

1 %The Long Snowy Winter%

2 Jan 4th 1856th

3 A clear cold day-- p. m. to Walden.

4 To examine the ice

5 I think it is only such a day as this--when

6 the fields on all side are well clad with

7 snow over which the sun shines brightly,

8 that you observe the blue shadows on the

9 snow--I see a little of it today. Dec 29th

10 there were 8 or 10 acres of Walden still open--

11 that evening it began to snow & snowed all

12 night--& the remainder of the pond was frozen

13 on that the succeeding night. But on Jan.

14 first I was surprised to find all the visible

15 ice snow ice--<sup>1</sup>when I expected that only the

16 8 or 10 acres would be--but it appeared that

17 the weight of the snow had sunk the ice already

18 formed & then partly dissolved in the water

19 which rose above it & partly was frozen with

20 it. The whole ice {Jan.} 1st was about 6

21 inches thick--and I should have supposed

22 that over the greater part of the pond there

23 would be a clear ice about 2 inches thick

24 {on the} lower side--yet where I cut through

25 near the shore I distinguished 2 kinds

26 of ice, the upper 2 1/2 inches thick & evi-

27 dently snow ice, the lower about 4 inches

28 thick & clearer--yet not remarkably

29 clear--

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<sup>1</sup> ice--: altered from "ice."

1           Some fishermen--had ap. by accident  
2 left 2 of their lines there which were  
3                            leading from hole to hole  
4 frozen in. I could see there tracks^  
5 where they had run--about day before  
6 yesterday--or before the snow--& their dog  
7    & the snow was stained with tobacco juice-- They had had lines set  
8 with them.^ They had ap. taken no fish,  
9           in 2 or 3 distant coves  
10 for they had cut no well to put them  
11 in. I cut out the lines, the ice being about  
12 an inch thick around them--& pulled up  
13  
14 a fine yellow pickerel which would  
15    At first I thought there was none for he was tired of struggling  
16           but soon I felt him  
17 weigh 2 lbs or more^-- The hook had  
18 caught in the outside of his jaws--&  
19 the minow hung entire by his side..  
20 It was very cold, & he struggled but  
21           not being able to bend & quirk his tail  
22 a short time,^in a few minutes became  
23                            snowy  
24 quite stiff as he lay on the^ice-- The water  
25 in his eyes was frozen so that he looked  
26 as if he had been dead a week. About  
27 15<sup>2</sup> minutes after, thinking<sup>3</sup> of what I  
28 had heard about fishes coming to life  
29           after being frozen  
30 again^on being put into water--I thought  
31 I would try it. This one was to ap-  
32 pearance as completely dead as if he had  
33 been frozen a week-- I stook him up  
34 on his tail without bending it. I put  
35 him into the water again without re-  
36    The ice melted off & its eyes looked bright again  
37 moving the hook.^& after a minute  
38 or two was surprised by a sudden con-  
39 vulsive quirk of the fish--and a

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<sup>2</sup> "15" altered from "16"

<sup>3</sup> "thinking" altered from "I"

1 minute or 2 later by another, & I saw that  
2 it would indeed revive & drew it out  
3 again. Yet I do not believe that if  
4 it had been frozen solid through & through that  
5 it would have revived--but only when  
6 it is superficially frozen--

7 This reminded me of the pickerel which  
8 I caught here under similar circumstances  
9 for Peter Hutchinson--& thrust my mittened  
10 hands in after--<sup>4</sup>

11 When I put this pickerel in again after half  
12 an hour--it did not revive--but I held  
13 it there only 3 or 4 minutes, not long enough  
14 to melt the ice which encased it.

15 Another man had passed since the<sup>last</sup>snow  
16 fell, & pulled up at least one of the  
17 lines-- I knew it was today & not yesterday  
18 by the character of his track--for it was  
19 made since the<sup>stiff</sup>crust formed on this  
20 snow last night--a broad depression  
21 cracking the crust around--but yester-  
22 day, it was comparatively soft & moist.

23 Aunt says that Mr Hoar  
24 tells a story of Abel Davis to this pur-  
25 port-- He had once caught a pickerel  
26 in the brook near his house--& was over-  
27 heard to say-- "Why, who'd a thought  
28 to find you here in Temple Brook.  
29 With a slice of pork you'll make  
30  
31

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<sup>4</sup> after--: altered from "after."

1 Rhody (or whatever the name of his wife was)  
2 & I a good meal." He probably was  
3 not much of a fisherman, & could hardly  
4 contain himself for joy.

5           It is snapping cold this night (10 Pm)  
6 I see the frost on the windows sparkle as  
7 I go through the passage way with a  
8 light.

9                           Jan 5th '56  
10           One of the coldest mornings Therm. 9°-- say some  
11           P. m. Up river to Hub's Bridge<sup>5</sup>.

12           It has been trying to snow all day--but  
13 has not succeeded, as if it were too cold--  
14 Though it has been falling all day--  
15 there has not been enough to whiten the  
16 coat of the traveller. I come to the  
17 river for here is the best walking--  
18 The snow is not so deep over the ice.  
19 Near the middle the superincumbent  
20 snow has so far been converted into a  
21 coarse snow-ice ~~ice~~ that it will  
22 bear me, though occasionally I slump  
23 through intervening water to another ice  
24 below--also perhaps the snow has  
25 been somewhat blown out of the  
26 river valley. At any rate by walking  
27 {where} the ice was frozen last, or  
28 over the channel, I can get along  
29 quite comfortably--while it  
30 is hard travelling through this  
31 crusted snow in the fields.

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<sup>5</sup> Bridge: altered from "bridge"; "B" written over "b"

1           Generally to be sure the river is but  
 2   a white snow-field indistinguishable  
 3   from the fields--but over the chanel  
 4   there is a thread, commonly, of yellowish  
 5   porous looking snow ice-- The hard-  
 6   hack--above the snow has this form  
 7    {drawing} Should not that meadow where the 1st bridge was built  
 8       Also there are countless  
 9       be called hard-hack meadow?  
 10   small ferns with terminal  
 11   leafet only left on still rising  
 12   above the snow--for I notice the  
 13                    like the large ones in swamps  
 14   herbage of the river-side now--thus^  
 15           that coarse now straw colored grass  
 16   {drawing} What with the grasses^  
 17   & the stems of the button-  
 18   bushes--the snow about the button bushes  
 19           several rods broad  
 20   forms often broad<sup>6</sup>^low mounds nearly  
 21   burying the bushes above which the  
 22       & that broad bladed--now straw colored grass  
 23   the tops of the button bushes^still rise  
 24       many of  
 25   with^their now black looking balls--erect  
 26           The black willows have here and there still a very few little  
 27           curled & crispy leaves  
 28   or dangling-- {drawing} The river  
 29   is last open methinks  
 30       %V. the 27th inst%  
 31   just below a bend%^%--as now at the  
 32   bath place & at clam-shell Hill--&  
 33   quite a novel sight is the dark water  
 34   there-- How little locomotive now  
 35   look the boats whose painted sterns I  
 36   just detect where they are half filled  
 37   with ice & almost completely buried in  
 38   snow--so neglected by their improvident  
 39       some frozen in--the ice opening their seams--  
 40   owners.   some drawn up on the bank

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<sup>6</sup> broad: altered from "round"

1 This is not merely improvidence--it is ingratitude  
2 Now and then I hear a sort of  
3 creaking twitter maybe from a passing  
4 snow bunting. This is the weather for them.  
5 I am surprised that nut Mead. Brook  
6 has over flowed<sup>7</sup> its meadow--& converted it  
7 into that coarse yellowish snow ice.  
8 Otherwise it had been a broad snowfield  
9 There is a narrow  
10 concealing a little ice under it. thread of open water  
11 over its channel  
12 The thin snow now driving from the north  
13 & lodging on my coat--consists of those  
14 beautiful star crystals, not cottony  
15 & chubby spokes as on the 13th Dec. but  
16 thin & partly transparent crystals. They are  
17 about 1/10th of an inch in diameter perfect  
18 little wheels with 6 spokes without a tire--  
19 --or rather with 6 perfect little leafets--fern-  
20 & slender  
21 like--with a distinct straight^midrib--raying  
22 from the center-- On each side of each  
23 midrib there is a transparent thin blade  
24 with a crenate edge--thus {drawing}  
25 How full of the creative genius is the air  
26 in which these are generated! I should  
27 hardly admire more if real stars fell  
28 & lodged on my coat-- Nature is full  
29 of genius--full of the divinity--so that  
30 not a snow-flake escapes its fashioning  
31 hand. Nothing is cheap & coarse--  
32 neither dew drops nor snow flakes--  
33 Soon the storm increases--it was

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<sup>7</sup> flowed: altered from "flown"; "ed" written over "n"



1           On the Saskatchewan<sup>10</sup> when no man  
2 of science is there to behold still down they  
3 come, & not the less fulfill their destiny{,}  
4 perchance melt at once on the In-  
5 dian's face-- What a world we live in!  
6 where myriads of these little disks  
7           the  
8 so beautiful to^most prying eye--are whirled  
9 down on every traveller's coat--the observant  
10 & the unobservant--and on the restless  
11           fur  
12 squirrel's coat--& on the far stretchings  
13 fields & forests--the wooded dells--&  
14 the mt tops--far, far away from the  
15 haunts of man they roll down some little  
16           fall over &  
17 slope-^come to their bearings & melt or lose  
18 their beauty in the mass--ready anon  
19 to swell some little rill with their  
20 contribution--& so at last the  
21 universal ocean--from which they came--  
22 There they lie like the wreck of chariot  
23 wheels after a battle in the skies.  
24           Meanwhile the meadow mouse shoves  
25 them aside in his gallery--the school  
26 boy casts them in his snow ball--or  
27 the woodman's sled glides smoothly over  
28 them--these glorious spangles--the  
29 sweeping of heaven's floor. And they all  
30 sing--melting as they sing--of the mysteries  
31 of the number 6--six--six--six.  
32 He takes up the water of the sea in

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<sup>10</sup>"S" written over "s"



1 Jan 6th

2 // High wind & howling & driving snow storm

3 all night--now much drifted-- There

4 is a great drift in the front entry &

5 at the crack of every door--& on the window

6 sills. Great drifts on the S of walls--

7 Clears up at noon--when no {—} vehi-

8 cle had<sup>13</sup> passed the house--

9 Frank Morton has brought home & I

10 opened that pickerel of the 4th ult-- It is

11 with smaller between

12 frozen solid-- Yellow spawn as big as a pin head^

13 enwraps its insides the whole length--1/2 an

14 inch thick-- It must spawn very early then.

15 or maw

16 I find in its gullet or paunch--^(the

17 long white bag) 3 young perch, one of

18 them 6 inches long--& the tail of a 4th--

19 <sup>14</sup>& yet it was caught in endeavoring to

202 large

21 swallow another^minnow! Its belly was

22 considerably puffed out. 2 of the perch

23 lay parrallel side by side--of course head

241 downward, in its gullet--(?) The upper & largest

25 perch was so high that he was cut in

26 two in the middle in cutting off the head.

27 This is what you may call voracity.

28 P. m. to Drifting Cut.

29 %prob%

30 The snow is now %^% more than a foot deep on a level.

31 While I am making a path to the pump

32 I hear hurried rippling notes of birds,<sup>15</sup> look

33 // up & see quite a flock of snow buntings

34 coming to alight amid the currant tops

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<sup>13</sup> "had" altered from "has"

<sup>14</sup> "&...minnow?" (lines 19-21) marked by T. for transposition with "Its...head" (lines 21-26); T. numbered the sections "1" and "2" in the margin

<sup>15</sup>"," poss ";" or "--"

1 in the yard-- It is a sound almost as if  
2 made with their wings. What a pity  
3 our yard was made so tidy in the  
4 fall with--rake & fire--& we have  
5 now no tall crop of weeds rising above  
6 this snow to invite these birds.

7 I am come forth to observe the drifts.  
8 inches  
9 Perhaps six more^ on a level has fallen. or more  
10 It has not lodged on the trees  
11 They are as usual on the S side of the  
12 walls & fences--and judging from the direction  
13 of their ridges the ~~snow~~ wind was due north.  
14 Behind Monroe's tight board fence it is  
15 a regularly swelled ~~but~~ unbroken bank--  
16 but behind the wall this side carved  
17 scollops  
18 into countless^perforations--scrolls--& copings

19 An open wall is then the best place for a  
20 drift-- Yet these are not remarkable  
21 rich-- The snow was perhaps too dry.

22 Now at 4 1/4 the blue shadows are  
23 very distinct on the snow banks--

24 On the N. side of the Cut above the  
25 crossing--the jutting edges of the drift  
26 are quite handsome upon the bank--the  
27 snow is raised 12 feet above the track  
28 & it is all scolloped with projecting  
29 eaves or copings--like turtle shells  
30 <sup>16</sup>{drawing} They  
31 project from 3 to 5 feet & I  
32 can stand under them. They are  
33 in 3 or 4 great layers one lapping

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<sup>16</sup>word or mark above drawing that does not appear to be bleedthrough



1 but the cow kicked him over--& he finished  
2 by beating her with his cow-hide shoe--  
3 Capt. Richardson milked her warily--standing  
4 up. Father came home--& thought he would  
5 for she needed much to be milked  
6 "brustle right up to her"^but suddenly she  
7 lifted {her} leg & "struck him fair<sup>19</sup> & square  
8 right in the muns"--knocked him flat  
9 & broke the bridge of his [nonce]<sup>20</sup>--which  
10 He distinctly heard her hoof rattle on his nose  
11 shows it yet.^This "started the claret" &  
12 without staunching the blood he at once  
13 drove her home to the man he had her of--  
14 She ran at some young women by the way--  
15 who saved themselves by getting over the wall  
16 in haste.  
17 Father complained of the powder in the  
18 M. H. garret. {At} Town meeting but it  
19 did not get moved while we lived there  
20 Here he painted over his old signs for  
21 guide boards--& got a fall when  
22 painting Hale's<sup>21</sup> (?) factory.  
23 Here the bladder John was playing with  
24 burst on the hearth-- The cow came into the  
25 entry after pumpkins-- I cut my toe--&  
26 was knocked over by a hen with chickens  
27 &c &c.  
28 Mother tells how at the Brick House  
29 ~~I can~~ we each had a little garden a few  
30 feet square--& I came in one day having  
31 found a potatoe just sprouted which by her  
32 advice I planted in my garden-- Ere long

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<sup>19</sup> extra " cancelled

<sup>20</sup>Context suggests "nose"; MS is unclear but word is not "nose". T may play on "muns" for mouth. Emend to "nose"? BW, 4/30/10

<sup>21</sup>"H" written over "h"

1 John came in with a potatoe which he  
2 had planted--& had it planted in his  
3 garden-- "O mother I have found a  
4 potatoe all sprouted. I mean to put it  
5 in my garden." &c Even<sup>22</sup> Helen is said to  
6 have found one-- But next I came  
7 crying--that some body had got my po-  
8 tatoe--&c &c--but it was restored to me  
9 as the youngest & {original} discoverer  
10 if not inventor of the potatoe--& it  
11 grew in my garden--& finally its crop  
12 was dug by myself & yielded a dinner  
13 for the family.

14 I was kicked down by a passing ox--  
15 had a chicken given me by Lidy--Hannah--&  
16 peeped through the key hole at it-- Caught  
17 an eel with John-- Went to bed with new boots  
18 on--and after with cap-- Rasselas given  
19 me. &c &c--

20 Asked P. Wheeler--"Who owns all the land?" Asked  
21 mother having got the medal for geography,  
22 "Is Boston in Concord"-- If I had gone to Miss  
23 Wheeler a little longer should have received the chief  
24 prize book--"Henry Lord Mayor"--&c &c

25 Pm. up river

26 The snow is much deeper on the river  
27 than it was on an average 8 or 9 inches.  
28 The cold weather has brought the crows  
29 & for the first time this winter I hear

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<sup>22</sup> "Even" altered "even"



1 with snow & the sun is low--morning  
 2 or evening--& you are looking from it.  
 3 I see birch scales (bird-like) on the snow  
 4 on the river more than 20 rods S of  
 5 the nearest and only birch--& trace them  
 6 north to it.

7 Jan 8th '56

8 P. m. to Walden--

9 The snow is about a foot or prob.  
 10 a little more--deep on a level--& consid-  
 11 erably drifted--but on the pond it<sup>24</sup> is  
 12 %v 12th inst.%  
 13 not more than 5%^inches deep on an average,  
 14 being partly turned into snow ice<sup>25</sup> by the sink-  
 15 ing of the ice--& perhaps partly blown off--

16 Many catbird nests about the pond  
 17 & in ap. one I see a snake's slough in-  
 18 terwoven. The leaves of red oak shrubs  
 19 are still quite {bloody} colored-- All  
 20 that I see, but one, %V 22nd inst% Most  
 21 of the p-- pine cones^are open--%^I see  
 22 prying into the black fruit of the alder--  
 23 along the pond-side a single prob.  
 24 // lesser-redpoll--(?)<sup>26</sup> Yellowish breast--& distinct  
 25 white bar on wing. Monroe is fishing  
 26 there. As usual a great pickerel  
 27 had bitten & ran off--& was lost, he  
 28 supposed, among the brush by the  
 29 shore. He tells of an eel up the  
 30 N. Branch--that weighed 7 lbs--also  
 31 that Geo Melvin spearing one night  
 32

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<sup>24</sup> "it" altered from "is"

<sup>25</sup> poss "snow-ice"

<sup>26</sup> "(?)" written over "--"

1 --speared a large owl (prob. cat owl) that  
2 sat near by.

3 For a couple of days the cars have been  
4 very much delayed by the snow--& it is now  
5 drifting somewhat. The fine dry snow is driving  
6 over the fields like steam, if you look toward  
7 the sun, giving a new form to the surface--  
8 spoiling the labor of the track-repairers--grad-  
9 ually burying the rails-- The surface  
10 of the snow on the pond is finely scored in many  
11 places by the {oak} leaves which have been  
12 blow across it-- They<sup>27</sup> have furrowed deeper  
13 than a mouse's track--& might puzzle a  
14 citizen. They are more frisky than a squirrel.

15 Many of the young oaks ap. not to  
16 have lost any leaves yet-- They are so full  
17 of them that they still sustain some mas-  
18 ses of snow--as if there were birds nests  
19 for a core-- I see the great tracks  
20 of white rabbits that have run & frisked  
21 in the night along the pond side.

22 Jan. 9th '56

23 Clear Cold morning. Smiths thermometer <sup>16</sup>~~24~~-  
24 ours 14°- at breakfasttime--6°- at 9 Am.

25 3<sup>28</sup> Pm to Beck Stows The thermometer  
26 at 2°+ when I return at 4<sup>29</sup> 1/2 it is at  
27 2- prob. it has been below zero for  
28 the greater part of the day. I meet chop-  
29 pers ap. coming home early on ac.  
30

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<sup>27</sup>"T" written over "t"

<sup>28</sup>"3" poss written over "P"

<sup>29</sup> "4" altered from "3"

1 of the cold. I wade through the swamp  
2 %2 feet V Jan 12th%  
3 where the snow lies light 18<sup>30</sup> inches deep  
4 a few leaves of andromeda &c peeping out--I am a birds nesting.  
5 on a level--^The<sup>31</sup> mice have been out  
  
6 & run over it. I see one large bush  
7 of winter-berries--still quite showy though  
8 somewhat discolored by the cold. The rabbits  
9 have run in paths about the swamp.  
  
10 Go now anywhere in the swamp & fear  
11 The fisherman whom I saw on Walden last night will find his  
12 no water. lines well frozen in this morning.  
  
13 In passing through the deep cut on<sup>32</sup>  
14 the New Bedford road--that a little  
15 sand, which was pretty coarse, almost  
16 gravel, had fallen from the bank--&  
17 was blown over the snow, here & there-- The  
18 surface of the snow was diversified  
19 by those slight drifts, or perhaps cliffs  
20 which are left a few inches high, (like  
21 the fracture of slate rocks)--with a  
22 waved outline-- {drawing} & all the sand  
23 was collected in waving  
24 lines just on the edge  
25 of these little drifts in ridges may be  
26 1/8 of an inch high-- This may help decide  
27 how those drifts (?) or cliffs (?) are formed.  
28 Yet when it blows & drifts again it presents a similar appearance.  
29 // It has not been so cold throughout  
  
30 the day before--this winter. I hear the  
31 boots of passing traveller's squeak.

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<sup>30</sup>"18" cancelled in pencil

<sup>31</sup>"T" written over "t"

<sup>32</sup>blotch after word

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Jan 10

The weather has consid. moderated 2°- at break-  
fast time--(It was 8°- at 7 last evening)  
but this has been the coldest night probably.

//

You lie with your feet or legs curled  
the sheets shining with frost about your mouth  
up--waiting for morning<sup>33</sup>. Water left by

the stove is frozen thickly--& what you  
sprinkle in bathing falls on the floor ice--

The house plants are all frozen--& soon

l droop & turn black. I look out on the roof of

a cottage covered a foot deep with snow,

& wondering how the poor children in its

garret--with their few rags--contrive to keep

I mark the white smoke from its chimney whose contracted wreathes are soon dissipated  
in this

stinging air--& think of the size of their wood pile  
their toes warm--^And again I try to realize

how they panted for a breath of cool air

those sultry nights last summer-- Realize

it<sup>34</sup> now if you can. Recall the hum of the

mosquitoe

It seems that the snow storm of Saturday

night was a remarkabl one reaching

many hundred miles along the coast.

It is said that some thousands passed the

night in cars--

The kitchen windows were magnificent

last night with their frost sheaves--sur-

passing any cut or ground glass.

%Remembering the walk of yesterday%

I love to wade & flounder through

the swamp now--these bitter cold days when

the snow lies deep on the ground-- And

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<sup>33</sup>"Water" written over "In"

<sup>34</sup> "it" altered from "if"

1 I need travel but little way from the town  
2 to get to a Nova Zembla Solitude--to wade through  
3 the swamps--all snowed up--untracked by  
4 man--{into} which the fine dry snow is  
5 still drifting till it is even with the tops  
6 of the water andromeda & half way up  
7 the high blueberry bushes-- I penetrate  
8 to islets inaccessible in summer--my  
9 feet slumping to the sphagnum far  
10 out of sight beneath--where the  
11 alder-berry glows yet--& the azalea  
12 buds--& perchance a single tree-  
13 sparrow or a chickadee lisps by my side--  
14 Where there<sup>35</sup> are few tracks even of wild  
15 animals--perhaps only a mouse or  
16 two have burrowed up by the side of  
17 some twig & hopped away in straight  
18 lines on the surface of the light deep  
19 snow--as if too timid to delay--to another  
20 hole by the side of another bush-- And  
21 a few rabbits have run in a path amid  
22 the blueberries & alders about the edge of  
23 the swamp-- This is instead of a polar  
24 sea expedition & going after Franklin.  
25 There is but little<sup>36</sup> life & but<sup>37</sup> few objects  
26 it is true-- We are reduced to admire  
27 buds even like the partridges--&  
28 bark like the rabbits & mice.--the  
29 great yellow & red forward looking

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<sup>35</sup> "there" altered from "they"

<sup>36</sup> "little" written over "life"

<sup>37</sup> "but" altered from "few"

1 buds of the azalea--the plump red ones  
2 of the blueberry--& the fine sharp red  
3 ones of the pan. andromeda--sleeping along  
4 its stem-- The speckled ~~alder~~ black alder--  
5 the rapid growing dog-wood--the pale  
6 brown & cracked blueberry--&c Even a  
7 little shining bud which lies sleeping behind  
8 its twig & dreaming of spring--perhaps half  
9 concealed by ice, is object enough-- I feel my-  
10 self upborne on the andromeda bushes be-  
11 neath the snow--as on a springy basket  
12 work--then down I go up to my middle  
13 in the deep but silent snow--which has  
14 no sympathy with my mishap-- Beneath  
15 the level of this snow how many sweet ber-  
16 ries will be hanging next August<sup>38</sup>!  
17                   %This for yesterday--the coldest day yet%  
18                   This freezing weather I see the pumps  
19 dressed in mats & old clothes--or bundled  
20 up in straw-- Fortunate he who has placed  
21 his cottage on the south side of some  
22 high hill or some dense wood--&  
23 not on the middle of the Great<sup>39</sup> Fields where  
24 there is no hill nor tree to shelter it--  
25 There the winds have full sweep--& such  
26 a day as yesterday--the house is but a  
27 fence to stay the drifting snow-- Such  
28 is the piercing wind--no man loiters between  
29 his house & barn-- The road track  
30 is soon obliterated & the path ~~to the~~

---

<sup>38</sup>"A" written over "a"

<sup>39</sup>"G" written over "g"

1       which leads round to the back of the house  
2       ~~front door~~<sup>40</sup> which was dug this morning  
3  
4       is filled up again--& you can no  
5       longer see the tracks of the master  
6       of the house who only an hour ago  
7       took refuge in some half<sup>41</sup> subterranean apart  
8       ment there. You know only by an  
9       occasional white weath of smoke from  
10       his chimney--which is at once snapped  
11       up by the hungry air that he sits warm-  
12       Studying the almanac to learn how long it is before Spring.  
13       ing his wits there within--<sup>42</sup>But his  
14       neighbor who only half a mile off  
15       has placed his house in the shelter of a  
16       wood--is digging out of a drift his pile  
17       of roots & stumps, hauled from the swamp,  
18       at which he regularly dulls his axe & saw,  
19       reducing them to billets that will fit his stove.  
20       With comparative safety & even comfort he labors  
21       at this mine.  
22       As for the other--the windows give no sign  
23       of inhabitants--for they are frosted over  
24       as if they were ground glass--& the curtains  
25       are down beside-- The path is snowed up  
26       & all tracks to & fro--no sound issues  
27       from within. It remains only<sup>42</sup> to examine the  
28       chimney's nostrils--I look long & sharp at  
29       it & fancy that I see some smoke  
30       against sky there--but this deceptive--  
31       for as we are accustomed to walk up  
32       to an empty fire-place & imagine

---

<sup>40</sup>"which was" cancelled in pencil

<sup>41</sup>"half" inserted

<sup>42</sup>large blotch obscures "only" and "look" from the following line

1 that we feel some heat from it--so I have {—}  
2 convinced myself that I saw smoke issuing  
3 from the chimney of a house which had not  
4 been inhabited for 20 years. I had so vivid  
5 an idea of smoke curling up from a chimneys  
6 top--that no painter could have matched my  
7 imagination-- It was as if the spirits of  
8 the former inhabitants revisiting their old  
9 haunts--were once more boiling a spiritual  
10 kettle below.-- A small whitish bluish cloud  
11 almost instantly dissipated, as if the fire  
12 burned with a very clear flame--or else the  
13 postmeridian hours having arrived--it  
14 were partially raked up, & the inhabitants  
15 were taking their siesta.

16 ~~Jan 11th~~ 10th still

17 P. m. Worked on flower-press.

18 Jan 11<sup>2</sup>th '56

19 P. m. to Walden.

20 Cold as the weather has been for some  
21 days--it melting a little on the S side  
22 of houses today for the first time for  
23 quite a number of days--though the  
24 9th ult was the coldest day thus  
25 far--the therm. hardly going below zero  
26 during the day-- Yet whenever I have  
27 been to Walden--as Jan 4th-8th & to  
28 day--I have found much water  
29 under the snow above the ice, though

1 there is but about 5 inches both snow  
2 & water above the ice. Jan 4th was  
3 the coldest day that I have been there--  
4 & yet I slumped through the snow into  
5 water--which evidently was prevented from  
6 freezing at once by the snow-- I think  
7 that you may find water on the ice  
8 thus at any {time}--however cold--&  
9 Prob. some of the overflow I noticed on the river  
10 a few days ago was owing to the  
11 however soon it may freeze-- weight of the snow as there  
12 has been no thaw.  
13 Observed that the smooth sumachs about  
14 the N side of the Wyman Meadow  
15 a great  
16 had been visited by partridges & many of  
17 still crimson The same next day on the other side the pond.  
18 the^berries were strown on the snow^-- There  
19 they had eaten them perched on the twigs.  
20 Elsewhere they had tracked the snow  
21 from bush to bush--visiting almost every  
22 bush & leaving their traces-- The mice  
23 also had run from the base of one sumac  
24 to that of another on all sides--though there  
25 was no entrance to the ground there--prob--  
26 they had climbed the stems for berries--  
27 Most of the bunches now hang<sup>43</sup> half broken  
28 off by time &c--  
29 {drawing} %Sumachs%{drawing} {drawing} See Jan 30th  
30 The lespedeza now a very  
31 pale brown looks thus {drawing}

---

<sup>43</sup> "hang" altered from "hand"

1           The sunsets I think are now  
2 particularly interesting-- The colors  
3 of the west seem more than usually  
4 wan, perhaps by contrast with this  
5 simple snow clad earth over which we  
6 look & the clear cold sky--a sober  
7 but extensive redness--almost every night  
8 passing into a<sup>44</sup> dun-- There is nothing  
9 to distract our attention from it.

10           Monroe who left his<sup>45</sup> lines in Walden  
11 on the 8th cut them out today--but he  
12 got no fish--though all his bait were gone.

13           The January Sunsets.

14           To-day I burn the first stick of the //  
15 wood which I bought & did not get  
16 from the river-- What I have still left of  
17           wood  
18 the river<sup>^</sup>would--added to what of it I reserve  
19 for other uses, would last me a week  
20 longer.

21           Animals that live on such cheap food as  
22 buds & leaves & bark and wood--like partridge{s}  
23 & rabbits & wild mice, never need appre-  
24 hend a famine.

25           I have not done wondering at that voracity  
26 of the pickerel--3 fresh perch & part of another  
27 in its maw--! If there are a thousand  
28 pickerel in the pond, & they eat but  
29 one ~~perch or shiner~~ meal a day--there  
30 go a thousand perch or shiners for you

---

<sup>44</sup> "a" altered from "--"

<sup>45</sup> "his" altered from "in"

1 out of this small pond--<sup>46</sup> One year would  
2 require 365.000!--not distinguishing frogs--  
3 Can it be so? The fishermen tell me  
4 that when they catch the most, the fish are  
5 fullest.

6 Mother reminds me that when we  
7 lived at the Parkman House she lost  
8 a ruff 1 1/2 yards long & with an edging  
9 3 yards long to it which she had laid on  
10 the grass to whiten--& looking for  
11 it she saw a robin tugging at the  
12 tape string of a stay on the line. He would  
13 repeated-ly<sup>47</sup> get it in its mouth--fly off &  
14 be brought up when it got to the end of its  
15 tether-- Miss Ward thereupon tore a  
16 linen handkerchief into strips & threw them  
17 out--& the robin carried them all off. She  
18 had no doubt that he took the ruff.

19 It is commonly said that fishes are  
20 long lived on ac. of the equable tempera-  
21 ture of their element-- The temperature of the  
22 body of Walden may perhaps range from  
23 perhaps at bottom much less. or 53°  
24 85°+^down to 32°+^While that of the air  
25 ~~about~~ it ranges from 100°+ down to  
26 28°- --or 128° more than 2ce as much.  
27 Yet how large a portion of animal  
28 life becomes dormant or emigrates in the  
29 winter--& on those that remain with us  
30 there is an increase of fur & prob. of

---

<sup>46</sup> "pond--" altered from "pond."

<sup>47</sup>poss "repeatedly" and stray mark

1 down--corresponding to the increased cold--  
2 If there is no corresponding thickening  
3 of the integument or scales of fishes on  
4 the approach of winter--they could seem  
5 to enjoy no advantage over<sup>48</sup> land animals.  
6 most land animals  
7 Beside their thick coats ~~the rabbits &~~  
8 ~~partridges (?)~~ seek some comparatively warm  
9 & sheltered place in which to sleep--but  
10 where do the fishes resort-- They may sink  
11 to the bottom--but it is scarcely so warm  
12 there as at the bottom of a grey rabbit's or  
13 a fox's burrow. Yet the fish is a  
14 tender animal in respect to cold-- Pull<sup>49</sup>  
15 him out in the coldest weather--& he at  
16 once becomes encased in ice & as stiff as  
17 a stake--and a fox (?) stands at his ease on the  
18 Frogs which perchance are equally tender, and must (?) come to the air occasionally,  
19 are therefore  
20 ice devouring him.^They may be said to live  
21 compelled go into<sup>50</sup> the mud & become dormant.  
22 then in a southern climate-- Even the  
23 tough mud turtle possesses a southern constitution.  
24 --He would snap in vain--& soon cease snapping  
25 at the N. W. wind when the thermometer is  
26 at 25° below zero-- Wild mice & spiders  
27 & snow fleas would be his superiors  
28 Jan 12th<sup>51</sup> 12th  
29 Moderating though at zero at 9 Am  
30 Pm to Andromeda swamps  
31 Measuring snow--It is ~~about~~ a fortnight  
32 since we had about a foot of snow fall  
33 on 2 or 3 inches which was firmly crusted--

---

<sup>48</sup> "over" altered from "of"

<sup>49</sup>"p" written over "p"

<sup>50</sup> "go into" altered from "going"

<sup>51</sup> "12th" altered from "13th"

1 & a week since about 6 inches fell upon  
 2 the last--I guess at these depths--  
 3 & we have had clear cold weather ever since  
 4 I carry a 4 foot stick marked in<sup>52</sup> inches--  
 5 ~~sticking~~ striking it down as far as it  
 6 will go at every 10th step--first  
 7 beginning in the first field west of the  
 8 RR cause way 4 to 6 rods from the RR--  
 9 Open fields  
 10 & walking par. with the RR-- N to S.

11		<u>145</u>	<u>309</u>	10	11 <sup>53</sup>	Then Trillium
12	19	10	10	8	8	a thick chiefly Pine
13	11	8	12	8	10	wood--75 yrs old.
14	14	9	11	8	13	8 N to S
15	10	14	6	12	9	12
16	7	15	8	8	10	8
17	12	13	7	12	13	11
18	9	<u>22</u>	9	14	fence 10	8
19	7	wall	10	9	10	11
20	ap. 6	7	11	7	--wall--	11
21	tree 7	6	9	10	20	9
22	9	7	11	10	<u>16</u>	8
23	9	7	<u>9</u>	10	<u>598</u>	9
24	10	7	422	7	73)728	10
25	10	8	Then cross	9	average	10
26	6	10	to E of RR	14	say 10 %i.e. 12% <sup>54</sup>	7
27	<u>9</u>	12	6 rods off	9		10
28	145	<u>9</u>	in Stows	<u>11</u>		12
29		309	Meadow	<u>422</u>		8
30				598		9
31						10
32						<u>11</u>

19)182/say 9 1/2 %or 11 1/2%  
Other things being equal  
 the snow should be deeper  
 in woods than in open fields  
 because the trunks of trees  
 take up room there--but this  
 may be more than balanced by  
 what is dissipated on the branches.

%Add 2 for ice at bottom%  
 %to all the depths {to} Feb 12 q.v.%

<sup>52</sup> "in" altered from "on"

<sup>53</sup>vertical pencil line running down the page separates this list from the one to the right

<sup>54</sup> Later revision: following this entry and extending down from it vertically in pencil, Thoreau writes: "or 9 1/2+ W of RR / & 10 1/2+ E " " "

1		Then Sproutland between		
2		RR & Andromeda Pond		
3		down hill toward the W.		
4				Wheelers
5	15	The 1st Andromeda Swamp		Squirrel
6	11	from E to W		Wood
7	20	24	The result of	<del>N of R</del>
8	17	16	34 measures on	W of RR
9	17	20	Walden--8 or 10	measuring
10	13	26	acres of which did not	from S
11	14	29	freeze till <u>during<sup>55</sup> the</u>	to N par
12	16	26	<u>snow of a fortnight</u>	with RR
13	15	16	ago--gave 5 1/6	12
14	17	19		9
15	15	27		10
16	<u>17</u>	27		12
17	12)187/say 15 1/2	24		10
18	%17 1/2%	21		10
19		27		12
20		22		12
21		16		8
22		17		9
23		28		11
24		33		7
25		28		7
26		<u>30</u>		12
27		20)476(say 23 4/5 <sup>56</sup>		12
28	The snow in the swamp was	25 4/5		8
29	within about 3 inches of the top			7
30	of the <u>highest</u> andromeda			12
31	bushes--& was swelled about			<u>12</u>
32	3 or 4 inches higher there than			19)192(
33	between such-- Foxes had			say 10 %(or 12%
34	sunk from 1 to 4 inches in it.			
35				an av. mixed
36				pine & oak wood
37				not very level--say
38				75 years old

<sup>55</sup> "during" altered from "The"

<sup>56</sup>curved line across page separates this list from the list at the right

1           Prob. there is less snow in the woods than in  
2 open land--though it may lie high & light.

3           In the swamp the dull red leaves of the  
4 andromeda were just peeping out--the  
5 snow lying not quite level but with gentle  
6 swells about the highest clumps of bushes--  
7 {drawing} Deep as the snow  
8 was, it was no harder  
9 but perhaps easier walking there--than in sum-  
10 mer. It would not much impede a mouse  
11 running about below.

12           Though the snow is only 10 inches deep on a level  
13 farmers affirm that it is 2 feet deep--con-  
14 fidently--

15                           Jan 13th

16           Sunrise--a heavy lodging snow almost  
17 rain--has been falling how long--coming  
18 from the eastward-- The weather comparatively  
19 warm but windy-- It will prob. turn to rain.  
20           say 4 or 5 inches deep  
21 It sticks to the sides of the houses.

22           Took to pieces a pensile nest which I found  
23 the 11th ult on the south shore of Walden on  
24 an oak sapling (red or black) about 15 feet  
25 from the ground. Though small it measures  
26 3 inches by 3 in the extreme & was hung between  
27 horizontal  
28 two^twigs or in a fork forming about a right  
29 angle--the 3d<sup>57</sup> side being regularly rounded without  
30 any very stiff material. The twigs extended 2 or  
31 3 inches beyond the nest--

---

<sup>57</sup> 3d: altered from "2d"

1           The bulk of it is composed of fine shreds  
2    or fibres--pretty long (say 3 to 6 inches) of ap.  
3    inner oak (?) bark, judging from some scrapes  
4    of the epidermis adhering. It looks at first sight  
5    like sedge or grass-- The bottom, which I ac-  
6    cidentally broke off & disturbed the arrangement of--  
7    --was composed of this, & white & pitch pine needles--  
8    & little twigs about the same size & form rough with little  
9    leaf stalks or feet            Yes they are  
10 ~~bud-shoulders~~--(prob hemlock (?)^)& also strips & curls  
11 of Paper birch epidermis--& some hornet or {other} wasp  
12 nest used like the last. I mention the most abundant  
13 material first. Prob. the needles & twigs were used  
14                                    perhaps bent by bird  
15 on ac. of their (curved form &) elasticity to give shape  
16 to the bottom. The sides, which were not so  
17 thick, were composed of bark shreds--paper  
18 birch & hornet nest (the 2 latter chiefly outside,  
19                                    agglutinated  
20 prob-- to bind & conceal & keep out the wind)--together  
21 But most pains was taken with the thin edge  
22 & for 3/4 of an inch down--where beside the  
23 bark fibres--birch paper--& hornets nest--some silky  
24 reddish brown, and also ~~some~~ white fiber, was used to  
25 bind all with--almost spun into ~~to~~ threads & passed  
26 over the twigs & agglutinated to them--or over  
27 the bark edge-- The shreds of birch paper were smaller  
28 there & the hornets nest looked as if it had been  
29 reduced to a pulp by the bird & spread very thinly  
30 here & there over all, mixed with the brown silk--  
31 This last looked like cow's hair--but as I found  
32 a piece of a small brown cocoon though a  
33                                    (NB some of the same on my red-eye's nest)  
34 little paler, I suspect it was from that^-- The  
35 white may have been from a cocoon--or else  
36                                    nest  
37 vegetable silk. Prob a vireo's^may be red-eye's.

1           In our workshops we pride ourselves  
2   on discovering a use for what had  
3   previously been<sup>58</sup> regarded as waste-- But  
4   how partial† & accidental our economy  
5   compared with Natures. In nature nothing  
6   is wasted--every decayed leaf & twig &  
7   fibre is only the better fitted to serve in  
8   some other department--& all at  
9   last are gathered in her compost heap--  
10   What a wonderful genius it is that  
11   leads the vireo to select the tough fibres  
12   of the inner bark--instead of the more brittle  
13   grasses for its basket--the elastic  
14                    the  
15   pine needles & ^twigs curved as they  
16   dried to give it form--and as I suppose  
17                    &c &c  
18   the silk of cocoons to bind it together with.  
19   I suspect that extensive use is made  
20   of these abandoned cocoons by the birds--  
21   & they if anybody--know where to find  
22                    at least  
23   them. There were^7 materials used  
24   in constructing this nest & the bird visited  
25   as many distinct localities many times--  
26   always with the purpose or design to find  
27   some particular one of these materials  
28   --as much as if it had said to itself--now  
29   I will go & get some old hornet's nest  
30   from one of those that I saw last fall  
31   down in the maple swamp (--perhaps  
32   thrust my bill into them)--or some silk

---

<sup>58</sup>"been" inserted

1 from those cocoons I saw this morning.

2 It turned to rain before noon  
3 4 or 5 inches of very moist snow or sleet  
4 having fallen--

5 Jan 14-- Sunrise-- Snows again  
6 I think that you can best tell from what  
7 side the storm came by observing on which  
8 side of the trees the snow is plastered.

9 The ~~snows~~ crows are flitting about the houses  
10 & alight upon the elms.

11 After snowing an inch or 2 it cleared up  
12 at night. %Boys &c go about straddling the fences, on the  
13 crust%

14 Jan 15

15 A fine clear winter day--

16 P. m. to hemlocks on the crust. slumping  
17 in every now & then. A bright day--not cold  
18 --I can comfortably walk--without gloves--yet  
19 my shadow is a most celestial blue-- This only  
20 require a clear bright day & snow-clad earth--  
21 not great cold. I cross the river on the  
22 crust--with some hesitation-- The snow  
23 appears considerably deeper than the  
24 12th ult--may be 4 or 5 inches deeper--  
25 & the river is indicated by a mere depression  
26 in it {drawing}  
27 or {drawing}

28 In the street not only fences but trees  
29 are obviously shortened as by a flood-- You  
30 are sensible that you are walking

1 at a level a foot or more above  
 2 the usual one-- Seeing the tracks where  
 3 a leaf had blown along & then tacked  
 4 & finally doubled & returned on its trail  
 5 I thought it must be the track of some  
 6 creature new to me--

7 I find under the hemlocks in & upon the snow, ap.  
 8 --brought down by the storm, an abundance of those  
 9 little dead hemlock twigs described on the 13th ult--  
 10 They are remarkably slender & without stiffness like  
 11 the fir (& I think spruce) twigs--& this gives the  
 12 hemlock its peculiar grace-- These are not yet curved  
 13 much--& perhaps they got that form from being  
 14 placed in the nest.

15 Jan 16th '56

16 8 Am down RR--measuring snow--  
 17 having had one bright day since the last flake  
 18 fell--but as there was a crust which would  
 19 bear yesterday--(as today) it cannot have settled  
 20 much. The last storms have been Easterly  
 21 & north easterly.

22 In yard 5 measures<sup>59</sup>  
 23 gave 15+ inches

In open fields--measuring as  
 near as possible where I did the 12th

24	W. of RR	E of RR	or av. of open fields
25			
26	15 11 8 13 34)416(	16 13 13	<u>13 6/10</u> --or perhaps
27	8 11 9 13	17 14 17 %15 6/10	14 since I
28	9 11 10 13 say	16 15 19 V. Feb 12th%	measured most on
29	8 13 8 15	13 21 11	the W % {av of 16} %
30	10 15 13 13 <u>12 1/4</u>	13 11 23 say	It being {so} much the
31	10 17 12 15	13 9 <u>25 15 5/8</u>	deepest on the side of
32	11 31 11 13	21 12 23)360(	the RR from which
33	11 8 13 12	21 14	the storm came.
34	9 17	13	

---

<sup>59</sup>T draws a line to separate lines of text "In yard..." from "In open fields..."

1 Geo. Prescott guessed it was 2 1/2 feet on an av.!!  
2 Trillium Woods  
3 through mid. as before  
4 18 Between woods & RR--N. W. the av. of  
5 18 12 measures was 18 1/2+  
6 12 Why so much (5 1/2 inches) more  
7 18 now in the woods than on the 12th--  
8 17 as comp. with open fields? Was the  
9 20 driving snow caught in a small wood?  
10 19 or did it settle less in the rain there?  
11 13 or since the snow on account of bushes?  
12 20  
13 15  
14 13  
15 17  
16 18  
17 19  
18 15  
19 18  
20 21 I hear flying over--(& see)  
21 17)291(say 17 a snow bunting--a clear loud

22 tcheep or tcheop, sometimes rapidly

23 trilled or quavered, calling its mates.

