

1858

The Sons of Vulcan were organized into a union, which later became the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers and still later led, though not by the most direct descent, to the AFL and CIO. A free zone was decreed between our country and Mexico. In Ottawa, Illinois Abraham Lincoln debated with Stephen Douglas in the campaign for United States Senator. Lincoln said there that this country could not endure half slave and half free. Two months later William Seward, speaking in Rochester, agreed and maintained that this country was engaged in an "irrepressible conflict" and must become either slave or free. The first Atlantic cable was laid successfully. Queen Victoria and President Buchanan exchanged congratulations over it. The Overland Mail Company began carrying mail by stage coach from Memphis and St. Louis to San Francisco. The Crystal Palace in New York burned down.

Thoreau's essay "Chesuncook" was published in the *Atlantic Monthly*. The intention was to make it the beginning of a series. However, Editor James Russell Lowell blue-penciled a sentence in which Thoreau suggested that a pine tree might go to heaven. Thoreau of course resented the censoring, sent a blistering letter to Lowell, and published no more in the *Atlantic* until it had a new editor. Thoreau traveled a good deal during the year. He visited Worcester, New York City, and Cape Ann among other places; he climbed Monadnock with Ellery Channing and Mt. Washington with the young man who helped to start the fire that had burned so many Concord trees—all of which might or might not have gone to heaven. Thoreau also wrote extensively and did a good deal of surveying; 1858 summed up as an unusually active year for him. The *Journal* is filled with facts—Latin labels and botanical observations. "How differently the poet and the naturalist look at objects!" Thoreau notes in September, and he is right.

To GEORGE THATCHER

Concord Jan 1st 1858

Dear Cousin,

Father seems to have got over the jaundice some weeks since, but to be scarcely the better for all that. The cough he has had so long is at least as bad as ever, and though much stronger than when I wrote before he is not sensibly recovering his former amount of health. On the contrary we cannot help regarding him more & more as a sick man. I do not think it a transient ail—which he can entirely recover from—nor yet an acute disease, but the form in which the infirmities of age have come upon him. He sleeps much in his chair, & commonly goes out once a day in *pleasant* weather.

The Harpers have been unexpected enough to pay him—but others are owing a good deal yet. He has taken one man's note for \$400.00, payable I think in April, & it remains to be seen what it is worth.

Mother & Sophia are as well as usual. Aunt returned to Boston some weeks ago.

Mr Hoar is still in Concord, attending to Botany, Ecology, &c with a view to make his future residence in foreign parts more truly profitable to him. I have not yet had an opportunity to convey your respects to him—but I shall do so.

I have been more than usually busy surveying the last six weeks running & measuring lines in the woods, reading old deeds & hunting up bounds which have been lost these 20 years. I have written out a long account of my last Maine journey—part of which I shall read to our Lyceum—but I do not know how soon I shall print it.

We are having a remarkably open winter, no sleighing as yet, & but little ice.

I am glad to hear that Charles [Thatcher] has a good situation, but I thought that the 3rd mate lived with and as the sailors. If he makes a study of navigation &c, and is bent on being master soon, well & good.

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It is an honorable & brave life, though a hard one, and turns out as good men as most professions. Where there is a good character to be developed, there are few callings better calculated to develop it.

I wish you a happy new year—

Henry D. Thoreau

MS., Berg; *previously unpublished.*

To JONES VERY

Concord Jan 16th 1858

My Dear Sir,

I received your note inviting me to Salem after my lecture Wednesday evening. My first impulse was to go to you; but I reflected that Mr [Parker] Pillsbury had just invited me to Lynn, thro' Mr Buffum, promising to be there to meet me, indeed, we had already planned some excursions to Nahant, &c—and he would be absent on Friday;—so I felt under obligations to him & the Lynn people to stay with them. They were very kind to me, and I had a very good time with them—Jonathan Buffum & Son, Pillsbury & Mr. [Benjamin?] Mudge—My reason for not running over to Salem for an hour, or a fraction of the day, was simply that I did not wish to impair my right to come by & by when I may have leisure to take in the whole pleasure & benefit of such a visit—for I hate to *feel* in a hurry.

I shall improve or take an opportunity to spend a day—or part of a day with you ere long, and I trust that you will be attracted to Concord again, and will find me a better walker than I chanced to be when you were here before.

I have often thought of taking a walk with you in your vicinity. I have a little to tell you, but a great deal more to hear from you. I had a grand time deep in the woods of Maine in July, &c &c. I suppose that I

saw the *genista tinctoria* in the N. W. part of Lynn—on my way to the boulders & the mill-stone ledge.

Please remember me to Mr. [George P.?] Bradford.

Yrs truly
Henry D. Thoreau

MS., Essex Institute; previously unpublished.

TO JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

Concord Jan. 23d 1858

Dear Sir,

I have been so busy surveying of late, that I have scarcely had time to "think" of your proposition, or ascertain what I have for you. The more fatal objection to printing my last Maine-wood experience, is that my Indian guide, whose words & deeds I report very faithfully,—and they are the most interesting part of the story,—knows how to read, and takes a newspaper, so that I could not face him again.

The most available paper which I have is an account of an excursion into the Maine woods in '53; the subjects of which are the Moose, the Pine Tree & the Indian. Mr. Emerson could tell you about it, for I remember reading it to his family, after having read it as a lecture to my townsmen. It consists of about one hundred manuscript pages, or a lecture & a half, as I measure. The date could perhaps be omitted, if in the way. On account of other engagements, I could not get it ready for you under a month from this date.

If you *think that you would like* to have this, and will state the rate of compensation, I will inform you at once whether I will prepare it for you.

