

1 Nov. 9th 1858 continued

2 The newspaper tells me that Un-  
3 cannoonuc was was white with snow  
4 for a short time on the morning of  
5 the 7th. Thus steadily but unobserved  
6 the winter steals down from the  
7 north--till from our highest hills we  
8 can discern its vanguard. Next week,  
9 perchance, our own hills will be  
10 white. Little did we think how near  
11 the winter was. It is as if a scout had  
12 brought in word that an enemy was  
13 approaching in force only a day's march  
14 distant. Manchester was the spy this  
15 time--which has a camp at the base<sup>1</sup>  
16 of that hill. We had not thought seri-  
17 ously of winter--we dwelt in fancied se-  
18 curity yet.

19 Pm to Grant Fields &  
20 Walden

21 The scarlet O. by Ag. Ground (and no  
22 doubt generally) is falling fast & has //  
23 & They have now generally grown dull--  
24 been for some days^--before the leaves have  
25 lost their color-- Other oaks may be  
26 said have assumed their true November //  
27 aspect--i.e. the large ones are about  
28 Only the latest black oaks are leafy--& they just withered  
29 bare. ^The trees on the hill just N of Alcott'<sup>2</sup>  
30 land--which I saw {yesterday}<sup>3</sup> so distinctly

---

<sup>1</sup>Period-like mark at end of line.

<sup>2</sup>No "s" apparent; the MS is wrinkled or folded after the apparent apostrophe.

<sup>3</sup>A wrinkle or fold in the MS obscures the middle of this word.

1 from Ponkawtasset--& thought were  
2 either larches or aspens--prove to be  
3 larches. On a hill like this it seems, they  
4 are later to change & brighter now than those  
5 in the Abel Heywood swamp--which are  
6 brownish yellow. The first named larches  
7 were quite as distinct amid the pines seen  
8 a mile off--as near at hand.

9 Oak sprouts--white & black, at least,  
10 are a deeper & darker red than the trees.  
11 Here is a white oak sprout e.g--far  
12 brighter red than any tree of the kind  
13 I ever saw-- I don't find the black oaks  
14 yet to be quite scarlet or red at all--  
15 yet the very young & sprouts often are--  
16 & are hard to distinguish from the Scar. O.

17 Garfield shot a hen hawk just as I  
18 came up on the on the hill side in front  
19 of his house. He has killed 3 within  
20 2 years--about his house & they have  
21 killed 2 hens for him. They will fly off  
22 with a hen. In this case the hen was already  
23 knocked over-- I was surprised to find that  
24 this bird had not a red tail--& guessed  
25 it must be a young one. I brought it  
26 home & found that it was {so}-- the same  
27 which Wilson called "Falco Leverianus"  
28 "American Buzzard or White-breasted Hawk".

1 it differed so much from the old. There  
2 little if any rufous brown about this  
3 bird. It had a white breast--& prettily  
4 (with black)%ish%<sup>4</sup> %or dark brown% %v the 11th%  
5 barred^ white tail coverts%^--was generally  
6 dark brown with white spots above  
7 He says that the ~~others~~ he ~~has~~ killed  
8 the others also at this season & that  
9 they were marked like this. They were  
10 all young birds then<sup>5</sup> & hence so bold  
11 as inexperienced perhaps. They take his  
12 hens from between the house & the barn.  
13 When the hawk comes all the hens &  
14 roosters run for the barn.  
15 I see cat-nep turned at top to a crimson //  
16 purple  
17 As I stood upon Heywood's Peak--  
18 I observed in the very middle of the Pond  
19 which was smooth--& reflects the sky  
20 {then}<sup>6</sup>--what at first I took to be a  
21 dark  
22 sheet of very thin ^ice for ~~(3)~~ yards wide  
23 the first ice of the season which had formed by the shore in the morning--  
24 drifting there (^--(though<sup>7</sup> I have seen any  
25 on the river or pond as yet)--but immediately  
26 I considered that it was too early & warm for this--  
27 ~~{knew} be the~~^-- Then I wondered for  
28 a moment what dark film could  
29 be floating out there on {this}<sup>8</sup> pure &  
30 unruffled lake. To be sure it was not  
31 a very conspicuous object & most would  
32 not have noticed it! But suspecting  
33 what it was, I looked through my

---

<sup>4</sup>"%ish%" is written partly on top of the close parenthesis.

<sup>5</sup>Alterations of the letters appear on top of "then".

<sup>6</sup>Possibly "there".

<sup>7</sup>A thin ink line on a descending angle goes through "through", the space between this line and the next, and the word "yet" on the next line.

<sup>8</sup> Possibly "the".

1 glass & could plainly see the dimples  
2 made by a school of little fishes contin-  
3 ually coming to the surface there together.  
4 It was exactly analogous to the dark  
5 rippled patches on the sea made by the  
6 river {shadow} { } &/ as seen from Cape Cod. Why have  
7 I never observed the like in the river?  
8 In this respect Walden is a small ocean--  
9 We had a true November sunset.

10 after a dark cloudy Pm The sun  
11 reached a clear stratum just before  
12 setting--beneath the dark cloud--though  
13 {scard} to enter another on the horizons edge--  
14 & a cold yellow sunlight suddenly  
15 illumined the withered grass of the  
16 fields around me & far eastward.  
17 Such a phenomenon--as when it occurs  
18 later I call the after-glow of the year.

19 It is of no use to plow deeper than  
20 the soil is--unless you mean to follow<sup>9</sup> up  
21 that mode of cultivation persistently--manuring  
22 highly & carting on muck--at each plowing.  
23 Making a soil in short. Yet many a  
24 man likes to tackle mightily themes <<sup>10</sup> like  
25 immortality-- but in his discourse he  
26 turns up nothing but yellow sand  
27 under which what little fertile<sup>11</sup> &  
28 available surface soil he may have  
29 is quite buried & lost. He should  
30 teach frugality rather--how to post-

---

<sup>9</sup>The first "o" in "follow" appears to have been altered in pencil.

<sup>10</sup>Possibly a dash.

<sup>11</sup>The characters in this word are overwritten with ink or crossed out with a wavy line.

1       pone the fatal hour--should plant<sup>12</sup>  
2       a crop of beans. He might have raised enough  
3       of them to make a deacon of him--though<sup>13</sup>  
4       never a preacher. Many a man runs  
5       his plow so deep in heavy or stony soil--  
6       that it sticks fast in the furrow. It is a  
7       great art in the winter to improve from day to  
8       day just that soil & fertility which he has<sup>14</sup>  
9       to harvest that crop which his life yields--  
10      whatever it may be. Not be straining as if to  
11      reach apples or oranges when he yields  
12      only ground-nuts. He should be digging not  
13      soaring. Just as earnest as your life is, so  
14      deep is your soil. If strong & deep you will  
15      sow wheat & raise bread of life in it.

16             Now the young henhawks--full-grown  
17      but inexperienced--still white-breasted & brown-  
18      (not red)  
19      ^tailed = swoop down after the farmer's hens  
20      between the barn & the house--often carrying  
21      one off in their clutches--and all the rest  
22      of the pack half fly half run to the barn.  
23      Unwarrantably bold, one ventures  
24      to stoop before the farmer's eyes. He  
25      clutches in haste his trusty gun--which  
26      hangs ready loaded on its pegs--  
27      he pursues warily to where the marauder  
28      sits tetering on a lofty<sup>15</sup> pine--& when  
29      is sailing scornfully away he meets his fate

---

<sup>12</sup>Overwritten or reformed letters.

<sup>13</sup>Overwritten or reformed letters.

<sup>14</sup>Slight mark that might be an abbreviated dash.

<sup>15</sup>Pencilled alterations by T. change "frosty" (originally in ink) into "lofty".

1 & comes fluttering head forward to earth.  
2 The exulting farmer hastes to secure his  
3 trophy--he treats the proud birds body  
4 with indignity-- He carries it home to show  
5 to his wife & children--for the hen's have his  
6 wife's special care-- He thinks it one of his  
7 best shots--full 13 rods-- His gun is "an  
8 all-fired good piece"--nothing but robin-  
9 shot. The body of the victim is delivered  
10 up to the children & the dog & like the  
11 body of Hector is dragged as many  
12 times round Troy.

13 But alas for the youthful hawk. The  
14 proud bird of prey--the tenant of the  
15 skies--we shall no more see his {wake}<sup>16</sup>-like  
16 outline against a cloud--or hear  
17 his scream from behind one--he saw but  
18 a pheasant in the field--the food  
19 which nature has provided for him--  
20 & stooped to seize it-- This was his offence--  
21 He the native of these skies--must make  
22 from another land  
23 way for {these}<sup>17</sup> bog-trotters^--which never soar.  
24 The eye that was conversant with sublimity  
25 --that looked down on earth from under  
26 its sharp projecting brow--is closed--the  
27 head that was never made dizzy by any  
28 height is brought low--the feet  
29 that were not made to walk on earth  
30 now lie useless along it.

---

<sup>16</sup>Possibly "wave".

<sup>17</sup>Possibly "those".



1 just  
2 (i.e.^withered) are brownish yellow--

3 The brilliancy of the scarlet O being generally  
4 dulled--the season of brilliant leaves may  
5 be considered over--say about the 10th & now  
6 //a new season begins--the pure November  
7 season of the russet earth--& withered  
8 leaf & bare twigs--& hoary withered golden  
9 rods &c

10 From F. H. Hill using my glass, I think  
11 that I can see some of the snow of the  
12 7th still left on the brow of Uncannonuc.

13 It is a light line lying close along under  
14 which covers the summit  
15 the edge of a wood ^which has protected it.

16 I can understand how much nearer they  
17 must feel to winter who live in plain  
18 sight of that, than we do. I think that  
19 I could not have detected the edge of the  
20 forest if it had not been for the snow.

21 In the path below the Cliff<sup>21</sup> I see some  
22 blue stemmed G. rod turned yellow as well  
23 as purple. The jersey tea is fallen all but  
24 //the terminal leaves-- These however are the greenest  
25 & ap. least changed of any indigenous plant--unless  
26 it be sweet fern. Withered leaves generally,  
27 though they remain on the trees, are generally droop-  
28 ing. As I go through the hazel bushes  
29 toward the sun--I notice the silvery light<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>21</sup>"C" written over "c"

<sup>22</sup>A strip approximately one inch wide has been cut from the bottom edge of the MS page.



1 The very armor that nature puts on reminds you of the foe she would<sup>23</sup>  
2 reflected from the fine down on their tender  
3 resist  
4 twigs--this years growth. This ap. protects  
5 them against the winter-- This a November  
6 phenomenon-- The silvery light reflects from  
7 a myriad of downy surfaces--  
8         A true November seat is amid the pretty white  
9 plumed Andropogon Scoparius--the withered  
10 culms of the purple wood grass which covers  
11 so many dry knolls. There is a large patch  
12 at the entrance to Pleasant Meadow. It springs  
13 from pink-brown {clumps}<sup>24</sup> of radical leaves--  
14         %make%  
15 which %^%good seats. Looking toward the sun--  
16 as I sit in the midst of it--rising as high  
17 as my head--its countless silvery plumes  
18 are a very cheerful sight. At a distance  
19 they look like<sup>25</sup> frost on the plant.  
20 I look out westward across F. H. Pond.  
21         The warmer colors are now rare  
22 --a cool & silvery light is the prevailing one--  
23 dark blue on slate colored clouds in the  
24 west--& the sun going down in there-- All--  
25 the light of November--may be called an  
26 after-glow.  
27                                 %v 5 {hs}<sup>26</sup> forward%  
28         Horn beam bare (how long?) perhaps with the //  
29 ostrya & just after elms?  
30         There are still a few leaves on the large A tremu- //  
31 liformis--but they will be all gone in a day or 2-- They  
32 have turned quite yellow.  
33         Hearing in the oak wood near by a sound as  
34 if some one had broken a twig--I looked up  
35 & saw a jay--pecking at an acorn-- There were

---

<sup>23</sup>This line has been interlined in a smaller script.

<sup>24</sup>An "I" dot appears above the middle of this word.

<sup>25</sup>The "k" appears to be written over an "f".

<sup>26</sup>Possibly "ps".



1 Of them the silvery whole--Eng. cherry--V broom  
2 are of the most interesting colors. %have been%

3 Nov. 11th 58

4 Goodwin brings me this Am--A this  
5 years loon which he just killed on<sup>32</sup> the river-- //  
6 great Northern diver--but a smaller specimen  
7 than Wilson describes--& somewhat differently marked--  
8 It is 27 inches long to end of feet--~~9~~ 44--& bill  
9 3 3/4 to angle of mouth--above blackish gray--  
10 with small white spots (2 at end of each feather)  
11 Beneath pure white throat & all except  
12 a dusky bar across the vent. Bill chiefly  
13 pale bluish & dusky. You are struck by its broad  
14 flat sharp edged legs--made to cut through  
15 the water--rather than to walk with--set far back--  
16 & naturally stretched out backward--its long  
17 & powerful bill--conspicuous white throat  
18 & breast. Dislodged by winter in the north--  
19 it is slowly travelling toward a warmer clime.  
20 Diving in the cool river this morning--  
21 which is now full of light, the trees & bushes<sup>33</sup>  
22 on the brink having long since lost their leaves,  
23 & the neighboring fields are white with  
24 frost. Yet this hardy bird is comfortable  
25 & contented there if the sportsman would let  
26 it alone.

27 Pm to Island--& {JP}. Brown's Cold Pond

28 A cold day--None seek sunny & sheltered places  
29 as in early spring--the S. side the island e.g.

---

<sup>32</sup>Possibly "in".

<sup>33</sup>"y" is struck out and appears somewhat written over "es".

1 Certain localities are thus distinguished. And  
2 they retain this peculiarity permanently,  
3 (unless it depends on a wood which may  
4 be cut)--thousands of years hence  
5 this may still be the warmest & sunniest  
6 spot in the spring & fall.  
7 I hear here a faint creaking of <sup>2 or 3</sup> ^crickets  
8 //or locustae--but it is a steady sound--not  
9 the common crickets--long--continued-- & when  
10 one pauses generally another continues the strain  
11 so that it seems absolutely continuous. They  
12 are either in the grass or on the bushes--by  
13 the edge of the water under this sunny wood-  
14 side. I afterward hear a few of the  
15 //common cricket--on the side of Clam Shell.  
16 Thus they are confined now to the sun  
17 on the north sides of hills & woods. They  
18 are quite silent long before sunset.  
19 Snow fleas are skipping on the surface  
20 //of the water at the edge & spiders running  
21 about. These become prominent now--  
22 cold & most  
23 The waters look^ empty of fish & ^other in-  
24 habitants now. Here in the sun in the  
25 shelter of the wood--the smooth shallow  
26 water, with the stubble standing in it  
27 is waiting for ice--indeed ice that formed  
28 last night must have recently melted  
29 in it. The sight of such water now reminds  
30 me of ice as much as of water No doubt  
31

1 many fishes have gone into winter quarters  
2 (V. ac. of eels in Tribune for Nov. 9th)  
3 The flowering dogwood though still leafy  
4 is uninteresting & partly withered-- //  
5 Gossamer reflecting the light--is another Novem-  
6 ber phenomenon (as well as October) I see here  
7 looking toward the sun a very distinct silvery  
8 sheen from the cranberry vines--(as from a  
9 thousand other November surfaces) though looking  
10 down on them they are dark purple.  
11 twiggie  
12 Speaking of mazes--the very stubble & fine  
13 pasture grasses unshorn--are others reflecting  
14 the light too like twigs--but these are of  
15 a peculiar bleached brownish color--a principal  
16 ingredient in the russet of the earths surface  
17 %V. Nov. 8th% Going by the willow row--above RR--  
18 {%sc%are}<sup>34</sup> up a small duck--perhaps teal--& //  
19 in the withered grass at Nut Meadow Brook //  
20 //  
21 2 black ducks--which rise black bet me  
22 & the sun--but when they have circled round  
23 to the east show a light some silvery sheen  
24 on the underside of their wings. Am sur-  
25 prised to see a little ice in this brook in the //  
26 %as I push far up {is brush or} a dense field of withered blue-joint--%  
27 shade--a spot white with frost--a few inches  
28 over-- Saw a small pool in the woods also skimmed  
29 over--& many ice crystals heaved up in low  
30 ground.-- Scare up a bird which at //  
31 first ran in the grass--then flew--a snipe  
32 See only a very few small water bugs in the brook //

---

<sup>34</sup>The first letters at the beginning of this word appeared to be reformed in pencil.

1 but no large ones, nor skaters.

2 As a general rule the leaves hold  
3 on longest on our indidenous trees  
4 & shrubs which were the first to leaf out  
5 e.g. aspen--White birch--meadow sweet--  
6 Gooseberry--Roses--sallows

7 In the shade of the wood on the hill side  
8 just W. of the cold Pond--am surprised  
9 to see the frost about the cistus not in  
10 the least melted. This at least is an evi-  
11 dence that cold weather is come. Looking  
12 closely at it--it reminds me by its form  
13 & position of the decodon bark half cracked  
14 open. It consists of 4 or 5 thin curled  
15 horizontally grained  
16 shavings of frost--so to speak ^placed  
17 vertically & based on the stem--are within  
18 another {drawing} {drawing} & curling toward the  
19 same side forming a sort of fools  
20 cap of dif. thicknesses--or cockles or sugar-  
21 plums It seems it is so cool that the  
22 //frost about the {cistus} does not melt all  
23 day--in the shade. Coming home I  
24 have cold fingers & must row to get warm  
25 // In the meadows the pitcher plants are  
26 bright red. This is the month of nuts  
27 and nutty thoughts--this November whose  
28 name sounds so bleak and cheerless--per-  
29 //haps its harvest of thought is worth

1 more than all the other crops of the year--  
2 Men are more serious now-- I find in  
3 the wood path this side that pond  
4 13 kernels of corn close together--&  
5 5 of them have the germ uncovered--the  
6 thin husk that was over it been torn off. This  
7 might have been done accidentally by the  
8 squirrel (?) in separating it from the ear--or  
9 in transporting it. And this may be the origin  
10 of some accounts of their eating out the germ  
11 to prevent its sprouting. If they do eat it,  
12 (as it is)  
13 perhaps it is because it is the softest^--&  
14 perhaps the most savory part. These were at  
15 %V fall of '59%  
16 least 1/3 of a mile from a cornfield.  
17  
18 {drawing}<sup>36</sup>  
19 <sup>37</sup>The tail coverts of the young hen hawk

---

<sup>35</sup>Illegible letters or marks.

<sup>36</sup>Drawing of a feather occupies most of the bottom half of the page, below which T continues the text of the entry.

<sup>37</sup>This text appears below the drawing at the bottom of the page.

1 i-- e this years bird at present--are white  
2 very handsomely barred or watered with  
3 dark brown in an irregular manner  
4 somewhat as above--the bars on opposite  
5 sides of the midrib--alternating in an agree-  
6 able manner-- Such natural objects  
7 have suggested the "watered" figures or  
8 colors in the arts-- Few mortals ever look  
9 down on the tail coverts of a young hen-  
10 hawk-- yet these are not only beautiful, but  
11 of a peculiar beauty--being differently marked  
12 & colored (to judge from Wilson's ac. of the  
13 old) from those of the old bird. Thus she  
14 finishes her works above men's sight.  
15 %V 9th%  
16 {drawing}<sup>38</sup>

---

<sup>38</sup>Drawing of a leaf occupies the bottom half of the page. At the end of the petiole faintly written (apparently in pencil) is "%V Nov. 27%".





1 Nov. 12th

2 I hear from Ricketson to-day that on

3 the 10th the following trees which I

4 had not seen lately--were ~~in~~ leafy & as

5 I infer, more or less unwithered. His words

6 are "Horse chestnut quite full of yellow

7 & green foliage-- English walnut do%^%.  
 8 %Persian are and Linden%  
 9 %x1%

10 Beech, Linden, Hawthorn (nearly perfect

11 in green foliage, only a little decayed at the

12 top, but in a sheltered place) silver Linden,

13 %x2% %x3% %v aug Eng. Existrium &c acts.}%  
 14 Copper Beech, Elm, Weeping ash, {Euani-}  
 15 %English {-acts.}% %x4%  
 16 {mus}<sup>42</sup> {Europacus}"  
 17 %English% %American%

18 Also "The Guelder rose" & "Bigonia radicans  
 19 %???"  
 20 & acuminata" & "numerous shrubs in full leaf"

21 Of those not European "Osage orange (mache-

22 {ra}<sup>43</sup>), Cornus {Florida} (handsome) Tulip) //

23 %American%  
 24 three-thorned Acacia, Mexican cypress."

25 He sent me specimens of those numbered

26 & the 3rd next

27 above which were fresh--esp. the 4th^--

28 --the 2d least so--but then what he sends for

29 the Am. linden is greener than the European!! //

30 I find that E. Hoar observed the Eng. elms with leaves or leafy still Nov. 2d near  
 31 Salisbury.  
 32 // It is much the coldest day--yet--& the

33 ground is a little frozen & resounds under

34 my tread. All people move the brisker

35 for the cold--yet are braced & a little

36 elated by it. They love to say "Cold day Sir." //

37  
 38 Though the days are shorter you

---

<sup>42</sup>Possibly "mous" is penciled over "mas" or "maus" or letters are reformed in pencil.

<sup>43</sup>Possibly "sa".

1 get<sup>44</sup> more work out of a hired man than before--  
2 for he must work to keep warm.

3 Pm to Hill--

4 The river side is skinned over & presents a //  
5 wintry aspect--those grait plaits, or folds,  
6 as it were {drawing} where the crystals have  
7 shot--wool grass frozen in--& the thin  
8 white ice where the water has gone down--

9 Now for a brisk and energetic walk--with  
10 a will & a purpose--have done with  
11 sauntering in the idle sense-- You must  
12 rush to the assault of winter. Make  
13 haste into the outskirts--climb the  
14 ramparts of the town--be on the alert  
15 & let nothing escape your observation.  
16 The army is all {van}.

17 The cold alone has brought down a good  
18 part of the remaining leaves of Abeles<sup>45</sup> willows--  
19 white  
20 I see the the handsome leaves of the last  
21 thickly strewn over the ice & reminding  
22 of grain even--half upside down--

23 P. pine leaves are about all fallen. //

24 The very common redness of the recent  
25 {new}  
26 as ^maples huckleberries &c  
27 shoots--^now that the twigs are bare  
28 & on many sides masses of them are {run}<sup>46</sup>  
29 together in a maze--adds to the general  
30 russet of nature. The Black willow shoots  
31 are very pale brownish yellow.

32  
33 We are now reduced to browsing on buds & twigs--

---

<sup>44</sup>Possibly "got".

<sup>45</sup>This carat appears somewhat like an ampersand on its side.

<sup>46</sup>Possibly "seen"; written on an descending angle beginning above the line and ending on the line.

1 & methinks with this diet & this cold--  
2 we shall look to the stall fed thinkers  
3 like these unkempt cattle in meadows  
4 now--grazing the withered grass.

5 Examining closely the base of some frost-  
6 weed--I find in each case a little  
7 frost firmly attached to the naked woody  
8 stem just under the bark--having burst  
9 the last for about an inch along the stem--  
10 & elevated it-- Perhaps this weed dies down  
11 slowly--since it blossoms a 2nd time--& there  
12 is more sap {~~nea~~} in the stem near its base  
13 than usual--which escapes in a vapor from  
14 the stem--& being frozen forms this kind  
15 of icicle.

16 I think that the change to some higher color  
17 in a leaf is an evidence that it has arrived at  
18 & final  
19 a later & more perfect^ maturity--answering  
20 to the maturity of fruits--& not to that of green  
21 leaves--&c &c which merely serve a purpose.  
22 The word ripe--is thought by some to be derived  
23 from the verb to reap--ac to which that is  
24 ripe which is ready to be reaped. The fall of  
25 the leaf is preceded by a ripe old age.

26 Nov 13

27 8 1/2 Am to Hill

28 I notice of late the darker green--(livid(?))  
29 of the arbor vitae & other evergreens--the  
30 effect of cold. So they are never so purely bright  
31 a green as immediately after their fall.  
32 They are not perfectly ever-green.



1 far & distinctly-- It is like the calm  
2 before an hurricane or an earthquake--  
3 this still ness which precedes the  
4 winter, setting in.  
5 Larches now look dark or brownish yellow  
6 //  
7 <sup>47</sup>Now on the advent of much colder  
8 weather--the last P. tremuliformis has  
9 lost it leaves-- the sheltered dog wood is {w}ithered  
10 //  
11 --& even the scarlet oak--may be considered  
12 & the larch looks brown & nearly bare  
13 as extinguished^ & the few leaves left here  
14 & there on the ~~stru~~ indigenous shrubs named  
15 on the 9th are being rapidly killed by the same  
16 cause--& are falling-<sup>48</sup>  
17 %{birches dark and withered}%  
18 <sup>49</sup>Now for twinkling light--reflected  
19 % { }<sup>50</sup>  
20 from unseen windows in the horizon in  
21 the early twilight.  
22 One hickory at least (on the hill) has  
23 //  
24 not lost its leaves yet--i.e. has a good many left--  
25 so they are a month falling<sup>51</sup>  
26 I see some feathers of a blue jay scattered  
27 along a wood path--& at length came  
28 to the body of the bird. What a neat &  
29 delicately ornamented creature--finer than  
30 any work of art in a ladies' boudoir--  
31 with--its soft light purplish-blue crest--  
32 and its dark blue or purplish 2nd darie  
33 (the narrow half) finely barred with dusky--  
34 It is the more glorious to live in Concord  
35 because they jay is so splendidly painted.

---

<sup>47</sup>Indent is deeper than usual.

<sup>48</sup>Possibly struck out letters.

<sup>49</sup>Indent is deeper than usual.

<sup>50</sup>Illegible, very light penciled text.

<sup>51</sup>The preceding three lines appear to be in a different pen.

1 %A large flock of geese go over just before night.%  
2 After expecting snow all day, though we did  
3 not know but it would prove rain--we  
4 looked out the window at 9 Pm & saw  
5 the ground for the most part white with the  
6 first sugaring--which at first we could //  
7 hardly tell from a mild moonlight--only there  
8 was no moon. Thus it comes stealthily in the  
9 night & changes the whole aspect of the earth.  
10 Of course--frozen ground, ice, & snow  
11 have now banished the few remaining skaters (if there  
12 were any-<sup>52</sup>(?) crickets--& water-bugs.  
13 It is wonderful what gradations  
14 & harmony {there}<sup>53</sup> is in nature-- The light  
15 reflected from bare twigs at this season--(  
16 i.e. since they began to be bare, in the latter  
17 not only  
18 part of Oct) is ^like that from ~~the~~ gossamer  
19 but like that which will ere long be reflected  
20 from the ice that will encrust them.  
21 So the bleached herbage of the fields is like  
22 frost--& part like snow--& one prepares  
23 for the other. NOV. 14<sup>54</sup>  
24 It is very cold & windy-- Thermometer 26+ //  
25 I walk to Walden & andromeda ponds--  
26 It is all at once perfect winter. I walk  
27 on frozen ground 2/3 covered with a sugaring  
28 of dry snow--& this strong & cutting NW  
29 wind makes the oak leaves rustle  
30 drily enough to set your heart on edge--  
31 A great many have fallen ever since the

---

<sup>52</sup>The dash and the first parenthesis overlap.

<sup>53</sup>Possibly "then".

<sup>54</sup>This date appears to have been added later as it appears on the same line as the last line of the previous paragraph.

1 snow last evening. Take a citizen  
2 into an oak sproutland  
3 out ^when there is a sugaring of  
4 dry snow--& a cold cutting N. W. wind  
5 rustles the leaves. A sympathetic shiver  
6 will seize him. He will know of no  
7 fire to warm his wits by. He has no  
8 pleasing pursuit to follow thro' these  
9 difficulties--no trap to inspect--  
10 no chopping to do-- Every resounding  
11 step on the frozen earth is a vain  
12 knocking at the door of what was  
13 lately genial Nature--his bountiful  
14 mother--now turned step mother-- He<sup>55</sup>  
15 is left out side to starve-- The rustling  
16 leaves sound like the fierce breathing  
17 an endless pack half famished from the north--  
18 of wolves--^impelled by hunger to seize him.  
19 Of<sup>56</sup> birds only the chicadees seem really at  
20 Where they are--is a hearth & a bright fire constantly burning  
21 home--^ The tree sparrows must be  
22 very lively to keep warm-- The rest but  
23 close today.  
24         You will see where a mouse (or mole?)  
25 has run under the thinnest snow--like this:<sup>57</sup>  
26 Such humble paths they prefer--perhaps  
27 to escape nocturnal foes.  
28 //         Now I begin to notice the silver downy  
29 twigs of the sweet fern in the sun (lately  
30 bare)--the red or crimson twigs & ~~the~~ buds  
31 of the high blueberry-- The different colors  
32 of the water and andromeda in different

---

<sup>55</sup>A large, thick comma-like mark after "He".

<sup>56</sup>Overwritten or reformed characters.

<sup>57</sup>A colon follows "...like this" or perhaps a drawing.



1 lights. If he looks into the water, he gets  
2 no comfort there--for that is cold  
3 & empty--expecting ice.

4 Now while the frosty air begins to nip  
5 your--fingers & your nose--the frozen  
6 ground rapidly wears away the soles of  
7 your shoes--as sand-paper might.

8 The old she wolf--is nibbling at your  
9 very extremities. The frozen ground eating  
10 away the soles of your shoes--is only typi-  
11 cal of the vulture that gnaws your heart  
12 this month.

13 Now all that moves migrates--or has  
14 migrated--ducks are gone by-- The  
15 citizen has sought the town.

16 Probably the witch hazel & many of the flowers  
17 lingered till the 11th when it was colder-- //

19 The last leaves & flowers (?) may be said to  
20 fall about the middle of November--

21 Snow & cold drive the doves to your door  
22 & so your thoughts make new alliances.

23 NOV 15  
24 %for ferns v. 17th%  
25 Pm to Grackle Swamp--a very fine

26 snow falling just enough to whiten the  
27 bare spots a little-- I go to look for  
28 evergreen ferns before they are covered  
29 up-- The end of last month & the first  
30 part of this is the time-- I do not know  
31 that I find more than one kind now

1 in the swamp--& of that the fertile  
2 fronds are mostly decayed. All lie flat  
3 ready to be buried in snow--  
4 Slight as the snow is--you are now re-  
5 minded occasionally in your walks that  
6 you have contemporaries--& perchance  
7 predecessors-- I see the track of a  
8 fox which was returning from his visit  
9 to a farm yard last night--& in the  
10 wood path of a man & a dog. The  
11 dog must have been a large one--~~{These}~~<sup>58</sup>  
12 ~~as the~~ I see their shadows before me  
13 In another place where the snow is so slight  
14 & lifted up on the withered grass that  
15 no track is left-- I see by the cakes or  
16 balls of snow that have dropt from his  
17 shoes that a man has passed-- This  
18 would be known for a man & a dogs track  
19 in any part of the world-- 5 toes in a bundle  
20 forming a sort of rosette  
21 --somewhat diamond shape--^are the prints  
22 of the dog--whether on the sands of Africa  
23 or the snow of N England-- The track of  
24 his master is somewhat more variable  
25 yet reducible within certain limits.  
26 The Lycopodium dendroideum var  
27 //obscurum appears to be just in bloom  
28 (the regular one (not var.) is ap. earlier)  
29 in the swamp about the Hemlocks^--later  
30 //than the L. complanatum which is  
31 done there.

---

<sup>58</sup>Possibly "Their" or "Thus".

1 Gossamer methinks belongs to the latter  
 2 part of Oct--& first part of November--also  
 3 the frost-weed--& ev. ferns  
 4  
 5 Buds & twigs (like-gossamer) & the mazes >N.B.  
 6 made by twigs--& the silvery light on this  
 7 down--& the silver-haired Andropogon grass--  
 8 to the first half of November--  
 9 The water andromeda leaves have fallen--& the  
 10 persistent turned that red-brown--how long? //  
 11 Nov. 16th  
 12 %for ferns v. 17th%  
 13 Pm to Hubbards Close--  
 14 A cold & blustering Pm sky for the  
 15 most part over cast.  
 16 The Cornus Canadensis is called by Loudon  
 17 a "deciduous herbaceous plant"--the pyrolas  
 18 "Ever-green herbaceous plants". The bunch  
 19 berry leaves are now, little if any withered //  
 20 (I see, next day ~~that~~ in exposed places they are)  
 21 ^ but generally drooping--the 4 hanging together  
 22 as is the habit<sup>59</sup> of the sericea--& <sup>60</sup>florida--  
 23 the lambkill &c. The plant dies down  
 24 with perennial root each year & a  
 25 fresh one shoots up in the spring-- You  
 26 can see its pink bud already strongly  
 27 formed-- But this years plant is very slow  
 28 to die--& I suspect many of the leaves re-  
 29 main green all winter under the snow.  
 30 ~~or-crimson~~ tinged  
 31 They are now generally purplish. Let me ob-  
 32 serve in what respect the pyrolas are  
 33 more evergreen-- The new bud is formed between the present 2 leaves  
 34 the old leaves lower on the stem or vine being mostly  
 35 decayed--

---

<sup>59</sup>Possibly plural: "habits".

<sup>60</sup>Small curvilinear line precedes the word "florida".

1           There are many large limbs strewn about  
2 the woods which were broken off by that  
3 stormy S. E.-wind in peach time. These  
4 are now thickly leaved--the dead wood  
5 not being able to cast {off}<sup>61</sup> the withered leaves--  
6 --but the leaves having died thus prematurely are  
7 of a different color from that their compan-  
8 ions changed to--a peculiar yellow brown  
9 (i.e chestnuts & oaks.) with more or less green  
10 in it.

11           I see a grey squirrel 8 or 10 rods off  
12 in Hubbards large wood--scamper over  
13 the leaves & run up an oak-- From the  
14 oak it crosses ascending into a tall  
15 white pine top & there lies concealed--  
16 & I can see no more of him.

17           The earth half covered with this slight  
18 snow--merely grazed<sup>62</sup> with--is the more  
19 like--the bare grey limbs of oak woods  
20 now--& such woods & the earth make  
21 the more uniform impression.

22           Methinks the winter green--pissewa  
23 is our handsomest evergreen--so liquid  
24 glossy green & dispersed almost all  
25 over the woods.

26           The mt Laurel--the Lycopodium dendroideum  
27 --Complanatum--& lucidulum--& the  
28 terminal shield fern--are also very interesting

---

<sup>61</sup>Overwritten, reformed, or possibly struck through?

<sup>62</sup>Possibly "grayed", but one line below, T spells "grey"--with an "e", not an "a".

1           Preaching--? Lecturing? Who are  
2   ye that ask for these things--What  
3   do ye want to hear ye puking infants?  
4   a trumpet sound that would turn you  
5   up to mankind or a nurse's lullaby?  
6           The preachers & lecturers deal with men  
7   of straw--as they are men of straw them-  
8   selves. Why a free spoken man--of sound lungs--  
9   cannot draw a long breath without causing  
10   your rotten institutions to come toppling  
11   down--by the vacuum he makes--  
12           Your church is a holy-house made of  
13           & so of the state  
14   blocks-- It would be a relief to breathe  
15   ones self occasionally among men--  
16   If there were any magnanimity in us  
17   --any grandeur of soul--anything but  
18   sects & parties undertaking to patronize  
19   Good<sup>63</sup>--& keep the mind within bounds  
20   how often we might encourage &  
21   provoke one another by a free expression(?)  
22   I will not consent to walk with my mouth  
23           not till  
24   muzzled^--~~until~~ I<sup>64</sup> I am rabid--until  
25   there is danger that I shall bite the  
26   unoffending--& that my bite will induce  
27   {hydrophobia}.  
28           Freedom of speech! It hath not entered  
29   into your hearts to conceive what those  
30   words mean. It is not leave given

---

<sup>63</sup>Note second letter "o" which has been struck.

<sup>64</sup>"I" poss. cancelled

1 me by your sect to say this or that--  
2 --it<sup>65</sup> is when leave is given to your sect  
3 to withdraw. The Church--the State--  
4 the school the magazine think they  
5 are liberal & free--! It is the freedom  
6 of a prison yard-- I ask only that 1/4  
7 part of my honest thoughts be spoken  
8 aloud. What is it you tolerate--  
9 your church today--not truth--but a  
10 life-long hypocrisy. Let us have insti-  
11 tutions framed not out of our rottenness  
12 but out of our soundness. This facti-  
13 tious piety is like stale ginger-bread--  
14 I would like to suggest what a pack of fools  
15 & cowards we mankind are. They want  
16 me to agree not to breathe too hard in the  
17 neighborhood of their paper-castles.

18         If I should draw a long breath in the  
19 neighborhood of these institutions their  
20 weak & flabby sides would pull out--for  
21 my own inspiration would exhaust the  
22 air about them--the church! it is eminently  
23 the timid institution. & the heads & pillars of  
24 it--one constitutionally & by principal the  
25 greatest cowards in the community.

26         The voice that goes up from the monthly  
27 concerts is not so brave & so cheering as that  
28 which rises from the frog-ponds of the  
29 land. The best "preachers" so called--are

---

<sup>65</sup>stray mark after "it"

1 an effeminate class--their honest thoughts  
2 wear petticoats. If they have any manhood  
3 they are sure to forsake the ministry--though  
4 they were to turn their attention to base ball.  
5 Look at your editors of popular magazines.  
6 I have dealt with 2 or 3 the most liberal  
7 of them. ~~Look at your~~ They are afraid to  
8 print a whole sentence--a sound sentence  
9 a free-spoken sentence. They want to get  
10 30.000 subscribers & they will do anything  
11 to get them. They consult the DDs, & all  
12 the letters of the alphabet before printing  
13 a sentence. I have been with many  
14 of these cowardly N.E towns--where  
15 this profess christianity--invited to speak  
16 perchance--when they were trembling in  
17 their shoes at the thought of the thing  
18 %or if they knew their weak side not that they were weak%  
19 %on all sides--%  
20 you might say-- The devil they have cove-  
21 nanted with is a timid devil. If they would  
22 let their sores alone they might heal  
23 & they could<sup>66</sup> to the {war}<sup>67</sup> again like men--  
24 but instead of that they get together in meeting  
25 house cellars--rip off the bandages & poultice  
26 them with sermons--  
27 One of our N.E. towns is sealed up her-  
28 metically like a molasses hogshead--  
29 such is it sweet christianity--only a little  
30 of the sweet trickling out of the cracks enough  
31 to daub you. The few more liberal minded

---

<sup>66</sup>"ld" of "could" is altered with pencil.

<sup>67</sup>Possibly "wars"; "w" altered with pencil.

1 or indifferent inhabitants are the flies  
 2 It is christianity bunged  
 3 that {buzz} about it.  
 4 I see awful eyes looking out through a bull's eye at the ap.<sup>68</sup> bung-hole  
 5 The further you go up Country-- )--I think the  
 6 It is doubtful if they can fellowship with me.  
 7 worse it is--the more benighted they are.

8 On the one side you will find a bar-room  
 9 which holds the "Scoffers" so called, {on}<sup>69</sup>  
 10 the other a vestry--where is a monthly con-  
 11 cert of prayer-- There is just as little to  
 12 cheer you in one of these companies as the  
 13 other. It may be often the truth--& righteous-  
 14 ness of the bar-room that saves the town

15 There is nothing to redeem the big city &  
 16 moral cowardice of N Englanders in my  
 17 eyes.-- You may find a cape which runs  
 18 50 miles into the sea--that has not  
 19 a man of moral courage upon it.  
 20 What is called forth is an immense prejudice.

21 Like the Hindoos & Russianes--&  
 22 Sandwich Islanders (that were) they are  
 23 the creatures of an institution. They  
 24 do not think,--they adhere like oysters to  
 25 what their fathers & grandfathers ad-  
 26 hered to. How often is it that the shoee  
 27 maker by thinking over his last--{can}<sup>70</sup>  
 28 think is valuable a thought as he  
 29 makes a valuable shoe?

30 I have been with the town & being invited  
 31 to speak to the inhabitants--not valuing<sup>71</sup>  
 32 not having red {even}<sup>72</sup>--the assembly's, cate-

---

<sup>68</sup>"ap." inserted

<sup>69</sup>Possibly "in".

<sup>70</sup>Obscured by over-writing; possibly "even".

<sup>71</sup>The last three letters of this word are obscured by over-writing.

<sup>72</sup>Possibly "ever".



1 chism--& I try to stimulate them  
2 by sparking the best of my experience. I see the  
3 craven priest looking for<sup>73</sup> a hole to escape  
4 at--alarmed because it was he that invited  
5 me thither--& an awful silence pervades  
6 the audience-- They think they will never get  
7 me there again-- But the seed has not all  
8 fallen in stoney {&}<sup>74</sup> shallow ground. [see below]<sup>75</sup>

9 The following are our shrubby  
10 ever-green plants--(not including Coniferae)

11 Mitchella repens

12 Linnaea

13 Andromeda polifolia

14 Cassandra calyculata

15 May-flower

16 Chequer berry

17 Mt. Laurel

18 Lambkill

19 Kalmia glauca

20 Labrador tea

21 Common cranberry

22 European "

23 %Genista is not Evergreen V Mar 6 '58%

24 to which I will add the herbaceous

25 NB R hispidus leaves last through the winter

26 turning reddish %V 25th%

27 %Gold Thread%<sup>77</sup>

-- Chimaphila<sup>76</sup> umbellata

& " maculata

28 It is no compliment to be invited

29 to lecture before the rich Institutes & Lyceums

30 the settled lecturers are as tame as the

31 settled ministers. The audiences do

---

<sup>73</sup>Possibly "from".

<sup>74</sup>Overwritten; possibly "or".

<sup>75</sup>Brackets by H. D. T.

<sup>76</sup>The initial "C" in this word appears to have been written over an initial "P".

<sup>77</sup>A curvilinear line curves upward from the end of "Thread%" to the end of "reddish" in the line above.

1 not want to hear any prophets-- they  
2 do not wish to be stimulated & instructed  
3 but entertained-- They their wives &  
4 daughters go to the Lyceum to make a  
5 sugar-plum. The little of medicine they get  
6 is disguised with sugar-- It is never the  
7 reformer they hear there but a faint  
8 & timid echo of him only-- They seek a  
9 pass-time merely-- Their greatest  
10 guns & rolls of thunder--are only wooden  
11 guns & great grandsons of thunder--  
12 who give them smooth words well pronounced  
13 --from MSS well punctuated-- They  
14 who have stolen the little fire they have  
15 from prophets whom the audience would  
16 quake to hear. They ask for orators  
17 that will entertain them--& leave them  
18 where they found them. The most successful  
19 lecturing ~~on what~~ on Washington, or what  
20 not--is an awful {scartching}<sup>78</sup> of backs  
21 to the tune it may be of 50.000 dollars.  
22 Sluggards that want to have a lullaby  
23 sung to them! Such mannikins as  
24 I have described--are they alas who have  
25 made the greatest stir (and what a  
26 shallow stir) in the church--&  
27 Lyceum--& in Congress.  
28 They want a medicine that will not in-  
29 terfere with their daily meals.

---

<sup>78</sup>Possibly "scratching"; however, the "a" and the "r" appear transposed in the MS.







1 hour high--there being many small alder  
2 & birches between me & it for half a dozen  
3 rods--the light reflects from their twigs  
4 has the appearance of an {immense}<sup>81</sup> cobweb  
5 ~~of white~~ with closely concentric lines--of  
6 which I see about 1/4 {drawing} or better  
7 {drawing} on ac. of the up ward curve of  
8 the twigs on each  
9 side--& the light not being reflected  
10 to me at all from one side of the trees  
11 directly in front of me. The light is  
12 thus very pleasingly diffused

13 We are interested at this season by the  
14 manifold ways in which the light is re-  
15 flected to us. Ascending white knoll  
16 covered with sweet fern, shortly after, the  
17 sun appearing but a point above the sweet  
18 fern--its light was reflected from a  
19 dense  
20 ^ mass of the bare downy twigs of this  
21 plant is a surprising-- ~~I was~~ warmer  
22 which could not be believed if described.  
23 It was quite like the sun light reflects  
24 from grass & weeds covered with hoar  
25 frost. Yet in an ordinary light {there}<sup>82</sup>  
26 dark or dusky  
27 is but ~~black~~ looking twigs with scarcely  
28 a noticeable downiness-- Yet as I saw it  
29 there was a perfect halo of light resting  
30 on the knoll as I moved to right or left.

31 A myriad of surfaces are now prepared

---

<sup>81</sup>Possibly "inverse".

<sup>82</sup>Possibly "thus" or "ther" (missing final "e").

1 to reflect the light. This is one of the  
2 hundred silvery lights of November.

3 The setting sun too is reflected from windows  
4 more brightly than at any other season.  
5 "November Lights" would be a theme for me  
6 I am surprised to see a stake-driver  
7 //  
8 fly up from the weeds within a stones throw  
9 of my boat's place. It drops its excrement  
10 from 30 feet in the air--& this falling, one  
11 part being heavier<sup>83</sup> than another--takes the  
12 {drawing}  
13 form of a snake {drawing} & suggests  
14 that this may be the origin of some of  
15 the stories of this bird swallowing a snake  
16 or eel which passed through it.  
17 {drawing}  
18 {drawing}  
19 Nature is moderate & loves  
20 degrees. Winter is not all white--& sere--  
21 some trees are evergreen to cheer us--and on  
22 the forest floor our eyes do not fall on  
23 sere brown leaves alone--but some ever-  
24 green shrubs are placed there<sup>84</sup> to relieve  
25 the eye--nut laurel--lambkill--chequer  
26 & a few ever green ferns scattered about  
27 berry--winter green &c &c &c^--keep up  
28 the semblance of summer still.

29 As for the ever green ferns I  
30 though shrivelled  
31 see {how}<sup>85</sup> Common polypody --(<sup>86</sup>by cold where exposed  
32 Asplenium Trichomanes  
33 " Ebeneum  
34 Aspidium Spinulosum? large frond small fruited in Swamp SE  
35 on 16th Brister's Spring

---

<sup>83</sup>The "v" in "heavier" appears to have had a tail that has been struck out.

<sup>84</sup>An i-dot mark appears over this word.

<sup>85</sup>Possibly "now".

<sup>86</sup>Open parenthesis includes the text interlined above.

1 Aspidium cristatum(?) Grackle swamp on the 15-  
2 \_\_\_\_\_with oftenet what I take to be the  
3 narrow and more open sterile pond  
4 A. marginale (common

5 " Achrostichoides (Terminal shield

6 The first one & the last 2

7 are particularly handsome--the last especially

8 it has so thick a frond.

9 Nov. 18 '58

10 Pm to Conantum

11 Notice the short bright yellow willow twigs

12 on Hubbard's Causeway. They are (bright)

13 or prominent now--1st because they are

14 & the rarity of bright colors at present

15 bare--2nd because high colored always--^

16 3d because of the clear air & November

17 light-- For the same reason I notice

18 now adays the red twigs of the silky

19 cornel by the river. The black willow

20 twigs are tawny--in the main--almost cin-

21 namon--

22 The fruitless enterprise of some persons who

23 rush helter skelter, carrying out

24 their crazy scheme--merely "putting it

25 through" as they phrase it--reminds

26 me of those thistle downs which not

27 being detained nor<sup>87</sup> & steadied by any seed at the

28 base are blown away at the first

29 impulse--& go rolling over all obsta-

30 cles. They may indeed go fastest &

32 farthest--but where they rest at last

---

<sup>87</sup>"nor" written over cancelled "&"



1 not even a thistle springs.

2 I meet these {aimless}<sup>88</sup> barren thistle downs driving

3 over the fields. They remind me of busy merchants

4 & brokers

5 ^ or change--doing business on credit--gambling

6 with fancy stocks--that have failed over

7 & over again--assisted to get agoing again

8 to no purpose--a great ado about nothing

9 --all in my eye--with nothing to deposit

10 not of the slightest use to the great thistle

11 tribe--not ever tempting a jack ass-- When

12 you right or extricate one of these fellows

13 & set him before the wind again-- it is

14 worth the {while}<sup>89</sup> to look & see if he

15 has any seed of success under him.

16 Such a one you know afar--

17 he floats merely slow & steady--& of

18 his enterprise expect results.

19 Am surprised to see F. H. Pond completely

20 frozen over--during the last 4 days-- //

21 It will prob. open again-- Thus while all

22 the channel elsewhere is open--& a mere

23 edging of ice amid the weeds is seen-- This

24 great expansion is completely bridged over--

25 thus early--

26 Some mockernuts--& I think some lichens

27 on Conantum are not yet bare. Their //

28 %9 V}. later%

29 withered leaves hold on almost like the oaks %NB%

30 %another year%

31 now is the time to gather the mocker nuts-- //

32 ^ I go along under the E side of

33 Lee's Cliff--looking at the ever-green ferns

---

<sup>88</sup>Possibly "useless" or "careless".

<sup>89</sup>A "t" cross appears through the "l" in while.

1 The Xx marginal fern is the commonest.  
2 How pretty the smallest asplenium some-  
3 times in a recess under a shading rock--  
4 as it were pinned on rosette-wise {drawing}  
5 {drawing} as if it were the head of a breast pin.

6 I look S from the Cliff-- The  
7 westering sun just out of sight behind  
8 the hill. Its rays from those bare twigs  
9 across the pond are bread & cheese to me.  
10 So many oak leaves have fallen that the  
11 white birch stems are more distinct amid  
12 the young oaks-- I see to the bone. See {those}<sup>90</sup>  
13 bare birches prepared to stand the winter through  
14 on the hill sides-- They never owing what is this  
15 dull town to me? The maples skirting  
16 the meadows--(in dense phalanxes) look  
17 light light infantry advanced for a  
18 swamp fight. Ah Dear November ye  
19 must be sacred to the Nine surely.  
20 The only willow catkins already peep out  
21 //1/4 of an inch.

22 // Early crow foot is reddened at Lee's

23 Nov 19th 58

24 Pm mockernutting--to Conantum.

25 //The lambkill & water andromeda--are  
26 turned quite dark red where much exposed--  
27 In shelter are green yet.

28 Those long mockernuts appear not to  
29 have got well ripe this year. They do

---

<sup>90</sup>Possibly "these" or "there".

1 not shed their husks--& the meat is mostly  
2 skinny & soft & flabby-- Perhaps the season  
3 has been too cold. I shook the trees.  
4 It is just the time to get them. How //  
5 hard they rattle down like stones. There  
6 is a harmony between {this}<sup>91</sup> stony fruit &  
7 these hard tough limbs which bear it--  
8 I was surprised to see how much the hickory  
9 tops had been bent & split ap. by ice--  
10 tough as they are. They seem to have suffered  
11 more than evergreens do-- The husks of one  
12 tree scarcely gaped<sup>92</sup> open at all--& could not  
13 be removed. I did not think at first why  
14 these nuts had not been gathered--but  
15 I suspect it may be because Puffer--  
16 who prob. used to get them has committed  
17 suicide.

18 Nov. 20th 58

19 Pm to Ministerial swamp--

20 I have seen more gray squirrels of late  
21 (as well as musquash)--I think not merely  
22 because the trees are bare--but because  
23 they are stirring about more--nutting &c--

24 Martial Miles tells me of a snapping  
25 turtle caught in the river at N Waltham  
26 about Oct 1<sup>st</sup> he thinks--which {weiged} ?  
27 55 lbs-- He saw it. There were 2 fighting.

28 He says that a marsh hawk had his  
29 nest in his meadow several years--

---

<sup>91</sup>"this" is overwritten and nearly illegible.

<sup>92</sup>Overwritten or struck through.

1 and though--he shot the female  
2 3 times--the male with but little delay  
3 returned with a new mate-- He often  
4 watched these birds--& saw that the  
5 female could tell when the male was  
6 {coming}<sup>93</sup> along way off. He thought  
7 that he fed her & the young altogether<sup>94</sup>(?)  
8 She would utter a scream when she  
9 perceived him--& rising into the air--  
10 (before or after the scream?) she turned  
11 over with her talons uppermost while he  
12 passed some 3 rods above & caught  
13 without fail the prey which he let  
14 drop-- & then carried it to her young.  
15 He had seen her do this many times &  
16 always without failing.

17 The Common milkweed (A. cornuti) & some  
18 //thistle still for counting

19 I go across the great Tony Wheeler pasture.  
20 It is a cool but pleasant November after-  
21 noon-- The glory of November is in its sil-  
22 very sparkling lights--I think it is peculiar  
23 among the months--for the amount sparkling  
24 white light reflects from a myriad of sur-  
25 faces. The air is so clear<sup>95</sup> & there are  
26 so many bare-polished, bleached or hoary  
27 surfaces to reflect the light. Few things  
28 are more exhilarating--if it is only  
29 moderately cold, then to walk over

---

<sup>93</sup>Possibly "coursing".

<sup>94</sup>The second "t" has not been crossed and appears as if it were an "l".

<sup>95</sup>Possibly "clean".