24 With this snow the fences are scarcely an  
25 obstruction to the traveller--he easily steps over them.  
26 Often they are buried. I suspect it is 2 1/2  
27 feet deep in Andromeda swamp now.

28 The snow is much deeper in yards--roads  
29 & all small enclosures--than in broad  
30 fields.

31 Jan 17th

32 Henry Shattuck tells me that the  
33 quails come almost every day & get some saba  
34 beans within 2 or 3 rods of his house. Some  
35 which he neglected to gather. Prob. the deep  
36 snow drives them to it.

1 Jan 18th '56

2 J. B. Moore--says that he has caught

3 20 lbs of pickerel in Walden in one winter

4 &--and had had nearly as good luck 5 or

5 6 times the same winter there; not less than

6 10 lbs at one time-- Suppose then<sup>60</sup> that

7 he has caught 50 pickerel there in

8 one winter--& all others the same winter

9 150--you have 200<sup>61</sup> caught in one

10 winter. I suspect there are as many as 2000

11 5 men caught 333 lbs in a pond in Eastham in

12 that will weigh a pound. one day this winter say the papers--largest

13 5 1/2 lbs

14 Analysed a nest which I found Jan 7th

15 in an upright fork of a red maple sapling

16 on the edge of Hub's swamp wood N side near--

17 the deep grooves made by the twigs on each side

18 river--about 8 feet from the ground^-- It may

19 be a yellowbird's--

20 Extreme breadth outside 3 inches--inside 1 1/2. Extreme

21 height outside 3 inches--inside 1 5/8 sides 3/4 inch thick.

22 It is composed of 7--principal materials--

23 I name the most abundant 1st--I mean most abundant when

24 compressed.)

25 silvery

261 Small compact lengths of^pappus about 7/8 inch long,

27 perhaps of erechthites), 1/2 inch deep & nearly pure, a very

28 warm bed--chiefly concealed, just beneath the lining in-

29 side.

302 Slender catkins, often with the buds & twig ends (of perhaps

31 hazel) throughout the whole bottom & sides--making

32 it thick but open & light, mixed with ~~ap.~~

33 %being bleached%

343 ~~Ap.~~ milkweed silk i.e. fibres like flax, but white,%^%also

35 in sides & rim--some of it almost thread like--white with

36 some of the dark epidermis-- From the pods? No, I am

37 about certain, from comparison, that it is the fibres of the bark of

38 the stem--V 19th inst.

---

<sup>60</sup> then: altered from "than"

<sup>61</sup> 200: altered from "150"

1                   & narrow  
24                   Thin^strips of grape vine bark--chiefly in the  
3 rim & sides for 3/4 inch down--& here & there throughout--  
45                   Wads of ap brown fern wool mixed with the last  
5                   3  
66                   Some finer pale brown & thinner shreds of bark--~~directly~~  
7                   within the walls & bottom  
8                   ~~underneath pappus, (mixed with some short shreds of grape bark)~~  
9                   ap. not grape-- If this were added to the grape-- These  
10                   5 materials would be not far from equally abundant.  
117                   Some very fine pale brown wiry fibres for a lining just  
12                   above the pappus & somewhat mixed with it. Perhaps  
13                   for coolness being springy.  
14                   Directly beneath the pappus was considerable %~~other~~%<sup>62</sup> shreds  
15                   of grape & the other Bark<sup>63</sup>--short & broken--  
16                   In the rim & sides some cotton ravelings--& some  
17                   short shreds of fish line or crow fence--A red maple  
18                   leaf within the bottom--a kernel of corn just  
19                   under the lining of fibres--(perhaps dropt by a crow or black-  
20                   bird or jay--or squirrel while the nest was building.) A few  
21                   short length of stubble or weed stems in the bottom &  
22                   sides A very little brown wool<sup>64</sup> like ap. that  
23                   in the nest last described--which may be brown  
24                   fern wool. The milkweed--& fern wool conspic-  
25                   uous without the rim & about the twigs.  
26                   I was most struck by that mass of pure pap-  
27                   pus under the inside lining.  
28                   Pm. to Walden--  
29                   to learn the temperature  
30                   of the water-- The snow is so deep at present  
31                   in the streets that it is very difficult turn-  
32                   ing out, & there are cradle holes between  
33                   this & the P. O.<sup>65</sup> The side walks being

---

<sup>62</sup>faint pencil inserted on line

<sup>63</sup> "Bark" altered from "bark"

<sup>64</sup> wool: altered from "wood"

<sup>65</sup> P. O.: altered from "p. o."

1 blotted out--the street like a woodmans path  
2 --looks like a hundred miles up country.

3 I see where children have for some  
4 days come to school across the fields  
5 on the crust--from Abiel Wheeler's<sup>66</sup> to  
6 the RR crossing. I see their tracks in  
7 the slight snow upon the crust which fell  
8 the 14th ult. They save a great distance &  
9 enjoy the novelty.

10 This is a very mild melting winter day--but  
11 clear & bright-- Yet I see the blue shadows  
12 on the snow at Walden., The snow lies very  
13 level there about 10 inches deep & for the  
14 most part bears me as I go across  
15 with my hatchet-- I think I never saw  
16 a more elysian blue than my shadow  
17 I am turned into a tall blue Persian  
18 from my cap to my boots, such as  
19 no mortal dye can produce--with an  
20 amethystine hatchet in my hand.

21 I am in raptures at my own shadow--  
22 of  
23 What if the substance were^as ethereal  
24 a nature. Our very shadows are no  
25 longer black--but a celestial blue,  
26 This has nothing to do with cold methinks,  
27 but the sun must not be too low.

28 I cleared a little space in  
29 which was 9 to 10 inches deep  
30 the snow^over the deepest part of the  
31 pond & cut through the ice--

---

<sup>66</sup>"W" written over "w"

1       which was about 7 inches thick only  
2       the first 4 inches perhaps--snow ice the other  
3       3 clear. The moment I reached the water  
4       it gushed up & overflowed the ice driving  
5                in the snow  
6       me out this yard-^--where it stood at  
7       last 2 1/2 inches deep above the ice--

8               The thermometer indicated 33 1/2° at top  
9       & 34 2/3 when drawn up rapidly from 30 feet  
10      beneath. So ap.<sup>67</sup> it is not much warmer  
11      beneath.

12             Goodwin was fishing there-- He says  
13      he once caught 50 lbs of pickerel  
14      here in 2 days--he<sup>68</sup> thought 25 or 30  
15      fishes. Thought that there were many  
16      hundred caught here in a winter--  
17      that nearly all were females.

18             Observed some of those little hard galls  
19      on the high blueberry pecked or eaten into by  
20      some bird (or possibly mouse) for the little white  
21      grubs which lie curled up in them. What  
22      entomologists the birds are-- Most men  
23      do not suspect that there are grubs in them.  
24      & how secure the latter seem under these  
25      thick dry shells! Yet there is no secret  
26      but it is confided to some one.

27                       Jan 19th '56

28             Another bright winter day-- Pm to  
29      river--to get some Water-asclepias--to see  
30      what birds nests are made of--

---

<sup>67</sup>actually underlined three times

<sup>68</sup> "he" altered from "so"

1           The only open place in the river between  
2Hubbard bridge & I have no doubt Lee's bridge, as I learned in my walks the next day.  
3           Hunts bridge & the<sup>^</sup>RR bridge is a  
4           small space against Merricks pasture just  
5                    As usual just below a curve in shallow water, with  
6           below the Rock.    the added force of the assabet.  
7                    The willow osiers of last years growth--  
8           on the pollards in Shattuck's row--Merrick's  
9           Pasture--from 4 to 7 feet long--are  
10          perhaps as bright as in the spring--  
11          the lower half yellow the upper red.  
12          but they are a little shrivelled in the bark.  
13                  Measured again the great elm  
14          in front of Charles Davis' on the Boston  
15          road--which he is having cut down--<sup>69</sup>  
16          The chopper White has taken off most  
17                          tried his axe  
18          of the limbs & just begun<sup>^</sup>on the foot  
19          of the tree-- He will prob. fall it on  
20          Monday, or the 21st. At the smallest  
21          place between the ground and the  
22          limbs 7 feet from the ground, it  
23          is 15 ft & 2 inches in circumference  
24          at 1 foot from the ground on the lowest  
25          side--23 9/12. White is to have  
26          10 dollars for taking off the necessary  
27          limbs & cutting it down merely--  
28          help being found him. {He} began on  
29          Wednesday-- Davis & the neighbors  
30          were much alarmed by the creaking  
31          in the late storms--for fear it would  
32          fall on their roofs. It stands 2 or 3 feet  
33          into Davis' yard.

---

<sup>69</sup>note from Lorna Mack: This may be the elm Thoreau replaced with the existing elm in front of the Art Assoc. (Legend has it)

1           As I came home through the village  
2 at 8 1/4 Pm by<sup>70</sup> a bright moon-  
3 light--the moon nearly full & not more  
4 than 18° from the zenith-- ~~I saw the~~  
5 The wind NW but not strong & the  
6 air pretty cold-- I saw the melon rind  
7 arrangement of the clouds on a  
8 larger scale & more distinct than  
9 ever before. There were 8 or 10 courses  
10 of clouds--so broad that with equal  
11 intervals of blue sky they occupied the  
12 whole width of the heavens--broad  
13 white scirrho-stratus in perfectly regular  
14 curves from west to east across  
15 the whole sky-- The 4 middle ones oc-  
16 cupying the greater part of the visible  
17 cope were particularly distinct.  
18 They were all as regularly arranged  
19 as the lines on a melon & with  
20 much straighter sides as if cut with  
21 a knife-- I hear that it attracted  
22 the attention of<sup>71</sup> those who were abroad  
23 at 7 Pm & now at 9 Pm it is  
24 scarcely less remarkable-- On one  
25                   N or S  
26 side of the heavens^the intervals of blue  
27 look almost black by contrast-- There  
28 is now, at 9, a strong wind from the  
29 N. W. Why do these bars  
30 extend E & W-- Is it the influence of

---

<sup>70</sup> "by" altered from "a"

<sup>71</sup> "of" altered from "at"

1 the sun--which set so long ago?  
2 --or of the rotation of the earth--? The  
3 bars which I notice so often morning & evening  
4 --are ap. connected with the sun at those  
5 periods.

6 In Oliver N. Bacon's Hist. of Natick p 235  
7 it is said that of Phaenogamos plants "Up-  
8 wards of 800 species were collected from Natick  
9 soil in 3 years' time, by a single individual."  
10 I suspect it was Bacon the Surveyor. There is  
11 given a list of those which are rare in  
12 that vicinity--among them are the  
13 following which I do not know to grow  
14 %found since% %prob here%  
15 here-- Actaea rubra<sup>72</sup> W--Asclepias tuberosa--  
16 %found since%  
17 Alopecurus pratensis<sup>73</sup>--Corallorhiza odontorhiza (?)  
18 %found since%  
19 Nutt.--Drosera filiformis Nutt.--Ledum lati-  
20 folium<sup>74</sup>--Malaxis Lilifolia W. (What in Grey?)--  
21 %found since%  
22 Sagina procumbens<sup>75</sup>.

23 Among those rare there but common here are--  
24 Calla Virginica--Glechoma Hederacea--Iris  
25 prismatica--Lycopus Virginicus--Mikania Scandens  
26 Prunus borealis--Rhodora Canadensis--Xyris  
27 aquatica--Zizania aquatica.

28 They, as well as we, have Equisetum  
29 hyemale--Kalmia glauca--Liatris scariosa  
30 --Ulmus fulva--Linnaea Borealis<sup>76</sup> &c &c Pyrola  
31 maculata.

32 Bacon quotes White who quotes Old<sup>77</sup> Col. memorial--ac--  
33 of man. & customs &c of our ancestors.

---

<sup>72</sup>"Actaea rubra" cancelled in pencil

<sup>73</sup>"Alopecurus pratensis" cancelled in pencil and followed by stray mark

<sup>74</sup>"Ledum latifolium" cancelled in pencil

<sup>75</sup>"Sagina procumbens" cancelled in pencil

<sup>76</sup> "Borealis" altered from "borealis"

<sup>77</sup> "Old" altered from "old"

1 Bacon says that the finest elm  
2 in Natick--stands in front of Thomas  
3 F Hammond's house & was set out "about  
4 the year 1760."-- "The trunk, 5 feet from the  
5 G. Emerson gives a dif. account. q.v.  
6 ground, measures 15 1/2 feet."  
7 Observed within the material of a robins  
8 nest this pm a cherry stone.  
9 Gathered some<sup>78</sup> dry water milkweed  
10 stems to compare with the materials of the birds nest  
11 of the 18th ult. The bird used--I am almost  
12 not the pods  
13 certain--the fibres of the bark of the stem^, just  
14 beneath the epidermis--only the bird's is older  
15 & more ~~fuzzy~~ fuzzy & finer like worne twine or string  
16 The fibres & bark have otherwise the same ap-  
17 pearance under the microscope-- I stripped  
18 off some bark about 1/16 of an inch wide &  
19 or 12  
20 6 inches long--& separating ~~8~~ or 10^fibres from  
21 the epidermis rolled it in my fingers making  
22 a thread about the ordinary size. This I could  
23 not break by direct pulling & no man could.  
24 I doubt if a thread of flax or hemp of the same  
25 size could be made so strong. What an  
26 admirable material for the Ind. fish line!  
27 I can easily get much longer fibres--I  
28 hold a piece of the dead weed in my hands--  
29 strip off a narrow shred<sup>79</sup> of the bark before  
30 10 or 12  
31 my neighbor's eyes & separate ~~a few~~ fibres as  
32 fine as a hair roll them in my fingers  
33 & offer him the thread--to try its strength.  
34 He is surprised & mortified to find that

---

<sup>78</sup> "some" altered from "a"

<sup>79</sup> "shred" altered from "shread"

1 he cannot break it. Prob. both the Ind.  
2 & the bird discovered for themselves this same  
3 (so to call it) wild hemp--  
4 The corresponding fibres of the mikania--  
5 seem not so divisible--become not so fine  
6 & {frozy}-- Though somewhat similar--are not  
7 nearly so strong. I have a hang-bird's nest  
8 from the river side made almost entirely of  
9 this in narrow shreds or strips with the epidermis  
10 on wound round & round the twigs & woven  
11 into a basket-- That is this bird has used per-  
12 haps the strongest fiber which the<sup>80</sup> fields afforded--  
13 & which most civilized men have not detected.  
14 Knocked down the bottom of that sum-  
15 mer yel-- bird's nest (made on the oak at  
16 the island last summer)-- it is chiefly of fern  
17 <sup>some</sup>  
18 wool & also ap^sheeps wool (?) with a fine green  
19 moss (ap that which grows on button bushes)  
20 & some milkweed fibre  
21 in mixed^& all very firmly agglutinated together--  
22 Some shreds of grape vine bark about it.  
23 Do not know what portion of the whole nest  
24 it is. Jan 20th 56  
25 In my experience I have found nothing  
26 so truly impoverishing as what is called  
27 wealth--i.e. the command of greater  
28 means than you had before--possessed--  
29 --though comparatively few & slight still--  
30 for you thus inevitably acquire a  
31 more expensive habit of living--& even

---

<sup>80</sup> "which the" altered from "which he"

1 the very same necessaries & comforts cost you  
2 more than they once did. Instead of  
3 gaining you have lost some independence--  
4 And if your income should be suddenly  
5 lessened--you would find yourself poor  
6 though possessed of the same means which  
7 once made you rich. Within the last 5  
8 years I have had the command of a  
9 little more money than in the previous  
10 for I have sold some books & some lectures--  
11 5 years--^ Yet I have not been a whit  
12 better fed or clothed or warmed or sheltered  
13 --not a whit richer, except that  
14 I have been less concerned about my living--  
15 but perhaps my life has been the less serious  
16 for it--& to balance it I feel now that  
17 there is a possibility of failure-- Who knows  
18 but I may come upon the town, if †  
19 {were} as if likely the public want no  
20 more of my books--or lectures (which  
21 Before I was much likelier to take the town upon my shoulders  
22 last is already the case).^ That is I have  
23 lost some of my independence on them--  
24 --when they would say that I had gained  
25 an independence. If you wish to give  
26 a man a sense of poverty--give him  
27 a thousand dollars-- The next hundred  
28 dollars he gets will not be worth more  
29 than ten that he used to get. Have pity  
30 on him--with{-}hold your gifts.

1           P. m. Up river to Hollowell Place--  
2    I see the blue between the cakes of snow  
3    cast out in making a path, in the  
4    triangular recesses {drawing}, though  
5    it is pretty cold--but the sky is complete-  
6    ly overcast. It is now good walking  
7    on the River--for though there has  
8    been no thaw since the snow came--a great  
9    part of it has been converted into snow  
10   ice by sinking the old ice beneath the water--  
11   & the crust of the rest is stronger than  
12   in the fields because the snow is so shallow  
13   & has been so moist. The river is thus  
14   an advantage as a highway not only in  
15   summer--& when the ice is bare in the  
16   winter--but even when the snow lies  
17   very deep in the fields. It is invaluable  
18   to the walker--being now, not only the  
19   most interesting, but excepting the  
20   narrow & unpleasant track in the high-  
21   ways, the only practicable route. The  
22   snow never lies so deep over it as else-  
23   where--& if deep it sinks the ice & is soon  
24   converted into snow ice to a great extent  
25   beside being blown out of the river valley.  
26   Neither is it drifted here. Here where  
27   you cannot walk at all in the summer  
28   is better walking than elsewhere in  
29   the winter-- But what a different

1 aspect the river's brim now from what  
2 it wears in summer!<sup>81</sup> I do not this  
3 moment hear an insect hum--nor see  
4 a bird--nor a flower. That museum of  
5 animal & vegetable life--a meadow--is now  
6 reduced to uniform level of white snow--  
7 with only half a dozen kinds of shrubs & weeds  
8 rising here & there above it.

9 Nut Meadow Brook is open on the river  
10 meadow--but not into the river-- It is  
11 short in the middle  
12 remarkable that--the^strip^below the  
13 Island--(v. yesterday) should be the only  
14 open place between Hunt's Bridge & Hubbards  
15 at least--prob as far as Lee's-- The river  
16 has been frozen solidly ever since the 7th  
17 ult--& that small open strip of yesterday  
18 %& in middle%  
19 (about 1 rod wide %^%) was prob. not more  
20 than a day or 2 old. It is very rarely  
21 closed I suspect--in all places more than  
22 2 weeks<sup>82</sup> at a time. Ere long it wears its way  
23 up to the light & its blue artery again  
24 %here & there%  
25 appears %^%. In one place close to the river  
26 Where the forgetmenot grows, that  
27 springy place under the bank just above  
28 the RR bridge the snow is quite melted &  
29 the bare ground & flattened weeds exposed  
30 for 4 or 5 feet.  
31 Broke open a frozen nest of mud & stubble in  
32 a black willow--prob. a robin's--in which

---

<sup>81</sup> "summer!" altered from "summer--"

<sup>82</sup> "2 weeks" altered from "a week"; stray mark above line

1 were a snail (?) shell {drawing} & a  
2 skunk cabbage seed? Were they not left<sup>83</sup>  
3 there by a mouse--? or could they have been  
4 taken up with the mud-- They were somewhat  
5 %A downy woodpecker--without red on head--the  
6 in the mud. only bird seen in this nook--I stand within 12 feet--%

7 The arrangement of the clouds last  
8 night attracted attention in various parts  
9 of the town.

10 A prob. kingbird's nest--on a small horizontal  
11 branch of a young Swamp white oak--amid the  
12 twigs about 10 feet from ground-- (This tree is very  
13 scraggy--has numerous short twigs at various angles  
14 with the branches--making it unpleasant to climb--  
15 & affording support to bird's nests--)-- The nest  
16 is round running to rather a sharp point on one side  
17 beneath-- Extreme diam. outside 4 1/2 to 5 inch  
18 within 3 inch--depth within 2 inch without 4 or  
19 more. The principal materials are 10-- In the  
20 order of their abundance thus  
21 1st reddish & grey twigs some a foot & more in length  
22 which are cranberry vines--with now & then a leaf on  
23 prob-- such as were torn up by the rakers--some are  
24 as big round as a knitting needle--& would be  
25 taken for a larger bush-- These make the stiff  
26 mass of the outside above & ~~the~~ rim.  
27 2nd Woody roots rather coarser intermixed from  
28 water side shrubs prob. some are from cranberry vines--  
29 These are mixed with the last & with the bottom.  
30 3d Softer & rather smaller roots & root fibres of herbaceous  
31 plants--mixed with the last & a little further inward.

---

<sup>83</sup> "left" altered from "cast"

1 For the harshest are always most external.

2 4th (Still to confine myself to the order of abundance)

3 Withered floweres & shoots bits of the gray downy

4 stems of the fragrant everlasting-- These more

5 or less compacted & ap agglutinated from the

6 mass of the solid bottom--& more loose with the

7 stems run down to a point on one side the bottom.

8 5 What I think is the fibrous growth of a willow

9 dark-colored

10 moss-like {drawing}<sup>84</sup> with a wiry<sup>^</sup>hair-like

11 stem (possibly it is a moss) This with or without

12 the tuft is the lining & lies contiguous in the sides & bottom.

13 6 What looks like brown decayed leaves & confervae from

14 the dried bottom of the river side--mixed with the--everlasting

15 tops internally in the solid bottom.

16 7 Some finer brown root fibres chiefly bet the lining of

17 no 6 & hair & the coarser fibres of no 3--

18 8 A dozen whitish coccoons mixed with the everlasting

19 tops & dangling about the bottom peak externally--

20 also 8 or 10 very minute coccoons mixed

21 a few within the solid bottom. with these--attached in a cluster to the top of

22 an everlasting

23 9 A few black much branched roots (?) (perhaps? ~~of~~ some

24 utricularia from the dried bottom of river) mixed with

25 nos 2 & 3.

26 white & black

27 10 Some horse hair--<sup>^</sup>together with no 5, forming the

28 lining.

29 There are also with the coccoons & everlasting

30 tops externally one or 2 cotton grass heads--one

31 small white feather--& a little greenish fuscous

32 moss from the button bush--& in the bottom a small

33 shred of grape vine bark.

---

<sup>84</sup>T writes a caption to drawing: "used instead of hair"

1 Jan 21st 56  
2 4 men, cutting at once, began to fell the  
3 (v 19th ult)  
4 big elm^at 10 Am--went to dinner at  
5 12, & got through at 2 1/2 Pm.  
6 They used a block<sup>85</sup> & tackle with 5 falls  
7 drawn by  
8 fastened to the base of a buttonwood<sup>86</sup>, &^a  
9 horse, to pull it over the right way--  
10 one said he pulled 20 turns  
11 So it fell without harm down the  
12 road. I measured it at 3 pm just  
13 after the top had been cut off--  
14 It was 15 feet to the first crotch. At<sup>87</sup>  
15 the most up right & prob. highest limb  
16 75 feet it^was cut off, & measured 27<sup>88</sup> inches  
17 in circumference-- As near as<sup>89</sup> I could  
18 tell from the twigs on the snow, & what  
19 the choppers said who had just removed the  
20 top--it was about 108 feet high.  
21 At 15 feet from the stump it  
22 divided into 2 parts, about an equal size  
23 One was decayed and broken in the  
24 also  
25 (which^proved hollow)  
26 fall, being undermost, the other<sup>90</sup>  
27 at its origin was 11 4/12 ft in circum-  
28 (The whole tree directly beneath this crotch was 19 3/12 round)  
29 ference^. This same limb branched again  
30 at 36 8/12 from the stump--& these measured just  
31 beneath the crotch 14 10/12 in circ.  
32 At the ground the stump measured 8 4/12  
33 one way--8 3/12 another--7 1/2 another.  
34 It was solid quite through at but--  
35 (excepting 3 inches in middle) though some-  
36 what decayed within--& I could count

---

<sup>85</sup> "block" altered from "black"

<sup>86</sup>"wood" inserted

<sup>87</sup> "At" altered from "at"

<sup>88</sup> 27: altered from "17"

<sup>89</sup> as: altered from "I"

<sup>90</sup>line connected caret to interlined text







1 & that is not all-- Under another  
2 pine there are more than 20--& a well  
3 worn track from this to a fence post  
4 3 rods distant under which are the cores  
5 of 8 cones and a corresponding {amount}  
6 of scales. The track is like a very small  
7 rabbit. {drawing} --going up the page. They have  
8 gnawed off the<sup>96</sup> cones which were perfectly  
9 closed. I see where one has taken one  
10 of a pair & left the other partly off-- He  
11 had first sheared off the needles that  
12 were in the way & then gnawed off the  
13 sides or cheeks of the twig to come  
14 at the stem of the cone--which, as  
15 usual was cut by successive cuts as  
16 with a knife while bending it. One or  
17 %prob died last summer when little over a year old%  
18 two small perhaps dead--%^%certainly {—}  
19 unripe ones were taken off & left unopened.

20 I find that many of those young  
21 pines are now full of unopened cones  
22 ap  
23 which^will be two years old next summer--  
24 & these the squirrel now eats. There are  
25 {drawing}<sup>97</sup> also some of them  
26 open, perhaps on the  
27 most thrifty twigs.

28 F. Morton hears today from  
29 Plymouth that 3 men have just caught<sup>98</sup>  
30 in Sandy Pond in Plymouth about 200

---

<sup>96</sup>"the" written over "these"

<sup>97</sup>Two captions, or labels, extend down from the drawing at two distinct points: "cones full grown / eaten by squirrels" and "cones big as / filberts".

<sup>98</sup>"t" is incompletely formed

1 lbs of pickerel in 2 days.  
2 Some body has been fishing in the pond this  
3 morning and the water in the holes is beginning  
4 to freeze--I see the track of a crow  
5 V. 24 inst  
6 {drawing} the toes as  
7 usual less spread--& the middle one  
8 making a more curved ~~line~~ furrow in the  
9 snow than the partridge--as if they  
10 %The inner (?) toe a little the nearest to the mid. one--% v Feb 1st  
11 moved more unstably recovering their  
12 %feeble on their feet%  
13 balance.%^^ This track goes to every  
14 hole but one or 2 out of a dozen  
15 (directly from hole to hole sometimes flying a little)  
16 ^& also to an apple core on the snow--  
17 I am pretty sure that this bird was  
18 after the bait which is usually dropt  
19 E. Garfield says they come reg. to his holes for bait as soon as he  
20 has left  
21 on the ice or in the hole^-- So if the  
22 pickerel are not fed it is-- It had even  
23 visited, on the wing, a hole now  
24 frozen & snowed up which I made  
25 far from this in the middle of  
26 the pond several days since--as  
27 I discovered by its droppings-- The  
28 same kind that it had left about  
29 the first holes--  
30 I was surprised on breaking with  
31 pickerel  
32 my foot the ice in a^hole near the  
33 shore--evidently frozen only last night  
34 to see the water rise at once 1/2 inch above  
35 it. Why should the ice be still sinking--  
36 Is it growing more solid & heavier?

1           Most were not aware of the size of the  
2 great elm till it was cut down-- I surprised  
3 some a few days ago by saying that when  
4 its trunk should lie prostrate it would be  
5 higher than the head of the tallest man in  
6 the town--& that 2 {such} trunks could  
7                                   chamber  
8 not stand in the ~~room~~<sup>^</sup>we were then in  
9                                   there would be ample  
10                                   room for  
11 --which was 15 feet across--that<sup>^</sup>~~that~~  
12 double bed-stead on the trunk--nay  
13 that ~~our whole~~ the very dinner table we  
14                                   %at%  
15 we were sitting<sup>^</sup>%with our whole party of  
16 7,<sup>8</sup> chairs & all around it might be  
17                                   ca  
18 set there. (In the de<sup>^</sup>yayed part of  
19 the but end there were curious fine  
20 black lines, giving it a geographical  
21 look here & there-- {drawing} half a  
22 dozen inches long--sometimes following  
23 the line of the rings--the boundary of  
24 a part which had reached a certain stage of  
25 decay. The force on the pullies broke off  
26 more than a foot in width in the middle  
27 of the tree--much decayed.

28           I have attended the felling & so to speak  
29 the funeral of this old citizen of the town--  
30 I who commonly do not attend funerals  
31 --as it became me to do--I was the chief  
32 if not the only mourner there-- I have  
33 taken the measure of its grandeur--  
34 have spoken a few words of eulogy at

1 his grave--~~but there~~ remembering the  
2 nil  
3 maxim ~~nil~~--de mortuis^nisi bonum--  
4 (in this case (magnum))  
5 ^but there were only the choppers & the  
6 passers by to hear me-- Further the  
7 town was not represented--the Fathers of  
8 the town--the select men--the clergy were  
9 not there--but I have not known a  
10 fitter occasion for a sermon of late.  
11 Travellers whose journey was for a short time  
12 delayed by its prostrate body were forced to ~~give~~ <sup>pay</sup>  
13 it some attention & respect--<sup>99</sup> But the axe-  
14 boys had climbed upon it like ants &  
15 commenced chipping at it before it had  
16 There was a man already bargaining for some part  
17 fairly ceased groaning^. How have the  
18 mighty fallen! Its history extends back  
19 over more than half the whole history of  
20 the town. Since its kindred could not  
21 conveniently attend--I attended. Methinks  
22 its fall marks an epoch in the History<sup>100</sup>  
23 of the town-- It has passed away together  
24 with the clergy of the old school--& the  
25 which used to rattle beneath it  
26 stage-coach--^ Its virtue was that it  
27 steadily grew & expanded from year to year  
28 to the very last. ~~On an average~~ <sup>about</sup> ^ 5/7 of  
29 ~~an inch in a year--(near the ground)~~  
30 How much of old Concord falls with  
31 it. The town-clerk will not chronicle  
32 its fall-- I will--for it is of greater  
33 moment to the town than<sup>101</sup> that of many

---

<sup>99</sup> "respect--" altered from "respect."

<sup>100</sup> "History" altered from "history"

<sup>101</sup> "than" altered from "that"

1 a human inhabitant would be-- Another  
2 %Instead of erecting a monument to it--we take all possible pains%  
3 link that bound us to the past is broken.  
4 %to obliterate its stump--the only monument of a tree which is commonly allowed to%  
5 How much of Old Concord was cut away  
6 %stand%  
7 with it! A few such elms would along%e%  
8 constitute a town ship-- They might claim  
9 to send a representative to<sup>102</sup> the General Court  
10 to look after their interests--if a fit one  
11 could be found-- a native American<sup>103</sup> one  
12 in a true & worthy sense--with Catholic  
13 principles. Our town has lost some of its  
14 venerableness-- No longer will our eyes  
15 like a vast corinthian column by the way-side  
16 rest on its massive grey trunk^--no longer  
17 shall we walk in the shade of its lofty  
18 spreading dome-- It is as if you had laid  
19 the axe at the feet of some venerable  
20 Buckley or Ripley-- You have laid the  
21 axe--you have made fast your tackle  
22 to one of the king-posts of the town.  
23 I feel the whole building wracked by it.  
24 Is it not sacrilege to cut down the tree which  
25 has so long looked<sup>104</sup> over Concord beneficently?  
26         Supposing the first 15 feet to average 6 feet  
27 in Diameter-- They would contain more than 3  
28         of wood<sup>105</sup>  
29 cords & a foot^; but prob.--not more than 3 cords.  
30         With<sup>106</sup> what feelings should not the citizens  
31 hear that the biggest tree in the town has  
32 fallen? A traveller passed<sup>107</sup> through the town  
33 & saw the inhabitants cutting it up--  
34 %without regret%  
35         The tracks of the partridges by the sumachs  
36 made before the 11th are perhaps more prominent

---

<sup>102</sup> "to" altered from "--"

<sup>103</sup> "American" altered from "american"

<sup>104</sup> "looked" altered from "& so"

<sup>105</sup> "wood;" altered from "wood--"

<sup>106</sup> "With" written over "Wh"

<sup>107</sup> "passed" altered from "past"

1 now than ever--for they have consolidated the snow--  
2 under them so that as it settled it has left  
3 them alto relieve-- They look like broad chains  
4 extending straight far over the snow.

5 I brought home & examined some of the droppings  
6 They were brown & dry though partly frozen {drawing}  
7 of the crow mentioned 4 ps back^-- After long  
8 with a microscope  
9 study^I discovered that they consisted of the  
10 other %ges%  
11 seeds & skins &^indi%^stible<sup>108</sup> parts of red-cedar  
12 I detected the imbricated scale like leaves of a  
13 %some% berry stem & then the seeds--the now  
14 berries and%%barberries--^& perhaps something more--  
15 black skins of the cedar berries--but easily the large seeds of the barberries  
16 & I knew whence it had probably come

17 --i.e. from the cedar woods & barberry<sup>109</sup>  
18 bushes by Flints Pond. These then make  
19 part of the food of crows in severe weather  
20 when the snow is deep as at present.

21 Jan 23d  
22 Brown is filling his ice house //

23 The clear ice is only from 1 1/2 to 4 inches--  
24 %nearly%  
25 thick--all the rest or ~~more than~~ a foot  
26 the snow  
27 is snow ice--formed by^sinking the first  
28 under the water--& freezing with the water.

29 The same is the case at Walden.  
30 or transparent  
31 To get ice at all clear^you must  
32 scrape  
33 keep the snow off--after each fall.

34 Very little ice is formed by addition below  
35 such a snowy winter as this.

36 yesterday  
37 There was a white birch scale^in the  
38 which I made  
39 ~~snowed up~~ snowed up hole^in the very  
40 middle of Walden<sup>110</sup>. I have no doubt they  
41 blow across the widest part of the  
42 pond.

---

<sup>108</sup>Check MS for this word to see what's interlined: is it "ge" or "ges"? EM says "ges". If "ges", decide whether the character in ink preceding "t" is an "s" or a flourish. BW 1/15/07

<sup>109</sup>"barberry" written over "barbary"

<sup>110</sup>"W" written over "w"



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30

Jan 24th 56

A journal is a record of experiences & growth--not a preserve of things well done or said. I am occasionally reminded of a<sup>115</sup> statement<sup>116</sup> which I have made in conversation & immediately forgotten--which would read much better than what I put in my journal. It is a ripe dry fruit of long past experience which falls from me easily without giving pain or pleasure-- The charm of the journal must consist in a certain greenness--though freshness--& not in maturity. Here I cannot afford to be remembering what I said or did-- my scurf cast off--but what I am & aspire to become.

Reading the hymns of the Rig Veda translated by Wilson--which consist in a great measure of simple epithets addressed to the firmament or the dawn-- or the winds--which mean more or less as the reader is more or less alert & imaginative--& seeing how widely the various translators have differed-- they regarding not the poetry, but the history & philology--dealing with very concise sanscrit which must almost always be amplified to be understood--I am sometimes inclined to doubt if the

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<sup>115</sup> "a" altered from "an"

<sup>116</sup> "statement" altered from "statement,"

1 translator has not made something  
2 out of nothing--whether a real idea  
3 or sentiment has been thus transmitted  
4 to us from so primitive a period-- I doubt  
5 if learned Germans might not thus  
6 edit pebbles from<sup>117</sup> the sea-shore into hymns  
7 of the Rig<sup>118</sup> Veda--& translators translate  
8 them accordingly--extracting the mean-  
9 ing which the sea has imparted to them  
10 in very primitive times-- While the commen-  
11 tators & translators are <sup>disputing</sup> ~~differing~~ about  
12 the meaning of this word or that, I hear  
13 only the resounding of the ancient sea  
14 & put into it all the meaning I am  
15 The deepest murmurs I can recall--  
16 possessed of--for I do not the least  
17 care where I get my ideas or what sug-  
18 gests them.  
19  
20 I knew that a crow had that day plucked  
21 the cedar berries & barberries by Flint's Pond--&  
22 then flapped silently through the trackless air  
23 to Walden, where it dined on fisherman's bait--  
24 though there was no living creature to tell me.  
25  
26 Holbrooks elm measured today  
27 11 feet 4 inches in circ. at 6 feet from ground.  
28 The size of one of the branches of the Davis elm--call it the Lee elm for a Lee  
29 Cheney's largest<sup>119</sup> in fron of Mr Frosts 12-4. at 6 ft formerly lived there.  
30 16-6 at 1 ft  
31 The great elm op Keyes' land nearby--call  
32 it the Jones elm--17-6 at 2 behind & 1 plus  
33 before  
34 15-10 at 4

---

<sup>117</sup> "from" altered from "or"

<sup>118</sup> "R" written over "r"

<sup>119</sup> "largest" altered from "Largest"



1 very distinct. {drawing} From this  
2 they pass into a semicircular  
3 figure sometimes Some of<sup>124</sup> the  
4 first are 6 inches from outside to outside  
5 length wise--with 1 to 2 feet of interval--  
6 are these the grey or red?  
7 A great many hemlock cones  
8 have fallen on the snow & rolled  
9 down the hill--  
10 Higher up against<sup>125</sup> the Wheeler Swamp  
11 I see where many squirrels--perhaps  
12 red--for the tracks appear smaller--  
13 have fed on the alder cones on the  
14 twigs which are low or frozen into the  
15 ice--stripping them to the core just as  
16 they do the pine cones.  
17 Here are the tracks of a crow like those  
18 of the 22d ult--with a long hind toe  
19 nearly 2 inches-- The 2 feet are also  
20 nearly 2 inches apart-- I see where  
21 the bird alighted descending with an  
22 impetus & breaking through the slight  
23 %planting%  
24 crust with its feet side by side.  
25 How different this partridge track  
26 with its slight hind toe--open & wide  
27 spread toes on each side--both feet  
28 forming one straight line, exactly thus  
29 {drawing} The middle  
30 5 inches from centre to centre--  
31 toe alternately curved to the right & to the left--

---

<sup>124</sup> "of" altered from "on"

<sup>125</sup> "against" altered from "in"

1 and, what is apparently the outer toe, in  
2 each case shorter than the inner one--

3 I see under a great many trees--  
4 black willow & swamp Whit oak--the  
5 bark scattered over the snow--some pieces  
6 6 inches long--& above see the hole  
7 which a woodpecker has bored.

8 The snow is so deep along the sides  
9 of the river that I can now look into  
10 nests which I could hardly reach in  
11 the summer-- I can hardly believe them  
12 the same-- They have only an ice egg in  
13 them now-- Thus we go about raised  
14 generally speaking more than a foot  
15 above the summer level-- So much higher  
16 do we carry our heads in the winter--

17 What a great odds such a little  
18 difference makes. When the snow raises  
19 us one foot higher than we have been  
20 accustomed to walk--we are surprised  
21 at our elevation! So we soar.

22 I do not find a foot of open  
23 water even on this North<sup>126</sup> Branch as  
24 far as I go--i.e. to J. Hosmers lot.  
25 The river has been frozen unusually  
26 long & solidly. They have been sledding  
27 wood along the river for a quarter of  
28 a mile in front of Merriams & past  
29 the mouth of Sam Barrett's Brook--

---

<sup>126</sup> "North" altered from "north"

1 where it is bare of snow hard glare  
2 ice on which there is scarcely a trace  
3 or oxen  
4 of the sled--^ They have sledded home  
5 a large oak which was cut down on  
6 the bank-- Yet this is one of the rockiest  
7 & swiftest parts of the stream.--Where  
8 I have so often stemmed the swift current--  
9 dodging the rocks--with my paddle-- There  
10 the heavy slow paced oxen with their ponder{-}  
11 ous squeaking load have {plodd} while  
12 the teamster walked musing beside it.  
13 That Wheeler swamp is a great place  
14 for squirrels-- I observe many of their  
15 tracks along the river side there-- The  
16 nests are of leaves & ap. of the gray species.  
17 There is much of the water-milk-  
18 weed on the little island just above  
19 Dove Rock--it rises above the deep snow  
20 there.  
21 It is remarkable how much the river  
22 has been tracked by dogs the week past--  
23 not accompanied by their masters. They hunt  
24 perchance in the night more than is  
25 supposed--for I very rarely see one  
26 alone by day.  
27 The river is pretty low & has falling within  
28 a month for there has been no thaw--  
29 The ice has broken & settled around  
30 the rocks which look as if they had

1 burst up through it-- Some maple  
2 limbs which were early frozen in have been  
3 broken & stripped down by this irresis-table weight.

4 You see where the big dogs have  
5 slipped on one or 2 feet in their haste  
6 --sinking to the ice--but having 2 more  
7 feet it did not delay them.

8 I walk along the sides of the stream admiring  
9 the rich mulberry catkins of the alders which  
10 look almost edible-- They attract us because  
11 they have so much of spring in them.

12 The clear red osiers too along the river  
13 side in front of Merriam's on Wheeler's  
14 side.

15 I have seen many a collection of stately  
16 elms--which better deserved to be repre-  
17 sented at the General<sup>127</sup> Court than the  
18 ~~mannikins beneath-- Perhaps they shaded~~  
19 ~~mannikins beneath-- Perhaps they shaded~~

20 ~~a~~ barroom & a victualling cellar %& groceries%  
21 %they overshadowed%

22 When I see their magnificent domes  
23 miles away in the horizon--over inter-  
24 vening vallies & forests--they suggest  
25 a village a community there-- But<sup>128</sup>  
26 after all, it is a secondary consider-  
27 ation whether there are human dwellings  
28 beneath them--these may have long since  
29 passed away-- I find that into my idea  
30 of the village has entered more of  
31 the elm than of the human being.

---

<sup>127</sup>"G" poss written over "g"

<sup>128</sup> "But" altered from "but"

1 They are worth many a political borough  
2 They constitute a borough  
3 The poor human representative of his  
4 party sent out from beneath their shade  
5 will not suggest a tithe of the dignity--  
6 the true nobleness & comprehensiveness of  
7 view--the sturdiness & independence--&  
8 the serene beneficence that they do-- They  
9 look from town-ship to township-- A fragment  
10 of their bark is worth the backs of all  
11 the politicians in the union. They are  
12 %their own%  
13 free soilers in %(% a peculiar but%)% broad sense--  
14 --They send their roots north & south &  
15 east & west--& ~~many times~~ into many  
16 a conservatives' Kansas<sup>129</sup> & Carolina--  
17 %such%  
18 who does not suspect their<sup>130</sup> underground  
19 %they improve the subsoil he has never disturbed%  
20 railroads--%^& many times their length  
21 of their principles  
22 if the support^requires it. They battle  
23 with the tempests of a century--see what  
24 scars they bear what limbs they lost before  
25 we were born-- Yet they never adjourn  
26 --they steadily vote for their principles &  
27 send their roots further & wider from  
28 the same centre. They die at their posts  
29 & they leave a tough but for the choppers  
30 to exercise themselves about--& a stump  
31 which serves for their monument.  
32 They attend no caucus--they make no com-  
33 promise--they use no policy-- Their one prin-  
34 ciple is growth--they combine a true

---

<sup>129</sup>"K" written over "C"

<sup>130</sup>"their" cancelled in pencil

1 radicalism with a true conservatism  
 2 --their radicalism is not a cutting  
 3 away of roots--but an infinite multi-  
 4 plication & extension of them under all  
 5 surrounding institutions. For every inch<sup>131</sup>  
 6       %may%       %higher into%  
 7 that they%^rise toward<sup>132</sup> the heavens they take  
 8 a firmer hold on the earth--%^<sup>133</sup> Their con-  
 9 servative heartwood--in which no sap longer  
 10 flows--does not impoverish their growth,  
 11 but is a firm column to support it--& when  
 12 their expanding trunks<sup>134</sup> no longer require  
 13 it--it utterly decays-- Their conservatism  
 14 is a dead but solid heartwood which is the  
 15 pivot & firm column of support to all this  
 16 growth--appropriating<sup>135</sup> nothing to itself--  
 17       %assisting to extend%  
 18 but forever by its support%^extending the  
 19       %their%  
 20 area of%^radicalism. Half a century after  
 21 they are dead at the core, they are preserved  
 22 by radical reforms-- They do not, like  
 23 men, from radicals turn conservative--  
 24 Their conservative part dies out first  
 25 --their radical & growing part survives.  
 26 They acquire new states & territories while  
 27       become  
 28 the old dominions decay--and^are the  
 29 habitation of bears & owls & coons.  
 30                   Jan. 25th 56  
 31       P. m. up river  
 32       The hardest day to bear that we have  
 33 had--for beside being 5°- at M. & at  
 34 4 P. m. there is a strong N. W. wind--

---

<sup>131</sup>"For every inch" cancelled in pencil

<sup>132</sup>"toward" cancelled in pencil

<sup>133</sup>This caret connects to a pencilled circle around "that . . . heavens" in the line above, transposing the phrase to this point in the sentence

<sup>134</sup> "trunk" altered from "trunks"

<sup>135</sup> appropriating: altered from "appropriated"

1 It is worse than when the thermometer  
2 was at zero all day-- Pierce says  
3 it is the first day that he has not  
4 been able to work out doors in the sun--  
5 The snow is now very dry & powdery  
6 & though so hard packed drifts some-  
7 what-- The travellers I meet have red-  
8 faces. Their ears covered-- Pity those  
9 who have not thick mittens-- No man  
10 could stand it to travel far toward this  
11 wind. It stiffens the whole face--& you  
12 feel a tingling sensation in your fore-head  
13 --.Much worse to bear than a still cold.  
14 I see no life abroad no bird nor beast.  
15 What a stern bleak inhospitable as-  
16 (I am off Clam shell hill)  
17 pect nature now wears--!^ Where  
18 a few months since was a fertilizing  
19 river--reflecting the sunset--& luxuriant  
20 meadows resounding with the hum of  
21 insects, is now a uniform crusted snow  
22 with dry powdery snow drifting over it  
23 & confounding river & meadow-- I make  
24 haste away covering my ears, before I freeze  
25 there. The snow in the road has frozen dry  
26 --as dry as bran.  
27 A closed P. pine cone gathered Jan 22nd  
28 opened last night in my chamber-- If  
29 you would be convinced how differently  
30 armed the squirrel is naturally for

1 dealing with p. pine cones--just try to get  
 2 one off with your teeth. He who extracts  
 3 with the aid of a knife  
 4 the seeds from a single closed cone^will  
  
 5 be constrained to confess that the squirrel earns  
 6 It is a rugged customer & will make your fingers bleed.  
 7 his dinner. ^But the squirrel has the key to  
 8 conical & spiny  
 9 this^chest of many apartments-- He sits on  
 10 a post vibrating his tail & twirls it as a  
 11 plaything.  
  
