There are two ways to view the following combination of text and images.

1. You can scroll through the file as it appears on your screen, using the size adjustment in the control panel to enlarge images you want to examine more closely or reduce images that extend beyond the borders of the screen.

2. If you hold down “Ctrl” and hit “l” (lower-case “el,” not the number 1), you’ll see the images within the text as they appeared on the screen in Concord. All of the images are roughly the same size; you can’t expand or reduce them. When you’re finished, hold down “Ctrl” and hit “l” again.
2017 has been a great year for Thoreau and for Thoreauvians—wonderful books, conferences, exhibitions, and especially the encouragement to spend some time thinking about Henry. I’m just delighted to be able to be in Concord during this anniversary year—you all are so lucky to live in or near the place where Thoreau was so firmly rooted. As Laura Dassow Walls writes in her introduction to the catalog of the wonderfully rich exhibition that Leslie has created, “No American writer is more place-centered than Henry David Thoreau, and the place that mattered more to him than any other was Concord, Massachusetts” (Thoreau: A Life, p. 9).

I’m going to talk this evening about two of the products of Thoreau’s deep love for and involvement in this town. Both are poetic:

the earlier one is literally poetry—written in stanzas, rhyming

the later one is based on the seasonal repetition with variation of the phenomena of nature—the poetry that nature writes and that Thoreau transcribes, so to speak.

I have lots of images of Thoreau’s MSS to show you. The quality varies, and I’m using many of them only to give you a feel for what Thoreau is doing, not because I want you to read them from the screen. I’ll read you a few examples of the literal poetry, and some much more interesting passages from the Journal.

Thoreau believed poetry to be inherently the most heroic and beautiful form of language, the highest form of expression, and it’s no surprise that he would choose the form, early in his writing career, to describe his home town.

Here is his own statement of his project, set down in a Journal entry of September 4, 1841:

I think I could write a poem to be called Concord— For argument I should have the River—the Woods—the Ponds—the Hills—the Fields—the Swamps and Meadows—the Streets and Buildings—and the Villagers. Then Morning—Noon—and Evening—Spring Summer—Autumn and Winter—Night—Indian Summer—and the Mountains in the Horizon. (Journal 1, p. 330)
The argument is a summary that precedes the work itself—a prologue. Thoreau suggests here that the argument for his poem will cover the natural and man-made features of Concord, along with the people themselves. The poem proper will deal primarily with the daily and seasonal cycles as they affect the town and its inhabitants. The hills and mountains that make the far horizon to the north and west of Concord, especially Wachusett and Monadnock, will also be part of the poem.

When Thoreau wrote this outline, he was living with the Emerson family. He thinks he is able to write this poem at this time because he has been preparing for such a task since he moved into the Emerson household in April 1841. Emerson invited him after he and John had to close their school because tuberculosis was sapping John’s strength. Henry was 24, he had been out of college for four years, and he needed to support himself: Emerson, writing to his brother William, says he offered Thoreau “his board &c for what labor he chooses to do.” There were advantages for Emerson in this arrangement, as he tells William: he writes that Thoreau “is thus far a great benefactor & physician to me for he is an indefatigable & a very skilful laborer & I work with him as I should not without him. and expect to be suddenly well & strong though I have been a skeleton all the spring until I am ashamed.” He describes Thoreau as “a scholar & a poet & as full of buds of promise as a young apple tree” (RWE Letters, 2:402). Surely Emerson’s desire to encourage his protege figured into the offer: Thoreau would be freer than he had been in his parents’ home to try to establish himself as a writer.

Ensconced at Emerson’s, Thoreau begins his writer’s work by copying his Journal, started in October 1837, into new manuscript volumes. He edits as he goes, and in the process he re-reads the fifty or so poems he had completed over the previous four years. He also reads, for the first time, Sir William Jones’s translation of The Institutes of Hindu Law: or, The Ordinances of Manu . . . Comprising the Indian System of Duties, Religious and Civil. This book codifies the teachings of Brahma that are basic to Hinduism; it is described in a 1991 translation as “an encompassing representation of life in the world—how it is, and how it should be lived” (Laws of Manu, p. xvii). Thoreau is enraptured—the book lifts him to a higher plane of existence, and he sees Concord and its surroundings in a new and sacred light. The style of the writing affects him deeply: in Journal entries for August 1841, he writes, “it has such a rhythm as the winds of the desert—such a tide as the Ganges” (August 6, 1841; Journal 1,
p. 316), and says each sentence “opens unexpensively and almost unmeaningly—as the petals of a flower” (August 30, 1841; *Journal 1*, p. 325).

The poetry Thoreau finds in the laws of Manu, which come to him from the “remote years of the gods,” the “habitation of the morning” (May 31, 1841; *Journal 1*, p. 311), sets a new standard, and by comparison the poetry he knows lacks vigor and strength. Again in August he writes,

> The best poets . . . exhibit only a tame and civil side of nature—They have not seen the west side of any mountain.

> Day and night—mountain and wood are visible from the wilderness as well as the village—They have their primeval aspects—sterner savager—than any poet has sung. It is only the white man’s poetry—we want the Indian’s report. Wordsworth is too tame for the Chippeway. (August 18, 1841; *Journal 1*, p. 321)

And in September:

> When I observe the effeminate taste of some of my contemporaries in this matter of poetry—and how hardly they bear with certain incongruities, I think if this age were consulted it would not choose granite to be the back bone of the world—but Bristol spa—or Brazilian diamonds. (September 1, 1841; *Journal 1*, p. 326) [These are not close-grained, stable rock, like granite, but crystalline ones, prone to fracture into pieces with shiny surfaces.]

Inspired by his reading of Manu, buoyed by his review of what he had accomplished as a writer in the previous four years, and energized by the approaching fall, Thoreau sets to work. In a few months, from mid-summer until mid-autumn 1841, he writes more lines of poetry than he has altogether up to that period, and more than he will write in the rest of his career.

Emerson writes to Margaret Fuller on September 13, “H. T. is full of noble madness lately, and I think more highly of him than ever” (*RWE Letters*, 2:447). This madness is going on right under Emerson’s nose, and his journal for September contains a description that doesn’t name Thoreau but that matches Thoreau’s own account of his mood very closely (a slightly revised version appears in his essay, “The Poet”):
I was astonished one morning (Emerson writes) by tidings that genius had appeared in a youth who sat near me at table. He had left his work, he had gone rambling none knew whither, he had written hundreds of lines, but he could not tell whether that which was in him was therein told, he could tell nothing but that all was changed, man, beast, heaven, earth, & sea. How gladly we listened!

Here’s Thoreau’s own description, fairly bursting from the pages of a letter he wrote on September 8 to Lucy Jackson Brown, Lidian Emerson’s sister (both women were muses of sorts to Thoreau):

Dear Friend

Your note came wafted to my hand, like the first leaf of the Fall on the September wind, and I put only another interpretation upon its lines, than upon the veins of those which are soon to be strewn around me. It is nothing but Indian summer here at present—I mean that any weather seems reserved expressly for our late purposes, whenever we happen to be fulfilling them. I do not know what right I have to so much happiness, but rather hold it in reserve till the time of my desert. What with the crickets, and the lowing of kine, and the crowing of cocks, our Concord life is sonorous enough. Sometimes I hear the cock bestir himself on his perch under my feet, and crow shrilly long before dawn, and I think I might have been born any year for all the phenomena I know.

... Just now I am in the mid-sea of verses, and they actually rustle round me, as the leaves would round the head of Autummus himself, should he thrust it up through some vales which I know,—but alas! many of them are but crisped and yellow leaves like his, I fear, and will deserve no better fate than to make mould for new harvests. I see the stanzas rise around me, verse upon verse, far and near, like the mountains from Agiocochook, not all having a terrestrial existence as yet, even as some of them may be clouds, but I fancy I see the gleam of some Sebago lakes and Silver Cascades, at whose well I may drink one day. I am as unfit for any practical purpose, I mean for the
furtherance of the world’s ends, as gossamer for ship timber—And I who am going to be a pencil-maker to-morrow, can sympathise with god Apollo, who served king Admetus for awhile on earth—But I believe he found it for his advantage at last—as I am sure I shall—though I shall hold the nobler part at least out of the service.

Dont attach any undue seriousness [to] this threnody—for I love my fate to the very core and rind, and could swallow it without paring I think

You ask if I have written any more poems—excepting those which Vulcan is now forging, I have only discharged a few more bolts into the horizon, in all three hundred verses, and sent them as I may say over the mountains to Miss Fuller. . . .

(Correspondence 1, pp. 79-80)
Just now I am in the midst of
senses, and the actually actual sound
in the leaves and the sound of
the branches. Nowadays things tend
toward a hushed and yellow
silence like the sun, and into this
some no better fate than to make
some no better fate than to make
on some of my head and my
composition, my fancy and my
composition, my fancy and my
composition, and all
composition, my fancy and my
composition, my fancy and my

Enter to some of them may he clearly,
but I long for the glimpse of some Styx,
taken and shown to me, to whom will
I may drink one day. Even as unfit for
my practical purpose, I mean for the fin-
fan of my world's end, in garments
for death—And I also am going
to a fruit-named Lorraine, can sympathize
with god Apollo, who made men that
wander from earth to earth. Could I be
left to find it for his advantage or
lost to, I am once forty hours.
I shall hold to noble peace at least
out of the season.
And now to the poem itself. When you see these manuscripts, you'll understand exactly what Thoreau means by the leaves rustling around him—there are pages and pages of poetry! Here again are his proposed subjects, underlined.
Sat Sept. 4th 1841.

I think I could write a poem to be called Concord—For argument I should have the River—the Woods—the Ponds—the Hills—the Fields—the Swamps and Meadows—the Streets and Buildings—and the Villagers. Then Morning—Noon—and Evening—Spring Summer—Autumn and Winter—Night—Indian Summer—and the Mountains in the Horizon.
He had already written the final segment—in July 1841 he had composed “The Mountains in the Horizon,” incorporating into it a revised version of a shorter poem titled “Wachusett” that appears in a Journal entry for May 2, 1841. This is a shorter version of the poem he sent Fuller—this one has only 158 lines. The manuscript is at the Houghton Library, Harvard University.
The Mountains in the Horizon
By the frontier straight ye stand upon ground
With grand aspect ye o'er sound
Terminations place for all round
Ye bring to summer's smile,
Millard's and the Peterborough hills.
There is argument that never dies,
Outruling the philosopher.
While we bury a lingering ray,
We still console the eastern sky,
Reflecting yonder in God's exalted solid Wade of clay.
The sun of the sky,
We see the hoar ageth up
Whose path in the sun.
From an "Oar, Dance, Sea,"
For many a year,
I've seen ye restless bound,
Without a sound,
Like some vast fleet
Sailing through rain and slat,
Through winters cold and tempestuous;
Ships of the sea each one
Their restless run,
Alas! before the gale,
Cuts a furrow of sail,
On raging clouds
Flighted cluster in your shrouds
With your slant mast to rigges and storm.
But that ye make the heavens,
To near the edge ye go;
Under the sea so low;
With weight of metal all unsoft,
I seem to feel ye in my very seat busy,
Immeasurable depths of old,
And breadth of beam, and length of running year.
The winds on the sea
Are relative love,
Dancing in sympathy
Fast enterprises of wanton
Some mean sceme of God,
To telling from shore to shore,
When voyage over one on,

O'er the hold we open your true consigns

With ye find a shore

Amid the flood.

Crossing the pleasant flood,

By milder strain,

Fly with the moonlike sail,

And glide before the wave

To some retired bay.

These haunt —

Relics under the rippling sun,

The caledon men,

Bearing green Denevat and Fragrant.

For such small ends

Time glides forward

Yearly into eternity,

For this has ocean meant,

For this the sun less sent,

And moon was sent

And 'is the winds' employment.

Time waits but till the field is filled

With rich small deeds

All scope is filled

As that with seeds.

Mand little acts are grand

Of child from land to land,

These as to lie in time

With their true value claim.
You who to the world did cast
The one so great

No doubt that on the part from
Where ye lead
Your masters did not fail
To register your health,
Nor ye sail not by stealth,
Shutting close in to land,
With cargo confound,
But those who went a venture and go
Have left the man three
Their honesty.