1 bare pastures & see the abundant  
 2 sheeny light--like a universal halo  
 3 --reflected from the russet & bleached earth.  
 4 The earth shines perhaps more than in  
 5 spring--for the reflecting surfaces are less  
 6 {dimmed}<sup>96</sup> now-- It is not a red but a white  
 7 light. In the woods & about swamps<sup>%as Ministerial%</sup>  
 8  
 9 also there are several kinds of twigs--  
 10 this years shoots of shrubs--which have a  
 11 slight down--hairines--hardly perceptible  
 12 in ordinary light though held in the hand--  
 13 but which seen toward the sun reflect  
 14 a sheening slivery light--such are not  
 15 only the sweet-fern--but the hazel in a  
 16 alder twigs  
 17 less degree^--& even the short huckleberry twigs  
 18 {plus} lespedeza stems.  
 19 ^ It is as if they were covered with a myriad fine  
 20 spiculae--which reflect a dazzling white light.  
 21 --exceedingly warming to the spirits & imagination.  
 22 This gives a character of snug warmth & cheerfulness  
 23 to the swamp--as if it were a place where  
 24 the sun consorted with rabbits & partridges.  
 25 such  
 26 Each individual hair on every ^shoot above  
 27 the swamp is bathed in glowing sunlight  
 28 & is directly conversant with the Day God<sup>97</sup>.  
 29 The cinnamon brown of withered fern weed,  
 30 colors  
 31 (how long?) ~~marks~~ whole fields. It may  
 32 be put with the now paler brown of hard- //  
 33 now  
 34 hack heads--& the ^darker ~~cinnamon~~ brown  
 35 of the Dicksonia fern by walls

---

<sup>96</sup>Possibly "skimmed".

<sup>97</sup>"D" in "Day" and "G" in "God" might appear to be lower case and overwritten or vice versa.

1 // I notice this pm that the pasture  
2 white oaks have commonly a few leaves  
3 also  
4 left on the lower limbs &^ next the trunk.  
5 Winter rye is another conspicuous  
6 green amid the withered grass fields--  
7 The rubuses are particularly hardy--  
8 to retain their leaves-- Not<sup>98</sup> only low blackberry  
9 & high blackberry leaves linger still fresh, but  
10 < the R. hispidus leaves last all winter like an  
11 evergreen--.  
12 The great round leaved pyrola--dwarf  
13 cornel--checker berry & lambkill--have  
14 lake or at present  
15 a ^purplish tinge on the under side^--& the  
16 last 2 are red or purplish above. It  
17 is singular that a blush should suffuse  
18 the under side of the thick leaved pyrola  
19 while it is still quite green above.  
20 When walnut husks have fairly opened  
21 showing the white shells within--(the trees  
22 being either quite bare--or with a few withered  
23 leaves at present) a slight jar with the  
24 foot on the limbs causes them to settle down  
25 in a perfect shower--& on bare grass ground  
26 --pasture ground--it is very easy picking  
27 them up.  
28 As I returned over Conantum summit  
29 yesterday just before sunset--& was  
30 admiring the various rich browns of the  
31 shrub oak plain across the river,& which

---

<sup>98</sup>"N" ap. written over "n"

1       seemed to me more wholesome & remarkable  
2       as more permanent--than the--late  
3       brilliant colors--I was surprised to see a  
4       broad halo travelling with me--and always  
5       opposite the sun to me--at least 1/4 of a mile  
6       off & some 3 rods wide on the shrub oaks.

7               The rare wholesome & permanent beauty  
8       of withered oak leaves of various hues  
9       of brown mottling a hill side--especially,  
10       seen when the sun is low--Quaker colors  
11       --sober ornaments--beauty--that quite  
12       satisfies the eye. The richness & variety are the  
13       same as before, the colors different%--%more  
14       incompatible & lasting.       %V 4 {as}<sup>99</sup> Girard%

15               Sprague of Cohasset states to the Nat. Hist.  
16       Soci. Sep. 1st 58 that the light under the  
17       tail of the common glow-worm "remained  
18       for 15 minutes after death--" p 396

19               Who are bad neighbors--? They who  
20       suffer their neighbors cattle to go at large  
21       because they don't want their ill will--  
22       are afraid to anger them. They are abettors  
23       of the ill doers.

24               Who are the religious? They who do not  
25       differ much from mankind generally--except  
26       that they are more conservative & timid--  
27       and useless--but who in their conversation  
28       & correspondence--talk about kindness  
29       of heavenly Father. Instead of going bravely

---

<sup>99</sup>Possibly "hs" or "ds".

1 about their business--trusting God {even}<sup>100</sup>--  
2 They do like him who says Good sir  
3 to the one he fears--or whistles to the--  
4 dog that is rushing at him. And be-  
5 cause they take his name in vain so often  
6 they presume that they are better than you  
7 Oh their religion is a rotten squash.

8 Nov. 21th 58

9 Pm to {Hollowell} Place--

10 See small water bugs in nut meadow

11 //brook in one place-- Prob they were not to be  
12 found in the late cold weather 12th 13th &c--

13 See from Clam Shell ap. 2 little dippers--  
14 //  
15 one up stream the other down--swimming & diving  
16 in the perfectly smooth river--this still over  
17 cast day.

18 Prob. the bulk of the Scar. Oak leaves are  
19 //  
20 fallen-- I find very handsome ones strewn over  
21 the floor of Potter's maple swamp-- They  
22 are brown above but still purple beneath.  
23 These are so deeply cut ~~& the~~ --& the middle  
24 & lobes of the leaf so narrow--that they  
25 look like the remnant of leafy stuff out  
26 of which leaves have been cut--or like  
27 scrap tin. The lobes are remarkably sharp  
28 pointed & armed with long bristles. Yes  
29 they lie one above another like masses of  
30 scrap tin.

---

<sup>100</sup>Possibly "ever".



1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32

Nov. 22nd

In surveying Mr. Bigelow's Woodlot today--  
I found at the N. E asterly angle what in the deed  
from the Thayers in '38 was called "an old stump  
by the wall". It is still quite plain & may last  
20 years longer-- It is oak

This is quite a pleasant day--but hardly  
amounting to 2nd. summer-- I see swarms  
of large mosquito-like insects dancing in  
the garden. They may be a large kind of  
slender  
{liparidae}. Had^ ringed abdomens & no plumes.

//

The river is quite low--about as low as  
it has been--for it has not been very low ~~befor~~--

//

About the 1st of November a wild  
pig from the west--said to weigh ~~several~~<sup>300 lbs</sup>  
hundred--jumped out of a car at the depot  
& made for the woods-- The owner had  
to give up the chase at once not to lose his  
passage--while some RR. employees {hunted}<sup>102</sup>  
the pig--even in the woods 1 1/2 miles  
off--but then the pig turned & pursued  
them so resolutely that they ran for their  
lives & one climbed a tree. The next day  
being Sunday they turned out in force  
with a gun & a large mastiff--but  
still the pig had the best of it--fairly frightened  
the men by his fierce charges--& the dog  
was so wearied that <sup>is injured by the pig</sup>the men were obliged  
to carry him in their arms-- The pig stood it

---

<sup>101</sup>"several" is struck out in pencil

<sup>102</sup>Possibly "tracked".

1 %so between the gun man's legs threw him over & hurt his shoulder (through pierced)%  
2 %in%<sup>103</sup> %many places by a pitchfork%  
3 better than the dog. %^%At the last accounts--  
4 he had been driven or baited into a barn & in  
5 Lincoln--he but no one durst enter--& they  
6 were preparing to shoot him. Such pork might  
7 %caught him at last in a snare--& so conveyed%  
8 be called venison %him to Brighton%

9 Nov. 23 a N Easterly storm--  
10 //with occasional sugarings of snow--

11 Nov 24th  
12 Pm to Cliffs & Walden

13 There is a slight sugaring of snow on the  
14 ground. On grass ground there is much  
15 the less & that is barely perceptible--while  
16 plowed ground is quite white & I can  
17 thus distinguish such fields even to the  
18 horizon. It is dark drizzling still  
19 from time to time sprinkling or snowing a little.

20 I see more snow in the N & NW horizon.

21 I can not only distinguish plowed fields--  
22 regular  
23 ^ white squares in the midst of russet--  
24 but even cart paths--& foot or cow  
25 paths a quarter of a mile long--  
26 as I look across to Conantum.

27 It is pleasant to see this revealed as a  
28 feature even in the distant landscape,  
29 a cow path leading from far inland  
30 down to the river.

31 The young oaks on the plain under the  
32 //Cliffs are of a more uniform color

---

<sup>103</sup>"%in%" appears at the end of the interlined text above; positioned here due to lack of space.

1 than a fortnight ago--a reddish brown.

2 F. H. Pond is closed still.

3 It is a lichen day--with a little moist //

4 snow falling. The great green lungwort

5 lichen shows now on the oaks--strange

6 that there should be none on the pines close

7 by--& the fresh bright chestnut fruit of

8 other kinds--glistening with moisture--brings

9 life & immortality to light.

10 That side of the trunk on which the lichens

11 are thickest is the side on which the snow

12 lodges in long ridges.

13 When I looked out this morning the

14 landscape presented a very pretty wintry sight

15 --little snow as there was. Being very moist

16 it had lodged on every twig--& every one

17 had its counterpart in a light downy white

18 one 2ce or 3ce its own depth resting on it.

19 I hear a screech owl--in Wheeler's Wood

20 by the RR--& I heard one a few evenings ago //

21 at home.

22 Saw a %scarlet% oak--some 16 inch in

23 diameter at 3 feet from ground--blown down

24 evidently in that storm SE wind some months

25 ago. It stood on the Southerly edge of

26 Wheelers wood & had fallen NNW--breaking

27 off a white oak (9 inch in diam.) & a small

28 white pine in its fall-- It was a perfectly sound

29 oak. I was surprised to see how little

1 root it had-- Very few roots reached deeper  
2 than 2 feet--the thickness of the crust  
3 of earth turned up by its fall--& those  
4 that did--were not bigger than ones finger.  
5 & there was not a root bigger than your  
6 finger at 4 feet from the center on any  
7 of the more than semi circle exposed  
8 side-- ^No wonder it was uprooted.

9 Here is an author who  
10 contrasts love for "The beauties of the person"  
11 with that for "excellences of the mind"--as if  
12 these were the alternatives--I must say that  
13 it is for neither of these that I should  
14 feel the strongest affection. I love that  
15 one<sup>104</sup> with whom I sympathise--be she  
16 "beautiful" or other wise--of excellent  
17 mind or not.

18 Nov. 25th

19 Pm to Ministerial Swamp--

20 I go through the Dennis Swamp by RR--

21 //See a few high blueberry buds--Which

22 have fairly started--expanded into { }<sup>105</sup> small<sup>106</sup>  
23 %V oct 13-59%  
24 red leaves ap within a few weeks--

25 The Rubus hispidus--is now very common &  
26 amid  
27 conspicuous ~~in~~<sup>in</sup> the withered grass & leaves  
28 of the swamp--with its green or reddened leaves  
29 also the gold-thread. The prinus  
30 berries on their light brown twigs are  
31 quite abundant & handsome.

32 While most keep close to their parlor

---

<sup>104</sup>A tail below the "o" in "one" has been struck out along with some of the "o".

<sup>105</sup>A struck-out letter might appear here.

<sup>106</sup>A tail below the "s" in "small" has been struck out.

1 fires this cold & blustering Thanksgiving  
2 afternoon--and think with compassion  
3 of those who are abroad, I find the  
4 sunny south side of the swamp as warm  
5 as their parlors--& warmer to my spirit.  
6 Aye, there is a serenity and warmth here,  
7 which the parlor does not suggest--enhanced  
8 by the sound of the wind roaring on the N. W.  
9 side of the swamp a dozen<sup>or so</sup> rods off.  
10  
11 What a wholesome & inspiring warmth is  
12 this! I see aspen (tremuliformis) leaves  
13 which have long since fallen turned black--  
14 which also show, the relation of this tree  
15 to the willow--& many species of which also turn  
16 black.

17 Pass Tarbell's--behind--The farmer now  
18 ~~on~~ the down hill of life--at length gets  
19 his new barn & barn-cellar built--far  
20 away in some unfrequented vale. This  
21 for 2 score years he has struggled for--  
22 This is his poem done at last--to get  
23 the means to dig that cavity & rear those  
24 timbers aloft. How many millions have  
25 done just like him--or failed to do it--!  
26 There is so little originality. & just  
27 so little--& just as much fate--so  
28 to call it, in literature. With steady  
29 struggle--with alternate failure & suc-  
30 cess, he at length gets a barn cellar

1 completed & then a tomb.

2 You would say that there was a tariff on  
3 thinking & originality.

4 I pass through the ministerial swamp--  
5 & ascend the steep hills on the S cut of last  
6 winter. In the barren poplar hollow  
7 just N of the old mts cranberry is another  
8 the largest patch of it (ie bear berry) that  
9 I remember in C. How often I see these  
10 aspens standing dead in barren--per-  
11 haps frosty valleys in the wood!

12 Most<sup>107</sup> shrub<sup>108</sup>-oaks there have lost their  
13 leaves (Q. ilicifolia) which very fair & perfect  
14 cover the ground.

15 You are surprised late these after-  
16 noons {ahalf} an hour perhaps before  
17 sunset--after walking in the shade--  
18 or on looking round from a height--to  
19 see the singularly bright yellow light  
20 of the sun reflected from pines, esp. pitch  
21 pines, or the withered oak leaves--  
22 through the clear cold air--the wind it  
23 may be blowing strong from the N. W.  
24 Sunlight in summer falling on green woods  
25 is not methinks such a noticeable phenome-  
26 non. I stand on that high hill south of  
27 C(?)  
28 the swamp cut off by ^Wheeler last winter  
29 & when I look round NE I am greatly  
30 surprised by the very brilliant sun light

---

<sup>107</sup>Underline is in pencil or a dry stroke.

<sup>108</sup>Underline is in pencil or a dry stroke.

1 of which I speak--surpassing the glare  
2 of any noon it seems to me.  
3 Nov. '26  
4 The various evergreens large & //  
5 //  
6 small may be said, generally to turn green //  
7 reddish  
8 or to have turned ~~green~~--about the middle  
9 %going up%  
10 %Got in boat on ac. of Reynold's new fence^%  
11 of November-- %(earlier than usual)%  
12 A good many leaves of sweet fern though  
13 withered now--still hold on--so that this //  
14 shrub may be put with the oaks in this  
15 respect. So far as I remember it is pecu-  
16 liar among shrubs in this.  
17 Walden is very low--compared with  
18 The bar bet. pond & Hubbards Pond hole is 4 feet wide  
19 itself for some years-- ^There is a shore //  
20 but {the}<sup>109</sup> main bar is not bare--  
21 at least 6 feet wide in side the alders  
22 at my old shore--and what is remarkable.  
23 I find that not only Goose Pond also  
24 has fallen correspondingly within a  
25 month--but even the smaller pond holes  
26 --only 4 or 5 rods over<sup>110</sup> such as Little Goose  
27 Pond--shallow as they are. ~~F.C. this lowness~~  
28 I begin to suspect therefore that this rise  
29 & fall extending thru a long series of years  
30 --is not peculiar to the Walden system of  
31 Ponds--but is true of ponds generally &  
32 perhaps of rivers--though in their case, it  
33 may be more difficult to detect. Even around  
34 Little Goose Pond the shore is laid bare  
35 for a space even wider than at Walden  
36 it being less abrupt. The Pouts  
37 Nest, also, has lost 10 feet on all

---

<sup>109</sup>Possibly "that".

<sup>110</sup>A tail appears to be struck out below the "v" in "over".

1 sides. Those pouts' nests which I discovered  
2 in the spring are high & dry 6 feet  
3 from the water. I overhauled one, ripping  
4 up the frozen {root}<sup>111</sup> with my hands. The  
5 {root}<sup>112</sup> was only 3 inches thick--then a cavity<sup>113</sup>  
6 & abottom<sup>114</sup> of wet mud. In this mud  
7 I found 2 small frogs 1 ap. an R. palus-  
8 tris less than an inch long. The other ap. a  
9 young R. pipiens 1 1/2 inches long. They were  
10 quite sluggish & had evidently gone into  
11 winter quarters there, but probably some  
12 mink would have got them.

13 The Pout's nest was frozen just enough  
14 to bear--with 2 or 3 breathing places left.  
15 The principal of these was a narrow opening  
16 ~~with some~~ about a rod long X 18 inches  
17 wide within 6 feet of the SW side of  
18 the pond hole--& then immediately adjacent  
19 ice was darker & thinner than the rest  
20 having formed quite recently. I observed that  
21 the water at this breathing chink was  
22 //all alive with polly wogs mostly of large  
23 size--though some were small--which  
24 ap. had collected there chiefly as the  
25 water surface was steadily contracted--  
26 for the sake of the air(?) {There}<sup>115</sup> more  
27 than a hundred of them there--or 10 or  
28 a dozen in a square foot--& many more under  
29 the ice. I saw one firmly frozen in & dead.  
30 One had legs & his tail was half eaten off by some creature--yet he was alive

---

<sup>111</sup>Possibly "roof".

<sup>112</sup>Possibly "roof".

<sup>113</sup>"a" and "cavity" run together without a space.

<sup>114</sup>"a" and "bottom" run together without a space.

<sup>115</sup>Possibly "these".



1                   There were also one or 2 frogs stirring among them                   //  
2                   Here was evidently warmer water--probably  
3                   a spring & they had crowded to it. Looking  
4                   more attentively--I detected also a great many  
5                   minnows about 1 inch long either floating--dead  
6                   these<sup>116</sup>frozen into the ice--at least 50 of  
7                   them. They were shaped like bream, but had the  
8                   transverse bars of a perch. There were more polly-  
9                   wogs in other parts of the Pond--hole--& at  
10                  the N end. I saw 2 perch about 7 inches  
11                  long--dead close to the shore--& turned a  
12                  bright green--which are commonly yellow--  
13                  as if poisoned by the water or something they  
14                  had eaten. Perhaps the fishes had suffered  
15                  by the falling of this Pond hole--& consequent  
16                  isolation from the main pond--which  
17                  has left this part still more shallow  
18                  & stagnant than before. It is full of the  
19                  target weed-- If the pond continues to fall  
20                  undoubtedly all the fishes thus land locked  
21                  will die. I noticed. ~~I~~ and at the  
22                  above named chink track which  
23                  looked like those of an otter--where  
24                  some animal had entered & come out  
25                  of the water--{having}<sup>117</sup> weeds & fragments  
26                  of ice at the edge of the hole- No  
27                  doubt several creatures like otter  
28                  & mink--&, foxes know where to re-  
29                  sort for their food at this season  
30                  This is now a perfect otter's or mink's preserve.

---

<sup>116</sup>A vertical mark or blot appears on and slightly beneath this dash.

<sup>117</sup>Possibly "leaning" or "having".

1 Perhaps such a mass of decaying weeds  
2 is fatal to the fishes here.

3 It is evident that these frogs would have  
4 been frozen stiff the first colder nights--  
5 in such a shallow retreat. It is very likely  
6 that that hole (i.e pout's hole) was under  
7 water when they took refuge there--&  
8 the water going down they were chilled.  
9 In such cases the polly wogs & fishes--  
10 & even frogs most of the last part to  
11 freeze--the warmest water, where it is open  
12 longest.

13 Examining these survivors by day I find  
14 that they are 1 1/6 inches long X 2/5 inch wide  
15 (this my largest) in form like a bream--  
16 ~~with~~ of a very pale golden like a perch--  
17 or more bluish Have but one dorsal fin  
18 and near as I can count--rays D 18 (first  
19 %& stiff% %There 10 larger & often tall%  
20 %9% half<sup>118</sup> shorter<sup>119</sup>%^% & more distinctly pointed-%^-whole fin about  
21 %average% %<sup>{19}</sup><sup>120</sup> how long%  
22 3 times as long as%^% high) C. 18<sup>121</sup>-- A. 13 or 14 V. 6  
23 %10(?)% %about%  
24 P. ~~6 or 8~~ (?)<sup>122</sup> They have%^% 7 ~~or 8~~<sup>123</sup> transverse dusky  
25 bars like a perch! Yet from their form &  
26 single dorsal fin I think they are breams--are  
27 they not a new species? Have young breams  
28 transverse bars? {drawing} A little narrower  
29 than this. %v 2 ds forward%

30 Nov 27

31 Those barren hollows & plains in the neigh-  
32 borhood of Walden--~~wh~~ are singular places

---

<sup>118</sup>Struck out in pencil.

<sup>119</sup>Possibly "stouter".

<sup>120</sup>Possibly "19".

<sup>121</sup>Struck out in pencil.

<sup>122</sup>Struck out in pencil.

<sup>123</sup>Scribbled out in pencil.

1 I see many which were heavily wooded  
2 15 or 30 years ago--now covered  
3 only with fine sedge--sweet-fern--or a  
4 small  
5 few birches--willows--poplars &^ wild-  
6 % {chick cornels} %  
7 cherries<sup>124</sup>-- %^%&c They need not amount to hollows  
8 at all--many of them are glades merely--  
9 & all that region is elevated--but the  
10 surrounding higher ground--though it  
11 may be only 5 or 10 feet higher will  
12 be covered with a good growth. One should  
13 think twice before he cut off such places.  
14 --Perhaps they had better never be laid bare  
15 but merely thinned out. {We}<sup>125</sup> do not be-  
16 gin to understand the treatment of woodland  
17 yet. On such spots you will see various  
18 young trees & some of them which I have  
19 named--dead as if a fire had run through  
20 them--killed apparently by frost.  
21 <sup>126</sup>I find scarlet oak acorns  
22 Like this-- in form not  
23 essentially different from  
24 those of the black oak--<sup>127</sup>  
25 except that the scales of  
26 the black--stand out more  
27 loose & bristling about the  
28 fruit. So all Scar. O. acorns do not  
29 regularly taper to a point from a broad  
30 base--& Emerson {represents} but one  
31 form of the fruit. The leaf of this was not  
32 very deeply cut--was broad for its length.

---

<sup>124</sup>"cherry" is overwritten by "cherries" or vice versa.

<sup>125</sup>"We" appears to be written over "The" or vice versa.

<sup>126</sup>A drawing of an acorn indents the text approximately 3 inches from the left margin from this line and before the six lines that follow. To the left of the drawing T. writes "Scarlet O." (in ink), below which is %v {Jan} 19' 59% (possibly "Jun").

<sup>127</sup>The comma appears below the dash.

1 I get 17 more of {these<sup>128</sup>} little breams of  
 2 yesterday--As I now count the dorsal  
 3 fins rays are 9-~~11~~10 (Gerard says 11) 9-  
 4  
 5 C. 17 with ap 4 short on each side  
 6 A 3-11  
 7 P 11 ~~10~~ (?)  
 8 V {6}<sup>129</sup> 1-5 %V. Dec 3d%  
 9 %V. also Mar 26%  
 10 They have about 7 transverse dark bars--  
 11 a vertical dark mark under eye--& a dark  
 12 spot on edge of operculum--  
 13 They appear to be the young of the Pomotis  
 14 // obesus described by Charles Girard to the  
 15 Nat Hist Soc. in April '54--obtained by  
 16 Baird in Freshwater about Hingham &  
 17 Charles River in Holliston.<sup>130</sup>  
 18 I got more perfect specimens than the bream  
 19 drawn above. They are exceedingly pretty  
 20 seen floating dead on their sides in a bowl  
 21 of water with all their fins spread out.  
 22  
 23 From their size & form & position--they cannot  
 24 fail to remind you of coins in the basin. The  
 25 conspicuous transverse bars distinguish them--  
 26 at once. {drawing} This is the form of the dorsal  
 27 fin which consists of 2 parts the foremost  
 28 {of}<sup>131</sup> shorter stiff spiny rays--the other {11} at least  
 29 half as long again & quite flexible & waving--  
 30 falling together like a {wet rag}<sup>132</sup> out of water--  
 31 So with the anal fin the 3 foremost rays  
 32 as I see  
 33 are short & spiny^ are part{s} of the  
 34

<sup>128</sup>Possibly "those".

<sup>129</sup>Possibly "6" struck out or overwritten with "5" struck out or vice versa.

<sup>130</sup>The remaining space on this line between the word "Holliston" and the right margin is obscured by a waxed in clipping. The clipping begins "Specimens of *Pomotis* . . ."; the reverse side of the clipping begins "Ship News". The front of the clipping includes handwritten dates--by HDT?--written vertically in its margin.

<sup>131</sup>Possibly stuck through.

<sup>132</sup>Possibly "net say"

1                   & to me  
2 vertical (ac. to Girard). These foremost rays  
3 in each case work like slender {raking}  
4 masts--& their points project beyond the thin  
5 web of the fin--whose edge looks like the  
6 ropes which stretch from masthead to masthead--  
7 loop-wise. The stiff & spiny {foremost}<sup>133</sup> part  
8 of the fins evidently serves for a cut water  
9 which bears the brunt of any concussion--&  
10 perhaps may serve for weapons of offence while  
11 the more ample & gently waving flexible after  
12 part more especially guides the {actions}<sup>134</sup> of the  
13 fish. The ~~trans~~ transverse bars are continued  
14 across these parts of the {f} D & A. fins--as  
15 the marking's {of a turtle} bristle across its feet  
16 or flippers. Methinks the fins of the minnows  
17 are peculiarly beautiful.

18                   How much more remote the newly discovered  
19 species seems to dwell than the old & fa-  
20 miliar ones--though both inhabit the  
21 same pond. Where the {pomolis obesus} swims  
22 must be a new country--unexplored by  
23                   sea  
24 science. The^ shore may be settled, but  
25 aborigines dwell unseen only {thus}<sup>135</sup> far  
26 inland. This country is so new that  
27 species of ~~birds~~ fishes--& birds--& quadru-  
28 peds in habit it--which science has  
29 not yet detected. The water which such  
30 a fish swims in must still have a primi-  
31                   %v forward%  
32 tive forest decaying in it.

---

<sup>133</sup>Possibly "forward".

<sup>134</sup>Possibly "motions".

<sup>135</sup>Possibly "this".

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32

Nov 28

A gray over cast & still day--<sup>136</sup> There  
& more small birds tree spars & chickadees than usual about the {house}<sup>137</sup>  
have been a very few fine snow flakes

falling for many hours--& now by

//2 Pm--a regular snow-storm has com-

menced--fine flakes falling steadily

& rapidly whitening all the landscape

In half an hour the russet earth is

painted white--even to the horizon. Do

we know of any other so silent & sudden

a change?

I cannot now walk without having a

track behind me--that is one peculiarity

of winter walking--any body may follow my

trail. I have walked perhaps a particular

wild path along some swamp side all

summer--& thought to my self, I am the only

villager that ever comes here. But I go

out shortly after the first snow has fallen--

& lo here is the track of a sports man

& his dog in my secluded path--& probably

he preceded me in the summer, as well.

Yet my hour is not his, & I may

never meet him!

I asked Coombs<sup>138</sup> the other night if he

had been a hunting lately-- He said he

had not been out but {once}<sup>139</sup> this fall. He

went out the other day, ~~howeve~~--with

a companion & they came near getting

a fox. They broke his leg. He has

---

<sup>136</sup>This caret joins a descending curved line to the interlined material below.

<sup>137</sup>This word is unclear due to its position on a descending angle.

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

<sup>139</sup>Possibly "since"; what appears like a small i-dot mark is positioned above this word, but it could be ink that bled through from the recto side of this page.

1 evidently been looking forward to some such  
2 success all summer-- Having done this  
3 much--he can afford to sit a while by  
4 the stove at the P.O. He is plotting now  
5 how to break his head.

6 Goodwin cannot be a very bad man--he is so  
7 cheery.

8 And all the years that I have known Walden  
9 striped  
10 these ^breems have skulked in it without  
11 my knowledge! How many new thoughts  
12 %V 11 {days}<sup>140</sup> forward%  
13 then may I have?

14 Nov. 29th

15 Pm to Hill

16 About 3 inches of snow fell last evening //

17 and a few cows on the hill side have wandered

18 about in vain to come at the grass. They

19 have at length found the place high on the

20 S side where the snow is thin nest.

21 methinks it is as good as half an hour added to  
22 the day

23 How bright & light the day now^--white houses

24 no longer stand out & stare in the landscape

25 The Pine woods snowed up--look more

26 like the bare oak woods with their gray

27 boughs-- The river meadows show {now}<sup>141</sup>

28 far off a dull straw color or pale brown

29 amid the general white

30 ^ where the coarse sedge rises where the

31 2 distinct oak woods are now more distinctly reddish.--

32 snow-- ^It is a clear & pleasant winter

33 day. The snow has taken all the Novem-

34 ber out of the day-- Now blue shadows

35 --green rivers (both which I see) &

---

<sup>140</sup>Possibly "hrs"

<sup>141</sup>Possibly "how".

1 still winter life--.

2 I see {partridge} & mice tracks--& fox

3 tracks--& crows sit silent on a bare

4 I see a living shrike caught to day

5 //oak top. in the barn of the Middlesex House--

6 Nov. 30 '58

7 The shrike was very violent for a long time

8 beating itself against the bars of its cage--

9 at {Stacy's}-- to day it is quiet & has eaten

10 raw meat. Its plain dark ash colored

11 crown and beak are separated by a very distinct

12 line from the black wings. It has a power

13 ful {hawklike} beak but, slender legs & claws--

14 close to-it looks more like a {musicapa}

15 than any thing--

16 with C.

17 Pm to Walden--& F. H Hill.

18 It is a pleasant day & the snow melting

19 considerably-- We stand on the Pouts'

20 Nest--now frozen--with snow ice added to the

21 old--so that it will bear--a coarse frozen

22 white batter--& the hills around are covered

23 with snow. Though Walden is open-- It

24 is a perfect winter scene. This withdrawn

25 but ample recess in the woods--with all

26 that is necessary for a human residence--

27 yet never referred to by the London Times

28 & Galignani's messenger--as some of

29 those arctic bays are-- some are hastening

30 to Europe & some to the West Indies

31 but here is a bay never steered for.



1 These nameless bays where the Times  
2 & the Tribune have no correspondent--  
3 are the true bays of All Saints--for me  
4 Green pines on this side brown oaks on  
5 that--the blue sky over head & this white  
6 counterpane all around. It is an insignifi-  
7 cant fraction of the globe which England  
8 & Russia & the Filibusters have over run--  
9         The open pond close by--though consid-  
10 erably rippled to-day--affects me as a pe-  
11 culiarly wild & genial object by contrast  
12 with this frozen pool & the snow covered  
13 shore--& I sit down on the shore in  
14 the sun--on the bare rocks. There seems to  
15 be a milder air above it, as the water  
16 within it is milder.  
17         Going westward thro' Wheeler's Owl Wood--to-  
18 ward Weird Dell-- I behold a peculiar  
19 winter scene--seen many times before--  
20 but forgotten-- The sun rather low is seen  
21 through the wood with a cold dazzling  
22 white lustre like that of burnished tin  
23 {reflected}<sup>142</sup> from the silvery needles of the pines  
24 No powerful light streams through--  
25 but you stand in the quiet & somewhat  
26 sombre aisles of a forest cathedral--  
27 where cold green masses alternate<sup>143</sup> with  
28         (you are inclined to call them red) %reddish tawney (?)%  
29         but warm<sup>144</sup>  
30 pale brown leather colored ones^--almost  
31 trees are the internal<sup>145</sup> decorations--  
32 ruddy--^while dark trunks streaked with snow  
33 rise on all sides & a pure white floor

---

<sup>142</sup>The final "d" may not be present at the end of this word.

<sup>143</sup>The "l" in "alternate" appears to have been a modified letter "f".

<sup>144</sup>The words "but warm" are positioned slightly above "brown" and continue in the space between "brown" and "leather" on the line below.

<sup>145</sup>A short word or small blot appears above the "r" in "internal".



1 crowded on one another--though in fact the  
2 dogs may have been a quarter of a  
3 mile ahead or behind their master--  
4 The dog--rosette--identical which is  
5 spotted all over Greece. They go {making}<sup>148</sup>  
6 these perfect im perfect impressions  
7 faster than a {tubes}<sup>149</sup> cylinder-{power}<sup>150</sup>  
8 press.

9           Coming over the side of F. H. Hill at sun-  
10 set--we saw a large long dusky cloud  
11 in the NW. horizon ap--just this side  
12 of Wachusett or at least 20 miles off  
13 --which was snowing--when all  
14 the rest was clear sky. It was a com-  
15 plete snow cloud. It looked like rain  
16 falling at an equal distance--except  
17 that the snow fell less directly--& the  
18 upper outline of a part of the cloud  
19 more like that of a dusky mist. {It}<sup>151</sup>  
20 was much of a snow storm--just enough  
21 to partially obscure the sight of the mts  
22 about which it was falling-- While the cloud  
23 was ap. high above (them or it may have  
24 been a little this side. The cloud was of  
25 a dun color--and at its south end  
26 near where the sun ~~had~~{—} was just about  
27 to set--it was all aglow on its under  
28 side with a salmon {fulgor}--making it  
29 look warmer than a furnace at the same  
30 time that it was snowing.

---

<sup>148</sup>The initial letters of this word are obscured by overwriting; also, this word could possibly be "marking" or "tracking".

<sup>149</sup>This word either has been struck out or contains a very long t-cross.

<sup>150</sup>The initial letters of what appears to be "power" are obscured by overwriting.

<sup>151</sup>"It" is possibly overwritten upon "The".

1 In short I saw a cloud--quite local  
2 in the heavens--whose south end  
3 rested over the portals of the day  
4 20 & odd miles off & was lit by the splendor  
5 of the departing sun--& from this lit  
6 cloud--snow was falling-- It was  
7 merely an extensive flurry though it  
8 may have lasted ~~half~~ 20 minutes--  
9 I have seen a dark cloud as wide as  
10 the sky rolling up from the NW-- & {blasting}  
11 all my hopes--at sight of which I  
12 have dismissed the sun for 3 weeks {&}<sup>152</sup>  
13 resigned myself to my fate-- But when  
14 after being absorbed in other meditations--  
15 I have looked round for that cloud half  
16 an hour after-- I have distinguished only  
17 an indistinct white film far in the  
18 SE-- which only added to the glory of  
19 {the}<sup>153</sup> day--by reflecting its light.  
20 The river may be said to have frozen generally last night  
21 That was a remarkable {prospect}  
22 from the side of F. H. Hill just before the  
23 sun set--a strong cold NW wind blowing  
24 & as good a winter prospect as the Arctic  
25 regions present. The brilliant blessed isles  
26 already gathered thus the portals of the day--  
27 & mother o' pearl clouds forming &  
28 dissolving in the crisped air between the  
29 Zenith & The west horizon-- While at  
30 least 20 miles off (at first 30) in the

---

<sup>152</sup>Possibly "I"

<sup>153</sup>Possibly "thy"; the tail of the end letter curves below the line and back to cross the initial "t".

1 N W<sup>154</sup> a vast dark dun colored cloud--where  
2 southern end overlapped the setting sun  
3 --a glowing canopy--was snowing in the  
4 mts--seen {thinly}<sup>155</sup> beneath it. It was a  
5 rare & strange sight, that of a snow  
6 storm 20 miles off--from the verge of a  
7 perfectly clear sky-- Thus local is all  
8 storm--surrounded by serenity & beauty--  
9 The terrestrial mts were made ridiculous  
10 beneath that stupendous range--I said  
11 to my companion there comes a storm which<sup>156</sup>  
12 will cover the earth 4 feet deep--make  
13 haste & do your necessary work before  
14 the night comes. But before {we}<sup>157</sup>  
15 had got home--I saw it in the east  
16 still further off--not having seen it  
17 passed us--a pale ethereal film almost<sup>158</sup>  
18 dissolved in the sky, as indistinct as  
19 a fabulous island. In these clear cold  
20 days--fear no cloud-- They vanish &  
21 dissolve before the cloud consuming  
22 air-- This air snaps them up like a  
23 dog his meat. Bare hickories now  
24 seen over the shining surface--of the  
25 snow--suggest a cold equal to that  
26 of the Cold Friday-- As I go up  
27 the hill eastward while the sun is setting  
28 I see a tinge of green reflected from its  
29 surface under my face-- & the scattered  
30 clouds in the east are greener yet--

---

<sup>154</sup>"W" appears to have been modified or overwritten by T.

<sup>155</sup>Possibly "shining"; no t-cross appears in this word.

<sup>156</sup>Written on a descending angle near the margin.

<sup>157</sup>"we" appears to have been overwritten upon "the".

<sup>158</sup>Written on a descending angle near the margin.



1           Neither England nor America--have any  
2           right to laugh at that sentence in the  
3           rare book called "The Blazon of Gentry" written  
4           written by a zealous student of heraldry--which  
5           after due investigation that  
6           says^ "Christ was a gentleman, as to  
7           the flesh, by the part of his mother,-- -- --  
8           -- -- and might have borne coat-armor. The  
9           apostles also were gentlemen of blood, and  
10          {many}<sup>161</sup> of them descended from that worthy  
11          conqueror Judas Machabeus; but, through  
12          the tract of time, & persecution of wars,  
13          poverty oppressed the kindred, and they  
14                                    x  
15          were {constrayned} to servile workes." ~~whatever~~  
16          ~~we may preach & profess~~-- texts we may  
17          quote or commentaries we may write--  
18          when we consider the laws & customs of  
19          these 2 countries we cannot fail to  
20          perceive that the above sentence is  
21          perfectly  
22          ^ of a piece with our practical com-  
23          mentary<sup>162</sup> on the New Testament--  
24          The above is really a pertinent reason  
25          offered why Christianity should {be}  
26          embraced in England & America--  
27          Indeed--it is accordingly only what  
28          may be called "respectable christianity"--  
29                                    at all generally  
30          that is ^embraced in the 2 countries--  
31                    I read that a woman picked  
32                    a pint of ripe red raspberries at Bunker Hill Cliff  
33                    where they get the {"Quincy Granite")<sup>163</sup> Oct. 1st this  
34    %{                                    }%  
35                    year

---

<sup>161</sup>Overwritten, letters are obscured.

<sup>162</sup>"ary" (the last letters in "momentary") are written on a descending angle below the line.

<sup>163</sup>A set of open quotation marks appears without a closed set; a closed parenthesis appears without an open one.

1           There is a late green ness--accompanied  
2 by open yellow flowers--a November  
3 greenness--methinks, corresponding to the  
4 early greenness of the spring--& its blossoms  
5 Early in November (& late in Oct) Lycopodium  
6 & evergreen ferns--(the small botrychium shed  
7       as well as several lycopodium{,}  
8 pollen then^) have their day--under {the}<sup>164</sup> yellow  
9 flowers by the witch hazel & amid a few lingering  
10 golden rods--as in spring green radical  
11 leaves are associated with {alder} & willow  
12 blossoms. The gold greens have their  
13 day so late in the fall. I do not speak so  
14 much of a lingering verdure--but of one which  
15 there is most flourishing, & you may say greenest  
16 before the lichen days have come.

17           I cannot but see still in my  
18 mind's eye those little striped breams poised  
19 in Walden's glaucous water. They balance  
20 all the rest of the world in my estimation  
21 at present, for this is the Bream that  
22 I have just found. & for the time I ne-  
23 glect all its brethren & am ready to kill  
24 the fatted calf on its account. For more  
25 than 2 centuries have men fished here &  
26 have not distinguished this permanent  
27 settler of the township-- It is not like a  
28 new bird--a transient visitor that may not  
29 be seen again for years--but there it  
30 dwells & has dwelt permanently-- Who  
31 can tell how long? When my eyes

---

<sup>164</sup>Possibly "their".



1 first rested on Walden--the striped bream  
2 was poised in it--though I did not see  
3 it, & when Tahatawan paddled his canoe  
4 there. How wild it makes the pond &  
5 the township to find a new fish in it--America<sup>165</sup>  
6 renews her youth here. But in my ac-  
7 count of this bream I cannot go a hair's  
8 breadth beyond the mere statement that it  
9 exists.--the miracle of its existence--my con-  
10 temporary & neighbor--yet so different from  
11 me! I can only poise my thoughts there  
12 by its side-- & try to think like a bream for a  
13 moment. I can only think of precious jewels  
14 --of sunrise--poetry--beauty--& the mystery  
15 of life-- I only see the bream in its orbit as  
16 I see {a}<sup>166</sup> star, but I came not to measure its  
17 distance or weight. The bream appreciated  
18 floats in the pond--as the center of the  
19 system--another image of God. Its life  
20 no man can explain more than he can  
21 his own. I want you to perceive the mystery  
22 of the bream{~~s~~} I have a contemporary in Wal-  
23 den. It has fins where I have legs & arms--  
24 I have a friend among the fishes--at least  
25 a new acquaintance-- Its character will in-  
26 terest me, I trust, not its clothes & anatomy.  
27 I do not want it to eat. Acquaintance with  
28 it is to make my life more rich & eventful.  
29 It is as if a poet or an anchorite had<sup>167</sup>  
30 moved into the town--whom I can see from

---

<sup>165</sup>Written on a descending angle near the margin beginning on the line and ending below the line.

<sup>166</sup>Possibly "the".

<sup>167</sup>Written on a descending angle beginning above the line and ending below the line.

1 time to time & think of yet oftener. Perhaps  
2 there are a thousand of these striped  
3 bream which no one has thought of  
4 in that pond--not their mere impressions  
5 in stone--but in the full tide of the breams  
6 life.

7           Though science may sometimes ~~talk about~~  
8 compare herself to a child picking up pebbles  
9 on the sea shore--that is a rare mood  
10 with her. Ordinarily, her practical belief is  
11 that it is only a few pebbles which are not  
12 known--weighed & measured-- A new species  
13 of fish--signifies hardly more than a new name.  
14 See what is contributed in the scientific re-  
15 ports-- One counts the fin-rays--another  
16 measures--the intestines--a 3d Daguerreotypes  
17 a scale--&c &c--otherwise there's nothing to be  
18 said. As if all but this were done--&  
19 these were very rich & generous contributions to sci-  
20 ence. Here votaries may be seen wandering  
21 along the shore of the Ocean of Truths--  
22 with their backs to that ocean--need to {rein}<sup>168</sup>  
23 in the shells which are cast up. You would  
24 say that the scientific bodies were terribly put  
25 to it for objects & subjects.  
26                           of an animal  
27           A dead specimen--^if it is only well preserved  
28 in alcohol--is just as good for science as  
29 a living one preserved in its active elements.  
30           What is the amount of my discovery to me--?  
31           It is not that I have got one in a bottle--

---

<sup>168</sup>Possibly "seize".

1 & that it has got a name in a book--  
2 but that I have a little fishy friend in  
3 the pond. How was it when the youth  
4 first discovered fishes? Was it the number  
5 of their fin rays or the arrangement  
6 of the place of the fish in some system--  
7 that made the boy dream of them? Is  
8 it these things that interest mankind in the  
9 fish--the inhabitant of the water? No--but  
10 living  
11 a faint recognition of a ^contemporary--a  
12 provoking mystery. One boy thinks of  
13 fishes & goes {a}<sup>169</sup> fishing--from the same mo-  
14 tive that his brother {seaches} the poets for  
15 some lines. It is the poetry of fishes--which  
16 is their chief use--their flesh is their lowest  
17 use. The beauty of the fish--that is what  
18 it is best worth the while to measure-- Its  
19 place in our systems is of comparatively  
20 little importance. Generally the boy  
21 loses some of his perception & his interest in  
22 the fish--he degenerates into a fisherman  
23 %V 4 {hs}<sup>170</sup> forward%  
24 or an ichthyologist.

25 Dec 2nd

26 When I first saw that snow-cloud--  
27 it stretched low along the N. W. horizon--  
28 perhaps 4/4 round--& half a dozen times as  
29 high as the mts--& was remarkably  
30 horizontal on its upper edge--but that  
31 edge was obviously for a part of the way  
32 very thin--composed of a dusky mist

---

<sup>169</sup>Possibly a dash.

<sup>170</sup>Possibly "ds".

1       which first suggested snow-- When soon  
2       after it had risen & advanced & was plainly  
3       snowing-- It was as if some great dark  
4       machine was sifting the snow upon  
5       the mountains. There was at the  
6       same time the most brilliant of sun-  
7       sets--the clearest & crispiest of winter  
8       skies.-- We have had every day  
9       since similar slight flurries of snow--  
10      we being in their midst.

11                        Dec. 3d 58

12               Pm to Walden--

13               A deliciously mild pm--though the  
14      ground is covered with snow-- The cockes  
15      crowed this morning as of yore--

16               I carry hatchet & rake in order to ex-  
17      plore the pout's nest for frogs & fish--  
18      (the pond not being frozen). A small  
19      part of that chinck of the 26th is  
20      not yet frozen--& is crowded with pollywogs  
21      mostly of large sizes & very many have  
22      legs more or less developed. With my  
23      small iron rake about 1 foot long  
24      X 4 inches wide I jerk onto the ice at  
25      one jerk 45 pollywogs & more than  
26      as many more fall into the water-- Many  
27      of the smallest pollywogs have bright  
28      copper red bellies--prettily spotted--

1 while the large {one}<sup>171</sup> curiously pale  
2 yellow, either clear or spotted. Many<sup>172</sup>  
3 are dying. They have crowded so  
4 thickly along the open chink 3 or 4 inches  
5 wide by the side of a boat in the ice  
6 that when I accidentally rock it  
7 about a hundred are washed out  
8 onto the ice. One salamander  
9 among them--{& 4} of the new  
10 breams much larger darker & richer  
11 colored than any I had found.

12 I have often seen pollywogs in small  
13 numbers in the winter, in spring holes  
14 &c--but never such crowding to air holes in  
15 the ice-- All that is peculiar in this case  
16 is that this small pond has recently been  
17 cutoff from the main pond by the falling  
18 of the water--& that it is crowded with  
19 chiefly target weed  
20 vegetable matter^--so that apparently  
21 the stagnant water has not only killed  
22 the breams & perch (of which last I find  
23 3 dead) but ~~comp~~ many pollywogs  
24 & compels others to seeke the surface.  
25 by the shanty field %&%  
26 As I return home by the%^%<sup>173</sup> RR--  
27 I cannot help contrasting this evening  
28 (on F. H. hill side)  
29 with--the 30th-- Now there is a genial  
30 soft air--and in the west many clouds  
31 of a purplish dove color. I walk with  
32 unbuttoned coat--taking in the in-

---

<sup>171</sup>Possibly "are".

<sup>172</sup>This the initial "M" has been overwritten or reformed.

<sup>173</sup>This penciled carat positions the penciled "&" above the line.

1 fluence, of the hour. Coming thro' the  
2 p. pines E of the Shanty field--I see  
3 the sun thro the pines--very yellow  
4 & warm looking--& every twig of the  
5 pines & every {weed} is lit with yellow  
6 light --(not silvery) The other  
7 night the few cloudy {islets}<sup>174</sup> about  
8 setting sun (& where it had set) were  
9 glitteringly bright afar thro' the  
10 (when I get to the cause way)  
11 cold air. Now ^all the west is  
12 suffused with an extremely rich {crimson}  
13 purple or rose color--{while}<sup>175</sup> the edges  
14 of what were dove colored clouds--  
15 have a warm saffron glow--finally  
16 {deepening}<sup>176</sup> to rose or damask when the  
17 sun {has}<sup>177</sup> set. The other night  
18 there was no reddening of the clouds  
19 after sun set--no after glow--  
20 but the glittering clouds were al-  
21 most immediately snapped up in  
22 the crisped {air}.  
23 I im prove every opportunity to go into a grist-mill  
24 --any excuse to see its cob web tapestry-- I put  
25 questions to the miller as an excuse for staying--while  
26 my eye rests delighted on the cobwebs above his head--  
27 & perchance on his hat.  
28 The salamander above named--found in  
29 the water {of}<sup>178</sup> the pouts' nest--is the Salamander  
30 //%prob Dorsalis v Ap. 18- 59%  
31 symmetrica<sup>179</sup>. It is some 3 inches long brown  
32 (not ~~very~~ dark brown) above--& yellow with

---

<sup>174</sup>Possibly "inlets".

<sup>175</sup>Possibly "white"

<sup>176</sup>"deepening" appears to have been altered.

<sup>177</sup>Possibly "was".

<sup>178</sup>Possibly "at".

<sup>179</sup>Struck out in pencil.



1 & the fine violet-purple reflections from  
2 the sides of the abdomen--like the nacre  
3 of a shell--as coin-like they lie flat in  
4 a basin-- Such jewels they swam between  
5 the stems --{(clothed)}<sup>182</sup> in transparent jelly) of  
6 the target weed.

7 R. W. E saw quite a flock of ducks in the  
8 //  
9 pm--(Walden) this pm

10 Dec. 5

11 // Some sugar maples, both large & small--  
12 have still like the larger oaks a few leaves  
13 about the larger limbs near the trunk.

14 Pm to Walden--

15 Snowed yesterday Pm & now it is 3 or  
16 //  
17 4 inches deep & a fine mizzle falling and  
18 freezing to the twigs & stubble--so that there  
19 //is quite a {glaze}. The stiffened ice-coated  
20 weeds & grasses on the causeway--recall  
21 past winters-- These humble withered  
22 plants which have not of late attracted  
23 your attention--now arrest it by their  
24 very stiffness & exaggerated size. Some grass  
25 culms 18 inches or 2 feet high--which no-  
26 body noticed--are an inexhaustible supply  
27 of {slend} ice wands set in the snow--

28 The grasses & weeds next to the crusty surface  
29 --form arches by various forms. It is  
30 surprising how the slenderest grasses can sup-  
31 port such a weight--but the culm is

---

<sup>182</sup>What could possibly be a "c" could possibly be an open parenthesis; thus, the word would not start with "c".



1 is buttressed by another icy culm or column--& the  
2 load gradually taken on-- In the woods  
3 the drooping pines compel you to stoop--  
4 In all directions they are bowed down  
5 --hanging their heads-- The large yellowish  
6 leaves of the black oak (young trees) are  
7 peculiarly conspicuous rich & warm in the  
8 {midst} of this ice & snow--& in the  
9 causeway--the yellowish bark of the willows  
10 gleams warmly through the ice.

11 The birches are still upright & the numerous  
12 parallel white ice rods--remind me of  
13 the recent gossamer-like gleams which  
14 they reflected.

15 How singularly ornamented is that salamander.

16 Its brightest side--its yellow belly--sprinkled  
17 fine  
18 with^ dark spots is turned downward. Its  
19 back is indeed ornamented with 2 rows of  
20 bright vermilion spots--but these can only  
21 be detected on the very closest inspection--  
22 & poor eyes fail to discern them even {then}<sup>183</sup>  
23 --as I have found.

24 Dec 6th 58

25 Go out at 9 Am to see the glaze  
26 It is already half fallen--melting off.  
27 The dripping trees & wet falling ice  
28 will wet you through like rain in the  
29 woods. It is a lively sound--a busy  
30 tinkling the incessant brattling & from  
31 time to time rushing crashing sound of

---

<sup>183</sup>Possibly "there".

1 this falling ice & trees suddenly erecting  
2 themselves when relieved of their loads.  
3 It is now perfect only on the N sides  
4 of woods which the sun has not touched  
5 or affected. Looking at a dripping tree between  
6 you & the sun, you may see here or there  
7 one or another rain-bow color--a small  
8 brilliant point of light-- Yesterday it  
9 froze as it fell on my umbrella--converting  
10 the cotton cloth into a thick stiff glazed  
11 sort of oil cloth--so that it was impossible  
12 to shut it.

13 Dec 7th

14 To Boston--

15 At Nat. Hist. Rooms

16 The egg of Turdus solitarius is light bluish with  
17 pale brown spots. This is ap.

18 mine--which I call hermit thrush--though mine  
19 is redder & distincter--brown spots--

20 The egg of T. Brunneus (called Hermit Thrush)  
21 is a clear blue

22 The rail's eggs (of Concord, which I have seen) is not  
23 the Virginia rail's which is smaller & nearly pure  
24 white--nor the clapper rails which is larger--  
25 Is it the sora rail's? (of which there is no egg in  
26 this collection)

27 My egg found in R. W. E's garden is not  
28 the white-throated sparrow's egg.

29 Dr. Bryant calls my {serrigo} (ie the faint-

1 He says Coopers hawk  
 2 noted bird) Savannah sparrow--  
 3 is just like the sharp-shinned only a little larger commonly--. He  
 4 could not tell them apart. Neither he nor Brewer can identify  
 5 eggs always-- Dec. 9th<sup>184</sup> Could match some gull eggs out of another  
 6 basket full of a diff. species as well as out of the same basket--  
 7 At New Bedford. See a song sparrow  
  
 8 and a pigeon woodpecker-- & Bryant tells of  
 9 the latter picking holes in blinds & also in his  
 10 barn roof & sides in order to get into it--holes in the  
 11 window sashes or casings as if a nail had been  
 12 driven into them.  
  