 12 But so is a man commonly a locked up  
 13 open  
 14 chest to us--to^whom; unless we have the key  
 15 of sympathy--will make our hearts bleed.  
  
 16 The elms--they adjourn not night  
 17 nor day--they pair not off-- They stand  
 18 for magnificence--they take the brunt of  
 19 the tempest<sup>136</sup>--they attract the lightning<sup>137</sup> that  
 20 leaving only a few rotten members  
 21 would smite our roofs. scattered over the highway.  
  
 22 The one by Holbrooks is particularly regular--  
 23 & lofty for its girth--a perfect sheaf--but  
 24 thin leaved--ap. a slow grower--It bore a  
 25 tavern sign for many a year-- Call<sup>138</sup> it the  
 26 Bond (?) elm  
  
 27 Jan. 26 '56  
  
 28 When I took the ether my consciousness  
 29 amounted to this--I put my finger on  
 30 myself in order to keep the place, other-  
 31 wise I should never have returned to this<sup>139</sup>  
 32 world.  
  
 33 They have cut & sawed off the but of  
 34 the great elm at 9 1/2 feet from the

---

<sup>136</sup> "tempest" altered from "storm"

<sup>137</sup>"lightening" written over "high"

<sup>138</sup>"C" poss written over "c"

<sup>139</sup> "this" altered from "my"

1 ground--and I counted the annual  
2 rings there with the greatest ease &  
3 accuracy-- indeed I never saw them so  
4 distinct on a large but. The tree  
5 was quite sound there.--not the least  
6 hollow even at the pith. There were  
7 127 rings. Supposing the tree to have been  
8 5 years old when 9 1/2 feet high, then it  
9 was 132 years old--or came up in the  
10 year--1724, just before Lovewell's Fight<sup>140</sup>.

11           There were 2 centers fourteen (14) inches  
12 apart. {drawing} The ac. coarse sketch  
13 will give a general idea  
14 of it. There were 13 dis-  
15 tinct rings about each  
16 center--before they united &  
17 one ring enclosed both. Then there was  
18 a piece of bark--which may be rudely  
19 represented by the upper black mark--  
20 say 6 or 8 inches long. This was not over-  
21 but by  
22 grown<sup>^till</sup> the 24th ring. These  
23 2 centers of growth corresponded in  
24 position to the 2 main branches<sup>6<sup>141</sup> feet</sup>  
25 above--  
26 & I inferrred that when the tree was  
27 about 18 years old, the fork com-  
28 menced at 9 1/2 feet from the ground.--  
29 but as it increased in diameter, it  
30 united higher & higher up. I remember  
31 that the bark was considerably nearer

---

<sup>140</sup> "Lovewell's Fight" altered from "lovewell's fight"

<sup>141</sup> "6" altered from "5"

1 one center than the other. (There was bark  
 2 in several places completely overgrown &  
 3 included on the extreme but end where cut off--  
 4 having ap. overgrown its own furrows.)  
 5 Its diameter, where I counted the rings, was  
 6 one way, as near as I could measure in spite  
 7 of the calf, 4f 3/12 another 4 8/12--&  
 8 4 5 feet. On the line by which I counted,  
 9 which was the long way of the tree, it  
 10 had grown in the first 50 years 20 inches  
 11 or 2/5 inch a year or about 1/9 of an inch a year.  
 12 ^the last 50--5 3/4 inches^--& there was a  
 13 space of about 5 inches between the two--or  
 14 At this height it had grown on an average annually nearly  
 15 24/100 of an inch from the center  
 16 for the intermediate 27 years. on one side. ~~Or counting~~  
 17 ~~both sides had made nearly 1/3 an inch growth.~~  
 18 The white or sap wood averaged about  
 19 2 inches thick. The bark was from 1 to  
 20 2 inches thick and in the last case I could  
 21 ~~dis~~ distinct  
 22 count: from 12 to 15^rings in it--as if  
 23 it were regularly shed after that period.  
 24 {drawing}  
 25 The Court House Elm measured at  
 26 6 feet from the ground on the W side--  
 27 12 feet 1 1/2 inches in circ.  
 28 The Willow by the Jim Jones house--  
 29 14 feet at about 18 inches from ground--  
 30 13-8/12 " " 6 " "  
 31 & it bulged out much larger above this.

1 P. m.  
2 Walked--down the river as far as  
3 the S bend behind Abner Buttricks. I also  
4 know its condition as far as the Hub.  
5 Bridge in the other direction. There is  
6 not a square foot open between these  
7 extremes--& judging from what I know  
8 of the river beyond these limits--I may safely  
9 say that it<sup>142</sup> is not open--(the main<sup>143</sup> stream  
10 I mean)--anywhere in the town-- Of the  
11 %the goose ground%--say  
12 North Branch<sup>144</sup>--above the bath place%^%--I  
13 to the Stone bridge v. 27th inst.  
14 cannot speak confidently. The same must  
15 have been the case yesterday since it was colder.  
16 Prob. the same has been true of the river--excepting  
17 the small space against Merricks below  
18 (when it closed at the Hub. Bath<sup>145</sup>)  
19 the Rock<sup>146</sup> (now closed) since Jan 7th^or  
20 nearly 3 weeks--a long time methinks  
21 for it to be frozen so solidly. A sleigh might  
22 safely be driven now from Carlisle Bridge<sup>147</sup> to the  
23 Sudbury<sup>148</sup> meadows on the river. Methinks  
24 it<sup>149</sup> is a remarkable cold, as well as snowy,  
25 January--for we have had good sleighing ever--  
26 since the 26th of December--& no thaw.  
27 Walked as far as Flint's Bridge with Abel  
28 Hunt--where I took to the river-- I told him  
29 I had come to walk on the river as the best  
30 place--for the snow had drifted somewhat in  
31 the road--while it was converted into ice  
32 almost entirely on the river--but asked

---

<sup>142</sup> "it" written over "this"

<sup>143</sup> "the main" altered from "one main"

<sup>144</sup> "Branch" altered from "branch"

<sup>145</sup> "Bath" altered from "bath"

<sup>146</sup> "Rock" altered from "rock"

<sup>147</sup> "Bridge" altered from "to"

<sup>148</sup> "Sudbury" altered from "sudbury"

<sup>149</sup> "it" altered from "is"

1 he--are you not afraid that you will get-  
2 in? Oh no it will bear a load of wood from  
3 one end to the other-- But then there may  
4 be some weak places-- Yet he is <sup>some 70</sup>70<sup>150</sup> yrs  
5 old & was born & bred immediately on its banks.  
6 Truly one half the world does not know how  
7 the other half lives.  
8  
9 Men have been talking now for a week at  
10 the P. O. about the age of the great<sup>elm</sup>^--as  
11 a matter interesting-- but impossible to be  
12 determined-- The very choppers & travellers  
13 have stood upon its prostrate trunk & specu-  
14 lated upon its age-- As if it were a pro-  
15 found mystery. I stooped & read its years  
16 (127 at 9 1/2 feet)  
17 to them--^but they heard me as the wind  
18 that once sighed through its branches--  
19 they still surmised that it might be 200  
20 yrs old--but they never stooped to read the  
21 inscription-- Truly they love darkness rather  
22 than light. One said it was probably 150  
23 --for he had heard somebody say--that for  
24 50 yrs the elm grew--for 50 it stood still--  
25 %(wonder what portion of his career he stood still!)%  
26 & for 50 it was dying.%^%Truly all men are  
27 not men of science. They dwell within  
28 an integument of prejudice thicker than  
29 the bark of the cork tree--but it is  
30 valuable chiefly to stop bottles with--tied  
31 to their buoyant prejudices they keep them  
32 selves afloat when honest swimmers  
33 sink.  
34

---

<sup>150</sup>"70" written over "60"

1 Talking with Miss Mary Emerson  
2 this evening--she said--"It was not  
3 the fashion to be so original when I  
4 she is readier to take my view--look through my  
5 was young." eyes for the time than any young person that I  
6 know in the town.  
7 The white maple {muds} look large with  
8 bursting downy scales as in spring.

9 I observe that the crust is strongest  
10 over meadows though the snow is deep  
11 there & there is no ice nor water beneath.  
12 but in pastures & upland generally I break  
13 through. Prob. there is more moisture to be  
14 frozen in the former places--& the snow is  
15 more compact.

16 Jan 27 '56

17 I haved just sawed a wheel 1 3/4 inches thick  
18 off the end of ap. a stick of red oak in  
19 my pile. I count 29 rings--And<sup>151</sup> about  
20 of rings or divisions of some kind  
21 the same number^with more or less distinctness  
22 in the bark which is about 1/4 of an inch  
23 thick. Is not the whole number of rings con-  
24 tained in the bark of all trees above a bark<sup>152</sup>  
25 externally smooth? This stick has 2  
26 centers of growth, each a little one side  
27 of the middle. I trace one easily to a  
28 limb which was cut off close to the tree about  
29 3 1/2 inches above the lower side of the section.  
30 The 2 centres are 1 inch apart on the  
31 lower side, 2 inches & 5/8 on the upper side  
32 the main one  
33 There are 3 complete circles to each

---

<sup>151</sup>"And" written over "the"

<sup>152</sup>stray mark before "bark"

1 on the lower side--& 10 {on} the upper  
2 side--before they coalesce--hence it was 7 years  
3 closing up through 1 3/4 inches of height.  
4 {drawing} There is a rough ridge  
5 confined to the bark  
6 only & about 1/4 of an inch high extending  
7 from the crotch diagonally down the tree ap.  
8 to a point over the true center of growth.

9 Pm. Walked on the river  
10 from the Old Stone to Derby's Bridge-- It is  
11 open a couple of rods under the Stone bridge  
12 but not a rod below it  
13 ^& also for 40 rods below the mouth of  
14 along the W. side  
15 Loring's Brook--^prob. because this is a mill  
16 stream. The only other open places within<sup>153</sup> the limits  
17 mentioned yesterday--are in one or 2 places close  
18 under the bank, {and} concealed by it, where  
19 The river after freezing having shrunk  
20 warm springs issue. & the ice settled a foot or 18 inches there  
21 so that you can see water over its edge--  
22 The White maple at Derby's Bridge measures  
23 including ap. a very large sucker  
24 15 feet in circ. at ground^--& 10 ft 5 inches at  
25 not including sucker, there free  
26 4 feet above the ground.^~~The 1~~

27 The lodging snow of Jan. 13th,--just a fortnight  
28 ago, still adheres in deep & conspicuous ridges  
29 to large exposed trees--too stubborn to be  
30 shaken by the wind--showing from which  
31 side the storm came.

32 {drawing} The fruit stems of the dog wood  
33 still hold on & a little fruit--  
34 Of course the limbs should be smoother.  
35 The outline much like a peach tree--but it is  
36 without the numerous small limbs. or twigs

37 Saw what I think were bass nuts on the snow on the river  
38 at Derby's RR Bridge. prob from up stream.

---

<sup>153</sup>"with" inserted



1           It is interesting to see near the sources  
2           small  
3 even of^streams or brooks which now  
4 flow through an open country--perhaps  
5 shrunken in their volume--the traces  
6 of ancient mills--which have devoured  
7 the primitive forest--the earthen dams  
8 & old sluice ways--& ditches and banks  
9 for obtaining a supply of water--

10           These relics of a more primitive pe-  
11 riod are still frequent in our midst.  
12 Such too probably has been the history  
13 of the most thickly settled & cleared  
14 countries of Europe. The saw-miller  
15 is neighbor & successor to the Indian.

16           It is observable that not only  
17 the Moose & the wolf disappear before  
18 the civilized man--but even many species  
19 of insects--such as the black-fly--  
20 & the almost microscopic 'no-see-em'  
21 How imperfect a notion have we commonly  
22 of what was the actual condition of  
23 the place where %we%<sup>156</sup> dwell--3 centuries ago.

24           For the most part the farmers  
25 have not been able to get into the woods  
26 for the last fortnight or more--on  
27 ac. of the snow--& some who had not  
28 got up their wood before are now  
29 put to their trumps--for though it may  
30 not be more than 18 inches deep on a  
31 level in sprout-lands the crust

---

<sup>156</sup>inserted

1 cuts the legs of the cattle--& the occasion-  
2 al drifts are impassable. Sometimes  
3 with 2 yoke of oxen and a horse attached  
4 to the sled--the farmer attempts to break  
5 his way into his lot--one driving while  
6 another walks before with a shovel--treading  
7 & making a path for the horse--but  
8 they must take off the cattle at last  
9 & turn the sled with their hands.

10 Miss Minott has been obliged to have  
11 some of her locusts about the house cut  
12 down-- She remembers when the whole  
13 top of the elm N of the road close to Dr.  
14 Heywoods broke off--when she was a  
15 little girl. It must have been then before  
16 1800.

17 Jan 30th 56

18 8 Am It has just begun to snow--those  
19 dry  
20 little round^pellets like shot.

21 Geo. Minott says that he was standing  
22 with Bowers (?) & Joe Barrett near Dr Hey-  
23 wood's barn in the September gale--& saw  
24 an elm--2ce as big as that which broke off  
25 before his house--break off 10 feet  
26 from the ground--splinter all up--&  
27 the barn bent & gave so that he thought  
28 it was time to be moving. He saw stones  
29 "as big as that [air tight] stove, blown  
30 right out of the wall--" so by bending

1 to the blast he made his way home.

2 All the small buildings on the Walden  
3 road across the brook were blown back  
4 toward the brook-- Minot lost the  
5 roof of his shed. The wind was southerly.

6 As I walked above the old stone bridge  
7 on the 27th ult--I saw where the river had  
8 recently been open open under the wooded bank  
9 on the W. side--& recent saw dust & shavings  
10 from the pail-factory--& also the ends of saplings  
11 & limbs of trees which had been bent down by  
12 the ice, were frozen in. In some places some  
13 water stood above--the ice--& as I stood there  
14 I saw & heard it gurgle up through a crevice  
15 & spread over the ice. This was the influence  
16 of Lorings Brook<sup>157</sup>-- far above.

17 Stopped {f+} snowing before noon--not having  
18 amounted to anything.

19 P. m. measured to see what difference  
20 there was in the depth of the snow in  
21 dif adjacent fields as nearly as possible<sup>158</sup>  
22 alike--& similarly situated. Commenced  
23 15 or 20 rods E of the RR--& measured  
24 across Hubbards (?) Stows & Collier's  
25 fields toward a point on the S side  
26 of the last 25 rds E of Trillium Woods.  
27 These 3 fields were nearly level--some-  
28 what meadowy, especially the 2nd, & at  
29 least 25 rods from the nearest dis-  
30 turbing influence--such as the RR

---

<sup>157</sup> "Brook" altered from "brook"

<sup>158</sup> "possible" altered from "possibly"

1	embankment--or a wood--				
2		AB	BC	21	average
3	N A wall & riders	22	20	12	of
4	_____	19	27	13	all 3 14--
5	. Hub's (?)	14	12	8	%add 2 for
6	av. 14 5/8	13	9	14	ice at bottom
7	.	13	9	11	= 16-
8	B rail fence	17	8	15	V Feb 12th%
9	_____	13	10	14	
10	. Stows	10	10	10	
11	av. 12 1/2	21	9	14	
12	.	13	8	15	
13	. rail fence	13	<u>15</u>	16	
14	_____	12	11)137(12 1/2	15	
15				16	
16				10	
17	C & ditch	11		14	
18	. Collier's	14		<u>21</u>	
19	av. 14	12		17)239(14	
20	.	<u>17</u>			
21	D wall & riders	16)234(14 5/8			
22	_____				
23	S				
24					

25 The walls no doubt gave the 1st & 3d fields some-

26 what more snow-- Yet I am inclined to think

27 that in this trial the snow is shallower

28 very nearly as the fields are more moist.

29 It is 3 inches shallower here than nearer

30 showing the effect of that bank very clearly--6 to 15 rods off

31 the RR where I measured yesterday.^but

32 the av. is the same obtained yesterday

33 for open fields E & W of RR--& proves

34 the truth of that measuring.

35 The snow in the 1st field measured 2 inches

36 more than that in the 2nd!

37 % + 2 = 28 1/2 + %

38 The andromeda swamp gave 26 1/2 + % (on the

39 % + 2 = 25 4/5 % more than %

40 12th ult it was 23 4/5 % ) It has prob. been about<sup>159</sup>

41 feet

42 2 1/2 say on the 16th The andromeda calyculata

43 is now quite covered & I walk on the crust

44 over an almost uninterrupted plain there.

45 Only a few blueberries & Andromeda paniculatas

46 rise above it. Near the last I break through.

47 It is so light beneath that the crust breaks

48 there in great cakes under my feet &

<sup>159</sup>"about" cancelled in pencil

1 immediately falls about a foot making  
2 a great hole--so that once pushing my  
3 way through--for regularly stepping is out of  
4 the question in the weak places--makes a  
5 pretty good path.

6 NB In Wheelers squirrel wood which on the 12th  
7  $\%+2=12\%$   $\%+2=17\%$   
8 gave 10<sup>%</sup>inches of snow now gives 15<sup>%</sup>which  
9 is what I should have judged from the  
10 changes in Trillium wood. They are affected  
11 alike.

12 The sproutland just South of this wood  
13  $\%+2=23\ 4/10\%$   
14 NB gives as average of 14 measurements 21  $4/10\%^$   
15 which I suspect is too much--it is so sheltered  
16 a place.

17 By the RR{--}against Walden I heard the  
18 lispings of a chickadee & saw it on a sumach--  
19 It repeatedly hopped to a bunch of berries--took  
20 one--& hopping to a more horizontal twig--place  
21 it under one foot & hammed at it with its  
22 bill. The snow was strewn with the berries  
23 under its foot, but<sup>160</sup> I could see no shells of  
24 the fruit-- Perhaps it clears off the crimson only.

25 Some of the bunches are very large & quite  
26 upright there still.  
27 {drawing} {drawing} sumachs

---

<sup>160</sup> "but" written over "by"

1           Again I suspect that on meadows  
2           the snow is not so deep & has a firmer  
3           crust. In an ordinary storm the  
4           depth of the snow will be affected by a  
5           wood 20 or more rods distant--or  
6           as far as the wood is a fence--

7           The snow is so light in the swamps under  
8           the crust amid the andromeda that  
9           a cat could almost run there. There  
10          are but few tracks of mice--now the  
11          snow is so deep-- They run underneath.

12          The drift about Lynch's House is  
13          like this {drawing}<sup>161</sup>

14          There is a strong  
15          wind this P. m. from<sup>162</sup> NW  
16          & the snow of the 28th is driving like  
17          steam over the fields--drifting into the roads--  
18          On the RR causeway--it lies in perfectly  
19          straight & regular ridges a few feet  
20          apart NW & SE {drawing} It is dry & scaly.  
21          like coarse bran.

22          Now that there is so much snow  
23          it slopes up to the tops of the walks on both  
24          sides. {drawing}

25          What a dif. between life in the city &  
26          in the country at present--between walking  
27          in Washington street--threading your way between  
28          countless sledges & travellers over the discolored  
29          snow--and crossing Walden Pond--

---

<sup>161</sup>lines 14 and 15 actually appear to right of drawing

<sup>162</sup> "from" altered from "&"

1 a spotless field of snow surrounded by  
2 woods--whose intensely blue shadows & your  
3 own are the only objects-- What a solemn  
4 silence reigns here--!

5 Jan 31st

6 P. m. up North Branch

7 There are a few inches of light snow on top  
8 of the little hard and crusted that I walked  
9 on<sup>163</sup> here last--above the snow ice-- The old  
10 tracks are blotted out & new & fresher ones  
11 are to be discerned-- It is a tabula rasa--  
12 These fresh falls of snow are like turn-  
13 ing over a new leaf of Nature's Album.

14 At first you detect no track of beast  
15 or bird & Nature<sup>164</sup> looks more than  
16 commonly silent & blank-- You doubt  
17 if anything has been abroad--though  
18 the snow fell 3 days ago--but ere  
19 long the track of a squirrel is<sup>165</sup> seen  
20 to or  
21 making^from the base of a tree--  
22 or<sup>166</sup> the hole where he dug for acorns  
23 & the shells he dropped on the snow  
24 around that stump.

25 The wind of yesterday has shaken down  
26 countless oak leaves which have been  
27 driven hurry-scurry over this smooth &  
28 delicate & unspotted surface--& now  
29 there is hardly a square foot which  
30 does not show some faint trace  
31 of them. They still spot the snow thickly

---

<sup>163</sup>"on" altered from "in"

<sup>164</sup> "Nature" altered from "nature"

<sup>165</sup>"is" inserted

<sup>166</sup> "or" altered from "&"

1 in many places, though few can be  
2 traced to their lairs. More hemlock  
3 cones also have fallen & rolled down the  
4 bank. The fall of these withered leaves  
5 after each ruder blast--so clear &  
6 dry that they do not soil the snow is a  
7 phenomenon quite in harmony with the win-  
8 ter.

9           Perhaps the tracks of the mice are the  
10 most amusing of any--they take  
11 such various forms--and though<sup>167</sup>  
12 small are so distinct. Here is where  
13 one has come down the bank--& hopped  
14 meanderingly across the river--  
15 {drawing}  
16 or {drawing}  
17 1 1/4 inches wide by 5 6 or 7 apart from center  
18 to center--

19           But what track is this just  
20 under the bank  
21 {drawing} It must be  
22 a bird, which at last struck the snow  
23 with its wings and took to flight--there  
24 were but 4 hops in all--& then  
25 it ended as above though there was  
26 nothing near enough for it to hop upon  
27 from the snow-- The form of the ~~track~~ foot  
28 was some what like that of a squirrel

---

<sup>167</sup> "though" altered from "here one"

1        though only the outline was distinguished--  
2        The foot was about 2 inches long & it  
3        was about 2 inches from outside of one  
4        foot to outside of thother. 16 inches from  
5                the rest in proportion  
6        hop to hop--^ Looking<sup>168</sup> narrowly I saw  
7        where one wing struck the bank ten  
8        feet ahead, thus {drawing} as it passed--  
9                                occurred  
10       1/4 of a mile down stream it^~~looked~~  
11 again thus {drawing} and near by still  
12       less of a track but<sup>169</sup> marks as if  
13       it had pecked in the snow.  
14                Could it be the track of a crow with  
15       its toes unusually close together? or was  
16       it an owl? Prob a crow V. Feb. 1st  
17                hardly a doubt of it--  
18       Some creature has been eating elm blossom  
19       buds & dropping them over the snow.  
20                The tracks of the mice suggest ex-  
21       tensive hopping in the night & going  
22       a gadding-- They commence & termi-  
23       nate in the most insignificant little  
24       holes by the side of a twig or tuft--  
25       & occassionally they give us the type of  
26       their tails very distinctly--even side-wise  
27       to the course on a bank side--thus  
28       {drawing}

---

<sup>168</sup> "Looking" altered from "looking"

<sup>169</sup> "but" altered from "as"

1           Saw also the tracks prob-- of a muskrat  
2   for a few feet leading from hole to hole just  
3   under the bank.

4                           Feb <sup>170</sup>1st '56  
5                           2/3 grown  
6   Our kitten Min^this morning was playing  
7   with Sophia's broom this morning, as she  
8   was sweeping the parlor, when she sud-  
9   denly went into a fit, dashed round the  
10   room--& the door being opened, rushed up  
11   2 flights of stairs & leaped from the  
12   attic window to the ice & snow by the  
13   side of the door step--a descent of  
14   a little more than 20 feet--passed round  
15   the house & was lost-- But she made  
16   her appearance again--about noon  
17   at the window quite well & sound in  
18   every joint--even playful & frisky.

19           Pm. Up river

20           What gives to the excrements of the fox  
21   that clay color often, even at this sea-  
22   son? Left on our eminence--

23           I scented a fox's trail this p. m. (and  
24   have done so several times before) where  
25   he crossed the river--just 3 rods distant--  
26   looked sharp & discovered where it had stopped  
27   by a prominence-- Yet he could not have  
28   passed since last night--or 12 hours before  
29   --it being near the village. How widely  
30   they range these nights! I hear

---

<sup>170</sup>poss stray mark before "1st"

1 that Daniel Foster of Princetown had  
2 11 turkies taken from under his barn  
3 in one night last fall--prob. by a fox.  
4 2 were found a week after buried under some  
5 brush in a neighboring wood.

6 The snow is somewhat banked toward the  
7 sides of the river--but shows darker yellowish  
8 or icy in the middle-- Lichens blown from the  
9 black willows lie here & there on the snow.  
10 Nut Meadow Brook open for some distance  
11 in the meadow-- I was affected by the sight  
12 of some green polygonum leaves there-- Some  
13 kind of minnow darted off-- I see where  
14 a crow has walked along its side. In  
15 one place it hopped--& its feet were side  
16 by side as in the track of yesterday--though  
17 a little more spread the toes-- I have but  
18 little doubt that yesterday's track was a crows--  
19 {drawing} The 2 inner toes are near together--the  
20 middle more or less curved often.

21 I see a gray rabbit amid the young oaks--  
22 in Hubs river-side grove  
23 ^curled & shrunk up--squatting on the  
24 & begin to sketch it when  
25 snow-- I advance^& it plunges into a little  
26 by its side  
27 hole in the snow^--the entrance to its burrow  
28 3 inches wide by a little more in length {drawing}.  
29 The track of its foot is about 1 inch wide.

30 I see a pitch pine seed blown 30  
31 rods from J Hosmers little grove--

1           The Sheldon<sup>171</sup> House in Deer field pulled  
2 down about 8 yrs since--represented in  
3                           %& in Barber %  
4 Gleasons pictorial for '51%^--is in the  
5 style of the Hunt House--except that  
6 there is but one window on each side of  
7           %& the Meeting house alone of those within the fort%  
8 the door. It%^survived the assault of ~~1675~~ %1704%  
9 & the door through which a hole was cut  
10 & a woman shot is still preserved--  
11           This has been a memorable January  
12 for snow & cold-- It has been excellent  
13 sleighing ever since the 26th of Dec.  
14           %not%                           %since%  
15 --very little<sup>172</sup> less than a foot at any time before  
16   %Jan 6th%  
17 the 13th & not less than a foot<sup>173</sup> since%^on a  
18 level in open fields%^--in swamps much more.  
19 Cars have been detained--the woodlots for  
20 the most part inaccessible-- The river has  
21 been closed up from end to end--with the  
22 exception of one or 2 insignificant openings  
23 on a few days. No bare ice. The crows  
24 have been remarkably bold coming to  
25 eat the scraps {cast} out behind the  
26 houses. They alight in our yard. I  
27 think I have not noticed a tree sparrow  
28 during the month. Blue jays & chicadees  
29 also common in the village--more than  
30 usual. We have completely forgotten  
31 the summer-- There has been no Jan.  
32 thaw--though one prophesied it a fort-  
33 night ago because he saw snow fleas

---

<sup>171</sup> "Sheldon" altered from "sheldon"

<sup>172</sup>"very little" cancelled in pencil

<sup>173</sup>"before . . . foot" cancelled in pencil

1 The ponds are yielding a good crop of ice  
2 The eaves have scarcely run at all. It has  
3 been what is called "an old fashioned winter".

4 Feb 2d

5 Snowed again last night perhaps an inch--  
6 erasing the old tracks--& giving us a blank  
7 page again--restoring the purity of  
8 nature-- It may be even a trifle deeper now than hitherto. //

9 Feb 3d

10 Analysed the crow b. bird's nest from which  
11 I took an egg last summer--8 or 10 feet up a  
12 white maple by river op-- Island. Large of an irreg-  
13 ular form appearing as if wedged in between a  
14 twig & 2 large contiguous trunks. From outside  
15 to outside it measures from 6 to eight inches--  
16 inside 4--depth 2--height 6-- The  
17 foundation is a loose mass of coarse ^grape strips of  
18 chiefly  
19 vine bark^--some 18 inches long by 5/8 inch  
20 also  
21 wide--^{slender} grass & weed stems--mikania  
22 stems--a few cellular river weeds as rushes--sparganium  
23 --pipe grass--& some soft coarse fibrous roots--

24 The same coarse grapevine bark  
25 & grass & weed stems--together with some harder  
26 wiry stems--form the sides & rim--the bark  
27 being passed around the twig--

28 The nest is lined with the finer grass &  
29 weed stems &c--

30 The solid part of the nest is of half decayed  
31 full of fine fibrous roots &  
32 vegetable matter & mud ^bound internally  
33

1 with grass stems &c--& some grape bark--  
2 being 1 1/2 inches thick at bottom--  
3 Pulled apart & lying loose it makes  
4 a great mass of material.  
5 This like similar nests, is now a great  
6 haunt for spiders.  
7 Pm up North Branch--  
8 A strong N. W. wind (& Therm. 11°-) driving  
9 the surface snow like steam--about 5 inches  
10 of soft snow now on ice. See many seeds  
11 of the hemlock on the snow still. & cones  
12 which have freshly rolled down the bank.  
13 Tracked some mice to a black willow by  
14 river side, just above spring--against the  
15 open swamp--and about 3 feet high in ap.  
16 an old woodpeckers hole--was prob. the  
17 mouse nest--a double fhandful--  
18 consisting 4/9 of fine ~~fibres~~ <sup>inner bark</sup> or shreds of ^perhaps  
19 willow or maple 3/9 the greenish moss ap. of  
20 buttonbush--2/9 the gray slate fur ap of  
21 rabbits or mice. Half a dozen hogs bristles  
22 might have been brought by some bird to its nest  
23 there. These made a very warm & soft  
24 nest.  
25  
26 // Got some kind of vireo's nest from a maple  
27 far up the stream a dozen feet high--pensile--  
28 almost  
29 within ^wholly rather coarse grape vine shreds  
30 without the same & bark covered with the delicate  
31 white spider-nests (?) birch bark shreds & brown

1 cocoon silk.

2 Returning saw near the Island<sup>174</sup> a shrike //

3 glide by, cold & blustering as it was--

4 with a remarkably even & steady sail

5 or gliding motion 8 or 10 feet above the ground

6 ^like a hawk--^& alight on a tree from which

7 at the same instant a small bird--perhaps

8 a creeper or nuthatch flitted timidly away--

9 The shrike was ap. in pursuit.

10 We go wading through snows now

11 up the bleak river--in the face of

12 a cutting N. W. wind & driving snow storm--

13 turning now this ear then that to the

14 & our gloved hands in our bosoms or pockets

15 wind--^Our tracks are obliterated before

16 we come back. How different this

17 from sailing or paddling up the

18 stream here in July--or poling amid

19 Yet still, in one square rod where they have got out ice & a

20 the rocks! thin transparent ice has formed, I can see the pebbly

21 bottom the same as in summer.

22 It is a cold & windy Sunday--the

23 whistles round the N. W. corner of the house &

24 wind ^penetrates every crevice ~~of the~~

25 ~~house~~ & consumes the wood in

26 the stoves--soon blows it all away.

27 whisks round the corner of the house--in at a crevice--& flirts

28 An arm-ful goes but little way-- Such

29 off with all the heat before we have begun to

30 a day makes a great hole in the

31 feel it.

32 wood-pile.

33 but a few inches deep

34 Some of the low drifts^--made by the

35 surface snow blowing--over the river espe-

36 cially, are of a fine pure snow so

37 densely packed that our feet make hardly

38 any impression on them

39 River still tight at Merricks. //

---

<sup>174</sup>"I" written over "i"

1           There comes a deep snow in mid-  
2 winter covering up the ordinary food  
3 of many birds & quadrupeds--but  
4 anon a high wind scatters the seeds  
5                   & birch & alder &c  
6 of pines & hemlocks ^far & wide over  
7 the surface of the snow for them.

8           You may now observe plainly the habit  
9 of the rabbits to run in paths about the  
10 swamps.

11           Mr Emerson who returned last week  
12 from lecturing on the Mississippi--  
13 ~~where~~ having been gone but a month--  
14 tells me that he saw boys skating  
15 on the Mississippi--& on Lake Erie--&  
16 ~~has made~~ on the Hudson--& has no  
17 doubt they are skating on Lake<sup>175</sup> Superior--  
18 & prob-- at Boston he saw them skating on  
19 the Atlantic.

20           The inside of the gray squirrel, or leaf nests,  
21 is of leaves chewed or broken up finely. I see  
22 where one, by the snow lodging on it, has helped  
23 weigh down a birch.

24   p 476  
25           In Barber's His't Coll--^there is a letter by  
26 Cotton Mather dated "Boston, 10th Dec. 1717."  
27 describing the great snow of the previous February.  
28 from which I quote--

29           "On the twentieth of the last February there  
30 came on a snow, which being added unto what  
31 had covered the ground a few days before,

---

<sup>175</sup>"Lake" written over "Su"

1 made a thicker mantle for our mother  
2 than what was usual: And the storm with it  
3 was, for the following day, so violent as to make  
4 all communication between the neighbors every  
5 where to cease. People, for some hours, could not  
6 pass from one side of a street unto another,"--  
7 -- -- -- -- --"On the 24th day of the month,  
8 comes Pelion upon Ossa: Another snow came  
9 on which almost buried the memory of the former,  
10 with a storm so famous that Heaven laid an  
11 interdict on the religious assemblies through-  
12 out the country, on this Lord's<sup>176</sup> day, the like  
13 whereunto had never been seen before. The Indians  
14 near an hundred years old affirm that their  
15 fathers never told them of any thing that equalled  
16 it. Vast numbers of cattle were destroyed in  
17 this calamity. Whereof some there were, of the  
18 stranger [stronger? mine] sort, were found  
19 standing dead on their legs, as if they had  
20 been alive many weeks after, when the snow  
21 melted away. And others had their eyes glazed  
22 over with ~~eyes~~ at such a rate, that  
23 being not far from the sea, their mistake  
24 of their way drowned them there. One gentleman,  
25 on whose farms were now lost above 1100 sheep,  
26 which with other cattle, were interred (shall I  
27 say) or innived, in the snow, writes me word  
28 that there were two sheep very singularly  
29 circumstanced. For no less than 8 & 20 days  
30 after the storm, the people pulling out

---

<sup>176</sup>"L" written over "l"

1 the ruins of above an 100 sheep out of  
2 a snow bank which lay 16 foot high,  
3 drifted over them, there was 2 found alive,  
4 which had been there all this time, &  
5 kept themselves ~~lives~~ alive by eating the  
6 wool of their dead companions. When they  
7 were taken out they shed their own fleeces,  
8 but soon got into good care again."

9 -- --"A man had a couple of young hogs,  
10 which he gave over for dead, but on the 27th  
11 day after their burial, they made their way  
12 out of a snow-bank, at the bottom of which  
13 they had found a little tansy to feed upon."--

14 --"Hens were found alive after 7 days; Turkeys  
15 were found alive after 5 & 20 days, buried  
16 in the snow, & at a distance from the  
17 ground, & altogether destitute of anything  
18 to feed them."-- --

19 --"The wild creatures of the woods, the out-  
20 goings of the evening, made their de-  
21 scent as well as they could in this time of  
22 scarcity for them towards the sea-side. A vast  
23 multitude of deer, for the same cause, taking  
24 the same course, & the deep snow spoiling  
25 them of their only defence, which is to run,  
26 they became such a prey to these devourers,  
27 that it is thought not one in 20 escaped."

28 -- -- --"It is incredible how much  
29 damage is done to the orchards, for

1 the snow freezing to a crust, as high as the  
2 bows of the trees, anon split them to pieces.  
3 The cattle also, walking on the crusted snow  
4 a dozen foot from the ground, so fed upon  
5 the trees as very much to damnify them."--

6 "Cottages were totally covered with the snow, &  
7 not the very tops of their chimneys to be seen"-- These  
8 "odd accidents" he says "would afford a story.  
9 But there not being any relation to Philosophy in  
10 them, I forbear them." He little thought  
11 that his simple testimony to such facts as the  
12 above--could be worth all the philosophy he  
13 might dream of.

14 Feb. 4th

15 Pm to Walden--

16 I go to walk--at 3 Pm thermometer--18°-  
17 & 22°-  
18 It has been about this at this hour--for  
19 a week or 2-- All the light snow, some  
20 5 inches above the crust, is adrift these  
21 days--& driving over the fields like steam  
22 --or like the foam streaks on a flooded  
23 meadow--from NW to SE. The sur-  
24 face of the fields is rough--like  
25 a lake agitated by the wind.

26 I see that the partridges feed quite  
27 extensively on the sumach berries--e.g.  
28 at my old house--they come to them after  
29 every snow--making fresh tracks & leave  
30 now stript many bushes quite bare.

31 At tanager glade I see where

1 bark of the  
2 the rabbits have gnawed the^shrub oaks  
3 extensively & the twigs down to the size of  
4 a goose quill cutting them off as smoothly  
5 as a knife. They have have also gnawed  
6 some young white oaks--black-cherry--  
7 & apple-- The shrub oaks look like  
8 hedges which have been trimmed--or clipt.

9 I have often wondered how red cedar  
10 could have sprung up in some pastures  
11 which I knew to be miles distant from  
12 the nearest fruit-bearing cedar--but it  
13 & barberries &c  
14 now occurs to me that these<sup>177</sup> ^may be  
15 planted by the crows--and prob. other birds.

16 --The oak leaves which have blown  
17 over the snow are collected in dense  
18 heaps on the still<sup>178</sup> side of the bays at Walden  
19 --where I suspect they make warm beds  
20 for the rabbits to squat on.

21 Feb 5th

22 The weather is still clear--cold--& un-  
23 relenting-- I have walked much on  
24 the river this winter--but, ever since it  
25 froze over--it has been on a snow  
26 clad river--or pond-- They have been  
27 river walks--because the snow was  
28 shallowest there-- Even<sup>179</sup> the meadows on--  
29 ac. of the firmer crust, have been more  
30 passable than the uplands-- In the  
31 afternoons I have walked off freely

---

<sup>177</sup>"these" written over "they"

<sup>178</sup>"still" inserted

<sup>179</sup>"E" written over "e"

1 up or down the river without impediment  
2 or fear--looking for birds & birds' nests  
3 & the tracks of animals--and as often  
4 as it was written over--a new snow came  
5 & presented a new blank page-- If it  
6 were still after it, the tracks were  
7 beautifully distinct-- If strong winds blew--  
8 the dry leaves losing their holds--traversed  
9 & scored it in all directions.

10 The sleighing would have been excellent all  
11 the month past if it had not been for the  
12 drifting of the surface snow into the track when-  
13 ever the wind blow--but that crust on  
14 the old snow--has prevented very deep drifts

15 I should the average cold was about 8°+  
16 at 8<sup>180</sup> Am & 18° or 20°+ at 3 Pm.

17 Feb 6th '56

18 Pm to Walden-- The down is just peeping //  
19 out from some of the aspen buds-- Cut a  
20 cake of ice out of the middle of Walden, within  
21 3 rods of where I cut on the 18th of Jan. The  
22 snow was about an inch deep only--so fast  
23 has it been converted into snow ice. I was obliged  
24 to make a hole about 4 feet square  
25 in order to get out a cake, & took<sup>181</sup> great  
26 care to approach the water evenly on all sides  
27 so that I might have the less chopping  
28 to do after the water began to rush in, which  
29 would wet me through. It was surprising  
30 with what violence the water rushed in

---

<sup>180</sup>"8" poss written over "6"

<sup>181</sup>"with" written over "the"

1 as soon as a hole was made--under  
2 the pressure of that body of ice. On  
3 the 18th of Jan. the ice had been about  
4 7 inches thick here--about 4 being  
5 snow ice & about 3 water ice-- It was  
6 // now 19 inches thick 11 1/2- being snow  
7 ice & 7 1/2+ water ice. Supposing  
8 it an inch thick only here when the snow  
9 began to fall on it (for it began to fall  
10 almost immediately) it had increased ~~it~~  
11 since that time 6 1/2+ inches downward & 11 1/2-  
12 upward-- Since the 18th of Jan-- , when<sup>182</sup>  
13 there was 10 inches of snow on it it  
14 had increased about 4 1/2 downward--  
15 & about 7 1/2 upward. I was not pre-  
16 pared to find that any ice had formed  
17 on the underside since the 18th. The  
18 water ice was very crystalline. This ice  
19 was thicker than the snow has been in open  
20 fields any time this winter-- Yet this  
21 winter has been remarkable for the abun-  
22 dance of snow. I also cut through  
23 & measured in the Ice Heap Cove--  
24 The snow ice was 12 1/4 & the water ice  
25 about 6--but perhaps a little was broken  
26 off in cutting through the last-- In all about  
27 18 1/4 inch. I was not prepared to find it  
28 thickest in the middle. Earlier<sup>183</sup> in the  
29 winter--or on the 18th Jan. it was  
30 thickest near the shore.

---

<sup>182</sup>poss pencil caret before word

<sup>183</sup>"Earlier" written over "Early"

1           Goodwin says that he has caught 2 crows  
2 this winter in his traps set in water for mink,  
3 & baited with fish-- The crows prob. put to it  
4 for food & looking along the very few  
5 open brooks attracted by this bait got  
6 their feet into the traps. He thinks  
7 that I call muskrat tracks are mink  
8 tracks by the Rock--& that muskrat do not  
9 come out at all this weather-- I saw a  
10 clamshell opened & they say minks do not open them (?)

11                   Feb 7th

12           Began to snow at 8 Am--turned to rain                   //  
13 at noon & cleared off or rather ceased raining  
14 at night--with some glaze on the trees.  
15   though slight  
16           This the first thawing ^since the 25th(?) of Decemem-  
17 ber-- During the rain the air was thick--  
18 the distant woods--bluish--and the single  
19 trees &c on the hill under the dull mist  
20 covered sky remarkably distinct & black--

21                   Feb 8th

22           9 Am to Fair Haven Pond--  
23           A clear & a pleasanter & warmer day  
24 than we have had for a long time. The  
25                   (at noon)  
26 snow begins ^to soften somewhat in the road.  
27           For 2 or 3 weeks successive light &  
28 dry snows have fallen on the old crust  
29 & been drifting about on it--leaving  
30 it at last 3/4 bare & forming drifts  
31 against the fences &c or here & there  
32 low slaty.--fractured ones in mid field

1 or pure white hard-packed ones. These drifts  
2 on the crust are commonly quite low  
3 & flat. But yesterdays snow turning  
4 to rain which froze as it fell--there  
5 giving them a hoary look  
6 // is now a glaze on the trees^--icicles  
7 like rakes' teeth on the rails--and  
8 a thin~~e~~ crust over all the snow-- At  
9 this hour the crust sparkles with a  
10 myriad brilliant points or mirrors--one  
11 to every 6 inches at least-- This crust is  
12 cracked like ice into irregular figures a foot  
13 or two square. Perhaps the snow has  
14 settled considerably--for the track in the  
15 roads is the highest part. Some heard  
16 a loud cracking in the ground or ice  
17 last night.

18 I cut through--5 or 6 rods from the E shore  
19 of Fair Haven--& find 7 inches of snow--9 inches  
20 // of snow ice & 8 of water ice--17 of both.  
21 The water rises to within 1/2 inch of the top of  
22 the ice.