Especially in these,
New England, who live me
Themselves alone without society.

My life is like a western sky
Unto the western eye
Of calm serene.
Each moment lentely vanishes
In the wind blows.
Now streaming like the northern light
Each yet more math, more high, more high
Subsiding on the shores of night.
Like the solemn field of grain
Yet always both remain
For still its root,
Bearing through all its length
With grateful strength,
Only the shadows glide
From side to side,
But still the deep grass doth abide.
When it rests along
Like the breath of a song,
Or the wind on the mound
Or the tempest on the ledge,
First swells then dies away
Like a harp stream.
Only a strong wind stays
To write the wind again.
But there are all for red and blue
dancing in unison all,
Then steadfast still.
"Up holding heaven, holding down earth,""The parsley from the morn,
Not deadened. For are now learning on
The other,
May I figure myself the solitary brother.

They far below ye,
Remnant of the sky,
Been through the clearing in the gorge,
Or from the end of the gorge
Into leaver all it passes by.
Then out in solemn in the west,
The ancient setting request,
With natural toilers joined,
And natural colors tinged
Not like the Tyrian dye,
But in the scheme of the sky
Forming an amphitheater of glory
Greater than Greece or Roman story.
Their cold nobility centering with us
Now the dawn, brevity, is the begun.

Nothing to lose
But hands between me and you,
There western pioneers
Who cannot not shame nor fear
By torrentous fraud driven
Under the care of heaven,
And cannot explain them then?
Will breathe enough of air?
The man, shall go behind thee not before,
Grief to need his store,
Even beyond the rest
With thy mental stock then migrated
To unclouded cloths,
Without a pilgrim axe,
Upon a loftier way
Than even our western route,
Clearing the road or high
Methad the all tempestuous
To do and instep Thyself as clearing
in New Eng.
In composing the other poems he followed a method I’ve never seen in his MSS—and I’ve seen most of them. I’ll take you through nineteen pages of the existing twenty-page draft (I have images of all the pages but one). The manuscripts for the first eighteen pages are at the Huntington Library, San Marino, CA; the manuscript for the last page is in the Berg Collection at the New York Public Library (for a digital image of the last page, see https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/ba964070-e8e0-0131-78b9-58d385a7b9d0; click on the last thumbnail at the bottom of the large window that opens).
The evening of the 3rd down to a cold Monday
and a sudden aspect near midnight. Sunlight streams over the
landscape as a

Fine grain of light continues the mountain air
behind
The wind now shifts the direction of the breeze
Geometric columns stand firm in the
Lake overtakes green leaves by slow progression,

From was a sense surrounding the light
tent behind each needle after rain;
Then flake a small confident to the end

Below each bath with struggling force
Amid the meadows green grass
And head the meadow silence
Evening mustard just at noon's setting

Last time
September side up to the pale
And blooms along the evening way
Then slopes off into the vale,
The brook that flows out into the sea

The small leads follow a thin lake
Whose surface at a meeting frame
Mingle the edge of the lake
And other the edges to its face

Small birds reflect on joy in the
On beat and movement in constant 
Small birds reflect on joy in the
Over new acres some dreamer's bay
And to the lake and seen a high
With faint and broken cliff to legend the way

The coolest beach is brown and serene
The farthest pond is fenced with leaves
That float upon the water like
Where it was that bees, no heart that news

Leaves scattered in each bough
That still contains the apples from
But now the leaves changed and dark
Like number into cansake the other crowns
Meanwhile old earth jogged steadily
At the mouth of nearest wharf,
And air in the ship's cabin
Whose limits had vanished quite.

You made
Washes here like summer rain
Each leaf curled like a living thing
As with the leisure air it steel.
Some faint memorials of the fusing
Then for it rose it turned a bout
And thus things came to some
Fires burned palaces last frail.
A patient summer roasted health.

Now of the rank summer health
My more superficial shows
What was I like to health.
When he saw me of the state both less than
Me through & diligence it held a court.
The sailor of the town.
It self infected most about a town
With a steno soon upon our container from
A robber must not walk alone
And thus in our arms we
For justice holding it tranquil.
Thank God also, season's grace the year
And sometimes, spread his ways
Who his kinsmen love
And planted trees in the shortest stay
Mr. gentle winter have his head another which though cold lest he
Should suffer a thunderstorm much as June expires in winter's end
Sometimes quite internal thought covered by snow and gathered up
As come same as green July
And to its corn bate then as round
Late座谈 friend and the continual
Ripe fruits of harvest as an autumn's sky
Do a cold surrender have seen
Our human leap after the book
Green as a column with the stone green
Like some fair place to tempt the wondering soul
A dry and golden thought about gloom
Although the green of the same
And memorize as it seems
Too wise amid the bow of June & Fare
Their love, which I respond to sing,
(Withings itself keen)
It is quite a different thing,
For neither needs to cling
When both can stand.

Two sturdy oaks I mean, that side by side
Withstand the winter storm,
And despite of wind and tide,
Grow up the meadow's pride,
For both are strong.

Above the bank I touch, but undermined
Down to their deepest roots,
Admiring we shall find
Their roots are intertwined
Inseparably.

April 8th 1838.

It is now summer, then new
Away the glory gone, from
One yellow leaf, the last new green
It is now here in yellow leaf
And the glory covered of June
Though pleasant here, but not the first
The sun of the flower, it had changed its morn
The cricket chirps seemed to import
Already in the mule died
wine 

he made in a panic. But now loosed
and someone to it. He thought poor.
A firm of audacity, the avenue spread.

I saw this, and the red And for a while
when the mule broke out the rear

October的教学, to spitting him
And then as he leaped in the low machinery
and silence. And the gun is a place of a moment.

He with a perfect pencil we were

The eyes screams through the chaste wood
and the fire fox yellow leaves burned

I was due and texture upon round

The first time he saw from out the

the year is better than I

The first with the red dust in the

They ran the charge to the extra. He

Poor rights to the town hand.

The keeping of certain medals in

Discouraged.

Reason是一个
Art greatness one need naught alone
under damp
arm in three
beating of new camp

The harvest settles in the wind
Red apples on hanging the hay
The cerulean flame of My mind
Diwali, all of I am as snake they

The moon is the font of the sky
And one lump was broken down
The sun born to birth his stem in the night
From nemesis brightness he has declined colour

The greedy ends to death pluck the fruit
And cast it in a death cup
2 The star more brightly glitter, more
Though, their tears he, once the flood reached

The hemp stand, wades, every hour
And dress up hero's costume
4 I trying into my place again
With unhelped strength, she stand and
scarred head
For in the woods these golden days
Some leap o'er it amber walk
And through the lane under the sleep
With the call to the the melancholy 15 Parcel

Gently withdrawing from the light
It slowly disappears away
When the flame that had followed them
Resigned to death upon the old years thing
More than once a melancholy
Flew and all the anger
As if the sun were turned to a
By officers for from the City Summer men
When in my bed at early dawn
I've heard the crickets proclaim the day
Though the sun shone secretly
Only the grasshoppers they tout and say
On half the sun with their faint whim
From ordering all that Coke's laugh
Who is the thing knew noon
As if unconscious of it nor ear light
Their canons rang the hollow sound
March seemed but lately made
And this its fall may infant wind
When the house in its cradle laid.
The lake might with golden feet
In sun has lately passed the way
And with her turn decked as neat
She has arranged in fair time of the day
To open the sheet of mist spread on
The endless track of corns beneath
Which round the brain, as ever serre
Pestle the homely waters soft.

This fragrant forest yields the scent
Of aromatic herbs, as you
Would say the wind, whereas it sent
This through the fields had sprouted perfumedden.
Washington, compared with Brunswick, South Carolina, Vol. 1. p. 27.

Woman. Social condition of N. A. No. 91. p. 489.

Witchcraft. Upham's, comprising a history of the Salem delusion - the meaning and onsets attached to the word intell.

D. Considerations on justification or the ejection of the conduct of our ancestors in relation to Upham's

Witchcraft. D. Lecture.

Those who preferred to hold intercourse with the light and spiritual powers divided into 3 classes. de 139.


Wonder the basis of worship. The man who cannot wonder, who does not habitually wonder, is but as

hair of spectacles behind which shrouds no eye. Pater Noster, Revisit 1. p. 662.
The most charming of all places which my eye
scans on this village embossed on the
flanks of the broad
footpath. I give
over Cook as a mute
natural wonder plans
to its shelter, and
support from hi

The plan a whole
sheet of

An inkstone in every
chair...
which opened as I heard a sudden burst of sound. The memory of that sweet sound.

The Cliffs. July 8th, 2025

But now then comes the thought of men,

more dear than lightning,

more swift as than lightning,

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[illegible text]

[illegible text]

[illegible text]
My memory I'll educate
To know the real before both
Remembering of the latest date
The joy from an idle immortal youth.

Just believe the love counted
With unutterable mine
Which yet my lot I cannot sand
Which mortal me young, and maid me old.
And call the days together how my thought
The such

In the power unseen to

Fragrance round my sleep it makes
Mournful than was the amber drop
That my soul needs its life and make
The body of which state its membership.
Number of days in Whitefield

John Newton

From the north

By a great river at some church place

Unnumbered times I endured the flame

And repent 1: they rule and to preserving grace

Such as to move the heavenly mind

That star that guides our mortal course

Which shows them life after death is laid

In wheat, firm flour, and weeping grave

Thyself to dwell in such a manner

With such reverence and fervent tone

That elder Time now guiding by

And leaves one with eternity alone
There is most beauty in youth's years
To the elder God, not to
That free God whom young appear
And infant world through infant grace first
Whose clean and ancient harmony
Pierced my inward through all its door
As through its internal melody
Further shed than the, further within
Who with one breath attains the others
And also from human heart
With one unbroken journey to year
Armoyd, and joins to waking forces of this
Who equal to the coward's haste
And still beside the foremost heart
Where life's flame is not diseased
Though it assume the lowest part
Be it long or but a gulf
Dormant though what once hung
The further hell or climb to home
And yet eternity that cheat which for that is alway
The wind my faculties around
To learn why life I was sent
Just what his parent meant
And to declare a man what God hath meant
And the declare a man what
Who declare a man what
Who declare a man what

Volunteer to learn to God. God
And blesses us.
What we presume to do alone
Be let be done.
What we presume to do alone
God let be done.

But what we learn of God's doing
And blesses a
What which we learn of God's doing
And blesses us.
And what we choose should be done

Be what it is alone.

If you are bound to the commandments of God, do
If you are bound to the commandments of God, do

God's commandments be done
God's commandments be done
God's commandments be done
These pages as I’m showing them follow the order of Thoreau’s large numbers, but the numbers are actually from a later stage of work. Initially, I think he simply let the language flow, filling page after page of stanzas about autumn, the experience of inspiration, and the task of the poet. Thoreau worked with these stanzas, revising and rearranging them to create fair copies of several poems: one describes the condition of inspiration, and three are on topics included in his poetic plan—morning, the transition of summer into autumn, and autumn itself.

The poem titled “Inspiration” exists in two versions. The manuscript for the sixteen-stanza version below is in the Morgan Library & Museum, NY.

Inspiration.
Always the general show of things
Floats in review before my mind,
And such true love and rev’rence brings
That sometimes I forget that I am blind.

But straight there comes unsought, unseen,
Some clear divine electuary,
And I who had but sensual been,
Grow sensible, and as God is am wary.

I hearing get, who had but ears,
And sight, who had but eyes before,
I moments live, who lived but years,
And truth discern, who knew but learning’s lore.

I hear beyond the range of sound,
I see beyond the verge of sight,
New earths—new skies—new seas around,
And in my noon the sun doth pale his light.

More swift its bolt than lightning is,
Its voice than thunder is more loud,
It doth expand my privacies
To all, and leave me single in the crowd.

Speaking with such authority,
With so serene and lofty tone,
That idle Time runs gadding by,
And leaves me with Eternity alone.