Yrs truly
Henry D. Thoreau

J. R. Lowell Esq

Thoreau was evidently one of the prospective contributors to the new Atlantic Monthly whom Lowell, its initial editor, was definitely interested in. The magazine had begun publication the year before. Thoreau and its editor had been acquainted since Harvard days; then Lowell was a year behind Thoreau. But there must have been little if anything in common. Lowell, a vigorous dandy, moved in Harvard's shiniest circles, while Thoreau was leading his own uncluttered life. After college their careers continued to diverge markedly. Lowell became a very popular poet, a married man, an abolitionist, and a professor. Thoreau hoed his furrow. The surprising thing, one would judge, is that Lowell when he came to the Atlantic got in touch with Thoreau at all. (It may have been at the suggestion of Francis H. Underwood, who had approached Thoreau in 1853 about contributing to a projected antislavery magazine and who was now helping Lowell in the Atlantic office.) Very probably Lowell approached Thoreau indirectly through Emerson. On September 14, 1857 Lowell wrote Emerson about some of his contributions to the Atlantic and also inquired "How about Mr. Thoreau?" On November 19 Lowell was more specific: "Will not Thoreau give us something from Moosehead?" (H. E. Scudder's James Russell Lowell, I, 415 and 417), and that may have been the query that resulted in this letter. MS., Harvard; previously unpublished.

From ?

Dear Sir:

Please send me a copy

This fragment is all that remains of what was probably a request for a copy of one of Thoreau's books. The manuscript is postmarked "Athol, January 25, 1858." MS., Lownes; previously unpublished.

From T. W. HIGGINSON

Worcester Jan 27, 1858

Dear Sir

Would it not be practical to start from Moosehead Lake, with an Indian guide, reach the head water of the Allegash & so down to Madawaska—or farther West, under the Sugar Loaf Mts. to Quebec? What were the termini of your expedition in that direction & what time & cost?

Cordially
T. W. Higginson

MS., Harvard; *previously unpublished.*

To T. W. HIGGINSON

Concord Jan 28 1858

Dear Sir,

It would be perfectly practicable to go the Madawaska the way you propose—As for the route to Quebec, I do not find the “Sugar-loaf Mts” on my maps. The most direct and regular way, as you know, is substantially Montresor’s & Arnold’s, and the younger John Smith’s—by the Chaudiere; but this is less wild. If your object is rather to see the St. Lawrence River below Quebec, you will probably strike it at the Riviere du Loup. (V. Hodges’ account of his excursion thither via the Allegash. I believe it is in the 2nd Report on the Geology of the Public Lands of Maine & Mass, in ’37.) I think that our Indian last summer, when we talked of going to the St. Lawrence named another route, near the Madawaska—perhaps the St Francis, which would save the long portage which Hodge made.

I do not know whether you think of ascending the St Lawrence in a

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canoe—but if you should you might be delayed not only by the current, but by the waves, which frequently run too high for a canoe in such a mighty stream. It would be a grand excursion to go to Quebec by the Chaudiere—descend the St Lawrence to the Riviere du Loup—& so return by the Madawaska & St Johns to Frederickton, or further—almost all the way *down stream*—a very important consideration.

I went to Moosehead in company with a party of four who were going a hunting down the Allegash—& St Johns, and thence by some other stream over into the Restigouche & down that to the Bay of Chaleur—to be gone 6 weeks!

Our northern terminus was an island in Heron Lake on the Allegash (V. Colton’s R. R. & Township map of Maine.) The Indian proposed that we should return to Bangor by the St Johns & Great Schoodic Lake—which we had thought of ourselves—and he showed us on the map where we should be each night. It was then noon, and the next day night, continuing down the Allegash, we should have been at the Madawaska settlements, having made only one or 2 portages, and thereafter, on the St Johns there would be but one or 2 more falls with short carries, and if there was not too much wind, we could go down that stream 100 miles a day. It is settled all the way below the Madawaska. He knew the route well. He even said that this was easier, and would take but little more time, though much further, than the route we decided on—i.e. by Webster Stream—the East Branch & Main Penobscot to Oldtown—but he may have wanted a longer job. We preferred the latter—not only because it was shorter, but because—as he said, it was wilder.

We went about 325 miles with the canoe (including 60 miles of Stage between Bangor & Oldtown) were out 12 nights, & spent about 40 dollars apiece, which was more than was necessary We paid the Indian, who was a very good one, \$1.50 per day & 50 cts per week for his canoe. This is enough in ordinary seasons. I had formerly paid \$2 00 for an Indian & for white batteau-men

If you go to the Madawaska in a leisurely manner, supposing no delay on account of rain or the violence of the wind, you may reach *Mt Kineo* by noon, & have the afternoon to explore it. The next day you may get to the head of the Lake before noon, make the portage of 2½ miles over a wooden R R & drop down the Penobscot half a dozen miles. The 3d morning you will perhaps walk half a mile about Pine Stream Falls, while the Indian runs down, cross the head of Chesuncook, & reach the junction of the Caucomgomock & Umbazooksus by noon, and

ascend the latter to Umbazookskus Lake that night. If it is lowwater, you may have to walk & carry a little on the Umbazookskus before entering the lake. The 4th morning you will make the carry of 2 miles to Mud Pond (Allegash water) & a very wet carry it is, & reach Chamberlain Lake by noon, & Heron Lake perhaps that night, after a couple of very short carries at the outlet of Chamberlain.

At the end of 2 days more, you will probably be at Madawaska.

Of course the Indian can paddle twice as far in a day as he commonly does.

Perhaps you would like a few more details—We *used* (3 of us) exactly 26 lbs of hard bread, 14 lbs of pork, 3 lbs of coffee 12 lbs of sugar (& could have used more) beside a little tea, Ind. meal, & rice & plenty of berries & moosemeat. This was faring very luxuriously. I had not formerly carried coffee—sugar, or rice. But for solid food, I decide that *it is not worth the while to carry anything but hard bread & pork*, whatever your tastes & habits may be. These wear best—& you have no time nor dishes in which to cook any thing else. Of course you will take a little Ind. meal to fry fish in—& half a dozen lemons also, if you have sugar—will be very refreshing—for the water is warm.