 13 Asked a sailor at the wharf how  
 14 he distinguished a whaler--he said by  
 15 the "davits" large upright timbers  
 16 with sheaves {curving}<sup>185</sup> over the sides--thus  
 17 (a merchant man has only a few & small at the stern)  
 18 {drawing} to hold up the boats ^also by the place  
 19 for the man to stand at mast-head--(cross trees  
 20 I should say they were) & look out for {-}<sup>186</sup> whales--  
 21 which you do not see on a merchant ship--  
 22 i.e the cross tress of the latter are very slight  
 23 --of the whaler {drawing} somewhat like this--  
 24 Dec. 11th  
  
 25 Pm to Walden-- An over cast pm--  
 26 & rather warm-- The snow on the ground  
 27 in pastures--brings out the warm red in  
 28 These are what Thompson calls "the tawny copse"  
 29 leafy oak woodlands by contrast^--so  
 30 that they suggest both shelter & warmth--  
 31 All browns indeed are warmer now  
 32 than a week ago-- These oak woodlands  
 33 half a mile off--commonly with pines

---

<sup>184</sup>The interlined passage that begins "He says Coopers hawk..." and ends at "the same basket" surrounds on all sides "Dec. 9th" the date of the next entry.

<sup>185</sup>Possibly "carving".

<sup>186</sup>Possibly a blot or a letter struck through.

1 inter mingled--look like warm coverts for  
2 birds & other wild animals. How much  
3 warmer our woodlands look and are  
4 for these withered leaves that still hang  
5 on--! Without them the woods would be  
6 dreary--bleak & {wintery}<sup>187</sup> indeed. Here is  
7 a manifest provision for the necessities  
8 of man & the brutes. These leaves remain  
9 to keep us warm--& to keep the earth warm  
10 about their roots. While the oak leaves  
11 look redder & warmer--the pines look  
12 much darker since the snow has fallen.  
13 --(The hemlocks darker still) A mile or  
14 2 distant they are dark brown or almost  
15 black--as still further, is all wood-  
16 land--& in the most distant horizon  
17 have a blue tinge like mts from the  
18 atmosphere-- The boughs of  
19 old & bare oak woods are gray &  
20 in harmony with the white ground  
21 looking as if snowed on.

22         Already in hollows in the woods & on the  
23 sheltered sides of hills--the fallen leaves  
24 are collected in small heaps on the  
25 snow crust--simulating bare ground  
26 & helping to conceal the rabbit & partridge  
27 &c-- They are not equally different but  
28 collected together here & there as if for  
29 the sake of society--

---

<sup>187</sup>The letters in this word are blotted or reformed or overwritten.

1 I find a the pouts nest--now quite  
2 frozen over--air holes & all 22 pollywogs  
3 frozen in & dead within a space of 2 1/2  
4 feet square--also a young shiner--but it has a dark longitudinal line along side%  
5 feet square--also a minnow--%^%with  
6 %(about 1 1/2 inches long)% V 25th  
7 the bream.

8 The terminal shoots of the small scarlet  
9 oaks are still distinctly red though withered.

10 A "swirl" applied to leaves suddenly caught  
11 up by a sort of whirl wind--is a good  
12 {word} enough, methinks.

13 Walden is about 2 1/3 skimmed over //  
14 It is frozen nearly half the way out from  
15 the Northerly shore--except in a very broad  
16 open space on the NW shore & a considerable  
17 at  
18 space ~~off~~ the pines at the NE end-- But the  
19 ice, thin as it is, extends quite across from  
20 N  
21 the W side to the SW cape (w side of the  
22 R. R. bay) by an isthmous only 2 or 3 rods<sup>188</sup> wide  
23 in its narrowest part. It is evident that  
24 whether a pond shall freeze this side  
25 or that first-- depends much on the wind.  
26 If it is small & lies like Walden between  
27 hills--I should expect that in perfectly  
28 calm weather it would freeze soonest  
29 above the S shore--but in this case there  
30 ~~wind~~ was probably wind from the N or NW &  
31 the more sheltered & smooth N side froze  
32 first. The warmth reflected from the pines  
33 at the NE corner may account for the

---

<sup>188</sup>The letters of this word are reformed or overwritten.

1 open water there--but I cannot account  
2 It must be because  
3 for the open space at the NW end it is there open to the  
4 {rake}<sup>189</sup> of the N wind  
5 the shore being flat--& gently sloping backward a long way--while the protection of  
6 Heywood's Peak<sup>190</sup>  
7 It is {the} remarkable that the S edge of  
8 may account for the ice isthmus--being met by the break-wind of the W. RR. {cape}<sup>191</sup>--  
9 the ice projects Southward in a cape corresponding  
10 triangular  
11 to the deep^ bay in the S side--though it is in  
12 the middle of the pond--& there is even a rude  
13 correspondence {elsewhere} along the edge of  
14 the ice, to the opposite shore-- This might seem  
15 to indicate that the ice to some extent formed  
16 first over {deeper}<sup>192</sup> water.

17 When the ice was melting & the trees  
18 dripping on the morning of the 6th, I noticed  
19 that the snow was discolored--stained  
20 yellow by this drip--as if the trees were  
21 urinating

22 The large Scar oak--in the cemetery has  
23 leaves on the lower limbs near the trunk--  
24 just like the large white oaks now--  
25 So has the largest black oak which I see  
26 --others of both & all kinds are bare.

27 Some, being offended, think sharp {&}<sup>193</sup>  
28 satirical things--which yet they are not  
29 prepared consciously to utter-- But in some  
30 unguarded<sup>194</sup> moment those things escape  
31 from them, when they are ~~are~~ as if near un-  
32 conscious. They betray their thoughts, as  
33 it were, by talking in their {sleep}<sup>195</sup>--for the  
34 truth will out, under whatever veil  
35 of civility.

---

<sup>189</sup>Possibly "sake".

<sup>190</sup>"Heywood's Peak" appears on the same line as the phrase above "while the protection of"; limited space requires this text to wrap to the line below

<sup>191</sup>Possibly "cove" or "cave".

<sup>192</sup>Faint letters at the end of this word descend to the line below.

<sup>193</sup>Possibly a blot or a strike-out mark.

<sup>194</sup>Modification of the letters in this word--overwritten or reformed?

<sup>195</sup>A t-cross appear across the "l".

1 Dec 12th 58

2 Pm up river on ice to FH Hill--

3 Crossing the fields west of our Texas

4 house--I see an immense flock of //

5 Snow buntings-- I think the largest

6 that I ever saw-- There must be a thousand

7 or 2 at least-- there is but 3 inches

8 at most of crusted and dry frozen

9 snow & they are running amid the

10 weeds which rise above it. The weeds

11 are chiefly juncus tenuis (?), but its seeds

12 are ap. gone. I find, however, the glumes

13 of the piper grass scattered about where

14 they have been. The flock is at first

15 about equally divided into 2 parts

16 about 20 rods apart--but birds are

17 incessantly flitting across the interval

18 to join the brethren flock--until all

19 are united-- They are very restless running

20 amid the weeds and continually changing

21 their ground. They will suddenly rise again

22 a few seconds after they have alighted

23 as if alarmed but after a short wheel

24 settle close by. Flying from you in some positions

25 or chiefly

26 you see only^ the black part of their bodies--

27 & then as they wheel, the white comes into view

28 contrasted prettily with the former--&

29 in all together at the same time.

1       Seen<sup>196</sup> flying higher against a cloudy sky  
2       they look like large snow-flakes.--  
3       When they rise all together--their note  
4       is like the rattling of nuts in a bag  
5       as if a whole bin-ful were rolled from  
6       side to side-- They also utter from time  
7       to time--i.e individuals do--{~~perh~~}  
8       a clear rippling note--perhaps {of}<sup>197</sup> alarm,  
9       or a call-- It is remarkable that  
10       their notes above described should resemble--  
11       the lesser red-polls' Away goes the  
12       great wheeling rambling flock rolling  
13       through the air, & you cannot easily  
14       tell where they will settle {suddenly} the  
15               (or a part not foremost)  
16       pioneers ^will change their course  
17               when at length they know it  
18       when in full career--& ^the (long struggling)<sup>198</sup>  
19               on the other side  
20       rushing flock ^will be fetched about  
21       as it were with an undulating jerk  
22       as in the boys' game of snap the whip  
23       & those that occupy the place of the  
24               gradually off  
25       snapper are ^after their leaders on the  
26       new tack-- As far as I observe they confine  
27               V mid of Sep.  
28       themselves to up land^-- not alighting in  
29       the meadows--& like a snow storm  
30       they come rushing down from the north  
31               The extremities of the wings are black while  
32       the parts next their bodies are black.  
33               The are commonly abundant now  
34               See a shrike on a dead pine at the Cliffs

---

<sup>196</sup>The "S" is overwritten or reformed.

<sup>197</sup>Possibly "at".

<sup>198</sup>"(long struggling)" is either struck out or underlined in pencil.



1           The p. pines have not done falling--  
2 considerable having fallen on the snow

3           The river meadows--where they were  
4 not cut--are conspicuous brown-straw-  
5 colored now--in the sun almost a  
6 true straw color-- November lingers still there.

7           I should like to know where all those snow birds  
8 will roost to-night--for they will probably roost  
9 together & what havoc an owl might make  
10                    {Mellvin} tells me that he saw a thousand  
11 among them! feeding a long time in the Great meadows--he  
12           thinks on the seeds of the wool grass--!!about same time

13                           Dec. 13th

14           Pm to Walden

15           There is a fine mizzling rain--which rests in //  
16 small drops on your coat--but on most surfaces  
17 is turning to a glaze. Yet it is not cold enough  
18 for gloves even--& I think that the freezing may  
19 be owing to the fineness of the rain--& that  
20 if it should rain much harder--even though  
21 it were colder--it would not freeze to what  
22 it fell on-- It freezes on the RR. rails when  
23 it does not on the wooden sleepers. Already I  
24 begin to see on the storm side of every twig &  
25 culm a white-glaze (reflecting the snow or  
26 sky) rhyming with the vegetable core--. And  
27 on those fine grass heads which are bent  
28 over in the path--the fine dewy-like drops  
29 are frozen separately like a string of beads  
30 --being not yet run together. There is little  
31 if any wind--& the fine rain is visible only

1 against a dark ground.

2 There is not so much ice in Walden as  
3 //on the 11th

4 A damp day brings out the color of oak  
5 leaves--somewhat as of lichens. They  
6 are of a brighter & deeper leather color--  
7 richer & more wholesome--hanging more  
8 straightly down than ever-- They look peculiarly  
9 {clean}<sup>199</sup> & wholesome--their tint brought  
10 out--& their lobes more flattened out--  
11 & they show to great advantage--{three}<sup>200</sup>  
12 trees hanging still with leather-colored  
13 leaves in this mizzling rain--seen against  
14 the misty sky. They are again as it were  
15 full-veined with some kind of brown sap.

16 Dec. 14th

17 I see at Derby's shop a barred owl

18 //Strix nebulosa taken in the woods

19 west of the factory on the 11th--found  
20 (with its wing broke) by a wood chopper--  
21 It measures about 3 1/2 feet in { }  
22 extent--X 18 to 20 inches long--or  
23 nearly the same as the cat owl--but  
24 is small--& without horns. It is  
25 very mild & quiet--bears handling  
26 perfectly well--& only snaps its bill  
27 with a loud sound at the sight of  
28 a cat or dog. It is ap. a female

---

<sup>199</sup>Possibly "clear".

<sup>200</sup>Possibly "these".

1 since its is large--& has white spots on  
2 the wings-- The claws are quite dark  
3 --rather than dark brown-color It hopped  
4 into the basin of the scales--& I was sur-  
5 prised to find that--it weighed only 1 lb &  
6 1 oz. It may be thin fleshed on ac. of  
7 its broken wing--but how light-bodied  
8 these fliers are! It has no yellow iris  
9 like the cat-owl--& has thin bristles about  
10 its yellow bill--which the other has not.  
11 It has a very smooth & handsome round  
12 head--a brownish-grey--

13 Solemnity is what they express--fit repre-  
14 sentatives of the night.

15 Dec. 18--58

16 Pm to Walden.

17 The pond is merely frozen a little about  
18 the edges-- I see various little fishes  
19 lurking under this {?} thin transparent  
20 ice close up to the edge or shore<sup>esp</sup> where  
21 the shore is flat--& water shoal--  
22 They are little shiners?? (with the dark longitu-  
23 dinal stripe.) about 1 1/2 inches long {in} perch  
24 & 1 pickerel about a foot long.  
25 They are all a peculiar rich brown color seen thus through {the}<sup>201</sup> ice--  
26 The love to get up as close to the  
27 shore as possible--& when you walk  
28 along you scare them out. I cast  
29 a stone on the ice over a perch 6 inches  
30 long thinking only to stun it--but

---

<sup>201</sup>Possibly "thin".

1 killed it so. The ice is about 1 inch  
2 thick. I notice that it is firmly  
3 frozen to the shore--so that there  
4 is no rise and fall as when it was water  
5 --or at least nothing equal to that--  
6 but the ice has been cracked with  
7 a great many parallel cracks  
8 6 inches to a foot from the shore-- Yet  
9 ap. no water has oozed out {there}<sup>202</sup>.

10 Minot tells how he used to love to walk  
11 through swamps where great white  
12 pines grew & hear the wind sough in  
13 their tops. He recalls this now as he crouches  
14 over his stove--but he adds that it was  
15 dangerous, for even a small dead limb  
16 broken off by the wind & falling from such  
17 a height would kill a man at once

18 Dec 20th

19 // Walden is frozen over--except 2 small  
20 spots--less than 1/2 acre in all, in middle.

21 Dec 22

22 Pm to Walden-- I see in the cut near  
23 the shanty-site quite a flock of F.  
24 hiemalis & goldfinches together on the  
25 //// snow & weeds & ground. Hear the well  
26 known {mew} & watery twitter of the  
27 last & the drier chilt chilt of the former.  
28 These burning yellow birds--with  
29

---

<sup>202</sup>Possibly "these".

1 a little black & white on their coat flaps,  
2 look warm above the snow-- There  
3 maybe 30 goldfinches--very brisk & pretty  
4 tame. They hang head downwards on the  
5 weeds-- I hear of their coming to {pick}<sup>203</sup> sun-  
6 flowers seeds in Melvin's garden these days.

7 The pond is no more frozen than on  
8 the 20th I see where a rabbit has  
9 happened across it in the slosh last night  
10 --making a track larger than a man's ordinarily  
11 is--

12 Dec 23

13 Pm to Eddy Bridge

14 NO  
15 Colder last night--Walden undoubtedly frozen #  
16 at last--what was left to freeze.

17 See a shrike on the top of an oak-- //  
18 It sits still pluming itself. At first  
19 when it was flying I thought it a hairy  
20 woodpecker.

21 How perfectly at home the musquash  
22 is on the river! And then there is an  
23 abundance of clams--a whole-  
24 some diet for him, to be had for the  
25 diving for them. I do not know that  
26 he has any competition in this chase  
27 unless it is an occasional otter.

28 The clams are a sizeable fish--&  
29 in time of scarcity would not be con-  
30 temptible food for man.

---

<sup>203</sup>Possibly "peck"

1                                   Dec 24  
2                    Those 2 places in middle of Walden  
3 //  
4                    not frozen over yet! Though it was  
5                    quite cold last night  
6                    See another shrike this pm--the  
7 //  
8                    4th this winter! It looks much smaller  
9                    than a jay.

10                                   Dec 25  
11                    Pm up river on ice to FH. Pond  
12                    & across to Walden--  
13                    The ground is still for the most part  
14                    bare. Such a December is at least  
15                    as hard a month to get thro' as  
16                    November-- You come near eating your  
17                    heart now--.  
18                    {There is}<sup>204</sup> a good deal of brown or  
19                    dark straw color in the landscape  
20                    now--esp. in the meadows--where  
21                    the ranker grasses--many of them  
22                    un cut--still stand. They are bleached  
23                    a shade or 2 lighter-- Looking from  
24                    the sun there is a good deal of warm  
25                    sun light in them. I see where one  
26                    farmer has been getting this withered  
27                    sedge on the ice within a day or 2  
28                    for litter, in a meadow which had  
29                    not been cut-- Of course, he could not  
30                    cut very close.  
31                    The ice on the river is about half-

---

<sup>204</sup>A modified or struck out letter appears between what could be "There" and "is".

1 covered with light snow--it being drifted  
2 thus as usual by the wind (On Walden  
3 however, which is more sheltered the ice  
4 is uniformly covered--& white) I go  
5 running & sliding from one such snow-patch  
6 to another. It is easiest walking on the  
7 snow which gives a hold to my feet--  
8 --but I walk feebly on the ice-- It is so  
9 rough that it is poor sliding withal.

10 I see in the thin snow along by the  
11 button bushes & willows just this side  
12 of the Hubbard bridge, a new track  
13 as if made by  
14 to me--looking {even}<sup>205</sup> somewhat ~~like~~<sup>like</sup> a row  
15 of large rain drops--but it is the track  
16 of some small animal. The separate  
17 tracks are at most 5/8 inch in diameter  
18 nearly round-- --& 1 3/4 to 2 inches apart  
19 varying perhaps 1/2 inches from a straight  
20 line--thus {drawing} Sometimes  
21 they are 3 or 4 inches apart. The size  
22 is but little larger than that of  
23 a mouse--but it is never {drawing} thus, or  
24 like a mouse. Goodwin to whom I described  
25 it--did not know what it could be.

26 -- The sun getting low now--say at 3 1/2  
27 I see the ice green SE--

28 Goodwin says that he once heard  
29 a partridge strike a twig or limb in the  
30 woods as she flew, so that she fell

---

<sup>205</sup>Possibly "ever".

1 & he secured her.

2           Going across to Walden--I see that  
3 the fuzzy-purple wood grass--is now  
4 bleached to a dark straw color--without any  
5 purple.

6           I notice that a fox has taken pretty much  
7 my own course--along the Andromeda ponds.  
8 The sedge which grows in tufts 18 or  
9 20 inches high there--is generally recurving  
10 thus {drawing} {drawing}

11           I see that the shiners which Goodwin  
12 is using for bait today--have no longitu-  
13 dinal dark bar--or line on their sides--such  
14 as those {minnows}<sup>206</sup> of the 11th & 18th ult  
15 had. Yet I thought that by the position  
16 of their fins &c the latter could not be {like}<sup>207</sup>  
17 banded minnow.

18 //       Walden at length skimmed over last  
19 night.--i.e, the 2 holes that remained open.  
20 One was very near the middle & deepest  
21 part--the other bet. that & the RR.

22           Now that the sun is setting all its  
23 light seems to glance over the snow  
24 clad pond--& strike the rocky shore under  
25 the pitch pines at the NE end-- Though  
26 the bare rocky shore there is only a foot  
27 or a foot & 1/2 high as I look--it  
28 reflects so much light that the rocks

---

<sup>206</sup>The letters of this word have been reformed or overwritten--somewhat illegible.

<sup>207</sup>Possibly "the" with a long t-cross.



1 are singularly distinct--as if the hound  
2 showed its teeth.

3 I staid<sup>208</sup> later to hear the pond crack  
4 --but it did not much. How full  
5 of soft pure light the western sky  
6 now--after sunset! I love to see  
7 the outlines of the pines against it.  
8 Unless you watch it you do not know  
9 when the sun goes down. It is like  
10 a candle extinguished without smoke.  
11 A{moment} ago you saw that glittering  
12 orb amid the dry oak leaves in the ho-  
13 rizon--& now you can detect no trace  
14 of it. In a pensive mood I enjoy  
15 the complexion of the winter sky at  
16 this hour.

17 Those small {sphagneous} mts in the Andromeda  
18 ponds are grotesque things. Being frozen  
19 they bear--me up like moss-clad rocks--  
20 & make it easy getting thro' the water-  
21 brush.

22 But for all voice in that serene hour  
23 --I hear an owl hoot-- How glad  
24 I am to hear him--rather than {the}<sup>209</sup>  
25 most eloquent man of the age!

26 I saw afar days ago--the ground  
27 under a swamp white oak in the river meadow  
28 quite strewn with brown dry galls about  
29 as big as a pea--& quite round--like a  
30 small fruit which had fallen from it.

---

<sup>208</sup>Possibly "stand".

<sup>209</sup>Reformed letters in this word.

1                                   Dec. 26th  
2                   Pm to Jenny Dugan's--  
3                   I walk over the meadow above RR  
4                   bridge--where the withered grass rises  
5                   above the ice--the river being low-- I notice  
6                   that water has oozed out over the edge  
7                   of this ice or next the meadows edge on  
8                   the west--not having come from the  
9                   river but evidently from springs in the  
10                  bank-- This thin water is turned to a slush  
11                  of crystals--as thick as mortar nearly--&  
12                  will soon be solid ice.

13                  Call at a farmers this Sunday Pm where  
14                  I surprise the well-to-do masters of the  
15                  house--lounging in very ragged clothes--(for  
16                  which they think it necessary to apologize)  
17                  and one of them is busying laying the supper-  
18                  table (at which he invites me to sit down  
19                  at last) bringing up cold {meat}<sup>210</sup> from  
20                  the cellar--& a lump of butter on the end  
21                  of his knife--& making of the tea--by the  
22                  time his {mother}<sup>211</sup> gets home from church--  
23                  Thus sincere & homely, as I am glad to  
24                  know, is the actual life of these New-  
25                  England men--wearing rags indoors  
26                  there, which would disgrace a beggar--  
27                  (and are not beggars {&} paupers  
28                  they who could be disgraced so) & doing  
29                  the indispensable work however humble

---

<sup>210</sup>Possibly "meats".

<sup>211</sup>Possibly "brother".

1 How much better & more humane it was  
2 than if they had imported & set up among  
3 their penates a headless torso from the  
4 ruins of Ireland! I am glad to find  
5 that our New England life has a  
6 genuine humane core to it--that in-  
7 side after all there is so little pretense  
8 & brag. Better than that methinks is  
9 the hard drinking & quarreling which we  
10 must allow is not uncommon there.  
11 The middle aged son sits there in the  
12 old unpainted house--in a ragged coat  
13 & helps his old mother about her work--  
14 when the field does not demand him.

15 Dec 27th

16 Talk of fate! How little one can know  
17 what is fated to another! what he can  
18 do & what he can not do. I doubt whether  
19 one can give or receive any very pertinent  
20 advise. In all important crises one can only  
21 consult his Genius-- Though he {was}<sup>212</sup> the  
22 most shiftless & craziest of mortals, if  
23 {he}<sup>213</sup> still recognizes that he has any Genius  
24 to consult, none may presume to go between  
25 him & her. They, methinks, are poor stuff--&  
26 creatures of a miserable fate who can  
27 be advised & persuaded in very important  
28 steps. Show me a man who consults  
29 his genius, & you have shown me a  
30 man who cannot be advised.

---

<sup>212</sup>Possibly "were".

<sup>213</sup>Marks above the letters in this word make it difficult to be sure of the letters.

1 You may know what a thing costs or  
2 is worth to you, you can never know  
3 what it costs--or is worth to me.

4 All the community may scream because  
5 one man is born who will not do as  
6 it does--who will not conform--  
7 because conformity to him is death. He  
8 is so constituted. They know nothing about  
9 his case-- They are fools when they presume  
10 to advise%<sup>him</sup>%. The man of genius knows what  
11 he is driving at--nobody else knows--  
12 --& he alone knows when something comes  
13 between him & his object.

15 In the course of generations however men  
16 will excuse you for not doing as they do--  
17 if you will bring enough to pass in your  
18 own way.

19 Dec 28th

20 Pm to Walden--

21 The earth is bare. I walk about  
22 the pond looking at the shores--since  
23 I have not paddled about it much of  
24 late years-- What a grand place for  
25 a promenade! Methinks it has not  
26 been so low for 10 years & many alders  
27 &c are {left}<sup>214</sup> dead on its brink. The high-  
28 blue berry appears to bear this position--  
29 alternate wet & dry--as well as any  
30 shrub or tree-- I see winter berries still abundant  
31 // in one blue<sup>215</sup>

---

<sup>214</sup>Possibly "half".

<sup>215</sup>This line is squeezed in at bottom of page.

1           That rocky shore under the P. pines  
2    which so reflect the light, is only 3 feet  
3    wide X 1 foot high--yet there even to day  
4    the ice is melted close to the edge--and just  
5    off this shore the pickerel are most abundant.  
6                   & sunny  
7    This is the warm^ side to which any one--many  
8    bird or quadruped would soonest resort in  
9    cool weather-- I notice a few chicadees  
10                   in the sun  
11    there in the edge of the pines--^lispig  
12    & twittering cheerfully to one another  
13    with a reference to me I think--the  
14                   one a little further off utters the phebe note  
15    cunning & innocent little birds.^There  
16    is a foot more or less of clean open water  
17    at the edge here--& {seen of}<sup>216</sup> this one  
18    of these birds hops down as if glad to  
19    find any open water at this season--& after  
20    drinking--it stands in the water on  
21    a stone up to its belly--& dips its head &  
22    flirts the water about vigorously giving  
23    itself a good washing. I had not  
24    suspected this at this season. No fear  
25    that it will catch cold.  
26           The ice cracks suddenly--with a shivering  
27    jar--like crockery--or the brittlest material  
28    --such as it is. And I notice as I sit here  
29    at this open edge--that each time the  
30    ice cracks--though it may be a good  
31    distance off toward the middle, the water here  
32    is very much agitated-- The ice is about  
33    {6}<sup>217</sup> inches thick.

---

<sup>216</sup>Possibly "seeing"; however, a space appears in the middle of the word.

<sup>217</sup>Possibly "5".

1           Aunt Jane says that she was born  
2   on Christmas day--& they called her a  
3   Christmas gift--& remembers hearing  
4   that her aunt Hannah {Orrock} was  
5   so disconcerted by the event that she  
6   threw all the spoons out-doors, when  
7   she had washed them, or with the dish water.

8           Father says that he & his sisters (except  
9   Elizabeth) were born in Richmond Street  
10   Boston--between Salem & Hanover streets--  
11   on the spot where a bethel now stands--on  
12        %They had milk of a neighbor who used to drive his cows to & from the%  
13   the left hand going from Hanover street.  
14        %common every day.%  
15                    Dec 29th

16           Pm Skate to Israel Rice's--  
17   I think more of skates than of the horse or  
18   locomotive as annihilators of distance,  
19   for while I am getting along with the  
20   speed of the horse--I have at the same  
21   time the satisfactions of the horse & his  
22   rider--& far more adventure & variety  
23   than if I were riding. We never ceased  
24   to be surprised when we observe how swiftly  
25   the skater glides along. Just compare  
26   him with one walking or running. The  
27   walker is but a snail in comparison--  
28   and the runner gives up the contest  
29   after a few rods. The skater can afford  
30   to follow all the windings of a stream  
31   & yet soon leaves far behind & out of

1 sight, the walker who cuts across-- Distance  
2 is hardly an obstacle to him.  
3 I observe that my ordinary track  
4 like this {drawing}  
5 the strokes being 7 to 10 feet long  
6 The new stroke is 18 or 20 inches one side of the old--  
7 The briskest walkers appear to be sta-  
8 tionary to the skater-- %The skater has wings--balance to%  
9 %his feet--%  
10 Moreover, you have such perfect control of  
11 your feet--that you can take advantage  
12 of the narrowest & most winding & sloping  
13 bridge of ice=in order to pass between the button  
14 bushes & the open stream--or under a bridge on  
15 a narrow shelf--where the walker cannot  
16 go at all. You can glide securely within  
17 an inch of destruction on this { }<sup>218</sup> the most  
18 slippery of surfaces--more securely than you  
19 could walk there perhaps on any other material.  
20 You can pursue swiftly the most intricate  
21 & winding path--even leaping obstacles'  
22 which suddenly present themselves.  
23 I saw on the ice off Pole brook  
24 a small caterpillar curled up as usual  
25 (over the middle of the river)--but wholly //  
26 a light yellow brown.  
27 Just above S entrance to Farrar  
28 Cut--a large hornets' next 30 feet  
29 high in a maple over the river--  
30 Heavy Haynes was fishing 1/4 of a  
31 mile this side of Hubbards Bridge  
32

---

<sup>218</sup>A vertical stroke appears between "this" and "the"; possibly "&".

1 He had caught a pickerel--which  
2 the man who weighed it told me (he  
3 was ap. also {the}<sup>219</sup> of Wm Wheelers--& I saw  
4 the fish at the house where it was weighed  
5 4 lbs & 3 oz. It was 26 inches long.

6 It was a very handsome fish-- Dark  
7 yellow & brown on the sides  
8 brown above ^becoming at length almost  
9 a clean golden yellow low down--with  
10 a white abdomen--& reddish fins.  
11 They are handsome fellows--both the  
12 pikes in the water & tigers in the jungle.  
13 The shiner & the red-finned {minow} (a dace)  
14 are the favorite bait for them.

15 What tragedies are enacted under this  
16 dumb icy platform--in the fields! What  
17 an anxious & adventurous life the small  
18 fishes must live--liable at any moment  
19 to be swallowed by the larger-- No fish  
20 of moderate size can go sculling along  
21 safely in any part of the stream--but  
22 suddenly there may come rushing out this  
23 jungle or that some greedy monster &  
24 gulp it down-- Parent fishes--if they  
25 care for their offspring--how can they  
26 trust them abroad out of their sight--  
27 It takes so many young fishes a week  
28 to fill the maw of this large one--

29 And the large ones! Heavy Haynes &  
30 {company} are lying in wait for them.

---

<sup>219</sup>Possibly "that".



1 Jan 2d  
2 Pm to Cliffs & Walden--  
3 Going up the hill thro' Stow's young oak wood-  
4 land--I listen to the sharp dry rustle of the  
5 withered oak leaves-- This is the voice of the  
6 wood now. It would be comparatively still  
7 respects  
8 & more dreary here in other ~~accounts~~ if  
9 it were not for these leaves that hold on--  
10 It sounds like the roar of the sea--& is  
11 enlivening & inspiriting like that--suggesting  
12 how all the land is sea coast to the  
13 aerial ocean-- It is the sound of the  
14 the surf of an unseen Ocean  
15 surf--^billows of air breaking in the  
16 forest--like water on itself or on sand  
17 & rocks-- It rises & falls--swells &  
18 dies away--with agreeable alternation  
19 as the sea-surf does. Perhaps, the  
20 {landsman}<sup>220</sup> can foretell a storm by  
21 it. It is remarkable how universal  
22 these grand murmurs are--these back-  
23 grounds of sound--the surf--the wind  
24 in the forest--water falls--&c which  
25 yet to the ear & in their origins are  
26 essentially one voice--the Earth  
27 The breathing or snoring of the creature  
28 voice-- ^The earth is our ship--& this is  
29 the sound of the wind in her rigging as we  
30 sail. Just as the inhabitant of Cape  
31 Cod hears the surf ever breaking on its  
32 shores-- So we countrymen hear this

---

<sup>220</sup>The second "a" in what appears to be "landsman" is unclear.

1 kindred surf on the leaves of the forests  
2           Regarded as a voice--though it is not  
3 articulate--as our articulate sounds  
4           [but this is nearer a consonant sound]<sup>221</sup>  
5 are divided into (vowels)^--labials--dentals  
6 palatals--sibilants--mutes--aspirates  
7 &c so this may be called folial or  
8 frondal--produced by air driven against  
9 the leaves & comes nearest to our sibilants  
10 or aspirate.

11           The color of young oaks of different  
12 species is still distinct-but more faded  
13 & blended--becoming a more {u}niform  
14 brown.  
15                    %V {Sept)%  
16           Michaux %^%said that white oaks oaks  
17 would be distinguished by their retaining  
18 their leaves in the winter--but as far as  
19 my observation goes they cannot be  
20 so distinguished-- All {our} large oaks  
21 may retain a few leaves at the base of  
22 the lower limbs & about their trunks--  
23 though only a few--& the white o. {scarcely}  
24 more than the others--while the same  
25 trees when young are all alike thickly  
26 clothed in the winter, but the leaves  
27 of the white oaks are the most withered  
28 & shrivelled of them all.

29           Why do young oaks retain their leaves  
30 while old ones--shed them--why do they die  
31 on the stem, having some life at the base

---

<sup>221</sup>Brackets by T.

1       <sup>222</sup>in the one case--while they wither through  
2       at the base in the other case--? Is it be-  
3       cause in the former case they have more  
4       life sap & vigor?

5               There being some snow on the ground I  
6       can easily distinguish the forest on the mts  
7       (the Peterboro' Hills &c) and tell which are forested,  
8       those parts & those mts being dark like  
9       a shadow-- I cannot distinguish the forest  
10      thus far in the summer--

11              The white pines &c as I look down on them  
12      from this hill--are now darker, as be-  
13      comes the sterner seasons--like a frost bitten  
14      apple--a somber green--

15              When I hear the hypercritical quarrelling  
16      about grammar & style--the position of  
17      the particles &c &c--stretching or contracting  
18      every speaker to certain rules of theirs  
19      --Mr Webster perhaps not having spoken  
20      according to Mr. Kirkham's rule--I  
21      see that they forget that the first re-  
22      quisite & rule is that expression shall  
23      be vital--& natural--as much as the  
24      voice of a brute--or an interjection--first  
25      of all mother tongue--& last of all  
26      artificial or father tongue. Essentially  
27      your truest poetic sentence is as free  
28      & lawless as a lamb's bleat-- The gram-  
29      marian is often one who can neither cry  
30      nor laugh--yet thinks that he can

---

<sup>222</sup>Approximately sixteen lines of faint, indecipherable writing in T.'s hand appears on a small separate piece of paper that has been inserted between this page and the preceding page. This text has not been transcribed.

1 express human emotions.

2           So the posture masters tell you how you  
3 shall walk--turning your toes out,  
4 perhaps, excessively--but so the beautiful  
5 walkers are not made.

6           Mediaeval or law Latin seems to have  
7 invented the word forest--not being satis-  
8 fied with silva--nemus &c Webster  
9 makes it from the same root "L. foris,  
10 Fr. hors, & the Saxon faran, to go, to depart."  
11 -- --The allied words "all express distance from  
12 cities & civilization, & are from roots expressing  
13 departure or wandering"--as if this newer  
14 term were needed to describe those strange wild  
15 woods furthest from the centers of civilization.

16           The earth--where quite bare--is now  
17 & for 5 or 6 weeks--russet without any  
18 lively red--not golden russet.

19           I notice on the top of the Cliffs that the  
20 extremities of the smooth sumac are generally  
21 dead & withered--while those of the  
22           which are so downy  
23 staghorn ^are alive. Is this a prevailing  
24 difference? Which extends furthest north?

25           The outside bark scales of some large  
26 p. pines in the midst of the woods having  
27 dropt off give a peculiar flatness  
28 to the ridges as if it had been shaved  
29 or scraped.

30           Minot says that a fox will lead  
31 a dog onto thin{—}<sup>223</sup> ice in order that

---

<sup>223</sup>Struck out, indecipherable letters appear at the end of "thin"; possibly formerly "think".

1 he may get in. Tells of Jake Lakin losing  
2 a hound so--which went under the ice  
3 & was drowned below the {holt}--was found  
4 afterward by Sted. Buttrick--his collar taken  
5 off & given to Lakin. They used to cross  
6 the river there {on-}<sup>224</sup> the ice--going to market  
7 formerly.

8 Looking from the SW side of Walden toward  
9 Heywoods Peak before sunset--the brown  
10 light on the oak leaves is almost dazzling.

11 Jan 3d

12 Having had rain within a few days--on the 4 or  
13 5 inches of snow there was--making slosh of it--  
14 without melting the hard frozen ground--the slosh  
15 & surface water have now frozen making  
16 it pretty good skating in the roads generally--  
17 I walked to Acton--but might have skated  
18 well 1/2 or 2/3 the way.

19 Many of the clusters {of}<sup>225</sup> the smooth sumac are  
20 very  
21 now a ^dark crimson

22 Jan 4th

23 A NE snow storm--or rather a N snow //  
24 storm-- very hard to face--

25 Pm to Walden in it. It snow's very  
26 hard--driving along almost horizontally--  
27 falling but a foot or 2 in a rod-- Nobody is  
28 in the street--or thinks going out  
29 far except on important business = most  
30 roads are trackless-- The snow may be  
31 now 15 to 18 inches deep-- As I go along

---

<sup>224</sup>The final letter of this word has been struck out.

<sup>225</sup>Possibly "by".

1 the causeway--I find it is one thing to go  
2 south or from the wind--another to face it  
3 I can see through the storm--a house or  
4 large tree only 1/4 of a mile--beyond all  
5 Woods-- & single trees seen through this air are all dark or black  
6 is white falling snow= ^The surface of  
7 the snow is in great waves whose ridges  
8 run from E to W about a rod apart or  
9 generally less--say 10 feet--low & gentle  
10 swells-- The {drawing}<sup>226</sup> small p white pines  
11 stand thus --- {drawing}<sup>227</sup> the lower branches  
12 loaded & bent down to the ground  
13 while the upper are commonly  
14 free & erect  
15 But the p. pines near thrush alley are  
16 the most interesting objects--for they hold much  
17 more snow-- The snow lodges on their plumes  
18 & bending them down, it accumulates more  
19 & more on the angle generally at the base  
20 of the several plumes--in little conical  
21 heaps shaped somewhat like this {drawing}<sup>228</sup>  
22 or {drawing} {drawing} differing ac. to the  
23 number & position of the plumes-- They  
24 look as if a child had stuck up its elbow  
25 under a white sheet-- Some small  
26 ones stand stiffly {upright}<sup>229</sup> {drawing}<sup>230</sup> like a  
27 soldiers plume--  
28  
29 Several trees will be so fallen

---

<sup>226</sup>Drawing extends one line above and one line below this line.

<sup>227</sup>Drawing extends three lines below this line.

<sup>228</sup>Drawing extends two lines below this line.

<sup>229</sup>Possibly "uptight".

<sup>230</sup>Drawing extends slightly above this line and one the line below this line.

1 together & intermingled--that you do not  
2 see them distinctly.

3 At the same time--the lowermost--small  
4 horizontal  
5 black & dead ^limbs--near the ground where  
6 there is least wind & jar--(these almost  
7 exclusively--say for 6 or 8 feet up--are  
8 covered with upright walls of snow 5 or  
9 6 times their own height--& zig zagging  
10 with them like the wall of china--or like  
11 great white caterpillars they lie along  
12 them--these snowy sloths--or rather  
13 it is ~~an~~ labyrinth ~~of~~ a sort of cob-  
14 web--of {broad} white--belts over the air--  
15 Only a dim twilight struggles through  
16 to this lower region--& the sight of these  
17 snowy walls or labyrinths suggests a  
18 rare stillness--freedom from wind & jar--  
19 If you try to stoop & wind your way {there}<sup>231</sup>  
20 you get your neck & ears full of snow--

21 {drawing}<sup>232</sup> I cant draw it--

22 That is, for each dead  
23 pine branch you have a thin flat  
24 branch of snow resting on it--an exaggeration  
25 of the former-- It is a still white labyrinth  
26 of snowy purity--& you can look far into  
27 its recesses under the green & snowy canopy  
28 --a labyrinth of which perchance a rabbit  
29 may have the clue.

30 I notice one p. pine about 3 feet high  
31 so snowed up & its branches all drooping it looked

---

<sup>231</sup>Possibly "their".

<sup>232</sup>This drawing appears partially in the left margin and extends down two lines below this line.

1       like a draped statue or a white-ant hill--  
2       {drawing} In the woods the snow is often 2 feet  
3       deep--& you must walk at a very  
4       deliberate pace--if you would keep it up--  
5       Still--the withered hoary golden rods  
6       (Chief. S. nemoralis) & asters (perhaps oftenest  
7       A dumosus) rise above the snow here & there  
8       gray weeds sufficiently dry & everlasting-- The  
9       oak leaves--esp. the black oak leaves  
10      are very agreeable & wholesome colors--  
11      --the deeper the snow--the more universal  
12      the whiteness--the more agreeable is this  
13      color.  
14             Your breath causes the snow to turn to ice  
15      in your beard--a shaggy mass of icicles it  
16      it becomes--which makes you look--like  
17      a man from the extreme north.  
18             When it grew late--the air being thick  
19      & unelastic in this storm--I mistook the  
20      distant sound of the locomotive whistle for  
21      the hoot of an owl-- It was quite like it.  
22             I see nevertheless a few tree sparrows  
23      about--looking chubbier than ever--their  
24      feathers being puffed up--& flitting & {twittering}<sup>233</sup>  
25      merrily along the fence--  
26             Turning north--the large rather moist  
27      flakes actually put out your eyes  
28      & you must manage to look through the  
29      merest crack.  
30             Even in the winds of the storm--I see {when}<sup>234</sup>

---

<sup>233</sup>Possibly "twitting".

<sup>234</sup>Possibly "where".



1 great clouds of fine snow roll down the  
2 woodside--the wind shaking the snow from  
3 the trees-- It looks like the vapor from the  
4 locomotive.

5 Jan 5th

6 As I ~~see~~ go over the causeway near the RR  
7 bridge--I hear a fine busy twitter & looking  
8 up see a nuthatch--hoping along & about  
9 a swamp white oak branch inspecting every  
10 side of it--& as readily hanging head-  
11 downwards, as standing upright--and then  
12 it utters a distinct gnah as if to attract  
13 a companion-- Indeed that other  
14 finer twitter seemed designed to keep  
15 some companion in tow--or else it was  
16 like a very busy man talking to him-  
17 self. The companion was a single  
18 chickadee--which lisped 6 or 8 feet  
19 off-- There were perhaps no other  
20 birds than these 2 within a quarter  
21 of a mile-- And when the nuthatch  
22 flitted to another tree 2 rods off the  
23 chickadee unfailingly followed.

24 Jan 6th

25 Pm to M. Miles--

26 Near Nut Meadow Brook on the  
27 Irving Miles Road--I see a flock of  
28 snow buntings. They are feeding  
29 exclusively on that ragged weed which

1 I take to be Roman worm wood--  
2 Their tracks--where they sink in the snow  
3 are very long--i.e. have a very long  
4 heel-- thus {drawing}  
5 or sometimes almost in a single  
6 straight line. They made water  
7 where they went-- sharp rippling like a  
8 vibrating spring. They had run about  
9 to every such such<sup>235</sup>-- leaving distinct tracks  
10 raying from & to them while the snow  
11 immediately about the seed was so tracked  
12 & pecked where the seeds fell, that  
13 no track was distinct.  
14 {drawing}  
15 %& much more tracked up%<sup>236</sup>  
16 Miles had hanging in his barn  
17 a little ow--(strix Acadia<sup>237</sup>) which  
18 he caught alive with his hands about  
19 a week ago-- He had had freed it  
20 to eat--but it died. It was a funny  
21 little brown bird--spotted with white  
22 7 1/2 inches long to the end of the tail--or

---

<sup>235</sup>possible "rush"

<sup>236</sup>possibly a caption for drawing

<sup>237</sup>"Acadia" altered from "acadia"

1 8 to the end of the claws--x 19 in alar extent  
2 --but not so long by considerable as a  
3 robin though much stouter This one  
4 %Nuttall says 3%  
5 had 3 (not 2)%^% white bars on its tail--but  
6 no noticeable white at the tip. Its curving  
7 feet were feathered quite to the extremity  
8 (or tawny white)  
9 of the toes--looking like whitish ^ mice--or  
10 as when one pulls stockings over his boots.  
11 As usual the white spots on the upper sides of the  
12 wings are smaller & a more distinct white--while  
13 those beneath are much larger but a subdued  
14 satiny white-- Even a bird's wing has an  
15 upper & under side--& the last admits  
16 only of more subdued & tender colors--

17 Jan 9th 59<sup>238</sup>

18 At Sundown to Walden--  
19 Standing in the middle of Walden I  
20 see with perfect distinctness the form &  
21 outlines of the low hills which surround it  
22 though they are wooded  
23 ^ because they are quite white, being covered  
24 with snow-- While the woods are for  
25 the most part bare or very thin leaved.  
26 I see thus the outline of the hills 8 or  
27 10 rods back through the trees--<sup>239</sup>  
28 {drawing} This I can never  
29 do in the summer when the leaves are  
30 thick & the ground is nearly the same  
31 color with them. These white hills are  
32 now seen as through a veil of stems

---

<sup>238</sup>59: altered from "58"; downstroke added to lower part of "8" and top of "8" crossed out

<sup>239</sup>followed by stray mark

1 Immediately after the wood was cut off  
2 this outline of course was visible at all  
3 seasons--but the wood springing up  
4 again concealed it--& now the snow  
5 has come to reveal this lost outline.

6 The sun has been set some minutes  
7 & as I I stand on the pond looking westward  
8 toward the twilight sky--a soft <sup>satiny</sup> ^ light  
9 is reflected from the ice in flakes here &  
10 there like the light from the under side  
11 of a birds wing.

12 It is worth the while to stand here  
13 at this hour & look into the soft  
14 western sky--over the pines whose outlines  
15 are so rich & distinct against the clear  
16 sky. I ~~am~~ am inclined to measure  
17 the angle at which pine bough meets  
18 the stem. That soft--still--cream colored  
19 sky--seems the scene--the stage or field  
20 from some rare drama to be acted on--  
21 C. says the winter is the Sabbath of the  
22 year. The perfect winter days are cold  
23 but clear & bright

24 Jan 10th

25 Pm up Assabet to Sam Barretsts<sup>240</sup> Pond.

26 //Cold weather at least 8° this Am

27 This is much the coldest afternoon  
28 to bear as yet--but cold as it is--  
29 4 or 5°--at 3 pm-- I see as I go  
30

---

<sup>240</sup>second "ts" poss. mark on the copy, not manuscript

1 round the Island--much (steam or) vapor  
2 blowing {foam} & bare spaces in the river just below  
3 20 rods off. I see in the Island Wood  
4 where squirrels have dug up acorns in  
5 the snow--& frequently where they have  
6 eaten them on the trees & dropped the  
7 shells about on the snow.

8 Hemlock is still falling on the snow, like //  
9 the p. pine-- The swamp white oaks //  
10 ap. have fewer leaves--are less likely to have  
11 any leaves--even the small ones--than any  
12 oaks except the chinquapin methinks--  
13 Here is a whole wood of them above Pinxter  
14 swamp--which you may call bare.

15 Even the tawney(?) recent shoots of the  
16 black willow--where seen thickly & in  
17 the sun along the river--are a warm  
18 & interesting sight.

19 These gleaming birch & alder & other  
20 twigs--are a phenomenon still perfect-- //  
21 --that gossamer or cobweb like reflection--

22 The middle of the river where narrow  
23 as S side willow Island--is lifted up  
24 with a ridge considerably higher than  
25 on the sides-- & cracked broadly--  
26 The alder is one of the prettiest of trees &  
27 shrubs in the winter--it is evidently so  
28 full of life with its conspicuous pretty  
29 red catkins dangling from it on all  
30 sides-- It seems to dread the winter less

1 than other plants-- It has a certain hey-  
2 day--& cheery look--& less stiff than most  
3 & with more of the flexible grace of summer.  
4 With those dangling clusters of red catkins  
5 which it switches in the face of winter--  
6 it brags for all vegetation. It is not  
7 daunted by the cold--but hangs gracefully  
8 still over the frozen steam.

9 At Sam Barrett's Pond--where Joe  
10 //Brown is now getting his ice-- I think I  
11 see about 10 different freezings in ice  
12 some 15 or more inches thick--Perhaps  
13 the successive cold nights might be  
14 discovered recorded in each cake of ice.

15 See, returning, amid the Roman  
16 wormwood in front of the Monroe  
17 //place--by the river half a dozen gold-  
18 finches feeding just like the sparrows--  
19 How warm their yellow breasts look  
20 They utter the goldfinches watery twitter still.

21 I come across to the road S of  
22 the hill--to see the pink on the snow  
23 clad hill at sunset--

24 About half an hour before sunset  
25 this intensely clear cold eve--(thermometer  
26 at 5 6°) I observe all the sheets  
27 of ice (& they abound everywhere now  
28 in the fields) when I look from  
29 one side about at rt angle with the

1       suns rays--reflect a green light  
2       This is the case even when they are in the shade  
3       I walk back and forth in the road  
4       waiting to see the pink-- The windows  
5       on the skirts of the village reflect the  
6       setting sun--with intense brilliancy--a  
7       dazzling glitter--it is so cold-- stand  
8       ing thus on one side of the hill -- I  
9       begin to see a pink light reflected from the  
10      snow there about 15 minutes before  
11      the<sup>241</sup> sun sets-- This gradually deepens to  
12      purple & violet in some places--&  
13      the pink is very distinct--esp. when after  
14      looking at the simply white snow on  
15      other sides you turn your eyes to the  
16      hill. Even after all direct sun light  
17      is with drawn from the hill top, as well  
18      as from the valley in which you stand,  
19      you see, if you are prepared to discern  
20      it--a faint & delicate tinge of purple  
21      or violet there. This was in a very  
22      clear & cold evening when the thermometer  
23      was 6°--.

24             This is one of the phenomena of the winter  
25      sunset-- This distinct pink light reflected  
26      from the brows of snow clad hills on one side  
27      of you as you are facing the sun.

28             The cold rapidly increases & it is 14°--  
29      in the evening.

30             I hear the ground crack with a very loud

---

<sup>241</sup>possibly later revision

1 sound and a great jar in the evening & in  
2 the course of the night several times. It  
3 once  
4 is ^ as loud & heavy as the explosion of the  
5 Acton<sup>242</sup> powder mills-- This cracking is heard  
6 all over N. England at least this {night}.

7 Jan 11th

8 // at 6 Am 22° & how much more I know  
9 not--ours having gone into the bulb--but  
10 that is said to be the lowest.

11 Going to Boston to day--I find that the  
12 cracking of the ground last night is the  
13 subject of conversation in the cars--& that  
14 it was quite general-- I see many cracks  
15 in Cambridge & Concord: It would appear  
16 then that the ground cracks on the ad-  
17 vent of very severe cold weather-- I had  
18 not heard it before this winter. It was so  
19 when I went to Amherst a winter or 2 ago.<sup>243</sup>

20 Jan 12th

21 Mr Farmer brings me a hawk--which  
22 he thinks has caught 30 or 40 of his  
23 chickens since summer--for he has lost  
24 so many--& he has seen a hawk like this  
25 catch some of them-- Thinks he has  
26 a long time  
27 seen this same one sitting ^ upright on a  
28 tree high or low about his premises--&  
29 when it length a hen or this years  
30 chicken had strayed far from the rest  
31 it skimmed along & picked her up without

---

<sup>242</sup>Acton: altered from "acton"' "A" written over "a"

<sup>243</sup>In December, 1856 (the ground cracking anecdote on the 19th)



1 pausing & bore her off--the chicken not having  
2 seen him approaching. He found this caught  
3 by one leg & frozen to death in a trap which  
4 he had set for mink by a spring--&  
5 baited with fish.

6 This measures 19 x 42 inches & is ac. to Wilson  
7 & Nuttall--a young F. lineatus or red- //  
8 shouldered hawk-- It might as well be  
9 %Acc to {Bird} { }mine is the old bird%  
10 called red or rusty breasted hawk--%^%  
11 Nuttall says it lives on frogs--crayfish--  
12 &c--& does not go far N--not even to Mass.  
13 he thought, Its note Kee-oo. He never  
14 saw one soar--at least in winter.

15 Ac. to all accounts Wilson's F. Hiemalis is the  
16 old of this bird. for there is a remarkable  
17 diff. bet old & young.

18 Mine agrees with Wilsons F. lineatus  
19 or the young. Except that the greater  
20 wing coverts & 2ndaries are hardly what I  
21 should call "pale olive brown thickly spotted &c"  
22 --but rather dusky brown somewhat indistinctly  
23 barred with whitish (which is pure white on each  
24 edge of the feathers) & edged with rusty--  
25 that the shafts of the breast feathers are only dark  
26 brown--that the tail is not quite black  
27 but very dark brown--& is not "broadly tipped" with  
28 white, but only with 1/4 inch of it--vent  
29 not "pale ochre" but white--legs & feet  
30 hardly fine yellow--but dull greenish yellow--Femorals  
31 are bright rusty as the breast--

1           It differs from Wilson's Winter falcon  
2    --which is considered by Audubon & Brewer  
3    the same as the lineatus as not having  
4    what I should call a "tooth" in the upper  
5    mandible"-- --head sides of neck &c hardly  
6    "streaked with white"--above all prim-  
7    aries & exterior tail feathers not "brownish  
8    orange" & tail not "barred alternately  
9    with dark & pale brown", its inner vanes<sup>244</sup> &  
10   coverts not "white"--& what is very important,  
11   the breast & beneath is not "white".

12           Since Nuttall makes it a southern bird  
13   & it is not likely to come N in the winter, it  
14   would seem that it breeds here--

15           Farmer<sup>245</sup> says that he saw what he calls  
16   the common hen hawk--one soaring high  
17   with ap. a chicken in its claws--while  
18   a young hawk circled beneath--when  
19   former suddenly let drop the chicken--but  
20   the young failing to catch--he shot  
21   down like lightning & caught & bore off  
22   the falling chicken before it reached the  
23   earth.