Then chiefly is my natal hour,
And only then my prime of life,
Of manhood's strength it is the flower,
'T is peace's end and war's beginning strife.

'T hath come in summer's broadest noon,
By a grey wall, or some chance place,
Unseasoned Time, insulted June
And vexed the day with its presuming face.

Such fragrance round my sleep it makes,
More rich than are Arabian drugs,
That my soul scents its life, and wakes
The body up, beneath its perfumed rugs.

Such is the Muse, the heavenly maid,
The star that guides our mortal course,
Which shows where life's true kernel's laid,
Its wheat's fine flower, and its undying force.

Whose clear and ancient harmony
Pierces my soul through all its din,
As through its utmost melody,
Further behind than they, further within.

Who with one breath attunes the spheres,
And also my poor human heart,
With one impulse propels the years
Around, and gives my throbbing life its start.

I will not doubt forevermore,
Nor falter from an iron faith,
For if the system be turned o'er,
God takes not back the word which once he saith.

My memory I'll educate
To know the one historic truth,
Remembering to the latest date
The only true and sole immortal youth.

Be but thy inspiration given,
No matter through what dangers sought,
I'll fathom hell or climb to heaven,
And yet esteem that cheap which love has bought.

Fame cannot tempt the bard
Who's famous with his God,
Nor laurel him reward
Who hath his maker's nod.
Inspiration.

Always the general show of things
Floats in visions before my mind,
And much true love and reverence bring
That sometimes I forget that I am blind.

But straight the true comes unsought unseen,
Some clear divine declaration,
And I who had but natural sense,
Grow sensible, and as God is am man.

I hear, I see, who had but sight
And night, who had but eyes before,
I moments live, who lived but years
And truth a dream, who knew but Eternity's Core.

I hear beyond the range of sound,
I see beyond the verge of sight,
New earths new star new seas around,
And in my room the sun shone still high.

More swift than thought lightning's flight,
Its voice than thunder in more loud
Yet death expand my horizons
To all, and leave me single in the crowd.
Skeeking with such ardor,
with so serene and lofty tone,
That idle Time and idly roll,
And leave me in this Eternity alone.

Then shall I come to death's dark hour,
And not then on my life's flower,
Of manhood's strength in its prime,
In peace's last and last beginning strife.

If death come in Summer's brightest noon,
By a grey wall, at some chance place,
Unseen and Time unsees Time,
And vext the day with its foreboding face.

Such fragrance round my sleep it makes,
More red than any Arabian drug,
That one soul seems its life, and wakes
To look up, beneath its perfumed rugs.

Such is the Siren the beauteous maid,
The star that guides our mortal course,
Which shows where life's true rendezvous,
Its ends, its flower, and its undying rose.

I roar clear and distinct Harmon
Vision, sound through all its slain.
As through its almost melody,
Farther, behind them they, further, linger.

Who with one breath8129 the spheres,
And also in poor human heart,
With one impulse prods the years around, and giveth my trembling life its start.

I will not doubt forenoon,
Err, falter from my own fault,
For if the system he turned on,
Just take me back the book which once he wrote.

My memory I'll educate
To know the true historic truth,
Remembering to the latest date
The only true and sole immortal youth.

One last they inspiration gives,
Of matter through what dangers sought,
In fathom deep or climb to heaves,
And yet esteem that sea, which love has taught.

Fame cannot forget the beard
Who is just as with the Deivs,
Nor cannot been removed
Who haunts this on being mad.
He is the brother Henry L. Samuel
and writing.
Stephan E. Samuel
The second version, made up of twenty-one stanzas, is better organized and more concise in conveying Thoreau’s experience. The manuscript has not been located; the text below is based on a photograph.

I’ll read the first four stanzas, to give you a flavor of the poem. [In poetry that follows, boldface indicates portions I read aloud in Concord.]

Inspiration.

Whate'er we leave to God, God does,  
And blesses us;  
The work we choose should be our own,  
God lets alone.

If with light head erect I sing,  
Though all the muses lend their force,  
From my poor love of anything,  
The verse is weak and shallow as its source.

But if with bended neck I grope,  
Listening behind me for my wit,  
With faith superior to hope,  
More anxious to keep back than forward it,

Making my soul accomplice there  
Unto the flame my heart hath lit,  
Then will the verse forever wear,  
Time cannot bend the line which God hath writ.

Always the general show of things  
Floats in review before my mind,  
And such true love and reverence brings,  
That sometimes I forget that I am blind.

But soon there comes unsought, unseen,  
Some clear divine electuary,  
And I, who had but sensual been,  
Grow sensible, and as God is am wary.

I hearing get who had but ears,  
And sight who had but eyes before,  
I moments live who lived but years,  
And truth discern who knew but learning’s lore.
I hear beyond the range of sound,  
I see beyond the verge of sight,  
New earths–new skies–new seas–around,  
And in my noon the sun doth pale his light.

A clear and ancient harmony  
Peirces my soul through all the din,  
As through its utmost melody,  
Further behind than they, further within.

More swift its bolt than lightning is,  
Its voice than thunder is more loud,  
It doth expand my privacies  
To all, and leave me single in the crowd.

It speaks with such authority,  
With so serene and lofty tone,  
That idle Time runs gadding by,  
And leaves me with Eternity alone.

Then chiefly is my natal hour,  
And only then my prime of life,  
Of manhood's strength it is the flower,  
'Tis peace's end and wars beginning strife.

'T hath come in summer's broadest noon,  
By a grey wall or some chance place,  
Unseasoned time, insulted June,  
And vexed the day with its presuming face.

Such fragrance round my sleep it makes,  
More rich than are Arabian drugs,  
That my soul scents its life, and wakes  
The body up—from 'neath its perfumed rugs.

Such is the Muse—the heavenly maid,  
The star that guides our mortal course,  
Which shows where life's true kernel's laid,  
Its wheat's fine flower, and its undying force.

Who with one breath attunes the spheres,  
And also my poor human heart,  
With one impulse propels the years  
Around, and gives my throbbing pulse its start.
I will not doubt forever more,
Nor falter from an iron faith,
For if the system be turned oer,
God takes not back the word which once he saith.

I will believe the love untold,
Which not my worth nor want hath bought
Which wood me young and woos me old,
And call the stars to witness now my thought.

My memory I'll educate
To know the one historic truth,
Remembering to the latest date
The only true, and sole immortal youth.

Be but thy inspiration given,
No matter through what dangers sought,
I'll fathom hell or climb to heaven,
And yet esteem that cheap which love has bought.

Fame cannot tempt the bard
Who's famous with his God,
Nor laurel him reward,
Who hath his maker's nod.
A Mother's Love to God. God's Work.

And thus we see,
The love of those who love God's work.

It will light the day,
Though we are lost in the dark.
I see now God's glory.
This love is worth all sacrifice.

But if God leads well by
Stepping behind me for my fall,
Helping me to rise,
None can give thé knowledge.

Making my soul accomplish
Not to be afraid, not to fear alone.
His help comes from on high.
On my path, the hand of God.

Pray, to guard the path,
That a newer love before me.
And not to be lost amongst
That sometime I forget.

But even when come weaknesses
One clear divine entity,
And I who had been weak
Gone invisible, and a good to see.
Yet who had her care,
For she had no one before,
Though she had no years,
Though she knew her little corn.

Growth among young,
Grew in my soul,
What is this I must take,
How can it be done that I must take it.

She knows the great
She knows the sea,
Now not with me since
Her heart and soul she's mine.

...
“Cock-crowing” focuses on the sounds of early morning in Concord, sounds Thoreau mentions in his letter to Brown—the crowing of cocks, the single cock awake before the others, the lowing of cattle. The manuscript is in the Berg Collection at the New York Public Library; for a digital image, see https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/fbd60000-5331-0132-216e-58d385a7b928.

Cock-crowing.

**Upon my bed at early dawn**
I hear the cocks proclaim the day,
Though the moon shines serenely on,
As if her queenly course they could not stay—

Nor pull her down with their faint din
From riding at that lofty height,
Who in her shining knows no sin,
As if unconscious of a nobler light.

Far in the east their larum rings,
As if a watchful host there thronged,
Where now its early clarion sings,
So bravely is their martial note prolonged.

One on more distant perch, more clear,
But fainter brags him still,
But ah! he promises, I fear,
More than his master's household will fulfill.

The stars withhold their shining not
Or singly or in scattered crowds,
But seem like Parthian arrows shot
By yielding night 'mid the advancing clouds.

**Some wakeful steer exalts his trump**
Afar o'er the sonorous ground,
And with a sounding eastern pomp
It grandly marcheth the horizon round.

Invades each recess of the wood,
Awakes each slumbering bird,
Till every fowl leads forth her brood,
Which on her nest the tuneful summons heard.

Methinks that Time has reached his prime,
Eternity is in the flower,
I hear their faint confused chime
Now ushering in the sacred hour.

Over the hill top I have run
For fear to be too late,
I've left behind the laggard sun,
Travelling at such a rate,
To be in at creation,
To be up with fate.

And has time got so forward then?
From what perennial fount of joy,
Do ye inspire the hearts of men,
And teach them how the day-light to employ?

From your abundance pray impart
Who dost so freely spill,
    Some bravery unto my heart,
    Or let me taste of thy perennial rill.

There is such health and length of years
In the elixir of that note,
That God himself more young appears,
And a more youthful world through space doth float.

The tidy night with woolen feet,
I'm sure has lately passed this way,
And with her trim despatch so neat,
She has arranged the furniture of the day.

In yon thin sheet of mist spread oer
The lowland trees of leaves bereft,
Which round her head at eve she wore,
Methinks I see the housewife's duster left.

    The fragrant mist exhales the scent
    Of aromatic herbs, so you
    Would say she blest whereer she went,
    And through the fields had sprinkled perfumed dew.
Cock crowing.  
Men my bed at early dawn
From eggs proclaim the day,
Though 'twas more than three hours
As if her young cares she could not stay

No pull her down with their faint song
From riding at that lofty height,
Who on her shining know her keen,
As if uncommon for other light.

Far in the East their cannon rings,
As if a watchful heap that wologed,
Refine how its early evening sings,
So strongly a thin martial note prolongs.

One a more distant heap, more clear,
But fainter brings him still,
But oh! be warm, I fear,
More than his master's household will suffice.

And fruitful these tales to bring
After on the sorrowous ground,
And write a
The stars withhold their shining art
Of night or a celestial course,
But seen like Parthian arrows shot
By yielding right and the advancing clouds.

Some unhappy man with his heart
Ajar on the sorrowous ground,
And with a sounding eastern song,
It grandly marches, the horizon sounds.

Winds on each wave of the wood,
Wakes each clear being loud,
Will her foot lead just in good,

Whil a her met the constant common head.

Meditates that time has reached her mind,
I cannot be the flower,
I hear the faint confused theme

Over hearing in the sound hour.

Over the hills, bold I have seen
For fear the too late,
I left behind the laggard sun,
Travelling on the grey route,
To be in at creation,
To be up with fate.

And how time got so forward then?
From what human heart goes,
Do ye inspire the heart's yearn,
And lead them how the daylight venner?

From your abundance pray impart
Some looking into my heart,
Who don't so fully think,
Or let me taste of thy precious wine.

Then is such health and length of years
If ye double of thy heart,
That God himself some young appear,
And so more youthful come through these doth flow.

And in the same hang of thy muse.
The lady slept with closed feet,
In vain has latey pressed this way,
And with her eyes departing so near.
We lain arranged the furniture of the day.

In you this seat of mist spread us
The Nouveau true pleasure bust.
Which stood in the head of an the war,
Electrify face the housewife, doctor kept.

The fragment mist bundle the seat
Of aromatic herbs so you
Would say the least when the seat,
Put through the field hear thiner, profound day.
“The Soul’s Season” describes the transition from summer into autumn. The manuscript is in Firestone Library, Princeton University.

The Soul’s Season

Thank God who seasons thus the year,
And sometimes kindly slants his rays,
For in his winter he's most near,
And plainest seen upon the shortest days.

Who gently tempers now his heats,
And then his harsher cold, lest we
Should surfeit on the Summer's sweets,
Or pine upon the Winter's crudity.