To save time, the sugar, coffee, tea salt &c &c should be in separate water tight bags labelled and tied with a leather string; and all the provisions & blankets should be put into 2 large India rubber bags, if you can find them water tight—Ours were not.

A 4-quart tin pail makes a good kettle for all purposes, & tin plates are portable & convenient. Dont forget an India rubber knapsack—with a large flap—plenty of *dish cloths*—old newspapers, strings, & 25 feet of strong cord.

Of India rubber clothing the most you can wear, if any, is a very light coat, and that you cannot work in.

I could be more particular, but perhaps have been too much so already.

Yrs truly
Henry D. Thoreau

MS., Berg.

[1858]

To JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

Concord, Feb. 22d 1858

My dear Sir,

I think that I can send you a part of the story to which I referred within a fortnight. I am to read some of my latest Maine wood experiences to my townsmen this week; and in this case I shall not hesitate to call names.

MS., Harvard; *previously unpublished; the signature has been clipped from the MS.*

To JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

Concord Mar. 5 1858

Dear Sir,

I send you this morning, by the Concord & Cambridge expresses, some 80 pages of my Maine Story. There are about 50 pages more of it. I think that it is best divided thus. If, however, this is too long for you, there is a tolerable stopping place after the word "mouse" p. 74, which is about the middle of the whole.

If there is no objection you can print the whole date 1853.

I reserve the right to publish it in another form after it has appeared in your magazine.

Will you please send me the proofs on account of Indian names &c—and also, if you print this, inform me how soon you would like the rest?

Yrs truly
Henry D. Thoreau

MS., Harvard; *previously unpublished.*

From R. WARNER

Boston April 10 1858

Mr Henry D Thoreau
Sir

I wish you would go & measure the piece of land that I bought of Mr Brown immediately if you will call at my mill & tell Mr Smith to let Thomas [name] go with you & shew the lines I shall be up next week Wednesday or Saturday if you got the land measured before you will send the measure to me by mail

yours Truly
R. Warner

The Boston City Directory for 1858 lists a Richard Warner of Warner & Son, marginal slaters, who may have been the writer of this note. MS., Berg; previously unpublished.

 To MARY BROWN

I think that they [Mayflowers] amount to more than grow in Concord. The blood-root also, which we have not at all, had not suffered in the least. Part of it is transferred to my sister's garden. Preserving one splendid vase full, I distributed the rest of the Mayflowers among my neighbors, Mrs. Emerson, Mrs. Ripley, Mr. Hoar and others. . . . They have sweetened the air of a good part of the town ere this. . . . I should be glad to show you my Herbarium, which is very large; and in it you would recognize many specimens which you contributed. . . . Please remember me to Father and Mother, whom I shall not fail to visit whenever I come to Brattleboro, also to the Chesterfield mountain, if you can communicate with it; I suppose it has not budged an inch.

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Mrs. Mary Brown Dunton comments on this letter that it was written to thank her for a box of mayflowers—i.e. trailing arbutus—which Thoreau received April 23. She and Thoreau had become acquainted during his visit to Brattleboro during the autumn of 1856. (Journal, IX, 61–80.) Text, Vermont Botanical Club Bulletin No. 3 (April 1908), 37–38.

 To MARSTON WATSON

Concord, April 25, 1858

Dear Sir,

Your unexpected gift of pear-trees reached me yesterday in good condition, and I spent the afternoon in giving them a good setting out; but I fear that this cold weather may hurt them. However, I am inclined to think they are insured since you have looked on them. It makes ones mouth water to read their names only. From what I hear of the extent of your bounty, if a reasonable part of the trees succeed this transplanting will make a new era for Concord to date from.

Mine must be a lucky star, for day before yesterday I received a box of May-flowers from Brattleboro, and yesterday morning your pear-trees, and at evening a humming-bird's nest from Worcester. This looks like fairy housekeeping.

I discovered two new plants in Concord last winter, the Labrador Tea (*Ledum latifolium*), and Yew (*Taxis baccata*).

By the way, in January I communicated with Dr. Durkee, whose report on glow-worms I sent you, and it appeared, as I expected, that he (and by his account, Agassiz, Gould, Jackson, and others to whom he showed them) did not consider them a distinct species, but a variety of the common, or *Lampyris noctiluca*, some of which you got in Lincoln. Durkee, at least, has never see the last. I told him that I had no doubt about their being a distinct species. His, however, were luminous *throughout every part of the body*, as those which you sent me were not, while I had them.

Is nature as full of vigor to your eyes as ever, or do you detect some falling off at last? Is the mystery of the hog's bristle cleared up, and

with it that of our life? It is the question, to the exclusion of every other interest.

I am sorry to hear of the burning of your woods, but, thank heaven, your great ponds and your sea cannot be burnt. I love to think of your warm sandy wood-roads, and your breezy island out in the sea. What a prospect you can get every morning from the hill-top east of your house! I think that even the heathen that I am, could say, or sing, or dance morning prayers there of some kind.

Please remember me to Mrs. Watson, and to the rest of your family who are helping the sunshine yonder.

Watson's villa in Plymouth, "Hillside," was a favorite spot for Thoreau and his friends to visit. Sanborn (Recollections of Seventy Years, II, 320) reports that Thoreau and Alcott visited there "and in walks through the surrounding wood encountered the remains of a dead hog—his white firm jawbone, and his bristles quite untouched by decay. 'You see,' said Thoreau to his vegetarian friend, 'here is something that succeeded, beside spirituality, and thought,—here is the tough child of nature.'"

Mrs. Watson, born Mary Russell, had lived in the Thoreau household before her marriage and was supposed by Marston Watson to be the Maiden of Thoreau's youthful poem "To the Maiden in the East." MS., Mrs. Robert Bowler.