24                           Jan 13th

25           The cold spell is over & here this morning  
26   is a fog or mist--the wind if there  
27   is any I think northerly--& there is built  
28   out horizontally on the N side of every twig  
29   //& other surface--a very remarkable sort  
30   of hoar frost--the ~~fro~~ crystalized<sup>246</sup> fog--

---

<sup>244</sup>vanes: altered from "varies"; interlined dot over "I" is canceled

<sup>245</sup>Farmer] altered from "F"

<sup>246</sup>crystalized: "t" is not crossed in ms

1       which is still increasing-- Mr Edwin Morton  
2       was telling me night before last of  
3       a similar phenomenon witness in Central N. York  
4       the fog of high lands or mts, crystalizing  
5       in this way & forming a white fringe or frost on  
6       the trees even to 1 1/2 inches. This is already  
7       full an inch deep on many trees & gets to  
8       be much more perhaps 1 1/2 even on some in the  
9       course of the day-- It is quite rare here,  
10      at least on this scale-- The mist lasts  
11      all this day--though it is far from warm  
12      (11°+ at 8 Am) & till noon on the 14th when  
13      it becomes rain--& all this time there is  
14      exceedingly little if any wind.

15             I go to the river this morning & walk up it to see  
16      the trees & bushes along it-- As the frost work  
17      --(which is not thin and transparent like ice--  
18      but white & snowlike--or between the distinctly leaf  
19      with veins--& a mere aggregation of snow--  
20      though you easily distinguish the distinct leaves)  
21      is built out N-ward from each surface--  
22      spreading at an angle of about 45°  
23      {drawing} ie some 20 odd each side {drawing}  
24      up the N.--you must stand  
25      on the N side & look south at the  
26      trees &c when they appear except the large  
27      limbs & trunk--wholly of snow or frost  
28      work--mere ghosts of trees--seen softly against  
29      the mist. for a back ground--

1 It is mist on mist.

2 The outline & character of each tree is  
3 more distinctly exhibited--being exaggerated--  
4 & you notice any peculiarity in the dis-  
5 position o the twigs-- Some elm twigs  
6 thus enlarged with snowy fingers are strikingly  
7 regular & handsome then--

8 In the case of most evergreens {drawing} it amounts  
9 to a very rich sugaring--being so firmly attached  
10 --the weeping willow--seems to weep with more  
11 remarkable & regular ease than ever--& stands  
12 still & white with thickened twigs--as if carved  
13 in white marble. as alabaster<sup>247</sup>

14 Those trees, like alders, which have not grown  
15 much the past year--which had short irregular  
16 twigs & the richest in effect. The end  
17 of each alder twig is recurved<sup>248</sup> where the drooping  
18 catkin is concealed--on one side you see  
19 the dark brown fruit--but on the N--that too  
20 is concealed--can<sup>249</sup> see about 1/4 of a  
21 mile through the mist & then later  
22 is is somewhat thinner the woods--The Pine  
23 woods at a distance are a dark blue  
24 color.

25 Jan 14th

26 The fog--frosts & the fog continue--Though  
27 considerable of the frostwork has fallen.

28 This forenoon I walk up the Assabet to  
29 see it-- The hemlocks are perhaps  
30

---

<sup>247</sup>as alabaster: possibly alabaster preceded by false start; possibly later revision

<sup>248</sup>recurved: possibly "secured"

<sup>249</sup>preceded by ink blot

1 a richer sight than any tree--such Christmas  
2 trees, thus sugared, as were never seen-- On  
3 side you see more or less greenness--but when  
4 you stand due -- they are unexpectedly white  
5 & rich.--so beautifully still--& when you  
6 look under them--you see some great  
7 rock, or rocks, all hoary with the same--  
8 and a finer frost on the very fine ^ dead hemlock  
9 twigs there & on hanging roots & twigs---  
10  
11 quite like the cobwebs in a grist mill  
12 & it implies a stillness like that  
13 {covered} with meal^--or it is like the lightest  
14 down glued on.

15 The birch for its outline & its numerous  
16 twigs is one use of the prettiest trees in this  
17 dress--

18 The fog turns to a fine rain at  
19 noon--& in the evening & night  
20 it produces a glaze which this //  
21 morning

22 Jan 15th  
23 is quite handsome. Instead of that  
24 soft white faery-like mantle of  
25 down--with which the trees were thickly  
26 powdered-- They are now cased in a  
27 coat of mail--of icy mail--built out  
28 in many cases about as far from the  
29 twig--with icy prominences. {drawing}  
30 {drawing} Birches, tree tops, &

1 especially slender twigged willows or  
2 osiers are bent over by it--as they  
3 were not by the snow white & light  
4 frost of yesterday & the day before--  
5 So that the character or expression of  
6 many trees & shrubs is wholly altered.  
7 I might not guess what the pollard  
8 willow seen at merricks shore, with  
9 twigs one or 2 years old--was--  
10 {drawing} instead of {drawing}  
11 //The fog still continues through, &<sup>250</sup>  
12 succeeding<sup>251</sup> to, the rain. The 3d day of  
13 fog. The thermometer at 7 1/2 or  
14 8 Am is at 33°+

15 Jan 16th

16 Pm to Walden & thence via Cassandra  
17 ponds to F. H. & down river--

18 There is still a good deal of ice on  
19 The N side of woods & in & about  
20 the sheltered swamp. As we go S-  
21 westward through the Cassandra hollows  
22 toward the declining sun-- They look  
23 successively--both by their form & color--  
24 like burnished silver shields--in the  
25 midst of which we walked--looking  
26 toward the ~~setting~~<sup>252</sup> sun-- The whole  
27 surface of the snow--the crusting over  
28 & of the ice--as yesterday--is rough

---

<sup>250</sup>through, &: flourish across all

<sup>251</sup>succeeding: altered from "sudceeding"; "c" written over "d"

<sup>252</sup>setting: possibly "glittering"

1 as if composed of hail stones half melted  
2 together {drawing}  
3 {drawing}  
4 This being the case, I noticed yesterday  
5 when walking on the river--that where there  
6 was (little or) no snow & this rough surface  
7 was accordingly dark--you might  
8 have thought that the ice was covered  
9 with cinders, from the innumerable black  
10 points reflecting the dark water-- My  
11 companion thought that cinders  
12 had fallen on that part of the ice  
13 The snow which 3 quarters conceals  
14 the cassandra--in these ponds--& every  
15 twig & trunk & blade of withered sedge  
16 is thus covered or cased with ice--  
17 and accordingly, as I have said, when  
18 you go facing the sun, the hollows look  
19 like a glittering shield set round with  
20 brilliants. That bent sedge in the  
21 midst of the shield--each particular  
22 blade of it being married to an icy  
23 wire 20 times its size at least

1 shines like polished silver rings or  
2 semicircles-- It must have been  
3 far more splendid here yesterday before  
4 any of the ice fell off--  
5 No wonder my English companion says that our scenery is more spirited than that of  
6 England.  
7 The snow crust is rough with the  
8 wreck of brilliants, under the trees are  
9 inch or 2 thick with them under many  
10 trees (where they last several days)

11 When, this evening, I took  
12 split very<sup>253</sup>  
13 a ^ hickory stick--which was ^ slightly  
14 charred or scorched--but quite hot,  
15 out of my stove-- I perceived a strong  
16 scent precisely like that of a burnt  
17 or roasted walnut.--as was natu-  
18 ral enough--

19 Jan 18

20 That wonderful frost work of  
21 the 13th & 14 was too rare to be neglected--  
22 succeeded as it was also by 2 days of  
23 glaze--but having company I lost  
24 half the advantage of it--

25 It was remarkable to have a fog for  
26 4 days in midwinter--without wind--  
27 We had just had sudden severe cold  
28 weather & I suspect that the fog  
29 was occasioned by a<sup>254</sup> warmer air--  
30 prob from the sea--coming into contact

---

<sup>253</sup>very: followed by canceled false start

<sup>254</sup>a: written over "an"



1 with our cold ice & snow clad earth--  
2 The hoar frost formed of the fog--was  
3 such a one as I do not remember on  
4 such a scale. Ap. as the fog was coarser  
5 & far<sup>255</sup> more abundant, it was whiter  
6 less delicate to examine & of far greater  
7 depth than a frost work formed of dew--  
8 We did not have an opportunity  
9 to see how it would look in the sun  
10 but seen against the mist or fog--  
11 it was too fair to be remembered--  
12 the trees were the ghosts of trees appearing  
13 in their winding sheets--an intenser white  
14 against the {comparitively} dusky ground  
15 of the fog. I rode to acton in the  
16 afternoon of the 13--& I remember--  
17 the wonderful avenue of these  
18 faery trees which everywhere overarched my  
19 road. The elms from their form &  
20 size were particularly beautiful-- As far  
21 as I observed the frost-work was deepest  
22 in the low grounds--esp. on the S alba  
23 there<sup>256</sup>-- I learn from the papers that  
24 this phenomenon prevailed all over  
25 this part of the country--& attracted  
26 the admiration of all. The trees  
27 on Boston Common were clad in  
28 the same snow white livery with our  
29 musketaquid trees--

---

<sup>255</sup>far: written over canceled more {so}

<sup>256</sup>there: written over "trees"



1 That glaze! I know what what it was  
2 by my own experience--it was the frozen breath  
3 of the earth upon its beard.

4 But to remember still that frostwork--I do  
5 not know why it should build out northward  
6 alone--white the twig is perfectly bare on the S side.  
7 Is not the phenomenon electrical? You  
8 might have guided yourself night or  
9 day by observing on which side the twigs  
10 it was-- Closely examined it is a coarse  
11 aggregation of thin flakes or leafets.

12 {drawing}<sup>257</sup>

13 Standing a little east or west of an  
14 evergreen--you saw considerable of  
15 its greenness--esp the 2nd day when much  
16 had fallen--but in each case successively  
17 you were agreeably disappointed when  
18 you arrived exactly north of the tree & saw  
19 it to best advantage.

20 Take the most rigid tree--the whole effect  
21 is ~~soft~~ peculiarly soft & spirit-like for there  
22 is no marked edge or outline-- How  
23 could you draw the outline of these snowy  
24 fingers seen against the fog without ex-  
25 aggeration. There is no more a boundary line  
26 or circumference that can be drawn, than a

---

<sup>257</sup>This is one drawing; captions: "Looking from E or W" and "Cross section of a twig"

1 diameter. Hardly could the N.E.  
2 Farmer drive to market under these  
3 trees without feeling that his  
4 sense of beauty was addressed--  
5 He would be aware that the phe-  
6 nomenon called beauty was become  
7 visible if one were at leisure or  
8 had had the right {culture} to ap-  
9 preciate it. A<sup>258</sup> miller with whom  
10 I rode--actually remarked on the  
11 beauty of the trees. Had a farmer  
12 in all sincerity  
13 told me ^ that having occasion to go  
14 into Walden woods in his sleigh--he  
15 thought he never saw anything so beau-  
16 tiful in all his life--& if there had been  
17 men there who knew how to write about  
18 it, it would have been a great occasion  
19 for them.

20 Many times I thought that if the par-  
21 ticular tree--commonly an elm--under  
22 which I was walking or riding--were the  
23 only one like it in the country--it would  
24 beworth a journey across the continent  
25 to see it. Indeed I have no doubt  
26 that such journeyes would be undertaken  
27 on hearing a true account of it.

28 But instead of being confined to ~~this~~ a  
29 single tree this wonder was as cheap  
30 & common as the air itself-- Every man's

---

<sup>258</sup>A: altered from "In"; "A" written over "I"

1 woodlot was a miracle & surprise to  
2  
3 him--& for those who could not go  
4 so far there were the trees in  
5 the street & the weeds in the yard--  
6         It was much like (in effect) that  
7 snow that lodges on the fine dead twigs  
8 on the lower part of a pine wood--resting  
9                     commonly  
10 there in the twilight ^ only till it has done  
11 snowing and the wind arises-- But in this<sup>259</sup>  
12 case it did not rest on the twig--but  
13 grew out from it horizontally--and it was  
14 not confined to the lowest twigs but covered  
15 the whole forest & every surface--  
16         Looking down the street you might say  
17 that the scene differed from the ordinary one  
18                     plain  
19 as frosted cake differs from ^ bread. In  
20 some woods you might suspect that it  
21 was the work of enchantment-- Some ma-  
22 gician had put your village into a crucible &  
23 it had crystalized thus. The weeping willow  
24 with its thickened twigs--seemed more pre-  
25 cise & regularly curved than ever--and as  
26 still as if it were carved of alabaster.  
27         The maples--with their few long shoots--  
28 were rather set & still.  
29         It was remarkable that when the fog was  
30 a little thinner so that you could see the pine  
31 woods a mile or more off--they were  
32 a distinct dark blue--

---

<sup>259</sup>this: altered from "the"; "I" written over "e" and "s" added

1 If any tree is set & stiff--it was now more  
2 still--if airy & graceful--it was now  
3 more graceful-- The birches esp. were a  
4 great ornament--

5 As usual in the winter--where a ~~stone~~  
6 rock<sup>260</sup> rises above the ice--it was a mere  
7 hillock covered with a white counter-  
8 pane--& often where one end--perhaps  
9 the higher--of the rock was bare on one side  
10 it looked like a seal or walrus slowly lifting  
11 itself above the surface or resting there.

12 One suggested a bon-fire under the elms  
13 in the street at night.

14 Pm up Assabet to Bridge  
15 2 or more inches of snow fell last night--  
16 In the expanse this side Mantatuket Rock  
17 I see the tracks of a crow or crows in and  
18 about the button bushes & willows-- They have  
19 trampled & pecked much in some spots under  
20 the button bushes where these seeds are still  
21 left & dibbled into the snow by them. It  
22 would seem then that they eat them. The  
23 only other seeds there can be there are those  
24 of the mikania--for I look for them  
25 You will see a crows track beginning in  
26 the middle of the river--where one alighted

27 I notice such a track as this where one  
28 alighted {drawing} & ap. stuck its

---

<sup>260</sup>rock: altered from rocks; "s" added and then crossed out

1 spread tail into the snow--at the same  
2 time with its feet-- I see afterward where  
3 a wing's quills have marked the snow  
4 much like a partridge's-- The snow is  
5 very light--so that the tracks are rarely  
6 distinct--& as they often advance  
7 by hops {drawing} some might  
8 mistake it for a squirrels or mink's  
9 track. I suspect that they came  
10 here yesterday after minnows--when the  
11 fishermen were gone--& that has brought  
12 them here today in spite of the snow-- They evi-  
13 dently look out sharp for a morsel of fish.

14 I see where by the red maple above  
15 Pinxter swamp they have picked over  
16 dark (from button bush & ~~I see also a hypericum~~)  
17 the fine ^ greenish moss ^& the leaves which  
18 had formed a squirrels nest--knocking it  
19 down on to the river--& there treading about  
20 & pecking a small piece--ap. for some  
21 worms or insects that were in it--as if  
22 they were hard pushed.

23 I am pretty sure to find tracks under the  
24 last named bank--in the edge of these low  
25 swamp white oak wood--either of rabbits  
26 or mice--crows or fox-- The 2 former  
27 generally keep close under the bank--as  
28 the safest beat for them--but some  
29 times I see where they hopped across the  
30 river several times last night--& I can im-

1 agine how shyly they looked back from the  
2                   The mice--occasionally hop out a rod %& back%  
3                   making a semicircle--more rarely quite across  
4 opposite side--

5           In my walk of the 16th I noticed that  
6 almost all the way--after leaving the  
7 RR--till I reached the highway near  
8 Hubbard's Bridge I was on the track  
9 of a fox. My beat was nearly identical  
10 with it (or there<sup>261</sup> may have been several)  
11 --lengthwise through the Cassandra ponds  
12 & hollows--by the lowest & most open path  
13 --along the narrow grown up hill side path  
14 to Pleasant meadow--& just along the  
15 edge of the button bushes--visiting every  
16 musquash house & crossing the river from  
17 time to time.

18           I notice in mid stream, opposite the  
19 cooper's shore, where an opening has been  
20 made for ice some 18 ~~inches~~ square--&  
21                                   feet  
22 has not frozen over again--but the  
23 water is seen passing with a swift current  
24 & disappearing quickly under the thin  
25 edge of the newly formed ice--I notice  
26 one of those fine unaccountable cobweb-  
27 like lines--nearly straight through undu-  
28 lating--stretched from side to side of this  
29 opening--about 8 inches from the edge of  
30 the ice on the lower side. It looked at  
31 first as if the water, compared with the  
32 ice was higher--in fact heaped up

---

<sup>261</sup>there: altered from "they"; "y" crossed out



1 at that point on ac. of the obstruction  
2 which the lower side offered--& that it  
3 then suddenly descended & passed under the thin  
4 edge of the newly formed ice. The ridge of  
5 the watery dam was a narrow light line--& there  
6 were on the upper side parallel with it  
7 8 or 10 other light lines or ripples alternating  
8 with dark--within the breadth of 3 or 4 inches--  
9 growing less & less distinct  
10 ^ & on the lower side there was a sudden slope (ap.  
11 to the level of the water below)--about 1 inch wide  
12 {drawing}<sup>262</sup> It was remarkable that the  
13 current & all that it carried  
14 with it--passed incessantly along  
15 through & over these lines with-  
16 out in the least disturbing them--  
17 or rather breaking them--only producing that  
18 slight undulation.<sup>263</sup> I describe it as it appears.  
19 large  
20 Of the ^ black oaks on the N bank near  
21 Prescott Barrets--some are quite bare--  
22 others have about as many leaves on their lower //  
23 parts as a white oak-- The swamp white  
24 oaks opposite are all bare.  
25 I notice in 2 places where a musquash  
26 has been out on the snow covered ice--&  
27 has travelled about a rod or less leaving the  
28 sharp mark of its tail.  
29 To-day--an average winter day--  
30 I notice no vapor over the open part of the  
31 river below the Island. (as I did the very cold  
32

---

<sup>262</sup>Caption within drawing reads "ice"

<sup>263</sup>Here, T describes what would become known as the "D-line" phenomenon, discussed in fuller detail in R.S. McDowell and C.W. McCutchen, "The Thoreau-Reynolds Ridge, a Lost and Found Phenomenon," Vol 172, Issue 3986 (*Science* 28 May 1971): 973. See also J8, p. 174.

1 pm of the 10th). The air & water are  
2 prob. now too nearly at the same tem-  
3 perature. That then, in the winter is a  
4 phenomenon of very cold weather.

5 Wednesday Jan 19th 59--

6 Pm to Great Meadows via Sleepy Hollow

7 It is a remarkably warm still &  
8 pleasant Pm for winter--& the  
9 wind, as I discover by my handkerchief--  
10 S westerly. I noticed last night just  
11 after sunset a sheet of mackerel  
12 sky far in the west horizon--very finely  
13 imbricated & reflecting a coppery glow--  
14 & again I saw still more of it in the east  
15 this morning at sunrise--& now at  
16 3 1/2 Pm looking up I perceive that  
17 almost the entire heavens are covered  
18 with a very beautiful mackerel sky.  
19 This indicates a peculiar state of the at-  
20 mosphere-- The sky is most wonderfully  
21 & beautifully mottled with evenly distributed  
22 cloudlets--of indescribable variety--yet  
23 regularity in their form--suggesting  
24 fishes scales--with perhaps small fish bones  
25 thrown in here & there-- It is white in the midst,  
26 or most prominent part of the scales passing  
27 into blue in the crannies. Something  
28 like this blue & white mottling methinks

1                   a  
2    is seen on ~~the~~ mackerel & has suggested  
3    %Is not the peculiar prospect of the time lost sight of by this meteorologist% V Feb.28  
4    59<sup>264</sup>  
5    the name.^ It is a luxury for the eye  
6    to rest on it. What curtains--what tapistry  
7    to our halls--! Directly overhead, of course,  
8                    appear  
9    the scales or cloudlets ~~are~~ large & course--  
10   a testudo  
11    while far on one side toward the horizon  
12    It is as if we were marching to battle with a shield ^ over our heads--  
13    they appear very fine--^ I thus see a flock  
14    of small clouds, like sheep, some 20 miles  
15    in diameter--distributed with wonderful regulari-  
16    ty. But they are being steadily driven to some  
17    new pasture--for when I look up an  
18    hour afterward not one was to be seen--&  
19    sky was beautifully clear--  
20            The form of these cloudlets--is by the way--like or  
21                    waves --of ripple marks on sand--op.  
22    akin to that of ^ small drifts wavelike on the surface  
23    of snow--& to the first small openings in the  
24    ice of the the mid. stream  
25            I look at a few scarlet & black oaks this Pm  
26    some  
27    Our largest scar. O. (by the Hollow) ^ 3 feet diam at                    //  
28                    has more leaves  
29    2 feet from ground--^ than the large white oak  
30    close by--(which has more than white oaks generally)  
31            As far as I observe today--the scar. O. has more  
32    leaves now than the black oak--.  
33    {drawing} gathered a scar. O acorn of this  
34    form--with distinct fine dark stripes  
35    or rays--such as a Q. ilicifolia has--  
36            By the swamp between  
37    the Hollow & Peters I see the tracks of a crow--  
38    or crows-- Chiefly in the snow 2 or more inches deep

---

<sup>264</sup>separated from text by a pencil line

1 on a broad frozen ditch where mud has  
2 been taken out-- The perpendicular sides  
3 of the ditch expose a foot or 2 of  
4 sooty  
5 dark ^ mud which had attracted the  
6 crows-- & I see where they have walked  
7 along beneath it & pecked it. Even here  
8 also they have alighted on any bare spot  
9 where a foot of stubble was visible or  
10 even a rock. Where we walked yesterday  
11 --I see notwithstanding the effect of the sun  
12 on it--not only the foot tracks--but  
13 the distinct impression of its tail where  
14 it alighted--counting distinctly 11 (of  
15 prob 12") feathers→ about 4 inches of each  
16 the whole mark being some 10 inches wide  
17 & 6 deep or more like a semicircle than  
18 that of yesterday. The same  
19 crow--or one of the same has come  
20 again today--& the snow being sticky this  
21 warm weather--has left a very distinct  
22 track--~~some 2 in~~ The width of the  
23 whole track is about 2 3/4 inches--length  
24 of pace about 7 inches--length of their  
25 track some 2 inches (not including the nails)  
26 but the mark made in setting down the  
27 foot & withdrawing it is in each case some  
28 15 or 18 inches long--for its hind toe makes  
29 a sharp scratch 4 or 5 inches long--before  
30 it settles--& when it lifts its foot again

1 it makes 2 other fine scratches with  
2 its middle & outer toe on each side--  
3 the 1st some 9 inches long the 2nd 6.  
4 The inner toe is commonly close to the middle  
5 one-- It makes a peculiar curving  
6 track--(or succession of curves)--stepping round  
7 the planted foot each time with a sweep  
8 thus  
9 {drawing}  
10 you would say that it toed in decidedly & walked  
11 feebly-- It must be that they require  
12 but little & glean that very assiduously.

13 The sweet fern retains its serrate  
14 terminal leaves--

//

15 Walking along the river eastward-- I notice  
16 that the twigs of the Black willow--many  
17 of which were broken off by the late glaze  
18 only  
19 only break at base--& ^ an inch higher up  
20 bend without breaking.

21 I look down the whole length of the  
22 meadow to Ball's Hill &c In a still  
23 warm winter day like this--what warmth  
24 in the withered oak leaves--! Thus far away  
25 mingled with pines--they are the ~~warmer~~ redder  
26 for the warmth & the sun. At this season  
27 we do not want any more color.

28 A mile off I see the pickerel fisher  
29 returning from the holt--taking his way across  
30 the frozen meadows before sunset--

1 toward his hut on the distant bank--  
2 I know him--(looking with my glass) by  
3 the axe over his shoulder with his basket  
4 of fish & fish lines hung on it--& the  
5 tin pail of minnows in his hand-- The  
6 pail shines brightly more than a  
7 mile off ~~in the s~~ reflecting the setting  
8 sun. He starts early--knowing how  
9 quickly the sun goes down.  
10 this warm eve  
11 To night I notice ^ that there is much  
12 green in the ice--when I go directly  
13 from the sun. There is also considerable  
14 when I go directly toward it--but more  
15 than that a little one side--but when  
16 I look at right angles with the sun I  
17 see none at all. The water (when open)  
18 is also green.  
19 I see a rosy tinge like dust on  
20 the snow when I look directly toward  
21 the setting sun--but very little on the  
22 hills. Methinks this pink on snow  
23 (as well as blue shadows) requires a clear  
24 cold eve. At least such were the 2  
25 eves on which I saw it this winter--  
26 Coming up the street in the twilight  
27 it occurs to me that I know of no  
28 more agreeable object to bound our  
29 view looking outward through the  
30 vista of our elm-lined streets--than

1 the pyramidal top of a white pine forest  
2 in the horizon. Let them stand so near at  
3 least.

4 Jan 20th

5 %A 2nd reasonably pleasant day like the last%  
6 Pm up river-- I see a large White

%//%

7 oak perfectly bare

//

8 Among 4 or 5 pickerel in a "well" on the  
9 river I see one with distinct transverse bars  
10 as I look down on its back--not quite across  
11 the back--but plain as they spring from the  
12 side of the back-- While all the others  
13 are uniformly dark above. Is not the  
14 ?  
15 former E. fasciatus? There is no marked  
16 difference when I look at them on their  
17 sides.

18 I see in various places on the ice & snow  
19 this very warm & pleasant afternoon a kind  
20 of mosquito--perhaps--a feeble flyer--  
21 v. bottom  
22 commonly resting on the ice.

//

23 The green of the ice & water begins to be visible  
24 about 1/2 hour before sunset-- Is  
25 it produced by the reflected blue of the sky--  
26 mingling with the yellow or pink of the setting  
27 sun?

28 What a singular element is this water? I  
29 go shaking the river from side to side at each  
30 step--as I see by its motion at the few  
31 holes. .

32 I learn from J. Farmer that he saw

1 today in his woodlot--on removing the bark  
2 of a dead white pine an immense quantity  
3 of mosquitoes moving but little in a cavity  
4 bet. the bark & the wood--made prob by some  
5 other insect-- These were prob. like mine--  
6 There were also wasps & what he calls light-  
7 ning-bugs there.

8 Jan 21st  
9 with some fog--high wind in the night  
10 //A January Thaw-- ^ occasioned as yet  
11 wind still S--  
12 wholly by warm weather, without rain.

13 The last 2 days have been remarkably  
14 pleasant & warm with a southerly wind--  
15 & last night was ap. warmer yet--(I think  
16 it was 46°+ this morning) & this morning  
17 I am surprised to see much bare ground &  
18 ice--where was snow last evening--& though  
19 last eve it was good sleighing & the  
20 street was not wet at all--though the  
21 snow was moist--now it is almost entirely  
22 bare ice--except for the water-- The  
23 sluices are more than full--washing  
24 like mill-streams on each side the  
25 way--& after stretching in broad lakes  
26 across the street-- It is the worst or  
27 wettest of walking requiring India rubber  
28 boots--Great channels 8 inches deep  
29 & a foot or more wide are worn  
30 in the ice across the street--revealing  
31 a pure clear ice on the sides contrasting



1 with the dirty surface-- I do not remember  
2 so sudden a change the effect of warmth  
3 without rain-- Yesterday Pm it was safe  
4 sledding around along the river side--  
5 on the ice--Hubbard was doing so--  
6 & I saw at the bridges that the river  
7 was some 8 inches lower than it had  
8 been when it froze--the ice adhering to the  
9 piers ~~so much~~ & all hold up there so  
10 much higher than the surrounding  
11 surface-- & now it is rapidly rising  
12 & the river is forbidden ground.

13           It is surprising how suddenly the slumbering  
14 snow has been melted--& with what a rush  
15 it now seeks the lowest ground on all  
16 sides. Yesterday in the streets and fields it  
17 was all snow & ice & rest--now it is  
18 chiefly water & motion.

19           Yesterday afternoon I walked in the meerely  
20 moist snow-track of sleds & sleighs--while  
21 all the sides of the road & the ditches rested  
22 under a white mantle of snow. This morn-  
23 ing I go picking my way in rubbers through  
24 broad puddles on a slippery icy bottom stepping  
25 over small torrents which have worn channels  
26 6 or 8 inches deep--& on each side rushes  
27 past with a loud murmer streams large  
28 enough to turn a mill--occasionally spreading  
29 out into a sizable mill pond.

30           It begins to rain by afternoon--& rains more

1 or less during the night. Before night  
2 I heard of the river being over the road in  
3 one place--though it was rather low before  
4 Saw Melvin buying an extra quantity of shot in anticipation of the freshet &  
5 musquash shooting tomorrow.  
6 Jan 22d

7 Ap. the wind S 2 or 3 days--or thermometer  
8 so long above 40°+ will make a freshet  
9 if there is snow enough on the ground.

10 8 1/2 Am. Go to the river side. It  
11 %Hear Melvin's gun%  
12 is over the meadows. The thick white ice  
13 ~~of the~~ is seen lifted up & resting over the  
14 channel several rods from the present  
15 shore on the high bank side--

16 As I stand there looking out to that  
17 white ice, about 4 rods distant, (at my  
18 boats place) I notice countless narrow  
19 light lines, 1/3 inch wide, in or on the very  
20 thin dark half-cemented ice (hardly so thick  
21 as pasteboard) which has formed since  
22 midnight on the surface of the risen water  
23 between the old ice & the shore. At first  
24 I thought that these light lines were  
25 cracks in that thin ice or crystallizations  
26 (It is now 34°+) occasioned, perhaps, by the  
27 mere rising of the water. But observing  
28 that some of them were peculiarly meandering  
29 returning on themselves loop-wise-- I looked  
30 at them more attentively--& at length  
31 I detected at the inner end of one such line  
32 about a rod from me  
33 a small black speck-- ^ Suspecting this

1 to be a caterpillar--I took steps to ascertain  
2 if it were, at any rate, a living creature, by dis-  
3 covering if it were in motion. It appeared to  
4 me to move, but it was so slowly--that I  
5 could not be certain until<sup>265</sup> ~~so~~ I set up a stick on the  
6 shore--or referred it to a fixed point on the ice--  
7 when I was convinced that it was a caterpillar slowly  
8 crawling toward the shore, or rather to the willows--  
9 Following its trail back with my eye I found  
10 that it came pretty directly from the edge of the  
11 old or thick white ice ~~about~~ (i.e. from where  
12 surface of the  
13 the ^ flood touched its sloping surface) toward the  
14 willows from NE to SW & had come about 3 rods  
15 Looking more sharply still I detected 7 or 8  
16 such caterpillars within a couple of square rods  
17 on this crystallization each at the end of  
18 its trail & headed toward the willows--in exactly  
19 the same direction. And there were the distinct  
20 trails of a great many more which had  
21 reached the willows or disappeared elsewhere.  
22 These trails were particularly distinct when I  
23 squatted low & looked over the ice--reflecting  
24 more light than. They were generally pretty direct  
25 toward the shore--or toward any clump of  
26 willows if within 4 or 5 rods-- I saw one  
27 which lead to the willows from the old  
28 ice some 6 rods off--slowly as they crawled  
29 this journey must have been made within  
30 a few hours--for undoubtedly this ice was  
31 formed since midnight. Many of the lines

---

<sup>265</sup>"until" added

1 were very meandering--like this  
2 {drawing} &  
3 ap. began & ended within the thin  
4 ice-- There was not enough ice to support  
5 even a caterpillar within 3 or four feet  
6 of the shore--for the water was still rapidly  
7 rising & not now freezing. & I noticed  
8 no caterpillars on the ice within several  
9 feet--but with a long stick I obtained  
10 quite a number. Among them were 3  
11 1st  
12 kinds Prob the commonest were a small  
13 flat (beneath) black one with a dark  
14 shell head & body consisting of numerous  
15 5.5 ps forward  
16 rings--like dark velvet 4 or 5/8 inch long ^ --  
17 --2d a black catter pillar about same  
18 length--covered with hairy points or tufts  
19 remind me somewhat of that kind I see on  
20 the black willows which is larger & partly yellow--  
21 fuzzy  
22 3dly are all brown ^ & 6 or 7/8 inch long--  
23 The last lay at the bottom, but was alive  
24 All curled up when I rescued them.  
25 There were also many small brown  
26 grass hoppers (not to mention spiders of  
27 various sizes & snow fleas) on the ice but  
28 none of these left any perceptible track.  
29 These tracks thus distinct were quite  
30 There was certainly one for each foot of shore  
31 innumerable-- many thousands? within half  
32 a dozen rods--leading commonly from the  
33 channel ice to or toward the<sup>266</sup> shore or

---

<sup>266</sup>the: possibly erased



1  
 2 At any rate within ~~some~~ 6 hours probably  
 3 this freshet has invaded the Broadways  
 4 or lower streets of the caterpillar towns--  
 5 & within some 6 hours probably--these in-  
 6 numerable journeys have been performed by wrecked  
 7 caterpillars over newly formed ice bridge--  
 8 in our town alone  
 9 more such adventurers ^ than there are humans  
 10 living in the U.S--& their trails are there to be  
 11 seen every one of them. Undespairing caterpillars  
 12 determined to reach the shore. What risks they  
 13 run who go to sleep for the winter in our  
 14 river meadows!

16 Perhaps the insects came up from their  
 17 winter retreats in the roots of the grass in  
 18 such warm & sunny days as we have  
 19 had--& so are the more washed away--  
 20 & also became food for crows which  
 21 as I noticed explore the smallest bare  
 22 tufts in the fields.

23 I notice where a musquash has lately  
 24 swum under this thin ice, breaking it  
 25 hear & there--& his course for many rods  
 26 continuous  
 27 is betrayed by a ^ row of numerous white  
 28 bubbles as big as a nine-pence under the  
 29 ice. J. Farmer tells me that  
 30 he once saw a musquash rest 3 or 4 minutes  
 31 under the ice--with his nose against the  
 32 ice--in<sup>267</sup> a bubble of air about ~~of~~ an inch in  
 33 diameter, & he thinks that they can draw

---

<sup>267</sup>in: possibly cancelled

1 air through the ice & that one could  
2 swim across Nagog pond under the ice.

3 I think that the greater part of the  
4 caterpillars reaching the few feet of ~~the~~ open  
5 water next the shore--must sink to the bottom--  
6 & perhaps they survive in the grass there-- A few  
7 may crawl up the trees. One which I took off the  
8 bottom was alive.

9 A freshet, then, even in mid winter, is a most momentous  
10 event to the insect world

11 Perhaps the caterpillars, being in the water,  
12 are not frozen in, but crawl out on the ice  
13 & steer for the land from wherever they may be.

14 Ap. those which started from the edge  
15 of the channel ice must have been drifted  
16 there either by the current or wind--because  
17 they could not have risen directly up to it from  
18 the bottom--since it slopes toward the shore  
19 for a rod under water. It is remarkable that  
20 the caterpillars know enough to steer for the  
21 shore though 4 or 5 rods off.

22 I notice that the river thus braking up in  
23 this freshet--this body of ice over the channel  
24 cracks<sup>268</sup> on each side near the line  
25 of the willows, a little outside of them, 2 great  
26 making many a jounce or thankee marm for the skater when all is frozen again  
27 rents showing the edge & thickness of the ice, ^ while  
28 between them the ice of the channel is lifted up  
29 level--while outside these rents the ice slopes  
30 downward for a rod the shore edge still

---

<sup>268</sup>cracks: preceded by canceled false start

1 fastened to the bottom--i.e. the fuller tide  
2 rushing downward--lifts up the main body  
3 of the ice cracking it on each side of the  
4 channel, the outside strips remaining  
5 attached to the bottom by their shore edges  
6 & sloping upward to the rents-- So that  
7 the freshets runs through & nearly overflows  
8 there 2 strips creeping far up the bank or  
9  
10 over the meadows on each side.

11 Pm I see many caterpillars on the ice still  
12 & those glow-worm like ones. I see several  
13 of the black fuzzy (with distinct tufts) catter-  
14 the  
15 pillars, described above, on open water next the  
16 shore--but none of them is moving--

17 Also in the water common small black crickets  
18 (are alive) & other bugs (commonly alive)  
19 which have been washed out of their winter  
20 quarters.

21 And in the fields generally--exposed on  
22 bare hard ice--The snow being gone &  
23 more than half the earth bare--are a  
24 great many--caterpillars (still 2<sup>269</sup> another  
25 many naked & fish worm color 4 to 6 inches long  
26 kinds than yet described ^) & those glow-worm  
27 like ones (some more brown) or they  
28 have evidently been washed out of their  
29 retreats in the grass by the great flow  
30 & left on the ice  
31 of water--^ They must afford abundant  
32 food birds. Crows which fared hard 10  
33 days ago--must fare sumptuously now

---

<sup>269</sup>"2": added



1 This will account for their tracks which  
2 I saw the other day leading to every little  
3 bare shaft or exposed tuft of grass--those  
4 warm days. Perhaps the caterpillars &c  
5 crawl forth in sunny & warm days in mid-  
6 winter--when the earth is bare--& so supply  
7 the birds--& are ready to be washed away by  
8 a flow of water!

9 I find thus a great variety of living insects  
10 now washed out. 4 kinds of caterpillars,  
11 & also the glow-worm like creature so common--  
12 grasshoppers--crickets--& many bugs--not to mention  
13 the mosquito-like insects (which the warm weather  
14 has called forth--flying feebly just above the ice & snow  
15 a foot or 2.) spiders & snow fleas.

16 A sudden thaw is then a great relief to  
17 crows & other birds that may have been put  
18 to it for food. Their larders are now over stocked.

19 Can that glow-worm like creature, so com-  
20 mon on the ice by the river side in the fields now,-- be  
21 the female of the lightning-bug? It is about 1/2 inch  
22 x 1/11 inch wide  
23 long-- ^ dusky reddish brown above, lighter beneath--  
24 short  
25 with a small black flattish head & about 4 small antennae  
26 --6 legs made the forward part of the body--which last consists  
27 of 12 ring-like segments There is one row of minute  
28 light colored dots down the middle of the back. &  
29 perhaps (?) others fainter on the side.

31 Many are out in boats steering outside  
32 the ice of the river over the newly flooded meadows--  
33 shooting musquash-- Cocks crow as in spring--

1 The energy & excitement of the musquash  
2 hunter even--not despairing of life, but  
3 keeping the same rank & savage hold  
4 on it that his predecessors have for  
5 so many generations--while so many  
6 are sick & despairing--even this is  
7 inspiriting to me-- Even these deeds of  
8 death are interesting as evidence of life--  
9 for life will still prevail in spite of  
10 all accidents. I have a certain faith  
11 that even musquash are immortal & not  
12 born to be killed by Melvin's double B (?) shot.

13 Methinks the breadth of waves--whether  
14 in water--or snow--or sand--or vapor--  
15 (in the mackerel sky) is determined generally  
16 by the force of the wind or other element  
17 striking the water &c-- It depends on how  
18 much water &c the wind has power to displace

19 The musquash hunter (last night) with  
20 his increased supply of powder & shot--and  
21 boat turned up somewhere on the bank--now  
22 that the river is rapidly rising--dreaming of  
23 his exploits today in shooting musquash--of  
24 the great pile of dead rats that will weigh  
25 down his boat before night--when he will  
26 return wet & weary & weather beaten to his  
27 hut with an appetite for his supper--& for  
28 much sluggish (punky) social intercourse  
29 with his fellows--even he dark--dull

1 and battered flint as he is--is an inspired  
2 man to his extent more--perhaps the most  
3 inspired by this freshet--of any--& the  
4 Musketaquid meadows cannot spare  
5 him. There are poets of all kinds--&  
6 degrees--little known to each other-- The  
7 lake school is not the only or the principal  
8 one-- They love various things--some love beauty  
9 & some love rum--some go to Rome &  
10 some go a-fishing & are sent to the house  
11 of correction once a month-- They keep up  
12 their fires by means unknown to me. I know  
13 I  
14 not their coming & goings. How can tell  
15 what violets they watch for? I know them  
16 wild & ready to risk all when their muse in-  
17 vites. The most sluggish will be up early  
18 enough then--& face any amount of wet  
19 & cold. I meet those gods of the river &  
20 woods with sparkling faces (like apollo's)  
21 late from the house of correction--it may be  
22 carrying whatever mystic & forbidden bottles  
23 or other vessels concealed--while the  
24 dull regular priests are steering their  
25 parish rafts in a prose wood.

26 What care I to see galleries full of representatives  
27 of heathen gods--when I can see actual  
28 living ones--by an infinitely superior artist--  
29 without perspective tube.

30 If you read the Rig veda--oldest of

1 books as it were--describing a very primi-  
2 tive people & condition of things--you  
3 hear in their prayers of a still older  
4 more primitive & aboriginal race--  
5 in their midst and roundabout--warring  
6 on them--& seizing their flocks & herds<sup>270</sup>  
7 --infesting their pastures-- Thus is it in  
8 another sense in all communities--&  
9 hence the prisons & police.

10 I hear these guns going today--& I must  
11 confess they are to me a spring-like & exhilarating  
12 sound--like the cock-crowing--though each  
13 one may report the death of a musquash.  
14 This methinks, or the like of this, with whatever  
15 mixture of dross--is the real morning or  
16 evening hymn that goes up from these vales  
17 today--& which the stars echo. This is the  
18 best sort of gloryfying of God & enjoying him--  
19 that at all prevails here today--without  
20 any clarified butter or sacred ladles.

21 As a mother loves to see her child imbibe  
22 nourishment & expand-- So God loves to see  
23 his children thrive on the nutriment he has  
24 furnished them. In the musquash hun-  
25 ters I see the Almouchicois still pushing  
26 swiftly over the dark stream in their canoes--  
27 These aboriginal men cannot be repressed--but  
28 under some guise or other they survive & re-  
29 appear continually-- Just as simply as

---

<sup>270</sup>herds: possibly altered from "beasts"

1 the crow picks up worms which all  
2 over the fields have been washed out by  
3 the thaw--there men pick up the musquash  
4 that have been washed out the banks.  
5 And to serve such ends even plow & sail--  
6 & powder & shot are made--& the grocer  
7 exists to retail them--though he may think himself  
8 much more the deacon of some church.

9 From year to year the snow has its regu-  
10 lar retreats & lurking places--when a  
11 thaw comes (laying bare the earth) under  
12 the south & eastward banks. I see it now  
13 resting there in broad white lines & deep  
14 drifts (from my window) as I have seen  
15 it for many years--as it lay when  
16 the Ind. was the only man here to see it.

17 Jan 23d

18 The freshet is now frozen over--but not  
19 thick enough to bear without cracking--and  
20 that peculiar whitish ice--like bread or mortar  
21 that has run over is seen 4 to 6 feet in width  
22 and about trees--posts-sides &c  
23 all along the shore ^-- It is produced by the  
24 water prob still rising--after the freezing in the  
25 night--& flowing back over the ice--in a  
26 semi liquid state--or like soft solder--a  
27 rough or wrinkled or rippled dirty-white surface--  
28 often stained with the bank--yellowish or brown--

29 There is a cold NW wind--& I notice  
30 that the snow fleas which were so abundant

1 on this water yesterday--have hopped  
2 to some lee--i.e are collected like powder  
3 under the SE side of posts or trees or  
4 stickes or ridges in the ice-- You are surprised  
5 to see that they manage to get out of the  
6 wind. On the SE side of every such barrier  
7 along the shore there is a dark line or heap  
8 of them. I see one of those glow worm like  
9 creatures frozen in--sticking up perpendicular  
10 1/2 above the ice.

11           Going over the Hosmer Pasture this side  
12 Clam Shell s. westward-- I thought I saw  
13 much gossamer on the grass--but was sur-  
14 prised to find that it was the light reflected  
15 from the withered grass stems which had  
16 been bent or broken by the snow (now  
17 melted) It looked just like gossamer even  
18 within 10 feet--most would have taken it  
19 for that--also these fine gleaming lines  
20 (like those of the alders & birch twigs &c)  
21 were very distinctly part of an arc of a  
22 large circle--the lower side of it--  
23 as you looked toward the sun--the light being  
24 necessarily so reflected. {drawing}  
25 This is a remarkable instance of the  
26 November or rather winter light reflected  
27 from twigs & stubble

28           The grass stood thus {five drawings}  
29 &c.

1 It was just like an abundant gossamer.  
2 The earth being generally bare I notice  
3 on the ice--where it slopes up eastward  
4 a little a distinct rosy light (or pink) reflected  
5 from it generally--1/2 hour before sunset.  
6 This is colder<sup>271</sup> evening than of late--&  
7 there is so much the more of it.

8 Jan 24

9 An abundance of excellent skating-- //  
10 the freshet that covered the meadows being  
11 frozen. Many boys & girls are skating  
12 on Mantatuket meadow--& on Merrick's--  
13 Looking from this shore, they appear decidedly  
14 elevated--(not by their skates merely--) what  
15 is the cause? Do we take the ice to be air?  
16 I see an abundance of caterpillars of various  
17 kinds on the ice of the meadows--many of  
18 those large dark hairy with longitudinal  
19 light stripes somewhat like the common apple one--  
20 in  
21 Many of them are frozen yet--some for 2/3  
22 their length--yet all are alive. Yet it  
23 has been so cold since the rise that you can  
24 now cross the channel about anywhere  
25 I also see a great many of those little  
26 brown grasshoppers & one perfectly green one  
27 some of them frozen in but generally on the sur-  
28 face--showing no sign of life--yet when I brought  
29 them to home to experiment on I found them all  
30 alive & kicking in my pocket-- There were  
31 also a small kind of reddish wasp quite lively

---

<sup>271</sup>"colder" written over "a"

1 on the ice--& other insects--those naked  
2 or smooth worms or caterpillars. This shows  
3 what insects have their winter quarters in  
4 the meadow grass. This ice is a good field  
5 for an entomologist.

6 I experimented on the large bubbles under  
7 the ice some the oldest & nearest the surface--  
8 were white--others the newest & against  
9 the present under surface--were of a bluish  
10 or slate color--more transparent. I found  
11 that the whiteness of the first was owing  
12 to the great quantity of little bubbles above  
13 & below the great one produced by the heat  
14 of this "burning glass"-- While those of recent  
15 formation have not had time to accomplish  
16 this. When I cut through with my knife  
17 an inch or 2 to one of the latter kind making  
18 a very slight opening, the confined air pressed  
19 by the water, burst up with a considerable  
20 hissing sound sometimes spurting a little water  
21 with it--& thus the bubble was contracted--al-  
22 most annihilated--but frequently when I  
23 cut into one of the old or white ones there  
24 was no sound. the air did not rush out  
25 because there was no pressure. There being  
26 ice below as well as above it--but when  
27 I also pierced the lower ice--it did rush  
28 out with a sound like the others.

29 My object at first was to ascertain if



1 both kinds of bubbles contained air--But  
2 that was plain enough--for when the water rushed  
3 in the<sup>272</sup> bluish or new ones wholly beneath the ice  
4 wholly or nearly disappeared while the white  
5 ones, giving place to water were no longer white--

6 It would seem then that a considerable pres-  
7 sure--such as the water exerts on an air bubble  
8 under the ice--does not force it through the  
9 ice--certainly<sup>273</sup> not for a considerable time.

10 How then can the musquash draw air through  
11 the ice as is asserted? He might, however,  
12 come to breath in such a bubble as this al-  
13 ready existing.

14 The larger spiders generally rest on the ice  
15 with all their legs spread--but on being touched  
16 they gather them up.

17 Jan 25th

18 The river has gone down about 8 inches--&  
19 the ice still adhering to the shore all about  
20 the meadows starts downward for some  
21 4 or 5 feet till it meets the water, and  
22 it is then cracked--often letting the water  
23 up to overflow it so that it is hard to  
24 get off & on in some places-- {drawing}

25 That channel ice of the 22d (q.v.) lifted  
26 up looks thin--thus<sup>274</sup>  
27 {drawing}

28 The edges of the outside portions ~~appear~~ are

---

<sup>272</sup>the: altered from "they"; "e" altered from "y"

<sup>273</sup>preceded by cancelled "at"

<sup>274</sup>followed by cancelled false start

1 more lifted up now ap. by the weight  
2 of the water on them.

3 Jan 26

4 Pm Over Cyanean Meadow on ice.

5 These are remarkably warm & pleasant  
6 days. The water is going down--& the ice  
7 is rotting. I see some insects (those glow-  
8 worm like ones--sunk 1/2 inch or more into  
9 the ice by absorbed heat & yet quite alive in  
10 these little holes--in which they alternately freeze  
11 & thaw. At willow bay I see for many  
12 rods black soil 1/4 of an inch deep covering  
13 several  
14 & concealing the ice (for ~~many~~ rods)-- This  
15 I find was blown some time ago from a  
16 plowed field 20 or more rods distant.  
17 This shows how much the sediment of the river  
18 may be increased by dirt blown into it from the  
19 neighboring fields. Any ice begins immedi-  
20 ately after it is formed to look dusty in the  
21 sun--any where-- This black soil is rapidly  
22 sinking to the bottom through the ice-- by absorbing  
23 heat--& water overflowing & freezing--it is  
24 left deep within thick ice. Or else lying in  
25 wavelets on the ice--the surface becomes at  
26 last full of ~~their~~ dark bottomed holes alter-  
27 nating with clear ice

28 The ice having fairly begun to decompose  
29 is very handsomely marked--more or less internally  
30 as it appears--with a sort of graphic



1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30

Jan 27

I see<sup>275</sup> some of those little cells perhaps  
of a wasp or bee--made of clay or  
clayey mud. It suggests that these in-  
sects were the first potters. They look  
somewhat like small stone jugs.

Jan 28

Melvin tells me that one with whom  
he deals below says that the best mus-  
quash skins came from Concord River--  
& it is because our musquash are so fat.  
M. says that they eat apples--& he  
has seen where they have eaten acorns--&  
Isaiah Green told him & convinced him that  
they ate his<sup>seed</sup> corn in the hill. He weighed  
a very large one the other day--& it weighed  
5 lbs. Thinks they would not commonly weigh  
more than 3.

When you have been deprived of your  
usual quantity of sleep for several nights  
you sleep much more soundly for it--& wake  
up suddenly like a bullet that strikes a wall.

Jan 30

How peculiar the hooting of an owl! it is  
not shrill & sharp like the scream of a hawk  
but full round & sonorous waking the echoes  
of the wood.

The surface of the snow esp. on hill-  
sides has a peculiarly combed or worn

---

<sup>275</sup>altered from {saw}

1 appearance where water has run in a thaw.  
2 --i.e. the whole surface shows regular  
3 furrows at a distance--as if it had been scraped  
4 with an immense comb.

5 Jan 31st

6 Pm up river across Cyanean Meadow--

7 Now we have quite another kind of ice--

8 It has rained hard converting into a very

9 thin liquid the snow which had fallen

10 on the old ice--& this having frozen has

11 made a perfectly smooth but white snow

12 ice. It is white like polished marble (I

13 call it marble ice) & the trees & hill

14 are reflected in it--as not in the other.

15 It is far less varied than the other--but

16 still is very peculiar & interesting. You notice

17 the polished surface much more--as if it

18 were the marble floor of some stupen-

19 dous hall. Yet such is its composition

20 it is not quite so hard & metallic, I

21 think--the skater probably makes more

22 The other was hard & crystalline  
23 of a scratch.

24 As I look S just before sunset over this

25 fresh & shining ice-- I notice that its

26 surface is divided as it were into a great-

27 many contiguous tables in different planes--

28 --somewhat like so many different facets

29 of a polyhedron--as large as the earth itself--

30 These tables or planes are bounded by

1       cracks, though without any appreciable  
2       opening & the different levels are betrayed  
3               of the light or sky  
4       by the reflection ^ being interrupted at the  
  
5       cracks. The ice formed last night--  
6       is a day old  
7       ^& these cracks as I find run generally  
  
8       from NE to SW across the entire meadow  
  
9       some 25 or 30 rods nearly at right angles  
  
10      with the river--& are from 5 to 15  
  
11      feet apart--while there are compara-  
12      tively few cracks crossing them in the  
13      other direction-- You notice this phe-  
14      nomenon looking over the ice some rods  
15      before you--otherwise might not observe the  
16      cracks when upon them. It is as if the  
17      very globe itself were a crystal with a  
18      certain number of facets.

19            When I look westward now to the flat  
20      snow crusted shore-- It reflects a strong  
21      violet color--

22            Also the pink light reflected from the  
23      low flat snowy surfaces amid the  
24      ice on the meadows, just before sun-  
25      set is a constant phenomenon these  
26      clear winter days-- Whole fields--& sides  
27      of hills are often the same--but it is more  
28      distinct on these flat islands of snow  
29      scattered here and there over the meadow  
30      ice.-- I also see this pink in the dust  
31      made by the skaters

1           Perhaps the green seen at the same time  
2 in ice & water--is produced by the general  
3           or  
4 yellow ^ amber lights of this hour --mingled  
5 with the blue of the reflected sky.??

6           Surely the ice is a great & absorbing  
7 phenomenon-- Consider how much of the  
8 surface of the town it occupies-- How much  
9 attention it monopolizes!  
10 We do not commonly distinguish more than  
11 one kind of water in the river--but what va-  
12 rious kinds of ice there are!