23 Isaac Garfield has cut a dozen holes on  
24 the west side-- The ice there averages  
25 // 19 inches in thickness-- Half the holes  
26 are 5 or 6 rods from the shore--& the  
27 rest 9 or 10--the water from 3 to 7 feet  
28 In some places more than half the whole depth is ice  
29 deep-- ^The thinnest ice is 17 inches  
30 the thickest 20+. The inner row

31  
32 

---

In the mid of river in front of our house same day it is 13 1/4 inches thick  
33 only 5 of it snow ice--it having been late to freeze there, comparatively.

1       invariably the thickest. The water rises above  
2       the ice in some cases.

3               Edward & Issac Garfield were fishing  
4       there--& Puffer came along--& afterward  
5   He cannot get near the  
6       Lewis Miner with his gun.       partridges on ac. of the cracklings  
7   of the crust.  
8       %I saw the last 2 approaching with my glass%  
9               The fishermen agree in saying that the pickerel  
10       have<sup>184</sup> generally been eating, & are full, when they bite.  
11       Puffer thinks they eat a good deal, but seldom.  
12       Some think it best to cut the holes the day-  
13       before--~~that~~ because the noise frightens them.  
14       & the crackling of the crust to day<sup>185</sup>--was thought  
15       to frighten them-- E. Garfield says that  
16       his uncle Daniel was once scaling a  
17       pickerel when he pricked his finger against  
18       the horn of a pout which the pickerel  
19       had swallowed. He himself killed a pickerel  
20       with a paddle in the act of swallowing  
21       a large perch-- Puffer had taken  
22       a striped snake out of one.

23               They send to Lowell<sup>186</sup> for their bait, &  
24       fishermen send thither from far & wide, so  
25       that there is not a sufficient supply for them.

26               I. Garfield once caught an eel there  
27       with his pickerel bait--through the ice--  
28       also speared a trout that weighed ~~2~~  
29       3 1/2 lbs--he says--off Well meadow--

30               E. Garfield says that he was just  
31       turning into the pond from up stream  
32       when he heard a loud sound & saw and  
33       caught there 2 great mud turtles-- He  
34       let the boat drift down upon them,

---

<sup>184</sup>"have" inserted

<sup>185</sup>poss "today"

<sup>186</sup>"L" written over "l"

1 One had got the other by the neck--& their  
2 shells were thumping together--& their tails  
3 sticking up-- He caught one in each  
4 hand suddenly, & succeeded in getting  
5 them into the boat--only by turning them  
6 over--since they resisted with their claws against  
7 the side--then stood on them turned over--  
8 paddled to nearest shore--pulled his  
9 boat up with his heel--& taking a tail  
10 in each hand walked backward through  
11 the meadow in water a foot deep, drag-  
12 ging them. Then carried one a few rods,  
13 left him & returned for the other--&  
14 so on-- One weighed 43 & the other 47  
15 pounds--together 90-- Puffer said that  
16 he never saw 2 together so heavy-- I. Garfield  
17 said that he had seen one that weighed  
18 63 lbs. All referred to the time when  
19 (about 15 years ago--one said the year  
20 of the Bunker Hill Monument celebration) Some  
21 40 were found dead on the meadows between  
22 there & Sudbury-- It was about the end of  
23 March & Puffer inferred that they had come  
24 out thus early from the river & the  
25 water going down the ice had settled on  
26 them & killed them--but the Garfields  
27 thought that the ice which tore up  
28 the meadows very much that year--exposed  
29 them & so they froze-- I think the last most

1 likely. Puffer searches for them in May under  
2 & calls one of the small  
3 the cranberry vines with a spear-- kinds the "grass tortoise"

4 E. Garfield says that he saw the  
5 other day where a fox had caught in the  
6 snow 3 partridges & eaten 2--he himself  
7 last winter caught 2 on the hill side S of  
8 F. Haven with his hands-- They flew before him--  
9 & dived into the snow,--which was about a  
10 foot deep--going 2ce their length into it--  
11 He thrust his hand in & caught them.  
12 Puffer said that his companion one night  
13 speared a partridge on the alders on the S side  
14 the pond.

15 E. Garfield says there were many quails  
16 here last fall--but that they are suffering  
17 now--

18 One night as he was spearing in Conant's Cran-  
19 berry meadow, just north the pond--his dog  
20 caught a shelldrake in the water by the  
21 shore.

22 Some days ago he saw what he thought  
23 a hawk as white as snow fly over the pond--  
24 %was it a {guy-}falcon%  
25 but it--may have been a white owl--(which  
26 nest he never saw--) He some times sees a  
27 hen hawk in the winter--but never a partridge  
28 or other small hawk at this season--  
29 Speaks again of that large speckled hawk he killed once--which  
30 some called a "Cape Eagle"  
31 Had a hum-- bird's nest behind their  
32 house last summer--& was amused to see  
33 the bird drive off other birds--would  
34 pursue a robin & alight on his back--  
35 --let none come near-- I Garfield saw  
36 ones nest on a horizontal branch of  
37 a white-pine near the Charles Miles house  
38 about 7 feet from ground.

1           E Garfield garfield spoke of the  
2 wren's nest as not uncommon hung in the  
3 grass at the meadows--& how swiftly  
4 & easily the bird would run through a  
5 winnow of hay.

6           Puffer saw a couple of foxes cross the  
7 pond a few days ago-- The Wheelwright  
8 in the corner saw 4 at once about  
9 the same time.

10          They think that most squirrel tracks now  
11 are of the gray ones--that they do not lay  
12 up anything-- Their tracks are much larger  
13 than those of the red. Puffer says  
14 that 5 gray squirrels came out of  
15 one of their leafy nests in a mid-sized  
16 white pine, after it was cut down behind  
17 the Harrington house the other day--&  
18 a day or 2 after 3 out of another. He says  
19 that they too use bark in making their  
20 nests--as well leaves--the inner bark  
21 of old chestnut rails--which looks like  
22 seaweed.

23          E. Garfield says the Chip squirrels come  
24 out this month--.

25          Puffer saw a star-nosed mole yesterday  
26 in the road its track was {drawing}  
27 dog-like

28          Coming home at 12--the ice is fast  
29 melting on the trees & I see in the  
30 drops the colors of all the gems-- The  
31 snow is soft & the eaves begin to run

1 as not for many weeks.

2 Therm. at 3 1/2 Pm 31°+

3 Puffer once found the nest of what he calls the deer mouse  
4 (prob. jumping) in pile of wood at what is now R. Rice's  
5 place in Sudbury--& the old one carried off 9 young  
6 clinging to her teats. These men do not chop now--they say because  
7 the snow is so deep & the crust cuts their legs.  
8 Mr Pritchard tells me that he remembers  
9 a 6 weeks of more uninterruptedly severe cold  
10 than we have just & that was in '31 end  
11 ing the middle of January--the eaves  
12 on the S side of his huse did not once  
13 run during that period--but they have  
14 run or dripped a trifle on several days  
15 during the past 6 weeks.  
16 Daniel (?)  
17 Puffer says that he and ^Haynes set lines once when  
18 there was good skating in all the bays from the  
19 Long cause-way in Sudbury down to the RR. bridge--  
20 but caught only 2 or 3 perch.  
21 Feb 9th 56.  
22 How much the NW. wind prevails in the  
23 winter--almost all our storms come from  
24 that quarter & the ridges of snow drifts run  
25 that way-- If the Ind. placed their heaven  
26 in the SW--on ac. of the warmth of the  
27 SW wind--they might have made a  
28 stern winter god of the N. W. wind.  
29 Pm up Assabet  
30 3 1/2 Pm. Therm. 30°+ This & yesterday  
31 comparatively warm weather--1/2 inch of //  
32 snow fell this fore noon--but now it has

1 cleared up. I see a few squirrel tracks  
2 but no mice tracks for no night  
3 has intervened since the snow. It is  
4 only where the river washes a wooded bank  
5 that I see mice or even squirrel tracks  
6 {--}elsewhere only where dogs & foxes have traversed  
7 it-- E.G. there are no tracks on the side  
8 of the river against Hosmers & Emerson's land  
9 though many alders &c there--but many  
10 tracks commonly on the opposite wooded side.  
11 In the swamp west of pigeon rock--I see  
12 where the rabbits have bitten off the Swamp-  
13 white oak sprouts--where they have sprung  
14 up tender looking like poplar--from stocks  
15 broken by the ice last winter. I hear a  
16 // pheobe note from a chicadee  
17 // Saw a pensile nest 18 feet high within  
18 a lichen clad red maple on the edge  
19 of the Assabet Spring or<sup>pink</sup> azalea swamp--  
20 It looked very much like a bunch of the  
21 lichens dangling--& I was not sure it was  
22 not till I climbed up to it. Without it  
23 was chiefly the coarse greenish lichens of  
24 the maple--bound with coarse bits of  
25 bark--& perhaps bleached milkweed bark (??)  
26 & brown cocoon silk--& within a thin lin-  
27 ing of pine needles hemlock twigs & the like.  
28 Was it a Yel-- throat vireo's--? It  
29 was not shaped like the red eye's--{bu}

1 side wise thus--{drawing} looking down on it thus  
2 --{drawing} On a side twig to one of the  
3 limbs & about a foot from the end of the twig.

4 Feb-- 10th 56

5 Speaking about the weather & the  
6 fishing--with E & I-- Garfield on the  
7 8th ult I was amused to hear these 2  
8 young farmers suddenly disputing as to  
9 whether the<sup>187</sup> moon (?)<sup>188</sup>, if that be it, was in  
10 the Feet--or the Head or elsewhere. Though  
11 I know far more of astronomy than they,  
12 I should not know how at once to find  
13 out this nonsense in an almanac-- Yet  
14 they talk very glibly about it, & go a fishing  
15 accordingly. Again in the evening of  
16 the same day I overtook Mr Pritchard & ob-  
17 served that it was time for a thaw--but said

18 he-- "That does not look like it--  
19 in the west  
20 (pointing to the ~~new~~ moon^<sup>189</sup>) ~~in the~~ You  
21 ~~you~~ could hang a powder horn upon  
22 that pretty well<sup>189</sup>--"

23 Pm

24 To Walden-- Returning I saw a  
25 fox on the railroad at the crossing  
26 below the shanty-site--8 or 9 rods from  
27 me. He looked of a dirty yellow & lean.  
28 I did not notice the white tip to his tail--  
29 Seeing me he pricked up his ears--& at  
30 first ran up & along the E bank

---

<sup>187</sup>"the" inserted

<sup>188</sup>"(?)" inserted

<sup>189</sup>"w" written over "y"

1 on the crust--then changed his  
2 mind & came down the steep bank  
3 crossed the RR before me--& gliding  
4 up the west bank disappeared in  
5 the woods-- He coursed or glided  
6 along easily--appearing not to lift  
7 his feet high--leaping over obstacles--  
8 with his tail extended straight behind--  
9 He leaped over the ridge of snow  
10 about 2 feet high & 3 wide--between  
11 the tracks very easily & gracefully.

12 I followed examining his tracks-- There  
13 was about a quarter of an inch of  
14 recent snow above the crust--but  
15 for the most part he broke in  
16 2 or 3 inches-- I slumped from 1 to 3  
17 feet. His tracks when running, as  
18 I have described, were like this--  
19 {drawing} being about 2 by 5 inches  
20 as if he slid a little--no  
21 marks of toes being seen  
22 in that shallow snow--the greatest  
23 interval above--1 foot-- Soon after  
24 thus {drawing} The greatest  
25 interval some-  
26 times 4 feet even. Sometimes the 3 tracks  
27 merged together where the crust broke--  
28 {drawing}

1           When walking at ease before he  
2 saw me his tracks were more round--and  
3 nearer together--(about 2 inch x 2 1/2)  
4 thus {drawing}  
5 Sometimes I thought his tail had scraped  
6 the snow--  
7           He went off at an easy gliding pace  
8 such as he might keep up for a long  
9 time--pretty direct after his first turning.

10                               Feb 11th  
11           Pm to Fair Haven Pond by River  
12           Israel Rice says that he does not

13 know that he can remember a winter  
14 when we had as much snow as we  
15 have had this winter.   Eb. Conant says as much excepting the  
16                               year when he was 25--about 1803.  
17           It is now fairly thawing--the eaves                       //

18 running & puddles stand in some places--  
19 The boys can make snow balls--& the  
20 horses begin to slump occassionally.  
21           Saw a partridge by the river side  
22 opposite F. H. Hill which at first  
23 I mistook for the top of a fence post  
24 above the snow--amid some alders--I  
25                               4 rods off  
26 shouted & waved my hand^to see if it was  
27 one--but there was no motion & I  
28 thought surely it must be a post--  
29 Nevertheless I resolved to investigate--  
30 Within 3 rods I saw it to be indeed a  
31 partridge to my surprise--standing perfectly  
32 still with its head erect & neck ~~out~~

1 stretched upward-- It was as com-  
2 plete a deception as if it had de-  
3 signedly placed itself on the ~~lig~~ line of  
4 the fence & in the proper place for a  
5 post. It finally stepped off daintily  
6 with a tetering gait & head up--&  
7 took to wing.

8 I thought it would be a thawing day  
9 by the sound--the peculiar sound--of cock-  
10 crowing in the morning.

11 It will indicate what steady cold  
12 weather we have had to say that the  
13 lodging snow of Jan 13th (though  
14 it did not lodge remarkably) has not  
15 yet completely melted off the sturdy  
16 trunks of large trees--

17 Feb. 12 56

18 Thawed all day yesterday--& rained some-  
19 // what last night, clearing off this morning.  
20 Heard the eaves drop all night  
21 The Thermometer at 8 1/2 Am--42°+  
22 or crust  
23 The snow^& cold weather began Dec 26th--  
24 & not till Feb 7th was there any considerable  
25 relenting when it rained a little--i.e.  
26 43 days of uninterrupted cold weather--  
27 & no serious thaw till the 11th or yesterday.

28 How different the sun light over  
29 thawing snow--from the same over dry  
30 frozen snow. The former excites me  
31 strangely & I experience a spring-like

1 melting in my thoughts. Water now  
2 stands above the ice & snow on the river.

3 I find on shovelling away the snow  
4 that there is about 2 inches of solid  
5 ice at the bottom--that thin crusted  
6 snow of Dec 26th These 2 inches must  
7 be added then to my measures of Jan 12th--16th--  
8 23d--29th--& 30

9 To day I find it has settled since the  
10 29th, owing of course mainly to the  
11 rain of the 7th ult & espically of last<sup>190</sup>  
12 night, about 2 inches in open  
13 land--& 1 1/2 inches in Trillium woods--

14	Thus W of RR	E of RR	<sup>191</sup> Trill. Woods
15	11 1/4(+2=12 1/4	13 1/5(+2=15 1/5	13-(+2=15
16	average		
17	12(+2 =		
18	14		

19 There has been scarcely any loss on the W  
20 side of RR--but 3 3/4 on the E side-- It  
21 may be owing to the drifting since the 29th

22 From Jan 6th to Jan 13 not less than a  
23 foot of snow on a level in open land--  
24 %V forward Mar. 19%  
25 & from Jan 13th to Feb 7th %^%not less than  
26 16 inches on a level at any one time  
27 in open land--& still there is 14 on a level.  
28 That is for 25 days the snow was 16  
29 inches deep in open land!!

---

<sup>190</sup>"l" written over "y"

<sup>191</sup>vertical line drawn between this column and the one to the left of it

1 Feb 13th  
2 Grew cold again last night--with high  
3 wind-- The wind began about mid-day-- I think  
4 a high wind commonly follows rain or a thaw  
5 in winter-- The thermometer at 8 1/2 Am is  
6 // at zero. (at 1 Pm 8°+)  
7 This fall of 42° from 8 1/2 Am yesterday to  
8 the same time to day--has produced not  
9 thin & very uneven  
10 // a ^smooth, but a ^firm & thick ^crust  
11 on which I go in any direction across  
12 the fields stepping over the fences--  
13 Yet there is some slosh at the bottom of  
14 this snow, above the icy foundation.  
15 Now no doubt many sportsmen are  
16 out with their dogs--who have been impri-  
17 soned by the depth of the snow. In the  
18 woods where there are bushes beneath  
19 you still slump more or less--  
20 The crust is quite green with the  
21 needles of pitch pines--sometimes whole  
22 plumes which have recently fallen-- Are these  
23 chiefly last years needles brought down  
24 by the glaze--or those of the previous  
25 year which had not fallen before?  
26 I suspect they are chiefly the former--but  
27 may be some of the latter. V. Feb 14th  
28 Feb 14  
29 Still colder this morning 7°- at 8 1/2  
30 Am.

1 Pm to Walden--

2 I find that a great many pine needles--  
3 both white & pitch--of '54 still hold on  
4 bristling around the twigs, especially if the  
5 tree has not grown much the last year--  
6 So those that strew the snow now are of  
7 both kinds.

8 I can now walk on the crust in every direction  
9 at the Andromeda swamp--can run  
10 & stamp without danger of breaking  
11 through raised quite above the androm-  
12 eda (which is entirely concealed) more  
13 than 2 feet above the ground.

14 But in the woods--& even in wood  
15 paths--I slump at every other step.

16 In all the little valleys in the  
17 woods & sproutlands & on the S. E.  
18 sides of hills--the {oak} leaves which  
19 have blown over the crust are gathered  
20 in dry & warm looking beds often  
21 5 or 6 feet in diameter about the  
22 base of the shrub oaks. So clean & <sup>crisply</sup> ^dry  
23  
24 & warm above the cold white crust--  
25 they are singularly inviting to my eye--

26 No doubt they are of service to conceal  
27 & warm the rabbit & partridge & other  
28 beasts & birds-- They fill every little hollow  
29 & betray thus at a distance a man's tracks  
30 made a week ago--or a dogs many  
31 rods off on a hill side

1           If the snow were not crusted they would  
2 not be gathered thus in troops.

3           I walk in the bare maple swamps & detect  
4 the minute pensil nests of some vireo high  
5 over my head--in the fork of some unattain-  
6 able twig where I never suspected them in  
7 summer--a little basket cradle  
8 that rocked so high in the wind. & where  
9 is that young family now? while their cradle  
10 is filled with ice?

11           I was struck today by the size & continuousness  
12 of the naturally willow hedge on the  
13 E side of the RR. causeway at the  
14 foot of the embankment--next to the fence  
15           %12%  
16           Some 10<sup>192</sup> years ago when that cause-  
17 way was built through the meadows  
18 was built there were no willows there  
19 or near there--but now just at the foot  
20 of the sand bank--where it meets the meadow  
21 & on the line of the fence--quite a dense  
22 willow hedge has planted itself. I used  
23 to think that the seeds were brought  
24 with the sand from the deep cut in  
25           but there is no golden willow there ~~nor indeed in~~  
26 the woods--^but now I think that  
27 the seeds have been blown hither from  
28 ~~lodged~~ a ~~great~~ distance & lodged against  
29 the foot of the bank--just as the  
30 snow drift accumulates there--  
31 for I see several ash trees among

---

<sup>192</sup>"10" cancelled in pencil

1       them which have come from an ash 10  
2       rods east in the meadow--though none  
3             There are also a few alder elms birch--poplars & some elder--  
4       has sprung up elsewhere.^ For years a willow  
5       might not have been persuaded to take root  
6       in that meadow-- But run a barrier  
7       like this through it & in a few years  
8       it is lined with them. They plant themselves  
9       here solely & not in the open meadow--as  
10       exclusively as along the shores of a river--  
11       The<sup>193</sup> sand bank is a shore to them & the  
12       meadow<sup>194</sup> a lake. How impatient, how  
13       rampant--how precocious these Osiers!  
14       They have hardly made 2 shoots from  
15       the sand in as many springs--when silvery  
16       catkins burst out along them--& anon  
17       golden blossoms--& downy seeds--spreading  
18       their race with incredible rapidity-- Thus  
19       they multiply & clan together. Thus  
20       they take advantage even of the RR--  
21       which elsewhere disturbs & invades their  
22       domains. May I ever be in as good  
23                     %v n p How tenacious%  
24       spirits as a willow.%^^ They never despair--  
25       Is there no moisture longer in Nature which  
26       they can transmute into sap. They are emblems  
27       of youth--joy & everlasting life. Scarcely  
28       is their growth restrained by winter  
29       but their silvery down peeps forth  
30       in the warmest days in January (?)

---

<sup>193</sup>"T" poss written over "t"

<sup>194</sup>poss cancelled "i" dot over word

1 The very trees & shrubs & weeds--if we consider  
2 their origin have drifted thus like  
3 snow against the fences & hill  
4 sides. Their growth is protected & fa-  
5 vored there. The willow--how tenacious  
6 of life--how withy--how soon it gets over  
7 its hurts! Soon the alders will take  
8 their places with them. This hedge is of  
9 course as straight as the rail-road or  
10 its bounding fence.

11 Over this crust alder & birch & pine seeds &c  
12 which in summer would have soon found  
13 a resting place--are blown far & wide.

14 Feb 16th '56

15 Pm to Walden--

16 It has been trying to snow for 2 days--  
17 about 1 inch fell last night but it  
18 clears up at noon & sun comes out very  
19 warm & bright. Wild says it is the warmest  
20 day at 12 M since the 22nd of Dec. when  
21 the therm. stood at 50°+ today it is at  
22 44. I hear the eaves running before  
23 I come out--& our thermometer at 2 Pm is  
24 38°+. The sun is most pleasantly warm on  
25 my cheek--the melting snow shines in the  
26 ruts--the cocks crow more than usual  
27 in barns--my great coat is an  
28 incumbrance-- There is<sup>195</sup> no down visible on  
29 the sallows when I descend the E side

---

<sup>195</sup>"is" written over "no"

1 of the RR--unless a scale has come off.

2 Where I measured the ice in the mid--

3 of Walden on the 6th ult I now measure

4 again, or close by it, though without cutting  
5 [prob about same as the 6th when called 7 11 1/2--]  
6 out the cake-- I find about 11 1/4 ^of snow-ice

7 & 21 1/2 in all--leaving 10 1/4 clear ice.

8 Which would make the ice to have increased

9 beneath through all this thickness & in spite

10 of the thaws 2 3/4- inches

11 Near the shore in one place it was 22 inches

12 Feb 17th

13 Some 3 or 4 inches of snow fallen in the night

14 & now blowing--

15 At noon begins to snow again--as well as

16 {blows}-- Several more inches fall--

17 Feb 18

18 Yesterday's snow drifting-- No cars

19 from above or below till 1. Pm.

20 Feb 19th

21 Measure snow again--on ac. of what

22 fell on 17th--

23	W of RR	E of RR	av of	Trill. Wood
24	15+(+2	12 1/2--(+2	Both	18 1/2 +2 (20 1/2
25			14 +2 (16	

26 The great body of the last snow ap. to have  
27 settled under the E side of the RR-- There are 5 1/2  
28 inches more in the wood than on the 12th ult--& I  
29 think this is about the av. of what fell on the 17th  
30 (night & day) Ac. the snow has been deeper since

1 the 17 than before this winter-- I think if the drifts  
2 could be fairly measured it might be found to  
3 be 17 or 18 inches deep on a level.

4 This snow, you may say, is all drifted--  
5 for in the fields E of the RR there is not  
6 so much as there was a week ago, while W  
7 there is about 4 inches more.

8 Feb 20th '56

9 P. m. Up Assabet--

10 See a broad and distinct otter trail  
11 made last night or yesterday-- It came  
12 out to the river through the low woods  
13 N of Pinxter swamp--making a very  
14 conspicuous trail from 7 to 9 or 10  
15 or 4  
16 inches wide & 3^4 deep--with sometimes  
17 singularly upright sides--as if a square  
18 {drawing}  
19 timber had been drawn along^--but com-  
20 monly rounded--{drawing} It made some  
21 short turns & zig-zags--passed under  
22 limbs which were only 5 inches above the  
23 snow--not over them--had ap. slid  
24 down all banks and declivities--making  
25 a uniform broad hollow trail there  
26 without any mark of its feet-- On  
27 reaching the river it had come along  
28 under the bank--from time to time  
29 looking into the crevices where it might  
30 get under the ice there--some times as-  
31 cending the bank and sliding back--  
32 On level ground its trail had this

1 appearance--  
2 {drawing}  
3 Commonly 7 to 9 or 10 inches wide & tracks  
4 of feet 20 to 24 apart--but sometimes  
5 there was no track of the feet for 25  
6 feet--frequently for 6-- In the last  
7 case swelled in the outline as above.  
8 <sup>op.</sup>  
9 Having come down as far as ^the Great  
10 white on the hill--it returned on its  
11 track & entered a hole under the ice at  
12 Assabet spring from which it has not issued.

13 Feb 22dnd

14 Pm to Assabet Stone bridge & home on river  
15 --It is a pleasant & warm P. m. & the  
16 snow is melting-- Yet the river is still perfectly  
17 closed--(as it has been for many weeks)  
18 both against Merricks & in the Assabet--ex-  
19 directly  
20 cepting ^under this upper Stone bridge--&  
21 prob at mouth of Loring's Brook<sup>196</sup>. I am  
22 surprised that the warm weather within  
23 10 days has not caused the river to open  
24 at Merricks--but it was too thick  
25 to be melted

26 Now first--the snow melting & the ice begining  
27 greyish  
28 to soften-- I see those slender ^winged  
29 with closed wings snow clad  
30 insects creeping ^over the ^ice {drawing} Perla (?) //  
31 from 1/3 of an inch to an inch long  
32 On all parts of the river of various sizes &c--& every warm  
33 day afterward--  
34 Have seen none before--this winter.  
35 Have in fact 4 wings /V. snow & ice

---

<sup>196</sup>"B" written over "b"

1           Just below this bridge begins an  
2   otter track several days old--yet  
3   very distinct which I trace half a  
4   mile down the river-- In the snow  
5   less than an inch deep on the ice  
6   each foot makes a track 3 inches  
7   wide--ap enlarged in melting--& the  
8   whole 4 appear thus-- The clean  
9   interval {drawing}<sup>197</sup>--the length  
10   occupied by the 4 feet = 14 inch.  
11   It looks as if some one had dragged  
12   a round timber down the middle of the  
13   river a day or or two since--which bounced  
14   as it went.

15           There is now a crack running down  
16   the middle of the river & it is slightly  
17   elevated there owing prob to the {increasing}  
18   temperature.

19                           Feb 23d

20           9 Am to F. H. Pond up river--

21           A still warmer day-- The snow is so solid  
22   that it still bears me--though we have  
23   had several warm suns on it. It is melting  
24   gradually under the sun. In the morning  
25   I make but little impression in it.  
26   As it melts it acquires a rough but  
27   regularly waved surface. It is inspiriting  
28   to feel the increased heat of the sun reflected  
29   from the snow-- There is a slight  
30   mist above the fields--through

---

<sup>197</sup>T writes the caption "16 inches" above drawing

1 which the crowing of cocks sounds spring-  
2 like.

3 I sit by a maple on a maple-- It wears  
4 the same shaggy coat of lichens summer &  
5 winter.

6 At 2 Pm the Therm. is ~~42°+~~ 47°+ Whenever  
7 it is near 40 there is a speedy sotening  
8 of the snow.

9 I read in the papers that the ocean  
10 %/not to bear or walk on safely%  
11 is frozen--%^or has been lately--on the bank-  
12 side of Cape Cod--at the Highland Light  
13 one mile out from the shore-- A phe-  
14 nomenon which, it is said, the oldest have  
15 not witnessed before--

16 Feb 24th

17 Dr Jarvis tells me that he thinks there  
18 was as much snow as this in '35 when  
19 he lived in the Parkman House & drove  
20 in his sleigh from Nov 23d to March 30th  
21 excepting one day.

22 Feb 25th

23 Pm. to Walden--& Fair Haven--

24 The only bare ground is the RR tracks--where  
25 the snow was thin. The crust still bears--& left  
26 the RR. at Andromeda ponds--& went through  
27 on crust to Fair Haven-- Was surprised to see  
28 some little minnows only an inch long in an  
29 open place in Well Meadow Brook-- As  
30 I stood there saw that they had just felled

1 my bee tree the hemlock--the chopper  
2 even then stood at its foot-- I went over  
3 & saw him cut into the cavity by my direction.  
4 He broke a piece out of his axe as big as  
5 hemlock  
6 my nail against a^knot in the mean-  
7 while. There was no comb within.

8 They have just been cutting wood  
9 at Bittern Cliff--the sweet syrup is  
10 out on the ends of the hickory logs  
11 there.

12 Gathered some facts from  
13 Henry Bond's Genealogies of the Families<sup>198</sup> of  
14 Watertown &c--

15 My mother's mother was Mary Jones,  
16 only daughter of--"Col. Elisha Jones, Esq.,  
17 of Weston. A Boston newspaper, of Feb. 15th  
18 1775, says: 'On Monday last, died, in this  
19 town, in the 66th year of his age, Elisha Jones  
20 Esq., late of Weston, for many years a magis-  
21 trate, Col. of a regiment of Militia, and mem-  
22 ber of the General Assembly. In the many de-  
23 partments in which he acted, he eminently shewed  
24 the man of principle, virtue,' &c. He married,  
25 Jan 24, 1733-4, Mary Allen, and occupied his  
26 father's homestead". [Mary Allen was the  
27 dr. of Abel Allen--who was the son of Lewis  
28 Allen of Watertown Farms who died 1707-8]

29 The children of E Jones & Mary Allen were  
30 1 Nathan 2d son died in infancy 3 Elisha 4 Israel

---

<sup>198</sup>"F" written over "f"

1 b. 1748  
2 5 Daniel 6 Elias 7 Josiah 8 Silas--9 Mary^  
3 10 Ephraim 11 Simon (or Simeon) 12 Stephen 13 Jonas  
4 14 Phillemore 15 Charles.  
5 born 1710  
6 Col. Elisha Jones was ^the son of Capt Josiah  
7 Jones (born 1670 in Weston) & Abigail Barnes  
8 Capt. Josiah Jones was the son of Josiah Jones of Wat-  
9 ertown Farms (born 1643) and Lydia Treadway (dr of  
10 Nathaniel Treadway & ~~Suf~~ who died in Watertown 1689)  
11 Josiah Jones was son of Lewis Jones (who ap-  
12 pears to have moved from Roxbury to Watertown about 1650+ &  
13 died 1684) and Anna (perhaps Stone?) This Josiah  
14 born in England.  
15 Jones in 1666 bought "of John Stone & Wife Sarah,  
16 of Wat., a farm of 124 acres on the N side of  
17 Sudbury highway, about 2 miles from Sud.",--  
18 Feb 26th  
19 Pm to Hubb's Close--  
20 I see at bottom of the Millbrook--below  
21 Emersons--2 dead frogs--the brook has  
22 part way yet a snowy bridge over it--.  
23 Were they left by a mink or killed by cold  
24 & ice? In Hubbard's maple swamp  
25 beyond I see the snow within a few days  
26 sprinkled with the saw dust like bits of wood  
27 under a dead maple where a woodpecker  
28 has drilled a handsome round hole--  
29 Excepting the carrying it downward within it  
30 is ready for a nest-- May they not have a  
31 view to this use even now?



1 meadow--a grey-rabbits hind leg--freshly  
2 left there--perhaps by a fox.

3           The papers are talking about the pros-  
4 pect of a war between England & America--  
5 neither side sees how its country can avoid  
6 a long & fratricidal war without sacrifici-  
7 cing its honor-- Both nations are ready to  
8 take a desperate step--to forget the interests  
9 of civilization & christianity & their com-  
10 mercial prosperity--& fly at each other's  
11 throats. When I see an individual  
12 thus beside himself--thus desperate--ready  
13 to shoot or be shot--like a black leg--  
14 who has little to lose--no serene aims to ac-  
15 complish--I think he is a candidate for  
16 bedlam-- What asylum is there for  
17 nations to go to?

18           Nations are thus ready to talk of wars  
19 %will it not be thought {disreputable} at length {as duelling between individuals}  
20 & challenge one another--because they  
21 now is?%  
22 are made up to such an extent of poor  
23 low-spirited despairing men--in whose eyes  
24 the chance of shooting somebody else with-  
25 out being shot themselves exceeds their actual  
26 good fortune. Who in fact will be  
27 the first to enlist but the most des-  
28 perate class--they who have lost all hope--  
29 & they may at last infect the rest.

30           Minot says that partridges will bud  
31 on black birches as on apple trees.

1 Feb 28th '56  
2 Pm to Nut Meadow--  
3 Mother says that the cat lay on her  
4 bread one night & caused it to rise  
5 finely all around her  
6 I go on the crust which we have  
7 had since the 13th--i.e. on the solid frozen  
8 snow which settles very gradually in  
9 the sun--across the fields & brooks.  
10 The very beginning of the river's breaking  
11 up--appears to be the oozing of water  
12 through cracks in the thinnest places  
13 & standing in the shallow puddles there  
14 on the ice--which freeze solid at night.  
15 The river & brooks are quite shrunken.  
16 --The brooks flow far under the  
17 a foot thick  
18 hollow ice & snow crust^--which here  
19 and there has fallen in showing the  
20 shrunken stream far below-- The surface  
21 of the snow melts into a regular  
22 waved form--like raised scales.  
23 Miles is repairing the damage done  
24 at his new Mill by the dam giving way.  
25 He is shovelling out the flume which  
26 was half filled with sand--standing  
27 in the water. His saw-mill built of  
28 slabs reminds me of a new country.  
29 He has lost a head of water equal to  
30 2 feet by this accident-- Yet

1 he sets his mill a-going to show me<sup>201</sup> how  
2 it works-- What a smell as of gun-  
3 wash when he raised the gate--  
4 He calls it the sulphur from the  
5 pond-- . It must be the carburetted hy-  
6 drogen gass from the bottom of the  
7 pond under the ice. It powerfully  
8 a powerful smelling bottle  
9 scents the whole mill. ^How pleasant  
10 are the surroundings of a mill!  
11 Here are the logs (pail-stuff) already  
12 drawn to the door from a neighboring hill<sup>202</sup> before  
13 the mill is in operation-- The dammed up  
14 meadow the meadow--the melted snow  
15 --and welling springs--are the serfs he  
16 compells to do his work-- He is unruly as  
17 yet--has lately broke loose--filled  
18 up the flume & flooded the fields below  
19 He uses the dam of an old mill {~~built~~}  
20 which stood here a hundred years ago--  
21 which now nobody knows anything about.  
22 The mill is built of slabs--of the  
23 eaten sap-wood. The old dam had prob--  
24 been undermined by muskrats-- It would  
25 have been most prudent to have built  
26 a new one. Rude forces--rude men--  
27 & rude appliances--  
28 Martial Miles who is there--says that  
29 there are many trout in this brook--  
30 He sees them running down just before  
31 winter--& at that time Charles Snow

---

<sup>201</sup>"me" inserted

<sup>202</sup>"hill" inserted

1 once speared a great many--  
2 one  
3 ~~some~~ weighing 3 ~~or~~ 4 lbs.-- He  
4 once came within 4 feet of an otter  
5 at 10 Pm in the middle of the  
6 road by the guide board just north  
7 of this brook-- Spoke of the one  
8 shot in a ditch at Donge Hole  
9 as I had heard before--also of the  
10 3 killed--shot--at Farrar's swamp--  
11 The one who shot them told him  
12 that he attempted to kill them with a  
13 shovel, but that they would take it out  
14 of his hands as often as he attempted  
15 it.

16 Coombs came along with his dog &  
17 gun on his way to shoot partridges  
18 which will come out to bud this evening  
19 on certain young apple trees-- He  
20 has got 4 or 5 for several nights in  
21 succession--& sees foxes there running about on  
22 the crust.<sup>203</sup>  
23 Francis Wheeler says he sold two young fox-  
24 skins to a tin peddler today for a dollar  
25 --Coombs says they got a silver-gray fox  
26 in Lincoln this winter & sold its skin for  
27 16 dollars!! He says that he  
28 // killed a shelldrake a month or  
29 6 weeks ago in a small open place  
30 beneath the falls at the Factory.  
31 This shows what hardy birds they are.

32 Last summer--he found

---

<sup>203</sup>"running . . . crust" poss added

1 a black ducks nest on one of the islands  
2 in Loring's Pond<sup>204</sup>-- He saw the duck hide  
3 in the grass-- Came up & put his hand  
4 on a parcel of feathers & raising a  
5 handful was surprised to find the eggs  
6 under them.

7 How various the talents of men--!  
8 From the brook, in which one lover of  
9 nature has never during all his life time  
10 detected anything larger than a minnow  
11 another extracts a trout that weighs  
12 3 lbs--or an otter 4 feet long.

13 How much more game he will see  
14 who carries a gun--i.e. who goes to see it!  
15 Though you roam {the} woods all your  
16 days--you never will see by chance--what  
17 he sees who goes on purpose to see it.

18 One gets his living by shooting wood cocks--  
19 most never see one in their lives--

20 Coombs goes to shoot partridge this evening  
21 by a a far off wood side-- M Miles goes  
22 home to load up--for he is going to Boston  
23 with a load of wood tonight.

24 Our young Maltese cat Min--which  
25 cold  
26 has been absent 5 ^nights--the ground  
27 covered deep with crusted snow--her first  
28 absence--and given up for dead--has  
29 at length returned at day light--awakening  
30 the whole house with her mewing  
31 & afraid of the strange girl we have got in the mean while

---

<sup>204</sup>"p" written over "p"

1 she is a mere wrack of skin & bones  
2 --with a sharp nose & wiry tail  
3 She is as one returned from the dead--  
4 There is as much rejoicing as at the  
5 return of the prodigal son--& if we had  
6 a fatted calf we should kill it.

7 Various are the conjectures as to her  
8 adventures--whether she has had a  
9 fit--been shut up somewhere or lost--  
10 torn in pieces by a certain terrier or frozen to death.  
11 In the mean while she is fed with the best  
12 saucers of  
13 that the house affords--minced meats &^  
14 warmed milk--& with the aid of unstinted  
15 sleep in all laps in succession is fast  
16 %He%  
17 picking up her crumbs. She has already  
18 found her old place under the stove--and  
19 %his%  
20 is preparing to make a stew of her brains  
21 there.

22 That strong gun-wash scent from the  
23 mill pond water was very encouraging.  
24 I who never partake of the sacrament make the more of it.  
25 How simple the machinery of the mill--

26 Miles has dammed a stream--raised a pond or  
27 horizontal  
28 head of water & placed an old ^mill-wheel  
29 in position to receive a jet of water in its  
30 buckets--transferred the motion to a  
31 horizontal shaft & saw by a few cog-  
32 wheels & simple gearing & throwing a  
33 roof of slabs over all--at the out-  
34 let of the pond-- You have a mill.

35 Returning on the crust over  
36 Puffer's place--I saw a fine plump

1 hen hanging from an apple tree & a  
2 crow from another--prob. poisoned to  
3 kill foxes with-- A hen which prob. a fox  
4 had killed.

5 Stopped at Martial Miles' to taste his cider--  
6 marvellously sweet & spirited without being bottled  
7 --alum & mustard put into the barrels.

8 A weight of water stored up in  
9 a meadow, applied to move a saw--which  
10 scratches its way through the trees placed  
11 before it. So simple is a saw-mill

12 A mill wright comes & builds a dam  
13 across the part of the meadow--& a mill  
14 pond is created--in which at length fishes of  
15 various kinds are found-- (The pond is  
16 like a weight wound up.) & muskrats  
17 & minks & otter frequent it.

18 Feb 29th 56

19 Minot told me this P. m. of his catching  
20 a pickerel in the mill brook once--before  
21 the pond was drawn off--when the brook had  
22 4 or 5 times as much water as now--  
23 which weighed 4 lbs-- Says they stayed  
24 in it all winter in those days-- This was  
25 near his land up the brook-- He once  
26 when fishing for pickerel  
27 also caught there ^a trout which weighed  
28 3 1/2 lbs--he fell within 2 feet of the water--  
29 but succeeded in tossing him higher up--

1       When cutting peat thereabouts he saw  
2       a stinkpot turtle in the water eating a  
3       frog which it had just caught.

4               Speaks of seeing a mink swimming along  
5       a little in his beech wood lot--& from  
6       time to long running along the shore  
7       --part way up an alder & down again

8               He loves to recall his hunting  
9       days & adventures-- And I willingly  
10      listen to the stories he has told me half  
11      a dozen times already. One day he saw  
12      about 20 black ducks on Goose Pond  
13      & stole down on them thinking to get  
14      a shot--but it chanced that a stray  
15      dog scared them up before he was  
16      ready. He stood on the point of the  
17      neck of land between the ponds & watched  
18      them as they flew high toward {Flint's}  
19      Pond. As he looked he saw one separate  
20      from the flock when they had got  
21      half way to Flint's<sup>205</sup> Pond--or half a mile--  
22      & return straight toward Goose Pond  
23      again. He thought he would await  
24      him & give him a shot if he came  
25      near enough-- As he flew pretty near  
26      %rather%  
27      & %^%low--he fired--whereupon the  
28      duck rose right up high into the  
29      air, & he saw by his motions that  
30      he was wounded-- Suddenly he

---

<sup>205</sup>"F" written over "f"

1 dropped like a stone<sup>206</sup> by a slanting  
2 fall into the point of a thick pine  
3 wood--& he heard him plainly strike the  
4 ground like a stone. He went there &  
5 searched for long time--& was about  
6 giving it up--when at length he saw  
7 the duck--standing still alive & bleeding  
8 by the side of a stump--& made out  
9 to kill him with a stick. before he could  
10 reach the water.

11 He said he saw Emerson come home from  
12 lecturing the other day with his knitting  
13 bag (lecture bag) in his hand. He asked  
14 him if the lecturing business was as good  
15 as it used--to be-- Emerson said he did-  
16 'nt see but it was as good as ever--  
17 guessed the people would want lectures  
18 "as long as he or I lived."

19 Told again of the partridge hawk  
20 striking down a partridge which rose  
21 before him & flew across the run in  
22 the beech woods.--how suddenly he did  
23 it--& he hearing the fluttering of the  
24 partridge came up & Secured<sup>207</sup> it while  
25 the hawk kept out of gun shot.

26 March 1st '56

27 9 Am to Flints Pond via Walden--  
28 by RR--& the crust.

29 I hear the hens cackle as not before for many  
30 months. Are they not now beginning to lay?

---

<sup>206</sup>"like a stone" cancelled in pencil

<sup>207</sup>"S" poss written over "s"

1 //           The catkins of the willow by the causeway  
2           & of the aspens--ap to have pushed out  
3           a little further than a month ago.  
4           I see the down of half a dozen on that  
5           willow by the causeway-- On the aspens pretty  
6           generally. As I go through  
7           the cut--it is still, warm, & more  
8                           spring like  
9           or less sunny--^(about 40°+) & the sand  
10          & reddish subsoil is bare for about  
11          a rod in width--on the RR-- I hear  
12          several times the fine drawn phe-be  
13          note of the chickadee--which I heard only  
14          once during the winter-- Singular that I  
15          should hear this on the first spring day.  
16                I see a pitch pine seed with its wing  
17          far out on Walden-- Going down the  
18          hill to Goose Pond I slump now & then.  
19          Those dense dry beds of leaves are gathered  
20          especially about the leafy tops of young oaks  
21          which are bent over & held down by the snow--  
22          They lie up particularly light & crisp.  
23                The birch stubs stand around Goose-  
24          pond--killed by the water a year or 2 ago  
25          5 or 6 feet high & thickly--as if they were  
26          an irregular stake fence a rod out.  
27                Going up the hill again I slump in up  
28          to my middle.  
29                At Flints I find haf a dozen fishing  
30          The pond cracks a very little while I am

1 there say at half past 10. I think I  
2 never saw the ice so thick--it measures just  
3 2 feet thick {in} shallow water 20 rods from //  
4 shore.

5 Goodwin says that somewhere where  
6 he lived they called cherry-birds port-  
7 royals.

8 Haynes of Sudbury brought some axe helves  
9 which he had been making to Smith's  
10 shop to sell today-- Those made by hand  
11 are considered stronger than those which are  
12 turned because their ~~forms~~ outline con-  
13 forms to the grain. They told him they  
14 had not sold any<sup>208</sup> of the last yet-- "Well",  
15 said he, "you may depend on it you will.  
16 They've got to come after them yet--for  
17 they haven't been able to get into the  
18 woods this winter on account of the  
19 snow--& they'll have to do all their  
20 chopping this month."