Grown tired of this rank summer's wealth,
Its raw and superficial show,
I fain would hie away by stealth
Where no roads meet, but still 't doth trivial grow.

Methinks by dalliance it hath caught
The shallow habits of the town,
Itself infected most, which ought
With sterner face upon our tameness frown.

A sober mind will walk alone
Apart from nature if need be,
And only its own seasons own,
For nature having its humanity.

Sometimes a late Autummal thought
Has crossed my mind in green July,
And to its early freshness brought
Late ripened fruits and an autumnal sky.

A dry but golden thought which gleamed
Across the greenness of my mind,
And prematurely wise it seemed,
Too ripe 'mid summer's youthful bowers to find.

So have I seen one yellow leaf
Amid the glossy leaves of June,
Which pensive hung, though not with grief,
Like some fair flower, it had changed so soon.
I scent my med'cine from afar,
Where the rude simpler of the year,
October leads the rustling war,
And strews his honors on the summer's bier.
The New Year.

Thank God the seasons have the year,
And sometimes kindly lends his way.
For in his winter he is most near,
And Plantar see upon the winter day.

When gently the sun in his heat,
And the house colder, cast us
Would repose on the summer meet,
Be you upon the winter cold.

From end, of this and the summer meet.
My sun and superficial snow,
Then would be away by stealth.
When in wood met, but still the time grew.

Motherly declarative is called caught
The shallow habits of the town.
We who affected most, which sang
With tones far from our times from.

A time mind both cats alone
Apart from nature, meet lee,
And why do we season on
For nature having it humbug.

Sometimes a late autumnal thought
Has come on my mind in green July,
And the early morning brought
Late opened fruits, and in autumnal night.
A dull but golden tongue which gleamed
A beam to greenness in my mouth
And from some list of names,
The ripe mid memory youthful loves to find.

As how I see a yellow gape
Abroad the clean lean of June,
Which passed th' young thing past all saints
Like some pure flower, it had change no more.

I went on medicine from age,
When the end of life of the year,
October leads the winter near,
And brings his hours a few damocles' lie.
And “The Fall of the Leaf,” in two versions, presents the sights and sounds of autumn, and their effect on the poet. Here is the twenty-one-stanza version; the manuscript is in the Berg Collection at the New York Public Library; for a digital image, see https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/a85bfc10-561c-0132-7942-58d385a7b928.

The Fall of the Leaf.

The evening of the year draws on,
The fields a later aspect wear,
Since summers garishness is gone
Some grains of night tincture the noontide air.

Behold the shadows of the trees
Now circle wider 'bout their stem,
Like sentries which by slow degrees
Perform their rounds, softly protecting them.

And as the year doth decline,
The sun affords a scantier light;
Behind each needle of the pine
There lurks a small auxiliar to the night.

After each shrub and straggling fence
That marks the meadows pensive green,
And shows the meadows opulence,
Evening's insidious foot at noon is seen.

Wave upon wave a mellower air
At length floods all the region,
As if there were some tincture there
Of ripeness, caught from the long summer's sun.

I hear the cricket's slumbrous lay
Around—beneath me—and on high,
It rocks the night, it lulls the day,
And everywhere is nature's lullaby.

But most he chirps beneath the sod,
Where he hath made his winters bed,
His creak grown fainter but more broad,
A film of autumn o'er the summer spread.

Small birds in fleets migrating by
Now beat across some meadow's bay,
And as they tack and veer on high,
With faint and hurried click beguile the way.

**The moon is ripe fruit in the sky,**
*Which over hangs her harvest now,*
**The sun doth break his stem well nigh,**
*From summer's height he has declined so low.*

The greedy earth doth pluck his fruit
And cast it in night's lap,
The stars more brightly glisten, mute
Though their tears be, to see their Lord's mishap.

The harvest rattles in the wind,
Red apples overhang the way;
The cereal flavor of my mind,
Natheless, tells me I am as ripe as they.

The sharp wind searcheth every vein,
And dries up humors crude,
I spring into my place again
    With unwarped strength, like staunch and seasoned wood.

Far in the woods these golden days,
Some leaf obeys its Maker's call,
And through their hollow aisles it plays
With delicate touch the prelude of the fall.

Gently withdrawing from its stem,
It lightly lays itself along
Where the same hand hath pillowed them,
Resigned to sleep upon the old year's throng.

The loneliest birch is brown and sear,
The farthest pool is strewn with leaves,
Which float upon their watery bier,
Where is no eye that sees, no heart that grieves.

I marked when first the wind grew rude
Each leaf curled like a living thing,
As if with the rich air it would
Secure some faint memorial of the spring.

Then for its sake it turned a boat,
And dared new elements to brave,
A painted palace which did float
A summer's hoarded wealth to save
The jay screams through the chestnut wood,
The crisped and yellow leaves around,
Are hue and texture of my mood,
And these rough burs my heirlooms on the ground.

The threadbare trees, so poor and thin,
They are no wealthier than I,
But with as brave a core within
They rear their boughs to the October sky.

Poor knights they are which bravely wait
The charge of winter's cavalry,
Keeping a simple Roman state,
Discumbered of their Persian luxury.

No greatness now need walk alone,
Lest nature should its ardor damp,
Which saw where their new armor shone
Or heard the rustling of the forest camp.
The Echo of the Leaf.

The evening of the year draws on,
The fields a late aspect wear,
Since summers quitted me a'gane
Some shades of bright picture the counteance.

Behold the shadows of the trees,
Now elbow aside, bend them, then,
Like centres, almost 1 slow degrees
Pérmant, round, softly protecting them.

And as the year doth decline,
The sun affords a scatter'd light;
Behind each bower of the pine
There lurks a marl anxious to the night.

After each shrub and struggling rise
That marks the meadows sober green,
And shows the meadows gentle,
Evening's incision first at noon is seen.

Gone upon, now a melody an,
At length floods all the region,
As if from some summer scene
By singer, caught from the long summer sun.

I hear the cricket them from day
Around - beneath me - and a high,
It rocks, the heavier, it calls the day,
And song anew is nature's melody.
But mott he charm beneath the sky,  
When he bath made his cotton bed,  
He read your fairest and most worldly  
A film of Autumn  
The summer shades

Slate blue, a fleck engraying by  
Now leaf across some meadow's lay,  
And as the boughs are seen in high  
With faint and burned cheeks begirt the way.

The moon is night fruit in the sky,  
Which one hangs her bent corn,  
The moon doth bear his stern red light,  
From summer's longer he has declined so far.

The scowz estook doth plant his fruit  
And cast in a mightily:  
The stars more brightly shall, more  
Though their tears be, to see her Lord's misser.

The hamlet sattle in the wind,  
Red apples enhand the sky;  
The crescent flour of my mind,  
Now laden, take me I am an old wor.

The strong and scorched every ken,  
And does up brown as once,  
Springing into my place again  
With unwrapped strength, like flame on Seasons wood.
The sun, the earth, their golden days,
Some keep Essays on Walt Whitman
And through their hollow sides it plays
With delicate touch the spondees of its face
Gently withdrawing from its stem,
A lightly capitated along
While the same hand both followed them,
Resigned asleep upon the old year's thing.
The closet bird is brown and eerie
The farther part is thrown with leave,
Which float upon their eating hale.
Then in his eye that sees no heart that grieves
I marked the fruit the hand upon sole
Each leaf curled like a living thing,
As if with the west air it would
Become some faint memorial of the spring.
To eat it's sake it turned a boat,
And stood near element-stone,
A painted paddle which did float
A man's bended reed it came
The year screams through the chestnut wood,
The caged and yellow leave around,
And these rough lines my hear leaves in the ground.
The thread have been so from and then,
To the cloth have been frown and then,
But with a love a core within.
They saw Newulfs in October.

Poor knights—They the wind brought
Their charge of British cavalry,
Keeping a simple Roman state,
So came back of their Persian Empire.

No greatness we need with alone,
Our nation should it order climb,
Which can when their new arm of stone,
To lead the million of the first camp.

Mark B. W. who gave Mrs. Winger...
This version, with forty-one stanzas, contains all but two of the stanzas that are in the shorter version, as well as five stanzas from “Cock-crowing,” eight of the nine stanzas that make up “The Soul’s Season,” one stanza from “Inspiration,” and eight stanzas unique to it. Often one or two stanzas are kept together, but there’s a lot of rearrangement. The manuscript is in the Berg Collection at the New York Public Library; for a digital image, see https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/20293560-5622-0132-573f-58d385a7b928.

The Fall of the Leaf.
Grown tired of this rank summer’s wealth,
   Its raw and superficial show,
I fain would hie away by stealth
   Where no roads meet, but still 't doth trivial grow.

   A sober mind will walk alone,
       Apart from nature if need be,
    And only its own seasons own,
       For nature having its humanity.

Sometimes a late autumnal thought
   Has crossed my mind in green July,
And to its early freshness brought
   Late ripend fruits and an autumnal sky.

A dry but golden thought which gleamed
   Athwart the greenness of my mind,
And prematurely wise it seemed,
   Too ripe mid summer's youthful bowers to find.

   So have I seen one yellow leaf
       Amid the glossy leaves of June,
Which pensive hung, though not with grief,
       Like some fair flower, it had changed so soon.

I scent my med'cine from afar,
   Where the rude simpler of the year
October leads the rustling war,
   And strews his honors on the summer's bier.

   The evening of the year draws on,
       The fields a later aspect wear,
Since summer's garishness is gone
       Some grains of night tincture the noontide air.
Behold the shadows of the trees
   Now circle wider 'bout their stem,
Like sentries which by slow degrees
   Perform their rounds, gently protecting them.

   And as the season doth decline
The sun affords a scantier light,
   Behind each needle of the pine
There lurks a small auxiliar of the night.

After each shrub and straggling fence
   That marks the meadow's pensive green,
And shows the meadow's opulence,
   Evening's insidious foot at noon is seen.

Wave upon wave a mellower air
   Flows over all the region,
As if there were some tincture there
   Of ripeness caught from the long summer's sun.

I hear the cricket's slumbrous lay
   Around, beneath me, and on high,
It rocks the night, it lulls the day,
   And everywhere 'tis nature's lullaby.

But most he chirps beneath the sod,
   Where he hath made his winter's bed,
His creak grown fainter, but more broad,
   A film of autumn o'er the summer spread.

Upon my bed at early dawn
   I hear the cocks proclaim the day,
Though the moon shines serenely on
   As if her queenly course they could not stay;

Nor pull her down with their faint din
   From riding at that lofty height,
Who in her shining knows no sin,
   But is unconscious of a nobler light.

The stars withhold their shining not
   Or singly or in scattered crowds,
But seem like Parthian arrows shot
   By yielding night 'mid the advancing clouds.
And has time got so forward then?
   From what perennial fount of joy
Do ye inspire the hearts of men,
   And teach them how the daylight to employ?

From your abundance pray impart,
   Who dost so freely spill,
Some bravery unto my heart,
   Or let me taste of thy perennial rill.

Small birds in fleets migrating by
   Now beat across some meadow's bay,
And as they tack and veer on high,
   With faint and hurried click beguile the way.

The moon is ripe fruit in the sky
   Which overhangs her harvest now,
The sun doth break his stem well nigh
   From summer's height he has declined so low.

The greedy earth doth pluck his fruit,
   And cast it in night's lap,
The stars more brightly glisten, mute
   Though their tears be, to see their lords mishap.

The harvest rattles in the wind,
   Ripe apples overhang the hay,
The cereal flavor of my mind
   Natheless, tells me I am as ripe as they.

I hearing get who had but ears,
   And sight who had but eyes before,
I moments live who lived but years,
   And truth discern who knew but learning's lore.

Far in the woods these golden days
   Some leaf obeys its maker's call,
And through their hollow aisles it plays
   With delicate touch the prelude of the fall.

Gently withdrawing from its stem
   It lightly lays itself along,
Where the same hand hath-pillowed them
   Resigned to sleep upon the old year's throng.
The loneliest birch is brown and sere,
   The farthest pool is strewn with leaves,
Which float upon their watery bier,
   Where is no eye that sees, no heart that grieves.