From B. B. WILEY

Chicago Apl 26, 1858

HD Thoreau Esq
Dear Sir

May I ask you to send me or have sent to me Mr Emerson's lecture on "Country Life." I am told he is ready to lend his papers to earnest inquirers. I will pay all postages and return the Ms. as soon as

read, though, if Mr Emerson do not object, I might wish to copy it. Neither you nor he must think me impertinent. I am where I would almost give my life for light and hence the request.

Not having your "Wild & Walking" to read, I have been walking in the wild of my own Nature and I am filled with anxious inquiries as to whether I had better remain in this business into which I passively slid. At that time I had many misgivings that it was not a wise step and I have been on the anxious seat ever since. I want labor that I can contemplate with approval and continue to prosecute with delight in sickness, adversity, and old age, should I chance to meet with such. I object to this business that it does not use my faculties, and on the other hand I ask myself if all my trouble is not in me. You dont want to hear my reasons pro and con. You too have been at a parting of the ways and will understand me.

It is true that while here I have been much helped yet it is in spite of my trade connections which came near spoiling me.

If I now leave, I shall probably have very little money, but I think some "fire in my belly" which will in the long run do something for me, if I live in the freedom of obedience.

If I leave, it will be with the expectation of earnestly choosing some sort of "Country Life," or, if I remain in a city, something that will make me grow. I believe that am I once fairly on deck I should not want to go below again.

I am ready to tread cheerfully any path of Renunciation if Heavenly Wisdom demand it—with equal alacrity would I, in that high behest, go to the Devil by the most approved modern, respectable, orthodox methods. It is difficult to reconcile the Temporal and the Eternal. I must at some time so decide it that I can use all the "fire in my belly" to some purpose

I spent, in December, some weeks on a farm in the interior of the State. I walked some distance over the prairie to look at a farm a man wanted me to buy and when the next night I reached my host's house, I took up "Walden" and came across your translation of Cato's advice to those about buying farms. It was very welcome and I let this farm alone.

I would write you a long letter, but I suppose it would only make you smile benignly—and perhaps me, too, when, a year hence, I remembered it.

Remember me respectfully and lovingly to Mr Emerson
Your grateful friend
B. B. Wiley

MS., Berg; *previously unpublished.*

To JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

Concord May 18 1858

Dear Sir,

The proofs, for which I *did* ask in the note which accompanied the ms, would have been an all sufficient "Bulletin."

I was led to suppose by Mr Emerson's account,—and he advised me to send immediately—that you were not always even *one* month ahead. At any rate it was important to me that the paper be disposed of soon.

I send by express this morning the remainder of the story—of which allow me to ask a sight of the proofs.

Yrs. truly
Henry D. Thoreau

MS., Harvard; *previously unpublished.*

To H. G. O. BLAKE

Concord Tuesday 4 pm June 1st 1858

Mr Blake—

It looks as if it might rain tomorrow: therefore this is to inform you—if you have not left Worcester on account of rain, that if the

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weather prevents my starting tomorrow, I intend to start on Thursday morning—i.e. if it is not decidedly rainy—or something more than a shower, and I trust that I shall meet you at Troy as agreed on.

H. D. T.

MS., Hosmer; *previously unpublished.*

To JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

Concord June 22d 1858.

Dear Sir,

When I received the proof of that portion of my story printed in the July number of your magazine, I was surprised to find that the sentence—"It is as immortal as I am, and perchance will go to as high a heaven, there to tower above me still."—(which comes directly after the words "heals my cuts," page 230, tenth line from the top,) have been crossed out, and it occurred to me that, after all, it was of some consequence that I should see the proofs; supposing, of course, that my "Stet" &c in the margin would be respected, as I perceive that it was in other cases of comparatively little importance to me. However, I have just noticed that that sentence was, in a very mean and cowardly manner, omitted. I hardly need to say that this is a liberty which I will not permit to be taken with my MS. The editor has, in this case, no more right to omit a sentiment than to insert one, or put words into my mouth. I do not ask anybody to adopt my opinions, but I do expect that when they ask for them to print, they will print them, or obtain my consent to their alteration or omission. I should not read many books if I thought that they had been thus *expurgated*. I feel this treatment to be an insult, though not intended as such, for it is to presume that I can be hired to suppress my opinions.

I do not mean to charge you with this omission, for I cannot believe that you knew anything about it, but there must be a responsible editor somewhere, and you, to whom I entrusted my MS. are the only

party that I know in this matter. I therefore write to ask if you sanction this omission, and if there are any other sentiments to be omitted in the remainder of my article. If you do not sanction it—or whether you do or not—will you do me the justice to print that sentence, as an omitted one, indicating its place, in the August number?

I am not willing to be associated in any way, unnecessarily, with parties who will confess themselves so bigoted & timid as this implies. I could excuse a man who was afraid of an uplifted fist, but if one habitually manifests fear at the utterance of a sincere thought, I must think that his life is a kind of nightmare continued into broad daylight. It is hard to conceive of one so completely derivative. Is this the avowed character of the Atlantic Monthly? I should like an early reply.

Yrs truly,
Henry D. Thoreau

The lines of force that converged in this letter could be detected in the earlier notes. Thoreau's insistence that he be allowed to read his printer's proofs is clear there. So is his cold and formal attitude toward Lowell—an attitude that Lowell doubtless matched. Canby has said that the letter should be framed in every editor's office as a reminder. If Thoreau ever received a reply, we have no record of it. MS., Harvard.

To H. C. O. BLAKE

Concord, June 29, 1858, 8 A.M.

Mr. Blake,—

Edward Hoar and I propose to start for the White Mountains in a covered wagon, with one horse, on the morning of Thursday the 1st of July, intending to explore the mountain tops botanically, and camp on them at least several times. Will you take a seat in the wagon with us? Mr. Hoar prefers to hire the horse and wagon himself. Let us hear by express, as soon as you can, whether you will join us here by the earliest train Thursday morning, or Wednesday night. Bring your map

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of the mountains, and as much *provision* for the road as you can,—hard bread, sugar, tea, meat, etc.,—for we intend to live like gipsies; also, a blanket and some thick clothes for the mountain top.