13           Young Heywood told me that the trout  
14 which he caught in Walden was 27 inches long  
15 & weighed 5 lbs--but was thin--not in good  
16 condition. (He saw another)-- It was in the little  
17 cove between the deep one & the RR.

18                           Feb. 1 1859

19           Pm up Assabet--

20           The river having suddenly gone down since the freshet  
21 I see cakes of ice 8 or 10 feet across left 2 feet  
22 high or more above the banks frozen to 4 or 5  
23 maples or oaks. Indeed each shore is lined  
24 with them--where wooded--a continuous row--  
25 attached to alders maples swamp white oaks  
26 &c-- which grow through them or against their  
27 edge-- They are somewhat like tables of  
28 a picnic party or a muster field dinner--  
29 --Rustic tables & seats. Sometimes a little  
30 inclined having settled on one side--

1 Also an ice belt adheres to the steep shores--  
2 & the rain & melted snow running down  
3 has drifted over the edge of it forming abundant  
4 & frosty icicles--& you see where this hard &  
5 thick ice has bent under its own weight.

6 As for large oak leaves seen-- I think there  
7 is not much difference between the white & scar-  
8 let o's-- Then come black red & swamp white,  
9 but the last one has scarcely any.

10 Feb 2nd

11 I see Peter Hutchinson cutting down a large red o  
12 on A. Heywoods hillside W of the former's house. He  
13 points out to me what he calls the "grey oak" there  
14 with "a thicker bark" than the red. It is the scarlet O.



1 Feb. 3d 5 minutes before

2 3 Pm Father died.<sup>276</sup>

---

<sup>276</sup>centered on the page

1           After a sickness of some 2 years  
2           going down town in pleasant weather  
3           doing a little business from time to time--  
4           hoeing a little in the garden &c Father took  
5           to his Chamber Jan 13th & did not come down  
6           again. Most of the time previously  
7           he had coughed & expectorated a great  
8           deal. Latterly he did not cough--but  
9           continued to raise.

10           He continued to sit up in his chamber  
11           till within a week before he died. He  
12           sat up for a little while on the Sunday 4  
13           days before he died-- Generally he was very silent  
14           for many months-- He was quite conscious  
15           to the last--& his death was so easy  
16           that we should not have been aware that  
17           he was dying, though we were sitting around  
18           his bed, if we had not watched very closely.

1 I have touched a body which was flex-  
2 ible & warm yet tenantless--warmed by  
3 what fire? ~~&c~~ When the spirit that ani-  
4 mated some matter has left it--who else  
5 --what else--can animate it?

6 How enduring are our bodies after all!  
7 The forms of of our brothers & sisters--our  
8 parents & children and wives--lie still  
9 in the hills & fields round about us--not  
10 to mention those of our remoter ancestors--  
11 and the matter which composed the  
12 body of our first human father still  
13 exists under another name.

14 When in sickness the body is emaciated  
15 & the expression of the face in various ways is  
16 changed--you perceive unexpected resem-  
17 blances to other members of the same family.  
18 As if within the same family there was a  
19 greater general similarity in the framework  
20 of the face--than in its fitting up & clothing.

21 Father first came to this town to live  
22 with his father about the end of the last century--  
23 (His father died in 1801)  
24 when he was about 12 years old ^. Afterward  
25 he went to the Lexington Academy (Parkers?) a  
26 short time--perhaps a year-- Then into Dea. Whites store  
27 as clerk-- Then learned the dry goods business in  
28  
29 (Aunt J. shows me a letter from him directly after his going there dated 1807)--was with a  
30 a store in Salem ^. When about 21 open a store  
31 for himself on the common where the town house stands

Hathaway



1        come to the town more recently than he--or have  
2        lived more aloof from the mass of the inhabi-  
3        tants.

4                Some have spoken slightingly of the Indian--  
5        as a race possessing so little skill & wit--  
6        so low in the scale of humanity & so brutish  
7        that they hardly deserved to be remembered--using  
8        only the terms--miserable--wretched--pitiful  
9        & the like--in writing their histories of this country  
10       they have so hastily disposed of this refuse  
11       of humanity (as they might of called it) which  
12       littered & defiled the shore & the interior. But  
13       even the indigenous animals are inexhaustibly in-  
14       teresting to us. How much more than the indigenous  
15       man of America! If wild man--so much  
16       more like ourselves than they are unlike--have  
17       inhabited these shores before us--we wish to know par-  
18       ticularly what manner of men they were--how they  
19       lived here--their relation to nature--their arts  
20       & their customs--their fancies & reflections--  
21       They paddled over the waters--they wandered in these  
22       woods--& they had their fancies & beliefs  
23       connected with the sea & the forest--which con-  
24       cern as quite as much as the fables of  
25       oriental nations do. It frequently happens that  
26       the historian though he professes more hu-  
27       manity than the trapper--mt man or gold digger  
28    exhibits &  
29       who shoots one as a wild beast reality ^ practices  
30       a similar inhumanity to him--wielding a

1 pen instead of a rifle.

2 One tells you with more contempt than  
3 pity that the Indian had no religion--holding  
4 up both hands--& this to all the shallow  
5 trained & bigoted seems to mean something im-  
6 portant but it is commonly a distinction  
7 without a difference-- Pray how much more  
8 religion has the historian. If Henry Ward  
9 Beecher knows so much more about God  
10 than another--if he has made some  
11 discovery of truth in this direction, I would  
12 thank him to publish it in Sillimans  
13 Journal--with as few flourishes as possible

14 ~~what~~ It is the spirit of humanity  
15 --that which animates both so called  
16 savages & civilized nations--working  
17 through a man--& not the man expressing  
18 himself-- That interests us most.-- The  
19 thought of a so called savage tribe is generally  
20 far more just than that of a single  
21 civilized man.

22 I perceive that we partially die ourselves  
23 through sympathy at the death of each of  
24 our friends or near relatives-- Each such ex-  
25 perience is an assault on our vital force--  
26 It becomes a source of wonder that they who  
27 have lost many friends still live.

28 After long watching around the sick bed  
29 of a friend--we too partially give up

1 the ghost within--& are the less to be identified  
2 with this state of things.

3 The writer must to some extent inspire  
4 himself-- Most of his sentences may at  
5 first be dead in his essay--but when all  
6 are arranged--some life & color will  
7 be reflected on them from the mature  
8 & successful lines--they will appear to pul-  
9 sate with fresh life & he will be enabled  
10 to eke out their slumbering sense, &  
11 make them worthy of their neighborhood--

12 In his first essay on a given theme, he  
13 produces scarcely more than a frame & ground  
14 work for his sentiment & poetry. Each clear  
15 thought that he attains to draws in  
16 its train many divided thoughts or per-  
17 ceptions.

18 The writer has much to do even to create  
19 a theme for himself-- Most that is first  
20 written on any subject is a mere groping after  
21 it--mere rubble stone & foundation. It is  
22 only when many observations of different periods  
23 have been brought together--that he  
24 begins to grasp his subject--& can  
25 make one pertinent & just observation.

26 Feb 5th

27 When we have experienced many disappoint-  
28 ments--such as the loss of Friends, the  
29 notes of birds cease to affect us as they did.

1 // I see another butcher bird on the top  
2 of a young tree by the Pond.

3 Feb 7th

4 Evidently the distant woods are more  
5 blue in a warm & moist or misty day  
6 in winter--& is not this connected with  
7 the blue in snow in similar days?

8 Going along the Nut Meadow on Jimmy  
9 Miles road--when I see the sulphur  
10 lichens, on the rails--brightening with the  
11 moisture--I feel like studying them again  
12 as a relisher or tonic--to make life go  
13 down & digest well--~~i.e.~~ as we use  
14 pepper & vinegar & salads-- They are  
15 a sort of winter greens which we gather  
16 & assimilate with our eyes. Thats the  
17 true use of the study of lichens-- I expect that  
18 the lichenist will have the keenest relish  
19 for Nature in her every day mood & dress.  
20 He will have the appetite of the worm that  
21 never dies--of the grub. To study lichens  
22 is to get a taste of earth--& health--to  
23 go gnawing the rails & rocks. This product  
24 of the bark is the essence of all times.

25 The lichenist extracts nutriment from the  
26 very crust of the earth

27 A taste for this study is an evidence of ti-  
28 tanic health--a sane earthiness--it makes  
29 not so much blood as soil of life-- It fits



1 a man to deal with the barrenest & rockiest  
2 experience-- A little moisture--a fog or rain  
3 or melted snow makes his wilderness to blossom  
4 like the rose. As some strong animal appetites--  
5 not satisfied with starch & muscle & fat--  
6 are faint to eat that which eats--& digests  
7 --the contents of the crop--& the stomach & entrails  
8 themselves--so the lichenist loves the tripe of  
9 the rock--that which eats & digests the  
10 rocks. He eats the eater--Eat-all may be  
11 his name, A lichenist feats more than starve--  
12 His provender never fails-- What is the barrenest  
13 waste to him--the barest rocks? A rail is  
14 the sleekest & fattest of coursers for him--  
15 anew  
16 he picks ^ the bones which have been picked  
17 a generation since--for when their marrow  
18 is gone they are clothed with new flesh for  
19 him. What diet drink can be compared with  
20 a tea or soup made of the very crust of the  
21 earth? There is no such collyrium or salve  
22 for sore eyes as these brightening lichens  
23 in a moist day. Go & bathe & screen<sup>278</sup> your  
24 eyes with them in the softened light of the  
25 woods.

26 Feb 11th Pm to Ball's Hill  
27 over ice. Among the common phenomena  
28 of the ice--are those triangular points of thick  
29 ice-- ~~when it~~ heaved up a couple of feet  
30 where the ice has recently settled about

---

<sup>278</sup>possibly "season"

1 a rock {drawing} the rock looks  
2 somewhat like a dark fruit within  
3 a gaping shell or burr--  
4         Also, now, as often our freshet in  
5 cold weather--the ice which had formed  
6 around & frozen on the trees & bushes along  
7 the shore--settling draws them down  
8 to the ground or water--often breaking them  
9 extensively. It reminds you of an alligator  
10 or other evil genius of the river pulling  
11 the trees & bushes which had come to drink into  
12 the water. If a maple or alder is unfortunate  
13 enough to slip its lower limbs into the freshet  
14 dallying with it--their fate is sealed--  
15 for the water freezing that night takes  
16 fast hold on them like a vice--& when  
17 the water runs out from beneath an irre-  
18 sistable weight brings them down to the ground  
19 & holds them there--Only the spring  
20 sun will soften the heart of this relentless  
21 monster when commonly it is too late--

22         How the ice far in the meadows thus settling  
23 spreads the the clumps of willows &c on  
24 every side! {drawing}

25         Nature works by {contraries}. That which  
26 in summer was most fluid & unresting is now  
27 most solid & motionless-- If in the summer  
28 you cast a twig into the stream it instantly  
29 moves along with the current--& nothing re-  
30 mained as it was--Now I see yonder a

1 long row of black twigs standing erect  
2 in mid channel where 2 months ago  
3 a fisherman sat there & fastened his lines to them.<sup>279</sup>  
4 They stand there motionless as<sup>280</sup> guide posts while  
5 snow & ice are piled up about them--

6 Such is the cold skill of the artist. He carves  
7 a statue out of a material which is fluid  
8 as water to the ordinary workman. His sentiments  
9 are a quarry which he works.

10 I see only the chain of marker posts passing  
11 round a tree above the ice.

12 The S. side of Ball's Hill--which is warm &  
13 half bare is tracked up with partridges--& I start  
14 several there. SO is it next <sup>Sun</sup> ^ day--with the  
15 hill shore E of F. H. Pond. These birds are sure to  
16 be found now on such slopes where only the  
17 ground & dry leaves are exposed.

19 The water lately went down & the ice settled on the  
20 meadows--& now rain has come & cold again--  
21 but this surface is alternate ice & snow--Looking  
22 from the hill toward the sun--they are seen to be  
23 handsomely watered all over--with alternate  
24 waves of shining ice & white snow crust--  
25 Literally "wattered" on the grandest scale this  
26 palace floor--

27 Saturday Feb 12.

28 You may account for that oak by the Rock  
29 having such a ballanced & regular outline--  
30 by the fact that in an open place their

---

<sup>279</sup>"to them" added in margin

<sup>280</sup>"as" possibly cancelled

1 branches are equally drawn toward toward the  
2 light on all sides. & not because of a  
3 understanding  
4 mutual consent through the trunk. For  
5 there is Cheneys abele<sup>281</sup> which stands just S. of  
6 a large elm-- It grows wholly southward and  
7 in form is just half a tree {drawing}-- So with the  
8 tupelos under the hill shore E of F. H. Pond  
9 like a bull's horn  
10 They terminate abruptly ^ having no upward leading  
11 shoot--& bend off over the water--are singularly  
12 one sided {drawing} In short trees appear  
13 to grow regularly because the sky & diffu-  
14 sion of light is commonly regular--

15 There is a peculiarly drooping elm at Geo.  
16 Prescott's great gate just N of his house--very  
17 {diffirent} from the common or upright ~~ones~~  
18 stiff branched ones near by it--

19 Feb. 13th 1859

20 Pm on ice to F. H. Pond.

21 Yesterday there was no skating--unless you  
22 swept the snow from the ice--but today--though  
23 there has been no rain nor thaw, there is  
24 pretty good skating-- Yesterday the water  
25 which had flowed, & was flowing, back over  
26 the ice on each side of the river & the meadows  
27 --1 rod or 2 in width--was merely skimmed  
28 over--but last night it froze so that  
29 there is good skating there-- Also the wind  
30 will generally lay bare some portion of the  
31 ice--unless the snow is very deep--

---

<sup>281</sup> A white Poplar - OED.

1 This yellowish ice which froze yesterday &  
2 last night is thickly & evenly strewn with  
3 fibrous frost crystals very much like bits  
4 of asbestos an inch or more long--sometimes  
5 arranged like a star or rosette--one for  
6 every inch or 2--but where I broke in yesterday  
7 & apparently wherever the water over flowed the  
8 thin ice late in the day there are none. I think  
9 that this is the vapor from the water which  
10 found its way up through the ice--& froze in  
11 the night. It is sprinkled like some kind of  
12 grain--& is in certain places much more  
13 thickly strewn--as where a little snow shows  
14 itself above the ice.

15 The old ice is covered with a dry powdery  
16 about 1 inch deep toward the sun  
17 snow--^ from which as I walk ^ this perfectly  
18 clear bright p.m.--at 3 1/2 o'clock--  
19 the colors of the rain-bow are reflected  
20 from a myriad fine facets--it is as if the  
21 dust of diamonds & other precious stones  
22 were spread all around-- The blue & red  
23 predominate. Though I distinguish these  
24 colors everywhere toward the sun, they are  
25 so much more abundantly reflected to  
26 me from 2 particular directions--that I  
27 see 2 distant rays, or arms, so to call  
28 them, of this rain-bow like dust--one on each  
29 side of the sun--stretching away from me  
30 & about half a dozen feet wide. The 2

1 arms including an angle of about 60  
2 degrees-- When I look from the sun I  
3 see merely dazzling white points-- I  
4 can easily see some of these dazzling  
5 grains 15 or 20 rods distant on any side  
6 though the facet which reflects the light  
7 cannot be more than a 10th or 12th of an  
8 inch at most-- Yet I might easily--&  
9 commonly do over-look all this.

10 Winter comes to make walking possible  
11 where there was no walking in summer--  
12 Not till winter do we take possession of  
13 the whole of our territory.

14 I have 3 great highways raying out  
15 from one center--which is near my door--  
16 I may walk down the main river--or  
17 up either of its two branches. Could any  
18 avenues be contrived more convenient?  
19 With this river--I am not compelled to walk in the tracks of horses  
20 Never is there so much light in  
21 the air as in one of these bright winter  
22 afternoons, when all the earth is covered  
23 with new fallen snow--& there is not a  
24 cloud in the sky-- The sky is much the  
25 darkest side--like the bluish lining of an  
26 There seems nothing left to make night out of.  
27 egg shell.^ With this white earth be-  
28 neath & that spot skimmed milk sky  
29 above him--man is but a black speck  
30 enclosed in a white egg shell.

32 Sometimes in our prosaic moods, life

1 appears to us but a certain no' more of days  
2 like those which we have lived--to be cheered  
3 not by more friends & friendship--but probably  
4 fewer & less-- As perchance we anticipate  
5 the end of this day before it is done--close  
6 the shutters--& with a cheerless resignation  
7 commence the barren evening whose fruitless  
8 end we clearly see--was despondingly think  
9 that all of life that is left is only  
10 this experience reflected a certain number  
11 of times. And so it would be, if it were  
12 not for the faculty of imagination.

13 I see under this ice an inch thick,  
14 a large bubble with 3 cracks across it  
15 yet they are so fine--though quite distinct  
16 that they let no air up--& I release it with  
17 my knife. An air bubble very soon makes  
18 the ice look whitish above it-- It is whitest  
19 of all when it is fairly enclosed--with ice  
20 beneath it. When by treading above<sup>282</sup> it I dis-  
21 lodge a bubble under this ice which formed  
22 only last night-- I see that it leaves  
23 the outline of its form behind--the ice  
24 being a little thinner above it.

25 Here is the track of one who walked  
26 here yesterday-- The age of the track is  
27 betrayed by a certain smoothness or shin-  
28 iness--produced by the sun shining on the  
29 raw & disturbed edges & melting them

---

<sup>282</sup>inserted

1 The fresh track is evidently mader in  
2 a dry powdery substance--that of  
3 yesterday as if<sup>283</sup> it were made in a slightly  
4 glutinous matter--or which possessed  
5 considerable tenacity

6 Then there is the wonderful stillness  
7 of a winter day. The sources of sound as  
8 of water are frozen up--scarcely a tinkling  
9 rill of it is to be heard. When we listen,  
10 we hear only that sound of the surf  
11 of our internal sea--rising & melting  
12 in our ears as in 2 sea shells. It is  
13 the sabbath of the year--stillness  
14 audible--or at most we hear the  
15 ice belching & crackling as if struggling  
16 for utterance

17 A transient acquaintance with any phenomenon  
18 is not sufficient to make it completely the  
19 subject of your muse. You must be so con-  
20 versant with it as to remembre it & be  
21 reminded of it long afterward while it  
22 lies remotely fair & elysian in the horizon  
23 approachable only by the imagination.

24 Feb. 14th

25 Pm on ice up Assabet--to RR.

26 The ice belt which I still see along  
27 the steep bank of the Assabet--is now  
28 some 3 weeks old--& though it was then  
29 6 or 8 inches thick it is now only 2 or 3

---

<sup>283</sup>altered from "of"



1 or much less--in many places nearly  
2 wasted away--& those once horizontal tables  
3 are often fallen aslant like shields pierced  
4 with many holes-- That belt--at first  
5 consisting of more or less blunt triangles  
6 {drawing} projecting 4 or 5 feet  
7 from the bank--was at first of course  
8 perfectly horizontal & level--(I see where  
9 dogs & foxes & rabbit have run along  
10 on it for half a mile together). but now  
11 such is the flexibility of the ice it is now  
12 bent downward by its own weight-- Thus  
13 {drawing} --or if you stand in front of it it is  
14 a waving or undulating line instead of  
15 a level one-- {drawing}  
16 ie. on its edge. I see one table where the  
17 ice is a little more than 1 inch thick which  
18 is curved downward on the sides--18 inches  
19 within a horizontal distance of 2 1/2 feet--  
20 thus {drawing} there is nothing like a crack  
21 at this bend. Some of the belt itself--where  
22 3 inches thick has bent downward 18 inches  
23 at 4 or 5 feet from the bank-- I also see  
24 on Sunset Interval a large cake a  
25 rod square--& a foot thick with more  
26 than a foot of soil attached beneath--  
27 which by its own weight resting high &  
28 dry there has bent very considerably.  
29 In one great cake there just like this  
30 I see a fence post with 3 holes in it

1 standing upright--& perhaps the whole  
2 of it has been brought away in the soil  
3 beneath. It does not appear where it  
4 came from.

5           Looking at the edge of one of these cakes  
6 I notice some bubbles--seen edgewise  
7 in the form of some buttons--or of an  
8 inverted moorish dome-- {drawing} There  
9 are they which when you look down  
10 on them appear thus-- {drawing}

11           As I walk over thin ice--settling it down  
12 I see great bubbles under--3 or 4 feet  
13 wide go waddling or wabbling<sup>284</sup> away--  
14 like a scared lady impeded by her train.  
15 I have but little doubt that the musquash  
16 gets air from these bubbles which are probably  
17 very conspicuous under the ice. They are  
18 its reservoirs

19                           Feb 15th

20           Pm up river to F. H. Pond  
21 I thought by the peculiar moaning sound  
22 of the wind about the dining room at  
23 noon--that we should have a rain storm.  
24 I heard only one blast though some  
25 crack, but no doubt that betrayed  
26 a pluviose<sup>285</sup> breath.

27           I am surprised to find how much

---

<sup>284</sup>possibly "wobbling"

<sup>285</sup>possibly underlined

1 it has thawed in the street--though  
2 there has been no rain--only a S. wind.  
3 There is already water standing over an icy  
4 foundation & the dirt of the street is more  
5 obvious--the snow having partly melted away from it.

6 We walk through almost invisible pud-  
7 dles on the river & meadows--in which we  
8 see the trees &c reflected

9 I see some remarkable overflowed ice--  
10 Here is one oval shield--of an oval form  
11 some 20 feet long--very regularly & inter-  
12 {drawing} estingly mottled with yellowish  
13 or dead leaf color--the stain of  
14 the mead--which by some law  
15 has been regularly distributed  
16 through the white--yet so  
17 delicately shaded off--that it almost makes  
18 you dizzy to look at it. It reminds me  
19 of the beginning of a higher organization  
20 --or bony structure in a moluscous fish--  
21 The over flow must here have been from  
22 the center where it burst up & flowed each  
23 way. In the proper light I am surprised  
24 to detect<sup>286</sup>--very fine & perfectly regular  
25 curving rays within the ice--just like  
26 the veins of some leave--only finer & more  
27 regular--bilateral--perhaps a trace  
28 of the water as it flowed--say like  
29 the lines of a cowry shell--It is but

---

<sup>286</sup>medial "t" not crossed

1 imperfectly suggested in the drawing.  
2           Against the thickening air trees  
3 are more & more distinct The apple  
4 trees--so moist are blacker than ever--  
5 A distant white white birch erect  
6 on a hill--against the white misty  
7 sky looks ~~like~~ with its fine twigs  
8 so distinct & black- {drawing} like a millipede  
9 crawling up to heaven. The  
10 white oak leaves against the  
11 darker green of pines, now moist, are  
12 far more reddish--  
13           Against Bittern Cliff I feel the first drop  
14 strike the right slope of my nose & run down  
15                   such is the origin--of rivers  
16 the ravine there ^ Not till half a mile further  
17 my doubting companion<sup>287</sup> feels another  
18 on his nose also--& I get some in my eye & soon  
19 after I see the countless dimples in the puddles on the ice--so measured & deliberate is  
20 Nature  
21  
22 Then the gentle spring-like rain begin always  
23 & we turn about.  
24           The sound of it--pattering on the dry  
25 oak leaves--where young oaks thickly  
26 cover a hill side--is just like that  
27 of wind stirring them--when first heard--  
28 but is steady & monotonous & so betrayed--  
29 We rejoice to be wetted--& the very smell of  
30 wet woolen clothes exhilarates us.  
31           I forgot to say (the 14th) that there are  
32 2 of those ice belts, a narrower & thinner one  
33 about 10 inches below the first often con-

---

<sup>287</sup>Typed note stapled to MS copy: "Edmond's copy of Sanborn's 1906/Volume 17 (journal, 1858-59): p. 449. note at foot reads, 'This walk Feb'y 15, / was taken with Channing'"

1 nected with it by icicles at the edge--Thus  
2 each rise was recorded--

3 Feb 16th

4 Pm From the entrance of the mill road--I look

5 back through the sun, this soft Pm

6 to some white pine tops near Jenny Dugan's

7 Their flattish boughs rest stratum above

8 green

9 stratum like a cloud--a ^ mackerel

10 sky--hardly reminding me of the concealed

11 earth so far beneath--they are like a

12 flakey crust to the earth--a more ethereal

13 terebinthine evergreen earth--It occurs to

14 me that my eyes rest on them with the

15 same pleasure as do those of the hen hawk

16 which has been nestled in them--

17 My eyes nibble the piney sierra which makes

18 the horizon's edge--as a hungry man nibbles

19 a cracker.

20 The hen hawk & pine are friends. The same

21 thing which keeps the hen hawk in the woods

22 --away from the cities--keeps me here. That

23 bird settles with confidence on a white pine

24 top--& not upon your weather-cock-- That

25 bird will not be poultry of yours--lays no

26 eggs for you--forever hides its nest--

27 Though willed--or wild, it is not wilfull

28 in its wilderness. The unsympathizing

29 man regards<sup>288</sup> the wildness of some

30 animals--their strangeness to him as

---

<sup>288</sup>"regards" altered from "regardness" [sic]

1 a sin-- As if all their virtue consisted  
2 in their tameableness. He has always  
3 a charge in his gun ready for their  
4 extermination-- What we call wildness  
5 is a civilization other than our own--  
6 The hen hawk shuns the farmer but it seeks  
7 the friendly shelter & support of the pine--  
8 It will not consent to walk in the barnyard  
9 but it loves to soar above the clouds--  
10 It has its own way & is beautiful, when  
11 we would fain subject it to our will. So  
12 any surpassing work of art is strange &  
13 wild to the mass of men--as is genius  
14 itself-- No hawk that soars & steals our  
15 poultry is wilder than genius--& none  
16 is more persecuted or above persecution.  
17 It can never be poet laureate--to  
18 say pretty<sup>289</sup> poll--& polly-want a cracker--

19 Feb 20th 59--

20 Have just read "Counterparts or  
21 the Cross of Love" by the author of "Charles  
22 Auchester"--<sup>290</sup>

23 It is very interesting--its illustration of  
24 Love & Friendship--as showing how  
25 much we can know of each other  
26 through sympathy merely--without  
27 any of the ordinary information.

28 You know about a person who deeply

---

<sup>289</sup>possibly "piety"

<sup>290</sup> Elizabeth Sara Sheppard  
(1830-62)

1 interests you more than you can be  
2 told-- A look, a gesture, an act--~~tells~~  
3 ~~you~~ which to every body else is insignifi-  
4 cant tells you more about that one  
5 than words can. (How language is al-  
6 ways found to serve best the highest  
7 moods--& expression of the highest truths!)  
8 If he wanted to conceal something from  
9 you--it would be apparent.

10         It is as if a bird told you-- Something  
11 of moment occurs-- Your friend designs  
12 that it shall be a secret to you-- Vain wish!--  
13 You will know it & his design. He  
14 says consciously nothing about it-- Yet  
15 as he is necessarily affected by it--its effect  
16 is visible to you-- From this effect you  
17 infer the cause-- Have you not already  
18 anticipated a thousand possible accidents?--  
19 can you be surprised? You unconsciously  
20 through sympathy make the right supposition--  
21 No other will account for precisely this  
22 behavior. You are disingenuous & yet  
23 your knowledge exceeds the woodcraft  
24 of the cunningest hunter-- It is as if you  
25 had a set a trap--knowing the haunts  
26 of your game--what lures attract it  
27 --its track--&c You have foreseen how it  
28 will behave when it is caught & now you  
29 only behold what you anticipated.

1 sometimes from the altered manner  
2 of our friend--which no cloak can  
3 possibly conceal--we know that  
4 something has happened--& what it  
5 was--all the essential particulars,  
6 though it would be a long story to tell--  
7 though it may involve the agency of 4  
8 or 5 persons--who never breathed it  
9 to you--yet you are sure as if you  
10 had detected all their tracks in the wood.

11           You are the more sure because in the  
12 case of love effects follow their causes  
13 more inevitably than usual--this being a  
14 controlling power--

15           Why a friend tells all with a look--a tone  
16 --a gesture--a presence--a friendliness.  
17 He is present when absent--

18           In the composition it is the  
19 greatest art to find out as quickly  
20 as possible which are the best passages  
21 you have written--& tear the rest away  
22 to carve at them. Even the poorest  
23 parts will be most effective when  
24 they serve these--as pediments to the  
25 column.

26           How much the writer lives & endures



1 in coming before the public so often-- if  
2 few years or books are with him equal  
3 to a long life of experience--suffering &c  
4 It is well if he does not become hardened.  
5 He learns how to hear contempt--& to despise  
6 himself-- He makes, as it were, post mortem  
7 examinations of himself before he is dead.

8 Such is art.

9 Pm The rain ceases--& it clears up  
10 at 5 Pm-- It is a warm W wind-- &  
11 a remarkably soft sky--like plush--perhaps  
12 a lingering moisture there-- What a reve-  
13 tion the blue & the bright tints--in the  
14 west again after the storm & darkness! It  
15 is the opening of the windows of heaven after  
16 the flood!

17 %Picking Geese%

18 Feb. 22nd Go to Worcester to Lecture in a parlor--

19 Feb 23rd--

20 Pm walk to Quinsigamond Pond--  
21 where was good skating yesterday--but this  
22 very pleasant & warm day it is suddenly quite  
23 too soft. I was just saying to Blake that  
24 I should look for hard ice in the shade  
25 or N side  
26 ^ of some hill & wooded hill--close to the  
27 shore--though skating was out of the  
28 question elsewhere--when looking up  
29 I saw a gentleman & lady very gracefully

1 v 2 ps forward<sup>291</sup>

2 Now the sun has got so high--& hot--  
3 that we have to take off our thick coats when  
4 we walk--perhaps-- The ice is softened  
5 so that the skaters' sport is spoiled--  
6 your heels sink into it slightly as you  
7 walk--& so you get along more easily.

8 The fisherman must better himself, if he  
9 would catch any more fish through the  
10 ice. It begins to melt about the edges  
11 of some ponds-- The sunny sides--so that  
12 the woodman must be quick to team his  
13 wood across there.

14 What evidence is there of spring? This light  
15 & warm sun--which compels us to throw our  
16 outside coats open wide--or take them off  
17 --even to seek the shade for coolness-- -- This  
18 rapidly melting snow & these sparkling currents  
19 by the roadside-- this softened ice--  
20 but above all the warble of a single blue-  
21 bird that came to us out of the softened air.

22 If I am going a journey I am ready  
23 in such good season--that often the last  
24 hour before I start, not having been devoted  
25 to any particular occupation, but simply  
26 vacated by my ordinary occupation, becomes  
27 a season of singular leisure, & I find that  
28 I then do various jobs which had been in-  
29 {diferently} postponed long before--

---

<sup>291</sup>line set off from text by curved line

1       you can attend to things then which you  
2       have no leisure for on ordinary days--wholly  
3       out of your ordinary routine.

1 gyrating & as it were curtesying to each  
2 other in a small bay under such  
3 a hill on the opposite shore of the  
4 pond-- Intervening bushes & shore concealed  
5 the ice-- so that their swift & graceful  
6 motions--their bodies inclined at various  
7 angles as they gyrated forward &  
8 backward about a small space--  
9 looking as if they would hit each other--  
10 {reminde} me of the circling of 2 winged  
11 crickets in the air--or hawks receding &  
12 approaching.

13 I first hear & then see 8 or 10 blue

14 //birds going over-- Perhaps they have not

15 boy

16 One ^ tells me that he saw a blue-bird

17 reached Concord yet. in Concord on Sunday the 20th V Mar 9th.

18 Ac. to newspapers they were seen 23 Feb. also in Connecticut. & Mar 3d in West Roxbury.

19 I see, just caught in the pond--, a brook

20 pickerel--which though it has no

21 transverse bars, but a much finer &

22 slighter reticulation than the common--

23 is very distinct from it in the length &

24 form of the snout. This is much shorter

25 & broader as you look down on it-- Thus

26 {drawing}<sup>292</sup> In Bell<sup>293</sup> Pond--(once Bladder Pond)

27 on the same road near to Worcester-- They were

28 catching little shiners only at most 2 inches

29 long for perch bait--(The perch & pickerel

30 they commonly catch at Quinsigamond are

31 smaller) They cut a round hole about

---

<sup>292</sup>caption above drawing reads "brook." "common--"

<sup>293</sup>"Bell" altered from "bell"

1 3 feet in diameter & let down a simple  
2 net of this form {drawing} with only a stone  
3 to sink it in the bottom--then cast  
4 Indian meal or bits of cracker  
5 into the water & the minnows swim<sup>294</sup>  
6 forward after the bait & the fisherman without  
7 seeing them pulls up the net at a venture--

8 Feb 25th

9 Heard Staples--Tuttle--E. wood--N. Barret  
10 & others this morning at the P. O. talking  
11 about the profit of milk farming. The  
12 general conclusion seemed to be that  
13 it was less profitable than it was 3 years  
14 ago. Yet Staples thought he could name  
15 half a dozen who had done well-- He  
16 named one-- He thought he could name  
17 8 or 10 who had paid off the mortgages  
18 on their farms by this means within a few  
19 years-- Tuttle said he would give him  
20 a good supper if he would name 3.  
21 Staples named only the one referred to  
22 above-- David Buttrick--but he added  
23 There is  
24 --looking at Tuttle--"~~I can nam~~ yourself--  
25 You know you came to town with nothing  
26 in your pocket but an old razor,  
27 a few pennies & a damned dull jack-  
28 knife--& now you are richer than David  
29 Buttrick"-- Well answered N Tuttle

---

<sup>294</sup>followed by cancelled "(-)"

1 I shouldn't have been if I had not used  
2 the razor so much."

3           When it snowed yesterday very large  
4 flakes--an inch in diameter--aunt said--  
5 "They are picking geese"-- This, it seems is an  
6 old saying--

7           Measure your health by your sympathy  
8 with morning & spring. If there is no response  
9 in you to the awakening of nature-- If the  
10 prospect of an early morning walk--does not  
11 banish sleep--if the warble of the first  
12 blue-bird does not thrill you-- Know that  
13 the morning & spring of your life are past.

14           Thus may you feel your pulse.

15 //I heard this morning a nuthatch on the  
16 elm in the street-- I think that they are  
17 heard oftener & again at the approach of  
18 spring--just as the phebe note of the chica-  
19 dee is--& so their gnah gnah is a  
20 herald of the spring.

21 //           Joe Smith says that he saw black birds  
22 //this morning-- I hear that robins were  
23 seen a week or more ago-- So the birds  
24 are quite early this year.

25           Pm up river on ice--  
26 I see a handful of the scarlet R carolina  
27 hips in the catch of a willow on some  
28 mud--a foot or more above the ice--

1 they are partly eaten--& I think were placed  
2 there by musquash-- The rose bud with a  
3 few hips on it still stands in the ice within  
4 a few feet-- Goodwin says he has  
5 seen their tracks 8 or 10 rods long to an  
6 apple tree near the water where they  
7 have been for apples.

8           Along edge of Staples' Meadow sprout-  
9 land-- the young maples some 3 years  
10 old are stripped down ie. the lower branches  
11 for a foot or 2 by the ice falling-- This  
12 barks & wounds the young trees severely.

13           The ice over the middle of the river  
14 is now alternately dark & whitish--  
15 I see the river beginning to show dark through  
16 the thinnest parts in broad crescents  
17 convex up stream--single or connected--  
18 {drawing}

19           A good book is not made in  
20 the cheap & off hand manner of many of  
21 our Scientific Reports--ushered in by the message  
22           d  
23 of the Presi<sup>a</sup>ent communicating it to Congress--  
24 & the order of Congress that so many thousand  
25 copies be printed, with the letters of instruction  
26 for the Secretary of the Interior (or rather  
27 exterior)--<sup>295</sup> the bulk of the book being a  
28 journal of a picnic or sporting expedition--  
29 by a brevet Lieutenant Colonel--illustrated

---

<sup>295</sup>" )" written over "--"

1 by photographs of the travellers footsteps  
2 across the plains & an admirable  
3 engraving of his native village as it  
4 appeared on leaving it-- & followed by  
5 an appendix on the Palaeontology of  
6 the route by a distinguished savant who  
7 was not there--the last illustrated by  
8 very finely executed engravings of some  
9 broken  
10 old shells picked up on the road.

11           There are several men of whose comings  
12 & goings the town knows little-- I mean  
13 the trappers. They may be seen coming from  
14 the woods & river, perhaps with nothing  
15 in their hands,--& you do not suspect  
16 what they have been about. They go  
17 about their business in a stealthy manner  
18 for fear that any shall see where they  
19 set their traps--for the fur-trade still  
20 flourishes here. Every year they visit the  
21 out-of-the way swamps & meadows & brooks  
22 to set or examine their traps for musquash  
23 & mink--& the owners of the land com-  
24 monly know nothing of it. But few  
25 as the trappers are here--it seems  
26 by Goodwin's accounts that they steal  
27 one another's traps.



1 All the criticism which I got on my lecture  
2 on Autumnal Tints at Worcester on the  
3 22nd was that I assumed that my au-  
4 dience had not seen so much of them  
5 as they had. But after reading it I am  
6 more than ever convinced that they have  
7 not seen much of them--that there  
8 are very few persons who do see much  
9 of nature.

10 Feb. 27th 59

11 Pm to Cliffs-- though it was a dry  
12 powdery snow storm yesterday--the snow is now  
13 so high that the snow is soft & sticky this  
14 pm. The sky too is soft to look at & the  
15 air to feel on my cheek.

16 Health makes the poet--or sympathy  
17 with nature--a good appetite for his  
18 food which is constantly renewing him--whet-  
19 ting his senses. Pay for your victuals then with  
20 poetry--give back life for life--

21 ~~Mar 1st~~ 1859  
22 Feb 28th

23 To Cambridge & Boston--  
24 Saw a mackerel in the market-- The  
25 upper half of its sides is mottled ~~like~~  
26 blue & white like the mackerel sky--  
27 {drawing} as stated Jan 19th 58--

1 Wednesday Mar 2d '59

2 Pm to Cassandra Ponds & down

3 river--

4 It is a remarkably cold day for  
5 March-- And the river &c are frozen as  
6 solidly as in the winter & there is ~~less~~  
7 no water to be seen upon the ice as  
8 usually in a winter day--ap. because  
9 it has chiefly run out from beneath  
10 on the meadows & left the ice-- For  
11 often as you walk over the meadows  
12 it sounds hollow under your tread.

13 I see in the Deep Cut on the left hand  
14 or E side just beyond the clay--a ravine  
15 lately begun, in a slightly different manner  
16 from the clam shell one. The water running  
17 down the steep sand bank--(which is some  
18 30 or 35 feet high)--it being collected  
19 from the field above--had worn a channel  
20 from 4 to 6 inches wide--gradually through  
21 the frozen crust of the sand which was 1 to  
22 2 feet thick, & reaching the loose unfrozen  
23 sand beneath had washed it downward,  
24 & out through the narrow channel lower  
25 down--~~and~~ until quite a cavern was  
26 formed whose bottom was 8 or 10 feet  
27 below the surface while it was 5 or 6

1 feet wide--But within a few days  
2 --the crust thawing had fallen in--  
3 & so the cavern with its narrow "crack"  
4 or sky light was turned into an open  
5 ravine--& there is no telling where the  
6 mischief will end.

7           The willow catkins by the RR. where  
8 you first come in sight of the house  
9 now all (on one or 2 bushes) crept out  
10 about 1/8 of an inch--giving to the bushes //  
11 already a very pretty appearance when  
12 you stand on the sunny side--the  
13 silvery white specks contrasting with the  
14 black scales-- Seen along the twigs  
15 they are somewhat like small pearl buttons  
16 on a waistcoat--

17           Go & measure to<sup>296</sup> what length the  
18 silvery willow catkins have crept out  
19 beyond their scales--if you could know  
20 what time o' the year it is by nature's  
21 clock.

22           As I go through the Cassandra ponds I  
23 look round as the young oak woods still  
24 clad with rustling leaves as in winter  
25 with a feeling as if ~~they~~ it were their last  
26 rustle before the spring--but then I  
27 reflect how far away still is the time when  
28 the new buds swelling will cause these  
29 leaves to fall.

---

<sup>296</sup>"to" altered from "the"

1 we thus commonly antedate the spring  
2 more than any other season--for we  
3 look forward to it with more longing.  
4 We talk about spring as at hand  
5 before the end of February--& yet  
6 <sup>1/6 part of the whole year</sup>  
7 it will be 2 good months ^ before we  
8 can go a may-ing-- There may be  
9 a whole month of solid & uninterrupted  
10 winter yet--plenty of ice & good sleighing  
11 --We may not ever see the bare ground--  
12 & hardly the water--& yet we sit down &  
13 warm our spirits unusually with this  
14 distant prospect of spring-- As if a  
15 man were to warm his hands by stretching  
16 them toward the rising sun & rubbing them.  
17 We listen to the February Cock-crowing &  
18 turkey gobbling as to a first course--(or  
19 prelude) The blue bird, which some  
20 wood chopper or inspired walker is said  
21 to have seen in that sunny interval between  
22 the snow-storms, is like a speck of clear  
23 blue sky seen near the end of a storm  
24 reminding us of an ethereal region & a heaven  
25 which we had forgotten. Princes &  
26 magistrates--are often styled serene--but  
27 what is their turbid serenity--to that



1 as if it had grown a little there.

2 The chrysothrix may have looked as  
3 it does even under the snow--or all winter (?)  
4 It already (at any rate) makes pretty (dirty) green  
5 beds--about level with the surface of the  
6 water. These plants (i.e first ones) are  
7 earlier than any pads--for the brooks &  
8 //ditches even--are generally frozen over still--  
9 firmly.

10 Mar 3d

11 Going to Acton this morning, I saw  
12 some sparrows on the wall, which I  
13 //think must have been the F. hiemalis (?)

14 Pm up river to Nut. meadow Brook

15 It is nearly as cold as yesterday-- The piers  
16 of the bridge by the RR bridge--are adorned  
17 with very handsome salver or waiter shaped  
18 ice 3 or 4 feet in diameter (bottom up  
19 crenate  
20 ward) The ^ edges all around being adorned  
21 with bell-shaped pendants (produced by the  
22 melting? or perchance the water dashed against  
23 them.) {drawing}

24 Going by the solidago oak at Clam shell  
25 hill-bank-- I heard a faint rippling note  
26 //& looking up saw about 15 ~~white~~ snow

1 buntings sitting in the top of the oak all  
2 with their breasts toward me--sitting so still  
3 & quite white seen against the white  
4 cloudy sky-- They did not look like birds--but  
5 the ghosts of birds--& their boldness, allowing  
6 me to come quite near enhanced this im-  
7 pression. There were almost as white  
8 as snow-balls, & from time I heard a low  
9 soft rippling note from them. I could see no  
10 features--but only the general outline of <sup>plump</sup> ^  
11 birds in white. It was a very spectral sight  
12 --& after I had watched them for several  
13 minutes-- I can hardly say that I was  
14 prepared to see them fly away like ordinary buntings  
15 when I advanced farther. At first they //  
16 were almost concealed by being almost the same  
17 color with the cloudy sky.  
18  
19 I see in that ditch (call it Grassy Ditch)  
20 near John Hosmers 2d spring S. of Nut Meadow  
21 Brook--much grass which has lately grown  
22 an inch or more & lies flat on the water-- //  
23 It is somewhat frost bitten too.  
24 Is it the *Glyceria*<sup>298</sup> *fluitans*? It fills the ditch  
25 like moss--as seen at a little distance. It must  
26 be a very springy ditch to be thus open entirely.  
27 Also pretty near the spring I see a tuft of  
28 carex (?) whose stiff glaucous points have  
29 risen several inches above the surface //  
30 See 2 small water bugs at the spring-- //  
31 more elsewhere

---

<sup>298</sup>"G" written over "g"

1 // I see ap. some callitriche fresh in the spring  
2 We recross the river at Grindstone Meadow  
3 but prob. cannot tomorrow or next day there--  
4 (we tread on the white parts)  
5 The ice is spotted with<sup>299</sup> dark crescents ^ & it is  
6 puffed up along the middle being at  
7 least 6 inches high in the middle where  
8 we cross--  
9 All the lower part of steep southern slopes of hills  
10 is now commonly bare--(though the snow may  
11 be pretty deep on the brow) especially the  
12 springy bases where the skunk cabbage  
13 &c grow  
14 How imperceptibly<sup>300</sup> the first springing takes  
15 places--! In some still muddy springs whose  
16 temperature is more equable than that of  
17 the brooks--while brooks & ditches generally  
18 are thickly frozen & concealed--and the  
19 earth is covered with snow--& it is even  
20 cold hard & nipping winter weather.  
21 Some pine grass which fills the water  
22 like a moss begins to lift its tiny spears or  
23 blades above the surface which directly fall  
24 flat for half an inch or an inch along the  
25 surface--and on them (though many are  
26 frost bitten) you may measure the length  
27 to which the spring has advanced (has sprung)  
28 very few indeed--even of botanists are  
29 aware of this growth. Some of it appears  
30 to go on even under ice & snow--  
31 Or in such a place as I have described--

---

<sup>299</sup>added

<sup>300</sup>"t" not crossed



1 if it is also sheltered by alders, or the like,  
2 you may see (as Mar 2d) a little green  
3 crescent of Caltha leaves {drawing} raised an  
4 inch or so above the water, with leaves but  
5 partially unrolled--& looking as if it  
6 would withdraw beneath the surface again  
7 at night. This I think must be the most  
8 conspicuous & ~~prog~~ forward greenness (of the spring).

9 The small reddish radical leaves of the  
10 dock too are observed flat on the moist  
11 ground as soon as the snow has melted there--as  
12 if they had grown beneath it.

13 The mossy bank along the S side of Hosmer's  
14 2d spring ditch--is very interesting. There are  
15 many coarse hair-like masses of that green  
16 & brown moss on its<sup>301</sup> edge hanging over the ditch  
17 {drawing} alternating with withered looking  
18 cream colored sphagnum tinged with some  
19 color--in protuberances or mammae a foot  
20 across on the perpendicular side of the  
21 ditch. Cast water on their cheeks & they  
22 ~~bec~~ become much more reddish--yet hardly  
23 so interesting. This is while the top of the  
24 bank & all the hill side above is covered  
25 deep with snow-- The pretty fingers of  
26 the lycopodium clavatum peeping out  
27 here & there amid the snow & hanging down  
28 the ditch side--contrasting with the snow--  
29 are very interesting.

---

<sup>301</sup>"t" is uncrossed

1 Channing tells me he has met with a  
2 sassafras tree in New Bedford woods, which  
3 according to a string which he put round  
4 it--is 11 3/4 feet in circumference at  
5 about 3 feet from the ground. They  
6 consider them very good for rails there--  
7 they are so light & durable.

8 Talk about reading--a good reader--!<sup>302</sup>  
9 it depends on how he is heard-- There  
10 may be elocution & pronunciation (recitation  
11 say) to satiety but there can be no  
12 good reading unless there is good hearing  
13 also. It takes two at least for this game  
14 as for love--& they must cooperate.

15 The lecturer will read best those parts  
16 of his lecture which are best heard-- Some  
17 times it is true, the faith & spirits of the  
18 reader run a little ahead & draw after  
19 the good hearing--& at other times the  
20 good hearing runs ahead to draw on the  
21 good reading-- The reader & the hearer  
22 are a team not harnessed tandem  
23 the poor wheel horse supporting the burden of the shafts  
24 but side by side<sup>303</sup>--while the leader  
25 runs pretty much at will--while the  
26 lecture lies passive in the painted  
27 curricule behind--I saw some men  
28 unloading molasses hogsheds from a  
29 at his Grove  
30 truck ^ the other day rolling them up

---

<sup>302</sup>"!" written over dash

<sup>303</sup> "but side by side" circled with an arrow for insertion preceding "the poor"

1 an inclined plane--~~One stood~~ The truckman  
2 stood behind & shoved--after putting a couple  
3 of ropes one around each end of the {hogshead}, whilse  
4 while 2 men standing in the depot steadily  
5 pulled at the ropes--the first man was  
6 the audience the last was the audience--

7         It is the duty of the lecturer to team his hogshead  
8 of sweets to the depot or Lyceum--place the  
9 horse--arrange the ropes--& shove--& it is the  
10 duty of the audience to take hold of the ropes &  
11 pull with all their might-- The ~~read who~~  
12 lecturer who tries to read his eassy--without  
13 being abetted by a good hearing--is in the  
14 predicament of a trucker who is engaged  
15 in the sisyphian labor of rolling a molasses  
16 hogshead up an inclined plane alone--while  
17 the freight master & his men stand indifferent  
18 with their hands in their pockets-- I have seen  
19 many such a hogshead which had rolled  
20 off the ~~truck~~ horse & gone to mash with  
21 all the sweets wasted on the ground between  
22 the truckman & the freight-house--& then  
23 freight-masters thought that the loss was  
24 not theirs.

25         Read well!--<sup>304</sup> did you ever know a full  
26 well that did not yield of its refreshing  
27 waters to those who put their hands to  
28 the windless or the well sweep?-- Did you

---

<sup>304</sup>"!" written over dash

1       ever suck cider through a straw? Did  
2       you ever know the cider to push out of the  
3       straw when you were not sucking--unless  
4       it chanced to be in a complete ferment?

5             A lecture is like a barrel half full  
6       of some palatable liquor--you may tap  
7       it at various levels--in the sweet liquor--  
8       or in the froth--or in fixed air above--  
9       An audience will draw out of a lecture  
10      or enable a lecturer to read only such  
11      parts of his lecture as they like--

12            If it is pronounced good, it is partly to the  
13      credit of the hearers--if bad it is partly  
14      their fault.

15            Some times a lazy audience refuses to cooperate  
16      & pull on the ropes with a will--simply  
17      because the hogshhead is full & therefore  
18      heavy--when if it were empty--or  
19      had only a little sugar adhering to it--  
20      they would whisk it up the slope in a  
21      jiffy.

22            The lecturer therefore desires of his audience  
23      a long pull a strong pull & all pull  
24      together-- I have seen a sturdy (truckman)  
25      or lecturer who had nearly broken his back  
26      with shoving his lecture up such an inclined  
27            while the audience was laughing at him  
28      plane ^ at length, as with a last effort--  
29      set it a-rolling in amid the audience  
30      & upon their toes--scattering them like

1 sheep & making them cry out with pain--  
2 while he drove proudly away.

3 Rarely it is a very heavy freight of such  
4 hogsheds stored in a vessels hold, that  
5 is to be lifted out & deposited on the public  
6 wharf--& this is accomplished only after many  
7 a hearty pull all together & a good deal of  
8 heave-voing.

9 Mar 4th<sup>305</sup>

10 Began to snow last evening & it is now  
11 (early in the morning) about a foot deep-- //  
12 and raining--

13 Pm to E. Hosmer Spring

14 Down turnpike & back by E. Hub's Close--

15 We stood still a few moments on  
16 the turnpike below Wrights (the turnpike  
17 which had no wheel track beyond Tuttle's--  
18 & no track at all beyond Wrights) & listened  
19 to hear a spring bird-- we heard only the jay  
20 screaming in the distance & the cawing of  
21 a crow-- What a perfectly N.E. sound is  
22 this voice of the crow! If you stand  
23 perfectly still anywhere in the outskirts of  
24 the town & listen--stilling the almost incessant  
25 hum of your own personal factory-- This  
26 is perhaps the sound which you will be  
27 most sure to hear. --rising above all  
28 sounds of human industry & leading your  
29 thoughts to some far bay in the woods

---

<sup>305</sup> Note stapled to MS copy: "Sanborn's 1906, vol. 18: p. 11 par. 2: walk taken on March 4 is glossed as 'with Channing.' "

1 where the crow is venting his disgust.  
2 This bird sees the white man come & the  
3 Indian withdraw--but it withdraws not.  
4 Its untamed voice is still heard above the  
5 tinkling of the forge. It sees a race  
6 pass a-way--but it passes not away--It  
7 remains to remind us of aboriginal nature.  
8 I find near Hosmer Spring--in the wettest  
9 ground--which has melted the snow as it fell  
10 flat  
11 little ^ beds of light green moss--soft  
12 as velvet--which have recently pushed up  
13 & lie just above the surface of the water.  
14 They are scattered about in the old decayed  
15 //trough--(& there are still more & larger  
16 up Brister's Spring) They are like little  
17 rugs or mats & are very obviously of fresh  
18 growth--such a green as has not been  
19 dulled by winter--a very fresh & living perhaps  
20 slightly glaucous green. The myosotis &  
21 bitter cress are hardly clean & fresh enough  
22 but the last is at well meadow v 6 ps forward  
23 for a new growth ^ -- The radical leaves  
24 of the ranunculus repens are conspicuous  
25 but the worse for the wear--but the  
26 golden saxifrage has in one or 2 places  
27 //decidedly & conspicuously grown, like the  
28 cowslip of well meadow & still more--rising  
29 in dense buds 1/2 to 3/4 of an inch above the  
30 water-- The leaves , like those of the cowslip

1 only partly uncurled & flatted out-- This dis-  
2 tinguishes the fresh springing leaves of these 2.  
3 Prob. there is more of the chrysosplenium thus advanced //  
4 there is also at well meadow on the 5th  
5 in C. than of the caltha ^ -- I see more of the last  
6 here--

7 The surface of the snow thus rapidly melting  
8 & sinking (there are commonly some inches of  
9 water under it--the rain having soaked through)  
10 though still very fresh & pure white is all  
11 cracked as it were like that of some old  
12 toadstools. It has sunk so much that every  
13 inequity in the surface of the road be-  
14 neath is more distinctly shewn then when  
15 bare--the ruts of old wood paths are repre-  
16 in the surface  
17 sented ^ a foot above--& the track of the man & of  
18 the dog that ran by the side of the team  
19 (in the old snow) the thread in short, of every valley.