21 I like to see the farmer whittling his own  
22 axe-helve, as I did E. Hosmer a white oak  
23 one on the 27th ult.

24 It is remarkable, that though I have  
25 not been able to find any open place in  
26 the river almost all winter--except under  
27 the further Stone Bridge<sup>209</sup> & at Loring's Brook<sup>210</sup>--this winter  
28 winter so remarkable for ice & snow--that Coombs  
29 should (as he says) have killed 2 shell drakes  
30 at the falls by the factory--a place

---

<sup>208</sup>"any" written over "and" in pencil--"%y%" written over "d"

<sup>209</sup>"B" written over "b"

<sup>210</sup>"B" written over "b"



1 one. The birches ap. not to have lost  
2 a quarter of their seeds yet-- As I went  
3 home up the river I saw some of the  
4 seeds 40 rods off--& perhaps in  
5 a more favorable direction I might  
6 have found them much further. It sug-  
7 gested how unwearied Nature is spreading  
8 her seeds-- Even the spring does not find  
9 her unprovided with birch--aye & alder  
10 & {pine} seed-- A great proportion of  
11 the seed that was carried to a distance lodged  
12 in the hollow over the river--& when the river  
13 breaks up will be carried far away  
14 to distant shores & meadows.

15 The opening in the river at Merricks is now //  
16 increased to 10 feet in width in some places.

17 I can hardly believe that henhawks //  
18 may be beginning to build their nests  
19 now--yet their<sup>211</sup> young were a fortnight  
20 old the last of April last year--

21 Mar 3<sup>212</sup>d To Cambridge

22 Mar 4<sup>213</sup>th-- To Carlisle--Surveying.

23 I had 2 friends. The one  
24 offered me friendship on such terms  
25 that I could not accept it, without  
26 a sense of degradation-- He would not  
27 meet me on equal terms--but  
28 only be to some extent my patron.  
29 He would not come to see me, but

---

<sup>211</sup>"their" poss written over "I p"

<sup>212</sup>"3" written over "4"

<sup>213</sup>"4" written over "5"

1 was hurt if I did not visit him-- He  
2 would not readily accept a favor--  
3 but would gladly confer one-- He treated  
4 me with ceremony occasionally--though  
5 he could be simple & down right some-  
6 times.--and from time to time acted  
7 a part treating me as if I were a  
8 distinguished stranger-- {Was} on stilts--  
9 using made words. Our relation  
10 was one long tragedy--for I<sup>214</sup> did  
11 not directly speak of it.-- I do not  
12 believe in complaint, nor in explanation  
13 The whole is but too plain alas already.  
14 We grieve that we do not love each  
15 other--that we cannot confide in  
16 each other. I could not bring my-  
17 self to speak and so recognize an  
18 obstacle to our affection--

19 I had another friend, who through  
20 a slight obtuseness perchance did  
21 not recognize a fact--which  
22 the dignity of friendship could by  
23 me  
24 no means allow^to descend so far as  
25 inevitable  
26 to speak off--& yet the ^effect of that  
27 ignorance was to hold us apart forever.

28 Mar 5th '56  
29 // Snowed an inch or two in the night  
30 Went to Carlisle--surveying

---

<sup>214</sup>"I" written over "he"

1           It is very bad turning out there is so  
2 much snow in the road-- Your horse springs  
3 & flounders in it. The snow in the wood-  
4 lot which I measured was about 2  
5 feet on a level.

6                           Mar 6th

7           P. m. Up Assabet--

8           The snow is softening-- Methinks the  
9 lichens are a little greener for it. A ~~slight~~  
10 thaw comes & then the birches which were  
11 grey on their white ground before--appear  
12 prettily clothed in green-- I see various kinds  
13 of insects out on the snow now-- On //  
14 the rock this side the leaning hemlocks--  
15 is the track of an otter. He has left  
16 some scentless jelly like substance 1 1/2 inches  
17 in diameter there--yellowish beneath--may-  
18 be part of a fish--or clam (?) or himself--

19           The leaves still hanging on some perhaps  
20 young swamp white oaks are remarkably  
21 fresh almost ochre colored brown.

22           See the snow discolored yellowish under  
23   high  
24 a prob. gray squirrel's nest^in a pitch pine  
25 & acorn shells about on it.

26           Also a squirrel's track--on the snow over Lee's  
27 Hill<sup>215</sup>. The outside toe on the fore feet  
28 is nearly at right angles with the others.  
29 This also distinguishes it from a rabbit's  
30 track. It visits each apple tree--

---

<sup>215</sup>"H" written over "h"

1 digs up frozen apples & sometimes fil-  
2 berts--& when it starts again aims for  
3 an apple tree--though 15 rods distant.

4 Mar. 7th. 56

5 Pm. Measured snow on account of  
6 snow which fell 2nd & 4th

7	W of RR 16+ <sup>216</sup>	E of RR	Av. say	Trill. Wood <sup>217</sup>	21
8 //	15 1/2	16	16+		

9 Prob. quite as deep as any time before,  
10 this year-- There are still 2 or more inches  
11 of ice next the ground in open land--  
12  
13 // I may say that there has not been less than  
14 16 inches of snow on a level in open land--since Jan.  
15 13th--~~unless there<sup>218</sup> was a little less just before the~~  
16 ~~snow of the 2nd ult--certainly not less than 15 inches.~~  
17 in some cases  
18 ? My stick entered the earth & ~~for the most part~~ in the wood as it has not done  
19 before.  
20 There has been some thawing under the snow  
21 Mar 9th

22 ! Thermometer at 2 pm 15+° 16 inches  
23 hard & dry  
24 of snow on a level in open fields^--ice  
25 in Flints' Pond 2 feet thick--and  
26 the aspect of the earth is that of  
27 the middle of January in a severe  
28 winter. Yet this is about the date that  
29 A Pail of water froze nearly 1/2 inch  
30 blue-birds arrive commonly. thick in my chamber  
31 with fire raked up.  
32 The train which should have got down last night did not arrive till<sup>219</sup>  
33 this Pm. (Sunday) having stuck in a drift  
34 Mar 10th

35 // Thermometer at 7 Am 6° below zero.

36 Dr Bartletts between 6 1/2<sup>220</sup> & 7 Am was at 13°--  
37 Smith's at 13 or 14°--at 6 Am.

38 Pm up river to Hubbard Bridge  
39 Thermometer 9'+ at 3 1/2 pm (the same when

---

<sup>216</sup> "16+" inserted

<sup>217</sup> "Wood" altered from "wood"

<sup>218</sup> "there" altered from "it"

<sup>219</sup> "till" altered from "this"

<sup>220</sup> "6 1/2" altered from "5 1/2"

1 I return at 5) The snow hard & dry--squeak-  
2 ing under the feet--excellent sleighing-- A  
3 biting NW wind compells to cover the ears-- It  
4 is one of the hardest days of the year to bear--  
5 Truly a memorable 10th of March-- There  
6 is no opening yet in the main stream at  
7 Prichards--Hub Bath<sup>221</sup>--or the Clam Shell //  
8 or  
9 {~~nor~~<sup>222</sup>} prob. anywhere but at Merrick's--&  
10 that a dozen rods long by 10 feet.  
11 And it is tight & strong under the bridges  
12 A blue bird would look as much out  
13 of place now as the 10th of January.  
14 I suspect that in speaking of the  
15 springing of plants in previous years  
16 I have been inclined to make them start  
17 too early generally.  
18 The ice on Ponds is as solid as ever--  
19 There has been no softening of it-- Now  
20 is a good time to begin to cut--only its  
21 great thickness would hinder you.  
22 The blue shadows on snow are as fine as ever.  
23 It is hard to believe the records of pre-  
24 vious years--  
25 I have not seen a tree-sparrow methinks  
26 since January-- Probably the woods have  
27 been so generally buried by the snow this  
28 winter, that they have migrated further  
29 south. There has not been one in the  
30 yard the past winter--nor a red-poll.  
31 I saw perhaps one red-poll in the town //  
32 that is all.  
33 pinched  
34 The^ crows are feeding in the road today in  
35 front of the house--& alighting on

---

<sup>221</sup> "Bath" altered from "bath"

<sup>222</sup> "nor" poss altered from "wood"

1           & blue jays also  
2 the elms^ as ~~as~~ in the middle of  
3 the hardest winter--for such is  
4 this weather-- The blue jays hop about in yards--<sup>223</sup>

5           The past has been a winter of such  
6 unmitigated severity that I have not  
7 chanced to notice a snow-flea--which  
8 {are so} coming in thawing days.<sup>224</sup>

9           I go over the fields now in any di-  
10 rection sinking but an inch or two to the  
11 old solid snow of the winter.

12           In the road you are on a level  
13 with the fences--and often consider-  
14 ably higher--that sometimes where  
15 it is a level causeway in summer  
16 you climb up & coast down great  
17 swells of hard frozen snow--much  
18 higher than the fences--

19           I may say that I have not had  
20 to climb a fence this winter but have  
21 stepped over them on the snow--

22           Think of the art of printing what  
23 miracles it has accomplished<sup>225</sup>--covered  
24 the very waste paper which flutters  
25 under our feet like leaves & is almost  
26 as cheap--a stuff now commonly put  
27 to the most trivial uses--with  
28 thoughts & poetry. The wood chopper  
29 reads the wisdom of ages recorded  
30 on the paper that holds his dinner--  
31 then lights his pipe with it-- When  
32 we ask for a scrap of paper

---

<sup>223</sup>"The...yards--" inserted

<sup>224</sup>newspaper clipping labeled "Meteorological." stuck in journal at this point

<sup>225</sup> "accomplished" inserted

1 for the most trivial use it may  
2 have the confessions of Augustine or  
3 the sonnets of Shakespeare--& we won't  
4 observe it-- The student kindles his  
5 fire, the editor packs his trunk, the  
6 sportsman loads his gun--the traveller  
7 wraps his dinner--the Irishman<sup>226</sup> papers  
8 his shanty--the school boy ~~clab~~ peppers  
9 the belle pins up her hair  
10 the plastering^--with the printed  
11 thoughts of men-- Surely he who can  
12 see so large a portion of earth's surface  
13 {found} thus darkened with the record of  
14 human thought & experience--& feel no  
15 desire to learn to read it<sup>227</sup>--is without  
16 curiosity. He who cannot read--is ~~yet~~  
17 worse than deaf & blind--is yet but  
18 half alive--is still born.

19 Still there is little or no chopping--  
20 for it will not pay to shovel the snow  
21 away from the trees--unless they are  
22 quite large--& then you must work  
23 standing in it 2 feet deep-- There  
24 is an eddy about the large trees beside  
25 which produces a hollow in the snow  
26 it lies close up to  
27 about them--but^ the small ones on every  
28 side.

29 10 Pm Therm. at zero //

30 I read, when last at Cambridge, in the  
31 Philad. Phil. trans. that in the cold winter

---

<sup>226</sup>"I" written over text

<sup>227</sup>"it" written over "the"



1 neighbors may inspire me--& I may  
2 dream of no heaven but that which  
3 lies about me. A man may ac-  
4 quire a taste for wine or brandy--&<sup>231</sup> so  
5 lose his love for water--but should we  
6 not pity him?

7 The sight of a marsh hawk in Concord  
8 meadows is worth more to me than  
9 the entry of the allies into Paris.

10 In this sense--I am not ambitious. I do  
11 not wish my native soil to become ex-  
12 hausted & run out through neglect--

13 Only that travelling is good which  
14 reveals to me the value of home & enables  
15 me to enjoy it better. That man is  
16 the richest, whose pleasures are the cheap-  
17 est.

18 It is strange that<sup>232</sup> men are in such haste  
19 to get fame as teachers--rather than  
20 knowledge as learners.

21 I hear that Goodwin found one of his  
22 traps frozen in^ where it has not frozen  
23 before this year.

24 P. m. 3 1/2 Therm. 24'+

25 Cut a hole in thice in the middle of  
26 Walden. It is just 24 1/4 inches //  
27 thick--11 1/2+ being snow ice 12 3/4 water ice  
28 & there is between 3 & 4 inches of crusted  
29 snow above this. The water rises to  
30

---

<sup>231</sup> "&" altered from "so"

<sup>232</sup> "that" altered from "than"

1 within 2 1/2 inches of the top of the  
2 ice--i.e. between a 9th & 10th of the  
3 whole thickness. The clear ice  
4 has therefore gained 2 3/4 inches  
5 beneath since the 16 of Feb. It  
6 has gone on freezing under 21 1/2  
7 inches of ice-- Yet people very com-  
8 monly say that it will not continue  
9 to freeze under half that thickness  
10 of snow & ice. It is a job to cut  
11 a hole now--

12           Snow and ice together make a curtain  
13 28 inches thick now drawn over the  
14 pond.<sup>233</sup> Such is the prospect of  
15 the fishes!<sup>234</sup>

16                           Mar 12th

17           The last 4 cold days have closed  
18 // the river again against Merricks<sup>235</sup>--&  
19                           few small  
20 prob-- ~~at~~ the^ other^ places which may  
21 have opened--in the town--at the mouth  
22 of one or 2 brooks.

23           I hear from 2 sources of portions of brooks &c  
24 being frozen over within 2 or 3 days which  
25 had not frozen before this winter.

26           We had a colder day in the winter  
27 of 54 & 5--than in the last--yet the  
28 ice did not get to be so thick-- It  
29 is long continued steady cold which  
30 produces thick ice-- If the present

---

<sup>233</sup> "pond." altered from "pond--"

<sup>234</sup> "!" altered from "?"

<sup>235</sup> "Merricks" altered from "merricks"

1 cold should continue uninterrupted a  
2 thousand years would not the pond be-  
3 come solid?

4 Rufus Hosmer says he has known<sup>236</sup> the  
5 ground here to be frozen 4 feet deep

6 I never saw such solid mountains  
7 of snow in the roads-- You travel along  
8 excellent  
9 for many rods<sup>237</sup> over^ dry solid sleighing  
10 where the road is perfectly level not  
11 thinking but you are within a foot  
12 of the ground--then suddenly descend  
13 4 or 5 feet--and find to your surprise  
14 that you had been traversing the broad  
15 back of a drift.

16 The crow has been a common bird  
17 in our street & about our house the  
18 past winter--

19 One large limb of the great elm  
20 at Davis--sawed off presented this  
21 outline {drawing} a perfect harp--

22 Mar 13th

23 Pm to Flints Pond

24 Much warmer at last-- On Flint's  
25 Pond--I cut a hole & measured the  
26 ice at 22 rods from the shore nearest  
27 to Walden--where the water was 9 feet  
28 deep--(measuring from its surface in the hole)

29 The ice was 26 inches thick

//

---

<sup>236</sup> "known" altered from "seen"

<sup>237</sup> "rods" altered from "roads"

1 13 1/2 of it being snow ice--& the  
2 ice rose above the water 2 inches--  
3 This ice is as solid as at any time  
4 in the winter-- 3 inches of Snow  
5 above-- It was so much work  
6 to cut this hole with a dull  
7 axe--that I did not try any other  
8 place where it may have been thicker.  
9 Perhaps it was thicker in the middle  
10 as in '47. Prob. not. judging from Walden--V 19th proximo.<sup>238</sup>

11                               Friday Mar 14th 56  
12                               quite warm. Therm. 46'+  
13                               3d Pm up Assabet--

14                       The ice formed the forefront of this week--  
15 --as that at merricks noticed on the 12--and  
16 heard of elsewhere in the mill-brook--appears  
17 to have been chiefly snow ice--though no  
18 snow fell-- It was ap. blown into the water  
19 during those extremely cold nights & assisted its  
20 freezing. So that it is a question whether  
21 the river would have closed again at Merrick's  
22 on the night of the 10 & 11th ult--not-  
23 withstanding the intense cold--if the snow  
24 had not been blown into it--a question, I  
25 say, because the snow was blown into it.

26                       I think it remarkable that cold as  
27 it was--I should not have supposed from  
28 my sensations that it was nearly so cold  
29 as the thermometer indicated.

30 //                       Tapped several White maples with  
31 my knife--but find no sap flowing.

---

<sup>238</sup>"Prob....proximo." inserted

1 but just above Pinxter<sup>239</sup> Swamp<sup>240</sup>--one red  
2 maple-limb was moistened by sap trickling //  
3 along the bark--Tapping<sup>241</sup> this I was surprised to  
4 find it flow freely. Where the sap had dried  
5 on the bark--shining and sticky it tasted quite  
6 sweet-- Yet Anthony<sup>242</sup> Wright tells me  
7 that he attempted to trim some apple trees  
8 on the 11th ult--but was obliged to give up  
9 it was so cold-- They were frozen solid.<sup>243</sup>

10 This is the only one of 8 or 10 White & red  
11 maples--that flows--I do not see why it  
12 should be..

13 As I return by the old Merrick bath Place--  
14 on the river--for I still travel every where  
15 on the middle of the river--the<sup>244</sup> setting  
16 sun falls on the osier row toward the road--  
17 and attracts my attention. They certainly look  
18 brighter now & from this point, than I have  
19 noticed them before this year--greenish &  
20 yellowish below & reddish above--& I fancy  
21 the sap fast flowing in their pores-- Yet  
22 I think that on a close inspection I  
23 should find no change. Never the less,  
24 it is on the whole perhaps the most  
25 springlike sight I have seen. %V 2 ps forward%

26 Mar 15th

27 Put a spout in the red-maple of yesterday &  
28 hung a pail beneath to catch the sap--  
29 Mr Chase (of the Town School) who has lived a hundred

---

<sup>239</sup> "Pinxter" altered from "pinxter"

<sup>240</sup> marks on page in upper corner of this paragraph--possibly from copying a creased page. Continues for next 3 pages, as well

<sup>241</sup> "t" corrected to "T"

<sup>242</sup> "Anthony" altered from "anthyony"

<sup>243</sup> "solid." possibly "solid--"

<sup>244</sup> "the" written over "I"

1 miles dist. in N.H. speaks of the snow fleas  
2 as a spring phenomenon--(prob. because the  
3 winter is more uniformly cold<sup>245</sup> there)--& says that  
4 they think it time to stop making maple sugar  
5 when they observe them. They get into the  
6 by myriads  
7 sap^ & trouble them much.

8 Mar 16th

9 7 Am. The sap of that red maple has not begun  
10 to flow yet-- The few spoonfuls in the pail &  
11 in the hole are frozen.

12 These few rather warmer days have made  
13 a little impression on the river-- It<sup>246</sup> shows<sup>2</sup> a rough snowy  
14 ice in  
15 many places--suggesting<sup>247</sup> that there is a river  
16 beneath--the snow having probably--blown  
17 & melted off there--or the water oozed up--  
18 (Put the last cause first)<sup>248</sup>  
19 A rough softening snowy ice--with some  
20  
21

22 darker spots where you suspect weakness--  
23 though it is still thick enough--

24 2 Pm The red maple is now  
25 about 1 inch deep in a quart  
26 pail--{nearly} all caught since morning--  
27 It now flows at the rate of about  
28 6 drops in a minute-- Has probably  
29 flown faster this forenoon-- It is  
30 perfectly clear like--water-- Going  
31 throwing the pail over my head to save myself  
32 home slipped on the ice^& spilt  
33 all but a pint. So it was lost on  
34 the ice of the river-- When the river breaks  
35 up it will go down the Concord into  
36 the Merrimack--& down the Merri-

---

<sup>245</sup> "cold" altered from ")"

<sup>246</sup> "It" altered from "the"

<sup>247</sup> "suggesting" poss written over "the"

<sup>248</sup> the numbers and editorial comment are Ts indication that these phrases should be transposed

1 mack into the sea--& there get salted  
2 as well as diluted--part being boiled  
3 into sugar. It suggests, at any rate--  
4 what various liquors, beside those con-  
5 taining salt, find their way to the  
6 sea--the sap of how many kinds of  
7 trees?

8           There is at any rate such a phe-  
9 nomenon as the willows shining in the  
10 spring sun--however it is to be accounted<sup>249</sup>  
11 for.

12                           Mar. 17th Monday

13           Snow going off very gradually under the  
14 sun alone-- Going begins to be bad--horses  
15 slump--{hard} turning out.           see where the  
16   cattle which have  
17   stepped a few inches  
18 one side the sled track have {slumed} 2 feet or more leaving great holes.  
19   Mar 18th

20           P. m. Up River--

21           It is still quite tight up Hub's Bath-<sup>250</sup>  
22 Bend--and at Clam Shell--though I  
23 hesitate a little to cross at these places--  
24 There are dark spots in the soft white  
25 ice--which will be soon worn through.

26           What a solid winter we have had--  
27 --no thaw of any consequence--no bare  
28 ground since Dec 25th--but an unmelting  
29 mass of Snow & ice--hostile to all greenness.  
30 have not seen a green radical leaf  
31 even--as usual. %all being covered up%

32           Nut Meadow Brook is open for a

---

<sup>249</sup> "accounted" altered from "accounts"

<sup>250</sup> "B" poss written over "b"

1 dozen rods from its mouth--& for a  
2 rod into the river-- Higher up it  
3 is still concealed by a snowy bridge.  
4 2 feet thick  
5 // ^I see the ripples made by some fishes,  
6 which were in the small opening at its  
7 mouth--making haste to hide them  
8 selves<sup>251</sup> in the ice covered river. This  
9 square rod & one or 2 others like it  
10 in the town, are the only places where  
11 Thus early they appear ready to be the prey of the fishhawk  
12 I could see this phenomenon now^-- Within  
13 // the brook I see quite a school of  
14 or over  
15 little minnows an inch long amid^ the  
16 bare dead stems of Polygonums--and one  
17 // or little water-bugs. (apple-seeds).  
18 The last also in the broad ditch on the Corner-road in Wheelers Meadow  
19 Notwithstanding the backwardness of the season  
20 all the town still under deep snow & ice--  
21 here they are in the first open & smooth  
22 water--governed by the altitude of the sun.  
23 // --I see many small furrows freshly  
24 made in the sand at the bottom of  
25 the brook--from 1/2 an inch to 3/4 wide--  
26 which I suspect are made by some small  
27 shell-fish--already moving. Perhaps Paludina  
28 V. 20th prox.  
29 Mar. 19th<sup>252</sup>  
30 Pm. To Walden--  
31 Measured the snow again  
32 // W of RR E of RR av Trillium Woods  
33 15 11 4/5 13 2/5 16<sup>253</sup> 3/4  
34 The last measurement was on the 7th

---

<sup>251</sup> "selves" altered from "self"

<sup>252</sup>T pastes down newspaper clipping discussing "Ice" after date line

<sup>253</sup> "16" written over "15"

1 ult. when it av. about 16<sup>254</sup> inches in  
 2 the open land-- This depth it must have  
 3 preserved owing to the remarkably cold weather  
 4 till the 13th at least. So<sup>255</sup> it chances  
 5 that the snow was constantly 16 inches  
 6 at least  
 7 deep^ on a level in open land from Jan 13 //  
 8 to Mar. 13th  
 9 It is remarkable how rapidly it has  
 10 settled on the <sup>E</sup>W. of the RR as compared  
 11 with the W, since the 7th ult (or I may say  
 12 rather the 13th) The whole av. settling, in open  
 13 land, since say the 13th is a little less than 3  
 14 inches.  
 15  
 16 The thickness of the ice on Walden in the  
 17 long cove on the S. side about 5 rods  
 18 from shore--where the water is 19 1/2 feet  
 19 deep is just 26 inches. about 1 foot //  
 20 being snow ice. In the middle it  
 21 was 24 1/4 on the 11th ult-- It is the  
 22 same there now--and undoubtedly--it //  
 23 %Prob. got to be thickest on this side%  
 24 was then 26 in the long cove.%^^ Since the  
 25 warmer weather which began on the  
 26 13th the snow which was 3 or 4 inches deep  
 27 is about half melted on the ice under  
 28 the influence of the sun alone--& the //  
 29 within the last 5 days  
 30 ice is considerably softened^--thus suddenly ^  
 31 quite through it, being easier to cut  
 32 & more--moist--quite fine<sup>256</sup> & white like  
 33 The dust not at all hard dry & crystalline sticking together as damp  
 34 snow in the ~~hole~~ hole. snow when I shovel it out  
 35 on my axe.  
 36 Ap. then Walden is as thickly frozen about shore as Flint's.

---

254 "16" altered from "11"

255 "So" altered from "so"

256 "fine" altered from "&"

1           While I am measuring, though it  
 2   is quite warm,--the air is filled with  
 3   large moist snow flakes--of the star  
 4   form--which are rapidly concealing<sup>257</sup>  
 5   the very few bare spots on the R. R. em-  
 6 // bankment. It is indeed a new snow  
 7   storm  
 8 //           Another old red maple bleeds<sup>258</sup> now on  
 9   the warm S edge of Trillium Wood. The  
 10  1st maple was old & in a warm position.  
 11        What befel at Mrs. Brooks'  
 12        On the morning of the  
 13  17th ult--Mrs Brooks Irish girl  
 14  Joan, fell down the cellar stairs  
 15        by her mistress  
 16  & was found^ ap. lifeless lying at the  
 17  bottom<sup>259</sup>-- Mrs Brooks ran to the street  
 18  door for aid to get her up--& asked  
 19  a Miss Farmer<sup>260</sup> who was passing  
 20                            near by  
 21  to call the blacksmith^-- The<sup>261</sup>  
 22  latter lady turned instantly and making  
 23  haste across the road on this errand  
 24  fell flat in a puddle of melted  
 25  snow--& came back to Mrs Brook's  
 26  bruised & dripping & asking for opo-  
 27  deldoc. Mrs Brooks again ran  
 28  to the door & called to Geo. Big-  
 29  elow to complete the unfinished  
 30  errand-- He ran nimbly about

---

<sup>257</sup> "concealing" altered from "concealed"

<sup>258</sup> "bleeds" altered from "on"

<sup>259</sup> "lying...bottom" marked by T. for transposition with "ap. lifeless"

<sup>260</sup> "Farmer" altered from "farmer"

<sup>261</sup> "The" altered from "the"

1 it & fell flat in another puddle  
2 near the former--but his joints being  
3 limber--got along without opodel-  
4 doc & raised the blacksmith<sup>262</sup>-- He  
5 also notified James Burke who  
6 was passing--& he rushing in to rend-  
7 er aid--fell off one side of the  
8 in the dark  
9 cellar stairs--^ They no sooner got  
10 the girl upstairs then she came to  
11 & went raving-- Then<sup>263</sup> had a fit.  
12 Haste makes waste-- It never  
13 rains but it pours-- I have this from  
14 those who have heard Mrs Brooks' story--seen  
15 the girl--&<sup>264</sup> the stairs--& the puddles.  
16 No sooner is some opening made  
17 in the river--a square rod in area--where  
18 some brook or rill empties in than the  
19 ap. begin to  
20 fishes^ seek it for light & warmth--and  
21 thus early perchance may become the  
22 prey of the fish hawk-- They are seen  
23 to ripple the water darting out as you  
24 approach.  
25 I noticed on the 18th ult. that springy  
26 spot on the shore just above the RR bridge  
27 by the ash--which for a month has been bare  
28 for 2 or 3 feet now enlarged to 8 or 10 feet  
29 in diameter-- And in a few other places on  
30 the meadowy shore--(e.g just above mouth  
31 of Nut meadow) I see great dimples

---

<sup>262</sup> poss stray mark under "blacksmith"

<sup>263</sup> "Then" altered from "then"

<sup>264</sup> "&" written over "t"

1                   8 or 10 feet over  
 2 in the deep snow^ betraying ~~great~~ springs  
 3 There the pads (Nuphar) & cress already spring & shells are left by the rat  
 4 At<sup>265</sup> the broad ditch on the corner road  
  
 5 opposite Bare Garden--the snowy crust  
 6 had slumped or fallen in here & there  
 7 & where the bridge was perfect I saw it  
 8   smooth  
 9 quite 2 feet thick-- In the ~~still~~ open water  
 10 there--small water-bugs were gyrating.  
 11 singly--not enough to play the game.  
  
 12                I am surprised at the sudden change  
 13 in the Walden<sup>266</sup> ice within 5 days-- In cut-  
 14 ting a hole now--instead of hard dry trans-  
 15 parent chips of ice--you make a fine  
 16 white snow very damp & adhering together  
 17 with but few chips in it. The ice has been  
 18 affected throughout its 26 inches--  
 19 though most I should say above-- Hard to say  
 20 exactly where the ice begins under the 2 inches of snow.  
 21                                   Mar 20th 56  
  
 22 //                It snowed 3 or 4 inches of damp snow  
 23   to  
 24 last Pm & night--now thickly adhering<sup>267</sup>  
 25 the twigs & branches-- Prob. it will  
 26 soon melt & help carry off the snow.  
  
 27                Pm. to Trill. Wood & to Nut mead.  
 28 to tap a maple--see paludina & get elder & sumach spouts  
 29 Brook. Slumping in the deep snow--  
  
 30                It is now so softened that I slump at every  
 31 3d step. The sap of red maples in low &  
 32 // warm position now generally flows--but  
 33 not in high & exposed ones.  
  
 34                Where I saw those furrows in the  
 35 sand in Nut meadow Brook the other  
 36 day--I now explore--& find within

---

<sup>265</sup> "At" altered from "In"

<sup>266</sup> "Walden" altered from "walden"

<sup>267</sup> "adhering" altered from "and"





1 and found the ice from 30 to 37 inches  
 2 thick--(the greater part or all but about  
 3 a foot snow ice)--the snow having blown  
 4 on to the ice there. He measured it with  
 5 a rule & a hooked stick--(But at  
 6 Walden where I measured there was no drift=  
 7 %It may have been no thicker at Nagog on an average%  
 8 ing of the snow<sup>272</sup>.--)%^%He says that

9 both the grey squirrel & the red eat pine-seed  
 10 former  
 11 but not in company. The<sup>273</sup>^ have been quite  
 12 common about his house the past winter--& his  
 13 neighbor caught two in his yard.

14 10 Am to my red maple sugar  
 15 camp-- Found that after a pint &  
 16 a half had run from a single tube after  
 17 3 Pm yesterday--it had frozen about 1/2 inch  
 18 thick--& this morning 1/4 of a pint more had  
 19 run-- Between 10 1/2 & 11 1/2 Am this fore-  
 20 noon--I caught 2 3/4 pints more from 6  
 21 tubes at the same tree--though it  
 22 is completely overcast & threatening rain--

23 4 1/2 pints in all

24 This sap is an agreeable drink like  
 25 (by chance) but slight  
 26 ice&d% water^ with a pleasant^ sweetish taste.

27 I boiled it down in the P.m. & it  
 28 made 1 1/2 ounces of sugar without  
 29 any molasses.--which appears to be  
 30 the average amount yielded by the sugar  
 31 maple in similar situations--viz south edge  
 32 of a wood.--a tree partly decayed 2 feet diameter.

---

<sup>272</sup>"drift...snow." underlined in pencil

<sup>273</sup> "The" altered from "They"

1           It is worth the while to know that  
2 there is all this sugar in our woods  
3 much of  
4 ^which might be obtained by ~~boiling~~ using  
5 the refuse wood lying about--without  
6 damage to the proposition<sup>274</sup> who use neither  
7 the sugar nor the wood.

8           I left home at 10 & got back before 12 with  
9 2 3/4 pints of sap in addition to the 1 3/4 I found collected.

10          I put in saleratus & a little milk while  
11 boiling--the former to neutralize the acid--  
12 & the latter to collect the impurities in a skum.  
13 After boiling it till I burned it a little & my  
14 small quantity would not flow when cool  
15 but was as hard as half done candy--I put  
16 it on again & in a minute it was  
17 softened & turned to sugar.

18          While collecting sap the little of yesterdays  
19 lodging snow that was left dropping from  
20 the high<sup>275</sup> pines in Trill. Wood--& striking the brittle  
21 twigs in its descent--makes me think that  
22 the squirrels are running there.

23          I noticed that my fingers were purpled  
24 evidently from the sap on my auger.  
25 Had a dispute with father about the  
26 use of my <sup>276</sup>making this sugar when I  
27 knew it could be done--& might have bought  
28 sugar<sup>277</sup> cheaper at Holden's. He said it  
29                                %I made it my study%  
30 took me from my studies. I said%^% I felt as  
31 if I had been to a university.

32          It dropped<sup>278</sup> from each tube about as  
33 fast as my pulse beat--& as there were  
34 3 tubes directed to each vessel--it flowed

---

<sup>274</sup> "proposition" poss. altered from "proprietor"

<sup>275</sup> "high" inserted

<sup>276</sup> false start preceding "making"

<sup>277</sup> "sugar" altered from "it"

<sup>278</sup> "dropped" written over text

1 at the rate of about 180 drops in a minute into it.

2 One maple standing immediately north of a  
3 thick white-pine scarcely flowed at all--while a  
4 smaller farther in the wood--ran pretty well.

5 The S side of a tree bleeds first in the spring--  
6 I hung my pails on the tubes or a nail--had  
7 2 tin pails & a pitcher. Had a 3/4 inch auger.  
8 Made a dozen spouts 5 or 6 inches long--  
9 hole as large as a pencil--smoothed with a  
10 pencil.

11 Sat. Mar. 22nd 56

12 Pm. to White Maples & up Assabet.

13 The ice of the river is very rapidly softening  
14 --still concealed by snow--the upper part  
15 becoming homogeneous with the melting  
16 snow above it. I sometimes slump into snow  
17 & ice 6 or 8 inches to the harder ice beneath.

18 I walk up the middle of the Assabet //

19 & most of the way on mid. of S branch--

20 in snow

21 Many tracks of crows^ along the

22 edge of the open water against Merricks

23 at Island-- They thus visit the edge of

24 water--(this & brooks--) before any ground

25 is exposed. Is it for small shell fish?

26 The snow now no longer bears you

27 It has become very coarse grained under the

28 sun--& I hear it sink<sup>279</sup> around me as I

29 walk.

30 Part of the white maples now begin

---

<sup>279</sup> sink: altered from "sing"; "k" written over "g" and tail of "g" cancelled

1           some perhaps 2 or 3 days  
2   to flow^--prob. in equally warm positions  
3   they would have begun to flow as early as  
4   those red ones which I have tapped.  
5                            ap.  
6 // Their buds--and^ some of the red ones--are  
7       This prob. follows directly on the flowing of the sap  
8   visibly swollen.^ In 3 instances I cut  
9   off a twig & sap flowed & dripped from  
10  the part attached to the tree, but in  
11  no case would any sap flow from  
12  the part cut off--(I mean where I first  
13  had cut it) which appears to show  
14            Yet the next day at Walden it flowed from  
15  that the sap is now running up. I  
16  both parts--though considerably more from the end attached to the tree.  
17  also cut a notch in a branch 2 inches  
18  It will also drip from the upper carf of a woodchopper--  
19  in diameter, & the upper side of the cut  
20  remained dry--while sap flowed from the  
21  lower side--but in another instance both  
22  sides were wet at once & equally.  
23 //            The sap then is now generally flowing  
24  upward in red & white maples in warm  
25            See it flowing from maple twigs which were gnawed  
26  positions-- off by rabbits in the winter--  
27            The down of willow<sup>280</sup> catkins in very warm  
28 // places has in almost every case peeped out  
29  1/8 of an inch--generally over the whole willow  
30            On water standing above the ice under  
31 // a white maple are many of these Perla (?)  
32  insects with 4 wings drowned--though  
33  it is all ice & snow around the country  
34  over.        Do not see any flying--nor before this.  
35            The wood choppers--who are cutting  
36  the wood at Assabet spring--now at last  
37  go to their work up the middle of the  
38  but one got in yesterday one leg the whole length.  
39  river.^ At the red maple which  
40  It is rotted through in many places behind Pritchard's.

---

<sup>280</sup> "willow" altered from "willows"

1 I first tapped I see the sap still running  
2 & wetting the whole side of the tree. It  
3 has also oozed out from the twigs--especially  
4 those that are a little drooping & run  
5 down a foot or two bathing them some  
6 times all around--both twigs & buds some-  
7 times--or collected in ~~little~~ drops on the  
8 under sides of the twigs--& all evapora-  
9 ted to molasses--which is for the most  
10 or ink  
11 part as black as blacking^ having  
12 probably caught the dust &c even over  
13 all this snow-- Yet it is as sweet & thick  
14 as molasses--& the twigs & buds look  
15 as if blacked & polished. Black drops of  
16 thick  
17 this^~~congealed~~ sweet syrup spot the under  
18 sides of the twigs-- No doubt the bees &  
19 other insects frequent the maples now--  
20 I thought I heard the hum of a bee  
21 but perhaps it was a R. R. whistle. //  
22 on the Lowell RR See a fuzzy gnat on it.  
23 ^It is as thick as molasses-- It is especially  
24 apt to catch about<sup>281</sup> the bases of the  
25 is delayed  
26 twigs where the stream ~~stops~~-- Where the  
27 sap is flowing--the red maple being cut  
28 inner  
29 the^ bark turns crimson. I see many  
30 snow fleas on the moist maple chips.  
31 Saw a pigeon woodpecker under //  
32 the swamp wht oak in Merricks Pasture--  
33 where ther is a small patch of bare ground.  
34 Prob. Minot saw one in his door yard in

---

<sup>281</sup> "about" altered from "at"

1 mid winter.

2 Mar. 23d '56

3 I spend a considerable portion of my time  
4 observing the habits of the wild ani-  
5 mals my brute neighbors-- By their  
6 various movements & migrations they  
7 fetch the year about to me-- Very sig-  
8 nificant are the flight of geese & the  
9 migration of suckers &c &c-- But when  
10 I consider that the nobler animals have  
11 been exterminated here--the cougar--  
12 panther--lynx--wolverine wolf--bear  
13 the beaver, the turkey  
14 moose--deer^ &c &c--I cannot but  
15 feel as if I lived in a tamed &<sup>282</sup>, as it were,  
16 emasculated country-- Would not  
17 the motions of those larger & wilder  
18 animals have been more significant  
19 still-- Is it not a maimed & imperfect  
20 nature that I am conversant with?<sup>283</sup>  
21 As if I were to study a tribe of Indians  
22 that had lost all its warriors. Do not  
23 the forest & the meadow now lack ex-  
24 pression--<sup>284</sup>now that I never see nor  
25 think of the moose with a lesser forest on  
26 his head--in the one--nor of the beaver  
27 in the other? When I think what were  
28 the various sounds & notes--the migrations  
29 & works & changes of fur & plumage  
30 which ushered in the spring & marked  
31 the other seasons of the year--I am  
32 reminded that this my life in Nature  
33 --this particular round of natural phe-

---

<sup>282</sup> "&" inserted

<sup>283</sup> "with?" altered from "with--"

<sup>284</sup> "expression--" altered from "expression ?"

1       nomena which I call a year--is lamentably  
2       incomplete-- I listen to concert--in which so many  
3       parts are wanting. The whole civilized country  
4       is to some extent turned into a city. Many  
5       & I am that citizen, whom I pity.  
6       ^of those animal migrations & other phenome-  
7       na by which the Indians marked the  
8       season--are no longer to be observed.

9               I seek acquaintance with nature--to know  
10       her moods & manners-- Primitive Nature<sup>285</sup> is  
11       the most interesting to me. I take infinite pains  
12       to know all the phenomena of the spring, for  
13       instance--thinking that I have here the entire  
14       poem--& then to my chagrin I learn that  
15       it is but an imperfect copy that I possess &  
16       have read--that my ancestors have torn  
17       out many of the first leaves & grandest passa-  
18       ges--& mutilated it in many places.

19              I should not like to think that some demigod  
20       had come before me & picked out some of the  
21       best of the stars. I wish to know an entire heaven  
22       & an entire earth.

23              All the great trees--& beasts--fishes & fowl are  
24       gone--the streams perchance are somewhat shrunk.

25              I see that a shop keeper adver-  
26       tises among his perfumes for handkerchiefs  
27       "meadow flowers"--& "New mown hay".

28              Pm to Walden

29              The sug. maple sap flows--& for aught I  
30       know is as early as the red.

//

---

<sup>285</sup> "Nature" altered from "nature"

1           I think I may say that the snow  
2 // has been not less than a foot deep on  
3 a level in open land--until today--since  
4           about 11 weeks  
5 Jan 6th.^ It prob-- begins to be less about  
6 this date. The bare ground begins to appear  
7 where the snow is worn in the street-- It has  
8 been steadily melting since Mar. 13th the  
9 therm. rising daily to 40 & 45 at noon--but  
10 no rain.

11           The E. side of the Deep Cut is nearly bare--  
12 as is the RR itself--and on the driest parts  
13 of the sandy slope I go looking for  
14 Cicindela--to see it run or fly amid the  
15 sere blackberry vines--some life which  
16 the warmth of the dry sand under the  
17 spring sun has called forth-- But I see  
18 none. I am reassured & reminded that  
19 I am the heir of eternal inheritances--  
20 which are inalienable--when I feel the  
21 warmth reflected from this sunny bank--  
22 & see the yellow sand & the reddish sub-soil--  
23           & the trickling of melting snow in some sluiceway  
24 & hear some dried leaves rustle^. The eternity  
25 which I detect in Nature<sup>286</sup> I predicate of my-  
26 self also. How many springs I have  
27 had this same experience! I am encouraged  
28 for I recognize this steady persistency & re-  
29 covery of nature as a quality of myself.

30           The first places which I observe to be  
31 bare now--though the snow is generally so  
32 deep still--are the steep hill sides facing  
33 the South--as the side of the cut (though  
34 it looks not south exactly--) & the slope  
35 of Heywoods Peak toward the pond.

---

<sup>286</sup> "Nature" altered from "nature"

1 there is less snow there--on ac. of eddy--& ap. the tree absorbs heat  
2 also under some trees in a meadow^--or a  
3 ridge in the same place-- Almost the whole  
4 of the steep hill side on the S N of Walden  
5 is now bare & dry & warm--though fenced  
6 in with ice & snow-- It has attracted partridges  
7 4 of which whirr away on my approach--  
8 There the early sedge is exposed--(& looking  
9 closer I observe that it has been sheared off<sup>287</sup>  
10 close down when green far & wide--& the fallen  
11 by their sides  
12 withered top are little handfuls of hay^ which  
13 have been covered by the snow--& sometimes look as  
14 if they had sere as nests for the mice--for  
15 Yet not such plain nests as in the grain field last spring  
16 Prob. the Mus. leucopus.  
17 their green droppings are left in them abundantly.^  
18 and the winter-green  
19 ^and the sere penny royal still retains some  
20 fragrance--  
21 As I was returning on the RR--at the crossing  
22 hearing a rustling I  
23 beyond the shanty--^saw a striped squirrel //  
24 E  
25 amid the sedge on the bare^ bank--~~ap~~ 20 feet  
26 distant-- After observing me a few moments  
27 between the rails  
28 as I stood perfectly still--^he ran straight up  
29 to within 3 feet of me out of curiosity--then after  
30 a moments pause &<sup>288</sup> looking up to my face--turned  
31 back--& finally crossed the RR-- All the  
32 red was on<sup>289</sup> his rump & hind quarters.  
33 When running he carried his tail erect--as  
34 he scratched up the snowy bank.  
35 Now then the steep south hill sides  
36 begin to be bare--~~exposing~~ & the early sedge  
37 & sere but still fragrant penny royal

---

<sup>287</sup> "off" poss. altered from "of"

<sup>288</sup> "&" inserted

<sup>289</sup> false start following "on"

1 & rustling leaves, are exposed--& you  
2 sheared off  
3 see where the mice have<sup>gnawed</sup> the sedge  
4 during the winter  
5 & also made nests of its top--^There too  
6 the partridges resort--& perhaps you  
7 hear the bark of a striped squirrel & see  
8 him scratch ~~up~~ toward his hole rustling  
9 the leaves-- {For} all the inhabitants of nature  
10 are attracted by this bare & dry spot as well as  
11 you.  
12 The musk rat  
13 houses<sup>290</sup> were certainly very few & small last  
14 summer--and the river has been remarka-  
15 bly low up to this time-- While the previous  
16 fall there very numerous & large--& in the  
17 succeeding winter the river rose remarkably  
18 high. So much for muskrat sign.  
19 // The bare ground just begins to appear in a few spots in the road in mid.  
20 Monday Mar. 24th 56-- of the town.  
21 // Very pleasant day--Therm. 48'+ at noon  
22 start to  
23 9 Am-- Get 2 quarts of White Maple  
24 & home at 11 1/2  
25 // sap^--one<sup>291</sup> F. Hiemalis in yard. Spend the fore-  
26 noon on the river at the White Maples--  
27 warble  
28 ////I hear a blue-birds^ & a song sparrow's  
29 Blue birds seen in all parts of the town to day for 1st time as I hear--  
30 chirp-- So much partly for being out  
31 The F Hiemalis has been seen 2 or 3 days.  
32 the whole forenoon-- --Cross the river  
33 behind Monroe's-- Go every where on  
34 it is all solid  
35 the N. branch^--& almost every where on  
36 the S. branch-- The crust bears in the  
37 morning-- The snow is so coarse grained  
38 & hard that you can hardly get up  
39 a handful to wash your hands with  
40 except the dirty surface. The early  
41 // aspen-bud<sup>292</sup> down very conspicuous 1/2  
42 inch long--yet I detect no flow of sap.  
43 The White maple sap--does not flow

---

<sup>290</sup> "houses" altered from "There"

<sup>291</sup> "one" poss. inserted

<sup>292</sup> "aspen-bud" altered from "aspen-buds"

1 fast generally at first--or 9 Am--not till  
2 about 10.