I marked when first the wind grew rude
   Each leaf curled like a living thing,
As if with the ripe air it would
   Secure some faint memorial of the spring.

Then for its sake it turned a boat
   And dared new elements to brave,
A painted palace which did float
   A summer's hoarded wealth to save.

Oh could I catch these sounds remote,
   Could I preserve to human ear,
The strains which on the breezes float,
   And sing the requiem of the dying year.

I stood beside an oaken copse
   When the first gale of autumn sighed,
It gently waved the birch tree tops
   Then rustled the oak leaves and died

But not the strains which it awoke,
   For in my inmost sense I hear
The melody of which it spoke
   Still faintly rising on my inward ear.

A ripple on the river fell,
   A shadow o'er the landscape passed,
And still the whispering ferns could tell
   Whither the stranger travelled so fast.

How stand the cottages of men
   In these so fair October days,
Along the wood along the fen
   I see them looming through the mellow haze.

Immersed in Nature there they lie
   Against some cliff or chestnuts shade
Scarce obvious to the travellers eye
   Who thoughtful traverses the forest glade.
The harvest lies about the door
   The chestnut drops its burs around
As if they were the stock that bore
   The yellow crops that strew the ground.

The lily loves the river's tide
   The meadow's are the daisy's haunt
The aspens on the mountain side
   Here child of nature grows the human plant.

The jay screams through the chestnut wood
   The crisped and yellow leaves around
Are hue and texture of my mood,
   And these rough burs my heirlooms on the ground.

The thread bare trees so poor and thin
   They are no wealthier than I,
But with as brave a core within
   They rear their boughs to the October sky.

Poor knights they are which bravely wait
   The charge of winter's cavalry,
Keeping a simple Roman state
   Discumbered of their Persian luxury.

Thank God who seasons thus the year
   And sometimes kindly slants his rays,
For in his winter he's most near
   And plainest seen upon the shortest days.

Who gently tempers now his heats
   And then his harsher cold, lest we
Should surfeit on the summer's sweets,
   Or pine upon the winter's crudity.
The Foliage of the Leaf

Green tired of the wanton summer's heat,
Its sun and superficial show,
I saw would die any by stealth,
When no roads meet, but still I do find you.

A sober mind will walk alone,
Apart from nature if need be,
And yet its own reasons own.
For nature having to humanly.

Sometimes a late autumnal thought
Was crowned my mind in green July,
And to it early cornmen brought
Late ripened fruits and an autumnal sky.

A dry but golden thought which gleamed
Altho' the greenness of my mind,
And prematurely and it seemed,
To the mid summer's youthful hour and end.

So have I seen the golden leaf
And the glory leaves of June,
Which passions hung, though not all grief,
Like some few flame, I had changes so soon.

I recall my mind came from afar
When the rude onsets of the year,
October leads, the mellow rain,
And I shroud the honors on the Summer's breast.
The evening of the year draws on,
The fields alight aspect wear,
The summer garishness is gone:
Some grains of night hunk in the midnight air.

Behold the shades of the trees,
Now smile under bent Their stem,
Like sentinel stand firm degrees
Before Their sounding gently rustling them.

And as the season slowly declines,
The sun affords a scattered light,
Behind each needle of the tree
There lingers a small ember of the sight.

After each think and struggling face
That marks the meadows pensive green,
And shad the meadows patience,
Evenings minnions foot at noon is seen.

May often have a semblance and
Plains on all the region.
As if there were some loneliness
Of absence (cavet) form the long summest.

I hear the cricket, strum the keys
Around, bear witness, me, and on high;
It rocks the night, it lasts the day,
And everywhere its lullaby.

But must he suffers beneath the rod;
When he hath made his winter bed.
He create green Painter, but now broad,
A film of autumn over the summer head.
Small ships of fleecy-footing
Upon my bed at early dawn,

Small head. West wind some meadows lay,
And all the tack an' ruch on high,

Small head. West wind some meadows lay,
And all the tack an' ruch on high,

Small head. West wind some meadows lay,
And all the tack an' ruch on high,

Small head. West wind some meadows lay,
And all the tack an' ruch on high,

Small head. West wind some meadows lay,
And all the tack an' ruch on high,
The moon in ripe fruit in the sky,
Which once hung in earnest view.
Now doth bear his stern silent
From summer's height to his decline where.

The quiet earth doth flesh her fruit,
And cast up its bright cap,
The slain more brightly after mute
Though their teeth be bare their Lord adores.

The hens and saddles on the hound,
Pipe apples on the day.
The nearest flowing of my mind
Prophet let me For a rope of this.

I weep yet who had but care,
And sigh who had but song before,
I moment live who lived but year
And death, unseen, who knew but living him.

The wood's fine golden day
Some leaf drops it making call
And through their hollow warbles it plays
Put, I dedicate touch the prelude of the fall.

Gently drawing from it then
Go light as such study along
When the same hand had followed them
Pronounced to sleep upon the old seat among.

The coldest leaf is brown and bare,
The fathom pool is frozen with leaves
Much float upon their better bed
When is no eye that gazing so dead that pricks.
I marked the first the wind gave over each leaf seemed like a living thing. As it with the air it would become some faint remembrance in the air. The more it broke it turned a boat. As I stood near to the shore, a palace did float a summer's sound. I could not catch thou sound to, could I preserve to human ear. The storms which on the breeze float and sing the requiem of the dying year. I stood besides an oak above the first gate of autumn night. When gently wave the branch the life then molten in the oak the leaves at this. The storms which it broke for one in my heart there. The melody of what it spoke till fall again on no mixed ear. A ripple on the main fell a shadow on the landscape passed. When the whispering fans could tell. What was the stronger travelled so fast. Don't start the college of men. Then no fair October day along the road along the sea. Over time coming through the woods here.
immersed in Nature then the lie
against some cliffs a chasm into
its arms to the mouthless sea
much thought of becomes the great lake.

The brownest spread the tree
down the cloudburst drops to burst around
as if they were the clouds that come
the yellow crops cheaply over the ground.

The city covers the men's tide
The meadows are the damp lands.
The appetites on the mountain side
Here childish mature grows the human plant.

Here child mature grows the human plant.
The spry screams through the cloudburst wind.
The earth and yellow leaves around
the edges of my mood,
for here and in the woods of my youth
as brush and bush in the woods of my youth
where speed comes.

All the trees love to hear and hear
The trees no wealth their their love
they are no wealth their love

Or best into a core within
their thin through to the October sky.

The brave love in the charge of winter cavalry,
keeping a simple Roman state.

Or even best if they Russian cavalry.

NYPL
Thanks God who reason, the the year
And sometime kindly don't bring.
Our in this winter he's most near.
And pleasant men upon the hotter day.

God kindly.

Now your climate how his breath
And then his harder cold test me,
Would suspect in the summer's meet.
More upon the winter's credit.
Now that you’ve seen the titled poems that Thoreau drew out of the twenty-page penciled draft, and heard parts of them, I want to look again at that draft and offer a hypothesis about it. I think Thoreau arranged the pages of the draft after he made his fair copies, and that he did so to bring his poem together in a new order. I think he was experimenting with integrating the individual poems into a larger, continuous work.

On the verso of the draft page numbered “1” Thoreau listed aspects of autumn in Concord that correlate with the contents of the first eight pages of the draft (the manuscript is in the Huntington Library, San Marino, CA):

- Night shades
- Migration of birds
- Fall of the leaf
- Harvest & its effects
- Cricket
- Appearance of the wood
- Mellow air.
Let’s take a look at these transcripts of the first eight pages (the manuscripts are in the Huntington Library, San Marino, CA). Stanzas on the first page describe evening (“Night shades”).
The evening of the year draws on Monday
 Added the fields a later aspect wear
 since summers garishness is gone
 A twilight hue creeps o'er the landscape's face
 Some grains of night tincture the noontide air.

 Behold
 In deep wood the shadows of the trees
 now circle wider
 Distinct a chaste circuit round their stem
 Like silent sentries which by slow degrees
 Perform their rounds—in peace protecting them.

 From many a crevice banishing the light
 Until behind each needle of the pine
 Their lurks a small auxiliar to the night

 Behind each bush and straggling fence
 Amid the meadows pensive green
 And shows the meadows opulence
 Evenings insidious foot at noon is seen
The evening of the year draws on. In the twilight the ice creeps over the landstepan, for some grains of night continue the moonlight air. Behind the shade of the tree, geodetic needles and sound meet steam like cloud, the columnar column by column, and from the sun a peace protecting them.

Firm was a scene. Glowing the light, tented behind each needle, it was firm. Their ladders, a small tournament to the end.

Almost each back and struggling hence. 10/6/15.
The page numbered “2” includes a couple of stanzas about migrating birds (“Migration of birds”).
September rides upon the gale
And booms along the creaking roof
Then stoops afar into the vale
Spurning the brake and sumack with his hoof

The small birds follow in his wake
Who threads the forest at a rustling pace
Ruffling the surface of the lake
He streus the affrighted leaves upon its face.

Small birds in fleets migrate on high
Or beat across some meadow's bay.

Small birds in fleets migrating by
Beat now across some meadow's bay
And as they tack and veer on high
With faint and hurried click beguile the way.

The loneliest birch is brown and sere

The farthest pool is strewed with leaves
Which
Shall float upon their watery bier

Where is no eye that sees, no heart that grieves

Venice preserved is in each bark
That still sustains the ripples force
But soon to lie deluged and dark
Like sunken isles beneath the sailor's course

HM13201
September ride upon the lake
And becomes along the evening
Then a step back into the vale
Morning the brook the worm my hooch
The small lands fall on a bee lake
The threat the gulf at a meeting place
Ruffling the refuges of the lake
She shuns the tippling leaves up to face

Small lands + sheets among in high
On heat was unaccommoding the
Small lands + reflects migrating by
Beat now across some meadow’s bay
And to the lake and sea a high
With farms and flooded cliffs begone the way

The cloudiest beach is brown and serene
The fattest foot is stepped into lean
The first upon their under vein
Where is no exit that ever been that more
Lettur preserved 4 to each在这
That stand contains the nipple there
But soon a lie changed and dark
The numbers now confuse the old unknown
The verso of “2” and both sides of “3” deal with falling leaves (“Fall of the leaf”).
Meanwhile old earth jogged steadily on
In her mantle of purest white,
And anon another spring was born
When winter had vanished quite.

first grew rude
I marked when the wind blew
4 Each leaf curled like a living thing
As with the teeming air it would
Secure some faint memorial of the spring

Then for its sake it turned a boat
And dared strange elements to brave
Like painted palaces that float
A patient summer's hoarded wealth to save.

Grown tired
I tire of this rank summer's wealth
Its raw and superficial show
I fain would
And when I hie away by stealth
but still 't
Where no ways meet IT STILL doth trivial grow

Methinks by dalliance it hath caught
The shallow habits of the town.
It self infected most which ought
With a sterner face upon our tameness frown

A sober mind will walk alone
apart
Aside from nature if need be
And only its own seasons own
For nature pulling its humanity.
Thank God who seasons thus the year
kindly
And sometimes slants his rays
for
Who in his winter is most near
easiest during
And plainest seen upon the shortest days

Who gently tempers now his heats
An then his harsher cold, lest we
Should surfeit on the Summer's sweets
Or pine upon the winter's crudity.

Sometimes a late Autumnal thought
crossed my mind; rustled mid the leaves of June
Has come to me in green July
And to its early freshness brought
late ripened fruits and an autumn sky
Ripe fruits of harvest and an autumn sky.

So in mid summer I have seen
birches-
One pensive leaf upon the birch———vide——
Grown sere when all the rest are green
Like some fair flour to tempt the traveller's reach.

A dry but golden thought which gleamed
A Hawthorn the greenness of the mind
And prematurely wise it seemed Oct. hues
Too ripe amid the bowers of June to find.
That Love of which I purposed to sing,
(It sings itself I ween)
Is quite a different thing,
For neither needs to cling
When both can stand.