20 The surface of the snow though so recent is  
21 therefore--on account of the rain--very diversified  
22 --on steep slopes it is very regularly furrowed  
23 --ap by water that has flowed down it--  
24 {drawing} In the brook in Hub's close  
25 I see the grass pushing up  
26 from the bottom 4 or 5 inches long & waving  
27 in the current--which has not yet reached  
28 the surface--

29 C. thinks this is called a sap snow--because  
30 it comes after the sap begins to flow.<sup>306</sup>

---

<sup>306</sup>Note stapled to MS copy: "%C. thinks...%Sanborn's 1906, vol. 18: p. 13 par. 3:  
glossed with the note, 'Channing's notebook says, "World alive. I note that Henry  
said, "That perhaps the earth was God with his coat on." ' "

1           The story goes that at the social  
2 club the other night Cyrus Stow hearing  
3 that the lecture before the Lyceum by Alger  
4 was to be on "The Sophistry of Ennui" &  
5 not knowing what that was, asked in  
6 good faith if it went by wind or water.

7                           Mar 5th 1859

8           Going down town this Am I heard a white-  
9   within 20 feet  
10 //bellied nut hatch on an elm ^ uttering peculiar  
11           %also v. 21st Mar%  
12 notes & more like a song that I remember  
13 to have heard from it. There was a chickadee  
14 close by to which it may have been addressed.  
15 It was something like "to-what what what  
16 //what what" rapidly repeated, & not the  
17 normal "gnah gnah"-- And this instant  
18 it occurs to me that this may be that earliest  
19 spring note which I hear--& have referred  
20 This is before I have chanced to see a blue-bird black bird or robin in Concord this year  
21 to a wood-pecker! It is the spring note  
22 of the nut hatch.<sup>307</sup> It paused in its progress  
23 about the trunk or branch--& uttered this  
24 lively but peculiarly inarticulate song--an  
25 awkward attempt to warble almost in the  
26 face of the chickadee--as if it were one of  
27 its kind-- It was thus giving vent to the  
28 spring with it. If I am not mistaken,  
29 it is what I have heard in former springs  
30 or winters  
31 ^ long ago--fabulously early in the season or

---

<sup>307</sup>period altered from dash



1 when we have had but just begun to an-  
2 ticipate the spring--(for it would seem  
3 that we in our anticipations & sympathies  
4 include in succession the moods & expressions  
5 of all creatures) When only the snow had  
6 begun to melt & no rill of song had broken  
7 loose-- a note so dry & fettered still--so in-  
8 articulate & half thawed out--that you  
9 might (and would commonly) mistake for  
10 the tapping of a wood pecker. As if the  
11 young nuthatch in its hole had listened only  
12 to the tapping of wood peckers & learned that  
13 music--& now when it would sing--& give vent  
14 to its spring {extacy} & I can modulate only  
15 some notes like that--that is its theme still,  
16 That is its ruling idea of song & music.  
17 only a little clangor & liquidity added to the  
18 tapping of the woodpecker. It was the handle  
19 by which my thoughts took firmly hold on spring.

20 This herald of spring is commonly unseen, it sits  
21 so close to the bark.

22 Pm up river<sup>308</sup> to Well meadow--  
23 The snow melts & sinks very rapidly-- This  
24 spring snow is peculiarly white & blinding.  
25 The inequalities of the surface are peculiar  
26 & interesting when it has sunk that rapidly.

27 I see crows walking about on the ice half  
28 covered with snow in the middle of the meadows  
29 where there is no grass--ap. to pick up the

---

<sup>308</sup> Note stapled to MS copy: "Sanborn's 1906, vol. 18: p. 15 par. 2: "up the [sic] river" is glossed 'with Channing.' "

1 worms & other insects left there since  
2 the mid winter freshet  
3 // We see one or 2 little gnats or mosqui-  
4 toes in the air.  
5 // See a large light colored hawk circling  
6 I have no glass  
7 a long time over F. H. Hill & another--  
8 prob its mate starts away for Holden  
9 wood & circles toward it. The last being  
10 nearest. I distinguished that its wings  
11 were black tipped. What can they be?  
12 I think that I have seen the same in pre-  
13 vious springs. They are too light colored for  
14 henhawks--& for a pair of marsh hawks--  
15 being apparently alike. Then the fish-hawk  
16 is said by the books not to get here nearly  
17 so early--& beside they would not circle  
18 about so much over the hill. The gos-  
19 hawk which I next think of--has no black  
20 red shouldered h. or may it not be the  
21 winter hawk of Wilson--for  
22 ? tip to wings that I can learn ^ he says its primaries  
23 are black at the tips ? & that is lighter  
24 than the red-shouldered--of same species  
25 At the same time I see a crow going north  
26 or NE high over F. H. Hill--& 2 or 3 minutes after 2 more  
27 //& so many more at intervals of a few moments.  
28 This is ap their spring movement-- Turkeys  
29 //gobble in some distant farm yard at the  
30 same time. At length the sun is seen  
31 to have come out & to be shining on the  
32 oak leaves on the S side of Bear Garden  
33 hill--& its light appears to be exactly limited  
34 to them

1           I saw on the ice quite alive some of  
2           black  
3 those ^ water beetles {drawing} which ap had been  
4 left above by a rise of the river--were they  
5 a gyrinus?

6           When I was last at well meadow I saw  
7 where ap. a dozen hounds had all crossed  
8 the brook at exactly one point leaving a great  
9 trail in the slosh above the ice--though there  
10 was but one track of a man. It reminded me  
11 of a buffaloe trail. Every half mile as you  
12 go up the river you come to the tracks of one  
13 or 2 dogs which have recently crossed it without  
14 any man.

15           Those skunk cabbage buds which are most  
16 advanced--have cast off their outmost & often  
17 frost bitten sheathes--& the spathe is broader  
18 & slightly opened--(some 3/4 inch or more already)  
19 & has acquired brighter & more variegated  
20 colors. The outside of the spathe shows  
21 some ripeness in its colors & markings like  
22 a melon rind before the spadix begins  
23 to bloom. I find that many of the most for-  
24 ward spathes &c--have been destroyed since I was  
25 here 3 days ago. Some animal has nibbled away  
26 a part of the spathes (or sometimes only a hole in it)  
27 & I see the fragments scattered about) &  
28 then eaten out the whole of the spadix. Indeed but  
29 few forward ones are left. Is this a mouse  
30 --or musquash--or a bird? The spadix is evidently

1 a favorite tit-bit to some creature--  
2 ? That more entire-leaved plant amid the  
3 early skunk cabbage which I called a  
4 cress on the 3d--has the bitter taste of cress.

5 The common cress has in one place grown  
6 //considerably & is fresh & clean & very good  
7 to eat. I wonder that I do not see where  
8 some creatures have eaten it--

9 The sweet gale bush seen in a mass at  
10 a little distance is ~~dark~~ considerably darker  
11 than the alders above it-- This will do for  
12 the sweet-gale maze in November.

13 The cowslip there is very prominently flower-  
14 budded--lifting its yellow flower buds above water--  
15 in one place. The leaves are quite inconspicuous  
16 when they first come up bein rolled up tightly  
17 {drawing}

18 Sunday Mar. 6th<sup>309</sup>

19 Pm to Yellow Birch Swamp--  
20 ~~As w~~ We go through the swamp near  
21 Bee tree or Oak ridge listening for black  
22 birds or robins & in the old orchards for  
23 blue birds-- Found between 2 of the  
24 little birches in the path (where they grow  
25 densely) in Indigo-bird sproutland a small  
26 nest suspended between 1 & 2 feet above  
27 the ground between 2 of the little birches

---

<sup>309</sup>Note stapled to MS copy: "Sanborn's 1906, vol. 18: p. 17 par. 4, note: ` "Henry says, "If we get low enough down for duty, we shall be in chains" Channing'

1 This is where I have see the indigo bird  
2 in summer & the nest ap. answers to Wilson's //  
3 ac. of that birds--being fastened with saliva  
4 to the birch on east side--W says it is  
5 "built in a low bush xx suspended between 2 twigs,  
6 one passing up each side;"--  
7 This is about the diameter of a hair birds nest within  
8 composed chiefly of fine bark shreds looking like grass  
9 & one or 2 strips of grape vine bark  
10 ^ & very securely fastened to the birch on each side by a whitish  
11 silk or cobweb & saliva-- It is thin the lining being  
12 probably gone.<sup>310</sup>  
13 There is a very picturesque large  
14 black oak on the bee-tree ridge  
15 of this form {drawing}  
16 The genista--is not evergreen having  
17 turned brown--though it is still quite  
18 leafy--I could not find a single green shoot.  
19 It is correctly represented in Loudon's  
20 Arboretum in '44 as "a deciduous un-  
21 der-shrub"-- Yet in his "Encyclopedia"  
22 in 55 it is represented as "an evergreen  
23 shrub."  
24 Measured a thorn which at 6 inches from  
25 the ground--or the smallest place below the  
26 branches--for it branches soon--was 2 feet 3 inches

---

<sup>310</sup>followed by 3 blank lines

1 in circumference. Cut off a barberry  
2 on which I counted some 26 rings--the  
3 broadest diameter being about 3 1/2 inches--  
4 Both these were on the west side the Yellow  
5 birch Swamp.

6 The slender black birches with their  
7 catkined twigs gracefully drooping on  
8 all sides are very pretty--Like the alders  
9 ~~they~~ with their reddish catkins they express  
10 more life than most trees. Most trees  
11 look completely at rest if not dead now--  
12 but these look as if the sap must be  
13 already flowing in them--(<sup>311</sup>& in winter as well)

14 In woodland roads--you see where  
15 the trees which were bent down by ice &  
16 obstructed the way were cut ~~down~~ the past  
17 off  
18 winter--their tops lie on one side.

19 Mar 7th 6 1/2 Am to Hill

20 I come out to hear a spring bird--the ground  
21 generally covered with snow yet & the channel  
22 of the river only partly open-- On the hill  
23 I hear first the tapping of a small woodpecker.  
24 I then see a bird alight on the dead  
25 top of the highest white oak on the hill  
26 top-on the topmost point. It is a  
27 //shrike-- While I am watching him  
28 //8 or 10 rods off--I hear robins

---

<sup>311</sup>open paren written over dash

1 down below W of the hill-- Then to my surprise  
2 the shrike begins to sing. It is at first a  
3 wholly ineffectual & inarticulate sound--  
4 without any solid tone to it--a mere hoarse  
5 breathing as if he were clearing his throat--  
6 a shrill hissing  
7 unlike any bird that I know ^ --Then he uttered  
8 a very decided mewing  
9 a kind of mew ^ clear & wiry between that  
10 note of the  
11 of a catbird & the ^ nut-hatch-- As<sup>312</sup> if to  
12 lure a nut-hatch within his reach-- Then rose  
13 sharpest or tremulous  
14 with the ^ shrillest vibratory ^ whistling or chir-  
15 ruing on the very highest key-- This high gurg-  
16 ling jingle was ~~much~~ like some of the notes of  
17 singing  
18 a robin ^ in summer-- But they were very short spurts  
19 in all these directions--though there was all this  
20 variety. Unless you saw the shrike--it  
21 would be hard to tell what bird it was.  
22 This variety of notes covered considerable time  
23 but were sparingly uttered with intervals.  
24 It was a decided chinking sound the clearest  
25 strain--suggesting much ice in the stream.  
26 I heard this bird sing once before--but that  
27 was also in early spring--or about this time-- It is  
28 said that they imitate the notes of other birds in  
29 order to attract them within its reach-- Why then  
30 have I never heard them sing in the winter? (I have  
31 seen 7 or 8 of them the past winter quite near)  
32 The birds which it imitated--if it imitated  
33 any this morning--were the cat-bird & the  
34 robin--neither of which probably would it

---

<sup>312</sup>"As" written over { }

1 catch--& the first is not here to be caught.  
2 Hearing a peep I looked up & saw 3 or  
3 4 birds passing rather--which suddenly  
4 descended & settled on this oak top-- They  
5 were robins--but the shrike instantly hid  
6 himself behind a bough--& in half a minute  
7 flew off to a walnut & alighted as usual  
8 on its very topmost twig--apparently afraid  
9 of its visitors. The robins kept their  
10 ground--one alighting on the p very point  
11 which the shrike vacated. Is not this  
12 then probably the spring-note or pairing note  
13 or notes  
14 ^ of the shrike--?

15           The first note which I heard from the  
16 robins far under the hill--was "sveet  
17 sveet--suggesting a certain haste & alarm.  
18 & then a rich hollow somewhat plaintive  
19 peep or peep-eeep-eeep as when in distress  
20 with young just flown. When you first see  
21 them alighted they have a haggard--an anxious  
22 & humid look.

23           I hear several jays this morning.

24           I think that many of the nuts which we  
25 find in the crevices of bark--firmly wedged  
26 in--may have been placed there by jays chica-  
27 dees &c to be held fast while they crack  
28 them with their bills.<sup>313</sup>

29           A lady tells me that she saw

---

<sup>313</sup> Note stapled to MS copy: "Sanborn's 1906, vol. 18: p. 20 at foot: ' "H says there is nothing but the seasons" C.'



1 last cattle show day -- --- putting  
2 up a specimen of hair-work in a  
3 frame (by his niece) in the exhibition  
4 hall-- I think it represented flowers--  
5 & underneath was written "this  
6 Hare was taken from 8 different heads."

7 She made some sort of exclamation  
8 betraying that there was some mistake  
9 in the writing--whereupon -- ---  
10 took it down & carried it off--but  
11 soon came back with a new description  
12 or label-- "This hare was taken from  
13 8 different heads"--& thus it stood thro'  
14 the exhibition.

15 Pm to ministerial swamp.

16 I hear of 2 who saw bluebirds this morning-- //  
17 V 9th  
18 & one says he saw one yesterday--^ This seems to have  
19 been the day of their general arrival here--  
20 but I have not seen one in C. yet.

21 It is a good plan to go to some old orchard  
22 on the S. side of a hill sit down & listen--esp.  
23 in the morning when all is still. Yo can thus  
24 warble  
25 often hear the distant ^ ~~note of~~ of some  
26 blue-bird lately arrived--which if you  
27 had been walking would not have been audi-  
28 ble to you. As I walk those first wild  
29 spring days--with my coat thrown open stepping  
30 over tinkling rills of melting snow--excited by  
31 the sight of the bare ground--especially

1 the reddish subsoil, where it is exposed  
2 by a cutting--& by the few green radi-  
3 stand still  
4 cal leaves. I ^ shut my eyes & listen from  
5 time to time in order to hear the note  
6 of some bird of passage just arrived.

7 There are few if any so coarse and in-  
8 sensible that they are not interested to hear  
9 that the blue bird has come. The Irish  
10 laborer has learned to distinguish him &  
11 report his arrival. It is a part of the  
12 news of the season to the lawyer in his office  
13 & the mechanic in his shop--as well as to  
14 the farmer. One will remember perchance  
15 to tell you that he saw one a week ago  
16 in the next town or county. Citizens just  
17 come in to the country to live put up a blue  
18 bird box--& ~~register~~ record in some kind  
19 of journal the date of the first arrival  
20 observed--though it may be rather a late one.  
21 The farmer can tell you when he saw the  
22 first one, if you ask him within a week.

23 I see a great many of those glow-  
24 worm like caterpillars observed in the freshet  
25 in mid winter--on the snowy ice in the meadows  
26 & fields now--also <sup>small</sup> ^ beetes of various kinds  
27 & other caterpillars-- I think this unusual  
28 no' is owing to that freshet which washed  
29 them out of their winter quarters so long ago  
30 & they have never got back to them.  
31

1 I also see, but their appearance is a  
2 regular early spring, or late winter, phe-  
3 nomenon--a great many of those  
4 slender black bodied insects from 1/4 to  
5 (with the feelers) one inch long--with  
6 6 legs & long grey wings--2 feelers  
7 before & 2 forks or tails like feelers behind.  
8 The last are sometimes concealed by the  
9 wings-- This is {wat} I have called for  
10 convenience perla. {drawing} They are ~~creeping~~ {//}  
11 crawling slowly about over the snow--

12 I have no doubt that crows eat some of  
13 the above named caterpillars--but do other  
14 birds?

15 The mystery of this life of plants is kindred  
16 with that of our own lives, and the physiolo-  
17 gist must not ~~%presume%~~  
18 ~~gist~~ must not ~~%(% be in too much haste %)%~~ to explain  
19 ~~%which%~~  
20 their growth according to mechanical laws.  
21 ~~%or { } { } { } { } mechanics of his own making%~~  
22 we must not presume<sup>314</sup> to probe with our fingers  
23 ~~%my% % { } { } { } %~~  
24 the sanctuary of ~~%^%~~ life whether animal or  
25 vegetable. if we do we shall discover nothing  
26 but surface still. ~~%^%~~ The ultimate expression  
27 or fruit of any created thing--is the fine  
28 effluence which only the most ingenuous  
29 worshipper perceives at a reverent distance from  
30 its surface even-- The cause & the effect are  
31 equally evanescent & intangible--and the  
32 former must be investigated ~~with~~ in the  
33 same spirit & with the same reverence with

---

<sup>314</sup>underlined in pencil



1 the tree at that point & never returns to  
2 it. It has nothing to do with any other  
3 fruit which the tree may bear--& only  
4 %genius%  
5 the %(% eye %)% of the poet can--pluck it.

6 The fruit of a tree is neither in the seed or in  
7 the full grown tree  
8 (the timber)--but it is simply the highest use  
9 to which it can be put.  
10 %Mar.%  
11 Jan<sup>315</sup> 8th A rainy day.

12 Pm to Hill in rain--  
13 To us snow & cold seem a mere delaying  
14 of the spring. How far we are from under-  
15 standing the value of these things in the economy  
16 of Nature!

17 The earth is still mostly covered with ice &  
18 snow-- As usual I notice large pools of  
19 greenish water in the fields on an icy bottom  
20 which cannot owe their greenness to  
21 the reflected blue mingled with the yellowish  
22 light at sundown--as I supposed in the case  
23 of the green ice & water in clear winter  
24 days--for I see the former now at mid  
25 day--~~when~~ & in a rain storm when no  
26 sky is visible. I think that these green  
27 pools over an icy bottom must be  
28 produced by the yellow--or common  
29 earth stain in the water mingling with  
30 the blue which is reflected from the  
31 ice. Many pools have so large a  
32 proportion of this yellow tinge as not

---

<sup>315</sup>"Mar" altered from "Jan"





1 time is passing. If the weather is thick  
2 and stormy enough--If there is a good  
3 chance to be cold & wet & uncomfortable  
4 in the woods to feel weather beaten--  
5 you may consume the afternoon to  
6 advantage thus browsing along the edge  
7 of the near wood--which would  
8 scarcely detain you at all in fair weather  
9 & you will as far away there as at the  
10 end of your longest fair weather walk--&  
11 come home as if from an adventure.  
12 There is no better fence to put between  
13 you & the village than a storm into  
14 which the villagers do not venture  
15 out.

16 I go looking for green radical leaves-- What  
17 a dim & shadowy existence have now to our  
18 memories the fair flowers whose localities  
19 they mark! How hard to find any trace of  
20 their stem ~~af~~ now after it has been flattened  
21 under the snow, of the winter-- I go feeling  
22 with wet & freezing fingers amid the withered  
23 grass & the snow for these prostrate stems  
24 that I may reconstruct the plant. But  
25 greenness so absorbs our attention--that some  
26 times I do not see the former rising from the  
27 midst of those radical leaves when it almost  
28 puts my eyes out-- The shepherds purse  
29 radical leaves are particularly bright.

30 I see there a dead white pine some 25  
31 feet high--which has been almost entirely



1 stript of its bark by the woodpeckers-- Where  
2 any bark is left the space between it & the  
3 wood is commonly closely packed with the  
4 gnawings of worms which appear to have con-  
5 sumed the inner bark. But where the  
6 bark is gone the wood also is eaten to some  
7 depth--& there are numerous holes penetrating deep  
8 into the wood-- Over all this portion which is  
9 almost all the tree-- the woodpeckers have knocked  
10 off the bark & enlarged the holes in pursuit of  
11 the worms.

12 The fine rain with a strong N wind is now  
13 forming a glaze on my coat-- When I get  
14 home the thermometer is at 29°+ So a glaze  
15 seems to be formed when a fine rain is falling with  
16 the thermometer very little below the freezing point. //

17 Men of science when they pause to con-  
18 template "The power wisdom & goodness" of God  
19 or as they sometimes call him "The Almighty  
20 Designer"-- speak of him as a total stranger  
21 whom it is necessary to treat with the highest  
22 consideration. They seem suddenly to have  
23 lost their wits.

24 Mar. 9th

25 Pm to Lee's Cliff--with C  
26 C says that he heard & saw a blue bird on  
27 the 7th & RWE the same. This was the day //  
28 on which they were generally observed. I am doubtful  
29 about one having been seen on the 20th of Feb. by a boy

1 as stated Feb 23d C also saw a  
2 //skater insect on the 7th & a single blackbird  
3 flying over Cassandra Pond which he thought a Grackle--  
4 //A true spring day--not a cloud in the  
5 sky--the earth shines its icy armor  
6 reflecting the sun--& the rills of melting  
7 snow in the ruts shine too--& water  
8 where exposed in the right light on  
9 the river is a<sup>318</sup> remarkably shining blue--  
10 just as the osiers appear brighter  
11 //Yet it is cool & raw & very windy--  
12 The ice over the chanel of the river where  
13 not quite melted is now generally  
14 //mackerelled--(the water representing the  
15 blue portions--) with parallel openings  
16 leaving  
17 riddling it or ~~forming~~ a sort of network  
18 of ice over it {drawing} answering  
19 to the ridges  
20 of the waves-- You can best observe them  
21 from bridges  
22  
23 In some cases the snow upon the ice having  
24 lain in successive drifts might also assist  
25 or modify this phenomenon.  
26 // The rain of yesterday has been filling  
27 the meadows again--flowing up under  
28 the dry ice of the winter freshet which  
29 for the most part rested on the ground  
30 & so this rise is at first the less observed.  
31 until it shows itself beyond the edge of  
32 the ice.

---

<sup>318</sup>"a" added

1           At corner spring brook-- the water  
2 reaches up to the crossing--& slants over  
3 the ice there-- the brook being open and some  
4 space on each side of it-- When I look  
5 from 40-50 rods off at the yellowish  
6 water covering the ice about a foot here  
7 it is decidedly purple (though when close  
8 by & looking down on it it is yellowish merely)--  
9 while the water of the brook channel &  
10 a rod on each side of it where there is no  
11 ice beneath is a beautiful very dark blue.  
12 These colors are very distinct--the line of  
13 separation being the edge of the ice on  
14 the bottom. and this apparent <sup>juxtaposition</sup> ~~mingling~~  
15 of different kinds of water is a very singu-  
16 lar & pleasing sight. You see a light  
17 purple flood, about the color of a red  
18 grape--& a broad channel of dark purple  
19 water, ~~about~~ as dark as a common blue-purple  
20 grape--sharply distinct across its middle.

22           I see at Lee's the long narrow ~~crim~~  
23 radical leaves of the T. stricta--just  
24 beginning to push their shoots--the most forward  
25 looking plant there.

26           We cross F. H. P. on the ice though  
27 it is difficult getting on & off--it being  
28 melted about the edges, as well as over-  
29 flowed there.

30           It is worthwhile to hear the wind roar  
31 in the woods today. It sounds further off  
32 than it is.

33           Came across a stout & handsome

1 woodchopper--with a full dark or black  
2 beard--but that on his upper lip was  
3 a distinct sandy color-- It was a very  
4 pleasing contrast--suggesting a sympathy  
5 with the center of light & intelligence  
6 nearer to which it grew.

7 Mar 10th

8 6 Am to Hill

9 I see at near the Stone bridge where  
10 the strong NW wind of last night  
11 broke the ice just formed--& set the  
12 irregular triangular pieces on their edges  
13 quite perpendicular & directed NW & SE  
14 pretty  
15 & ^ close together--about 9 inches high  
16 for half a dozen rods, like a dense  
17 fleet of schooners with their mainsails  
18 set.

19 when  
20 And already ^ near the road

21 I hear the warble of my first Concord  
22 bluebird come to me from the hill  
23 through the still morning air--& looking  
24 up I see him plainly though so far  
25 away a dark speck in the top of a  
26 walnut.

27 When I reach the assabet above  
28 the Hemlocks-- I hear a loud crashing  
29 or battling sound--& looking through the  
30 trees--see that it is the thin ice of  
31 1/2 hour after sunrise  
32 the night--^ now swiftly borne down

1 the stream in large fleets & going to wreck  
2 against the thick old ice on each side--  
3 This evidently is a phenomenon of the  
4 morning. The river too has first waked  
5 up--and no doubt a river in midsummer  
6 as well as in winter--recognizes the advent  
7 of the morning as much as a man or an  
8 animal does-- They retire at night &  
9 awake in the morning.

10 Looking NE over Hosmers meadow I see  
11 still the rosy light reflected from the  
12 low snow spits--alternating with green  
13 ice there.

14 Ap. because the angle of incidence & excidence  
15 are equal--Therefore we see the green  
16 in ice at sundown when we look about  
17 over the ice--~~our~~ visual ray making such  
18 an angle with it as the yellow light  
19 from the W horizon does in coming to it.

20 Pm to Witherell Vale.

21 There are some who never ~~say or~~ do nor  
22 say anything--whose life merely excites ex-  
23 pectation-- Their excellence reaches no further  
24 than a gesture or mode of carrying them-  
25 selves-- They are a sack dangling from  
26 the waist, or a sculptured war-club  
27 over the shoulder-- They are like fine  
28 edged tools--gradually becoming rusty  
29 in a shop window-- I like as well

1 if not better to see a piece of iron or  
2 steel, out of which many such tools  
3 will be made--or the bushwhack  
4 in a man's hand.

5 When I meet gentlemen & ladies I am  
6 reminded of the extent of the inhabitable<sup>319</sup>  
7 & uninhabitable globe-- I exclaim to  
8 myself. Surfaces!--Surfaces! If the out-  
9 side of a man is so variegated & extensive  
10 what must the inside be?-- You are  
11 high up the Platte<sup>320</sup> river--traversing  
12 deserts--plains covered with rocks--with  
13 no deeper hollow than a prairie-dog  
14 hole tenanted also by owls & venomous snakes.

15 As I look toward the woods  
16 (from Wood's Bridge) I perceive the spring  
17 V ap. 15  
18 in the softened air ^ This is to me the most  
19 interesting & affecting phenomenon of the  
20 season as yet. Apparently in consequence  
21 of the very warm sun this still & clear day  
22 filling in the earth 4/5 covered with  
23 snow & ice there is an almost invisible  
24 vapor held in suspension which is  
25 like a thin coat or enamel applied  
26 to every object--& especially it gives to  
27 the woods--of pine & oak intermingled  
28 more  
29 a softened & ^ living appearance-- They evidently  
30 stand in a more genial atmosphere  
31 than before-- Looking more low I

---

<sup>319</sup>"t" not crossed

<sup>320</sup>"p" altered from "p"

1 see that shimmering in the air over  
2 the earth--which betrays the evapor-  
3 ation going on-- Looking through this trans-  
4 parent vapor--all surfaces--not osiers  
5 ~~bu~~ and open waters alone--look more  
6 vivid. The hardness of winter is relaxed--  
7         There is a fine effluence surrounding the  
8 wood--as if the sap had begun to stir--&  
9 you could detect it a mile off. Such  
10 is the difference between an object seen through  
11 a warm, moist, & soft air & a cold dry  
12 hard one-- Such is the genialness of  
13 nature that the trees appear to have  
14 put out feelers--by which the senses  
15 apprehend them more tenderly.

16         I do not know that the woods are ever more  
17 beautiful or affect me more.

18         I feel it to be a greater success as a lecturer  
19 to affect uncultivated natures-- than  
20 to affect the most refined--for all  
21 cultivation is necessarily superficial & its  
22 root may not even be directed toward the  
23 centre of the being.

24         Rivers too, like the walker, unbutton  
25 their icy coats & we see the dark  
26 bosoms of their channels--in the midst  
27 of the ice-- Again, in pools of melted  
28 snow, or where the river has risen, I look  
29 into clear placid water & see the russet  
30 grassy bottom in the sun.

1           Look up or down the open channel  
2   now--so smooth--like a hibernating  
3   animal that has ventured to come out  
4   to the mouth of its burrough-- One  
5   way, perhaps, it is like melted silver  
6   alloyed with copper-- It goes  
7   nibbling off the edge of the thick ice  
8   on each side-- Here & there I see  
9   a musquash sitting in the sun on the  
10  edge of the ice--eating a clam. & the  
11  clam shells it has left are those  
12  along the edge-- Even & anon he drops  
13  into the liquid mirror & soon reappears  
14  with another clam.

15           This clear placid silvery water is evidently  
16  a phenomenon of spring. Winter could  
17  not show us this.

18           A broad channel of water separates  
19  the dry land from the ice & the musquash  
20  hunter finds it hard to reach the game  
21  he has shot on the ice.

22 //Fine red-stemmed leaves have begun to push  
23 growing in the Ind. ashes       Carpenter says "The first green crust upon the cinders  
24 where soot is taken off--       with which the sur-face of Ascension Island was  
25                                   covered, consisted of minute mosses."  
26 & bud on Clam shell bank--

27   We sit in the sun on the side of Money-  
28 digger's Hill--amid the crimson low-  
29 blueberry shoots--& the withered andropogon

30 //scoparius & the still erect solidago arguta  
31   & the tall stubble thickly hung with fresh gleaming cobwebs  
32 (var--the common) ^ There are some  
33 greyish moths out &c--some gnats--



1 I see the bridged far away over the  
2 ice-- resting on its thick piers above  
3 the ice which is lifted around it-- It is  
4 short legged now-- This level or<sup>321</sup> horizontal line  
5 resting on perpendicular black ones  
6 is always an interesting sight to me.

7         As we sit in the wonderful air--many  
8 sounds--that of wood-chopping for one--  
9 come to our ears agreeably blunted or muffled  
10 even like the drumming of a partridge--not  
11 sharp & rending as in winter as in winter & recently. If a  
12 partridge should drum in winter--probably  
13 it would not reverberate so softly through  
14 the wood and sound indefinitely far.

15         Our voices even sound differently & betray  
16 the spring ~~air~~. We speak as in a house  
17 --in a warm apartment still--with  
18 relaxed muscles--& softened voices--  
19 The voice--like a woodchuck in his burrow--  
20 is met & capped in & encouraged  
21 by all genial & sunny influences. These  
22 may be heard now perhaps under south  
23 hill sides--& the south sides of houses--a  
24 slight murmur of conversation, as of  
25 insects, out of doors.

26         These earliest spring days are peculiarly  
27 pleasant--we shall have no more of  
28 them for a year. I am apt to forget  
29 that we may have raw & blustering days

---

<sup>321</sup>"or" added

1 a month hence. The combination  
2 of this delicious air, which you  
3 do not want to be warmer or  
4 softer--with the presence of ice  
5 & snow--your sitting on the  
6 bare russet portions--the South hill-  
7 sides--of the earth-- This is the  
8 charm of these days-- It is the summer  
9 beginning to show itself like an old friend  
10 in the midst of winter-- You ramble  
11 from one drier russet patch to another-- These  
12 are your stages. You have the air  
13 & sun of summer--over snow & ice--&  
14 in some places ever the rustling of dry leaves  
15 under your feet as in Indian Summer days.

16 The blue-bird on the apple tree--warbling  
17 so innocently to inquire if any of its mates  
18 are within call.--the angel of the spring!  
19 Fair & innocent yet the offspring of the earth.  
20 The color of the sky above & of the subsoil  
21 beneath. Suggesting what sweet & inno-  
22 cent melody--(terrestrial melody) may  
23 have its birth-place between the sky &  
24 the ground.

25 2 frogs, (may have been R. fontinalis--did not see  
26 them) jumped into Hosmer's grassy ditch.

27 See in one place a small swarm of  
28 insects flying or gyrating--dancing  
29 like large tipulidae--The dance always  
30 ^within the compass of a foot^ above<sup>322</sup>

---

<sup>322</sup>"...of a foot above" is not this far from "within the compass" in the MS, but the spacing is here to allow room for the interlined text above to be where it is in the MS.

1 a piece of snow of the same size in the  
2 midst of bare ground.

3 The most ornamental tree I have seen  
4 this spring was the willow full of catkins  
5 now showing most of their down--in front of  
6 Puffer's house.

7 Mar. 11th 59

8 6 Am By river side I hear the song of many  
9 song-sparrows-- The most of a song of //  
10 any yet-- And on the swamp white oak  
11 top by the stone bridge--I see & hear a red- //  
12 wing. It sings almost steadily on its  
13 perch there--sitting all alone, as if  
14 to attract companions. (& I see 2 more  
15 also solitary on different tree tops within  
16 a quarter of a mile) calling the river  
17 to life & tempting ice to melt & trickle like  
18 its own sprayey notes. Another flies  
19 over on high--with a tchunk & at length  
20 a clear whistle. The birds anticipate the  
21 spring--they come to melt the ice with  
22 their songs.

23 But methinks the sound of the wood-  
24 pecker tapping is as much a spring note  
25 as any these mornings--it echoes peculiarly  
26 in the air of a spring morning.

27 Pm. to Hunt House

28 I go to get one more sight of the old house  
29 which Hosmer is pulling down--but I am too

1 late to see much of it-- The chimney is gone  
2 & only little more than the oblong square  
3 frame stands-- E Hosmer & Nathan Hosmer  
4 are employed taking it down-- The latter  
5 draws all the nails, however crooked, &  
6 puts them in his pockets, for being wrought  
7 ones, N he says it is worth the while.  
8 {drawing} It appears  
9 plainly {~~the~~} now that  
10 the frame is laid  
11 bare, that the  
12 Eastern 2/3 of the main  
13 house, is older than  
14 the western 3rd--for you  
15 V. 12 ps forward-<sup>323</sup>  
16 can see where the W. part has been added  
17 on--at the line AB. All the joists in the old part  
18 are hewn--in the newer sawn-- But very extensive  
19 repairs had been made in the old part--prob.  
20 at the same time with the addition. (Also the  
21 back part had been added on to the new part--  
22 merely butted on at one side without tenant or  
23 The peculiar cedar lathes were confined to the old part  
24 mortise) The 2 Hosmers were confident  
25 The whole has oak sills & pine timbers  
26 that the chimney was built at the same  
27 time with the new part--because though there  
28 were flues in it from the new part--there was  
29 no break in the courses of brick about them.  
30 On the chimney was the date 1703 (?) I think  
31 that was it & if this was the date of the  
32 chimney--it would appear that the old

---

<sup>323</sup>Could be on line 14, separated from but even with "the western..."



1 Very much such relics as you find in the  
2 old rats nests in which these houses abound.

3 My mother says that she has been to the  
4 charitable society there-- One old jester  
5 of the town used to call it "the chattable  
6 society."

7 Mrs A. takes on dolefully on ac. of  
8 the solitude in which she lives--but she  
9 gets little consolation. Mrs B. says  
10 she envies her that retirement. Mrs A.  
11 is aware that she does, & says it is as if  
12 a thirsty man should envy another the  
13 river in which he is drowning. So goes  
14 the world--it is either this extreme or that.  
15 too much  
16 Of solitude--one gets ~~enough~~ & another  
17 not enough.

18 E. Hosmer says that a man told him that  
19 he had seen my uncle Charles--take a 12  
20 foot ladder set it up straight & then run  
21 up & down the other side, kicking it from  
22 behind him as he went down.

23 E H. told of seeing him often at the tavern toss his hat to the ceiling twirling it  
24 over & catch it on his head every time<sup>325</sup>  
25 Large flocks of black-birds today in the  
26 elm tops--& other trees-- These are the 1st con-  
27 spicuous large flocks of birds--

28 //J. Farmer says he saw ducks this morning

29 //& has seen larks some days

30 // Channing saw geese today--

31 Find out as soon as possible<sup>326</sup> what  
32 are the best things in your composition--

---

<sup>325</sup>Only the last two words, "every time," of the interlined text wrap to next line in MS, so from "E H." to "his head" is one line of interlined text.

<sup>326</sup>poss "possibly"

1 & then shape the rest to fit them. The  
2 former will be the midrib & veins of the leaf.  
3           There is always some accident  
4 in the best things--whether--thoughts  
5 or expressions or deeds-- The memorable  
6 thoughts--the happy expression the admirable  
7 deed-- are only partly ours-- The thought came  
8 to us because we were in a fit mood--also  
9 we were unconscious & did not know that  
10 we had said or done a good thing<sup>327</sup>. We  
11 must walk consciously only part way toward  
12 our goal--& then leap in the dark to our  
13 success. What we do best or most per-  
14 fectly--is what we have most thoroughly  
15 learned by the longest practice--& at length  
16 it falls from us without our notice  
17 as a leaf from a tree-- It is the last time  
18 we shall do it--our unconscious  
19 leavings.

20                           Saturday Mar. 12th

21       \_\_\_\_\_ Pm walk in rain to Ministerial swamp

//

22           Going up the R. R. in this rain with  
23 a S wind. I see a pretty thick low fog  
24 extending across the RR only against Dennis'  
25 swamp. There being much more ice & snow within  
26 the swamp--the vapor is condensed & is blown  
27 northward {over}<sup>328</sup> the RR. I see these local  
28 fogs with always the same origins--ie  
29 large masses of snow or ice--in swamps or woods

---

<sup>327</sup>"thing" poss. written over "think"

<sup>328</sup>"over" in 1906 but unlike T's normal "over." Not sure what else it could be though.

1 perhaps the N. side of hills--in several  
2 places afterward-- The air is warm--  
3 As often as we came to a particularly icy or snowy place--as Harrington road in  
4 woods--we found ourselves in a fog.<sup>329</sup>  
5 It is a regular spring rain such  
6 as I remember walking in--windy but  
7 warm-- It alternately rains hard & then  
8 holds up a little-- A similar alter-  
9 nation we see in the waves of water &  
10 all ~~all~~<sup>330</sup> undulating surfaces--in snow  
11 & sand & the clouds (the mackerel  
12 sky--) Now you walk in a comparative  
13 lull anticipating fair weather--with  
14 but a slight drizzling--& anon the wind  
15 blows & the rain drives down harder than  
16 ever-- In one of these lulls as I passed  
17 the Joe Hosmer (rough-cast) house--  
18 I thought I never saw any bank so handsome  
19 as the russet hill-side behind it-- It is  
20 a very barren exhausted soil where the cladonia  
21 lichens abound--& the lower side is a flowing  
22 sand--but this russet grass with its weeds  
23 being saturated with moisture--was in  
24 this light the richest brown, {methought},  
25 that I ever saw-- There was the pale brown  
26 of the grass--red-browns<sup>331</sup> of some weeds  
27 sarothra{e}  
28 (johnswort<sup>332</sup>, & pinweed probably) dark browns  
29 sweet  
30 of huckleberry ^fern stems--& the very visible  
31 green of the cladonias--30 rods off--  
32 & the rich brown fringes<sup>333</sup> where the broken  
33 sod hung over the edge of the sand bank.

---

<sup>329</sup>Wraps after "Harrington road in woods--we..." in the MS, all interlined between lines 2 and 5.

<sup>330</sup>T seems to have crossed "all" out twice.

<sup>331</sup>Could be "red-brown,".

<sup>332</sup>"johnswort" possibly cancelled. Cancelled in (absent from) 1906.

<sup>333</sup>Could be "fringe,".



1 I did not see the browns of withered  
2 vegetation so rich last fall--& methinks  
3 these terrestrial lichens were never more  
4 fair & prominent. On some knolls these  
5 vivid & rampant lichens as it were dwarf  
6 the oaks. A peculiar & unaccountable  
7 light seemed to fall on that bank--  
8 or hill side--though it was thick storm  
9 all around-- A sort of Newfoundland  
10 sun seemed to be shining on it. It was  
11 such a light that you looked around for  
12 the sun that might be shining on it.  
13 Both the common largest & the very smallest  
14 hypericums (sarrothra) & the pinweeds were very  
15 rich browns at a little distance coloring whole  
16 & fallen  
17 fields--& also withered^ ferns reeking wet  
18 --It was a prospect to excite a reindeer.  
19 These tints of brown were as softly & richly fair  
20 & sufficing & the most brilliant autumnal  
21 tints. In fair & dry weather these spots  
22 may be common place--but now they  
23 are worthy to tempt the painter's brush--  
24 The picture should be the side of a barren  
25 lichen-clad hill--with a flowing sand bank  
26 beneath--a few blackish huckleberry bushes--  
27 here & there & bright white patches of  
28 snow here & there in the ravines-- The  
29 hill running east & west & seen through  
30 the storm from a point 20 or 30 rods S.

1           This kind of light--the air being full  
2 of rain & all vegetation dripping with  
3 it--brings out the browns wonderfully.  
4           I notice now particularly the shallows  
5 by the RR--full of dark cones as a fruit  
6           broad  
7           The ^radical leaves of ap. water dock  
8 //  
9           are very fresh & conspicuous--  
10 //See 2 ducks flying over Ministerial swamp--  
11           In one place in the meadow S E of  
12 Tarbels-- I find on the ice about a  
13 couple of holes an inch across where a little  
14 stubble shows itself--a great many small  
15           say a thousand  
16 //ants dead- ^they are strewn about the holes  
17 for 6 or 8 inches--& are collected in a  
18 dense heap about the base of the stubble.  
19 I take up a mass of them on my knife each one  
20 entire--but now of course all wet & ad-  
21 hering together. It looks as if they had  
22 been tempted out by the warmth of the  
23 sun & had been frozen or drowned--or is it  
24 possible that they were killed by the frost  
25 last fall & now washed up through the  
26 ice? I think from their position around the base  
27 of the stubble in that little hole in the ice  
28 that, that they came out of the earth &  
29 clustered there since the ice melted to that  
30 extent. There are many other insects &  
31           (& esp. spiders dead)  
32 worms ^& caterpillars on the ice there  
33 as well as elsewhere

1 I perceive that a freshet which washes  
2 the earth bare in the winter--& causes  
3 a great flow of water over it in that state--  
4 (when it is not soaked up--) must destroy  
5 a great many insects & worms. I find a great--  
6 many that appear to have been drowned rather than  
7 frozen. May not this have tempted the blue birds  
8 on early this year? //

9 Mar 13th

10 7Am F. Hyemalis in yard- //

11 <sup>334</sup>Going down RR--listening intentionally I hear  
12 far--through the notes of song sparrows (which  
13 are very numerous) the song of one or 2 larks //  
14 Also hearing a coarse chuck I look up & see  
15 4 black birds whose size & long tails betray them C. b. birds %??% //  
16 Also I hear I am pretty sure--the cackle of a pigeon- //  
17 woodpecker.

18 The bright catkins of the willow are the spring-  
19 ing most generally observed.

20 Pm to Great Fields

21 Water rising still--Winter-freshet ice on //  
22 meadows still more lifted up & partly broken in  
23 some places-- The broad light artery of the  
24 river (& some in meadows too) very fair in  
25 the distance from Peters.

26 Garfield caught a skunk lately-- //  
27 Talking with Garfield to-day about his trap-  
28 ping he said that mink brought 3 1/4 dollars  
29 a remarkably high price--& asked if I had  
30 seen any. I said that I commonly saw

---

<sup>334</sup>Could be indented.

1 2 or 3 in a year-- He said that he had  
2 not seen one alive for 8 or 10 years.  
3 "But you trap them"--, "O yes" said he. "I  
4 catch 30 or 40 dollars worth every winter."

5 <sup>335</sup>This suggests how little a trapper  
6 may see of his game.

7 In some meadows I see a great many  
8 dead spiders on the ice--where ap.  
9 {~~thes~~} it has been overflowed--or rather  
10 it was the heavy rain methinks--when  
11 they had no retreat.

12 Hear a ground squirrel's sharp chirrup  
13 //  
14 which makes you start it is so sudden--  
15 but he is prob. earthed again, for I do not  
16 see him.

17 <sup>336</sup>On the N. E part of the Great Fields I  
18 find the broken shell of a {—} C. Blandingii<sup>337</sup>  
19 --on very dry soil-- This is the 5th then  
20 //I have seen in the town All the rest were 3  
21 in the Great meadows (one of them in a ditch) &  
22 1 within a rod or 2 of Beck Stow's Swamp.

23 It is remarkable that the spots where  
24 I find most arrowheads &c being light  
25 dry soil--(as the Great Fields--Clam-  
26 shell Hill--&c) are among the first  
27 to be bare of snow--& the frost gets out  
28 there first. It is very curiously & particu-  
29 larly true--for the only parts of the

---

<sup>335</sup>Could be indented.

<sup>336</sup>Ibid.

<sup>337</sup>E. Blandingii is a type of turtle (Blanding's Turtle), so the crossed out text might be "turt" or "tort."

1 N. E section of the Great Fields which  
2 are so dry that I do not slump there--  
3 are those small in area--when perfectly  
4 bare patches of sand occur--and then singularly  
5 enough the arrowheads are particularly  
6 common-- Indeed in some cases I find them  
7 only on such bare spots a rod or 2 in extent  
8 where a single wig wam might have stood--  
9 & not half a dozen rods off in any direction  
10 Yet the difference of level may not be  
11 more than a foot--(if there is any).

12           It is as if the Indians had selected precise-  
13 ly the driest spots on the whole plain with  
14 a view to their advantage at this season--  
15 If you were going to pitch a tent tonight  
16 on the great fields you would inevitably  
17 pitch on one of these spots--or else lie down  
18 in water or mud--or on ice. It is as if they  
19 had chosen the sight of their wig wams at  
20 this very season of the year.

21           I see a small flock of black birds  
22 flying over--some rising others falling  
23 yet all advancing together--one flock  
24           some silent others tchucking  
25 but many birds^ --incessant alternation.  
26 This harmonious movement as in a dance--this  
27 agreeing to differ--makes the charm of the  
28 spectacle to me. One bird looks fractional--  
29 --naked--like a single thread unraveling from  
30 the web to which it belongs-- Alternation!

1 alternation! Heaven & Hell!  
2           Here again--in the flight of a bird--  
3 its ricochet motion--is that undulation  
4 observed in so many materials--as  
5 in the mackerel sky.  
6           If men were to be destroyed & the books they  
7 //have written be transmitted to a new race  
8 of creatures in a new world--what kind  
9  
10 of record would be found in them of so remarka-  
11 //  
12 ble a phenomenon as the rain-bow?  
13           I can not easily forget the beauty  
14 of those terrestrial browns in the rain yesterday--  
15 The withered grass was not of that very pale  
16 //  
17 hoary brown that it is today--now that it is  
18 dry--& lifeless--but being perfectly saturated  
19 & dripping with the rain the whole hillside  
20 seemed to reflect a certain yellowish light  
21 so that you looked around for the sun in  
22 the midst of the storm-- All the yellow  
23 & red--& leather color, in the fawn colored  
24 weeds was more intense than at any  
25 other season. The withered ferns, which  
26 fell last fall, pinweeds--sarothra  
27 &c were actually a glowing brown--for  
28 the same reason--being all dripping wet--  
29 The cladonias crowning the knolls had visibly  
30 expanded & erected themselves--though seen 20 rods  
31 off--& the knolls appeared swelling & bursting  
32 as with yeast.



1 The barrenest surfaces--perhaps are  
2 as yesterday  
3 the most interesting in such weather ^  
4 when the most terrene colors are seen--  
5 The wet earth & sand--& esp. subsoil  
6 are very invigorating sights--  
7 The Hunt House, to draw from memory  
8 though I have given its measures within  
9 2 years in my journal--looked like this  
10 {drawing} This is only  
11 generally correct--  
12 without a scale--  
13 %V V2 ps back%  
14 Prob grackles have been seen some days--I think I  
15 //saw them on the {21st}? Garfield says he saw  
16 //black ducks yesterday  
17 Mar 14th  
18 Pm to Hunt House--  
19 I thought from the above drawing--that the  
20 original door must have been in the middle  
21 of the old part & not at one end--and that  
22 I should detect it in the manner in which  
23 the studs were set in. I really did so &  
24 found some other traces of the old door (where I  
25 have dotted it) when I got there.  
26 Some of the chalk marks which have been  
27 preserved under the {soiling} casing of  
28 the timbers so long--have been completely



1 washed off in yesterdays rain as the frame  
2 stood bare. Also read in chalk on a  
3 chamber  
4 ^floor joint (which had been plastered over beneath)  
5 "{enfine} Brown" so many s & d--& what  
6 most read for "Feb 1666" but being  
7 written over a rough knot it is doubtful.  
8 "Hides {~~so much~~} 3"  
9 Saw E. Homer take up the cellar stairs  
10 white  
11 They are of^ oak {drawing}{drawing} in  
12 squared  
13 form like one half of a^white oak log  
14 sawed diagonally-- These lie flat on  
15 their broadest sides on the slanting earth--  
16 resting near each end on a horse which  
17 is a white oak stick with the bark  
18 & sunk in the earth  
19 on, hewed on the upper side^ -- & they  
20 are fastened to this by 2 {pins} of wood placed  
21 as I have indicated.  
22 I judge by my eye that the house is 15  
23 feet high to the eaves-- The posts are  
24 remarkably sawn & hewn away--on ac. of  
25 {the} projection of the upper story--so that  
26 they are more than 2ce as large above  
27 as below--thus {drawing} the corner posts  
28 being cut on 2 sides or more than  
29 (6 inches off them)  
30 half away ^below the 2nd story.  
31 {drawing} The chimney was laid in clay. "T. B." were  
32 perhaps the initials of Thomas Brown  
33 also "I. H. D."

1           The cowslip in pitcher has fairly  
2 //blossomed today.

3           I see a large flock of grackles  
4 //  
5 ~~on the~~ searching for food along the  
6 water's edge, just below Dr. Bartletts  
7 -- some wade in the water-- They are within  
8 a dozen rods of me & the road. It  
9 must be something just washed up that  
10 they are searching for for the water has  
11 just risen & is still rising fast. Is it  
12 not insects & worms washed out of the  
13 grass? & perhaps the snails {drawing} ?

14           When a grackle sings--it is as if his mouth  
15 were full of cotton--which he was trying to  
16 spit out.

17           The river is still rising-- It is {open}  
18 & generally over the meadows-- The  
19 meadow ice is rapidly breaking up. Great  
20 cakes half a dozen rods long are  
21 drifted down against the bridges.

22           There is a strong current on the meadow  
23 not only N along the causeway--but S  
24 along the N end of the causeway--the water  
25 tries rushing both ways toward the only  
26 outlet at the bridge. This is proved  
27 by great cakes of ice floating swiftly  
28 along parrallel with the causeway--  
29 but in opposite directions to meet at the  
30 bridge. They are then soon broken

1 up by the current after they strike the  
2 abutments-- I see a large cake 8 feet  
3 wide & 10 inches thick just broken off carried  
4 under the bridge in a vertical position &  
5 wholly underwater such is the pressure there.

6 This shows to what an extent the cause-  
7 ways & bridges act as dams to the flood--

8 Mar 15th

9 Rainy day--& southerly wind //

10 I come home in the evening through a  
11 very heavy rain--after 2 brilliant rainbows //  
12 at sunset-- The first of the year.

13 Mar 16

14 6 Am The water is just over the slanting //  
15 iron truss 4 feet from its E end. & still rising.

16 Pm

17 Launch my boat & sail to Ball's Hill //

18 It is fine clear weather & a strong N W

19 wind-- What a change since yesterday!