3 Yet last year I paddled my boat  
4 to F. H. Pond on the 19th of March--!  
5 Before noon I slump 2 feet in the snow--  
6 You bore a little<sup>293</sup> hole<sup>294</sup> with your knife &  
7 presently the wounded sap wood begins to  
8 glisten with moisture--& anon a clear crystalline  
9 tear-like drop flows out & ~~fall~~ run's down  
10 %or drops at once to the snow--%  
11 the bark--%^ This is the sap of which the far  
12 That's the sweet liquor which the Ind. boiled a thousand years ago.  
13 famed maple-sugar is made--

14 Cut a piece of Rhus Toxicodendron resting on  
15 a<sup>295</sup> rock--at Egg Rock--5/8 of an inch in diam-  
16 eter--which had 19 rings of annual growth.  
17 It is quite hard & stiff.

18 My sugar making was spoiled by putting  
19 in much soda instead of saleratus--by accident.<sup>296</sup>  
20 I suspect it would have made more sugar  
21 than the red--did. It proved only brittle^ black  
22 candy

23 This sap flowed just about as fast as that  
24 of the red maple--

25 It is said that a great deal of sap will  
26 run from the yellow-birch.

27 <sup>297</sup>The River begins to open generally at  
28 the bends--for 10 or 20 rods & I see the  
29 dark ice alternating with dark water there  
30 while the rest of the river is still covered with  
31 snow--

32 Mar 25th

33 P. m. to Walden. The willow &  
34 aspen catkins have pushed out considerably

---

<sup>293</sup> "little" altered from "to the"

<sup>294</sup> "hole" altered from "whole"

<sup>295</sup> "a" altered from "at"

<sup>296</sup> "by accident." added

<sup>297</sup> false start before "The"

1 since the 1st of Feb in warm places--

2 I have frequently seen the sap of maples flow  
3 in warm days in the winter--in warm lo-  
4 calities-- This was in twigs-- Would<sup>298</sup> it in the  
5 trunks of large trees?--& if not, is not this  
6 an evidence that this sap did not come  
7 up from the roots?

8 The meadow E. of the RR causeway is  
9 bare in many spots--while that on  
10 the W. is completely & deeply covered--  
11 Yet a few weeks ago it was deepest  
12 on the east-- I think of no reason for  
13 this--except that the causeway may  
14 keep off the cold N. W. winds from the  
15 former meadow--for 30 rods<sup>299</sup> distant there  
16 are no bare spots. Why is the eastern  
17 slope--now, as every spring (almost completely)  
18 bare--long before the western? The road  
19 runs N & S & the sun lies one the one side  
20 as long as on the other Is it more favor-  
21 able that the frozen snow be acted on by  
22 the warmed air before the sun reaches  
23 it--than after it has left it? Another  
24 & 2d ^ reason is prob. that there is less snow  
25 ^ on that side--or on the W slope of  
26 a hill than on the Eastern-- Snow drifting  
27 from the N. W. lodges under the  
28 West bank. So I observe today--that  
29 (& this seems to give weight to the 2d reason urged above)  
30 the hills rising from the N & west^ sides  
31 of Walden are partially bare--While those  
32 on the south and east are deeply & com-  
33 pletely covered with snow. his house  
34 Mr. Bull tells me that his grapes grow faster & riper  
35 sooner on the W than the E side of ^  
36

---

<sup>298</sup> "Would" altered from "Could"

<sup>299</sup> "rods" altered from "rots"



1 ground generally is covered deep with  
2 snow-- They will not only stay with us through  
3 a storm, but come when there are but  
4 resting places for them. It must be hard  
5 for them to get their living now.  
6 water  
7 // The tallest^ andromedas now rise  
8 6 or 8 inches above the snow in the  
9 swamp.

10 Mar. 26th '56  
11 to Cambridge--

12 I hear that Humphrey Buttrick<sup>304</sup> found a whole  
13 (He tells me that his dog found 4 in the winter &--as other coveys are missing  
14 thinks they have starved)  
15 covey^ of quails dead ~~under the snow~~-- At  
16 Philadelphia a month or 2 since they offered  
17 more than market price  
18 a reward for live ones^--to preserve them.

19 We<sup>305</sup> have heard of an unusual quantity  
20 of ice in the course of the Liverpool  
21 packets this winter-- Perhaps the Pacific  
22 has been {sunk} by one, as we hear that  
23 some other vessels have been-- Yet the  
24 papers say it has been warmer about  
25 Lake Superior than in Kansas--&  
26 that the Lake will break up earlier  
27 than usual.

28 // They are just beginning to use ~~snow~~ wheels  
29 in Concord--but only in<sup>306</sup> the middle of  
30 the town--where the snow is at length  
31 worn & melted down to bare ground  
32 in the middle of the road from  
33 2 to 10 feet wide-- Sleighs are far  
34 the most common even here

35 // In Cambridge there is no sleighing

---

<sup>304</sup> "Buttrick" altered from "buttrick"

<sup>305</sup> We: altered from "Who"; "e" written over "ho"

<sup>306</sup> "in" altered from "but o"

1 --for the most part the middle of  
2 bare & even  
3 the road from Porters to the College is dusty  
4 for 20 to 30 feet in width--the College Yard is  
5 one half bare-- So if they have had more  
6 snow than<sup>307</sup> we, as some say, it has melted much  
7 faster-- There is also less in the towns between  
8 us & Cam. than in Concord. The snow lies  
9 longer on the low level plain surrounded  
10 by hills--in which Concord is situated. I am  
11 struck by the more wintry aspect--almost  
12 entirely uninterrupted snow fields--on coming  
13 into Concord in the cars.

14 The Romans introduced husbandry into  
15 England, where but little was practiced before--  
16 & the English have introduced it into America--  
17 so we may well read the Roman<sup>308</sup> Authors  
18 for a history of this art as practiced by us.

19 I am sometimes affected by the  
20 consideration that a<sup>man</sup> may spend  
21 the whole of his life after boyhood in  
22 acco<sup>m</sup>plishing a particular design--as  
23 if he were put to a petty & special<sup>309</sup> use  
24 --without taking time to look around  
25 him & appreciate the phenomenon  
26 of his existence-- If so many purposes  
27 are thus necessarily left unaccomplished  
28 --perhaps unthought of--we are  
29 reminded of the transient interest we  
30 have in this life-- Our interest in our

---

<sup>307</sup> "than" altered from "than,"; ",," cancelled

<sup>308</sup> "Roman" altered from "Romans"

<sup>309</sup> petty & special marked with line for transposition to read "special & petty"

1           in the spread of liberty &c  
2 country^strong & as it were innate as it  
3 is--cannot ~~(be a)~~ be as transient as our  
4 present existence here. It cannot be that  
5 all those patriots who die in the  
6 midst of their career have no further  
7 connexion with the career of their country.

8                           Mar. 27th '56  
9           Uncle Charles died this morning about midnight--aged 76  
10          The frost is now entirely out in some

11 // parts of the New Burying Ground--the  
12 sexton tells me--half way up the hill  
13 which slopes to the S. unless it is bare of  
14 snow--he says--

15           In our garden where it chances to be  
16 bare--2 or more rods from the house I was  
17 // able to dig through the slight frost-- In<sup>310</sup>  
18 another place near by I could not.

19           The river is now open in reaches  
20   ice  
21 // of 20 or 30 rods--where the<sup>311^</sup> has dis-  
22 appeared by melting.

23   about 70  
24          Elijah Wood Sen.^ tells me he does  
25 not remember that the river was ever  
26 frozen so long--nor that so much  
27 snow laid on the ground so long.

28           People do not remember when there  
29 // was so much old snow on the ground at  
30 this date.

31                           Mar 28th  
32          Uncle Charles buried. He was born in Feb. 1780--the winter  
33 // Cold & the earth stiff again after  
34 of the great Snow--& he dies in the winter of another great Snow--  
35 a life bounded by great snows.  
36 15 days of steady warm & for the most  
37 part sunny days (without rain) in which

---

<sup>310</sup> "In" altered from "in"

<sup>311</sup> "the" altered from "it"

1 the snow & ice have rapidly melted.  
2 Sam. Barrett tells me that a  
3 boy caught a crow in his neighborhood  
4 the other day in a trap set for mink. Its leg was  
5 broken. He brought it home under its arm  
6 & laid it down in a shop thinking to keep  
7 it there alive. It looked up sidewise<sup>312</sup> ~~from~~ as  
8 it lay seemingly helpless on the floor--but  
9 the door being open--all at once to their  
10 surprise it lifted itself on its wings & flitted  
11 out & away without the least trouble.

12 Many crows have been caught in mink traps  
13 the past winter, they have been compelled to  
14 the few openings in brooks &c  
15 visit ~~the water sides~~^so much for food--  
16 Barrett has suffered all winter for want of water.  
17 I think to say to my friend--There is  
18 but one interval between us. You are on  
19 one side of it--I on the other-- You know  
20 as much about it as I--how wide--how  
21 impassable it is. I will endeavor not  
22 to blame you-- Do not blame me-- There  
23 is nothing to be said about it. Recognize  
24 %pass over%  
25 the truth--&%^%~~cross~~ the intervals that  
26 are bridged.

27 Fare well my friends-- My path inclines  
28 to this side the mts--your's to that  
29 For a long time you have appeared  
30 further & further off to me.

31 I see that you will at length disappear  
32 altogether-- For a season my path

---

<sup>312</sup> "sidewise" altered from "sidewize"

1 seems lonely without you-- The meadows  
2 are like barren ground-- The memory of  
3 me is steadily passing away from you  
4 My path grows narrower & steeper &  
5 the night is approaching-- Yet I have  
6 in the infinite future  
7 faith that^ new suns will rise & new plains  
8 expand<sup>313</sup> before me--and I trust that I shall  
9 therein encounter pilgrims who bear that  
10 sane virtue that I recognized in you.  
11 will be very  
12 who ~~indeed are~~ that^ virtue that was you  
13 I accept the everlasting & salutary law.  
14 which was promulgated as much that  
15 spring that I first knew you, as this that  
16 I seem to lose<sup>314</sup> you.  
17 former  
18 My^ friends, I visit you--as one walks  
19 amid the columns of a ruined temple  
20 You belong to an era--a civilization & glory long past.  
21 I recognize still your fair proportions--  
22 %which we%  
23 notwithstanding the convulsions%^you--  
24 have felt & the weeds & jackals  
25 that have sprung up around.  
26 I<sup>315</sup> come here to be reminded of the past--  
27 --to read your inscriptions-- the hiero-  
28 glyphics the sacred writings  
29 We are no longer the repre-  
30 sentatives of our former selves.  
31 Love is a thirst that is never slaked.  
32 Under the coarsest rind the sweetest meat.  
33 If you would read a friend aright--you  
34 must be able to read through something  
35 thicker ~~th~~ & opaquer than horn.  
36 If you can read a friend--all languages  
37 % {Enemies publish themselves--They de-  
38 will be easy to you. clare war-- The friend here declares his love}%

---

<sup>313</sup> "expand" altered from "on"

<sup>314</sup> "lose" altered from "leave"

<sup>315</sup> "I" written over "C"

1 Mar. 29th 56  
2 Another cold day-- Scarcely melts at all. //  
3 Water skimmed over in chamber--with fire  
4 March 30th 56  
5 Pm to Walden & Fair Haven.  
6 Still cold & blustering. I came out to see  
7 the sand & rich soil in the<sup>316</sup> deep cut, as I  
8 would to see a spring flower--some redness  
9 in the cheek of earth. These cold days have  
10 made the ice of Walden dry and pretty hard  
11 again at top. It is just 24 inches thick in //  
12 about 11 inch of snow ice  
13 the middle--^It has lost but a trifle on the  
14 surface. The inside is quite moist-- The clear ice  
15 very crystalline & leaky--letting the water  
16 up from below so as to hinder my cutting.  
17 It<sup>317</sup> seems to be more porous & brittle than  
18 the snow ice.  
19 I go to Fair Haven via the Andromeda Swamps--  
20 The snow is a foot & more in depth there--  
21 still. There is a little bare ground in &  
22 swampy  
23 next to the^ woods at the head of Well  
24 Meadow--where the springs & little black  
25 rills are flowing. I see already one  
26 blade 3 or 4 inches long of that purple or //  
27 lake grass lying flat on some water--between  
28 the first leaf with a rich bloom on it  
29 snow-Clad banks--^ How silent are the  
30 footsteps of Spring! There too, where  
31 the is a fraction of the meadow 2 rods  
32 over--quite bare under the bank--  
33 in this warm recess at the head of the

---

<sup>316</sup> "the" inserted

<sup>317</sup> "It" possibly "it"

1 meadow--though the rest of the  
2 meadow is covered with snow a  
3 foot or more in depth--I am surprised  
4 to see the skunk-cabbage with its great  
5 ? spear heads open--& ready to blossom (i.e. shed--  
6 pollen in a day or 2--) and a<sup>318</sup> caltha palustris  
7 bud which shows yellowish--& the golden sax-  
8 also there are many fresh tender leaves of ap the gold-thread^ in open meadow there  
10 ifrage--green & abundant--^all surrounded prob. not  
11  
12 & hemmed in by snow which covered the  
13 ground since Christmas<sup>319</sup>--& stretches as  
14 far as you can see on every side.  
15 and there are as intense blue shadows on the snow as I ever saw.  
16 The spring advances in spite of snow & ice  
17 & cold even-- The ground under the snow  
18 has long since felt the influence of the  
19 spring sun--whose rays fall at a more  
20 favorable angle. The tufts or tussocks  
21 next the edge of the snow were crowned  
22 with dense phalanxes of stiff spears  
23 of the stiff triangularish sedge grass  
24 of any plant  
25 // 5 inches high but quite yellow  
26 This is the greatest growth^ I have seen--I had not suspected any  
27 with a very slight greenness at the  
28 I can just see a little greening on the bare & dry south bank.  
29 tip--showing that they pushed up  
30 through the snow which melting  
31 they had not yet acquired color.  
32 & clefts  
33 In warm recesses^ in meadows & rocks in  
34 the midst of ice & snow--nay even  
35 under the snow vegetation commences  
36 & steadily advances.  
37 // I find Fair Haven Pond & the river  
38 lifted up a foot or more--the result

---

<sup>318</sup> "and a" altered from "and the"

<sup>319</sup> "C" written over false start

1 the long steady thaw in the sun-- The water  
2 of the pond and river has run over the meadows  
3 partly  
4 covering mixing with &^ covering the snow-- ~~On~~  
5 somewhat  
6 ~~this~~ making it^ difficult to get onto the  
7 river on the E side-- On the E. side of the  
8 pond the ice next the shore is still frozen  
9 to the bottom under water by one edge while  
10 the other slants upward to meet the^ ice main body of the  
11 of the Pond-- This sort of canal on one  
12 or both sides of the river is from 0 or a rod  
13 to 3 or 4 rods wide-- This is the most deci-  
14 ded step toward a breaking up as yet--  
15 But the pond & the river are very solid yet  
16 I walk over the pond & down on the mid- //  
17 dle of the river to the bridge--without seeing  
18 an opening.  
19  
20 Saw prob. a henhawk?-- (saw the black {tips} to //  
21 %may have been a marsh hawk or harrier%  
22 wings--) sailing low over the low cliff  
23 next the river--looking probably for birds.  
24 The south hill sides no sooner begin  
25 to be bare--& the striped squirrels--&  
26 birds resort there--than the hawks come  
27 from Southward to prey on them. I  
28 think that even the henhawk is  
29 here in winter, only as the robin is.  
30 For 25 rods the corner road is im-  
31 passable to horses &c because of their slump-  
32 ing in the old snow--& a new path  
33 has been dug--which a fence shuts off the old.  
34 Thus they have served the roads on all sides the town--

1 Mar. 31st '56  
 2 Pm to Peters via Winter {Strt}  
 3 I see the scarlet tops of white maples  
 4 nearly a mile off down the river--the  
 5 lusty shoots of last year-- Those of the red  
 6 maple do not show thus.  
 7 I see many little holes in this old  
 8 & solid snow where leaves have sunk  
 9 down gradually--& perpendicularly  
 10 11 or 12 inches-- The hole no larger at  
 11 the top than at the bottom--nay often partly  
 12 closed at top by the drifting--and exactly  
 13 the form & size of the leaf-- It is as  
 14 if the sun had driven this thin shield  
 15 like a bullet thus deep into the solid  
 16 It is remarkable how deep the leaves settle into an old snow like this.  
 17 V np. b. 2  
 18 // snow-- See a small<sup>320</sup> ant running  
 19 about over a piece of meadow turf.  
 20 // The celandine begins to be conspicuous springing under Brown's  
 21 fence  
 22 April 1st 56

23 P.m. Down RR--measuring snow & to F. H.  
 24 Hill--

25 //	W. of RR	E of RR	av.	Trill. Wood.
26	2 5 12	0	5 1/2--inch	22
27	0 5 17	0		11
28	3 3 11	0		11
29	5 3 11	0		7
30	4 9 15	0		8
31	4 7 15	10		12
32	4 11	8		11
33	5 13 40)344(8 1/2	0		11
34	3 13	0		11
35	5 12	0		6
36	5 13	0		9
37	7 14	0		14
38	8 13	0		11
39	14 15	0		10
40	9 16	0		10
41	7 13	0		11
42	3	0		8
43	10	0		8
44		3		6
45		9		3
46		6		
47		0		20)200(10 inch
48		1		
49		20		
50				
51		24)57(2 1/3		

<sup>320</sup> "a small" altered from "also an"

1           It appears from the above how rapidly the  
2 snow has melted on the E side of the  
3 RR-causeway--though 8 to 12 rods from  
4 it--being sheltered by it from the N. W.  
5       v ap.11  
6 wind.^ It is for the most part bare ground there

7           Adhering to these localities the average  
8 depth in open land is 5 1/2 inches--but the  
9 E side of RR-- is a peculiarly sheltered place  
10 and hence bare--while the earth generally  
11 is covered-- It is prob. about 7 inches       //  
12 deep on a level generally in open land.

13 It has melted at about the same  
14 rate W. of RR--& in Trill. Woods since  
15 the 19th. It is a question whether it       //  
16 is better sleighing or wheeling now  
17 taking all our roads together. At  
18 any rate we may say the sleighing lasted  
19 till april. In some places it still  
20 fills the roads level with the walls--  
21 & bears me up still in the middle  
22 of the day. It grows more & more solid  
23 --ap. freezing at night quite through  
24 Wm Wheeler (of the Corner Road) tells  
25 me that it was more solid this  
26 morning than any time in the winter--  
27 & he was surprised to find that it  
28 would bear his oxen where 3 or 4 feet  
29 deep behind his house-- On some  
30 roads you walk in a path

1 recently shovelled out with upright  
2 walls of snow 3 or 4 feet high on  
3 each side &<sup>321</sup> a foot of snow beneath  
4 for 20 or 30 rods  
5 you^--& this is old snow. We have  
6 had none since Mar. 20--& that was  
7 very moist & soon melted. The drifts  
8 on the E side of the Depot--which  
9 have lain there a great part of the  
10 winter--still reach up to the top of the  
11 first pane of glass.

12 But generally speaking we slump so much  
13 --especially in the woods--except in the  
14 morning--~~that~~ & the snow is so deep  
15 that we are confined to the roads  
16 or the river still. Choppers can not  
17 & teams cannot get in for  
18 work in the woods yet-- wood yet

19 A new snow of this depth would soon  
20 go off; but this old snow is solid and  
21 It seems to be gradually turning to ice  
22 icy & wastes very slowly.^ I observe that  
23 while the snow has melted unevenly  
24 in waves & ridges--there is a transparent  
25 icy glaze about 1/16 of an inch thick  
26 but as full of holes as a riddle--spread  
27 level  
28 like gauze^ over all--resting on the  
29 prominent parts of the snow--leaving  
30 hollows beneath from 1 inch to 6 or  
31 more inches in depth-- I often see  
32 the spiders running under neath  
33 this. This is the surface which has  
34 melted & formed an icy crust--& being  
35 transparent-- it has transmitted the  
36 heat to the snow beneath--& has out-

---

<sup>321</sup> "&" written over "--"

1       lasted that-- This crashes & rattles under your  
2       feet.

3               The bare places now--are the steep south  
4       & W. or S. W. sides of hills--& cliffs--& also  
5       next to woods & houses on the same sides-- /  
6       The ridges & brows of hills--& slighter ridges  
7       & prominences in the fields-- / Low<sup>322</sup> open ground  
8       protected from the N. W. wind-- / Under trees &c.

9               I might have put the roads--2nd.

10              Going by the path to the Springs--I find  
11              oak  
12       great beds of^ leaves--sometimes a foot thick--  
13       very dry & crisp--& filling the path on one  
14       side of it in the woods--for 1/4 of a  
15              inviting one to lie down  
16       mile--^ They have absorbed the heat & settled  
17       like the single ones seen yesterday  
18       ^in mass a foot or more--making a  
19       path to that depth-- Yet when they are  
20       unusually thick they preserve the snow  
21       beneath--& are found to cover an almost  
22       icy mound.

23                              Apr. 2nd 56

24              8 Am. to Lee's Cliff--via. RR.

25              Andromeda Ponds--& Well Meadow--

26              I go early while the crust is hard. I hear  
27       a few songsparrows tinkle on the alders  
28       they skulk & flit along below the level of the ground in the ice filled ditches  
29       by the RR^--& blue birds warble over the  
30              A foot or more of snow in Andromeda  
31       Deep-Cut.   ponds.

32              In the warm recess at the head of Well-  
33       meadow--which makes up on the N. E side  
34       of F. Haven--I find many evidences of

---

<sup>322</sup> "Low" altered from "low"



1 dissolving the snow early in the spring--  
2 or on the edge  
3 in the midst^ of a narrow<sup>327</sup> open alder swamp--  
4 there look for the earliest skunk-  
5 cabbage--& cowslip--Where some little  
6 black rills are seen to meander or heard  
7 to tinkle in the middle of the coldest  
8 winter-- There appear the great spear-  
9 heads of the skunk cabbage--yellow--  
10 & red--or uniform mahogany color--  
11 with ample hoods sheltering their purple  
12 spadixes. The plaited buds of the hellebore  
13 are 4 or 5 inches high-- There are buds //  
14 of fresh green moss in the midst of  
15 the shallow water-- What is that  
16 coarse sedge like-grass--rather broadly  
17 triangularish--2 inches high in the water--  
18 This and the cress have been eaten  
19 prob. by the rabbits whose droppings  
20 are abundant-- I see where they have  
21 gnawed & chipped off the willow osiers.  
22 Common grass is quite green.  
23 Here where I come for the earliest flowers  
24 I might also come for the earliest birds--  
25 They seek the same warmth & vegetation.  
26 & so prob. with quadrupeds--rabbits  
27 skunks--mice &c. I hear now as I stand  
28 over the first skunk cabbage--the notes  
29 first  
30 of the^ red-wings--like the squeaking<sup>328</sup> of //  
31 %or grackles?%  
32 a sign--%^%over amid the maples yonder--

---

<sup>327</sup> "a narrow" altered from "an"

<sup>328</sup> word underlined in pencil

1 Robins are peeping & flitting about  
2 Am surprised to hear one sing regularly  
3 their morning strain--7 or 8 rods off--  
4 & smothered  
5 yet so low^ with its ventriloquism that  
6 you would say it was half a mile  
7 off-- It seems to be wooing its mate  
8 that sits within a foot of it.  
9 There are many holes in the surface  
10 of the bare springy ground amid  
11 the rills--made by the skunks or  
12 mice--& now their edges are bristling  
13 ~~leaf~~ feather like  
14 with^ frost-work--as if they were  
15 the breathing-holes or nostrils of the  
16 earth.  
17 That grass which had grown 5  
18 inches on the 30th is ap. the cut grass  
19 of the meadows. The withered blades  
20 which are drooping about the tufts  
21 are 2 feet long. I break the solid  
22 snow bank with my feet--& raise its  
23 edge--& find the stiff but tender  
24 yellow ~~blades or~~ shoots beneath it.  
25 They seem not to have pierced it but  
26 are prostrate beneath it. They have  
27 actually grown beneath it--but  
28 not directly up into it to<sup>329</sup> any extent  
29 rather flattened out beneath it--  
30 Cross F. H. P. to Lee's Cliff-- The  
31 Crowfoot & saxifrage seem remarkably  
32 backward--no growth as yet--  
33 But the Catnep has grown even<sup>330</sup> 6

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<sup>329</sup> "to" altered from "--"

<sup>330</sup> possibly cancelled in pencil

1 inches--& perfumes the hill-side when bruised--  
2 The columbine with its purple leaves  
3 has grown 5 inches<sup>331</sup>--& one is flower bud-  
4 ded--ap. nearer to flower than any thing  
5 there-- Turritis stricta very forward 4 inches  
6 high--

7           It is evident that it depends on the  
8 character of the season whether this  
9 flower or that is the most forward--  
10 -- Whether there is more or less snow--or cold  
11 or rain &c. I am tempted to stretch  
12 myself on the bare ground above the  
13 cliff--to feel its warmth in my back--  
14 & smell the earth & the dry leaves.  
15 --I see and hear flies & bees about--

16 A large buff-edged butter-fly--flutters by //  
17 along the edge of the cliff--V. antiopa  
18 Though so little of the earth is bared--  
19 this frail creature has been warmed to  
20 life again. Here is the broken shell  
21 of one of those large white snails--  
22 Helix albolabris on the top of the Cliff--  
23 It is like a horn with ample mouth  
24 wound on itself. I am rejoiced to find  
25 anything so pretty-- I cannot but think  
26 it nobler, as it is rarer--to appreciate  
27 some beauty than<sup>332</sup> ~~it~~ to feel much sym-  
28 pathy with misfortune. The Powers<sup>333</sup> are  
29 kinder to me when they permit me to en-

---

<sup>331</sup> T possibly draws a v. pencil line through "inches" here and on line 5

<sup>332</sup> "than" altered from "in"

<sup>333</sup> "Powers" altered from "powers"

1 joy this beauty--than if they were to express  
 2 any amount of compassion for me-- I  
 3 could never excuse them that.  
 4 A wood-chuck has been out under  
 5 the cliff--& patted the sand--cleared out  
 6 the entrance to his burrow.  
 7 Muskrat houses have been very scarce  
 8 indeed the past winter-- If they {wered} not  
 9 killed off--I cannot but think that  
 10 their instinct fore saw that the river  
 11 would not rise.      The river has been at summer  
 12 // level through the winter up<sup>334</sup> to April!!  
 13 I returned down the middle of the  
 14 river to near the Hub. bridge without<sup>335</sup> seeing  
 15 // any opening  
 16 Some of the earliest plants are now  
 17 not started because covered with snow--as  
 18 the stellaria & shepherd's purse--  
 19 Others like the Carex-Penn.--the crowfoot--  
 20 saxifrage--Callitriche--are either covered  
 21 I think it must be partly owing to the want of rain & not wholly to  
 22 the snow that  
 23 the first 3 are so backward  
 24 or recently uncovered--^  
 25 The white maples--& hazles--and for the  
 26 most part the alders still stand in snow--  
 27 alders on the bare place  
 28 Yet those^ by the skunk cabbage, above  
 29 named, appear to be no more forward!  
 30 Maybe, trees rising so high are more affected  
 31 by cold winds than herbaceous plants.  
 32 April 3d '56  
 33 When I awoke this morning--I heard  
 34 the almost forgotten sound of rain  
 35 on the roof-- I think there has not been  
 36 any of any consequence since Christmas  
 37 day-- Looking out I see the air

---

<sup>334</sup> "up" altered from "to"

<sup>335</sup> cancelled false start



1 cheeks! I revive with nature--her  
2 victory is mine. This is my jewelry.  
3 It rains very little, but a dense fog--  
4 15 or 20 feet high, rests on the earth  
5 all day spiriting away the snow-- Behind  
6 which the cockerels crow & a few birds  
7 sing or twitter. The Osiers look light  
8 & fresh in the rain & fog--like the  
9 Close at hand they are seen to be beaded with drops from the fog  
10 grass^-- There seems to be a little life in  
11 the bark now & it strips somewhat more  
12 freely than in winter. What a lusty growth  
13 have these yellow osiers 6 feet is com-  
14 mon--the last year--chiefly from  
15 the summit of the pollards--(but  
16 also from the sides of the trunk) filling  
17 a quadrant densely with their yellow  
18 rays--<sup>341</sup> The white maple buds on the  
19 s side of some trees--have slightly opened  
20 so that I can peep in to their cavities &  
21 %This happened in Feb(!) 57%  
22 // detect the stamens %^%-- They will prob. come  
23 next to the skunk cabbage this year--  
24 if the cowslip does not-- Yet the trees  
25 stand in the midst of the old snow--  
26 I see small flocks of robins sunning  
27 on the bared portions of the meadow--  
28 hear the sprayay tinkle of the song-sparrow  
29 along the hedges-- Hear also the  
30 squeaking notes of an advancing flock  
31 %? or grackles?--am uncertain which makes that squeak?%  
32 of red-wings%^% some where high in the sky--  
33 At length detect them high over head  
34 advancing N. E. in loose array with

---

<sup>341</sup> "rays--" altered from "rays."

1 a broad extended front--competing  
2 with each other {drawing} winging their way  
3 to some northern meadow which  
4 they remember. The note of some  
5 is like the squeaking of many signs,  
6 while others accompany them with a  
7 dry  
8 steady^ tchuck-tchuck

9 Hosmer is overhauling a vast heap of  
10 manure in the rear of his barn turning  
11 the ice within it up to the ~~sun~~-light-- Yet  
12 he asks despairingly what life is for--&  
13 says he does not expect to stay here long.  
14 But I have just come from reading Columella  
15 who describes the same kind of spring work--  
16 in that to him new spring of the world--with  
17 hope--& I suggest to be brave & hope-  
18 ful with nature. Human life may be  
19 transitory & full of trouble but the per-  
20 ennial mind whose survey<sup>342</sup> extends from  
21 that spring to this--from Columella  
22 to Hosmer--is superior to change.  
23 I will identify myself with that which  
24 did not die with Columella<sup>343</sup> & will not  
25 die with Hosmer--

26 Coming home along the causeway a  
27 robin sings, though faintly as in may--  
28 The road is a path--here and there  
29 shovelled through drifts which are con-  
30 siderably higher than a mans head on each  
31 side.

---

<sup>342</sup> "whose survey" altered from "which if"

<sup>343</sup> "Columella" altered from "columella"

1           People are talking about  
2 my Uncle Charles-- Minott tells how  
3 he heard Tilly Brown once asking him  
4                           (inside?  
5 to show him a peculiar^ lock in  
6 wrestling-- "Now dont hurt me--dont  
7 throw me hard"-- He struck his antago-  
8 nist in side his knees with his feet  
9 & so deprived him of his legs.

10           Hosmer remembers his tricks in the  
11 barroom--shuffling cards &c he could  
12 do any thing with cards-- Yet he did  
13 not gamble-- He would toss up his  
14 hat twirling it over & over & catch it  
15 on his head invariably. Once wanted  
16 to live at Hosmers--but the latter  
17 was afraid of him-- "Cant we study  
18 up something?" he asked-- H. asked him  
19 into the house--& brought out apples  
20 & cider--& Charles--talked-- "You!"  
21 said he "I burst the bully of Lowell"  
22 (or Haverhill?) He wanted to wrestle--  
23 would not be put off-- Well we wont  
24 wrestle in the house-- So they went out to  
25 the yard & a crowd got round. "Come  
26 spread some straw here" said C. "I do'nt  
27 want to hurt him." He threw him at  
28                           he told them to spread more straw  
29 once-- They tried again^ & he "burst" him

30           He had a strong head--& never got  
31 drunk--would drink gin sometimes  
32 but not to excess-- Did not use tobacco  
33 except snuff out of another's box



1 in any quantity until the ice is all gone.  
2 from the channel-- I think that  
3 what I have seen floating in former  
4 years is commonly such as had risen  
5 up afterward from the bottom of  
6 of flooded meadows. Sometimes however  
7 you observe great masses of floating  
8 ice--consisting of that which is later  
9 to break up--the thicker & more lasting  
10 ice from the broad bays or between bridges.

11 There is now an open water passage  
12 on each side of the broad field of ice  
13 in the bay above the R. R. The  
14 // water which is rapidly rising has over-  
15 flowed the icy snow on the meadows  
16 which is seen a couple of feet beneath  
17 it--for there is no true ice there--  
18 It is this rising of the water that breaks  
19 up the ice more than any thing.

20 The Mill brook has risen much higher  
21 comparatively than the river.

22 Apr 4th '56

23 // Pm to Clam Shell &c--

24 The alder scales S of the R. R. beyond  
25 the bridge are loosened-- This corresponds  
26 to the opening (not merely expansion showing  
27 the fuzziness) of the Wht maple buds--

28 There is still but little rain--but  
29 the fog of yesterday still rests on

1 the earth-- My neighbor says it is the //  
2 frost coming out of the ground. This per-  
3 haps is not the best description of it.  
4 It is rather the moisture in this warm  
5 air--condensed by contact with the snow  
6 & ice & frozen ground. Where the fields  
7 are bare I slump now 3 or 4 inches into  
8 the oozy surface. Also on the bare  
9 brows of hills clad with cladonias-- These  
10 are as full of water as a sponge--  
11 The muskrats no doubt are now being  
12 driven out of the banks. I hear as  
13 I walk along the shore the dull sound  
14 of guns--prob. most of them fired at musk-  
15 rats--borne along the river from dif-  
16 ferent parts of the town--one every two  
17 or 3 minutes--  
18 Already I heare of a small fire in the woods in Emerson's lot //  
19 set by the Engine--the leaves that are bare are so dry  
20 I find many sound cabbages shedding  
21 their pollen under Clam Shell<sup>345</sup> Hill.  
22 They<sup>346</sup> are even more forward generally  
23 here than at Well<sup>347</sup> Meadow-- Probably  
24 now dead  
25 2 or 3 only^ among the alders at the last  
26 place, were earlier. This is simply the ear-  
27 liest flower such a season as this--  
28 i.e. when the ground continues covered  
29 with snow till very late in the spring.  
30 For this plant occupies ground which  
31 is the earliest to be laid bare--those  
32 great dimples in the snow about a

---

<sup>345</sup> "Clam Shell" altered from "clam shell"

<sup>346</sup> "They" altered from "There"

<sup>347</sup> "W" written over "F"

1 springy place in the meadow--  
2 5 or 10 feet over--where the sun & light  
3 have access to the earth--a month  
4 before it is generally bare-- In such  
5 localities then they will enjoy an advantage  
6 over most other plants--for they will  
7 not have to contend with abundance  
8 of snow--but only with the cold air--  
9 which may be no severer than usual.  
10 Cowslips & a few other plants sometimes  
11 enjoy the same advantage. Sometimes  
12 apparently the original<sup>348</sup>--now outer  
13 spathe has been frostbitten &<sup>349</sup> is decayed  
14 & a fresh one is pushing up-- I see  
15 some of these in full bloom though  
16 the opening to their tents is not more  
17 effectually protected  
18 than 1/2 inch wide--^they are lapped  
19 like tent doors-- Methinks most  
20 of these hoods open to the south.

21 It is remarkable how completely the  
22 spadix is protected from the weather  
23 --first by the ample hood whose walls are  
24 distant from it--next by the narrow  
25 tent-like door way admitting air & light  
26 & sun--generally I think on the S side--  
27 and also by its pointed top curved  
28 downward protectingly over it-- It  
29 with powdered  
30 looks like a monk in his crypt--head.  
31 The sides of the door way are {lapped} or  
32 folded & one is considerably in ad-

---

<sup>348</sup> extra stroke in "original"

<sup>349</sup> "&" inserted

1 vance of the other. It is contrived best  
2 to catch the vernal warmth & exclude  
3 the winters cold. Notwithstanding all  
4 the snow the Cabbage is earlier than  
5 last year--when it was also the earliest  
6 flower--& blossomed on the 5th of April--  
7 It is perhaps owing to the long continued warm  
8 weather from Mar 13th to 28th

9 Yet it has been a hard winter for many  
10 plants--on dry exposed hills-- I am surprised  
11 to see the Clover cinquefoil &c &c--on the  
12 top of the bank at Clam Shell--completely--  
13 withered & straw-colored-- Prob. from the snow  
14 resting on it so long & incessantly.  
15 And plants that grow on high land are more back ward than last year.  
16 The ground no sooner begins to be bare to

17 a considerable extent than I see a marsh-

18 hawk or harrier.

19 The sap of the white birch at Clam shell begins to flow--  
20 Ap. 5

//  
//

21 The April weather still continues-- It looks  
22 repeatedly as if the sun would shine--&  
23 it rains ~~in~~ 5 minutes after. I look out  
24 to see how much the river has risen

25 Last night there were a great many  
26 they are engulfed &  
27 portions or islets visible--now^ it is a smooth  
28 expanse of water & icy<sup>350</sup> snow-- The water has  
29 been steadily deepening on Concord meadows  
30 all night--rising with a dimple about  
31 every stem & bush.

//

32 Pm to North River at Tarbell's--

33 Fair weather again. Saw half a

//

---

<sup>350</sup> "icy" altered from "ice"

1 dozen black-birds uttering that sign  
2 like note on the top of Cheney's elm--  
3 but noticed<sup>351</sup> no red at this distance--  
4 Hear<sup>352</sup> after--some red-wings  
5 // were they grackles--? sing boby-lee. Do these ever make  
6 the sign-like note? is not their's  
7 a fine shrill whistle?  
8 The ice from the sides of the rivers<sup>353</sup> has  
9 wheeled round in great cakes & lodged  
10 against each of the RR. bridges (i.e.  
11 over each stream)-- Near the town  
12 there is the firmest body of ice (in the  
13 river proper above Hubbards bridge.  
14 A warm & pleasant afternoon. The  
15 river not yet so high by 4 or<sup>354</sup> 5 feet as last  
16 winter. Hear on all sunny hill sides  
17 --where the snow is melted--the chink-  
18 clicking notes of the F. hiemalis flitting  
19 before me-- I am sitting on the dried grass  
20 on the S. hill side behind Tarbell's house--  
21 on the way to Brown's-- These birds know  
22 where there is a warm hill side as well  
23 as we. The warble of the blue-bird is  
24 in the air-- From Tarbell's bank  
25 we had look over the bright moving  
26 flood--of the Assabet<sup>355</sup> with many  
27 maples standing in it--the purling  
28 & eddying stream--with a hundred  
29 rills of snow water tinkling into it.  
30 Further toward J. P. Browns saw  
31 2 large ant hills--(red before black  
32 // abdomens) quite covered on all the  
33 sunny portion with Ants which  
34 appeared to have come forth quite--

---

<sup>351</sup> "noticed" altered from "saw"

<sup>352</sup> "Hear" altered from "Do"

<sup>353</sup> "rivers" poss. "river"

<sup>354</sup> v. pencil line through "or"

<sup>355</sup> "Assabet" altered from "assabet"

1 recently--& were removing obstructions  
2 from their portals. Probably the frost  
3 is quite out there. Their black abdo-  
4 mens glistened in the sun-- Each was  
5 bringing up some rubbish from beneath.

6           The outlines of one of these hills was  
7 a very regular cone--<sup>{drawing}</sup><sup>356</sup> both were  
8 graceful curves-- Came out upon  
9 the high terrace behind Hosmer's--where  
10 we overlooked the bright blue flood  
11 alternating with fields of ice--(we  
12 being on the same side with the sun.)  
13 The first sight of the blue water in the  
14 spring is exhilarating-- Saw half a  
15 dozen white shell drakes in the //  
16 meadow--where Nut. Mead. Brook  
17 was covered with the flood. There were  
18 2 or 3 females with them. These ducks  
19 would all swim together first a little  
20 way to the right--then suddenly turn  
21 together & swim to the left--from time  
22 to time making the water fly in a white  
23 spray--ap with a wing. Nearly half a  
24 mile off I could see their green crests  
25 in the sun-- They were partly concealed  
26 by some floating pieces of ice & snow  
27 which they resembled-- On the hill  
28 beyond<sup>357</sup> Clam-shell scared up 2 ~~ap~~.  
29 Turtle-doves-- //

---

<sup>356</sup> {drawing}: poss. false start

<sup>357</sup> "beyond" altered from "behind"

1           It is that walking when we must pick the  
 2   hardest & highest ground or ice--for  
 3   we commonly sink several inches in the  
 4   oozy surface--  
 5                            Ap 6th '56  
 6                            %i.e. Lily%  
 7   7 Am To<sup>358</sup> Willow Bay-- The meadow  
 8   has frozen over--skimmed over in the night--  
 9   the ducks must have had a cold night of it  
 10 //? I thought heard white-bellied swallows over  
 11                            prob. for they surely came next morn.  
 12   the house before I arose.^ The hedges  
 13   They twitter over the house only in the morn. at first  
 14   resound with the song of the song-sparrow--  
 15   He sits high on a spray singing--while I stand  
 16   near--but suddenly becoming alarmed  
 17   drops down & skulks behind the bushes close  
 18   to the ground--gradually removing  
 19 ?   far to one side. I am not certain  
 20   but I have seen the grass bird--as  
 21   well as song-spar this year--(on the 2nd  
 22   no--prob not for it has no dark splashes on throat--v 7th prox.)  
 23   ult--^) a sparrow with a light breast  
 24   & less brown about the cheeks & head--  
 25   The song sparrow I see now has a very  
 26   brown breast. What a sly skulking  
 27   fellow-- I have a glimpse of him skulking  
 28   behind a stone--or a bush next to the  
 29   ground--or perhaps he drops into a ditch  
 30   just before me--& when I run forward he<sup>359</sup>  
 31   is not to {to} be seen in it--having flitted  
 32   down it 4 or 5 rods to where it intersected  
 33   with another--& then up that--all  
 34   beneath the level of the surface--till  
 35   he is in the rear of me.  
 36                    Just beyond Wood's<sup>360</sup> Bridge--I hear  
 37 //   the Pewee. With<sup>361</sup> what confidence

---

<sup>358</sup> "To" altered from "The"

<sup>359</sup> "he" altered from "&"

<sup>360</sup> "Wood's" altered from "wood's"

<sup>361</sup> "With" written over text

1 after the lapse of many months, I come  
2 out to this water side--some warm & pleasant  
3 spring morning--& listening--hear from farther  
4 or nearer--through the still concave of the  
5 air--the note of the first pewee. If there  
6 is one within half a mile--it will be here--&<sup>362</sup>  
7 I shall be sure to hear to hear its simple notes  
8 from those trees--borne over the water. It is  
9 remarkable how large a mansion of the  
10 air you can explore with your ears in the  
11 still morning by the water side.

12 I can dig in the garden now where the snow is //  
13 gone. And even under 6 inches of snow & ice  
14 I make out to get through the frost with  
15 a spade-- The frost will all be out about  
16 as soon as last year--for the melting of the  
17 snow has been taking it out-- It is re-  
18 markable how rapidly the ground dries--  
19 for where the frost is out--the water does  
20 not stand but is soaked up.

21 There has been no skating the last winter  
22 the snow having covered the ice immediately  
23 & not melting  
24 after it formed--^& the river not rising till  
25 april--when it was too warm to freeze thick  
26 enough--

27 As we sat yesterday under the warm dry  
28 hillside amid the F. hiemalis--by Tarbell's  
29 I notice the first<sup>363</sup> bluish haze--a small  
30 patch of it over the true Nut<sup>364</sup> meadow  
31 blue pine  
32 seen against the further^ forest--over  
33 low  
34 the near^ yellow one. This was of course the

---

<sup>362</sup> "&" written over "I"

<sup>363</sup> v. pencil line through "first"

<sup>364</sup> "Nut" altered from "nut"

1       subtile vapor which the warmth of  
2       the day raised from Nut Meadow--  
3       This, while a large part of the landscape  
4       was covered with snow--an affecting an-  
5       nouncement of the approach of summer--  
6       The one wood seemed but an underwood on  
7       the edge of the other--yet all nut meadow's  
8       varied surface--intervened--with its brook--  
9       & its cranberries--its sweet-gale, alder, & willow--  
10      & this was its blue feather--!

11             P. m. To Hubbard's 2nd Grove<sup>365</sup> by River,--

12             At Ivy tree--hear the fine tseep  
13 // of a sparrow--& detect the fox colored  
14 sparrow--on the lower twigs of the willows  
15 & from time to time scratching the ground  
16 beneath-- It is quite tame--a single  
17 one with its ashy head & mottled breast.  
18 It is a still & warm--overcast afternoon  
19 and I am come forth to look for ducks  
20 on the smooth reflecting water which  
21 has suddenly surrounded the village--  
22 water half covered with ice or icy snow--  
23 On the 2d ult it was a winter landscape  
24 --a narrow river & ~~only~~ covered thick with  
25 ice for the most part--& only snow on  
26 the meadows-- In 3 or 4 days the scene  
27 is changed to these vernal lakes--& the  
28 ground more than half bare. The  
29 reflecting water alternating with un-  
30 reflecting ice.