Text, Familiar Letters of Thoreau, p. 385.

To DANIEL RICKETSON

Concord, June 30, 1858.

Friend Ricketson,—

I am on the point of starting for the White Mountains in a wagon with my neighbor Edward Hoar, and I write to you now rather to apologize for not writing, than to answer worthily your three notes. I thank you heartily for them. You will not care for a little delay in acknowledging them, since your date shows that you can afford to wait. Indeed, my head has been so full of company, &c., that I could not reply to you fitly before, nor can I now.

As for preaching to men these days in the Walden strain,—is it of any consequence to preach to an audience of men who *can* fail? or who can be *revived*? There are few beside. Is it any success to interest these parties? If a man has *speculated* and *failed*, he will probably do these things again, in spite of you or me.

I confess that it is rare that I rise to sentiment in my relations to men,—ordinarily to a mere patient, or may be wholesome good-will. I can imagine something more, but the truth compels me to regard the ideal and the actual as two things.

Channing has come, and as suddenly gone, and left a short poem, "Near Home," published (?) or printed by Munroe, which I have hardly had time to glance at. As you may guess, I learn nothing of you from him.

You already foresee my answer to your invitation to make you a summer visit—I am bound for the Mountains. But I trust that you have

vanquished, ere this, those dusky demons that seem to lurk around the Head of the River. You know that this warfare is nothing but a kind of nightmare—and it is our thoughts alone which give those *unworthies* any body or existence.

I made an excursion with Blake, of Worcester, to Monadnoc, a few weeks since. We took our blankets and food, spent two nights on the mountain, and did not go into a house.

Alcott has been very busy for a long time repairing an old shell of a house, and I have seen very little of him. I have looked more at the houses which birds build. Watson made us all very generous presents from his nursery in the spring especially did he remember Alcott.

Excuse me for not writing any more at present, and remember me to your family.

Yours,
H. D. Thoreau.

Text, Ricketson, pp. 79–80.

TO H. G. O. BLAKE

Concord, July 1, 1858

July 1st. Last Monday evening Mr. Edward Hoar said that he thought of going to the White Mountains. I remarked casually that I should like to go well enough if I could afford it. Whereupon he declared that if I would go with him, he would hire a horse and wagon, so that the ride would cost me nothing, and we would explore the mountain tops *botanically*, camping on them many nights. The next morning I suggested you and Brown's accompanying us in another wagon, and we could all camp and cook, gipsy-like, along the way,—or, perhaps, if the horse could draw us, you would like to bear half the expense of the horse and wagon, and take a seat with us. He liked either proposition, but said, that if you would take a seat with us, he would

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prefer to hire the horse and wagon himself. You could contribute something else if you pleased. Supposing that Brown would be confined, I wrote to you accordingly, by *express* on Tuesday morning, *via* Boston, stating that we should start to-day, suggesting provision, thick clothes, etc., and asking for an answer; but I have not received one. I have just heard that you *may* be at Sterling, and now write to say that we shall still be glad if you will join us at Senter Harbor, where we expect to be next Monday morning. In any case, will you please direct a letter to us there *at once*?

Text, Familiar Letters of Thoreau, pp. 385–86. *Sanborn prints this letter and that of June 29 as one, with a white space between.*

TO C. W. CURTIS

Concord Aug. 18th '58

Dear Sir,

Channing's poem "Near Home" was printed (if not published) by James Munroe and Co. Boston. C. brought it to me some seven weeks ago with the remark—"Knowing your objection to manuscript, I got it printed"—and I do not know that he presented it to anyone else. I have not been to the city of late, but Emerson told me that he found a small pile of them at Munroe's, and bought two or three; though Munroe said that he was forbidden to advertise it. Of course this is equivalent to dedicating it "to whom it may concern." Others also have bought it, for fifty cents; but C. still persists, in his way, in saying that it is not published. Ought not a poem to publish itself?

I am glad if you are not weary of the Maine Woods, partly because I have another and a larger slice to come.

As for the presidency,—I cannot speak for my neighbors, but, for my own part, I am politically so benighted (or belighted?) that I do not know what Seward's qualifications are. I know, however, that no one

in whom I could feel much interest would stand any chance of being elected. But the nail which is hard to drive is hard to draw.

Yours truly
Henry D. Thoreau

MS., Abernethy (*typescript*).

To JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

I shall be glad to receive payment for my story as soon as convenient—will you be so good as to direct it this way.

So Thoreau wrote stiffly to Lowell in a letter that has been erroneously dated 1856. As of September 1858 the Atlantic owed Thoreau \$198 by his calculation for the Maine woods material it had printed, but it took at least one more note, that of October 4, 1858, to get him his money. Text, catalogue of the Moulton sale (Merwin-Clayton, November 9, 1905), where the letter is described as 1 p. 8vo, dated from Concord, September 1, 1856.

To JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

Concord Oct 4 1858

James R. Lowell Esq.
Dear Sir,

I wrote to you more than a month ago respecting what was due me from the Atlantic monthly, but I have not heard from you. Perhaps

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you have not received my note. As I count, your magazine is indebted to me for thirty-three pages at six dollars a page—\$198.00

I should be glad to know if you receive this, and also when I may expect to be paid.

Yrs
Henry D. Thoreau

This is the last communication to Lowell that we have. Presumably Thoreau was at length paid. He had nothing else to do with the Atlantic until Lowell was succeeded in the summer of 1861 by James T. Fields. MS., Harvard; previously unpublished.

To DANIEL RICKETSON

Concord Oct 31 1858

Friend Ricketson,

I have not seen anything of your English Australian yet. Edward Hoar, my companion in Maine and at the White Mts., his sister Elizabeth, and a Miss Prichard, another neighbor of ours, went to Europe in the Niagara on the 6th. I told them to look out for you under the Yardley Oaks, but it seems that they will not find you there.