20 Last night I came home through an in-  
21 cessant heavy rain as I have been out in  
22 for many years--through the muddiest  
23 & wettest of streets--~~the~~ still partly  
24 covered with ice--& the rain water stood  
25 over shoes in many places on the  
26 side-walks. I heard of several who  
27 went astray in this water--& had ad-  
28 ventures in the dark-- You require india  
29 rubber boots then. But today I

1 see the children playing at hopscotch  
2 on those very sidewalks--with a bed marked  
3 in the dry sand-- So rapid are the  
4 changes of weather with us--& so porous  
5 our soil.  
6 With a strong wind we sail over the  
7 red-bridge road. The water is falling  
8 over the lower side of the road as over a dam,  
9 For the road really operates as a dam--  
10 much  
11 the water being ^lower on the E side.  
12 A new phase of the spring is presented--  
13 A new season has come. By the soaking  
14 & the wind<sup>339</sup>  
15 rain^ of yesterday ^<sup>340</sup> especially the remaining snow  
16 & ice has been almost entirely {~~washed~~} away  
17 swept<sup>341</sup>  
18 & the ice has been broken ~~up~~ floated off &  
19 melted--& ~~the~~ much frost taken out  
20 of the ground--& now as we glide {~~of~~}<sup>342</sup> over  
21 the Great Meadows before this strong  
22 wind--we {——} no longer see dripping satu-  
23 rated russet & brown banks through rain--hearing  
24 at intervals the alarm notes of the early robins--  
25 --banks which reflect a yellowish light--  
26 now  
27 but we see--the bare & ^pale brown & dry  
28 russet hills--the earth has cast off her  
29 white coat & come forth in her clean  
30 early  
31 washed sober russet ^spring dress-- As we  
32 look over the lively tossing blue waves for  
33 a mile or more Eastward & N our eyes fall

---

<sup>339</sup>T has line drawn from this interlined text to left caret.

<sup>340</sup>Caret crossed out.

<sup>341</sup>Written immediately under "{washed}".

<sup>342</sup>Unknown word or partial word crossed out. Perhaps "of".

1 on these shining russet hills--& Balls hill  
2 appears in this strong light at the verge of this  
3 undulating blue plain--like some glorious  
4 newly created island of the spring--just sprung  
5 up from the bottom in the midst of the  
6 blue waters-- The fawn colored oak leaves  
7 with a few pines intermixed--thickly covering  
8 the hill--look not like a withered vegetation  
9 --but an {ethereal} kind just expanded--& pec-  
10 culiarly adapted to the season--& the sky.

11 Look toward the sun the water is yellow--~~as if~~  
12 as water in which the earth has just washed it-  
13 self clean of its winter impurities-- Look from  
14 the sun & it is a beautiful dark blue--but  
15 in each direction the crest of the waves are white--  
16 & you cannot sail or row over this watery  
17 wilderness without sharing the excitement of this  
18 element-- Our sail draws so strongly that we  
19 cut through the great waves without feeling  
20 them-- And all around half a mile or a mile  
21 distant looking over this blue foreground I see  
22 the bare & peculiarly neat & clean washed & bright  
23 russet hills {reflect} the bright light (after  
24 the storm of yesterday) from an infinite number  
25 of dry blades of withered grass-- The russet  
26 surfaces have now as it were a combed look--  
27 combed by the rain. And the leather color  
28 of withered oak leaves covering Balls Hill  
29 seen a mile or 2 off in the strong light

1 with a few pines intermixed--as if it were  
2 an island rising out of this blue sea  
3 in the horizon--this sight affects me  
4 as if it were visible at this season only.  
5 What with the clear air & the blue water--  
6 & the sight of the pure dry withered leaves--that  
7 distant hill affects me as something altogether  
8 {ethereal}.

9           After a day of soaking rain--concluded  
10 with a double rainbow--the evening before  
11 [not to mention the rain of the evening] go out into  
12 the sparkling spring air embark on the  
13 flood of melted snow and of rain gathered  
14 from all hill sides--with a north west wind  
15 in which you often find it hard to stand up straight.  
16 & toss upon a sea--of which one half is  
17 liquid clay--the other liquid indigo--  
18 & look round on an earth dressed in a  
19           pale  
20 homespun of ^sheeny brown & leather color--  
21 Such are the blessed & fairy isles we sail  
22 to!

23           We meet one great gull beating up the  
24 //  
25 coarse of the river against the wind at Flints  
26           but there was very little water then.  
27 //Bridge (one says they were seen about a week ago). It is  
28 a very leisurely sort of limping flight--tacking its  
29 way along like a sailing vessel-- Yet the slow security  
30 with which it advances suggests a leisurely con-  
31 templativeness in the bird as if it were working out  
32 some problem quite at its leisure-- As often as  
33 its very narrow long & curved wings are lifted



1 that come & go--the lake or bay is not  
2 an institution, but a phenomenon--  
3 You plainly see that it is so much  
4 water poured into the hollows of the earth.

5 Mar 17--59  
6 6 1/2 Am

7 River risen still higher--it is 7 1/2 inches  
8 //  
9 below the highest part of the truss--  
10 & about 15 1/2 inches below the middle  
11 stone  
12 of the lower ^step of the RR. It is not  
13 quite over Woods road--  
14 // I hear a robin fairly singing  
15 A great many musquash have been  
16 killed within a week-- One says a cart load  
17 have been killed in Assabet-- Perhaps a  
18 dozen gunners have been out in this town every  
19 day-- They get a shilling apiece for their skins--  
20 One man getting musquash & one mink earned  
21 5 or 6 dollars the other day. I hear their guns  
22 early & late long before sunrise & after sunset--  
23 for those are the best times.

24 Pm to Flints Bridge by water-  
25 <sup>344</sup>The water is very high--& smooth as ever  
26 //it is-- It is very warm-- I wear but one coat  
27 on the water--the town & the land it is built  
28 on seem to rise but little above the flood--  
29 This bright smooth & level surface seems  
30 here the prevailing element as if the

---

<sup>344</sup>Might be indented.



1 distant town were an island. I realize  
2 how water predominates on the surface  
3 of the globe-- I am surprised to see new &  
4 unexpected water lines drawn by the  
5 level edge of the flood about knolls  
6 in the meadows & in the woods--waving  
7 lines--rarely if ever recognized or thought  
8 of by the walker or any--which mark the  
9 boundary of a possible or probable<sup>345</sup> freshet  
10 any spring. Even if the highest water mark  
11 were indicated at one point--the surveyor  
12 short of infinite  
13 could not with any labor^ draw these lines  
14 for us--which wind about every elevation  
15 of earth or rock-- Yet, though this slight  
16 difference of level which the water so simply  
17 & effectively points out, is so unobservable  
18 by us ordinarily--no doubt nature never for-  
19 gets it for a moment--but plants grow  
20 & insects &c breed in conformity to it-- Many  
21 a kingdom of nature has its boundaries par-  
22 allel with this waving line. By these  
23 freshets--the relation of some field, usually  
24 a<sup>346</sup>  
25 far from the stream, to^ future or past deluge  
26 is suggested-- I am surprised & amused at least  
27 --to walk in such a field & observe the nice  
28 distinctions which the great water level  
29 makes there. So plants & animals &  
30 thoughts have their commonly unseen  
31 shores--and many portions of the

---

<sup>345</sup>Looks like T first wrote "probably" then crossed out the bottom part of the y and made it an e.

<sup>346</sup>T may have inverted this "a" and the caret below it, so that the caret's on top and the "a" is below the line.

1 earth are with reference to them  
2 islands or peninsulas or capes--shores  
3 or mts--

4 We are stiff & set in our geography--because  
5 the level of water is comparatively, or within  
6 short periods, unchangeable-- We look  
7 only in the sea for islands & continents & their  
8 varieties-- But there are more subtle & in-  
9 visible & fluctuating floods--which island  
10 this or that part of the earth--whose  
11 geography has never been mapped.

12 For instance--here is Mantatuket Rock--  
13 --commonly a rocky peninsula with a low  
14 or swampy neck--& all covered with wood.  
15 It is now a small rocky island--& not  
16 only the swampy neck--but a considerable  
17 portion of the upland is blotted out by  
18 the flood--covered & concealed under water.  
19 & what surprises me is that the water  
20 should so instantly know & select its own  
21 shore--on the upland--though I could  
22 not have told with my eye whether it  
23 would 30 feet this way or as many that.<sup>347</sup>  
24 A distinction is made for me by the water  
25 in this case which I had never thought of--  
26 revealing the relation of this surface--  
27 to the flood ordinarily far from it--  
28 & which I now begin to perceive that

---

<sup>347</sup>Ibid.



1 Here is the same chemistry that colors  
2 the leaf or fruit coloring the bark--  
3 It is generally--probably always--the  
4 upper part of the twig--the more recent  
5 growth--that is the higher colored &  
6 more flower or fruit-like-- So leaves are  
7 more ethereal the higher up--& further  
8 from the root-- In the bark of the twigs  
9 indeed is the more permanent flower  
10 or fruit-- The flower falls in spring or summer  
11 fall or wither  
12 --the fruit & leaves^ in autumn {—————}  
13 ~~wither~~ --but the blushing twigs retain  
14 appear  
15 their color throughout the winter &^ ~~are~~  
16 more brilliant than ever the succeeding  
17 spring-- They are winter fruit. It adds greatly  
18 of winter or of  
19 to the pleasure of late November ~~or~~<sup>348</sup> early spring  
20 walks to look in to these mazes of twigs of  
21 different colors.  
22 As I float by the Rock, I hear rustling amid  
23 the oak leaves above that new water line--&  
24 there being no wind I know it to be a striped squir-  
25 //rel & soon see its long unseen striped sides  
26 flirting about the instep of an oak. The  
27 Its lateral stripes--alternate black & yellowish  
28 which I have not seen for a long time  
29 are a type^-- {drawing} or rather a punctuation  
30 the character to indicate  
31 mark-- (where) a new paragraph {commences} in  
32 the revolution of the seasons. Double lines.  
33 I find by measurement that there  
34 is from 2 to 3 inches fall in the middle between

---

<sup>348</sup>The caret appears to be placed over the word "or" as if T meant it to be crossed out.

1 the piers of Flints bridge--on the 2 sides of the  
2 bridge--supposing the planking to be level but  
3 there is much more close to the abutments--  
4 for the water is very conspicuously heaped up  
5 in the middle in each case--or between  
6 each 2 piers--thus {drawing}

7 If you look from above it is somewhat thus  
8 {drawing}

9 If I land now on any knoll which is  
10 left dry above the flood--an island in  
11 the meadow--& its surface is broken I am  
12 pretty sure to find Ind. relics. They pitch  
13 their wigwams on these highest places--near water.

14 I was speaking yesterday of the<sup>349</sup>  
15 peculiarity of our meadow bays in time of  
16 flood--a shore where there are no shore  
17 marks--for in time trees rocks &c arrange  
18 themselves parallel with the waters edge &  
19 the water by its marking makes for itself a strand  
20 from the bank  
21 washing out the soil ^& leaving the sand & stones--  
22 --& paths of animals & men conform to  
23 the permanent shore but in this case  
24 all is abrupt & surprising-- Rocky islands  
25 covered with green lichens & with poly pody  
26 half submerged rise directly from the water

---

<sup>349</sup>This line is indented substantially in MS.

1 & trees stand up to their middles in it.  
2 Any eye would perceive that a rock covered  
3 with green lichens quite down to the waters edge  
4 was something unusual.

5 Mar 18th

6 8 Am--to Stone Bridge

7 The water has fallen 3 or 4 inches-- It  
8 was at its height last night & was then  
9 // This is quite high water  
10 about 5 inches below the highest part  
11 of the truss-- But it was now begun  
12 to rain & the river will prob. rise again.

13 Along the shores you see now much  
14 coarse wrack of green & black pontederia  
15 // stems--which have been torn up by the ice--  
16  
17 The ice & the wrack are also dotted with  
18 cranberries here & there.

19 What a variety of weather! What a  
20 the 15th  
21 difference in the days. 3 days ago^ we  
22 with a southerly wind  
23 had steady rain--^ with a clear interval  
24 & a brilliant double rain bow {at} sunset--  
25 A day when all the russet banks were dripping  
26 saturated with wet--& the peep of the robin  
27 was heard through the drizzle & the rain--  
28 In the evening it rained again much harder  
29 than before- <sup>350</sup>The next day it  
30 it was clear & cool with a strong N. W.  
31 wind--& the flood still higher on the meadows  
32 --the dry russet earth & leather colored

---

<sup>350</sup>Gap here mirrors MS.

1 oak reflected a flashing light from  
2 far--the tossing blue waves with white  
3 crests excited the beholder & the sailer--  
4 --in short the tables were completely turned  
5 Snow & ice were for the most part washed  
6 & blown away--from both land & water--  
7 -- <sup>351</sup>Yesterday it was very warm without  
8 perceptible<sup>352</sup> wind--{not} a comparatively life-  
9 less--yet such as {invalids} like--with no  
10 flashing surfaces but as it were an invisible  
11 mist sobering down every surface--& the  
12 water still higher than before, was per-  
13 fectly smooth all day-- This was a weather  
14 breeder- <sup>353</sup>To day--comes a still  
15 steady rain again--~~which~~ with warm  
16 weather & a southerly wind--which threatens  
17 to raise the river still higher, though it had  
18 <sup>V 10 ps forward</sup>  
19 begun to fall.

20 One would say that frost in the ground  
21 though it may be melted for several inches  
22 (as now) {bred} rain--if indeed its {evaper}-  
23 ations do not create it. Expect rain  
24 after rain till the frost is completely out.  
25 The melted frost rising in the form of vapor  
26 returns perhaps in rain to liberate its kind  
27 still imprisoned in the earth.

28 Consider how I discovered where the  
29 Winthrop family in this town placed their  
30 front door some 200 years ago--without any

---

<sup>351</sup>Space here mirrors MS

<sup>352</sup>Poss. "perceptibly."

<sup>353</sup>Gap here mirrors MS.

1           Flood who is saving rails &c at the Stone  
2    Bridge-- remarks that old settlers say  
3    this stream is highest the 3rd day after a  
4    rain-- But of course this depends on the  
5    amount of the rain--the direction & force  
6    of the wind &c &c-- A SW wind will  
7    take the water out sooner--& any strong  
8    wind will evaporate it fast

9           Rice thinks that he has seen--2 gulls on  
10   the Sudbury meadows--the white & the  
11 ? gray gulls-- He has often seen a man  
12   shoot the large gull from Cambridge bridge--  
13   by heading him off--for the gull flies slowly  
14   He would first run this way & when the  
15   gull turned {aside}--run that, till the gull  
16   passed right over his head when he shot him.

17           Rice saw F. H. Pond still covered with ice  
18 //though open along the shore yesterday--  
19   I frequently see the gulls flying up the  
20   course of the stream or of the river valley  
21   at least.

22           R. thinks that the ducks will be seen more  
23   numerous--gathering on our waters--just be-  
24   fore a storm--like yesterday's





1 verbal--or written--or ocular evidence--  
2 I first detected & then verified it-- I with  
3 others, saw by the frame of the old Hunt  
4 house--that an addition had been made  
5 to its west end in 1703-- This brought the  
6 front door which was in the middle of the  
7 present-- near one end of the original or  
8 Winthrop house-- I sitting at home, said to  
9 myself--having an occult sympathy  
10 with the Winthrops of that date-- The front  
11 door must originally have been in the middle  
12 of the old house--for symmetry & convenience  
13 required it--& if it was I shall find traces  
14 of it I shall find there where studs  
15 have been set into the frame in a different  
16 manner from the rest-- I went to the house  
17 & looked where the door should have been--  
18 & I found precisely the evidence I sought--  
19 & beside where the timber above had  
20 been cut out just the width of the  
21 door-- Indeed if I had found no traces  
22 of the old door--I should have known that  
23 the present door was placed where it <sup>is</sup> ~~was~~  
24 after the house was built--for at this  
25 corner of the house the end of the sill  
26 chanced to be nearly round--the stick tapering--  
27 & the post was fitted upon in a remarkable

1 manner--thus {drawing} oak wood had been thus  
2 laboriously fitted to it--but within--3 feet  
3 of the corner this sill had been wholly cut away  
4 under the door--to make room for it--for  
5 they certainly had not put in a piece of sill only  
6 3 feet long & of that form there originally.

7 Mar 19--59

8 %very%

9 7 Am Fair weather--& a %<sup>354</sup>strong S. W

//

10 wind--the water not quite so high as day before //  
11 yesterday--(just about as high as yesterday morning) not-  
12 withstanding yesterday's rain--which was pretty copious.

13 <sup>355</sup>Pm to Tarbell's via J P Brown's--

14 The wind blows very strongly from the SW--& the  
15 course of the river being NE--it must help  
16 the water to run off very much. If it blew  
17 with equal violence from the N--the river  
18 would probably have risen on account of yesterday's  
19 rain. On the N. E. sides of the broadest  
20 expanses the waves run very high--  
21 quite sea-like--& their tumult is exciting  
22 both see & hear-- All sorts of lumber  
23 is afloat--rails--planks & timber &c  
24 which the unthrifty neglected to secure--now  
25 changes hands. Much RR. lumber  
26 is floated off-- While one end rests on the  
27 land-- It is the RR's, but as soon as it  
28 is afloat it is made the property of  
29 him who saves it-- I see some poor  
30 neighbors as earnest as the RR employees

---

<sup>354</sup>Caret, "very", and underline of "strong" are all in pencil.

<sup>355</sup>Larger than usual indentation here in MS.

1 are negligent--to secure it. It blows  
2 so hard that you walk aslant against  
3 the wind-- Your very beard, if you wear a  
4 full one, is a serious cause of detention.  
5 Or if you are fortunate enough to go before  
6 the wind your {na} carriage can hardly be  
7 said to be natural to you.

8         A new ravine has begun at Clam Shell--this  
9 spring. That other--which began with a  
10 crack in the frozen ground--I stood at the  
11 head of and looked down & out through  
12 the other day-- It not only was itself a  
13 new feature in the landscape--but it gave  
14 to the landscape seen through a new &  
15 remarkable character--as does the deep  
16 cut on the RR. It faces the water--  
17 & you {look} down on the shore & the  
18 flooded meadows between its two sloping  
19 sides as between the frame of a picture. It  
20 affected me like the descriptions or representations  
21 of much more stupendous scenery--& to my  
22 eyes the dimensions of this ravine were  
23 quite indefinite & in that mood I could  
24 not have guessed if it were 20 or 50 feet  
25 wide-- The landscape has a strange &  
26 picturesque appearance seen through it & it  
27 is itself no mean feature in it.

28         But a short time ago I detected here a crack  
29 in the frozen ground-- Now I look with delight

1 as it were at a new landscape through a broad  
2 gap in the hill.

3           Walking afterward on the side of the hill  
4 behind Abel Hosmer's overlooking the russet  
5 interval--the ground being bare where corn  
6 was cultivated last year-- I see that  
7 the sandy soil has been washed far down  
8                           length  
9 the hill--for its whole^--by the recent rains  
10 combined with the melting snow--& it forms  
11 on the nearly level ground at the base--very  
12 distinct flat yellow sands with a convex  
13 edge--contrasting with the darker soil there.  
14 {drawing} Such slopes must  
15 loose a great deal  
16 of this soil in a  
17 single spring--and I should think that  
18 was a sound reason in many cases--for leaving  
19 them woodland & never breaking & exposing<sup>356</sup> the  
20 surface-- This plainly is one reason why  
21 the brows of such hills are commonly so barren--  
22 They lose much more than they gain annually.  
23 It is a question whether the farmer will not  
24 lose more by the wash in such cases--than he  
25 will gain by manuring.

26           The meadows are all in commotion. The  
27 ducks are now concealed by the waves if there  
28 are any floating there-- While the sun is behind  
29 a cloud--the surface of the flood is almost  
30 uniformly yellowish or blue--but then the

---

<sup>356</sup>"breaking" & "exposing" marked for transposition.

1 sun comes out from behind the cloud--  
2 a myriad dazzling white crests to the waves  
3 are seen--  
4         The wind makes such a din about your  
5 ears--that conversation is difficult--  
6 Your words are blown away--& do not strike  
7 the {air}<sup>357</sup> they were aimed at-- If you walk  
8 by the water the tumult of the waves--confuses  
9 you-- If you go by a tree or enter the  
10 woods--the din is yet greater  
11         Nevertheless this universal commotion  
12 is very interesting & exciting-- The white pines  
13 in the horizon--either single trees or whole  
14 woods--a mile off in the S W or W--are  
15 particularly interesting-- You not only see  
16 the regular bilateral form of the tree--all  
17 the branches distinct like the frond of a fern  
18 or a feather--(For the pine even at this distance,  
19 has not merely beauty of outline--& color--  
20 it is not merely an amorphous & homogeneous  
21 or continuous mass of green--but shows  
22 a regular succession of flattish leafy boughs  
23 or stages in flakes one above another--  
24 like the veins of a leaf--or--the leaflets of  
25 a frond-- It is this richness & symmetry of  
26 detail, which more than its outline charms  
27 us) but that fine silvery light reflected  
28 from its needles, {~~now~~} (perhaps their under sides)  
29 incessantly in motion. As a tree bends

---

<sup>357</sup>Looks like a single letter, a space, then the word "air." 1906 (and original transcription) has "ear," and a closer look at the MS through the microfilm reader shows that T seems to have connected the single letter with the word, making it more like "ear."

1 & waves like a feather in the gale I see it  
2 alternately dark & light--as the sides  
3 of the needles which reflect the cool sheen, are  
4 alternately with {-}<sup>358</sup> drawn from & restored to the proper  
5 angle--& the light appears to flash up  
6 ward from the base of the tree incessantly.  
7 {if—}<sup>359</sup> In the intervals of the flash it is often  
8 as if the tree were withdrawn altogether from  
9 sight. I see one large pine wood--over  
10 whose whole top these cold electric flashes  
11 are incessantly passing off--harmlessly into the air  
12 above-- I thought at first of some fine spray  
13 broad  
14 dashed upward--but it is rather like ^flashes  
15 of pale cold light. Surely you can never  
16 see a pine wood so expressive--so speaking.  
17 This reflection of light from the waving  
18 crests of the earth--is like the play &  
19 flashing of electricity. No deciduous tree  
20 exhibits these fine effects of light. Literally  
21 incessant sheets--not of heat--but cold-  
22 lightning you would say were flashing there--  
23 Seeing some just over the roof of a house  
24 which was far on this side, I thought  
25 at first , that it was some thing--like  
26 smoke even--though a rare kind of smoke--that  
27 ~~when~~ went up from the house. In short  
28 you see a play of light over the whole  
29 pine, similar in its cause--but far grander

---

<sup>358</sup>Unknown mark or cross out of hyphen perhaps.

<sup>359</sup>Appears to be either "It" or "If" and another word.

1 in its effects than that seen in a  
2 waving field of grain. Is not this  
3 wind--an awaking to life & light the  
4 pines after their winter slumber? The  
5 wind is making passes over them--magnet-  
6 izing & electrifying them. Seen at ~~night~~  
7 midday even--it is still the light of  
8 dewy morning alone that is reflected from  
9 the needles of the pine. This is the  
10 brightening & awakening of the pines--a  
11 phenomenon perchance connected with the  
12 flow of sap in them. I feel some what  
13 like the young Astyanax at sight of his  
14 father's flashing crest. As if in this wind-  
15 storm of March a certain electricity was  
16 passing from heaven to earth<sup>360</sup> through the  
17 pines--& calling them to life.  
18                               general  
19               That 1st ^exposure of the russet Earth March 16  
20 //  
21 after the soaking rain of the day before--which washed  
22 off most of the snow & ice--is a remarkable era  
23 in an ordinary spring. The earth casting off  
24 her white mantle & appearing in her homely  
25 russet garb. This russet--(including the leather  
26 color of oak leaves--) is peculiar & not like the  
27 russet of the fall & winter for it reflects  
28 the spring light or sun--as if there were a  
29 sort of sap in it-- When the strong N. W.  
30 winds first blow drying up the super abundant

---

<sup>360</sup>"heaven" and "earth" marked for transposition.



1 moisture--the withered grass & leaves do  
2 not present a merely weather-beaten ap-  
3 pearance--but a washed & combed--spring-  
4 like face-- The knolls forming islands in our  
5 meadowy flood are never more interesting  
6 than then--this is when the earth is as it were  
7 recreated--raised up to the sun which was  
8 buried under snow & ice--

9 To continue the account of the weather 10 ps back

NB

10 <sup>361</sup>To-day it has cleared off to a very strong  
11 which began last eve after the rain  
12 S. W. wind ^strong as ever blows all day stronger  
13 than the N. W. wind of the 16--& hardly so warm  
14 with flitting wind clouds only-- It differs  
15 from the 16{th}<sup>362</sup> in being yet drier & barer the earth--  
16 scarcely any snow or ice to be found--& such being the di-  
17 rection of the wind you can hardly find a  
18 place in the Pm which is both sunny & sheltered  
19 from the wind--{&} there is a yet greater commo-  
20 tion in the water.

21 We are interested the phenomena of Nature  
22 mainly as children are--or as we are in  
23 games of chance-- They are more or less  
24 exciting-- Our appetite for novelty is in-  
25 satiable. We do not attend to ordinary things,  
26 though they are most important--but to extra-  
27 ordinary ones-- While it is only moderately  
28 hot or cold or wet or dry--nobody attends  
29 to it--but when Nature goes to an extreme  
30 in any of these directions we are all on

---

<sup>361</sup>This line indented more than the line above it in MS.

<sup>362</sup>Looks more like a mark, maybe even stray, than a "th," but it's certainly in the right spot for a "th."

1 the alert with excitement--not that  
2 we care about the philosophy or the effects  
3 of this ~~excitement~~ phenomenon-- E.g.  
4 When I went to Boston in the early train  
5 the coldest morning of last winter-- Two  
6 topics {mainly} occupied the attention of  
7 the passengers-- Morphy's chess victories &  
8 Natures victorious cold that morning.  
9 The inhabitants of various towns were comparing  
10 notes & that one whose door opened upon  
11 a greater degree of cold than any of his neighbors  
12 door--chuckled not a little-- Almost  
13 every one I met asked me almost before  
14 {our} salutations were over--"how the glass  
15 stood" at my house or in my town--  
16 the Librarian of the college--the registrar  
17 of deeds at Cambridge Post--a total  
18 form of  
19 stranger to me--whose ^inquiry made  
20 me think of another sort of glass--& each  
21 rubbed his hands with pretended horror--  
22 but real delight If I named a higher  
23 figure than he had yet heard. It was plain  
24 that one object which the cold was given  
25 us for was our amusement--a passing  
26 excitement-- It would be perfectly consistent  
27 & American to bet on the coldness of our  
28 respective towns, of the morning that is to  
29 come. Thus a greater degree of cold

1        may be said to warm us more than a  
2        less one. We hear with ill-concealed dis-  
3        gust the figures reported from some lo-  
4        calities--where they never enjoy the luxury  
5        of severe cold. This is a perfectly legitimate  
6        amusement--only we should know that  
7        each day is peculiar & has its kindred excitements

8                In those wet days like the 12 & the 15th  
9        when the browns culminated--the sun being  
10        concealed--I was drawn toward & worshipped the  
11        brownish light in the sod--the withered grass &c  
12        on barren hills-- I felt as if I could eat the  
13        very crust of the earth-- I never felt so terrene  
14        --never sympathized so with the surface of the  
15        earth. From whatever source the light &  
16        heat come from thither we look with love.

17                The newspapers state that a man in  
18        Connecticut lately shot 93 musquash in  
19        one day--

20                Melvin--says that in skinning a mink you  
21        must cut round the parts containing the musk--  
22        else--the operation will be an offensive one-- --  
23        that Wetherbee has already baited some  
24        pigeons (he hears)--that he(?) last year  
25        found a hen-hawk's eggs in March--& thinks  
26        that woodcocks are now laying %??%

Mar 20th 59

1  
2 // 7 Am. River no higher than 3 days ago--  
3 notwithstanding the rain of 2 days ago-- The wind being  
4 S. W. & very strong.

5 Pm I see under the E side of the house amid  
6 the evergreens {or} where they were sheltered from  
7 the cold NW wind--quite a parcel of sparrows  
8 chiefly F. hiemalis--2 or 3 tree sparrows & one  
9 song sparrow--quietly feeding together. I watch  
10 them through a window within 6 or 8 feet-- They  
11 evidently love to be sheltered from the wind--&  
12 at least are not averse to each others' so-  
13 One perches on a bush to sing--while others are feeding on the ground--but he is  
14 very restless on his perch--hopping about & stooping as if dodging those that fly  
15 over-- He must  
16 //ciety-- The tree sparrows sing a little^ . They are  
17 perch on some bit of stubble or twig to sing.<sup>363</sup>

18 evidently picking up the seeds of weeds which lie  
19 on the surface of the ground invisible to our eyes.

20 They suffer their wings to hang rather loose--  
21 The F. hiemalis is the largest--of the 3 They have

22 remarkably distinct light colored bills--& when  
23 they stretch show very distinct clear white tail  
24 lateral<sup>364</sup>  
25 feathers-- This stretching seems to be contagious

26 among them like yawning with us. They  
27 ~~5 { } sparrows~~ have considerable brown on the  
28 quill feathers-- The tree sparrows are much  
29 brighter brown & white than the song sparrow--  
30 The latter alone scratches once or twice  
31 & is more inclined to hop or creep close to the  
32 ground under the fallen weeds. Perhaps it

33 deserves most to be called the ground. bird.

34 %//% %very strong NW wind%  
35 Pm up Assabet<sup>365</sup>

36 When I get opposite the end of the  
37 willow row--the sun comes out & they are

---

<sup>363</sup>In MS, interlined text is as follows: Line 13 should end with "he is very restless on"; Line 14 with "fly over-- He must"; Line 17 is correct.

<sup>364</sup>Written at an angle between "white" and "tail."

<sup>365</sup>This line is centered in MS.

1 very handsome like a rosette--pale  
2 tawny or fawn colored at base & a rich  
3 yellow or orange yellow--the upper  
4 or 4  
5 3^ feet {drawing} This is, methinks, the brightest  
6 object in the landscape these days-- Nothing  
7 so betrays the spring sun-- I am aware that  
8 the sun has come out of a cloud first  
9 by seeing it lighting up the osiers. {~~Such a~~}<sup>366</sup>  
10 willow row--cut off within a year or 2--  
11 might be called a heliometer, or measure  
12 of the suns brightness.  
13 The last year's shoots of many trees, as maples  
14 both white & red--retain a permanent bright  
15 red or scarlet  
16 color^ all winter & spring, till new ones grow--  
17 The top of the forest is {thus}<sup>367</sup> very agreeably tinged.  
18 The river is so high--that I leave  
19 it at pinxter swamp & come into it again  
20 only at the swift narrow place above near  
21 the road--

22 Mar 21st

23 6 Am The water has fairly begun to fall-- It was //  
24 at its height the 17th fell a little 2 or 3 inches  
25 the morning of the 18-- On the 18th it rained  
26 very considerably--all day--which would ordinarily  
27 have raised the river a foot or perhaps 2--but  
28 the wind being very strong from the SW--it {only} pre-  
29 vented its falling anymore until this morning--  
30 --It did not prob. raise it more than 2 inches--

---

<sup>366</sup>Possibly crossed out.

<sup>367</sup>Could be "then."

1 Of course there could not have been much  
2 melted snow & ice to be added to the last  
3 rain about the sources of the river, since  
4 they are considerably further south  
5 where the ground must have been much  
6 more bare than here.

7 // A crow-black bird  
8 Pm sail to F. H. Pond  
9 A strong N. W wind--draw my boat over  
10 //  
11 the road on a roller-- Raising a stone  
12 for ballast from the S side of the RR  
13 causeway--where it is quite sunny & warm--  
14 I find the under side very densely covered  
15 little  
16 //with small ants--all stirring & evidently  
17 ready to come out--if some have not already--  
18 The feel the heat through the stone on the  
19 ground. It blowed very smartly in  
20 gusts--& my boat scud along this  
21 way & that--not minding its helm such  
22 as if it were lifted partly out of water--  
23 I went from point to point as quickly  
24 as you could say "here" & "there".  
25 I see a female marsh-hawk sailing & hunting  
26 over Potter's swamp. I not only see the white  
27 rump--but the the very peculiar crescent  
28 shaped curve of its wings {drawing}

29 F. H. Pond is only 2/3 open--  
30 //  
31 The E end is frozen still. & the body of  
32 the ice has drifted in to shore a rod or 2 before

1 the N W wind & its edge crumbled against  
2 the trees--

3 I see on a yel-lilly root washed up--  
4 leaf buds grown 5 or 6 inches or even 7 or 8  
5 with the stems. //

7 Every where for several days the alder catkins  
8 have dangled long & loose--the most alive  
9 apparently of any tree-- They seem to welcome  
10 the water which half covers them-- The willow  
11 catkins are also very conspicuous in silvery  
12 masses rising above the flood.

13 I see several white pine cones in the path by Wheildon's  
14 which appear to have fallen in the late strong winds--  
15 but perhaps the ice in the {winter} took them off-- Others  
16 still hold on.

17 From the evening of Mar 18 to this the evening of the  
18 21st we have had uninterrupted strong wind--till  
19 & since  
20 the eve of the 19 very strong S. W. wind--then NW--  
21 3 days of strong wind-- //

22 Mar 22

23 Pm-- The wind changes to Easterly-- //  
24 and is more raw--ie cool & moist--and  
25 the air thickens as if it would rain--

26 Returning from Poplar Hill through the  
27 west end of Sleepy Hollow It is very still  
28 the air thick--just ready to rain--& I  
29 hear there on the apple trees & small  
30 oaks--the tree sparrows & hiemalis  
31 singing very pleasantly-- I hear the

1 lively jingle of the hiemalis & the sweet  
2 notes of the tree sparrow--Canary-like  
3 --svar svar, svit vit vit vit vit--  
4 the last part with increasing rapidity.

5 Both species in considerable numbers  
6 singing together as they flit along--make  
7 //a very lively concert-- They sing as loud and  
8 full as ever now. There has been no sweeter  
9 warble than this of the tree sparrow as yet--

10 It is a peculiarly still hour now--when  
11 the first drops of rain begins to be heard on  
12 the dry leaves around me--& looking up  
13 I see very high in the air 2 large birds  
14 --which at that height with<sup>368</sup> their  
15 narrow wings flying S E looked i.e--  
16 were shaped like nighthawks-- I think they  
17 were gulls.

18 The great scar O. has now lost almost  
19 every leaf--while the white o near it still  
20 retains them.

21 // C. says he saw Fox colored sparrows %X% this pm

22 Mar 23rd

23 Pm Walk to Cardinal Shore & sail to  
24 Well meadow & Lees Cliff--

25 It clears up at 2 pm--

26 // The lycoperdon stella are numerous & blossomed  
27 out widely in Potters path by Bare Hill--

---

<sup>368</sup>Looks like T started to run "with" and "their" together, so "with" looks like "withei".



1 after the rain of the night.

2 As we sail upward toward the pond, we scare  
3 up 2 or 3 Golden-eyes or Whistlers-- //  
4 showing their large black heads & black backs  
5 and after ward I watching {swiming} not far  
6 before us-- I see the white spot, amid the black,  
7 on the side of his head-- I have now no doubt  
8 that I ~~saaw~~ some on the 21st flying here & it //  
9 is very likely that Rice saw them here on the 17th<sup>369</sup> as he  
10 says <sup>370</sup>The pond maybe said to be open today-- //

11 There is however quite a large mass of ice--  
12 which has drifted since the E wind arose yesterday  
13 noon from the E side over to the N of the Island--  
14 This ice of which there may be 8 or 10 acres  
15 is so very dark almost black--that  
16 it is hard to discern till you are just upon  
17 it--though some little pieces which are  
18 broke off & left on its edge were very visible  
19 for half a mile-- When at the edge of this  
20 field of ice it was a very dark gray  
21 in color--had none of the usual whiteness  
22 of ice-- It was about 6 inches thick--but  
23 was most completely honeycombed-- The upper  
24 surface was not only thus dark, dusky, or blackish  
25 but full of little hollows 3 to 6 inches across  
26 and the whole mass undulated with the waves  
27 very much--irregular cracks alternately  
28 opening & closing in it--yet it was well knitted  
29 together--with my paddle I could depress

---

<sup>369</sup>There is an interlined line (between 8 and 9) which seems to be connecting the two dates, the 21<sup>st</sup> and the 17th.

<sup>370</sup>There is a gap here between "says" and "The".



1 to the wrack prob. being ripped up by the ice.  
2 The ice thus helps essentially to clear the shore  
3 I am surprised to see one of those sluggish  
4 ghost-horses alive on this ice. It was probably //  
5 drifted from the shore by the flood & here lodged.  
6 That<sup>371</sup> dark uneven ice has a peculiarly coarse grained  
7 appearance--it is so much decomposed-- The pieces  
8 are interlocked by the irregularities of the perpendicular  
9 combing. The underside presents the most continuous  
10 surface-- It is held together chiefly on that side--  
11 One piece rings when struck on another--like  
12 a trowel on a brick--and as we rested against  
13 the edge of this ice we heard a singular  
14 wheezing & grating sound--which was the creaking  
15 of the ice which was undulating under the waves  
16 & wind.  
17 As we entered Well meadow--we saw a henhawk //  
18 perch on the top most plume of one of the tall pines  
19 at the head of the meadow-- Soon another ap-  
20 peared--prob its mate--but we looked in vain  
21 for a nest there It was a fine sight their  
22 soaring above our heads--presenting a perfect  
23 outline {drawing} and as they came round  
24 showing their rust colored tails  
25 with a whitish rump-- or as  
26 the sailed away from us--that slight tetering or  
27 quivering motion of their dark tipt wings seen  
28 edgewise--now on this side now that by  
29 which they balanced & directed themselves. These  
30 are the most eagle-like of our com-

---

<sup>371</sup>T seems to have started to write "this" but changed it to "that".

1 mon hawks. They very commonly perch upon  
2 the very topmost plume of a pine--&  
3 if motionless are rather hard to distinguish  
4 there.

5 The cowslip & most of the skunk cabbage  
6 there have been & are still drowned by flood--  
7 else we should find more in bloom--as it  
8 //is I see the skunk cabbage %X% in bloom--but  
9 generally the growth of both has been  
10 completely checked by the water.

11 While reconnoitering there we hear the  
12 //peep of one hylodes %X%--some where in this  
13 sheltered recess in the woods. And afterward  
14 on the Lee side I hear a single croak from  
15 //a wood frog. %X%

16 We cross to Lee's shore & sit upon the  
17 bare rocky ridge overlooking the flood SW &  
18 NE. It is quite sunny & sufficiently warm{.}

19 I see one or 2 of the small fuzzy gnats in  
20 //  
21 the air.

22 The prospect thence is a fine one, especially  
23 at this season when the water is high- The  
24 ~~water is~~ landscape is very agreeably diversified  
25 with hill & vale & meadow--& cliff-- As we  
26 look SW how attractive the shores of russet  
27 capes & peninsulas laved by the flood!  
28 Indeed that large tract E of the bridge  
29 is now an island-- How fair that low  
30 undulating russet land! At this season  
31 and under these circumstances--the

1 sun just come out & the flood high around  
2 it--russet--so reflecting the light of the  
3 sun appears to me the most agreeable of  
4 colors--& I begin to dream of a russet fairy-  
5 land & elysium. How dark & terrene must be green--  
6 but this smooth russet surface reflects almost  
7 all the light. That broad & low but firm  
8 island--with but few trees to conceal the  
9 contour of the ground & its outline--with  
10 its fine russet sward--firm & soft as velvet--  
11 reflecting so much light--all the undulations  
12 of the earth its nerves & muscles revealed by the  
13 light & shade--& even the sharper ridgy edge  
14 of steep banks where the plow has heaped up  
15 the earth from year to year-- This is a sort  
16 of fairy land & elysium to my eye-- The ~~island~~  
17 tawny couchant island! Dry land for the  
18 Indian's wigwam in the spring--& still strewn  
19 with his arrow-points-- The sight of such  
20 land reminds me of the pleasant spring days  
21 in which I have walked over such tracts looking  
22 for these relics. How well too this smooth  
23 firm light reflecting tawny earth contrasts  
24 with the darker water which surrounds it  
25 -or perchance lighter sometimes. At this  
26 season when the russet colors prevail--the  
27 contrast of water & land is more agreeable  
28 to behold-- What an inexpressibly soft curving  
29 line is the shore--! and if the water is per-

1       fectly smooth & yet rising-- you seem  
2       to see it raised 1/8 of an inch with swelling  
3       lip above the immediate shore it kisses as  
4       in a cup--or the of a saucer--  
5               Indian isles & promontories-- Thus we sit on  
6       that rock--hear the first wood-frog's croak  
7       & dream of a russet elysium-- Enough  
8       for the season is the beauty there of-- Spring  
9       has a beauty of its own--which we would  
10      not exchange for that of summer--and  
11      at this moment--if I imagine the fairest  
12      earth I can it is still russet--such  
13      is the color of the blessed isles-- & they are  
14      surrounded with the phenomena of spring.  
15             The qualities of the land that are most  
16      attractive to our eyes now--are dryness  
17      & firmness-- It is not the rich black soil--  
18      but warm & sandy hills & plains which tempt  
19      we love to sit on & walk over sandy tracts in the spring like cicindelas  
20      our steps--<sup>372</sup> There tongues of russet land  
21      tapering & sloping into the flood--do almost  
22      speak to one. They are alternately in  
23      sun & shade-- When the cloud is passed  
24      & they reflect their pale brown light to  
25      me-- I am tempted to go to them.  
26             I think I have already noticed within a  
27      week--how very agreeably & strongly the  
28      green of small pines contrasts with the  
29                             pasture  
30      russet of a hill side^ now-- Perhaps there  
31      is no color with which green contrasts

---

<sup>372</sup>Caret positioned directly below em dash

1 more strongly.

2 I see the shadow of a cloud--& it chances  
3 to be a hollow ring--with sun light in its midst--  
4 passing over the hilly sproutland toward the  
5 Baker House--a sproutland of oaks & birches  
6 & owing to the color of the birch twigs perhaps--  
7 from russet dark  
8 this shadow turns all ^to a decided^ purplish  
9 color as it<sup>373</sup> moves along. And then as  
10 I look further along eastward in the  
11 horizon, I am surprised to see strong purple  
12 & violet tinges in the sun from a hill  
13 densely  
14 side a mile off ^covered with full grown  
15 birches-- It is the steep--old corn field hill side  
16 of Jacob Parker's-- I would not have believed that  
17 under the spring sun so many colors were brought  
18 out. It is not the willows only that shine--  
19 but under favorable circumstances many other  
20 twigs--even a mile or 2 off--the dense birches  
21 so far that their white stems are not distinct--  
22 reflect deep strong purple & violet colors from  
23 the distant hill sides opposite to the sun-- Can //  
24 this have to do with the sap-flowing in them?

25 As we sit there we see coming swift &  
26 straight N. E. along the river valley not  
27 & therefore not changing his course--  
28 seeing us--^ a male goosander %X%--so near that //  
29 the green reflections of his head & neck are  
30 plainly visible-- He looks like a paddle wheel  
31 steamer--so oddly painted up black & white & green  
32 & moves along swift & straight like one

---

<sup>373</sup>Looks like T initially wrote "if" or "of," then changed it to an "it."

1 Ere long the same returns with his mate--  
2 the red-throated--the male taking the lead.  
3 The loud peop (?) of a Pig. wood pecker  
4 is heard in our sea--& anon the prolonged  
5 //loud & shrill cackle calling the thin-wooded  
6 hill sides & pastures to life-- It is like the  
7 note of an alarm clock set last fall--so  
8 as to wake nature up at exactly this date.

9 Up up up up up up {up} up up--!  
10 What a rustling it seems to make among the  
11 dry leaves--

12 You can now sit on {sunny} sheltered sprout  
13 land hill sides & enjoy the sight & sound of  
14 rustling dry leaves.

15 Then I see come slowly flying from the SW  
16 a great gull--of voracious form {drawing}<sup>374</sup>  
17 {drawing} which at length by a sudden & steep  
18 descent alights in F. H. Pond--scaring up  
19 a crow which was seeking its food on the edge  
20 of the ice--this shows that the crows get along  
21 the meadow's edge also what has washed up.

22 It is suggested that the blue is darkest when  
23 reflected from the most agitated water--because  
24 of the shadow (occasioned by the inequalities)  
25 mingled with it.

26 Some Indians of the north have but one  
27 word for blue & black--& blue is with  
28 us considered the darkest color--though  
29 it is the color of the sky or air--

---

<sup>374</sup>Seems to be the start of the drawing.



1 Light, I should say was white--the absence  
2 of it black-- Hold up to the light a perfectly opaque  
3 body & you get black--but hold up to it  
4 the least opaque body--such as air--& you  
5 get blue-- Hence you may say that blue is light  
6 seen through a veil.

7 Mar 24th 59

8 Pm down RR--

9 S. E wind--begins to sprinkle--while

10 I am sitting in Laurel glen--listening to hear the  
11 {earliest} I think they get under weigh a little earlier--ie you will  
12 first wood-frogs croaking--Now when the leaves  
13 hear many of them sooner than you will hear many hylodes--  
14 get to be dry & rustle under your feet--dried by

15 the march winds--the peculiar dry note--wurrik

16 wurrk wur ruk wurk of the wood frog

17 is heard faintly--by ears on the alert, borne

18 up from some unseen pool in a woodland {——}

19 hollow--which is open to the influences of the

20 sun--. It is a singular sound for awakening

21 nature to make--associated with the first {warmer}

22 days when you sit in some sheltered place in

23 the woods amid the dried leaves.-- How moderate,

24 on her first awakening--how little demonstrative!

25 You may sit half an hour before you will hear

26 another. You doubt if the season will be long

27 enough for such oriental & luxurious slowness

28 But they get on nevertheless & by tomorrow--or

29 in a day or 2--they croak louder & more

30 frequently-- Can you ever be sur e that

31 wood

32 you have heard the very first ^frog in the





1           Pm to Clam Shell--

2           I heard the what what what what<sup>375</sup> of

3 the Nuthatch this forenoon-- Do I ever hear

4 it in the pm? It is much like the cackle

5 of the Pig. woodpecker & suggests a relation

6 to that bird.

7           Again I walk in the rain & see the

8 rich yellowish browns of the moist banks.

9 These clam shell hills & neighboring promontories

10 --though it is a dark & rainy day-- reflect a

11 certain yellowish light from the wet withered

12 grass--which is very grateful to my eye--

13 as also the darker more reddish browns

14 as the radical leaves of the andropogon

15                           low

16 scoparius in ^ tufts here & there (Its culms

17 where they stand are quite light yellow)

18 Surely russet is not the name which

19 describes the fields & hill sides now--(whether

20 wet or dry) There is not red enough in it.

21 I do not know a better name for this

22 (when wet) yellowish brown than tawny--

23 on the south side of these warm hills--

24 it may perhaps be called one of the fawn

25 colors--ie brown inclining to green--

26 Much of this peculiar yellowish color on

27 the surface of the Clam shell plain is due

28 to a little curled sedge or grass--growing

29 loosely covering the ground<sup>376</sup> green

30 at short intervals^--(with^ mosses intermixed)--

---

<sup>375</sup>A dash or a partial drawing here after last "what."

<sup>376</sup>There's a line connecting the interlined text to the caret.

1 in little tufts like curled hair {drawing}

2 I saw yesterday in Laurel glen where the  
3 early sedge had been grazed very close to the ground  
4 & the same perhaps digested fine as green paint  
5 dust lay around--Was it the work of a mouse?

6 Day before yesterday--in clear dry weather  
7 we had pale brown or fawn colored earth  
8 i.e. a dry withered grass blade--today a more  
9 yellow brown or tawny--the same being wet-- The  
10 wet brings out an agreeable yellow light  
11 as if the sun were shining through a mist on it.

12 The earth is more truly russet in Novem-  
13 ber--when there is more redness left in the withered  
14 & withering vegetation.

15 Such is the change in the color of the bare  
16 portions of the earth--(i.e. bare of trees & bushes)  
17 produced by rain-- Also the oak leaves are much  
18 redder In fair weather the light color of  
19 these objects was simply a light reflected from  
20 them (originating in the sun & sky--now it is a  
21 more proper & inward light which attracts &  
22 confines our attention to moist sward itself.

23 A snipe%X% flies away from the moist //  
24 clam shell shore--uttering its cr a ack  
25 c-r-r rack--

26 I thought the other day-- How we enjoy a  
27 warm & pleasant day at this season-- We  
28 dance like gnats in the sun.

1           A score of my townsmen have been  
2 shooting & trapping musquash & mink of  
3           %{Some have got nothing else to do-- If they should}%  
4 late-- They are gone all day--early & late  
5           %{strike for higher wages now--instead of going to the clambanks}%  
6 They scan the rising tide-- Stealthily they  
7           %{as the Lynn shoemakers propose they could go to shooting musquash--}%  
8 set their traps in remote swamps--avoiding  
  
9 one another-- Am not I a trapper too--  
10 early & late--scanning the rising flood--  
11 ranging by distant wood sides--setting  
12 my traps in solitude--& baiting them as well  
13 as I know how-- That I may catch life &  
14 light--that my intellectual part may  
15 taste more venison & be invigorated--that  
16 my naked-ness may be clad in some wild  
17 furry warmth.

18           The color of spring--hitherto I should  
19 say--that in dry weather it was fawn colored  
20 in wet more yellowish or tawny-- When  
21 wet--the green of the fawn is supplied by the lichens  
22 & the mosses--

23                           Mar 26th

24           Pm to Conantum via Cardinal Shore  
25 & boat- <sup>377</sup>The river has gone down  
26 considerably--but the rain of yesterday  
27 & today--has checked its fall somewhat--

28           Much earth has been washed away from  
29 the roots of grasses & weeds along the banks  
30 of the river--& many of those pretty little  
31 bodkin bulbs are exposed--& so transported

---

<sup>377</sup>Gap here between "boat-" and "The".

1 to new localities-- This seems to be the way  
2 in which they are spread.

3 I see many smallish ants on the red carcass  
4 of a musquash just skinned & lying on the //  
5 bank--cold and wet as the weather is--  
6 They love this animal food. On the top  
7 of the hill at Lee's Cliff much winter green  
8 as been eaten--at least a great many leaves  
9 are lying loose strewn about.

10 I find washed up on the (Cardinal) shore a little  
11 bream about 1 1/8 inches long--very much like those //  
12 found at {}<sup>378</sup> walden last fall. It has about  
13 seven transverse bars--a similar dorsal fin-- a reddish  
14 copper iris with the black vertical dash through the  
15 eye-- I think it must be one of the common breams  
16 of the river--(though I see only the black spot on  
17 the operculum & not any red one) & ap. all the ?  
18 young are thus striped--?

19 What was that large rather greyish duck  
20 on F. H. P. this Pm ? It was far off--was it  
21 a last years male sheldrake or a female--or another ?

22 -- Mar 27

23 7 Am Was that the Alauda-shore lark (?) ?  
24 which which flew up from the cornfield  
25 beyond Texas house--& dashed off so swiftly  
26 with a peculiar note--a small flock of them?

27 Pm Sail from Cardinal Shore  
28 up Otter Bay-- close to Dea. Farrar's

29 I see a gull flying over F. H. P. which

---

<sup>378</sup>Looks like three letters, but nothing makes sense. Original transcriber had "{isle}," and the 1906 skipped it altogether.

1 //appeared to have a much duskier body  
2 beneath than the common near by--  
3 though about the same size-- Can it  
4 be another species--?  
5         The wind is so nearly westerly today  
6 that we sail up from Cardinal shore  
7 the pond & from the road up  
8 to^ what I will call Otter-bay behind  
9 Farrars & then ~~{still}~~ ~~{better}~~ up--that  
10 & returning sail from the road at Creel  
11 (or Pole) Brook--to Pond Island--  
12 & from Hallowell willows to RR.  
13   {er}  
14         The water is quite high still  
15 & we sail up Otter bay I think more  
16 than 1/2 mile to within a very short distance  
17 of Farrars-- This is an interesting & wild place  
18 There is an abundance of low willows  
19 whose catkins are now conspicuous rising  
20 4 to 6 or 7 feet above the water--thickly  
21 placed on long wand like osiers--  
22 They look--when you look from the sun  
23                         (whose wood is exposed)  
24 like dead gray twigs or branches<sup>379^</sup> of bushes  
25 in the light--but nearer are {recognised}  
26 for the pretty bright buttons of the  
27 willow. We sail by masses of these silvery  
28 buttons 2 or 3 rods long--rising above  
29 the water By their color they have relation  
30 to the white clouds--& the sky--& to  
31 the snow & ice still lingering in a few localities

---

<sup>379</sup>Seems to be a line drawn connecting interlined text to caret.



1 In order to see there silvery buttons in the  
2 greatest profusion--you must sail amid  
3 them on some flooded meadow or swamp  
4 like this. Our whole course, as we wind  
5 about in this bay, is lined also with the alder  
6 many of them  
7 whose pretty tassels now^ in full bloom are  
8 hanging straight down--suggesting in a peculiar  
9 manner the influence of gravity--or are  
10 regularly blown one side {drawing}

11 It is remarkable how modest & unobtru-  
12 sive these early flowers are-- The musquash  
13 & duck hunter--or the farmer--might &  
14 do commonly pass by them with perceiving them--  
15 They steal in to the air & light of spring without  
16 being noticed for the most part-- The sportsman  
17 seems to see a mass of weather-stained dead  
18 partly lichens  
19 twigs showing their wood & ^covered with grass {moss}  
20 & moss--& the flower of the alder--(now partly  
21 may be 1/2 little  
22 in bloom^-- ) make the impression at a ^distance  
23 the  
24 of a collection of^ brown twigs of winter--  
25 are  
26 also ^of the same color with many withered leaves.