Two sturdy oaks I mean, that side by side
Withstand the wintry storm,
And spite of wind and tide,
Grow up the meadow's pride,
For both are strong.

Above they barely touch, but undermined
Down to their deepest source,
Admiring we shall find
Their roots are intertwined
Inseparably.

April 8th 1838.

So in mid summer I have seen
Among the glossy leaves of June
One yellow leaf when all were green

So have I seen one yellow leaf
Amid the glossy leaves of June
Which pensive hung, but not with grief
Like some rare flower, it had changed so soon
Meanwhile old earth yegged headless
At the marble of freight's white,
And ains on the stiffly box
When lucre and ravished gate.

4
From the brow the toadful blue
Each leaf curled like a living thing
As with the leaning air it stands
Scarcely some faint memorial of the wing

Then for a second turned about
5
And turned within element
even
The bright red palace that floor
Of pure embers hoarded health in

Green line
Then of the rank summer health
She rose and superficial show
Who I also by stealth and light
When he and one of the dark beard your

Methinks it behoves it best a cutter
The slender habits of the town
Itself infected with what might
With a stone saw upon our carriages from
A fool must not walk alone
And bring us home if need be
And only is our means from
For nation further in humanity
Thank God also, second clean year
And sometimes grants his rains
Who in his lucre most near
And pleasant rest in the shortest days.

Who gently ponders his head
Another shepherds cold best he
Should suffer a on the common walk
o' time before his winter ends.

Sometimes quite an internal thought
Comes by and passed me-January
Now come June to green July
And to its early born clover noon
Late espoused fruit set the common
Ripe fruits of harvest at an autumn sky.

Do a mild summer have we
Our common lænce of days
Green sun like wide The sun of green
Like some fair flame to tempt the common

A dry but golden thought a back gleamed
Albear the greeners of the corn
And persimmon sure it seems
Two sure amidst the bush of June & June.
Their love which I respond to sing
(If wings itself been
It's quite a different thing,
For neither needs to live
When both can stand.

Two sturdy oaks I mean, that side by side
Withstand the winter storm,
And spite of wind and tide,
Grew up the meadow's pride,
For both are strong.

Above the bank touch, but undermined
Down to their deepest root,
Adorning as shall find
Their roots are entwined
Inseparably.

April 8th 38.

To a world serene
Glory awes me
One yellow leaf at end of green
It have drawn me a yellow leaf
Amid the glory leaves of June
Which I may know but not yet find
For one flower it had changed to such
The next three topics on the list are out of order in the manuscript. The cricket and the appearance of the wood are both on “4” (“Cricket,” “Appearance of the wood”).
The cricket chirps beneath the sod
Already in his winter bed
Where he has made
His creak grown fainter but more broad
And slowed his creaking without fraud
A film of Autumn over the summer spread
I can smell its medicine from afar
Where the rude simpler of the year
October leads the rustling war
And strews his trophies on the Summer's bier
And strews the summers glory far and near
And with shrill trumpet pierceth now my ear

The jay screams through the chestnut wood
The crisped and yellow leaves around
Are hue and texture of my mood
And these rough burs my heir looms on the ground.

The thread-bare trees, so poor and thin
They are no wealthier than I
But with as brave a core within
They rear their boughs to the October sky

Poor knights they are that bravely wait
The charge of winter's cavalry
Keeping a simple Roman state
Discumbered of their Persian luxury.
The cricket chorus became to import.
Already in the winter, the sun had set
And dreams, the curtains, at
A firm of audacity in the ceremony.

The grass of dormitory, the night is gone.
When the circle of the wind
October came, swaying, lean
And dreams, the curtains, on the
And the leaves, the curtain, the sun ever
Swinging the curtain, the sun ever.

The wind was heard, The chanted wind.
The circle of yellow leaves around
The breeze and feather upon round
The curtains, the curtains, of the sun.

The wind was heard, the sun in the sun.
And in the curtains, the circle of the sun.
And they run, the laugh, to the other side.

The night, the leaves are golden.
The curtains, the curtains, in the sun.
And the wind, the curtains, the curtain.
And the dream, the curtains, in the sun.

The wind was heard, the sun in the sun.
The curtains, the curtains, the circle of the sun.
And they run, the laugh, to the other side.

The night, the leaves are golden.
The curtains, the curtains, in the sun.
And the wind, the curtains, the curtain.
And the dream, the curtains, in the sun.

The wind was heard, the sun in the sun.
The curtains, the curtains, in the sun.
And they run, the laugh, to the other side.

The night, the leaves are golden.
The curtains, the curtains, in the sun.
And the wind, the curtains, the curtain.
And the dream, the curtains, in the sun.
And the harvest is on “5” (“Harvest & its effects”).
Nor greatness now need walk alone
ardor damp
armor shone
bustling of their camp

The harvest rattles in the wind
Red apples overhang the hay
The cereal flavor of my mind
How'ee'r, tells me I am as ripe as they

The moon is ripe fruit in the sky
And overhangs her harvest now
The sun doth break his stem well nigh
From summer's height he has declined so low

The greedy earth doth pluck his fruit
And cast it in Night's lap
The stars more brightly glisten--mute
Though their tears be, to see their Lord's mishap

The sharp wind searcheth every vein
And dries up humor's crude,
I spring into my place again
With unwarped strength, like staunch and seasoned wood.
Act greatness you need not be alone
under damp arms in three
breathing of new camp

The harvest settles on the mind
Red apples are hanging the day
The crescent plane of my mind

Oven I am as ripe in they

The moon is the front of the day
And no lamp has harvest now
The sun does break his stem in a night
From nearest might he has decline colour

The greedy ear doth pluck the fruit
And cast at a thrice cup

The star, more brightly glister men
Though their arms be once the Lord's match

The chimp and racchut every day
And dress up Hermes' costume

I shall sit in my place again
With uncooped strength, the hand and
scoured head
Finally, the “mellow air” is on “6” (“Mellow air”).
Far in the woods these golden days
Some leaf obeys its maker's call
And through their hollow aisles it plays
With delicate touch the prelude of the Fall

Gently withdrawing from its stem
lightly
It bravely lays itself along

Where the same hand hath pillowed them
Resigned to sleep upon the old year's throng

Wave upon wave a mellower air
Floods all the region
As if there were some tincture there
Of ripeness caught from the long summer sun.
The words "golden day
some leap above its eastern edge
and through its branches blazes and
from the heart of the maelstrom
with its call to the future of the Face
with its call to the future of the Face
when the days have no longer worn
honor to him nor those of your things
reign to their own and these of your things
more often now a melody in
through all the voices of its friend can come to him
by means of a
of power and
of day
of power and
of day
The draft pages numbered “7”, “8”, and “9” contain ten of the fifteen stanzas of the poem “Cock-crowing”; and the draft pages numbered “10” through “14” contain sixteen of the seventeen stanzas that are in the shorter version of “Inspiration” and seventeen of the twenty-one stanzas that are in the longer version of “Inspiration.”

This poem would have been even longer than the longest of the fair copies. Was it going to be “the poem to be called Concord”? I just don’t know. I have not discovered a fair copy that puts into practice the rearrangements Thoreau made in the long penciled draft, and I suspect it doesn’t exist because I think the more he worked with this poetry—its conventional structure, formal language, and sedate rhymes—the more dissatisfied he became. This is decidedly not the poetry of the Chippeway. He could see that the faint praise he offered for “the best poets” in his August 18 Journal entry—that they “exhibit only a tame and civil side of nature”—applied to his own work.

I should mention two more factors that probably contributed to the fading of Thoreau’s poetic ambition. One is that in early November, he met with the first rigorous criticism of his work, from Margaret Fuller, then the editor of the Transcendentalist periodical, the Dial. She sent "The Mountains in the Horizon" back to him to be reworked at least once, and she never published the poem. Even though Thoreau used it a year later in his essay "A Walk to Wachusett" he must have realized that the Dial was the most likely outlet for his poetry and that if he was having difficulty publishing there it would be almost impossible to reach a larger audience.

But instead of being stirred and motivated by what he was reading, as he had expected, he found himself disappointed—this may be an echo of his reaction to his own poems. Two comments in a Journal entry for November 30 distill this disappointment:

When looking over the dry and dusty volumes of the English poets, I cannot believe that those fresh and fair creations I had imagined are contained in them. English poetry from Gower down collected into one alcove—and so from the library window compared with the commonest nature seems very mean. . . .

I can hardly be serious with myself when I remember that I have come to Cam. after poetry—and while I am running over the catalogue, and collating and selecting—I think if it would not be a shorter way to a complete volume—to step at once into the field or wood, with a very low reverence to students and librarians. (Journal 1, pp. 337-338)

Thoreau’s projected anthology and his projected poem of Concord met similar fates. He never published an anthology, and of the many stanzas of verse he composed in fall 1841, he chose to publish only eighteen lines, eight years later, in his first book, A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers. These lines are all from “Inspiration”: he used twelve in “Monday” and six in “Friday.” Publication, though, as he wrote in A Week, is not the most important test of either quality or significance:

The true poem is not that which the public read. There is always a poem not printed on paper, coincident with the production of this, stereotyped in the poet’s life. It is what he has become through his work. (A Week, p. 343)

By that criterion, Thoreau’s endeavor was a success. Through his work on poetry, his own as well as that of others, he became a much better writer of prose. He continued to privilege poetry, and to revere the true poet as a heroic, enlightened figure, open to the voice of the divine, but his attempt to complete the poem of Concord was the beginning of the end of his ambition to write conventional poetry.
I’m going to suggest, however, that Thoreau found another way to capture Concord, in words in his close observation and recording of the natural phenomena of the place as they changed through the seasons. This is his phenological work. In this endeavor, which began in earnest soon after *A Week* was published, he became a student of the poetry composed by nature, which he identifies in the final chapter of *A Week*. “But here on the stream of the Concord,” he writes, “where we have all the while been bodily, Nature, who is superior to all styles and ages, is now, with pensive face, composing her poem Autumn, with which no work of man will bear to be compared” (*A Week*, p. 377).

Thoreau’s phenological work began between 1850 and 1851, when his casual interest in plants deepened into a more systematic study. He knew the names of most Concord species, but as he describes his new ambition in a Journal entry written several years after the fact, he wanted to become more knowledgeable in the habits of particular plant species, as well as of individual plants:

I soon found myself observing when plants first blossomed and leafed, and I followed it up early and late, far and near, several years in succession, running to different sides of the town and into the neighboring towns, often between twenty and thirty miles in a day. I often visited a particular plant four or five miles distant, half a dozen times within a fortnight, that I might know exactly when it opened, beside attending to a great many others in different directions and some of them equally distant, at the same time.

(December 4, 1856; *Journal* 1906, 9:158)

Thoreau’s observations encompassed other phenomena that could be studied in Concord and the surrounding area as well, including birds and “whatever else might offer” (*Journal* 1906, 9:158). From 1851 through 1861, his Journal records the arrival and departure of various species of birds; the depth of snow in various locations on different dates; changes in the colors of leaves in autumn; freezing and thawing of Walden Pond, the Concord River, and other bodies of water; the composition of birds’ nests; and other events that allowed him to understand nature in the context of seasonal change.

In April 1852—this is the third spring of his systematic study, which would become yet more systematic—Thoreau records a pivotal moment in his Journal: “For the first time I perceive this spring that the year is a circle— I see distinctly the spring arc thus far. It is drawn
with a firm line” (April 18, 1852; Journal 4, p. 468). In the paragraph that follows he poses a series of questions that will shape his phenological work during the next nine years:

Why should just these sights & sounds accompany our life? Why should I hear the chattering of blackbirds—why smell the skunk each year? I would fain explore the mysterious relation between myself & these things. I would at least know what these things unavoidably are—–make a chart of our life—know how its shores trend—that butterflies reappear & when—know why just this circle of creatures completes the world. Can I not by expectation affect the revolutions of nature—make a day to bring forth something new? (Journal 4 1992, p. 468)

Ten weeks after this April entry, on July 2, he declares 1852 his “year of observation” (Journal 5, p. 174). The activity he undertook during this year was demanding. His Journal entries for late spring and summer 1852 include almost twenty lists in which he records the growth, blooming, prevalence, and persistence of flowers; the leafing of trees; the migration and appearance of birds; the lichens he saw in winter 1851-1852; and “miscellaneous observations,” which include weather, the ripening of fruit and berries, the color of specific fields, and the behavior of birds, insects, and reptiles (Journal 5, pp. 3-281 passim).