I had a pleasant time in Tuckerman's Ravine at the White Mts in July, entertaining four beside my self under my little tent through some soaking rains; & more recently I have taken an interesting walk with Channing about Cape Ann. We were obliged to "dipper it" a good way, on account of the scarcity of fresh water, for we got most of our meals by the shore.

C[hanning] is understood to be here for the winter,—but I rarely see him.

I should be pleased to see your face here in the course of the Indian summer, which may still be expected—if any authority can tell us when the phenomenon *does* occur. We would like to hear the story of your

travels—for if you have not been fairly intoxicated with Europe, you have been half-seas-over, & so probably can tell more about it—

[Yours truly
Henry D. Thoreau]

We do not know who Ricketson's English Australian was. When Ricketson's son and daughter printed this letter they misread the date as 1856 and, incidentally, read "English author" for "English Australian" (Ricketson, p. 69). MS., Huntington; part of the page has been cut out for the autograph, and the signature and complimentary close have been added in pencil in another hand.

From DANIEL RICKETSON

The Shanty, 9 p.m., Nov. 3d, 1858.

Dear Thoreau,—

Your truly welcome note of the 31st ult. reached me only this evening. I am sorry our English Australian has not been in Concord. He is quite an original, and appeared to be as familiar with the Concord worthies, as though he had been a fellow townsman of theirs. He is a young man, but has seen a good deal of the world, inside and outside—has lived some years in and about London, and fellowshipped with all sorts of folks, authors, gypsies, vagrants, &c., his accounts of which are entertaining—talks easy and well, has no vain pretensions, although I found incidentally that he is highly connected—I believe, with the family of the celebrated Lord Lyttleton, of monody memory—wears common cheap clothes, and carries his own baggage, a small leathern bag, is short and rather stout, full beard and of sandy complexion, smokes a pipe a good deal, likes malt liquor and an occasional glass of whiskey or gin, but is by no means intemperate, only English and cosmopolitan in his habits. He has a little book in project to be called "Pots of Beer," the chapters headed Pot First, Pot Second, &c., so on—

Conversations and reflections over these inspiring vessels. (P.S. Of wrath?)

I told Channing about him (who, by the way—C.—I found at his old post at the Mercury office, last week), and he said that you would not like his pipe. This puts me to thinking, as Jack Downing would say, and I want to take this opportunity to apologize for having so often offended you by my untimely *puffs*. I assure you, in future, that I will strive to refrain in your presence, for I am ready to "acknowledge the corn," and plead guilty, craving pardon for my manifold sins against your purer tastes.

I feel deeply disappointed and somewhat chagrined at my failure in going to Europe, and hope to master sufficient courage to embark again next spring, when I shall probably go from New York, whence like the *deccensus averni* there is no return. You would like to know more about my voyage. I was really "half seas over," as you intimate, in more senses than one, for my sea-sickness operated on my brain like a potent stimulus, accompanied with the most painful vertigo. I felt somewhat as I conclude a dancing dervish might, after having spun round for some time, that is if they ever do so, or is it only the Shakers that perform these gyrations? But the newspaper I send you will give you an account of my experiences on board ship. The paragraph about the moose is quite Thoreau^{ish}_{ian}—take your choice—and the phrase, *tribute to the sea*, is, I think, borrowed from your account of your winter voyage to Nantucket, some years ago.

I have published my history of New Bedford in a neat duodecimo of 400 pages, and am *prospecting* for a volume of poems—also writing some sketches called "Smoke from my Pipe"—in the second chapter of which I introduce a certain philosopher, a friend of mine, who built his own house, earned his own livelihood, and lived alone some years, a genial man, a scholar, &c. Can you guess him out? I think I may also introduce, all of course, in a respectful and quiet way, some other of the Concordian band—but more of this anon, as we authors say, when we run out our line.

I am quite tempted by your kind invitation to visit Concord during the "Indian summer," should such a boon come this month. I may go to Boston soon, and may also possibly get as far as Concord for a few days—but whether I do or not, I want you to come down and visit me. I value your acquaintance highly, and I want to see Mr. Emerson and Father

Alcott once more. Life is too short, and noble men and women too scarce, for me to lose any opportunity of enjoying the society of such, when I can do so without obtrusion.

With my warm regards to your family and my other Concord friends, and hoping to hear from you again very soon, I remain, yours faithfully,

Daniel Ricketson.

Please return the newspaper.

I am amused by your account of your party in the rain under your little tent. I trust your friends were quite contented with your hospitality.

Text, Ricketson, pp. 81-83.

TO DANIEL RICKETSON

Concord Nov. 6 1858

Friend Ricketson,

I was much pleased with your lively and life-like account of your voyage. You were more than repaid for your trouble, after all. The coast of Nova-Scotia which you sailed along from Windsor westward is particularly interesting to the historian of this country, having been settled earlier than Plymouth. Your "Isle of Haut" is properly "Isle Haute" or the High Island of Champlain's map. There is another off the coast of Maine. By the way, the American elk, of *American authors*, (*Cervus Canadensis*) is a distinct animal from the moose (*cervus alces*), though the latter is also called elk by many.

You drew a very vivid portrait of the Australian—short & stout, with a pipe in his mouth, and his book inspired by beer, Pot 1st, Pot 2 &c. I suspect that he must be pot-bellied withal. Methinks I see the smoke going up from him as from a cottage on the moor. If he does not quench

his genius with his beer, it may burst into a clear flame at last. However, perhaps he intentionally adopts the low style.

What do you mean by that ado about smoking and my "purer tastes"? I should like his pipe as well as his beer, at least. Neither of them is so bad as to be "highly connected," which you say he is, unfortunately. Did you ever see an English traveller who was not? Even they who swing for their crimes may boast at last that they are *highly connected*.—No! I expect nothing but pleasure in "smoke from *your* pipe."