27 20 rods off masses of alder in bloom look  
28 like masses of bare brown twigs--last years  
29 twigs--& would be taken for such.

30 Of our 7 indigenous flowers which begin to bloom  
31 in march--4--i.e the 2 alders--the hazel & the  
32 aspen<sup>380</sup>  
33 ^white maple & the skunk cabbage--are not  
34 generally noticed ~~at all~~--so early, if at  
35 all--& most do not observe the flower of  
36 a 5th the white maple.

---

<sup>380</sup>Hazel and aspen marked for transposition.

1 The first 4 are reddish or yellowish<sup>381</sup> brown  
2 at a little distance--like the banks  
3 & sward moistened by the spring rain--  
4 The browns are the prevailing shades as  
5 yet--as in the withered grass & sedge--  
6 & the surface of the earth--the withered  
7 leaves--& these brown flowers--  
8 I see from a hill top a few very bright  
9 green spots a rod in diameter--in  
10 the upper part of Farrars meadow--  
11 which the water has left within a day  
12 or 2-- Going there I find that a very  
13 powerful spring is welling up there--which  
14 with water warm from the bowels of the  
15 caused  
16 earth has ~~kept~~ the grass & several  
17 weeds as Cardamine rhomboidea &c to  
18 grow thus early & luxuriantly--& perhaps  
19 it has been helped by the flood standing over  
20 it for some days-- There are bright liquid  
21 //green in the midst of brown & withered grass & leaves  
22 --such are the spots where the grass is greenest  
23 now--  
24 // C. says that he saw a turtle dove on  
25 the 25th.~~X~~<sup>382</sup>  
26 It is remarkable how long many things may  
27 be preserved by excluding the air & light  
28 & dust moisture &c-- Those chalk marks  
29 on the chambre floor joists & timbers of  
30 the Hunt house-one of which was read

---

<sup>381</sup>Reddish and yellowish marked for transposition.

<sup>382</sup>"X" in pencil is immediately beneath the "th" of "25th".

1 by many "Feb. 1666" & all of which were  
2 & expression  
3 in an ancient style of writing^ --ye for the  
4 &c-- "enfine<sup>383</sup> Brown" were as fresh when explored  
5 (having been plastered & cased over--) as if made  
6 the day--before-- Yet a single day's rain  
7 completely obliterated some of them-- Cousin  
8 Charles says that {~~saw~~}<sup>384</sup> on the timbers of  
9 a very old house recently taken down in  
10 Haverhill--the chalk-marks made by the  
11 framers--numbering the sticks--as fresh as if  
12 just made--

13 I saw a large timber over the middle of the  
14 best room of the Hunt house which had  
15 been cased--according to all accounts at  
16 least a hundred years ago-- The casing having  
17 just been taken off-- I saw that the  
18 timber appeared to have been freshly hewn on  
19 the underside--& I asked the carpenter  
20 who was taking down the house what  
21 he had been hewing that timber for  
22 --for it had evidently been done since it was  
23 put up--& in a very inconvenient position--  
24 & I had no doubt that he had just done  
25 it--for the surface was as fresh & distinct  
26 from the other parts as a fresh whittling--  
27 --but he answered to my surprise that he  
28 had not touched it-- It was so when he  
29 took the casing off. When the casing was  
30 put on it had been roughly hewn by one

---

<sup>383</sup>"f" poss. "s"

<sup>384</sup>Possibly crossed out.

1 standing beneath it, in order to reduce  
2 its thickness--or perhaps to make it  
3 So distinct & peculiar is the weather-stain--& so indefinitely it may  
4 more level than it was-- be kept off if you  
5 do not allow this painter to come to your wood  
6 Cousin Charles says that he took out  
7 h  
8 of the old Haverill house a very broad  
9 panel from over the fire place  
10 which had a picture of Haverhill<sup>385</sup> at  
11 some old period on it-- The panel had  
12 been there perfectly sheltered in an inhabited  
13 house for more than a hundred years.  
14 It was placed in his shop & no moisture  
15 allowed to come near it--& yet it  
16 shrank, 1/4 of a inch in width--when  
17 the air came to both sides of it--  
18 He says that his men who were  
19 digging a cellar last week--~~found~~  
20 on a S W slope found 51 snakes  
21 of various kinds & sizes--green--black  
22 brown &c about a foot under ground  
23 within 2 feet square (or cube?)--The frost  
24 was out just there but not in many  
25 //parts of the cellar-- They could not run  
26 they were so stiff--but they ran their tongues  
27 out-- The did take notice of any hole or  
28 cavity.

---

<sup>385</sup>"Haverhill" written over "the"

Mar 28

Pm Paddle to the Bedford line--

It is now high time to look for  
arrowheads &c-- I spend many hours  
every spring gathering the crop with the  
melting snow & rain have washed bare--  
When at length some island in the  
meadow or some sandy field elsewhere  
has been plowed perhaps for rye in the fall  
I take note of it, & do not fail to  
repair thither as soon as the earth begins  
to be dry in the spring. If the spot chances  
never to have been cultivated before--I am  
the first to gather a crop from it-- The  
farmer little thinks that another reaps  
a harvest which is the fruit of his  
toil-- As much ground is turned up in a  
day by the plow as Indian implements  
could not have turned over in a month--  
& my eyes rest on the evidences of an  
aboriginal life which passed here a  
thousand years ago perchance-- Especially  
if the knolls in the meadows are washed  
by a freshet where they have been plowed the  
previous fall--the soil will be taken away  
lower down & the stones left--the  
arrowheads &c--& soapstone pottery  
amid them.--some what as gold  
is washed in a dish--or tom--

1           I landed on 2 spots this Pm &  
2       picked up a dozen arrowheads--  
3       It is one of the regular pursuits of the  
4       spring. As much as sportsmen go in  
5       pursuit of ducks--& gunners of musquash  
6       and scholars of rare books--and travellers  
7       of adventures & poets of ideas-- & all  
8       men of money--I go in search of  
9       arrowheads when the proper season comes  
10      round again-- So I help myself to live  
11      worthily--& loving my life as I should--  
12      It is a good collyrium to look on the  
13      bare earth--to pore over it so much--  
14      getting strength to all your senses like An-  
15      taeus-- If I did not find arrowheads I  
16      might perchance begin to pick up crockery  
17      fragments of  
18      & {—}^pipes--the relics of a more recent  
19      man-- Indeed you can hardly name  
20      an more innocent or wholesome enter-  
21      tainment. As I am thus engaged--I hear  
22      the rumble of the bowling alley thunder  
23      which has begun again in the village.  
24      It comes before the earliest natural  
25      thunder-- But what its lightning is  
26      & what atmospheres it purifies I do  
27      not know. Or I might collect the  
28      various bones which I come across

1       They would make a museum  
2       that would delight some owen--at last  
3       & what a text they might furnish me  
4       for a course of lectures on human  
5       life or the like-- I might spend my  
6       days collecting the fragments of pipes  
7       until I found enough after all my search  
8       to compose one perfect pipe when laid  
9       together.

10       I have not decided whether I had better  
11       publish my experience in searching for  
12   with plates & an index  
13       arrowheads in 3 volumes--^ or try to compress  
14       it into one. These durable implements  
15       seem to have been suggested to the In-  
16       dian mechanic--with a view<sup>386</sup> to my  
17       entertainment in a succeeding period.  
18       After all the labor expended on -<sup>387</sup>  
19       the bolt may have been shot but once  
20       perchance--& the shaft which was  
21       devoted to it decayed--& there lay the  
22        h  
23       arrowhead sinking into the ground--awaiting  
24       me-- They lie all over the hills with  
25       like expectation--and in due time the  
26       husbandman is sent--& tempted by  
27       the promise of corn or rye--he plows  
28       the land & turns them up to my view.  
29       Many as I have found--methinks the  
30       last one gives me about the same delight  
31       that the first did. Some time or

---

<sup>386</sup>Looks like T may have written the end of "view" twice, making it more difficult to read.

<sup>387</sup>1906 has the word "it" here, but the mark doesn't look like much more than a dash -- albeit, not T's normal dash.

1 often, you would say, it had rained  
2 arrowheads for & they lie all over  
3 the surface of America. You may have  
4 your peculiar tastes--certain localities  
5 in your town may seem from association  
6 unattractive & uninhabitable to you--  
7 You may wonder that the land {bears}  
8 any money value there & pity {some}<sup>388</sup>  
9 poor fellow who is said to survive  
10 in that neighborhood-- But plow  
11 up a new field there--and you  
12 will find the omnipresent arrowpoints  
13 strewn over it--& it will appear  
14 that the red man with other tastes  
15 & associations lived there too.  
16 No matter how far from the modern  
17 road or meeting house, no matter how  
18 near-- They lie in the meeting house  
19 cellar--& they lie in the distant  
20 cow pasture-- And some collections  
21 which were made a century ago by the  
22 curious like myself have been dispersed  
23 again--& they are still as good as new--  
24 You can not tell the 3rd hand ones (for  
25 they are all 2nd hand) from the others.  
26 Such is their persistent out of door  
27 durability-- For they were chiefly

---

<sup>388</sup>Looks like T may have crossed out "some" with "the" or vice versa.



1 made to be lost-- They are sown like  
2 a grain that is slow to germinate broad  
3 cast over the earth-- Like the dragons  
4 teeth which bore a crop of soldiers--these  
5 bear crops of philosophers & facts--& the  
6 same seed is just as good to plant again.  
7 It is a stone fruit. Each one yields  
8 { } a thought. I come nearer to the maker  
9 of it than if I found his bones-- His bones  
10 would not prove any wit that wielded  
11 them--such as this work of his bones does--  
12 It is humanity inscribed on the face of the  
13 earth--patent to my eyes--as soon as the  
14 snow goes off--not hidden away in some  
15 crypt--or grave--or under a pyramid--  
16 No disgusting mummy--but a clean  
17 stone--the best symbol or letter that  
18 could have been transmitted to me-- The  
19 Red<sup>389</sup> Man--his mark {drawing}! at  
20 every step I see it--& I can easily supply  
21 the Tahitawan or Mantatukets<sup>390</sup> that  
22 might have been written if he had had  
23 a clerk-- It is no single inscription  
24 on a particular rock--but a footprint  
25 --rather a mind print--left every where  
26 & altogether illegible-- No vandals  
27 however vandalic in their disposition can  
28 be so industrious as to destroy them  
29 Time will soon destroy the works of

---

<sup>389</sup>The capital "R" of "Red" written over a lowercase "r."

<sup>390</sup>Robert Sayre spells it "Tahattawan" in his *Thoreau and the American Indians* (1977), and Mantatuket in this context probably should not have an "s". Also, could not find Mantatuket listed as an American Indian language or tribe, though I know T mentions the name later in on this journal (May 2) in reference to Mantatuket Rock. Checked Sayre and Hodge's *Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico, Parts I & II* (1975).

1 famous painters & sculptors--but  
2 the Indian arrow head will balk his  
3 efforts & Eternity will have to come to his  
4 aid. They are not fossil bones--but  
5 as it were fossil thoughts--forever re-  
6 minding me of the mind that shaped them.  
7 I would fain know that I am treading  
8 in the tracks of human game--that I  
9 am on the trail of mind--& those  
10 little reminders never fail to set me  
11 right-- When I see these signs I know  
12 that the subtle spirits that made  
13 them are not far off into whatever  
14 form transmuted-- What if you do  
15 plow & hoe amid them--& swear that  
16 not one stone shall left upon another--  
17 They are only the less like to break in that  
18 case-- When you turn up one layer  
19 you bury another so much the more  
20 securely-- They are at peace with rust--  
21 This arrowheaded character promises  
22 to out last all others-- the larger pestles  
23 & axes may perchance grow scarce &  
24 be broken--but the arrowhead shall  
25 perhaps never cease to wing its way through  
26 the ages to eternity. It was originally  
27 winged for but a short flight--but  
28 it still to my minds eye wings its way thro  
29 the ages bearing a message from the

1 hand that shot it-- Myriads of arrow  
2 points lie sleeping in the skin of the re-  
3 volving earth--while meteors revolve  
4 in ~~the~~ space-- The footprint--the mind-  
5 print of the oldest men-- When some vandal  
6 chieftain has razed to the earth the  
7 British Museum & perchance the winged  
8 bulls from Nineveh shall have lost  
9 most if not all of their features--  
10 the arrowheads which the museum  
11 contains will perhaps find themselves  
12 at home again in familiar dust--  
13 & resume their shining in new  
14 springs upon the bared surface of  
15 the earth then--& be picked up for  
16 the thousandth time by the shepherd  
17 or savage that may be wandering there--  
18 & once more suggest their story to him.

19 Indifferent they to British museums--&  
20 no doubt Nineveh bulls are old acquaint-  
21 tances of theirs--for they have camped  
22 on the plains of Mesopotamia too--  
23 & were buried with the winged bulls.

24 They cannot be said to be lost nor  
25 found. Surely their use was not so  
26 much to bear its fate to some bird  
27 or quadruped--or man--as it was to  
28 lie here near the surface of the earth  
29 for a perpetual reminder to the generations

1 that come after-- As for museums  
2 I think it is better to let Nature take  
3 care of our antiquities-- These are our--  
4 antiquities & they are cleaner-- to think  
5 of than the rubbish of the Tower of London.  
6 & they are a more ancient armor than  
7 is there. It is a recommendation that  
8 they are so in obvious--that they occur  
9 only to the eye & thought that chances to  
10 be directed toward them. When you  
11 pick up an arrowhead & put it in your  
12 pocket--it may say {~~but~~} Eh--you  
13 think you have got me, do you? but I  
14 shall wear a hole in your pocket at last.  
15 or if you put me in your cabinet  
16 --your heir--or<sup>391</sup> great grandson--will  
17 ~~negl~~ forget me--or throw me out  
18 the window directly--or when the house  
19 falls I shall drop into the cellar-- &  
20 there I shall lie quite at home again.  
21 Ready to be found again eh? Perhaps  
22 some {new} red man that is to come will fit  
23 me to a shaft & make me do his  
24 bidding for a bow shot--What reck I?  
25 As we were paddling over the great  
26 meadows I saw at a distance high  
27 in the air above the middle of the  
28 meadow--a very compact flock  
29 of black birds advancing against

---

<sup>391</sup>There's a mark to the immediate left of "or" that looks like T considered marking something for transposition.

1 the sun--though there were more than  
2 a hundred--they did not appear to occupy  
3 more than 6 feet in breadth--but the  
4 whole flock was dashing first to the  
5 right & then to the left-- When advancing  
6 straight toward me & the sun they made  
7 but little impression on the eye--so many  
8 fine dark points merely seen against  
9 the sky--but as often as they wheeled to  
10 the right or left--displaying their wings  
11 flat wise & the whole length of their bodies  
12 they were a very conspicuous black mass--  
13 This fluctuation in the amount of dark  
14 surface was a very pleasing phenomenon--  
15 It reminded me those blinds whose sashes  
16 are made to move all together by a stick--  
17 now--admitting nearly all the light &  
18 now entirely excluding it--so the flock  
19 of black birds opened & shut-- But  
20 at length they suddenly<sup>spread out &</sup> dispersed some  
21 flying off this way & others that--as when  
22 a wave strikes against a cliff-- it is  
23 dashed upward & lost in fine spray.  
24 So they lost their compactness & impetus  
25 & broke up suddenly in mid air--

27 We see 8 geese floating afar //  
28 in the middle of the meadow--at least  
29 half a mile off--plainly (with glass) much  
30 larger than the ducks in this neighborhood

1 & the white on their heads very distinct.  
2 When at length they arise & fly off  
3 northward--their peculiar heavy undulating  
4 wings--blue heron like--& unlike any duck--  
5 is very noticeable. The black Shell-drake  
6 &c--move their wings rapidly & remind  
7 you of paddle-wheel steamers-- Methinks  
8 the wings of the black duck appear to  
9 be set very far back when it is flying.

10           The meadows--which are still covered  
11 //far & wide--are quite alive with black  
12 ducks--

13           When walking about on the low  
14 E shore at the Bedford bound--  
15 I heard a faint honk--and looked  
16 around near the water with my glass  
17       or perhaps from a farm yard in that direction<sup>392</sup>  
18 thinking it came from that side^ -- I  
19 soon heard it again--& at last we  
20 detected a great flock passing over  
21 quite on the other side of us--2 pretty  
22 high up-- From time to time one of the  
23 company uttered a short note--that  
24 peculiarly metallic--clangorous sound--  
25 These were in a single undulating line,  
26 & as usual one or 2 were from time  
27 to time crowded out of the line, ap  
28 by the crowding of those in the rear--  
29 & were flying on one side & trying  
30 to recover their places--but at last  
31       2d<sup>393</sup>  
32 a short line was formed--meeting

---

<sup>392</sup>Seems to be a line 'connecting' the interlined text to the caret.

<sup>393</sup>Looks like T added "2d", and that it's interlined, but it's a close call.

1 the long one at the usual angle--&  
2 making a figure somewhat like a hay  
3 hook. I suspect it will be found that  
4 there is really some advantage in  
5 longer lines of passage flying in the wedge  
6 form & clearing their way through the  
7 air--That they really do overcome its  
8 resistance best in this way and perchance  
9 the direction & strength of the wind de-  
10 termine the comparative length of  
11 the 2 sides.

12 The great gulls fly generally up or  
13 down the river valley--cutting of the bends  
14 of the river--& so do these geese. These  
15 fly sympathizing with the river--a stream  
16 in the air--soon lost in the distant sky.

17 We see these geese swimming & flying  
18 at midday--& when it is perfectly fair.

19 If you saw the horizon at this season  
20 of the year you are very likely to detect  
21 a small flock of dark ducks moving with  
22 rapid wing athwart the sky--or see  
23 the undulating line of migrating geese  
24 {drawing} %against the sky-%  
25 perhaps it is this Easterly wind which  
26 brings geese, as it did on the 24th

1           Balls hill, with its withered oak leaves  
2   & its pines--looks very fair today--a  
3   mile & a half off across the water--  
4   through a very thin varnish or haze--  
5   It ~~The~~ reminds me of the isle which  
6   was called up from the bottom of the  
7   sea--which was given to Apollo.

8           How charming the contrast of land & water.  
9   especially a temporary island in the flood--  
10  with its new & tender shores of waving outline  
11  so withdrawn yet habitable--above  
12  all if it rises into a hill high above the  
13  water & contrasting with it the more--  
14  & if that hill is wooded suggesting wilderness.  
15  Our vernal lakes have a beauty to my  
16  mind which they would not possess if they  
17  were more permanent-- Every thing is  
18  in rapid flux here--suggesting that  
19  nature is {alive} to her extremities & super-  
20  ficies. To day we ~~float~~ sail swiftly,  
21  on dark rolling waves--or paddle over  
22  a sea as smooth as a mirror unable  
23  to touch the bottom where mowers work  
24  & hide<sup>394</sup> their jugs in August--coasting  
25  the edge of maple swamp--where alder  
26  tassels & white maple flowers are kissing  
27  the tide that has risen & to meet them-- But  
28  this particular phase of beauty is fleeting

---

<sup>394</sup>There's a letter crossed out -- looks like a g or q - immediately below the "e" of "hide".



1 Nature has so many shows for us she  
2 can not afford to give {much} time to this  
3 in a few days perchance--these lakes will  
4 have all run away to the sea-- Such are  
5 the pictures which she paints-- When  
6 we look at our master pieces--we see  
7 only dead paint & its vehicle--which  
8 suggests no liquid life rapidly flowing  
9 off from beneath. In the former case--  
10 {or}<sup>395</sup> in nature it is constant surprise-- & novelty.  
11 In many arrangements there is a wearisome  
12 monotony-- We know too well what shall  
13 have for our Saturday's dinner--but each  
14 days feast in Nature's year is a surprise  
15 to us & adapted to our appetite & spirits-- She  
16 has arranged such an order of feasts as  
17 never tires-- Her motive is not economy but  
18 satisfaction.

19 As we sweep past the N end of Poplar Hill  
20 with a sand hole in its, its now dryish--  
21 pale brown {withered}<sup>396</sup> sward clothing its rounded  
22 slope--which was lately saturated with moisture  
23 presents very agreeable hues-- In this light  
24 --in fair weather--the patches of now  
25 dull green-  
26 ish mosses contrast just regularly enough  
27 with the pale-brown grass. It is like some  
28 rich but modest colored Kidderminster<sup>397</sup> car-  
29 pet--or rather the skin of a monster  
30 python tacked to the hill side--& stuffed with  
31 earth.

---

<sup>395</sup>Could be "or", but it is not much more than a blob of ink

<sup>396</sup>1906 uses the word "mottled"

<sup>397</sup>Thoreau likely intended "Kidderminster"

1       These earth colors methinks are  
2       never so fair as in the spring-- Now  
3       the green mosses & lichens contrast with  
4       the brown grass--but ere long--the surface  
5       will be surprisingly green-- I suspect that  
6       we are more amused by the effects of  
7       color in the skin of the earth now  
8       than in summer--

9                Like the skin of a python greenish & brown  
10       a fit coat for it to creep over the earth  
11       & be concealed in. {Or} like the skin  
12       of a pard--the great leopard mother  
13       that nature is --where she lies  
14       at length exposing her flanks to the  
15       sun-- I feel as if I could land to stroke  
16       & kiss the very sward--it is so fair.  
17       It is homely & domestic to my eyes like  
18       the rugs that lies before my hearth-side.  
19                & divans  
20       Such ottomans ^are spread for us to re-  
21       cline on. Nor are these colors mere thin  
22       superficial figures vehicles for paint--but  
23       wonderful living growths-- These lichens--  
24       to the study of which learned men have devoted  
25       their lives--& libraries have been written about  
26       them-- The earth lies out now like a leopard  
27       drying her lichen & moss spotted skin in the  
28       sun--her sleek & variegated hide . I know  
29       that the few raw spots will heal over--  
30       Brown is the color for me--the color of our  
31       coats & our daily lives--the color of the poor  
32       mans loaf-- The bright tints are pies &  
33       cakes--good only for October feasts which

1 would make us sick if eaten everyday--  
2           One side of each wave & ripple is dark  
3 & the other light blue reflecting the sky--  
4 (as I look down on them from my boat) &  
5 these colors (?) combined produce a dark blue  
6 at a distance. These blue spaces--ever remind  
7 me of the blue in the iridescence produced by  
8 oily matter on the surface--for you are slow  
9 to regard it as a reflection of the sky-- The  
10 rippling undulating surface on which you  
11 glide is like a changeable blue silk garment.  
12           Here where in August the bittern booms in  
13 the grass & mowers march in echelon {drawing}  
14 & whet their scythes & crunch the ripe wool-  
15 grass--raised now a few feet--you scud  
16 before the wind in your tight bark--& listen  
17           (or sough ?)  
18 to the surge^ of the great waves sporting around  
19 you--while you hold the steering-oar--& your  
20 mast bends to the gale--& you stow all your  
21 ballast to windward-- The {crisped} sound of surging  
22 waves--that rock you--that ceaseless roll  
23 & gambol--& ever & anon break into your boat.  
24           Deep lie the seeds of the rhexia now--absorbing  
25 wet from the flood--but in a few months  
26 this mile wide lake will have gone to the other  
27 side of the globe--& the tender rhexia will  
28 lift its head on the drifted hummocks in  
29 dense patches bright & scarlet as a flame--  
30 --such succession have we here-- Where

1 the wild goose & countless wild ducks  
2 have floated & dived above them.  
3 So nature condenses her matter. She is  
4 a thousand thick. So many crops the same  
5 surface bears.

6 Undoubtedly the geese fly more numerously  
7 over rivers which like ours flow north easterly--  
8 are more at home with the water under them.  
9 Each flock runs the gauntlet of a thousand  
10 gunners--& when you see them {steer} off  
11 {from} you--& your boat--you may remember--  
12 how great their experience in such matters  
13 may be--how many such--boats & gunners  
14 they have seen & avoided between here &  
15 Mexico--& even now--perchance (though  
16 you ~~little~~ {low} plodding little dream it,)  
17 they see one or 2 more lying in wait ahead.  
18 They have an experienced ranger of the air  
19 for their guide-- The echo of one gun  
20 hardly dies away before they see another pointed  
21 at them- How many bullets or smaller  
22 shot have sped in vain toward their {honks}<sup>398</sup>!

23 Ducks fly more irregularly & shorter distances  
24 at a time. The geese rest in fair weather  
25 by day--only in the midst of our broadest meadow  
26 or pond. So they go--anxious &  
27 earnest to hide their nests under the  
28 pole.

29 The gulls seem used to boats & sails & will  
30 often fly quite near without manifesting alarm.

---

<sup>398</sup>1906 uses the word 'ranks'.

1                                   Mar 29th 59  
2                                   Driving rain & S E wind--c                                   //  
3                                   Walden is 1st clear of ice to-day                                   //  
4   Garfield says he saw a woodcock about  
5   a fortnight ago-- Minot thinks the                                   //  
6   middle of march is as early as they come--  
7   & that they do not then begin to lay.  
8                                   Mar 30  
9                                   6 Am--to Hill (across water)  
10                                  Hear a red-squirrel chirrup at me by  
11   the hemlocks--(running up a hemlock--)  
12   all for my benefit--not that he is ex-  
13   cited by fear, I think, but so full is he  
14   of animal spirits that he makes a great  
15   ado about the least event. At first  
16   he scratches on the bark very rapidly with  
17   his hind feet without moving the fore feet--  
18   He makes so many queer sounds--& so different  
19   from one another that you would think  
20   they came from half a dozen creatures--  
21   I hear now 2 sounds from him of a  
22   very distinct character-- a low or base  
23   inward worming screwing or {brewing}  
24   kind of sound--(very like that, by the way, which  
25   an anxious partridge mother makes) & at  
26   the same time a very sharp & shrill bark  
27   & clear on a very high key--totally distinct  
28   from the last--while its tail is flashing  
29   incessantly-- You might say that he  
30   successfully accomplished the difficult

1 feat of singing & whistling at the same  
2 time--  
3 Pm to Walden via Hub's Close--  
4 bodied  
5 The Green ^ flies out in sheds & prob. nearly  
6 as long as the others--the same size as the  
7 house fly.  
8 I see numerous large skaters%X% on a<sup>399</sup>  
9 //  
10 ditch-- This may be the gerris lacustris--  
11 but its belly is not white--only whitish in  
12 certain lights-- It has 6 legs 2 feelers  
13 (the 2 foremost legs being directed forward) a stoutish  
14 body & brown above. The belly looks whitish  
15 when you look at it edge wise--but turned  
16 quite over (on its back--) it is brown  
17 // A very small brown grasshopper hops (into the  
18 water--  
19 I notice again (in the spring holes in  
20 Hub's close) that water purslaine<sup>400</sup> being  
21 covered with water--is an evergreen--  
22 is  
23 though it ~~turns~~ reddish--  
24 // Little pollywogs 2 inches long are lively there.  
25 See on Walden 2 sheldrakes--  
26 male & female--(as is common) so they  
27 have for some time paired-- They are a  
28 hundred rods off-The male the larger  
29 with his black head & white breast--  
30 the female with a red head-- With my  
31 glass I see the ~~red~~ long red bills of  
32 both-- They swim at first one way

---

<sup>399</sup>Looks like T wrote the "a" over the beginnings of a "the"

<sup>400</sup>Also spelled "purslane"



1 frozen ground has gaped & erected itself from  
2 & over stones & sleepers--  
3 Pm to Holbrooks improvements--  
4 %X%<sup>403</sup>  
5 Many painted turtles out along a  
6 //  
7 ditch in Moores Swamp-- These the first  
8 I have seen--the water is so high in the  
9 meadows-- One drops into the water from  
10 some dead brush which lie in it & leaves  
11 on the brush 2 of its scales. Perhaps the  
12 sun causes the loosened scales to curl up  
13 & so helps the turtle to get rid of them.  
14 Humphrey Buttrick says that he has shot  
15 little  
16 2 kinds of ^dippers the one black--the other  
17 with some white.  
18 I see on a large ant hill--largish ants  
19 //at work %X% front half reddish--back half black--  
20 but on another very large ant hill near  
21 by (a rod to left of Holbrook road--perhaps  
22 50 rod this side of his clearing on the N side--)  
23 --5 feet through there none out.  
24 It will show how our prejudices interfere  
25 with our perception of color to state --that  
26 yesterday morning after making {a} fire in the  
27 kitchen cooking stove--as I sat over it  
28 I thought I saw a little bit {of} red or  
29 scarlet flannel on a a chink near a  
30 bolt head on the stove & I tried to pick

---

<sup>403</sup>"X" is immediately above the "s" of "turtles"



1 it out--while I was a little surprised that  
2 I did not smell it burning-- It was merely  
3 the reflection of the flame of the fire through  
4 a chink--on the dark stove-- ~~when I~~ This showed  
5 me what the true color of the flame was  
6 but when I knew what this was it was not  
7 very easy to perceive it again-- It appeared  
8 now more yellowish. I think that my senses  
9 made the truest report the first time.

10 The wood frogs lie spread out on the surface  
11 of the sheltered pools in the woods --cool & windy  
12 as it is--dimpling the water by their motions--& as  
13 you approach you hear their lively wark wurrk  
14 wu r r k--but seeing you they suddenly hist &  
15 perhaps dive to the bottom.

16 It is a very windy pm wind N-W-&  
17 at length a dark cloud rises on that  
18 side--evidently of a windy structure--  
19 a dusky mass with lighter intervals like  
20 a parcel of brushes lying side by side--a  
21 parcel of "mares tails" perhaps--it winds  
22 up with a flurry of rain--

23 Ap. 1st 59 some have planted peas //  
24 & lettuce--  
25 Melvin, the sexton, says that when Loring's  
26 Pond was drained once--perhaps the dam  
27 broke--he saw there about all the birds  
28 he has seen on a salt marsh

29 Also that he once shot a mackerel gull //  
30 I think he said it was in May--  
31 in Concord-- --that he sees the 2 kinds of

1 //yellow legs here-- That he has shot  
2 at least 2 kinds of large grey ducks--  
3 as big (one at least) as black ducks--  
4 He says that one winter (it may have  
5 been the last) there were caught by him  
6 & others at one place in the river below  
7 Balls hill in sight of Carlisle bridge  
8 about 200 lbs of pickerel within a week--some  
9 thing quite unprecedented--at least of  
10 late years This was about the last  
11 of February or 1st of March-- No males  
12 were caught! & he thinks that they  
13 had collected there in order to spawn--  
14 Perhaps perch & pickerel collect in large  
15 numbers for this purpose--  
16 Pm to Assabet over meadows in  
17 //boat--a very strong & cold NW wind--  
18 I land again at the (now island) rock,  
19 on Simon Brown's land--& look for arrowheads  
20 & picked up 2 pieces of soap stone pottery--  
21 one was probably part of the same which  
22 C. found with me there the other day. C's piece  
23 was one side of a shallow dish say 1 1/2 inches  
24 deep 4/8 to 6/8 inch thick with a sort of  
25 ear for handle on one side--almost a leg  
26 {drawing} {drawing} His piece, like mine, looks  
27 as if it had been scratched all over on the  
28 outside by a nail & it is evident that

1 this is the way it was fashioned-- It was  
2 scratched with some hard sharp pointed  
3 stone & so crumbled & worn away.

4 This little knoll was half plowed (through  
5 its summit) last fall in order to be culti-  
6 standing over all but the apex  
7 vated this spring--& the high water^ has  
8 for a fortnight been faithfully washing  
9 away the soil & leaving the stones--Ind relics  
10 & others--exposed-- The very roots of the grass--  
11 yellowish brown fibres--are thus washed  
12 clean & exposed in considerable quantity there--  
13 You could hardly have contrived a better way  
14 to separate the arrow heads that lay buried in  
15 that sod between the rocks--from the sod  
16 & soil--

17 At the poke-logan up the Assabet--  
18 I see my first phoebe %X%--the mild bird  
19 --it flirts its tail & sings pre vit pre vit  
20 pre vit previt incessantly & flirting  
21 its tail as it sits over the water--& then at  
22 last rising on the last syllable--says  
23 pre-vee as if insisting on that with pe-  
24 culiar emphasis.

25 The villagers remark how dark &  
26 angry the water looks today-- I think  
27 it is because it is a clear & very windy  
28 day & the high waves cast much shadow--  
29 %Crow b. birds common%

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29

Ap. 2nd 59

Pm to Lee's Cliff --(walking)

%Incana% Alders generally appear to be past prime  
//%on causeways--i.e. the earliest ones--see More same species%

%not open the 10th%

I see a little snow ice in the woods

in one place today-- It is still windy

& cool--but not so much or as yesterday--

I can always sail either up or down the

river with the rudest craft--for the

wind always blows more or less with the

blunt

river valley-- But when a^ wooded cape

or hill projects nearly in the direction to

which the wind is blowing--I find that

it blows in opposite directions off that shore

while there may be quite a lull off the

centre. This makes a baffling reach--

Generally a high wood close upon the

west side of our river--the prevailing winds

being N. W. makes such a reach--

// There are many fuzzy gnats now in

the air--windy as it is-- Especially I see

them under the Lee<sup>404</sup> of the ~~first~~ middle

conantum Cliff--in dense swarms all

headed one way--but rising and falling suddenly

all together as if tossed by the wind--

They appear to love best a position just

below the edge of the cliff--& to rise constantly

---

<sup>404</sup>Could be "Lew", another spelling of "lee" in OED.



1 small pitch pine tree a heap of the  
2 cones which have been stript of their  
3 scales evidently by the red squirrels this  
4 last winter & fall-- they having sat upon  
5 some dead limbs above-- They were all  
6 stript regularly from the base upward  
7 excepting the 5 to 7 uppermost & barren  
8 scales--making a pretty figure like this  
9 {drawing} I counted 239 cones  
10 under this tree alone  
11 & most of them lay within  
12 2 ~~square~~ feet square upon a mass of the  
13 scales 1 to 2 inches deep & 3 or 4 feet  
14 in diameter-- There were also many cones  
15 under the surrounding pines. Those I counted  
16 would have made some 3 quarts or more  
17 These had all been cut off by the squirrels  
18 & conveyed to this tree & there stript & eaten.  
19 They appeared to have devoured all the fruit  
20 of that p. pine grove--& probably it was  
21 they that nibbled the winter green--  
22 No fruit grows in rain--the red squirrel  
23 harvests the fruit of the p. pine. His  
24 body is about the color of the cone. I should  
25 like to get his recipe for taking out pitch  
26 for he must often get his chaps defiled  
27 methinks. These were all fresh cones  
28 the fruit of last year--perhaps there

1 was a hole in the ground where they lodged  
2 by that tree.

3 I see fly across the pond a rather large  
4 hawk--& when at length it turns up {I} am sur- //  
5 prised to see a {larg} blackish spot on the  
6 under side of each wing--reminding me  
7 of the night-hawk-- Its wings appeared  
8 long & narrow--but it did not show the  
9 upper or under side till far off--{sailing}<sup>407</sup> so  
10 level-- What was it?

11 The bass recently cut down at Miles swamp  
12 which averages nearly 2 1/2 feet in diameter at  
13 the ground has 47 rings--& has therefore  
14 grown fast-- The black ash is about 18  
15 inches in diameter & has 48 rings-- The white  
16 ash is about 15 inches in diameter & has 78  
17 rings--

18 I see the small botrychium still quite fresh //  
19 in the open pasture only a reddish or leathery  
20 %some too yellow% quite & more  
22 brown-- %^%It is therefore ~~more~~<sup>more</sup> evergreen<sup>^</sup> than the  
23 spleenworts.

24 As I go down the street just after  
25 sunset I hear many snipe tonight-- //

26 This sound is annually heard by the villagers  
27 but always at this hour, ie in the twilight--  
28 a hovering sound high in the air & they do  
29 not know what to refer it to-- It is very easily  
30 imitated by the breath.-- A sort of shuddering  
31 with the breath. It reminds me of  
32 calmer nights-- Hardly one in a hundred

---

<sup>407</sup>1906 has "sailing", but can only make out clearly the "-ling".

1 hears it & perhaps not nearly so  
2 many know what creature makes it.  
3 Perhaps no one dreamed of snipe  
4 an hour ago--but the air seemed  
5 empty of such as they--but as soon as  
6 the dusk begins--so that a birds flight  
7 is concealed--you hear this peculiar  
8 spirit suggesting sound--now far now near--  
9 heard through & above the evening din  
10 of the village. I did not hear one  
11 when I returned up the street half an  
12 hour later.

13 Ap 3rd--

14 // An easterly wind & rain

15 Pm to White Pond--

16 C. says he saw a striped snake on the 30th %X%<sup>408</sup>

17 //  
18 We go by Clam Shell--The water on the  
19 meadow is now visibly lowered considerably  
20 & the tops of bushes begin to appear--  
21 The high water has stood over & washed down  
22 the base of that avalanche of sand from  
23 my new ravine--leaving an upright edge  
24 a foot high--& as it subsided gradually  
25 it has left various parallel shore lines  
26 with stones arranged more or less in rows  
27 along them--thus forming a regular  
28 beach of 4 5 rods length-  
29 or<sup>409</sup>

---

<sup>408</sup>The "X" is immediately below the "th" of "30th".

<sup>409</sup>Looks like T added this after writing "4 5," so it's just *barely* interlined.



1           The beomyces is in its perfection this //  
2 rainy day. I have for some weeks been  
3 {writing} on the beauty & richness of the moist  
4 & saturated crust of the earth-- It has seemed  
5 to me more attractive & living than ever--a  
6 very sensitive cuticle--teeming with life--esp--  
7 in the rainy days. I have looked on it as the  
8 skin of a pard. And on a more close  
9 examination I am borne out--by discovering in  
10 this now so bright beomyces--& in other  
11 earthy lichens & in cladonias--{and} and also  
12 in the very interesting & pretty red & yellow stemmed  
13 mosses--a manifest sympathy with--  
14 and an expression--of the general life of the  
15 crust. This early & hardy cryptogamous vegeta-  
16 tion is as it were a flowering of the crust of the  
17 earth-- Lichens & these mosses which depend  
18 on moisture are now most rampant--  
19 If you examine it, this brown earth crust is  
20 not dead- <sup>410</sup>We need a popular name  
21 for the beomyces-- C. suggests pink mould  
22 --Perhaps pink shot or eggs would do.

23           A great many oak leaves have been blown  
24 off in the late windy weather-- When I disturb //  
25 a leaf in the woods I find it quite dry within  
26 this rainy day. I saw the other day a long  
27                           a foot high  
28 winrow of oak leaves^ washed up on  
29 the meadow edge 1/4 of a mile off opposite  
30 Ball's hill--whence they partly came--

---

<sup>410</sup>Gap here between "dead--" and "We".

1           It does not rain hard today--but  
2 mizzles--with considerable wind--&  
3 your clothes are finely bedewed with it--  
4 even under an umbrella-- The rain drops  
5 hanging regularly under each twig of the  
6 birches--so full of light--are a very pretty  
7 sight as you look forth through the mizzle  
8 from under your umbrella-- In a hard rain  
9 they do not lodge & collect thus.

10           I hear that Peter Hutchinson hooked  
11 a monstrous pickerel at the Holt last  
12 winter-- It was so large that he could  
13 not get his head through the hole--&  
14 so they cut another hole close by & then  
15 a narrow channel from that to the first  
16 to pass the line through--but then when  
17 they came to pull on the line the pickerel  
18 gave a violent jerk & escaped-- Peter  
19 thinks that he must have weighed 10 lbs.

20           Mens minds run so much on work  
21 & money that the mass instantly associate  
22 all literary labor with a pecuniary reward.  
23 They are mainly curious to know how much money  
24 the lecturer or author gets for his work--  
25 They think that the naturalist takes so much  
26 pains to collect plants or animals because  
27 he is paid for it-- An Irishman who saw  
28 in the fields  
29 me^ making a minute in my note book--  
30 took it for granted that I was casting up  
31 my wages--& actually inquired what they  
32 came to--as if he had never dreamed

1 of any other use for writing-- I might  
2 have {~~told~~} quoted to him that the wages of  
3 sin are death, as the most pertinent answer--

4 What do you get for lecturing now-- I am  
5 occasionally asked-- It is the more amusing  
6 since I only lecture about once a year out  
7 of my native town-- often not at all--  
8 So that I might as well, if my objects  
9 were merely pecuniary--give up the business.

10 Once when I was walking on Staten Island  
11 looking about me as usual--a man who  
12 saw me--would not believe me when I told  
13 him that I was indeed from N. E. but was  
14 not looking at that region with a  
15 pecuniary view--a view to speculation--&  
16 he offered me a handsome bonus if I  
17 would sell his farm for him.

18 I see by the White Pond path many fox colored  
19 sparrows ap lurking close under the lee side of<sup>411</sup>  
20 a wall out of the way of the storm-- Their  
21 tails near the base are the brightest things  
22 of that color--a rich cinnamon brown, that I  
23 know-- their note today is the chip much like  
24 a tree sparrows. We get quite near them.

25 Near to the pond I see a small hawk  
26 larger than a pigeon hawk fly past--a deep //  
27 brown with a light spot on the side-- I think it probable  
28 it was a sharp shinned hawk--

29 The pond is quite high (like Walden--which

---

<sup>411</sup>T seems to have corrected his "of", so it looks like an "f" is under the "o" of "of".

1 as I noticed the 30th ult--had {p} risen  
2 {at-1} about 2 feet since January & perhaps  
3 within a shorter period.) & the white  
4 sand beach is covered. The water being quite  
5 shallow on it--it is very handsomely & freshly  
6 ripple marked for a rod or more in width  
7 the ripples only 2 or 3 inches apart & very  
8 regular & parallel--but occasionally  
9 a foot long  
10 there is a sort of cell^ (a split closed at each  
11 end) in one-- In some parts indeed it  
12 reminded me of a cellular tissue--but the last  
13 foot next the shore had no ripple marks--ap--  
14 they were constantly levelled there. These were  
15 most conspicuous where a dark sediment  
16 the dead wood or crumbled leaves perchance from  
17 the forest lay in the furrows & contrasted with  
18 the white sand--

19 {drawing}

20 The cells were much more numerous & smaller  
21 in proportion than I represent them.

22 I find in drawing these ripple marks that  
23 precisely  
24 I have drawn ^such lines as are used to represent  
25 a shore on maps--& perchance the sight  
26 of these parallel ripple marks may have suggested  
27 that method of drawing a shore line-- I do  
28 not believe it--but if we were to draw  
29 such a lake shore accurately it would be  
30 very similar.



1           Such an appetite have we for new  
2 life that we begin by nibbling the  
3 very crust of the earth-- We betray  
4 our vegetable & animal nature &  
5 sympathies by our delight in water  
6 -We rejoice in the ~~cop~~ full rills  
7 the melting snow--the copious spring rains  
8 & the freshets--as if we were frozen  
9 earth to be thawed--or lichens &  
10 mosses--expanding & reviving under this  
11 influence--

12           The osier bark now as usual looks very  
13 yellow when wet--& the wild poplar  
14 very green-- Pm to Cliffs

15           Those striped snakes of the 30th c. { }<sup>412</sup>  
16 found (several in all) on west side  
17 the RR. causeway--on the sand--which is  
18 very warm. It would seem then that  
19 they come out in such places soon after  
20 the frost is out. The RR men who  
21 were cutting willows there to set on the  
22 sides of the deep cut--to prevent the gullying  
23 there--came across them.

24           The epigaea looks as if it would open  
25 //                            %V12th%  
26 in 2 or 3 days at least^-- showing much color  
27 & this form {drawing} The flower buds

---

<sup>412</sup>The 1906 has "were", but it looks more like "c." (for T's "Cousin Charles" he refers to earlier re: the snakes and refers to as "c.") plus another word. The period of "c." seems to be made from blotting out another letter. Maybe T forgot to cross out the rest of the word, and it is supposed to be simply "c."?

1 are protected by the withered leaves, oak  
2 leaves, which partly cover them--so  
3 that you must look pretty sharp to de-  
4 tect the first flower-- These plants blossom  
5 by main strength as it were--or the virtue that  
6 is in them--not ~~being~~ growing by water, as  
7 most early flowers--in dry copses--

8 I see several earth-worms today under //  
9 the shoe of the pump on the platform. They may  
10 have come up through the cracks from the well  
11 where the warm air has kept them stirring.

12 On the barren RR causeway--of pure  
13 sand--grow chiefly--sallows--a few poplars--  
14 & sweet fern & blackberry vines--

15 When I look with my glass I see the  
16 cold & sheeny snow still glazing the mts.  
17 This it is which makes the wind so piercing  
18 cold. There are dark & windy clouds {on}  
19 over that side--of that peculiar brushy  
20 or wispy character--or rather like sheafs<sup>413</sup>  
21 ~~of~~ which denotes wind-- They only  
22 spit a little snow at last--thin &  
23 scarcely perceived--like falling gossamer--

24 Ap 5--59

25 In running a line through a wood lot in  
26 the SW part of Lincoln to-day-- I started  
27 from an old pine stump--now mostly crumbled  
28 away--though a part of the wood was still hard  
29 above ground--which was described in his deed

---

<sup>413</sup>Looks like T wrote "sheafs" over another word (that may have gone with the "of" crossed out afterward).

1 of 1813 (46 years ago) as a pine  
2 stump. It was on the side of a hill above  
3 Dea Farrars meadow--

4 As I stood on a hill just cut off  
5 I saw half a dozen rods below the bright  
6 yellow catkins of a tall willow just opened  
7 on the edge of the swamp against the dark  
8 brown twigs <sup>414</sup>the withered leaves-- This early  
9 blossom looks bright & rare amid the withered  
10 leaves & the generally brown & dry surface  
11 like--the early butterflies-- This is the  
12 most conspicuous of the March flowers--(i.e  
13 if it chances to be so early as march)

14 It suggests unthought of warmth &  
15 sunniness-- It takes but little color & tender  
16 growth--to make miles of dry brown wood-  
17 land & swamp look habitable & homelike--  
18 as if a man could dwell there--  
19 Mr. Haines who travelled over the lots  
20 with us this very cold & blustering day--  
21 was over 80.

22 What raw blustering weather said I to  
23 my employer today-- Yes, answered he,--"did  
24 you see those 2 sun dogs on Saturday?"  
25 & windy  
26 They are a pretty sure sign of cold^ weather

27 Ap 6th

28 Another remarkably windy day--cold  
29 //  
30 NW wind & a little snow spitting from time  
31 to time--yet so little that even the traveller

---

<sup>414</sup>There could be an "&" here, between "twigs" and "the". T would have made it by crossing the "T-cross" from "twigs" and the beginning of the "t" in "the".



1 might not perceive it.

2 For 19 days from the 19th of March to  
3 the 6th of Ap. both inclusive we have had  
4 remarkably windy weather-- For 10 days //  
5 of the 19 the wind has been remarkably  
6 strong & violent--so that each of those  
7 days the wind was the subject of general  
8 one  
9 remark-- The first^ of these 10 days was  
10 the warmest--the wind being SW--but the  
11 others especially of late were very cold the  
12 wind being NW--& for the most part icy cold.  
13 5  
14 ----There have also been 5 days that  
15 would be called windy--& only 5 which  
16 4<sup>415</sup>  
17 were moderate-- The last 7 including today  
18 have all been windy--5 of them remarkably  
19 so wind from NW-- V 10th--forward

20 The sparrows have to flit along any thick  
21 hedge--like that of Mrs. Gourgas's Tree  
22 sparrows-- F. hiemalis--& fox colored spars in com-  
23 pany--

24 A fish hawk %X% sails down the river--from time //  
25 to time --almost stationary 100 feet above  
26 the water--not withstanding the very strong wind

27 I see where moles have rooted in a meadow //  
28 & cast up those little piles of the black earth.

29 Ap 7th  
30 %no%  
31 The Cheney elm looks as if it would shed pollen tomorrow%^% //  
32 %V 13th%  
33 --& the Salix purpurea will perhaps within a week%^% //

---

<sup>415</sup>The "4" replaces the crossed out "5" above it.

1           Pm up Assabet with Pratt--  
2           Standing under the N side of the hill  
3       I hear the rather innocent phe phe,  
4       phe phe, phe phe, phé of a Fish hawk  
5 (for it is not a scream, but a rather soft & innocent note)  
6       & looking up see one come sailing from  
7       over the hill. The body looks quite short  
8       in proportion to the spread of the wings  
9       which are quite dark or blackish above.  
10       He evidently has something in his talons.  
11       We soon after disturb him again  
12       & at length after circling around over  
13       the hill & adjacent fields he alights  
14       in plain sight one one of the half  
15       dead white oaks on the top of the {hill}  
16       --where probably he sat before. As I look  
17       through my glass he is perched on a large  
18       dead limb & is evidently standing on a  
19       fish (I had noticed something in his talons  
20       as he flew) for he stands high and uneasily  
21       finding it hard to keep his balance in the  
22       wind. He is disturbed by our neighborhood  
23       & does not proceed at once to eat his  
24       meal. I see the tail of the fish hanging  
25       over the end of the limb. Now & then he  
26       pecks at it. I see the white on the  
27       crown of the hawk-- It is a very large

1 black bird as seen against the sky. Soon  
2 he sails away again--carrying his fish  
3 as before horizontally beneath his body  
4 {drawing} & he circles above over  
5 the adjacent pasture--like  
6 a hawk hunting--though he can only  
7 be looking for a suitable place to eat  
8 his fish or waiting for us to be gone--  
9 Looking under the limb on which he was  
10 perched <sup>we</sup> find a piece of the skin of a  
11 sucker (?) or some other scaly fish which a  
12 hawk had dropt there long since. No  
13 doubt many a fish hawk has taken his  
14 meal on that sightly perch.

16 It seems then that the fish hawk which  
17 you see soaring & sailing so leisurely about  
18 over the land--(for this one soared quite  
19 high into the sky at one time) may have a fish  
20 in his talons all the while & only be waiting  
21 till you are gone for an opportunity  
22 to eat it on his accustomed perch.

23 I told Pratt my theory of the  
24 formation of a swamp on a hill-side--  
25 but he thought that the growth of the alders  
26 &c there would not make the ground any more  
27 moist there but less so--& stated that the  
28 soil (as he had noticed) was drier under  
29 rank grass in a mowing field--than at the

1 same depth under a surface of bare &  
2 hot sand--because the grass took up  
3 the moisture from the soil.

4 I saw a hole (probably of a woodchuck)  
5 //partly dug on the E side of the hill  
6 & 3 or 4 large stones lay on the fresh sand  
7 heap thrown out--which the woodchuck  
8 had pushed up from below-- One was about  
9 6 inches long x 4 or more wide & might  
10 weigh 4 lbs--& looking into the hole whose  
11 bottom I could not see, I saw another^ nearly as large  
12 about 3 feet down on its way up-- I have  
13 seen their holes dug in much worse  
14 places than this--This hole sloped downward  
15 at a considerable angle--so that the  
16 stones had to be pushed upward a steep slope.

17 A small hawk flies swiftly past on  
18 the side of the hill--swift & low--  
19 //ap. like same as that of Ap 3rd--a deep  
20 rusty brown-

21 The wood chuck probably digs in a stoney place  
22 that he may be the more secure.

23 I hear then the hovering note of a snipe at 4 1/2  
24 %in the day% also the next day at ~~10~~ 9 A.m. as much  
25 //pm--unusually early%^%-- as ever! Through  
26 Find a sternothaorus odoratus--so far from water the wind--  
27 // on Simon Browns knoll--where water has not been since about  
28 Mar. 20-- That I think he was then washed & left  
29 there & has since lain in the ground-- There a 2 or 3  
30 small leeches on him--which ~~the~~ may have adhered to him  
31 The white mans relics in the field are like the Indians  
32 all winter.  
33 pipes--pottery--& (instead of arrow heads) bullets.<sup>416</sup>

---

<sup>416</sup>Lines 33 and 35 seem interlined. T appears to have squeezed them onto this last page of this journal, and the subject matter is completely different from the previous material.



1 %To buy Flagg's Studies & c  
2 Oswald's Etymological Dict.  
3 Smith's Lit Dictionary  
4 Worcester's Dict.  
5 Carpenters Vegetable Physiology  
6 Bartlett Dic of Americanisms 59 edition<sup>417</sup>

---

<sup>417</sup>Entire page written faintly, seems to be in pencil.

1            %v. of dwarf {     } is gree all<sup>418</sup> {     }  
2            is at well meadow ({N} ~~Feb~~ Mar 2d)  
3            See grass & sedge of Mar. 3rd in Hosmer ditch  
4            v of P. pine buds (eaton) start  
5            mark sedge  
6            v. gulls & willows at Boston<sup>419</sup>

---

<sup>418</sup>Ink splotch here after and before "all."

<sup>419</sup>Entire page of text seems to be in pencil, written faintly.