To give you an idea of how he threw himself into this work, I’ll show you most of the lists from April through August; the manuscript volume of the Journal that contains them is in the Morgan Library & Museum, NY. Bradford Torrey omitted some of these in the 1906 edition of the Journal; the Princeton Edition includes them all. He starts with flowers observed from April 211-28, recorded in his April 28 entry, and periodically throughout the summer he updates and expands his initial list:

April 28 52: (April 11-28) Are not the flowers which appear earliest in the spring the most primitive & simplest? They have been in this town thus far, as I have observed them this spring, putting them down in the order in which I think they should be named. (Journal 5, pp. 3-4)
different. The first is one
unsurpassed for water
tasting. The 3rd, 13th & 14th are
noted for their cold.

The 9th & 10th belong to the
cold season of the earth: the
weather is very uncertain in
what you shall eat. There
is no certainty here.

The earth is just robbery
and cold.
May 14th 52: (April 28-May 13) Hastily reviewing this journal I find the flowers to have appeared in this order since the 28th of April—perhaps some note in my Journal has escaped me. (*Journal 5*, pp. 53-56)

[Plus birds and insects]
May 14th 62

Wrote delivering my journal. Found the flowers to have appeared in this order since the 28th. Most probably want note in my journal having seen me.
I do not observe so very carefully the
winter & spring in local - incl things
1. White Stag at Bridge instead - yet
2. Buzzed April 13th? Perhaps the wild yarrow
3. & some Solomon's seal - & other Veil.
4. All these plants and flowers - the horsemint & the yellowly -
some places, are in bloom now.

Birds, new 28th April.

Green Woodpecker, blue

New York (1) Monday May 24th, under the
young rain.

White (1)

White Icarus

Magpie, black

Great Woodpecker

Brown Thrasher

Gray Owl

Brown Owl

Reddish Owl

Summer Yellow bird

Pest in our

Chirping Didero 8

Mandarin Yellow Bird

Golden Oriole

Martin

Mustard


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  some places, are in bloom now.
June 24: (May 14-June 24) On a hasty review of my journal since the 13th of May I find that I have observed the flowers in the following order— I did not attend particularly to the trees, especially the evergreens—nor to the grasses &c &c. and have knowingly omitted several besides. (Journal 5, pp. 130-141; omitted from Journal 1906)

[Plus birds and miscellaneous observations]
June 24th.

In a bit more than a month since the 13th of May I have not seen the visitors in my garden. The garden is now full of flowers, the roses especially. The grass is now full of flowers also, and the vines are covered with blossoms.

Mr. Brown.

A few days ago, I visited the garden and noticed that the roses were in full bloom. The garden is now full of flowers, and the roses are especially in bloom. The grass is now full of flowers also, and the vines are covered with blossoms.
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<tr>
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<th>Description</th>
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</table>
May 14th. Spoke engaged with black friend, with many others. Many persons in the house. Many, short, 3 or 4 days. Shocks. (Shocks had some effect.) (May 14th, 1859.)

10th. Full moon (May 14th.)

15th. Full moon (June 14th.)

16th. Full moon. (June 14th.)

17th. Full moon.

18th. Full moon.

19th. Full moon.

20th. Full moon.

21st. Full moon.

22nd. Full moon.

23rd. Full moon.

24th. Full moon.

25th. Full moon.

26th. Full moon.

27th. Full moon.

28th. Full moon.

29th. Full moon.

30th. Full moon.
And father was down at work.

The sun shone in a cloudless sky.

Fires blazed, smoke rising to the roof.

The stove hummed, heat wafting throughout.

Young folks came from school, some milling about, others conversing.

The teachers chatted in the corner, their voices blending with the hum of the room.

Mama was reading, her eyes on the page.

Daddy was in the garden, tending to the plants.

The children were playing, shouting and laughing.

Our family was a hive of activity, each doing their own thing.

We were a happy family, always enjoying each other's company.

But on this day, something was different.

The sun was brighter, the air was fresher.

We all felt a sense of excitement, a sense of adventure.

The world was full of possibilities, waiting to be explored.

As we gathered around the dinner table, we shared stories of our day.

Daddy told of his latest invention, a device that would revolutionize our lives.

Mama spoke of her garden, her pride and joy.

The children shared their successes, their triumphs.

We were a family, united by love and laughter.

As we ate our meal, we were grateful for our blessings.

For we knew that life was precious, and we lived it to the fullest.

Our family was a testament to the power of love, the strength of unity.

And so, we raised our glasses, to the future, to the unknown.

For we knew that with each other, there was nothing we couldn't achieve.
July 7: To the 93 flowers observed in June before the 24th should be added 25 observed before the end of the month—and the following at least either overlooked before or observed not till July though they blossomed in June (Journal 5, pp. 196-197; omitted from Journal 1906)
July 25: Of flowers observed before June 11th the following I know or think to be still in blossom viz— (*Journal 5*, pp. 248-250)

[Plus those gone out of blossom since June 10 and those observed June 10-24 that are still common]
July 26: (June 23-July 25) Flowers observed between June 23d & July 27th [Thoreau miswrites—it’s July 25]
x Those observed in very good season
xx " " rather early
S Those which have been in blossom for a day or two
X " " some days
o " " some time
V not quite open (Journal 5, pp. 252-259; omitted from Journal 1906)
[Plus miscellaneous observations]
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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Latin Name</th>
<th>Common Name</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td><em>Ligustrum vulgare</em></td>
<td>Common Privet</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td><em>Prunus domestica</em></td>
<td>Common Plum</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td><em>Fagus sylvatica</em></td>
<td>Common Beech</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td><em>Quercus robur</em></td>
<td>Common Oak</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td><em>Ulmus glabra</em></td>
<td>Common Elm</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td><em>Populus nigra</em></td>
<td>Common Poplar</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><em>Salix alba</em></td>
<td>Common Willow</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td><em>Populus tremula</em></td>
<td>Common Alder</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td><em>Artemisia absinthium</em></td>
<td>Common Wormwood</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><em>Ligustrum lucidum</em></td>
<td>Glossy Privet</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td><em>Ligustrum ovalifolium</em></td>
<td>Oval-Leaf Privet</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td><em>Ligustrum vulgare</em></td>
<td>Common Privet (subsp. excelsum)</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td><em>Rosa canina</em></td>
<td>Dog Rose</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td><em>Ribes nigrum</em></td>
<td>Black Currant</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td><em>Sambucus nigra</em></td>
<td>Common Elder</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td><em>Viburnum opulus</em></td>
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<td>26</td>
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</table>
...not sure if the information is consistent. Here are the key points:

- Scientist's notes
- Observations
- Plant descriptions
- Weather conditions

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- Scientist's notes
- Observations
- Plant descriptions
- Weather conditions
August 5: Of the list of flowers "observed before June 11th" which I thought to be still in blossom July 25th—the following are now probably out of bloom viz. (Journal 5, pp. 276-281; omitted from Journal 1906)

[Plus flowers observed between June 23d & July 27 (list given July 26th) that are probably out of bloom, those very common, those abundant and conspicuous, those still common since July 25, and those still in bloom since June 10]
The best of times are those before June 20, 1867. "What thoughts in that day a beam of July 25?" he thought. He was probably a little bit over it.

...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maranta</td>
<td><em>Maranta arundinacea</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Euphorbia</td>
<td><em>Euphorbia esula</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Euphorbia</td>
<td><em>Euphorbia californica</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Euphorbia</td>
<td><em>Euphorbia lとりgata</em></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- *Maranta arundinacea* (marsh plant)
- *Euphorbia esula* (prickly plant)
- *Euphorbia californica* (California spurge)
- *Euphorbia lとりgata* (marsh spurge)
Thoreau is at the beginning of a very long project, and he does not yet see where it will lead. His sense of being overwhelmed by the amount of detail he is trying to assimilate is conveyed by another passage in the July 2 Journal entry: “At this season methinks we do not regard the larger features of the landscape—as in the spring—but are absorbed in details—... You are a little bewildered by the variety of objects. There must be a certain meagreness of details and nakedness for wide views” (Journal 5, p. 174). We get another glimpse of his mental state during this period of intense absorption in phenomena in a July 13, 1852, letter to Sophia:

I am not on the trail of any elephants or mastodons, but have succeeded in trapping only a few ridiculous mice, which cannot feed my imagination. I have become sadly scientific. I would rather come upon the vast valley-like “spore” only of some celestial beast which this world’s woods can no longer sustain, than spring my net over a bushel of moles. (Correspondence 2, p. 112)

He persevered, however, entering his observations in his Journal and marking many of them with double virgules for ease of locating them. (He must have realized that maintaining lists in his Journal like the ones he kept in 1852 just wasn’t tenable.)

He explored not only the events of nature but the relationship between himself and those events, as you’ll see in this example. In his Journal entry for October 26, 1858, he marks not only the flowing of sap in the largest scarlet oak in the neighborhood and the trees that are taking a long time to lose their leaves, but also the thickness of the coat he is wearing and the coolness of his fingers—and he comments on the effect of the cooler weather on the sale of gloves. The following is a transcription of the first part of Thoreau’s October 26 entry; the manuscript is in the Morgan Library & Museum, NY.
The Sugar Maples are almost bare—except a few small ones—
Minot remembers how he used to chop beech wood—He says that when frozen it is hard & brittle first like glass, & you must look out for the chips, for, if they strike you in the face they will cut like a knife.
He says that some call the stake driver “Belcher-squelcher”—& some “Wollerkertoot”
I used to call them Pump-er-go’r—Some say “slug-toot”
The largest Scarlet oak that I remember hereabouts stands by the Penthorum pool
also in another the 26th it had a pleasant acorn like taste in the Sleepy Hollow Cemetery & is now in its prime—I found the sap was flowing fast in it

The scar O generally is not in prime till now or 1
White {even later} 2
Birches—elms—chestnuts—salix alba & White-maple are a long time falling.
I wear a thicker coat—my [single] thick fall coat—at last—& begin to feel my fingers cool early & late—
One
The shop keepers have begun to hang out woolen gloves & even thick buck-skin mittens by their doors—foreseeing what then customers will want as soon as it is finger cold—& determined to get the start of his fellows
Oct. 26 '38

The sugar apples were almost ripe - we went down on the beach and gathered some. We put them in the icebox and made a pie of them. They were delicious. The leaves were turning yellow and were very pretty. We went out on the pier and got some clams. We had a good time.

The beach was very lovely. We had a picnic. We had a lot of fun.

The sky was blue and the clouds were white. The beach was beautiful. We had a good time.

The leaves were turning yellow. We had a good time.
At some time in the early 1860s, Thoreau collected his marked observations in lists ordered by year and category (general phenomena by month, growth and leafing, flowers, birds, animals). Here you see his Journal observations as he transferred them to his list of October 1858 phenomena (the manuscript is in the Morgan Library & Museum, NY):

Sap flows in Scarlet oaks  26
(generally bare 29th)
white birches–elms–chestnuts–s. alba & small willows–& white maples are a long time falling
Wear a thicker coat (not an outside one) & begin to feel finger cold early & late
Shop keepers bring out woolen gloves
Oct 38 continued

Prance

8e. Is stunningly cool.

Et 39 continued

S. L. (On the street)

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From the lists, he moved the information into charts, many arranged on large sheets of paper with years across the top and phenomena down the left side, to provide a picture of the occurrence of particular phenomena over time. At this stage Thoreau made a choice about which chart was appropriate for the events he had recorded.

The note about sap flowing in scarlet oaks doesn’t appear on any of the extant charts—there’s no use mark through it, either.