31             Apparently song sparrows may have the  
32 dark splash on each side of the throat

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<sup>365</sup> "Grove" written over "grove"

1 but be more often brown on the breast  
2 & head--some are quite light some quite  
3 dark-- Here is one of the light headed on  
4 the top of an apple tree--sings unweariedly  
5 at regular intervals--something like  
6 <sup>faster & faster</sup>  
7 tchulp / chilt chilt, chilt chilt, chilt  
8 chilt, chilt chilt / tuller tchay ter  
9 splay-ee / The last or 3d bar I am not  
10 sure about-- It flew too soon for me. I only  
11 remember that the last part was sprinkled  
12 on the air--like drops from a rill--as  
13 if its strain were moulded by the ~~strain~~  
14 spray it sat upon-- Now see considerable  
15 flocks of robins hopping & running in the  
16 meadows--crows next the water edge  
17 on small isles in the meadow.  
18 As I am going along the Corner road by  
19 <sup>hear &</sup>  
20 the meadow mouse brook--^see a quarter  
21 of a mile NW--on those conspicuous  
22 white oaks near the river in Hubbs 2nd  
23 grove--the crows buffetting some intruder--  
24 The crows had betrayed to me some large  
25 bird of the hawk kind which they were buffet  
26 ting-- I suspected it before I looked carefully.  
27 I saw several crows on the oaks & also  
28 what looked to my naked eye like a  
29 cluster of the palest & most withered  
30 oak leaves with a black base about  
31 as big as a crow-- Looking with

1 my glass I saw that it was a great  
2 bird-- The crows sat about a rod  
3 off higher up while another crow was  
4 occasionally diving at him--& all  
5 were cawing-- The great bird was just  
6 starting-- It was chiefly a dirty white  
7 with great broad wings with black tips  
8 & black on other parts--giving it  
9 the appearance of dirty white barred with  
10 black-- I am not sure whether it was  
11 // a white headed eagle or a fish hawk--  
12 There appeared much more white  
13 than belongs to either--& more black than  
14 the fish hawk has-- It rose & wheeled  
15 flapping several times till it got under  
16 way--then with its rear to me presenting  
17 the least surface--it moved off steadily  
18 over the woods N. W.  
19 in its orbit^ with the slightest possible  
20 undulation of its wings--a noble  
21 like saturn with its ring seen edgewise  
22 planetary motion--^ It is so rare  
23 that we see a large body self sustained  
24 in the air-- While crows sat still  
25 & intent--& confessed their Lord<sup>366</sup>--  
26 Through my glass I saw the outlines  
27 against the sky  
28 of this sphere^ trembling with life &  
29 power--as it skimmed the topmost<sup>367</sup> twigs  
30 of the wood--Toward some more  
31 solitary oak amid the meadows.  
32 To my naked eye it showed only

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<sup>366</sup> "Lord" altered from "lord"

<sup>367</sup> "topmost" altered from "top of"

1 so much black as a crow in its talons  
2 might-- Was it not the White headed eagle  
3 in the state when it is called the sea eagle?  
4 neck feathers  
5 Perhaps its<sup>368</sup> ~~crest~~ were<sup>368</sup> erected.

6 I went to the oaks--heard there a Nuthatch's<sup>369</sup> //  
7 faint vibrating tut-tut--somewhat even like  
8 croaking of frogs-- --as it made its way up the  
9 oak bark--& turned head down to peck. Anon  
10 it answered its mate with a gnah gnah

11 Smelt a skunk on my return at Hubbards  
12 blue berry swamp--which some dogs that had  
13 been barking there for half an hour had probably  
14 worried--for I did not smell it when I went along  
15 first. I smelt this all the way thence home  
16 the wind being S. W. & it was quite as perceptible  
17 in our yard as at the swamp-- The family  
18 had already noticed it--& you might have  
19 supposed that there was a skunk in the  
20 yard--yet it was 3/4 of a mile off at least.

21 <sup>370</sup>April 7 Monday--

22 Launched my boat. through ~~2~~ 3 rods //  
23 of ice on the river side--half of which froze last  
24 night. The meadow is skimmed over--but by  
25 mid-forenoon it is melted.

26 Pm-- Up river in boat--

27 The first boats I have seen are out  
28 today--after muskrats &c-- Saw one this  
29 morning breaking its way far through  
30 the meadow in the ice that had  
31 formed in the night. How independent  
32 they look who have come forth<sup>371</sup> for a

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<sup>368</sup> "were" altered from "was"

<sup>369</sup> "Nuthatch" altered from "nuthatch"

<sup>370</sup> newspaper clipping about snow storms of the past winter inserted between pages

<sup>371</sup> "forth" altered from "for"

1 day's excursion-- Melvin is out--  
2 & Goodwin--& another boat still.  
3 They can just row through the thinnest  
4 of the ice-- The first boat on the mead  
5 ows is exciting as the first flower or swallow  
6 It is seen stealing along in the sun under  
7 the meadow's edge-- One breaks the ice  
8 before it with a paddle while the other  
9 pushes or paddles--& it grates<sup>372</sup> & wears  
10 against the bows.  
11 // We see Goodwin skinning the muskrats  
12 he killed this forenoon on bank at Lee's Hill  
13 & mutilated  
14 leaving their red^ carcasses behind. He says  
15 // he saw a few geese go over the Great  
16 meadows on the 6th ult-- The half of  
17 the meadows next the river or more is covered  
18 with snow ice at the bottom--which  
19 from time to time rises up & floats--off  
20 --there & more solid cakes from over  
21 the river--clog the stream where it is  
22 least broken up--bridging it quite over--  
23 Great cakes rest against every bridge.  
24 We were but just able to get under  
25 the stone arches by lying flat & pressing  
26 our boat down--after breaking up  
27 a large cake of ice which had lodged  
28 against the upper side. Before  
29 we get to clam shell--see Melvin ahead  
30 // scare up 2 black ducks--which  
31 make a wide circuit to avoid  
32 both him & us-- Shell drakes pass

---

<sup>372</sup> "grates" altered from "greats"

1 also with their heavy bodies-- See the  
2 red & black bodies of more muskrats  
3 left on the bank at Clam shell--which  
4 the crows have already attacked-- Their hind  
5 legs are half-webbed--the fore legs not at all.  
6 Their paunches are full ap. of chewed  
7 roots--yellowish--& bluish-- Goodwin says  
8 perhaps  
9 they are fatter than usual--^--because they have  
10 not been driven out of their holes heretofore.

11 The open channel is now either over<sup>373</sup> the river  
12 or on the upper side of the meadows--next  
13 the woods--& hills-- Melvin<sup>374</sup> floats slowly &  
14 quietly along the willows watching for rats  
15 resting there--his white hound sitting still &  
16 grave in the prow--& every little while we hear  
17 his gun announcing the death of a rat or 2.  
18 The dog looks on understandingly & makes no  
19 motion. At the Hubbard bridge we hear  
20 the incessant note of the Phoebe-- Pevet--  
21 --pe-e-vet--pevé Its innocent some-  
22 what impatient call. Surprised to find  
23 the river not broken up just above this //  
24 bridge & as far as we can see--prob through  
25 F. H. Pond--prob. in some places you can  
26 cross the river still on the ice. Yet we make  
27 our way with some difficulty--through a<sup>very narrow</sup> channel  
28  
29 over the meadow & drawing our boat over  
30 the ice on the river--as far at foot of Fair  
31 Haven.-- See clams fresh opened--  
32 & roots & leaf<sup>375</sup> buds left by rats on  
33 the edge of the ice & see the rats there

---

<sup>373</sup> "over" altered from "in"

<sup>374</sup> "Melvin" written over "melvin"

<sup>375</sup> "leaf" altered from "leave"

1 By rocking our boat & using our paddles  
 2 can make our way through the softened  
 3 ice 6 inches or more in thickness.  
 4 The tops of young young white birches  
 5 now have a red-pink color-- Leave  
 6 boat there--  
 7 // See a yel. spot tortoise in a ditch  
 8 // & a bay-wing sparrow-- It has no dark  
 9 splash on throat.--& has a light or grey head.  
 10 Ap. 8th '56  
 11 1 Pm to boat--at Cardinal<sup>376</sup> Shore--& thence  
 12 to Well Meadow & back to Port--  
 13 Another very pleasant & warm day-- The  
 14 White-bellied swallows have paid us  
 15 twittering visits the last 3 mornings  
 16 {You} must rush out quickly to see them  
 17 for they are at once gone again.  
 18 // Warm enough to do without great  
 19 coat today & yesterday though I carry it  
 20 & put it on when I leave the boat.  
 21 Hear the crack of Goodwin's piece  
 22 close by just as I reach my boat--  
 23 Asks if I am bound up stream-- Yes to Well Meadow  
 24 He has killed another rat--^ Says I can't  
 25 get above the hay path 1/4 of a mile  
 26 above on ac. of ice--if he could he'd  
 27 a been at Well-Meadow before now.  
 28 But I think I will try--~~may be~~ & he  
 29 thinks if I succeed he will try it--<sup>377</sup> By  
 30 standing on oars which sink several inches  
 31 & hauling over one cake of ice I manage  
 32 to break my way into an open canal  
 33 above--where I soon see 3 rats  
 34 swimming-- Goodwin says that

---

<sup>376</sup> "C" written over "F"

<sup>377</sup> "it--" altered from "it."

1 he got 24 minks last winter--more  
2 than ever before in one season--trapped most  
3 shot only 2 or 3-- From opposite Bittern Cliff  
4 to Well meadow brook I pushed along with more  
5 or less difficulty to Well meadow Brook-- There  
6 10 feet wide  
7 was a water passage--^where the river had  
8 risen beyond the edge of the ice--but not  
9 more than 4 or 5 feet was clear of the  
10 bushes & trees-- By the side of fair Haven  
11 Pond--it was particularly narrow-- I shaved  
12 the ice on the one hand & the bushes & trees  
13 on the other all the way-- Nor was the  
14 passage much wider below as far back  
15 as where I had taken my boat. For all  
16 this distance the river for the most part, as  
17 well as the Pond--was an unbroken  
18 field of ice. I went winding my way & scraping  
19 between the maples-- Half a dozen rods off  
20 on the ice you would not have supposed  
21 ~~a boat~~ that there was room for a boat  
22 there-- In some places you could have got  
23 on to the ice from the shore without much  
24 difficulty-- But all of well meadow  
25 paddled  
26 was free of ice--& I sailed up to within a  
27 rod or 2 of where I found the cowslips  
28 so forward on the 2nd ult. It is difficult  
29 pushing a boat over the meadows now--  
30 for even where the bottom is not covered  
31 with slippery snow ice which affords no

//

1 hold--to the paddle--the meadow is frozen  
 2 & icy hard--for it thaws slowly under water.  
 3 This meadow is compleley open because none  
 4 of the snow ice has risen up-- Sometimes  
 5 you see a small piece that has been  
 6 released come up suddenly with such force  
 7 as to lift it partly out of water--but sinking  
 8 again at once--it looks like a shelldrake  
 9 which has<sup>378</sup> dived at a distance--  
 10           There in that slow muddy brook near  
 11 the head of Well Meadow--within a few  
 12 rods of its souce--where it winds amid  
 13 the alders--which shelter the plants  
 14 somewhat--while they are open enough  
 15 now to admit the sun--I find 2  
 16 // cowslips in full bloom--shedding pollen  
 17 & they may have opened 2 or 3 days ago;  
 18 for<sup>379</sup> I saw many conspicuous buds here  
 19 on the 2nd which now I do not see--  
 20 ~~They seem to have~~<sup>380</sup> been eaten off?<sup>381</sup> Do we  
 21 Have they not  
 22 not often lose the earliest flowers thus?  
 23 A little more--or if the river had risen  
 24 as high as frequently--they would have been  
 25 submerged-- What an arctic voyage  
 26 was this in which to find cowslips--  
 27 the Pond & river still frozen over for  
 28 the most part as far down as Car-  
 29 dinal Shore!  
 30           Saw 2 marsh hawks this pm cir-  
 31 cling low over the meadows--  
 32 along the water's edge--this shows that--frogs must be out  
 33 Goodwin & Puffer both fired at one  
 34 from Wm Wheeler's shore-- The  
 35 They say they made him duck & disturbed his feathers some.

---

<sup>378</sup> "has" written over "has,"

<sup>379</sup> "f" written over "F"

<sup>380</sup> "have" altered from "not"

<sup>381</sup> "off?" altered from "off--"

1 muskrats are now very fat-- They are reddish  
2 brown beneath--& dark brown above. I see  
3 not a duck in all this<sup>382</sup> voyage--perhaps  
4 they are moving forward this bright &  
5 warm day. Was obliged to come down as  
6 far as Nut meadow--(being on the west  
7 side--) before I could clear the ice--&  
8 setting my sail tack across the meadow  
9 for home-- The wind N westerly-- The  
10 river is still higher<sup>383</sup> than yesterday.

11 --About 8 1/2 Pm--hear geese passing  
12 --quite low over the river-- //

13 Found beneath the surface in the sphagnum  
14 near the cowslips a collection of little hard nuts--  
15 with wrinkled shells a little like nutmegs--perhaps  
16 bass nuts--collected after a freshet by mice!

17 I noticed that the fibres of the alder roots in  
18 the same place were thickly with little yellow  
19 knobby fruit-- Was not that clear light  
20 brown snail in that sphagnum a diff. //

21 species from the common one in brooks?  
22 See a few cranberries & smell muskrats--  
23 On the F. H. Cliff crowfoot & saxifrage  
24 are very backward-- That dense growing  
25 moss on the rocks--shows now a level surface  
26 of pretty crimson cups.

27 Noticed returning this P. m. a muskrat sitting  
28 near a small hole  
29 on the ice^ in Willow Bay<sup>384</sup>-- So motionless &  
30 withal round & featureless--of so uniform  
31 a color--that half a dozen rods off

---

<sup>382</sup> "this" altered from "the"

<sup>383</sup> poss v. pencil line through "higher"

<sup>384</sup> "Willow Bay" altered from "willow bay"

1 I should not have detected him--if not  
2 accustomed to observing them-- Saw the  
3 same thing yesterday, It reminds me  
4 of the truth of the Indians name for  
5 it "That sits ~~with~~ in a round form on  
6 the ice--" You would think it was a particular  
7 ly round clod of meadow mud rising  
8 above the ice-- But while you look it  
9 concludes its meditations--or perchance its  
10 meal & deliberately takes itself off off  
11 through a hole at its feet--& you  
12 see no more of him. I noticed 5 musk-  
13 rats this Pm without looking for them  
14 very carefully--4 were swimming in the  
15 usual manner--showing the vertical  
16 tail--& plunging with a half summer  
17 set suddenly before {my} boat-- While  
18 you are looking these brown clods slide off  
19 the edge of the ice & it is left bare--  
20 You would think that so large an ani-  
21 mal sitting right out upon the ice  
22 would be sure to be seen--or detected--but  
23 not so-- A citizen might paddle within  
24 2 rods & not suspect them-- Most country-  
25 men might paddle 5 miles along the  
26 river now & not see one muskrat--  
27 1/4 of a mile before or  
28 While a sportsman^ behind would be  
29 shooting one or more every 5 minutes--  
30 The other left to himself might not  
31 be able to guess what he was firing  
32 at.

1           The marsh-hawks flew in their usual irregular  
2 low tacking--wheeling & circling flight--leisurely  
3 flapping & beating now rising now falling  
4 in conformity with the contour of the ground.  
5 The last I think I have seen on the same  
6 beat in former years--he & his race must  
7 be well acquainted with the Musketicook  
8 & its meadows. No sooner is the snow off  
9 than he is back to his old haunts--scanning  
10 that part of the meadows that is bare  
11 while the rest is melting-- If he returns  
12 from so far--to these meadows--shall the  
13 River had risen so since yesterday I could not get under the bridge  
14 sons of Concord be leaving them at this  
15 but was obliged to find a round stick & roll my boat over the road.  
16 season--for slight cause?

17                               Wednesday April 9th

18           Another fine day-- 7 Am to Trillium woods--  
19 air full of birds-- The line I have measured  
20 W of RR is now just bare of snow--though //  
21 a broad & deep bank of it lies between that  
22 line & the RR-- E of RR has been bare some  
23 time. The line in Trillium woods is ap. just  
24 bare also. There is just about as much  
25 snow in these woods now as in the meadows  
26 and fields around generally--i.e. it is con-  
27                               There is not so much as on the E side of Lee's Hill  
28 fined to the coldest sides--as in them.^ It  
29 is toward<sup>385</sup> the N {&} E sides of the wood.  
30 Hence--ap. in a level wood of this character  
31 the snow lies no longer than in adjacent  
32 fields divided by fences &c--or even without  
33 them.

---

<sup>385</sup> "toward" altered from "on a si"





1 ducks amid the maples--which went off  
2 with a hoarse quacking--leaving a feather  
3 on the smooth dark water amid the fallen  
4 tree tops & over the bottom of red leaves.  
5 Set 2 sumach spouts in a large white  
6 Southward  
7 birch in the^ swamp--& hung a tin pail to them--  
8 & set off to find a yel-- birch-- Wandering over  
9 that high huckleberry pasture I hear--the  
10 // sweet jingle of the F. juncorum-- In a  
11 leafy pool in the low wood toward the  
12 river ~~see~~ hear a rustling--& see yel spot  
13 tortoises dropping off an islet--& into the  
14 dark stagnant water--& 4 or 5 more lying  
15 motionless on the dry leaves of the shore & of  
16 islets about. Their spots are not very  
17 conspicuous out of water--and in most danger--  
18 The warmth of the day has penetrated into  
19 these low swampy woods on the NW of  
20 the hill--& awakened the tortoises from their  
21 winter sleep. These are the only kind of tortoise  
22 Probably  
23 I have seen this year. ~~Perhaps~~ Because<sup>392</sup> the  
24 river did not rise earlier & the brooks ~~break~~  
25 & thaw them out. When I looked about  
26 I saw the shining black backs of 4 or 5  
27 still left--& when I threw snow balls at  
28 them they would not move-- Yet from  
29 time to time I walk 4 or 5 rods over  
30 deep snow banks--slumping in on the N  
31 & E sides of hills & woods'-- Ap. they love  
32 to feel the sun on their shells-- As I walk  
33 in woods where the dry leaves are just laid  
34 bare--I see the bright red berries of the  
35 solomon seal still here & there above the leaves.  
36 --affording food no doubt for some  
37 creature. Not finding other birches

---

<sup>392</sup> "B" written over "b"

1 I returned to the 1st swamp & tapped 2  
2 more white birches. They flow generally faster  
3 than the red or white maples when I tried them.  
4 I sit on a rock in the warm sunny swamp--  
5 where the ground is bare--& wait for my vessels  
6 to be filled-- It<sup>393</sup> is perfectly warm & perhaps drier there  
7 than even here-- The great butterflies--black with  
8 buff-edged wings are fluttering about--& flies  
9 are hovering over this rock-- the spathes of  
10 the skunk cabbage stand thickly amid the  
11 <sup>obvious</sup>  
12 dead leaves--~~almost~~ the only^ sign of vegetable  
13 life. A few rods off I hear some sparrows  
14 busily scratching the floor of the swamp--uttering  
15 a faint streep streep--& from time to time a  
16 sweet strain-- It is prob. the fox-col. sparrow--  
17 <sup>woody</sup>  
18 These always feed thus I think in^ swamps. a  
19 flock of them rapidly advancing--flying before  
20 one another through the swamp-- A robin peeping  
21 at a distance is mistaken for a hyla-- A gun  
22 fired at a muskrat on the other side of  
23 the island towards the village--sounds like  
24 planks thrown down from a scaffold--borne over  
25 Meanwhile I hear the sap dropping into my pail--  
26 the water--^ The birch sap flows thus copiously  
27 <sup>other</sup>  
28 before there is any^ sign of life in the tree--  
29 the buds not visibly swollen-- Yet the aspen  
30 though in bloom shows no sap when I  
31 cut it nor does the alder. Will their  
32 sap flow later? Prob. this birch sap like the  
33 maple flows little if any at night.

---

<sup>393</sup> "It" altered from "The"



1 in heaps on the snow & they would burn there in mid-  
2 winter though the fire could not spread much--

3 If the ground were covered with snow would any  
4 degree of warmth produce a blue haze like this?  
5 -- But such a fire can only run up the S & SW  
6 sides of hills--at this season-- It will stop  
7 at the summit & not advance forward far  
8 nor descend at all toward the N & E.

9 Pm Up RR--

10 A very warm day

11 The Alnus incana ~~by the causeway--but~~ especially //

12 by the RR op. the oaks sheds pollen X At

13 the 1st named alder--saw a striped snake, which //

14 prob I had scared into the water from the

15 warm RR-- bank--, its head erect as it

16 lay on the bottom & swaying back & forth

17 with the waves which were quite high--

18 though considerably above it. I stood there 5

19 minutes at least--& prob. it could remain--

20 there an indefinite period.

21 The wind has now risen a warm, but pretty

22 strong southerly wind--& is breaking up those

23 parts of the river which are yet closed-- The great

24 mass of ice at Willow Bay<sup>395</sup> has drifted down

25 against the RR bridge. I see no ducks--& it

26 is too windy for muskrat shooters-- In a leafy

27 pool by RR which will soon dry up I see large

28 skater insects--where the snow is not all melted. //

29 The willow catkins there near the oaks show

30 the red of their scales at the base of the catkins

---

<sup>395</sup> "Willow Bay" altered from "willow bay"



1                   also  
2 the reason why we^ did not die on the approach  
3 of Spring.

4           I measured a white oak stump just sawed off  
5 by the RR there averagin just 2 feet in diameter with  
6 142 rings--another near by 1 1/2 inches broader had but  
7 105 rings.

8           While I am looking at the hazel I hear from the  
9 old locality--the edge of the great pines & oaks  
10 in the swamp by the RR--the note of the Pine warbler                 //  
11 it sounds far off & faint--but coming out  
12                   iron  
13 & sitting on the^ rail-- I am surprised to see  
14 it within 3 or 4 rods on the upper part of a  
15 white oak--where it is busily catching insects--hopping  
16 along toward the extremities of the limbs & looking  
17 off on all side--2ce darting off like a wood  
18 pewee 2 rods over the RR--after an insect  
19 & returning to the oak--& from time to time  
20 uttering its simple rapidly iterated cool sounding  
21 notes-- When heard a little within the wood ~~they~~  
22 as he hops to that side the oak--they sound particu-  
23 larly cool & inspiring like a part of the ever-  
24 green forest itself-- --the trickling of the sap--  
25 Its bright yellow or golden throat & breast &c  
26 are conspicuous--at this season--a greenish yellow  
27 above--with 2 white bars on its bluish brown wings--  
28 It sits often with loose hung wings. & forked tail.

29           Meanwhile a bluebird sits on the  
30 same oak 3 rods off pluming its wings-- I hear  
31 faintly the warbling of one<sup>399</sup> ap. 1/4 a mile off &  
32 very slow to detect that it is even this one before

---

<sup>399</sup> "one" altered from "a"

1 me which in the intervals of pluming itself is  
2 apparently practising in an incredibly low voice.

3 The water on the meadows now, looking with  
4 the sun is a far deeper & more exciting  
5 blue than the heavens

6 The thermometer at 5 pm is 66+° and  
7 it has prob. been 70° or more & the last  
8 2 days have been nearly as warm.

9 This degree of heat then brings the F. juncorum  
10 & Pine warbler--& awakes the hyla.

11 Thursday Ap 10th

12 Fast day-- Some fields are dried sufficiently  
13 for the<sup>400</sup> games of ball--with which this season  
14 is commonly ushered in. I associate this  
15 day, when I can remember it, with games  
16 of base-ball played over behind the hills  
17 in the russet fields toward Sleepy Hollow  
18 where the snow was just melted & dried up.  
19 --& also with the uncertainty I always  
20 experienced whether the shops would be shut  
21 --whether we should have an ordinary dinner  
22 an extraordinary one--or none at all--  
23 and whether there would be more than  
24 one service at the meeting house--this  
25 last uncertainty old folks share with  
26 // me.-- This is a windy day drying  
27 up the fields--the first we have had for  
28 a long time

29 Therien describes to me the diagonal notch  
30 he used to cut in maples & birches (not  
31 having heard of boring) & the half

---

<sup>400</sup> "the" inserted

1 round spout cut out of chestnut or other straight  
2 grained wood--with a half round chisel sharpened  
3 and driven into a new-moon cut made by the  
4 partly side wise to the tree  
5 same tool.^ This evidently injured the trees more than  
6 the auger. He says they used to boil the birch down  
7 to a syrup--& he thought that the black  
8 birch would run more than any tree.<sup>401</sup>

9 P.M. I set out to sail--the wind N. W. but it  
10 is so strong--& I so feeble--that I gave it  
11 up-- The waves dashed over into the boat & with  
12 their sprinkling wet me half through in a  
13 few moments. Our meadow-sea looks as angry  
14 now as it ever can-- I reach my port--&  
15 go to Trillium Wood to get Yellow Birch sap.

16 The deep cut is full of ~~sat~~ dust-- This  
17 wind unlike yesterdays has a decidedly cold  
18 vein in it. The ditch by Trillium wood is strewn  
19 with yellowish hemlock leaves--which are still  
20 falling. In the still warmer & broader con-  
21 tinuation of this ditch south of the wood, in  
22 the SW recess--I see 3 or four frogs //  
23 jump in some prob. large R. palustris  
24 others quite small-- They are in before I see  
25 them plainly & bury themselves in the mud  
26 before I can distinguish them clearly-- They were  
27 evidently sitting in the sun by that leafy ditch  
28 in that still & warm nook-- Let them beware  
29 of marsh-hawks-- I saw also 4 yel-- spot tortoises  
30 paddling about under the leaves on the bottom

---

<sup>401</sup>The following page shows at the end of several lines on this page

1       there. Once they were all together. This ditch  
2       is commonly dry in the summer--  
3       I set 3 spouts in a tree 1 foot in diameter--& hung on a quart pail  
4       The yellow birch sap runs very fast--<sup>while</sup>~~while~~  
5       then went to  
6       I ~~was going & returning from~~ looking at the  
7       golden Saxifrage in Hubbard's close--when  
8       I came back the pail was running over-- This  
9       was about 3 Pm-- Each spout dripped  
10      about as fast as my pulse--but when I  
11      left at 4 Pm it was not dropping so fast.  
12 //   The red maples here do not run at all  
13      now--nor did they yesterday-- Yet one  
14      up the Assabet did yesterday. Apparently  
15      the early maples--have ceased to run.  
16              We may now say that the ground  
17 //   is bare--though we still see a few  
18      patches--or banks of snow on the  
19              especially on the N. E. sides of hills  
20      hill sides at a distance^ You see  
21      much more snow looking west--  
22      than looking east. Thus does this  
23      memorable winter disappear at last.  
24      Here & there its veteran snow banks spot  
25      the russet landscape. In the shade of  
26      walls & north hill sides--& cool hollows in  
27      the woods it is panting its life away. I  
28      look with more than usual respect--if not  
29      with regret--on its last dissolving traces.  
30              Is not that a jungermannia which  
31      so adorns the golden epidermis of the yellow  
32      birch with its fine fingers?  
33              I boil down about 2 quarts of this  
34      yel. birch sap to--2 teaspoonfuls of  
35      a smart tasting syrup-- I stopped there

1 else should have boiled it all away. A slightly medici-  
2 nal taste--yet not disagreeable to me-- It yields  
3 but little sugar then.

4 Ap. 11th

5 8 1/2 Am. To Tarbells--to get Black- &

6 Canoe-birch sap--

7 rusty  
8 Going up the RR I see a male & female^ grackle //

9 alight on an oak near me--the latter apparently  
10 a flaxen brown--with a black tail-- She looks like a  
11 different species of bird-- Wilson had heard only a  
12 tchuk from the grackle--but this male who  
13 was courting his mate--broke into incipient warbles--  
14 like a bubble burst as soon as it came to the  
15 surface--it was so aerated-- Its air would not  
16 be fixed long enough. Set 2 spouts in a canoe-  
17 birch 15 inch diameter--& 2 in a black birch

18 2 ft in diameter. Saw a king fisher on  
19 does not its arrival mark some new movement--in its finny prey? he the bright<sup>402</sup> //  
20 buoy that betrays it!  
21 a tree over the water.^ & hear in the old place

22 the pitch pine grove on the bank by the  
23 river--the pleasant singing note of the  
24 pine warbler--its a-che, vitter vitter, vitter  
25 vitter, vitter vitter, vitter vitter, vét. rings  
26 through the open pine grove--very rapidly.

27 --I also heard it--at the old place by the RR--  
28 as I came along. It is remarkable that  
29 I have so often heard it first in these  
30 2 localities--i.e. Where the RR. skirts the N.

31 edge of a small swamp--densely filled with  
32 old  
33 tall^ white pines & a few white oaks-- And

---

<sup>402</sup> "the bright" altered from "that bright"

1 in a young ~~pit~~ grove composed wholly of  
2 <sup>very</sup>  
3 pitch pines on the otherwise bare^ high &  
4 level bank of the Assabet-- When the  
5 season is advanced enough-- I am pretty  
6 sure to hear its ringing note in both those  
7 // places. The hazel sheds pollen today X; some  
8 elsewhere possibly yesterday-- The swallow up  
9 <sup>not till 13th X</sup>  
10 // RR will, if it is pleasant, tomorrow ✕  
11 // When I cut or break white-pine twigs now  
12 the turpentine exudes copiously from the bark--  
13 even from twigs broken off in the fall & now freshly broken  
14 ^--clear as water, or crystal-- How early did it?  
15 The Canoe birch sap flowed rather the  
16 fastest-- I have now got 4 kinds of  
17 birch sap--that of the White birch is  
18 a little tinged brown ap. by the bark--  
19 the others are colorless as water  
20 I am struck by the coolness of the sap  
21 though the weather may be warm-- Like  
22 wild apples--it must be tasted in  
23 the fields--& then it has a very slightly  
24 sweetish & acid taste & cool as iced  
25 water-- I do not think I could dis-  
26 <sup>of birch</sup>  
27 tinguish the different kinds^ with my  
28 eyes shut-- I drank some of the  
29 black birch wine with my dinner for  
30 the name of it-- But as a steady drink  
31 to be recommended to  
32 it is only ~~for~~^outdoor men & foresters  
33 // Now is ap. the very time to tap birches  
34 of all kinds.  
35 I saved a bottle-full each of the White  
36 Canoe & black-birch sap--(the yellow  
37 I boiled)& in 2{44} hours they had

1                   3   but the white  
2 all^ acquired a slight brown tinge. birch was the most brown  
3                   They<sup>403</sup> were at first colorless  
4                   On the whole I have not observed so much  
5 difference in the amount of sap flowing from  
6 the 6 kinds of trees which I have tapped--as  
7 I have observed between dif. trees of the  
8 same kind--depending on position &  
9 size. &c This flowing of the sap under  
10 the dull rinds of the trees is a tide which  
11 few suspect.

12                   Though the snow melted so much sooner on the  
13 E side of the RR. causeway than on the W--  
14 I notice that it still lies in a broad  
15 deep bank on the E side of Cheneys row  
16 of Arbor-vitae--while the ground is quite  
17 bare on the west-- Whence this difference?

18                   A few more hylas peep today though it  
19 is not so warm as the 9th--

//

20                   These warm & pleasant days I see very few  
21 ducks about though the river is high.

22                   The current of the Assabet is so much  
23 swifter--& its channel so much steeper  
24 than that of the main stream--that  
25 while a stranger<sup>404</sup> frequently cannot  
26 tell which way the latter flows by his  
27 eye--you can perceive the declination  
28 of the channel of the latter within a  
29 very short distance--even between one  
30 side of a tree & another-- You perceive  
31 the waters heaped on<sup>405</sup> the upper side of rocks

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<sup>403</sup> "They" altered from "These"

<sup>404</sup> "stranger" altered from "strange"

<sup>405</sup> "on" altered from "one"





1 of that wood which the april flood is  
2 bathing--& observe the great mulberry like  
3 catkins of yonder aspen curving over & downward  
4 --some already an inch or more in length--  
5 like great ~~crimson~~ reddish caterpillars covered  
6 thickly with down--forced out by heat--& already  
7 loose & of  
8 the sides & ends of some are^ a pale straw color  
9 shedding their pollen-- These for their for-  
10 wardness are indebted to the warmth of  
11 their position--

12 Now for the White-maple the same day  
13 paddle under yonder graceful tree  
14 which marks where is the bank  
15 of the river--though now it stands  
16 in the midst of a flood a quarter  
17 of a mile from land--hold fast  
18 by one of its trailing twigs--for the  
19 stream runs swiftly here-- See how  
20 the tree is covered with great globular  
21 clusters of buds-- Are there no anthers  
22 nor stigmas to be seen--? Look up-  
23 ward to the sunniest side--steady--when  
24 the boat has ceased its swaying--do  
25 you not see 2 or 3 stamens glisten like  
26 spears advanced on the sunny side of  
27 a cluster?-- Depend on it the bees will  
28 find it out before noon far over the  
29 flood as it is.

30 Seek out some young & lusty growing  
31 alder (as on the 9th) with clear shining  
32 & speckled bark--in the warmest possible

1 position--perchance where the heat is reflected  
2 from ~~south~~ some bank or hill side & the water  
3 The scales of the catkins generally are loosened but  
4 bathes its foot--^ On the sunniest cheek  
5 of the clump behold one or 2 far more con-  
6 siderably loosened--wholly or partially dangling  
7 & showing their golden insides-- Give the most  
8 forward of these a chuck & you will get a  
9 few grains of its yellow dust in your hand.  
10 Some will be in full bloom above while their  
11 extremities are comparatively dead as if struck  
12 with a palsey in the winter. Soon will come  
13 a rude wind & shake their pollen copiously  
14 over the water. Ap. 12th '56

15 There is still a little snow ice on the N side  
16 of our house 2 feet broad--a<sup>406</sup> relic of //  
17 the 25th of December-- This is all there is on  
18 our premises.

19 Ac. To Rees Cyclopedia the sap of  
20 the birches is fermentable in its natural  
21 state--also "Ratray, the learned Scot, affirms,  
22 that he has found by experiment, that the liquor  
23 which may be drawn from the birch tree in  
24 the spring time is equal to the whole weight  
25 of the tree, branches, roots, & all together".

26 I think on the whole that of the particular  
27 trees which I tapped--the yellow & canoe birches  
28 flowed the fastest.

29 Hazy all day with wind from the west-- //  
30 threatening rain--haze gets to be very thick  
31 & perhaps smoky in the P. m.--conceal-

---

<sup>406</sup> "a" altered from "the"

1 ing distinct forms of clouds--if there  
2 are any. Can it have anything to  
3 do with fires in woods West & SW?  
4 yet it is warm.

5 5 Pm Sail on the meadow-- There  
6 suddenly flits before me & alights on  
7 a small apple tree in Mackay's  
8 field as I go to my boat--a splendid  
9 purple-finch-- Its glowing redness is re-  
10 vealed when it lifts its wings--as when  
11 the ashes is blown from a coal of fire-- Just  
12 as the oriole displays its gold.

13 // The river is going down--& leaving the  
14 line of its wrack on the meadow--  
15 It was at its height when the snow generally was quite melted here--ie. yesterday.  
16 Rains considerably in the evening.

17 Perhaps this will raise the river again. No--

18 Sunday Ap. 13th '56

19 8 Am. Up RR-- Cold--& froze<sup>407</sup> in the  
20 // night. The Sallow will not open  
21 till some time today.

22 I hear a bay wing on the RR. fence sing  
23 the rythm--somewhat like----  
24 or here here fast  
25 char char, che che, chip chip chip,  
26 very fast & jingling jinglingly  
27 chitter chitter chitter chit, tchea tchea.

28 It has another strain considerably different but  
29 a 2nd also sings the above--2 on different posts are  
30 steadily singing the same--as if<sup>408</sup> contending with each  
31 other--notwithstanding the cold wind.

---

<sup>407</sup> v. line through "froze"

<sup>408</sup> "if" altered from "is"

1 P. m. to Walden--& F. H. Ponds--  
2 Still cold & windy  
3 The early gooseberry leafbuds--in garden have<sup>409</sup> //  
4 burst--now like small green frilled horns.-- Also  
5 the Amelanchier flower buds are bursting. //  
6 As I go down the R. R.-causeway--I see a flock  
7 of 8 or 10 bay-wing sparrows' fitting along the  
8 fence & alighting on the apple tree-- There  
9 are many robins about also-- Do they not  
10 incline more to fly in flocks a cold & windy day  
11 like this?  
12 & melted  
13 The snow ice is now all washed^ off of //  
14 Walden--down to the dark green clear ice  
15 which appears to be 7 or 8 inches thick & is  
16 quite hard still-- At a little distance  
17 you would mistake it for {water}--  
18 further off still as<sup>410</sup> from F. H. Hill--it is  
19 blue as in summer-- You can still get  
20 on to it from the southerly side--but  
21 elsewhere there is a narrow canal 2 or 3 to  
22 12 feet wide next the shore-- It may  
23 last 4 or 5 days longer, even if the  
24 weather is warm--  
25 As I go by the andromeda ponds I hear  
26 the tut tut of a few croaking frogs. //  
27 and at Well meadow I hear once or  
28 twice a prolonged stertorous sound--as from //  
29 river meadows a little later usually<sup>411</sup>--which  
30 is undoubtedly made by a dif. frog from  
31 the first--  
32 Fair. Haven Pond to my surprise is com- //

---

<sup>409</sup> "have" altered from "has"

<sup>410</sup> "as" written over "is"

<sup>411</sup> "usually--" altered from "usually."

1 pletely open-- It was so entirely frozen  
2 over on the 8th ult-- that I think  
3 the finishing stroke must have been given  
4 to it--but by last nights rain. Say then  
5 Ap. 13th(?)

6 Return over the shrub oak plain  
7 & the Cliffs. Still no cowslip--nor saxifrage  
8 There were alders out at Well meadow  
9 head--as large bushes as any--can they  
10 ? be A. serrulata-- V. leaves by & by.

11 Standing on the Cliffs I see most snow  
12 when I look s. w.--indeed scarcely a  
13 far or near  
14 particle in any other direction--^ from  
15 which & from other observations--I  
16 infer that there is most snow now  
17 under the N. E. sides of the hills--especially  
18 in ravines there.

19 At the entrance to the Boiling spring wood  
20 just beyond the Orchard--(of Haden) the N. E.  
21 angle of the wood--there is still a snow  
22 // drift as high as the wall--or 3 1/2 feet  
23 quite  
24 deep--stretching^ across the road at that  
25 height--& the snow reaches 6 rods down  
26 the road. I doubt if there is as much  
27 in the road anywhere else in the town--  
28 It is quite impassable there still to a  
29 horse--as it has been ~~since December~~--  
30 all winter.-- This is the heel of the winter

31 Scare up 2 turtle doves in the  
32 dry stubble in Wheelers hill field  
33 by the RR-- I saw two together once before

1 this year--probably they have paired.

2 Monday Ap. 14th '56

3 A raw over-cast morning

4 8 Am. Up Assabet-- See one striped squirrel

5 chasing another round & round the Island--with

6 a faint squeak from time to time--& a rustling

7 of the dry leaves-- They run quite near to the water.

8 Hear the Flickers cackle on the Old aspen

9 & his tapping sounds afar ~~of~~ over the water.

10 Their tapping resounds this far--with this pe-

11 culiar ring & distinctness because it is a hollow

12 tree they select--to play on--as a drum or tambour.

13 It is a hollow sound which rings {~~chang~~} & dis-

14 tinct--to a great distance--especially over water.

15 I still find small turtles eggs on the surface

16 entire--while looking for arrowheads by

17 the Island.

18 See from my window--a fish-hawk flying high //

19 W of the house--cutting off the bend between

20 Willow Bay & the meadow in front of the house

21 --between one vernal lake & another--he suddenly

22 straightening out his long narrow wings

23 high

24 wheels & ^ makes one circle^ above<sup>412</sup> the last

25 meadow as if he had caught a glimpse

26 of a fish beneath--& then continues his

27 course down the river.

28 P. M.

29 Sail to Hill by Bedford line

30 Wind S. W. & pretty strong--sky overcast

31 weather cool-- Start up a fish-hawk

32 from near the swamp white oaks SW

---

<sup>412</sup> "above" written over text

1           undoubtedly the one of the morning  
2 of the Island.^ I now see that this  
3 is a much darker bird both above  
4 & beneath--than that bird of  
5 the 6th ult. It flies quite low, ~~in~~  
6 surveying the water, in an undulating buoy-  
7 ant manner--like a marsh hawk  
8 or still more a Night hawk--with its  
9 long curved wings. He flies so low west-  
10 ward that I lose sight of him against  
11 the dark hill-side & trees--

12           The river is going down rapidly--yet the  
13 Hunts Bridge causeway is but just bare--  
14 The S side of Ponkawtasset looks  
15 much greener & more forward than  
16 any part of the town I have noticed.  
17 It is almost like another season there--  
18 They are already plowing there<sup>413</sup>.

19           I steer down straight through the  
20 Great Meadows--with the wind almost  
21 directly aft--feeling it more & more  
22 the farther I advance with them. They  
23 make a noble lake now-- The boat  
24 tossed up by the rolling billows keeps  
25 falling again on the waves with a  
26 chucking sound which is inspiriting.  
27 There go a couple of ducks which  
28 probably I have started--now scaling  
29 far away on motionless pinions with  
30 a straight descent in their low flight  
31 toward some new cove-- Anon

---

<sup>413</sup> "there" written over "pl"

1 I scare up 2 black ducks which make  
2 one circle around me reconnoitering--& rising  
3 higher & higher--then go down the river.  
4 Is it they that so commonly practice this  
5 manœuvre-- Peters is now far behind--  
6 on a forgotten shore-- The boat moored beneath  
7 his hill is no longer visible--& the red russet  
8 hill which is my goal rises before me--  
9 I moore my boat to a tree at<sup>414</sup> the base of  
10 this hill-- The waves are breaking with  
11 as on a sea-beach  
12 violence on this shore--^& here is the first  
13 painted tortoise just cast up by them--&  
14 lying on his back amid the stones--in  
15 the most favorable position to display his bright  
16 vermilion marks--as the waves still break--  
17 over him. He makes no effort to turn  
18 himself back--probably being weary con-  
19 tending with the waves-- A little further  
20 is another--also at the mercy of the  
21 waves--which greatly interfere with its staid  
22 helplessly  
23 & measured ways--its head^ wagging  
24 with every billow-- Their scales are very  
25 clean & bright now-- The only yellow I  
26 notice is about the head & upper part of the  
27 tail. The scales of the back are separated  
28 or bordered with a narrow greenish yellow  
29 ~~band~~ edging. Looking back over  
30 the meadow from the top of this hill  
31 I see it regularly watered with foam--

//

---

<sup>414</sup> "at" altered from "on"

1 streaks from 5 to 10 feet apart--  
2 extending quite across it in the direction  
3 of the wind--<sup>415</sup> Washed up against  
4 this shore I see the first dead sucker--  
5         You see now adays on every side on  
6 the meadow bottom--the miserable carcasses  
7 of the musquash stripped of their pelts.  
8         I saw one plunge from beneath the monument.  
9         There is much lumber--fencing stuff &c  
10 to be gathered now--by those inclined--  
11         I see an elm top at the Battle ground  
12 covered--uttering their squeaks & split  
13 whistles--as if they<sup>416</sup> had not got their  
14 voice yet--and a course rasping tchuck  
15 or char--not in this case from a crow--  
16 b. bird.  
17         Again I see the Fish hawk near  
18 the old place-- He alights on the  
19 ground where there is a ridge covered  
20 with bushes surrounded by water--but  
21 I scare him again--& he finally  
22 goes off N. E flying high.  
23         He had ap. stayed about that place  
24 all day fishing.  
25                 April 15th '56  
26         6 1/2 Am to Hill.  
27         It is warmer & quite still--somewhat  
28 cloudy in the east-- The water quite  
29 smooth-- April smooth waters--  
30 I hear very distinctly Barrett's saw

---

<sup>415</sup> "wind--" altered from "wind."