You & the Australian must have put your heads together when you concocted those titles—with pipes in your mouths over a pot of beer. I suppose that your chapters are Whiff the 1st—Whiff the 2nd &c But of course it is a more modest expression for "Fire from my Genius."

You must have been very busy since you came back, or before you sailed, to have brought out your History, of whose publication I had not heard. I suppose that I have read it in The Mercury. Yet I am curious to see how it looks in a volume, with your name on the title page.

I am more curious still about the poems. Pray put some sketches into the book—your shanty for frontispiece; Arthur & Walton's boat, (if you can) running for Cuttyhunk in a tremendous gale, not forgetting "Be honest boys" &c nearby; the Middleboro' Ponds with a certain island looming in the distance; the Quaker meetinghouse, and the Brady House, if you like; the villagers catching smelts with dip nets in the twilight, at the head of the River &c &c. Let it be a local and villageous book as much as possible. Let some one make a characteristic selection of mottoes from your shanty walls, and sprinkle them in an irregular manner, at all angles, over the fly leaves and margins, as a man stamps his name in a hurry; and also canes, pipes, and jacknives, of all your patterns, about the frontispiece. I can think of plenty of devices for tail-pieces. Indeed I should like to see a hair-pillow, accurately drawn, for one; a cat with a bell on, for another; the old horse with his age printed in the hollow of his back; half a cocoa-nut shell by a spring; a sheet of blotted paper; a settle occupied by a settler at full length, &c &c &c. Call all the arts to your aid. Dont wait for the Indian Summer, but bring it with you

Yrs, truly
H. D. T.

P. S. Let me ask a favor. I am trying to write something about the autumnal tints, and I wish to know how much our trees differ from

English & European ones in this respect. Will you observe, or learn for me what English or European trees, if any, still retain their leaves in Mr. [James] Arnold's garden (the gardener will supply the true names) & also if the foliage of any (& what) European or foreign trees there have been brilliant the past month. If you will do this, you will greatly oblige me. I return the newspaper with this.

No doubt the kind of good "local" book Thoreau advises Ricketson to write was the kind he himself hoped to prepare about Concord some day. The information on leaves that Thoreau requested in his postscript was put to excellent use in the essay "Autumnal Tints" in the Atlantic Monthly for October 1862, after his death. MS., Huntington.

From DANIEL RICKETSON

The Shanty, Nov. 10th, 1858.

Friend Thoreau,—

Your very pleasant and encouraging letter reached me on Monday (the 8th). Pleasant from the cheerful spirit in which it was written, and encouraging from the appreciation you express for the little portraits of my late travelling experiences I sent you.

This forenoon I made a visit to Arnold's grounds, walking to and from through the woods and fields most of the way on the route by the upper road by which the wind-mill stands. In company with the gardener, rejoicing in the appropriate and symphonious name of Wellwood Young, whose broad Gaelic accent rendered an attentive ear necessary to catch the names, I made the following list. The Scotch larch, for instance, he said came from Norroway (Norway), the yellow fringes of which were still hanging on the branches.

The following is the list I made in accordance with your request. I give the names without any order, just as we happened to meet the trees. Horse-chestnut, quite full of yellow and green foliage. English

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walnut, do. Beech, Linden, Hawthorn (nearly perfect in green foliage, only a little decayed at the top, but in a sheltered place), Silver Linden, Copper Beech, Elm, Weeping Ash, Weeping Willow, Scotch Larch, Euanimus Europeus (Gardener's name), I suppose correct. These are all European or English, I believe.

I give a few others not European, viz: Osage orange (or Maclura), Cornus Florida (handsome) Tulip, three-thorned Acacia, Mexican Cypress.

There were numerous shrubs in full leaf, among them the Guelder Rose. Vines, Bignonia radicans and Bignonia cuminata.

I send a few leaves. The largest green leaf is the American Linden—the smaller, the European copper leaved Beech. One English Elm (green), and two smaller and narrower leaves, the *Euanimus Europeus*.

I am sorry the list is no fuller, but I think it includes all in these grounds. The location is quite sheltered. I could not ascertain from the gardener what trees exhibited particular brilliancy of foliage last month. I conclude, however, that these I have named were quite fresh up to the last of October.

It is barely possible I may reach Concord on Saturday next and remain over Sunday, but hardly probable as they say.

Channing I understand has been to Concord since I wrote you last, and is now here again. Is he not quite as much a "creature of moods" as old Sudbury Inn? But I am in poor mood for writing, and besides it is nearly dark (5 p.m.).

May I not hear from you again soon, and may I not expect a visit also ere long?

As this is only a business letter I trust you will excuse its dulness. Hoping I have supplied you (Channing has just come in) with what you wanted, I conclude.

Yours faithfully,
D. R.

P. S. If I should not go to Concord I will endeavor to get one of my books to you soon.

Text, Ricketson, pp. 86-88.

To DANIEL RICKETSON

Concord Nov. 22d 1858

Friend Ricketson

I thank you for your "History." Though I have not yet read it again, I have looked far enough to see that I like the homeliness of it; that is the good old-fashioned way of writing as if you actually lived where you wrote. A man's interest in a single blue-bird, is more than a complete, but dry, list of the fauna & flora of a town. It is also a considerable advantage to be able to say at any time, if R. is not here, here in his book. Alcott, being here and inquiring after you (whom he has been expecting) I lent the book to him almost immediately. He talks of going west the latter part of this week.

Channing is here again, as I am told, but I have not seen him.

I thank you also for the account of the trees. It was to my purpose, and I hope that you got something out of it too. I suppose that the cold weather prevented your coming here. Suppose you try a winter walk or skate—Please remember me to your family.

Yrs H. D. T.

Ricketson's History of New Bedford, published by its author, came out this year. MS., Huntington.

From THOMAS CHOLMONDELEY

Donegana Friday 26th

My dear Thoreau

I am at *Montreal* & I think I shall pass south not far from you. I shall be on Tuesday evening at the Revere at Boston. I am going to

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spend the winter in the West Indies. What do you say to come there too?