The information about the leaves of white birches, elms, chestnuts, salix alba, small willows, and white maples—marked through with an ink line—was entered on a chart titled “Fall of the Leaf” (the manuscript is in the Morgan Library & Museum, NY):

<p>| p. 1 | Chestnut          | Oct 25 gen. bare long time falling |
|      | White Birch      | 29 gen bare long time falling      |
| p. 2 | S. Alba          | Oct 26 &amp; small willows long time falling |
|      | Am. Elm          | 26 long time falling               |
| p. 5 | White Maple      | 26 [almost] bare except small       |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Black Pine</th>
<th>Red Pine</th>
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The information about his reaction to the increasing cold, marked through in pencil, is on the chart titled “General Phenomena for October.” The manuscript is in the Beinecke Library, Yale University; for a digital image, see http://brbl-dl.library.yale.edu/vufind/Record/3558329.

In the category “Wear a thicker coat than thin” under the year “58” we see “26 a thicker (not outside one)”–he must have had at least three coats of different weights (Journal—greatcoat, thin coat, outside coat); in the next category, “Finger cold early or late” we have “26 beg. to feel finger cold early & late.”

The chart allows him to see the variation year by year from 1852 through 1861. He doesn’t have a Journal entry every year for these two observations, but there are enough for him to create an average

In 1852, he changed coats “Before Oct 2d”; in 1856, he wore “a thicker coat” on October 1; in 1857, it was “Before Oct 5th”; in 1858, October 26. In the leftmost column he recorded what seems to be a mean or an average date for the changing of the coats—“3 or earlier.”

The cold began to affect his fingers on the 14th in 1856 (“after rains in night suddenly changes to finger cold”); on the “21st at least” in 1857; on the 26th in 1858 (“beg to feel finger cold early & late”); on two days in 1859, the 16th (“hands cool when rowing at eve”) and the 20th (“at eve”); and on October 1 in 1860 (“cold enough for mittens in am”). The average date for this is the 14th, I think—the pencil is very faint.¹

He has much more data for some events than for others: there are annual observations about the river at its lowest, about hard frosts, about Indian Summer, and about gossamer—that is, spider silk—and for almost every year about when it rained (first or last half), about the temperature and the wind, and, in the very last row, in pencil, “Shadbush &c &c leaf after Ind. Summer.”

¹ In Walden’s Shore, Robert Thorson includes his hypothesis about why Thoreau was interested in the mean date of occurrence for the phenomena he recorded in his charts. The explanation is necessarily somewhat complex; see pp. 318–322.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Rain and fog.</td>
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<td>Rain in Dublin.</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Rain in Dublin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Rain in Dublin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Rain in Dublin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Rain in Dublin.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:**
- The table above details the occurrence of rain and fog in Dublin over a period from 12th to 14th, with specific times and dates highlighted.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Weather</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Wind</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Nov 14</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>29 mph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Nov 15</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>29 mph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Nov 16</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>29 mph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Nov 17</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>29 mph</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The table continues with similar data entries for each day.
Thoreau put a tremendous amount of time and effort into this project, which he called his “Kalendar,” with a capital “K,” and the work involved several stages, as you’ve seen. Observing and recording the phenomena was only the beginning. He had to decide which events were significant for his study (at the outset he probably included more than he ended up using). Then he had to figure out how best to organize the information. Finally, he had to apply the organization he had chosen, first copying the information into the lists, and then creating the charts.

As I said, I believe that he started extracting the Journal information into lists sometime in 1860. I think that much of the chart-making took place in the later summer and fall of 1861 after he returned from Minnesota in July. Altogether, seventeen charts survive; they compile data in the categories of general phenomena for April, May, June, October, and November, all phenomena for December, phenomena for winter, leafing, flowering (three charts), the fall of the leaf, birds (three charts), insects, and the freezing and thawing of Walden, White’s, and Flint’s Ponds. Most include phenomena for dates from 1850 through 1861. It’s not clear whether the gaps represent uncollected data or data he didn’t live long enough to transfer—a close study of one category of lists and the charts that resulted could help answer that question.

The charts seem to be the only substantial end product for this project—but do they represent all that he wanted to do with this data? I’m sure they do not. They look like the end product because they’re as far as he got with the project—he ran out of time, literally, before he could put the information to any other use.

What would he have done with it had he lived another several decades? He didn’t tell us, and I don’t think there’s enough indirect evidence to know.

He mentions the Kalendar in his Journal one time only, in an entry for Sunday, October 16, 1859:

When I get to Willow Bay I see the new musquash houses erected—conspicuous on the now nearly leafless shores— To me this is an important & suggestive sight—as, perchance, in some countries new hay-stacks in the yards.

I remember the phenomenon annually for 30 years. A more constant phenomenon here than the new hay-stacks in the yard—for they were erected here probably before man dwelt here & may still be erected here when man has departed. For 30 years I have annually observed about this time, or earlier—, the freshly erected winter
lodges of the musquash along the river side reminding us that if we have no gypsies we have a more indigenous race of furry quadrupedal men maintaining their ground in our midst still-- This may not be an annual phenomenon to you-- It may not be in the Greenwich almanack--or ephemeris--but it has an important place in my Kalendar. So surely as the Sun appears to be in Libra or Scorpio--I see the conical winter lodges of the musquash rising above the withered pontederia & flags-- There will be some reference to it, by way of parable or otherwise in my New Testament. Surely, it is a defect in our Bible—that it is not truly ours, but a Hebrew Bible-- The most pertinent illustrations for us are to be drawn, not from Egypt or Babylonia--but from New England.

Talk about learning our letters & being literate--why the roots of letters are things. Natural objects & phenomena are the original symbols or types which express our thoughts & feelings--& yet American scholars--having little or no root in the soil--commonly strive with all their might to confine themselves to the imported symbols alone-- All the time growth & experience--the living speech, they would fair reject as "Americanism". It is the old error--which the church--the state--the school ever commit--choosing darkness rather than light--holding fast to the old--& to tradition. A more intimate knowledge--a deeper experience will surely originate a word. When I really know that our river pursues a serpentine course to the Merrimack--shall I continue to describe it by referring to some other river no older than itself which is like it--& call it a meander? It is no more meandering than the meander is Musketaquidding.

What if there were a tariff on words--on language--for the encouragement of home manufactures. Have we not the genius to coin our own? Let the schoolmaster distinguish the true from the counterfeit.

They go on publishing the "chronological cycles" & "Moveable festivals of the Church" & the like--from mere habit-- but how insignificant are these compared with the annual phenomena of your life--which fall within your experiences. The signs of the zodiac are not nearly of that significance to me--that the sight of a dead sucker in the spring is. That is the occasion for an immoveable festival in my church. Another kind of Lent then begins in my thoughts than you wot of-- I am satisfied then to live on fish alone--for a season

Men attach a false importance to Celestial phenomena as compared with terrestrial--as if it were more respectable & elating to watch your neighbors than to mind
your own affairs. The nodes of the stars are not the knots we have to untie. The phenomena of our year are one thing—those of the almanac another!

For October, for instance, instead of making the sun enter the sign of the scorpion I would much sooner make him enter a musquash-house.

The snapping turtle too—must find a place among the constellations—though it may have to supplant some doubtful character already there. If there is no place for him over head—he can serve us bravely underneath supporting the earth—

In March 1860 Journal entries he did use information drawn from his March lists to try to tell the story of a typical March, but after a robust start the narrative diminishes into a daily weather report. I suspect that he moved to the chart format after that because he had an idea that the charts would yield more or different information. His vision for the project was vast—to explore what he called the “mysterious relation” between himself and the phenomena of nature—and I doubt that vision diminished over time.

Let me close with my own thoughts about this product of Thoreau’s intense involvement with Concord.

Like all phenological charts, Thoreau’s demonstrate the persistent cycles of phenomena through the passage of time. They present the facts of nature, set down as they occurred, but organized so that they reveal cycles of repetition with variation. But thousands of events take place every days and there has to be some principle of selection—these charts contain the phenomena that Thoreau chose, the events he saw as important. The charts have a numinous, essential quality for me because they distil the Concord that Thoreau experienced from 1850 through 1861, allowing me to view that place at that time through his own filter.

I can also imagine Thoreau using the charts as a mnemonic device. He had a prodigious intellectual capacity and a memory to match—he could hold and synthesize details in his mind, and allow the synthesis to evolve there. In an April 8, 1854, Journal entry he wrote:

I find that I can criticise my composition best when I stand at a little distance from it—when I do not see it, for instance. I make a little chapter of contents which enables me to recall it page by page to my mind—and judge it more impartially when my MSS is out of the way. (Journal 8, pp. 59-60)
When he saw his 1851 note on “Gossamer” in the October chart—“Nov. 1 -51 remarkable a bright clear warm day–” [observations often lapse back into the month before or jump forward into the month after the nominal month of the chart]—I can see it calling to his mind the details that made the phenomenon worth noting, as set down in his Journal:

It is a remarkable day for fine gossamer cob-webs. Here on the causeway as I walk toward the sun I perceive that the air is full of them streaming from off the willows & spanning the road—all stretching across the road—and yet I cannot see them in any other direction—and feel not one It looks as if the birds would be incommoded. They have the effect of a shimmer in the air. This shimmer moving along them as they are waved by the wind gives the effect of a drifting storm of light. It is more like a fine snow storm which drifts athwart your path than anything else. What is the peculiar condition of the atmosphere to call forth this activity. If there were no sunshine I should never find out that they existed— I should not know that I was bursting a myriad barriers. Though you break them with your person you feel not one. Why should this day be so distinguished. (Journal 4, pp. 159-160)

For him, the charts would have been like a honeycomb, with each chamber filled with material for his writing.

Cycles form the structure of Thoreau’s two books—going out and returning, moving through a week on the water (condensed from two weeks), living through a year (condensed from two years). In his phenological work, he immerses himself in the most significant cycle of all, the cycle on nature, knowing that it started long before he began recording, or began to be, and would continue long after he was gone. The charts memorialize his personal slice of that vast cycle.

And to return to Thoreau’s aspiration to write a “poem to be called Concord,” though these charts bear no outward resemblance to poetry, I see them as Thoreau’s transcription of the poems that nature composed in Concord year after year, during the last full decade of his life. He never characterized his phenological work this way, but in a Journal entry for Sunday, December 7, 1856, he describes the poem of winter in a way that makes me think he wouldn’t object to being seen as the scribe of nature’s poetry:
That grand old poem called Winter is round again without any connivance of mine– As I sit under Lees Cliff where the snow is melted–amid sere penny royal & frostbitten catnep–I look over my shoulder upon an arctic scene. I see with surprise the pond a dumb white surface of ice speckled with snow, just as so many winters before,–where so lately were lapsing waves or smooth reflecting water. I see the holes which the pickerel fisher has made–& I see him too retreating over the hills drawing his sled behind him. The water is already skimmed over again there. I hear too the familiar belching voice of the pond. It seemed as if winter had come without any interval since mid-summer & I was prepared to see it flit away by the time I again looked over my shoulder. It was as if I had dreamed it. But I see that the farmers have had time to gather their harvests as usual, and the seasons have revolved as slowly as in the first autumn of my life. The winters come now as fast as snow-flakes– It is wonderful that old men do not lose their reckoning. It was summer–& now again it is winter. Nature loves this rhyme so well that she never tires of repeating it. So sweet & wholesome is the winter–so simple & moderate–so satisfactory & perfect that her children will never weary of it. What a poem! An epic, in blanc verse enriched with a million tinkling rhymes. It is solid beauty. It has been subjected to the vicissitudes of millions of years of the gods & not a single superfluous ornament remains– The severest & coldest of the immortal critics have shot their arrows at & pruned it till it cannot be amended.


Thank you.
Short Titles

**Correspondence 1**  The Correspondence of Henry D. Thoreau, ed. Robert N. Hudspeth, vol. 1, 1834-1848 (Princeton UP, 2013)

**Correspondence 2**  The Correspondence of Henry D. Thoreau, ed. Robert N. Hudspeth, with Elizabeth Hall Witherell and Lihong Xie, vol. 2, 1849-1856 (Princeton UP, 2018)


**RWE Letters**  Ralph Waldo Emerson, *The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Ralph L. Rusk, 6 vols. (Columbia UP, 1939)


