



Henry David Thoreau Journal Entries on or around October 16th

"What are you doing now?" he asked. "Do you keep a journal?" So I make my first entry to-day.

SOLITUDE

To be alone I find it necessary to escape the present,--I avoid myself.

--1837, October 22 (*Journal*, Vol. I, p. 3)

To the northern voyager who does not see the sun for three months, night is expanded into winter, and day into summer.

--1851, October 19 (*Journal*, Vol. III, pp. 79)

The first snow is falling (after not very cool weather), in large flakes, filling the air and obscuring the distant woods and houses, as if the inhabitants above were emptying their pillow-cases. Like a mist it divides the uneven landscape at a little distance into ridges and vales. The ground begins to whiten, and our thoughts begin to prepare for winter.

--1852, October 15 (*Journal*, Vol. IV, p. 387)

Many a man, when I tell him that I have been on to a mountain, asks if I took a glass with me. No doubt, I could have seen further with a glass, and particular objects more distinctly,--could have counted more meeting-houses; but this has nothing to do with the peculiar beauty and grandeur of the view which an elevated position affords. It was not to see a few particular objects, as if they were near at hand, as I had been accustomed to see them, that I ascended the mountain, but to see an infinite variety far and near in their relation to each other, thus reduced to a single picture.

--1852, October 20 (*Journal*, Vol. IV, p. 392)

With Sophia boated to Fair Haven, where she made a sketch.

The red maples have been bare a good while. In the sun and this clear air, their bare ashy branches even sparkle like silver. The woods are losing their bright colors.

--1853, October 18 (*Journal*, Vol. V, p. 440)

Joy and sorrow, success and failure, grandeur and meanness, and indeed most words in the English language do not mean for me what they do for my neighbors. I see that my neighbors look with compassion on me, that they think it is a mean and unfortunate destiny which makes me to walk in these fields and woods so much and sail on this river alone. But so long as I find here the only real clysium, I cannot hesitate in my choice. My work is writing, and I do not hesitate, though I know that no subject is too trivial for me, tried by ordinary standards; for, ye fools, the theme is nothing, the life is everything.

--1836, October 18 (*Journal*, Vol. IX, p. 121)

Each town should have a park, or rather a primitive forest, of five hundred or a thousand acres, where a stick should never be cut for fuel, a common possession forever, for instruction and recreation.

--1859, October 15 (*Journal*, Vol. XII, p. 387)

We boast of our system of education, but why stop at schoolmasters and schoolhouses? We are all schoolmasters, and our schoolhouse is the universe. To attend chiefly to the desk or schoolhouse while we neglect the scenery in which it is placed is absurd.

–1859, October 15 (*Journal*, Vol. XII, p. 387)

When a government puts forth its strength on the side of injustice, as ours (especially to-day) to maintain slavery and kill the liberators of the slave, what a merely brute, or worse than brute, force it is seen to be! A demoniacal force!

–1859, October 19 (*Journal*, Vol. XII, p. 400)