<sup>416</sup> "they" altered from "their"

1 mill at my landing--. The purple finch  
2 is singing on the elms about the house  
3 together with the robins--whose strain its resem-  
4 bles ending with a loud shrill ringing  
5 chilt chilt chilt chilt-- I push across the  
6 meadow & ascend the hill. The white bellied  
7 swallows are circling about & twittering above  
8 the apple trees & walnuts--on the hill-side. Not  
9 till I gain the hill-top do I hear the note  
10 of the (F. junco) huckleberry bird from the  
11 plains beyond-- Returned again toward  
12 my boat I hear the rich--watery note of  
13 the martin making haste over the edge //  
14 of the flood-- A warm morning over smooth  
15 water before the wind rises is the time to hear  
16 it-- Near the water are many recent skunk  
17 probings--as if a drove of pigs had passed along //  
18 last night--death to many beetles & grubs--  
19 From amid the willows and alders along  
20 the wall there I hear a bird sing--  
21 thus, to make it rapid  
22 a-chitter chitter chitter chitter chitter chitter  
23 -che che che che, with increasing intensity  
24 & rapidity--& the yellow red-poll hops in //  
25 sight-- A grackle goes over (with 2 females)  
26 & I hear from him a sound like a watch-man's  
27 rattle--but little more musical.  
28 What I think the Alnus serrulata?--all<sup>417</sup>  
29 %Is that one at Bristers spring?%  
30 shed pollen to-day X--on the edge of Cat- //  
31 %& at Depot brook crossing?%  
32 bird meadow-- Also grows on the W. edge of  
33 Trillium Wood.

---

<sup>417</sup> "all" altered from "is"

1           Coming up from the river side I ~~see~~  
 2   hear the harsh rasping char-r char-r  
 3 //   of the crow black bird--like a very coarsely  
 4   vibrating metal, & looking up see 3  
 5   flying over--  
 6           Some of the early willow catkins have opened  
 7   in my window--As they open they curve backwards  
 8   exposing their head to the light.  
 9           By 9 Am the wind has risen--the water  
 10   is ruffled--the sun seems more perma-  
 11   nently obscured--& the character of the  
 12                            %First Salmon & Shad at Haverhill today%<sup>418</sup>  
 13   day is changed.  
 14           It continues more or less cloudy &  
 15   rain-threatening all day.  
 16 //           Ed. Emerson saw a toad in his garden  
 17   today--& coming<sup>419</sup> home from his house  
 18                            rather  
 19   at 11 P. m. a still & ^ warm night  
 20   I am surprised to hear the first loud clear  
 21   prolonged  
 22 //   ^ring of a toad--when I am near  
 23   Charles Davis' house. The same, or  
 24   another--rings again on a different  
 25   key--I hear not more than 2--perhaps  
 26   only one-- I had only thought of them  
 27   as commencing in the warmest part  
 28   of some day--but it would seem that  
 29   may first be heard in the night-- Or  
 30   perhaps this one may have piped  
 31   in the day & his voice been drowned by  
 32   day's sounds-- Yet I think that

---

<sup>418</sup> newspaper clipping about the first salmon and shad of the season inserted between pages

<sup>419</sup> "coming" poss written over "ho"

1 this night is warmer than the day has  
2 been-- While all the hill side else per-  
3 haps is asleep this toad has just awaked  
4 to a new year-- It was a rather warm  
5 moist night--the moon partially obscured  
6 by misty clouds--all the village asleep--  
7 only a few lights to be seen in some windows  
8 when as I passed along under the  
9 warm hill side I heard a clear shrill  
10 prolonged ringing note from a toad  
11 the first toad of the year--sufficiently coun-  
12 tenanced by its Maker in the night & the  
13 solitude--<sup>420</sup>& then again I hear it (before  
14 I am out of hearing--i.e.--it is deadened  
15 by intervening buildings) on a little higher  
16 key. At the same time I hear a  
17 part of the hovering note of my first  
18 snipe circling over some distant meadow //  
19 a mere waif--& all is still again.  
20 --a-lulling the watery meadows--Fan-  
21 ning the air like a spirit over some far  
22 meadows' bay.-- And now ~~there~~  
23 far vernal sounds there is only the  
24 low sound of my feet on the mill dam  
25 side walks.

26 Ap 16 '56

27 I have not seen a tree sparrow, I //  
28 think since December--  
29 5/2 Am. To Pinxter swamp over  
30 hill-- A little sunshine at the rising--

---

<sup>420</sup> "solitude--" altered from "solitude."

1 I standing by the river see it first reflected  
2 from E. wood's windows--before I can  
3 see the sun-- Standing there--I hear  
4 that same stertorous note of a frog  
5 as was heard the 13th ult  
6 or two--ap. from quite across all this  
7 flood--& which I have so often observed  
8 before--what kind is it? It seems  
9 to come from the edge of the meadow  
10 which has been recently left bare-- Apparently  
11 this low sound can be heard very far over  
12 the water-- The robins sing with a will  
13 now--what a burst of melody--! It gurgles  
14 out of all conduits now--they are  
15 choaked with it-- There is such a tide  
16 & rush of song as when a river is  
17 straightened between two rocky walls-- It  
18 seems as if the mornings throat  
19 were not large enough to emit all  
20 this sound. The robin sings most  
21 before 6 o'clock now-- I note where  
22 some suddenly cease their song--making  
23 a quite remarkable vacuum.

24 As I walk along<sup>421</sup> the bank of the Assabet  
25 I hear the yeep yeep yeep yeeep  
26 yeep yeep or perhaps peop of  
27 a fish hawk--repeated quite fast  
28 & whistling  
29 but not so shrill^ as I think I  
30 {%\}%}have heard it--& directly I see his

31

---

<sup>421</sup> "along" poss altered from "of"

1 his long curved wings undulating over  
2 Pinxter swamp--now flooded--.

3 From the hill top I see bare ground ap-  
4 pearing in ridges here & there in the<sup>422</sup> Assa-  
5 bet Meadow--

6 A grass bird--with a sort of spot on its  
7 breast sings here here hé, che che che,  
8 chit chit chit, t'chip chip chip chip chip--

9 The latter part especially fast--

10 The F juncorum says phe phe phe phe ph  
11 ph-p p p p p p p-p p faster & faster  
12 flies as I advance but is heard distinctly still  
13 further off--

14 A moist misty rain-threatening April //  
15 day--about noon it does mizzle a little.

16 The robin sings throughout it. It  
17 is rather raw--tooth-achy weather.

18 Pm round Walden--  
19 %media%  
20 The stellaria%^% is abundantly out-- //

21 I did not look for it early it was so  
22 snowy-- It evidently blossomed as soon  
23 after the 2nd of April when I may say the  
24 began to go off in earnest--as possible.

25 The Shepherds purse too is well out-- //  
26 3 or 4 inches high--& may have been  
27 some days at least--

28 Cheney's elm shows stamens on the warm //  
29 side pretty numerously.-- Prob that at Lee's Cliff a little  
30 earlier  
31 Plowing & planting are now going //

---

<sup>422</sup> poss. vertical pencil line through "the"

1 on commonly-- As I go down the RR--  
2 I see 2 or 3 teams in the fields. Frost  
3 {%//%} appears to be out of most soil. I see  
4 much  
5 a {pine}-warbler^ less yellow than the last  
6 searching about the needles of the p. &  
7 white pine. Its note is some what  
8 shorter--a very rapid & continuous  
9 trill or jingle which I remind my-  
10 self of by--vetter vetter vetter vetter  
11 vét--emphasizing the last sylla-  
12 ble. Walden is still covered  
13 with ice--which still darker green  
14 & more like water than before--  
15 A large tract in the middle is of  
16 a darker shade & particularly like water.  
17 Mr Emerson told me yesterday that  
18 there was a large tract of water in the  
19 middle! This ice trembles like a  
20 batter for a rod around whe I throw  
21 a stone on to it-- One as big as my  
22 fist thrown high goes through--  
23 It appears to be 3 or 4 inches thick.  
24 It extends quite to the shore on the  
25 N<sup>423</sup> side--& is there met by snow.  
26 The needles of the pines still show  
27 where they were pressed down by the  
28 great burden of snow last winter--  
29 I see a maple twig eaten off  
30 by a rabbit 4 1/4 feet from

---

<sup>423</sup> "N" poss written over "s"

1 the ground--showing how high the snow  
2 was there-- Golden Saxifrage X at //  
3 Hubbard's Close-- Frogs sit round round  
4 Callitriche pool--where the tin is cast--  
5 We have waste places--pools--& brooks--  
6 &c where to cast tin--iron--slag--crockery  
7 No doubt the Romans & Ninevites had such places  
8 &c-- To what a perfect system this world  
9 is reduced--a place for every thing &  
10 everything in its place!  
11 Ap. 17  
12 Was awakened in the night by a thunder //  
13 & lightning  
14 ^shower & hail storm. the old familiar burst  
15 as if it had been rumbling somewhere else ever since I heard it last & had not lost  
16 the knack.  
17 & rumble^ I heard a thousand hail stones  
18 strike & bounce on the roof at once--what a  
19 clattering-- Yet it did not last long, & the hail  
20 took a breathing space once or twice.  
21 I did not know at first but we should  
22 lose our windows the blinds being away at the  
23 These sounds lulled me into a deeper slumber than before.  
24 painters.^ Hail storms are milked out of  
25 the first summer like warmth--they belong  
26 to lingering cool veins in the air which thus  
27 burst & come down-- The thunder too <sup>424</sup>sounds  
28 like the final {rending} & breaking up. of winter  
29 thus precipitous is its edge-- The first one  
30 is a skirmish between the cool rear guard  
31 of winter & the warm & earnest van-guard  
32 of summer. ~~Winter~~ Advancing summer  
33 strikes on the edge of winter which does not  
34 drift fast enough away--& fire is elicited.

---

<sup>424</sup> false start preceding "sounds"



1 through the water--Over<sup>427</sup> by Dennis Hill<sup>428</sup> &  
2 push for it-- Mean while it grows more &  
3 more rain threatening-- All<sup>429</sup> the air moist &  
4 muggy--a great ill defined cloud darken-  
5 ing all the west--but I push on till I feel  
6 the first drops knowing that the wind will  
7 take me back again-- Now I hear ducks  
8 rise & know by their hoarse quacking  
9 that they are black one--& see 2 going  
10 off as if with one mind along the edge  
11 of the wood-- Now comes the rain with a  
12 rush-- In haste I put my boat about  
13 raise my sail & cowering und my umbrella  
14 in the stern<sup>430</sup> with the steering oar in  
15 my hand--begin to move home-ward-- The  
16 rain soon fulls up my sail & it catches  
17 little From under the umbrella I look out on the scene  
18 all the^ wind.^ The big drops pepper the  
19 watery plain--the aequor on every side--  
20 it is not a hard dry pattering as on a  
21 roof--but a softer liquid pattering--which makes  
22 the impression of a double wateriness-- You  
23 do not observe the drops decending--but where  
24 they strike--for there <sup>batter &</sup> they^ indent the surface deeply  
25 like buck shot--& they or^ <sup>else</sup> other drops which they  
26 {creat}--rebound or hop up an inch or two & these  
27 last you see--& also when they fall back  
28 broken into small shot & roll on the surface--  
29 Around each shot mark are countless circling  
30 dimples runing into & breaking one another--

---

<sup>427</sup> "Over" altered from "&"

<sup>428</sup> "Dennis Hill" altered from "dennis hill"

<sup>429</sup> "All" altered from "all"

<sup>430</sup> "stern" altered from "steering"

1 & very often a bubble is formed by the  
2 force of the shot which floats entire  
3 for half a minute-- These<sup>431</sup> big shot  
4 are battering the surface every three inches  
5 or thicker-- I make haste to take down  
6 my sail at the bridges--but at the  
7 stone arches--forgot my umbrella--which  
8 was unavoidably crushed in part-- Even  
9 in the midst of this rain I am struck  
10 by the variegated surface of the water--  
11 different portions reflecting the light  
12 differently--giving what is called a watered  
13 appearance--broad streams of light  
14 water stretch away--between streams of  
15 as if they were different kinds of water unwilling to mingle  
16 dark--^though all are equally dimpled  
17 by the rain--& you detect no difference  
18 in their condition-- As if Nature loved  
19 variety for its own sake-- -- It is a  
20 // true April shower--or rain-- I think the  
21 first. It rains so easy--has a genius for it  
22 --and infinite capacity for--many showers  
23 will not exhaust the moisture of April.  
24         When I get home & look out the window  
25 I am surprised to see how it has greened<sup>432</sup>  
26 the grass--it springs up erect like a green  
27 flame in the ditches on each side  
28 the road--where we had not noticed it  
29 before. Grass is born-- There is a  
30 // quite distinct tinge<sup>433</sup> of green on the  
31 hill side seen from my window now.  
32         I did not look for the very first.

---

<sup>431</sup> "These" altered from "This"

<sup>432</sup> v. pencil line through "greened"

<sup>433</sup> v. pencil line through "tinge"

1 I learn from the papers that an unusual  
2 number of fruit trees have been girdled  
3 by the mice under the deep snow of the  
4 past winter--immense damage has been  
5 done to nurseries & orchards-- I saw where  
6 a prostrate maple in the Great meadows had  
7 been gnawed nearly bare.

8 Our river was generally breaking up on  
9 the 3d of April--though<sup>434</sup> some parts were  
10 frozen till the 12th

11 I see by the papers--That the ice had left  
12 Lake St. Peter (St Lawrence) the 12th ult--  
13 ? another paper (of the 11th) has heard that the St. Lawrence was open  
14 from Quebec to Three Rivers--or before the Hudson

15 The ice on Lake Champlain was broken up on  
16 the 12th

17 ~~The ice moved do~~ Fair Haven Pond was quite  
18 open the 13th

19 The ice moved down the Penobscot & the river opened  
20 the 15th

21 Lake Ontario was free of ice the 16th

22 The Kenebeck is expected to<sup>435</sup> open this week  
23 today is Thursday--

24 There is still ice in Walden %(opens 18th)%

25 Ap 18th '56

26 Pm-- -- to Lee's Cliff by boat.

27 A strong N. W. wind--the waves were  
28 highest off Hubbard's 2nd Grove--where  
29 they had acquired their greatest impetus  
30 & felt the full force of the wind--

31 Their accumulated volume was less

---

<sup>434</sup> 2 vertical pencil lines through "though"

<sup>435</sup> "to" altered from "this"

1 beyond on ac. of the turn in the river  
2 The greatest undulation is at the  
3 lee-ward end of the longest broad reach  
4 in the direction of the wind. I was steering  
5 there diagonally across the black billows  
6 my boat inclined so as almost to drink  
7 water. Scare up the same 2 black-  
8 ducks--(& twice again) The<sup>436</sup> under  
9 sides of their wings show quite light &  
10 silvery as they rise in the light.  
11 Red maple stamens in some places pro-  
12 // ject considerably--& it will prob. blossom  
13 to-morrow if it is pleasant. %V 23 prox--%  
14 The farmer neglects his team to watch my  
15 with its round rusty wooly buds & pale brown ashy  
16 // sail. The slippery elm X^ That pretty  
17 -- -- -- -- --twigs  
18 now brown stemmed moss with green oval  
19 fruit-- Common Saxifrage & also early  
20 sedge--I am surprised to find abundantly  
21 out--both--considering their backwardness  
22 // Ap. 2d Both must have been out some  
23 ie 4 or 5 days half way down the face  
24 // of the ledge-- Crowfoot ap. 2 or 3 days--  
25 Antennaria at end of cliff as you descend--  
26 // say yesterday X Turritis Stricta X  
27 Columbine XXX & already eaten by bees--  
28 some with a hole in the side. It is worth  
29 the while to go there to smell the catnep.  
30 I always bring some home for the  
31 cat at this season.  
32 // See there<sup>437</sup> great chocolate puff-balls

---

<sup>436</sup> "T" written over "t"

<sup>437</sup> "there" possibly "those"

1 burst & diffusing their dust--on the side of the  
2 hill-- At the sandy place where I moored  
3 my boat just this side this Cliff<sup>438</sup> the selagi-  
4 %& on Conantum shore near ?  
5 nella apus is abundant-- elms 30 or 40 rods below%  
6 left boat--op. Bittern Cliff.  
7 Bear berry grows by path from river of 7 rods  
8 beyon last pine S side--now strongly flower budded. ?  
9 Observed a large mass of White lily root  
10 wooly  
11 with the mud washed up--the^ steel blue  
12 root--with singular knobs for off shoots  
13 {drawing} & long large succulent white roots  
14 from all sides the leaf buds yellow  
15 & lightly rolled up on each side--  
16 Small sallow next above tristis 3 feet high //  
17 in path to Walden<sup>439</sup> X  
18 Walden is open entirely to-day for first //  
19 --owing the the rain of yesterday & eve  
20 time.^ I have observed its breaking up  
21 of different years commencing in '45--&  
22 the av. date has been Ap. 4th  
23 This evening I hear the snipes generally {///  
24 & peeping of hylas from the door.  
25 A small brown wasp's (?) nest (last years of  
26 course) hung to a barberry bush on edge of Lee's  
27 Cliff.  
28 Ap. 19th 56  
29 Was awakened in the night to a strain  
30 of music dying away--passing travellers  
31 singing-- My being was so expanded & in-  
32 finitely & divinely related for a brief  
33 season--that I saw how unexhausted

---

<sup>438</sup> "this Cliff" altered from "the Cliff"

<sup>439</sup> "Walden" altered from "walden"

1       how almost wholly unimproved was  
2       man's capacity for a divine life.

3               When I remembered what a narrow & finite  
4       life I should anon awake to!

5               Thoughith respect to our channels, our  
6       valleys & the country we are fitted to drain  
7       we are Amazons<sup>440</sup>, we ordinarily live with  
8       dry channels.

9 //            The Arbor-vitae by river side behind Mon-  
10       roes--appears to be just now fairly in blossom.

11 X       I notice acorns sprouted. My birch  
12       wine now after a week or more has been  
13       pretty clear & colorless again the brown  
14       part having settled & now coating the  
15       glass.

16               Helped Mr Emerson set out in Sleepy  
17       Holly 2 over-cup Oaks--1 beech<sup>441</sup> & 2 Arbor-  
18       vitaes<sup>442</sup>

19               As dryness will open the pitch pine cone--so  
20       moisture closes it up again-- I put one  
21       which had been open all winter into water  
22       and in an<sup>443</sup> hour or 2 it shut up nearly as  
23       tight as at first.

24                               Ap. 20 '56

25 //            Rain, Rain, rain<sup>444</sup>--a N. E. storm

26               I see that it is raising the river some-  
27       what again. some little islets which  
28       had appeared on the meadow ~~just~~ N. W of  
29       Dodd's are now fast being submerged again.

---

<sup>440</sup> "Amazons" altered from "amazons"

<sup>441</sup> "beech" altered from "beach"

<sup>442</sup> "vitaes" altered from "vitae--"

<sup>443</sup> "an" altered from "the"

<sup>444</sup> v. pencil line through final "rain"

1 Columella book 1 p 163 (p  
2 15 of the Eng. Trans 1745) says--I quote  
3 the trans-- "there is a great multitude of  
4 Greeks, who lay down rules & precepts for  
5 husbandry; of whom the chief, that  
6 most celebrated Poet Hesiod the Boeotian [note  
7 of trans says 'Pliny says his book of Husbandry<sup>445</sup> was lost in  
8 his time, & that he was the first who gave precepts upon  
9 that subject?] has contributed not a little to our  
10 profession. Afterwards, Democritus the Abderite,  
11 Xenophon a follower of Socrates, Architas  
12 the Tarentinian, and those 2 Peripatetics<sup>446</sup>, the  
13 master and the scholar, Aristotle & Theo-  
14 phrastus, who all sprung from the foun-  
15 tains of wisdom, gave further assistance  
16 to it."

17 ¶ "The Sicilians also have prosecuted this busi-  
18 ness with no ordinary care, Hieron, and  
19 Epicharmus his scholar, [note says 'he wrote  
20 carefully of medicines proper for cattle' ac to Columella]  
21 Philometor, and Attalus. [note--'Varro . . . seems to  
22 say that Philometor was only the surname of  
23 Attalus'--] Athens also has produced a great  
24 number of writers, of which the most  
25 approved authors are Cháereas, Aristandros,  
26 Amphilschus, Euphron; Chrestus the son of  
27 Euphron, not as many think the Amhipol-  
28 itan, who himself is also esteemed an excellent  
29 husbandman, but he who was a native

---

<sup>445</sup> "Husbandry" altered from "husbandry"

<sup>446</sup> "Peripatetics" altered from "peripatetics"

1 of Attica."

2 ¶ "The Islands also greatly cultivated  
3 this study, and had it in great estima-  
4 tion; as witness Epigenes of Rhodes,  
5 Agathocles of Scio, Euagon and Anax-  
6 ipolis of Thasus. Menander & Diodorus,  
7 also, who were of the same country  
8 with Bias, one of the seven wise men,  
9 laid claim among the first, to the  
10 knowledge of Agriculture. Nor did Bacchius  
11 and Mnasseas of Milesium, Antigonus  
12 of Cyme, Apollonius of Pergamus, Dion  
13 of Colophon, Hegesias of Marogna, [note--  
14 referred to by Vitruvius 'as having, with infinite study  
15 & care, explained the properties of places, and  
16 the virtues of waters?] yield to these. For,  
17 ??  
18 indeed, Diophanes the Bithynian, abridged &  
19 reduced into six books the entire works of  
20 Dionysius of Utica, who, in many volumes,  
21 had, in a very diffuse manner, interpreted  
22 Mago<sup>447</sup> the Carthaginian; and other, not-  
23 withstanding more obscure authors, whose  
24 countries we have not been informed of,  
25 have contributed something to our study.  
26 n  
27 They are those following: Androtion<sup>448</sup>, Aeschrion,  
28 Aristomenes, Äthenagoras, Crates, Dadis,

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<sup>447</sup> "Mago" altered from "Mago"; underlining cancelled

<sup>448</sup> T reforms illegible "n" above

1 Dyonysius, Euphyton, Euphorion. [varro says  
2 of these last that most of their writings were lost  
3 in his time] Nor with less fidelity have Lysima  
4 chus, & Cleobulus, Menestratus, Pleutiphanes,  
5 Persis, Theophilus, to the utmost of their  
6 power, brought in tribute to us."

7 ¶ "And that we may now at length bestow  
8 the freedom of the city of Rome upon Husbandry,  
9 (for as yet, by these authors, she was only of  
10 the Greek nation) let us now make men-  
11 tion of the famous Marcus Cato the Censor,  
12 [ac. to Pliny the best husbandman of his age]  
13 who taught her first to speak Latin<sup>449</sup>; after  
14 him, of the 2 Sasersanas, the father & son, ['Pliny,  
15 says, that they were the most antient, and the most  
16 celebrated husbandmen after Cato'] who instructed  
17 her more carefully; and, next, of Scrofa Tre-  
18 mellius ['contemporary with Varro'] who made it  
19 eloquent; and of Marcus Terentino, [Varro--  
20 'Beside his books de re rustica, & de lingua Latina,  
21 which, though incorrect, are still extant,'--wrote  
22 many more which are lost.] who exactly polished  
23 & perfected her; and afterwards, of Virgil,  
24 who made her also mighty & powerful in  
25 verse. Nor, lastly, let us think it below us,  
26 to make mention of Hyginus, who was, as it  
27 were, a pedagogue to her. Nevertheless, above  
28 all, let us pay the greatest veneration &  
29 respect to Mago the Carthaginian, the

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<sup>449</sup> "Latin" altered from "latin"

1 father of Husbandry. ['wrote 28 books on this  
2 subject in the Carthaginian language'] For those  
3 28 memorable volumes of his were, by a decree  
4 of the Senate, translated into the Latin  
5 tongue. Nevertheless, men of our own  
6 times, Cornelius Celsus, & Julius Atticus, have  
7 deserved no less commendation. For Cornelius  
8 comprised the whole body of this art in five  
9 books, and Julius Atticus published one single  
10 book, of one species of culture relating to vines;  
11 whose disciple, as it were, Julius Graecinus,  
12 took care that 2 volumes of the like precepts  
13 concerning vineyards, which he had composed  
14 in a more facetious & learned style, should  
15 be transmitted to posterity."

16 Here are 55 writers on Husbandry named.

17 168 "But if fortune shall have favored  
18 our wishes, we shall have land (agrum) under  
19 a salubrious sky, (salubri caelo) with a rich soil,  
20 partly champaign, partly hills (collibus) gently  
21 sloping to the east or south, with some parts  
22 (terrenis) cultivated, & others woody & rough, nor  
23 far from the sea or a navigable river, by  
24 which the fruits can be exported & commodities  
25 (merces) imported. Let the champaign, divided  
26 or grass ground  
27 into mowing & arable (prata et arva) &  
28 willow & reed ~~yards~~ groves, lie below the house.  
29 Let some hills be bare of trees that they may  
30 serve for corn alone<sup>450</sup> (segetibus--or grain crops)  
31 which yet thrives better on moderately dry & ~~flat~~  
32 rich (pinguibus campis) plains than on steep

---

<sup>450</sup> "alone" altered from "("

1 places-- Therefore even the higher corn-lands  
2 ought to have some level places, and to be as  
3 gently sloping as possible, & very similar to a  
4 champaign position. Then let other hills  
5 be clothed with olive-yards, and vineyards<sup>451</sup>  
6 and their future props (--pedamentis); and be  
7 able to afford wood (materiam) & stone, if  
8 necessity obliges you to build; nor less pasture (pascua)  
9 for cattle. Then let living waters springing forth  
10 (salientes) send down rivulets flowing down  
11 (decurrentes) to the grass ground (prata) &  
12 gardens & willow groves; nor let there be wanting  
13 herds & flocks of cattle & the other quadrupeds  
14 feeding on the cultivated ground and the thickets."  
15

---

16 168 Columella says that Cato said  
17 that in buying a farm 2 things were chiefly  
18 to be considered "the salubrity of the air, and  
19 the fertility of the soil".--after these "the road,  
20 the water, & the neighborhood".-- -- -- "To the  
21 other precepts we add this, which one of the  
22 7 wise men delivered to posterity for ever,  
23 {μέτρον ἀρίστον}, measure is best.-- -- -- --  
24 -- -- --" and he quotes Virgil's *Laudato ingentia*  
25 *rura, Exiguum colito*-- -- -- -- & also says that  
26 "it is worthy of that most acute people the  
27 Cathaginians to have said that 'The land (agrum)  
28 ought to be weaker than the husbandman';  
29 since when he must <sup>wrestle</sup> strive with it, if the farm  
30 <sup>%farmer%</sup> prevail the owner<sup>452</sup> must be crushed." (Quoniam

---

<sup>451</sup> vineyards: altered from "vineyards,"; ",," cancelled

<sup>452</sup> "owner" cancelled in pencil

1 cum sit colluctandum cum es, si fundus prae-  
2 valeat, allidi dominum.)

3 Ap. 22nd '56

4 // It has rained 2 days & nights--& now  
5 the sun breaks out--but the wind  
6 is still Easterly--& the storm probably<sup>453</sup>  
7 is not over-- In a few minutes the air  
8 is full of mizzling rain again--

9 8 Am-- Go to my boat op. Bittern Cliff

10 // Monroe's larches by river will ap shed pollen  
11 soon-- The staminate flowers look forward--  
12 but the pistillate scarcely show any red--

13 // There is snow still (of the winter) in the hollows  
14 where sand has been dug on the hill side E  
15 of Clam shell-- Going through Hubbard's  
16 root-fence field--see a pigeon woodpecker  
17 on a fence post--he shows his lighter back  
18 between his wings cassock-like & like the  
19 smaller wood peckers--joins his mate on  
20 a tree & utters the wooing note o-week  
21 o-week &c--

22 The seringo also sits on a post--with  
23 a very distinct yellow line over<sup>454</sup> the eye--  
24 rhythm  
25 & the ~~{burden}~~ of its strain is Ker chick /  
26 Ker che / Ker-char-r-r-r-r / chick--  
27 the last 2 bars being the part chiefly  
28 heard. The huckleberry<sup>455</sup> buds are  
29 much swollen-- I see the tracks of  
30 some animal which has passed

---

<sup>453</sup> "probably" altered from "is"

<sup>454</sup> "over" altered from "of"

<sup>455</sup> v. pencil line through word



1 // the bark by the rain & rise of river--  
2 I push up stream to Lee's Cliff--behind Good-  
3 win who is after musquash-- Many suckers  
4 & one perch have washed up on the Conantum  
5 shore the wind being SEasterly-- I do not de-  
6 (It would be worth while to see how long before this happens--)  
7 tect any wound-- Their eyes are white^ & they  
8 appear to have been dead some time--Their fins  
9 & they are slimy  
10 are worn--^ I cut open a sucker & it looked  
11 rather yellow within-- I also see some-  
12 times their bladders washed up. They float  
13 on their backs. When cut open they sink--  
14 double  
15 but the^ bladder is<sup>460</sup> uppermost &  
16 protruded as far as possible. Saw  
17 some pieces of a sucker recently dropped by  
18 some bird or beast 8 or 10 rods from the  
19 shore-- Much root & leaf bud washed  
20 Very perfect & handsome clamshells recently opened--by the musquash--ie  
21 // up-- A gull-- I buy a male musk-  
22 during the storm--lie on the meadow & the hill side just above  
23 rat of Goodwin just killed-- He some-  
24 water-mark-- They are especially handsome because wet by the  
25 times baits his mink traps with muskrat--  
26 rain.  
27 always with some animal food-- The musquash  
28 does not eat this--though he sometimes treads  
29 on the trap & is caught-- It rains hard  
30 & steadily again & I sail before it. Now  
31 I see many more ducks than in all  
32 // that fair weather--shell drakes &c  
33 A marsh-hawk in the midst of the rain  
34 is skimming along the shore of the meadow  
35 close to the ground--& though not more  
36 than 30 rods off I repeatedly lose sight

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<sup>460</sup> "is" altered from "or"

1 of it--it<sup>461</sup> is so nearly the color of the hill side  
2 beyond-- It is looking for frogs.

3 The small slate colored hawk which I have  
4 called pigeonhawk--darts away from a //  
5 bushy island in the meadow.

6 The muskrat which I bought for 12 cents--  
7 weighs 3 lbs 6 oz. Goodwin thought that  
8 some would weigh 1/2 to 3/4 of a lb. more  
9 I think a lb more  
10 than this.^ Thought this was a young one of  
11 judged by the tail--  
12 last year--^& that they hardly come to their growth  
13 in one year-- Extreme length 23 inches--length  
14 of bare tail nine inches--breadth of tail 7/8  
15 of an inch--breadth of body &c<sup>462</sup> as it lies 6 1/2  
16 An oval body--dark brown above (black in  
17 some lights the coarse wind hairs aft) reddish  
18 Thus far the color of the hair--the fur within slate color  
19 brown beneath-- ^tail black--feet a delicate  
20 glossy dark slate? with white nails-- The<sup>463</sup> hind feet  
21 half webbed--& their sides & toes fringed thickly  
22 with stiff hair ap-- to catch water--ears  
23 partly  
24 apparently (for the head is wet & bruised)^ concealed  
25 in the fur--short & round--long black mus-  
26 tachial bristles-- Forelegs quite short more  
27 like hands, hind ones about 3 inches without  
28 the line of the body's fur & hair-- Tail on the  
29 skin is a little curved downwards.

30 The star-fungi--as they dried in my cham-  
31 ber in the course of 2 or 3 hours--drew  
32 in the fingers--the different segments curled  
33 back tightly upon the central puff-- The

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<sup>461</sup> "--it" altered from "--is"

<sup>462</sup> "&c" inserted below line

<sup>463</sup> "T" written over "t"

1 points being strongly curled downward in to the  
2 middle--dimple-wise. It requires  
3 wet weather then to expand & display them  
4 to advantage-- They are hygrometers--

5 Their coat seems to be composed of 2 thick-  
6 nesses-- of different material & quality--  
7 & I should guess that the inside chocolate  
8 colored had a great affinity for moister  
9 & being saturated with it swelled & so  
10 necessarily burst off & turned back--  
11 --& perchance the outside dirty white or pale  
12 grown one expands with dryness--

13 A single male shell-drake rose from  
14 amid the alders against Holden swamp  
15 woods as I was saling down in the rain  
16 with outstretched neck--  
17 & flew^ at right angles across my course  
18 only 4 or 5 rods from me--& a foot or 2  
19 above the water--finally circling round  
20 into my rear--

21 Soon after I turned about in Fair Haven  
22 Pond--it began to rain hard-- The wind  
23 was but little S of E--& there fore not  
24 very favorable for my voyage. I raised  
25 my sail--& cowering under my umbrealla  
26 in the stern--wearing the umbrella like  
27 a cap & holding the handle between my  
28 knees I steered & paddled--almost per-  
29 fectly sheltered from the heavy rain--  
30 Yet my legs & arms were a little

1 exposed sometimes in my endeavors to  
2 keep well to windward so as to double  
3 certain capes ahead-- For the wind oc-  
4 casionally drove me on to the western shore  
5 From time to time from under my umbrella<sup>464</sup>  
6 I could see the ducks spinning away before  
7 me like great bees-- For<sup>465</sup> when they are  
8 flying low directly from you,<sup>you</sup> ^ see hardly any-  
9 thing but their vanishing dark bodies--while  
10 the rapidly moving wings of paddles seen<sup>466</sup>  
11 edgewise are almost invisible. At length,  
12 when the river turned more easterly--I was  
13 obliged to take down my sail--& paddle  
14 slowly in the face of the rain, for the most  
15 part not seeing my course with the brella  
16 slanted before me-- But though my pro-  
17 gress was slow & laborious--& at length  
18 I began to gett a little wet--I enjoyed the  
19 adventure--because it combined to some  
20 extent the advantage of being at home  
21 in my chamber & abroad in the storm  
22 at the same time.

24 It is highly important to invent a dress which  
25 will enable us to be abroad with impunity  
26 in the severest storms-- We cannot be  
27 fully  
28 said to have^ invented clothing yet.

29 In the meanwhile the rain water collects in  
30 the boat & you must sit with you feet  
31 curled up on a paddle--& you expose your-

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<sup>464</sup> "umbrella" corrected from "umbrea"

<sup>465</sup> "For" altered from "for"

<sup>466</sup> "seen" altered from "are"

1 self in taking down your mast & raising  
2 it again at the bridges. These rain  
3 storms--(this is the 3d day of one) charac-  
4 terize the season--& belong rather to winter  
5 than to summer-- Flowers delay their blossoming  
6 --birds tarry in their migrations &c &c--

7 It is surprising how so many tender organizations  
8 of flowers & insects survive them uninjured.  
9 The muskrat must do its swimming chiefly  
10 with its hind feet-- They are similar in form & position  
11 to those of the shelldrake-- Its broad oval<sup>467</sup> &  
12 flattish body too must help keep it up--

13 Those star-puff-balls which had closed up  
14 in my chamber put into water opened again  
15 in a few hours.

16 What is that little bodkin shaped bulb which  
17 I found washed up on the edge of the meadow  
18 %Ludwigia palustris%  
19 {drawing} White with a few small greenish  
20 %a fac simile.%  
21 rounded leafets?

22 On the 19th ult when setting out one of those  
23 over-cup oaks in sleepy Hollow--digging  
24 at the decayed stump of an apple tree we disturbed--  
25 ? dug up--a toad which prob. had buried itself  
26 there last fall & had not yet come out.

27 Columella--De positione villae--p 172  
28 tells us--that that the villa was  
29 divided in to 3 parts the urban--  
30 rustic--& fructuary (fructuaria)--  
31 the first for the 1st for the Pater-  
32 familiae & his family--2nd rustic for  
33 %This whole chapter is important--De positione &c%

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<sup>467</sup> "oval" altered from "&"

1 the laborers hired & ~~free~~ slaves & for the  
2 cattle &c--the 3d ~~for~~ barns cellars &c  
3 for fruits--of all kinds--hay--wine & oil presses  
4 & ellans &c-- The baliff (or villicus) was to have  
5 his habitation close by the gate of the villa,  
6 that he might have a view of those going in  
7 & coming-out, & the Procurator (steward?  
8 says Trans) over the gate for the same purpose.

9 Says it is important that the dung  
10 hills be kept moist & strong enough to kill  
11 the seeds of thorns & grasses conveyed to it in  
12 litter & chaff--nec in agrum exportata [i.e.  
13 semina) segetes herbidas reddant.--nor carried  
14 in to the field produce weedy crops.

15 180 "For a herdsman (bubulco) a  
16 natural aptitude of mind (indoles mentis)  
17 though necessary is not enough,<sup>468</sup> unless a  
18 great volume of voice (vastitas vocis) and  
19 constitution (habitus) make him to be feared  
20 by the cattle. But let clemency temper his strength;  
21 for he ought to be more terrible than cruel,  
22 so that the cattle may both obey his com-  
23 mands--, & not worne out by the vexation  
24 of labor & blows at the same time, last  
25 longer (diutius perennent)."

26 Advises to make the tallest slaves plough-  
27 men--both for the above reasons & because  
28 the tall are not so little fatigued by any  
29 labor, not having to stoop to it-- -- -- --  
30 "Vineyards demand not so much tall, as

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<sup>468</sup> "enough," altered from "enough--"

1 broad & brawny? (lacertosos) men," army, or perhaps  
2 with long & strong arms.

3 Columella thus describes well enough  
4 the condition of much of our exhausted Con-  
5 cord soil--especially--old rye-fields--which  
6 have been cultivated many years in succession  
7 They are not weary with labor--but  
8 without manure-- exhausted for want of nourishment.

9 182 At cum perruptae rastris et aratris radices  
10 herbarum, ferroque succisa nemora frondibus  
11 suis desierunt alere matrem, quaeque tem-  
12 poribus autumnii frutetis et arboribus delapsa  
13 folia superjaciebantur, mox conversa vomeribus,  
14 et inferiori solo, quod plerunque est exilius,  
15 permista, atque absumpta sunt, sequitur,  
16 ut destituta pristinis alimentis macrescat  
17 humus."

18 But when the roots of plants being broken  
19 through with rakes (or hoes?) & ploughs,  
20 and the forests cut down with the axe<sup>469</sup> have  
21 ceased to nourish their mother with their leaves,  
22 and whatever leaves falling from the shrubs  
23 & trees in autumn were cast upon her were  
24 presently turned in with plow-shares, and  
25 mixed with the {~~loam~~} sub-soil, which  
26 for the most part is the leaner, and  
27 were {~~common~~} wasted, it follows that the  
28 soil  
29 earth destitute of its pristine nourishment,  
30 grows lean."<sup>4</sup>

31 183 "Those most skilled in rustic affairs say that  
32 there are 3 kinds of land (or soil?)<sup>470</sup> terreni):  
33 Campestre, collinum, montanum-- Champaign,  
34 hilly, & mountainous."

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<sup>469</sup> "axe" altered from "axe,"

<sup>470</sup> close paren cancelled in pencil

2 ~~let~~ Incultum igitur locum consideremus, siccus an  
3 humidus; nemorosus arboribus, an lapidibus confrago-  
4 sus; juncone sit, an gramine vestitus, ac filictis alliis-  
5 ve frutetis impeditus; si~~s~~ humidus erit, abundantia  
6 uliginis ante siccetur fossis. Earum duo genera  
7 cognovimus, caecarum et patentium;--"

8 Let us therefore consider an uncultivated place,  
9 whether it is dry or moist; woody with trees,  
10 or rugged with stones; clothed with rushes or with  
11 grass, and encumbered with fern groves or  
12 shrubby  
13 other^ nurseries. If it is moist let the abun-  
14 drained  
15 dance of moisture be first dried up by ditches.  
16 We have known 2 kinds of these, blind &  
17 open;--" This reminds me of many a  
18 wild Concord pasture--& so of the following

19 At saxosum facile est expidire lec-  
20 tione padidum, quorum si magna est abun-  
21 dantia, velut quibusdam substructionibus partes  
22 agri sunt occupandae, ut reliquae emunden-  
23 tur; vel in altitudinem sulco depresso lapides  
24 obruendi. But it is easy to clear  
25 stony ground by picking up the stones. if there  
26 is a great abundance of them parts of the  
27 field are to be occupied as it were by certain  
28 piles built up, that the rest may be  
29 clear; or the stones are to be buried in a  
30 But this (ap-- both) is to  
31 furrow sunk very deep." be done only when labor is very  
32 cheap--si suadebit operarum  
33 vilitas--  
34 When stones & gravel are wanting

1 a blind ditch is to be filled with "a rope  
2 of sprays tied together" (Trans) and cypress  
3 184 or pine boughs or others trodden upon it<sup>471</sup>--  
4 & then covered with earth. %(Sarmentis connexus velut  
5 funis informabitur)%  
6 Ap 23d '56  
7 To--White Cedars.  
8 Pm up Assabet-- The river risen  
9 // again on ac. of the rain of the last 3  
10 days to nearly as high as on the 11th ult--  
11 I can just get over Hosmer's meadow--  
12 // The red maple did not shed pollen on the  
13 19th & could not on the 20th--21st--or 22nd on  
14 ac. of rain so this must be the first  
15 day--the 23dX--though I see none quite so  
16 forward by the river-- The wind is now  
17 westerly--& pretty strong-- No sap to be  
18 // seen in the bass-- The White birch sap flows  
19 yet from a stump cut last fall--& a few  
20 small bees--flies &c are attracted by it.  
21 Along the shore by Dove Rock I hear  
22 like a fox-col-sparrow--  
23 a faint tseep^ & looking sharp detect  
24 // upon a maple a White-throated sparrow.  
25 I soon flies to the ground amid the birches  
26 2 or 3 rods distant--a<sup>472</sup> plump looking  
27 bright  
28 bird & with its^ white & yellow marks on  
29 the head--distinctly separated from the  
30 slate-color--methinks the most brilliant  
31 of the sparrows-- Those bright colors how-  
32 ever are not commonly observed--  
33 The white cedar swamp consists of  
34 humocks--now surrounded by water--  
35 V. n 21

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<sup>471</sup> it: altered from "at"

<sup>472</sup> a: altered from "&"

1 %notice bird's nests%

2 %Stop%

1           %Andrews Lat. Dict.  
2   Adoreum (from ador) relating to spelt  
3   Faba--more properly perhaps our hog's bean or  
4           horse-bean  
5   Phaselus A kind of bean with an edible pod  
6           French beans, Kidney beans, phasel;--  
7   Cicer The Chick-pea  
8   Cicera pulse similar to the chickpea, chick-  
9           ling vetch  
10   Panicum Italian panic grass  
11   Ptisana Barley {washed} & cleaned from the  
12           hulls, barley sprouts, pearl-barley,  
13           (also) a drink made from barley  
14           groats, barley-water, ptisana.  
15   Medica An excellent kind of clover introduced  
16           from Media, Burgundy clover, lucern  
17   Ervum A kind of pulse, the bitter vetch  
18   Farrago Mixed fodder for cattle, mash.  
19   Far, a sort of grain, spelt, Gr. {ξέα}, Triticum  
20           spelta L. The earliest food of the Ro-  
21           mans, both roasted & ground into meal.  
22   Avena oats 2 kinds common & wild  
23           V. Smiths' Class. Dict.  
24   I find a jugerum to be about 99 rods%

1 %Observe snail furrows in brooks in winter  
2 if there are any V March 20  
3 Note of grackles & how early  
4 Bay-wing how early--  
5 When turpentine of wht pine bark beg to flow--before Ap. 10  
6 Is that an A. serrulata at Brister's spring? no?  
7 ~~Observe if latent leaves of S. borealis are often reduced to {bracts}~~  
8 & compare with S. longifolia  
9 ~~Is that a V. fuscatum with string 1 rod E of {bend} at Clam Shell~~  
10 has reddish young leaves Yes  
11 Is that P. Erythrocarpum with string 2 feet W of swamp & {1 yd} W  
12 so N of entrance to Hub swamp?  
13 ~~V Chewinks nest of June 1st<sup>473</sup>~~  
14 <sup>474</sup>~~V Choke berry by E Walden sand & N end Emerson Cliff { }  
15 { } both {one block away} 23d (of June 5~~  
16 ~~V. Chickadee nest of June 3d & Cuckoo & Thrushes~~  
17 ~~V. King bird nest by stone heap~~  
18 ~~Yellow-browed sparrow {Nut Oak} meadow~~  
19 ~~V. chewink nest Linnaea {bot of rd} N of path N of pine~~  
20 ~~June 10 bet 2 {broken} top young white oaks~~  
21 ~~V. Paint. turtle eggs 1 rod + S marlboro { }~~  
22 ~~{of June 10} & about 2 feet from edgs of sand~~  
23 ~~V. small pewee? nest of June 12 Conantum~~  
24 ~~Get a Downy peckers nest~~  
25 Asclepias pods up RR 2 kinds--of July 5th%

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<sup>473</sup> V. pencil line from this point through line beginning with "Get--Downy..."

<sup>474</sup> line connects "Is that..." with "V. choke berry..."