have been here to help me get in my boat. The last time I used it, November 27th, paddling up the Assabet, I saw a great round pine log sunk deep in the water, and with labor got it aboard. When I was floating this home so gently, it occurred to me why I had found it. It was to make wheels with to roll my boat into winter quarters upon. So I saved off two thick rollers from one end, pierced them for wheels, and then of a joint which I had found drifting on the river in the summer I made an axletree, and on this I rolled my boat out.

Miss Mary Emerson [R. W.’s aunt] is here,—the youngest person
in Concord, though about eighty,—and the most apprehensive of a genuine thought; earnest to know of your inner life; most stimulating society; and exceedingly witty withal. She says they called her old when she was young, and she has never grown any older. I wish you could see her.

My books did not arrive till November 30th, the cargo of the Asia having been complete when they reached Liverpool. I have arranged them in a case which I made in the mean while, partly of river boards. I have not dipped far into the new ones yet. One is splendidly bound and illuminated. They are in English, French, Latin, Greek, and Sanscrit. I have not made out the significance of this godsend yet.

Farewell, and bright dreams to you!

Text, Familiar Letters of Thoreau, pp. 316-19.

To DANIEL RICHTERSON
Concord Dec 25'55

Friend Bicketson,

Though you have not shown your face here, I trust that you did not interpret my last note to my disadvantage. I remember that, among other things, I wished to break it to you that, owing to engagements, I should not be able to show you so much attention as I could wish, or as you had shown to me.—How we did scour over the country! I hope your horse will live as long as one which I hear just died in the south of France at the age of 40,—Yet I had no doubt you would get quite enough of me. Do not give up so easily—the old house is still empty—and Homers is easy to treat with.

Channing was here about ten days ago. I told him of my visit to you, and that he too must go and see you & your country. This may have suggested his writing to you.

That island lodge, especially for some weeks in a summer, and new explorations in your vicinity are certainly very alluring; but such are my engagements to myself that I dare not promise to send your way—but will for the present only heartily thank you for your kind & generous offer. When my vacation comes, then look out.

My legs have grown considerably stronger, and that is all that ails me. But I wish now above all to inform you—though I suppose you will not be particularly interested—that Cholmondeley has gone to the Crimea "a complete soldier," with a design when he returns, if he ever returns, to buy a cottage in the south of England and tempt me over,—but that, before going, he busied himself in buying, & has caused to be forwarded to me by Chapman, a royal gift, in the shape of 21 distinct works (one in 9 vols—14 vols in all) almost exclusively relating to ancient Hindoo literature, and scarcely one of them to be bought in America. I am familiar with many of them & know how to prize them. I send you information of this as I might of the birth of a child.

Please remember me to all your family—

Yrs truly
Henry D. Thoreau.

MS., Huntington.

FROM EMERSON
American House, Boston, December 26, 1855.

Dear Henry,—

It is so easy, at distance, or when going to a distance, to ask a great favor which one would haggle at near by. I have been ridiculously hindered, and my book is not out, and I must go westward. There is one chapter yet to go to the printer; perhaps two, if I decide to send the second. I must ask you to correct the proofs of this or these chapters. I hope you can and will, if you are not going away. The printer will send you the copy with the proof; and yet, it is likely you will see good
cause to correct copy as well as proof. The chapter is Stonehenge, and I may not send it to the printer for a week yet, for I am very tender about the personalities in it, and of course you need not think of it till it comes. As we have been so unlucky as to overstay the market-day,—that is, New Year's—it is not important, a week or a fortnight, now.

If anything puts it out of your power to help me at this pinch, you must dig up Channing out of his earths, and hold him steady to this beneficence. Send the proofs, if they come, to Phillips, Sampson & Co., Winter Street.

We may well go away, if, one of these days, we shall really come home.

Yours,
R. W. Emerson

Mr. Thoreau.

_The book was Emerson's English Traits (1856). Text, Emerson-Thorcan, p. 751._