Yrs ever
Thos Cholmondeley

Henry Thoreau Esq Concord Massachusetts

Donegana's was a Montreal hotel. Cholmondeley visited Thoreau in Concord a few days later. MS., Berg.

From THOMAS G. CARY, GEORGE LIVERMORE, AND HENRY G. DENNY

Boston, December 1st, 1858.

Sir:—

At the annual meeting of the Association of the Alumni of Harvard College, held in July last, a committee, appointed at a previous meeting "to take into consideration the state of the college library, and to devise means for its increase, maintenance, and administration," made their report in print, a copy of which has been sent to you. A committee has lately been appointed to carry the recommendations of this report into effect, in behalf of whom we now ask of you a contribution to aid in supplying the deficiencies that have been made known.

If you should not yet have examined the report, we earnestly ask that it may receive your particular attention, together with the statements appended thereto from the president, the librarians, and other officers of the college, showing such pressing want of means to keep up with the advance of the age, that professors and tutors are obliged to expend a portion of their moderate salaries in the purchase of new and expensive books, which should be found in the library, for their use and for that of the students.

The college has ever maintained the highest rank among the institutions of learning in the United States, and the influence which it has exerted on the intellectual and moral culture not only of this community, but, to a great extent, of the whole country, is very generally

acknowledged. In aiding it to maintain this pre-eminence and to continue the exercise of this salutary influence, the library is of the highest importance; yet the provision for its increase is utterly inadequate to supply, from year to year, even a moderate portion of the new works actually needed to meet the reasonable expectation of its friends and of the community.

This state of things seems to call earnestly upon all who have been at any time connected with the college, to make some return for the advantages which they have received from the munificence of its former benefactors, by providing in their turn for the wants that have arisen in the lapse of years and the progress of literature and science; it calls on the community, in the midst of which the college is situated, to sustain one of its noblest ornaments in a manner creditable to itself and to the country, and it calls on the friends of education generally to assist in maintaining at Cambridge the highest standard of scholarship.

Again referring to the printed statements for a more particular account of the wants of the library, we respectfully urge you to aid us in obtaining such a fund for investment as may be necessary for its proper support, feeling sure that only a general misapprehension of its resources has prevented the friends of the college and the community at large from placing it long ago beyond the need of such an appeal. To keep scholarship at Cambridge even with the advance of knowledge in this age, requires, for the annual purchase of new works, the income of a fund of not less than one hundred thousand dollars, and such a fund we hope to obtain.

While the exigencies of the case seem to demand a liberal subscription from those whose means will warrant it, we beg every one to respond to our call in some amount, however small, remembering that a few dollars from each one of the many who have not the ability to give largely, will in the aggregate be an important aid to the library.

We request you, therefore, on the receipt of this communication, or as soon after as may be convenient, to return the annexed paper, with your name and the amount of your donation, (either enclosing the money, or stating the time when we may expect to receive it,) to Henry G. Denny, Secretary and Treasurer of the Committee, 42, Court Street, or to Amos A. Lawrence, Esq., Treasurer of Harvard College, 30, Court Street, Boston. You will also confer a great favor by obtaining, as far as you have the power, further subscriptions, or by promoting bequests from those who are liberally disposed, in aid of the fund.

Should you not have received a copy of the report, please send your post-office address to the secretary of the committee, and one will be forwarded immediately.

We are, Sir, respectfully,

Your obedient servants,
Thomas G. Cary,
George Livermore,
Henry G. Denny.

A circular letter sent to all the Harvard College alumni. MS. facsimile, Kenneth Walter Cameron, The Transcendentalists and Minerva, p. 486.

TO DANIEL RICKETSON

Concord Dec 6 1858

Friend Ricketson,

Thomas Cholmondeley, my English acquaintance, is here, on his way to the West Indies. He wants to see New Bedford, a whaling town. I told him that I would like to introduce him to you there, thinking more of his seeing you than New Bedford. So we propose to come your way tomorrow. Excuse this short notice, for the time is short. If, on any account, it is inconvenient to see us, you will treat us accordingly.

Yours truly
Henry D. Thoreau

The proposed visit was made, and there is a good account of it in Ricketson's journal (Ricketson, pp. 309-10). Cholmondeley soon left New England, went to Jamaica, and finally returned to his own country before the summer of 1859. MS., Abernethy (typescript).

From TICKNOR & FIELDS

Boston Decr 7/58

Henry D. Thoreau Esq Concord Mass.

Dear Sir

Referring to our file of letters from 1857 we find a note from you of which the enclosed is a copy.

As our letter to which it is a reply was missent we doubt not but our answer to yours of a few months since has been subjected to the same, or a similar irregularity.

Respectfully yours &c.
Ticknor & Fields
pr Clark

There is no copy of Thoreau's letter in the letterbooks. MS., Harvard (typescript); previously unpublished.

From TICKNOR & CO.

Boston Dec. 15 1858

Mr. H. D. Thoreau Concord Mass.

Dear Sir,

In our last account we credited you capl [cash?] on the balance of copies of Walden, including quite a number of copies then on hand unsold—as the Edition was so nearly out we paid for all at that time. We have never been out of the book but there is very little demand for it so the 16 cops. rqd were in the edition printed. We enclose ck

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\$11 [16? 18?] .25 for 15 cops Concord River sold leaving in our hands 17 cops.

Truly yours
W. D. Ticknor & Co.

MS., Harvard (*typescript*); *previously unpublished*.

To JOHN LANGDON SIBLEY

Concord Dec 19 1858.

Dear Sir,

I return to the Library Marquette's "Recit des Voyages" &c the unbound reprint, one volume.

Yrs respectfully
Henry D. Thoreau

This note is addressed merely to the "Librarian of Harvard College." MS., Yale University Library; previously unpublished.