

The Long Snowy Winter

Jan 4th 1856th

A clear cold day– P. m. to Walden.

To examine the ice

I think it is only such a day as this—when the fields on all side are well clad with snow over which the sun shines brightly, that you observe the blue shadows on the snow— I see a little of it today. Dec 29th there were 8 or 10 acres of Walden still open— that evening it began to snow & snowed all night—& the remainder of the pond was frozen on that the succeeding night. But on Jan. first I was surprised to find all the visible ice snow ice—when I expected that only the 8 or 10 acres would be—but it appeared that the weight of the snow had sunk the ice already formed & then partly dissolved in the water which rose above it & partly was frozen with it. The whole ice Jan¹ 1st was about 6 inches thick—and I should have supposed that over the greater part of the pond there would be a clear ice about 2 inches thick on the lower side—yet where I cut through near the shore I distinguished 2 kinds of ice, the upper 2 1/2 inches thick & evidently snow ice, the lower about 4 inches thick & clearer—yet not remarkably clear—

¹"Jan" possibly altered from "was"

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

This reminded me of the pickerel which I caught here under similar circumstances for Peter Hutchinson—& thrust my mittened hands in after—

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

last

Another man had passed since the ^ snow fell, & pulled up at least one of the lines— I knew it was today & not yesterday by the character of his track—for it was

stiff

made since the ^ crust formed on this snow last night—a broad depression cracking the crust around—but yesterday, it was comparatively soft & moist.

Hunt says that Mr Hoar tells a story of Abel Davis to this purport— He had once caught a pickerel in the brook near his house—& was overheard to say—"Why, who'd a thought to find you here in Temple Brook. With a slice of pork you'll make

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

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

Jan 5th '56

One of the coldest mornings Therm. 9°⁻¹ say some

P. m. Up river to Hub's Bridge.

It has been trying to snow all day—but
has not succeeded, as if it were too cold—
Though it has been falling all day—
there has not been enough to whiten the
coat of the traveller. I come to the
river for here is the best walking—
The snow is not so deep over the ice.

Near the middle the superincumbent
snow has so far been converted into a
coarse snow-ice ice that it will
bear me, though occasionally I slump
through intervening water to another ice
below—also perhaps the snow has
been somewhat blown out of the
river valley. At any rate by walking
where² the ice was frozen last, or
over the channel, I can get along
quite comfortably—while it
is hard travelling through this
crusted snow in the fields.

¹This is a minus sign

²"where" possibly written over "were"

Generally to be sure the river is but
 a white snow-field indistinguishable
 from the fields—but over the chanel
 there is a thread, commonly, of yellowish
 porous looking snow ice— The hard-
 hack—above the snow has this form



Should not that meadow where the 1st bridge was built

Also there are countless
 be called hard-hack meadow?
 small ferns with terminal
 leafet only left on still rising
 above the snow—for I notice the

like the large ones in swamps

herbage of the river-side now—thus ^

that coarse now straw colored grass



What with the grasses ^

& the stems of the button-

bushes—the snow about the button bushes

several rods broad

forms often broad¹ ^ low mounds nearly

burying the bushes above which the

& that broad bladed—now straw colored grass

the tops of the button bushes ^ still rise

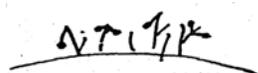
many of

with ^ their now black looking balls—erect

The black willows have here and there still a very few little
 curled & crispy leaves

or dangling—

is last open



The river

methinks

V. the 27th inst

just below a bend ^—as now at the

bath place & at clam-shell Hill—&

quite a novel sight is the dark water

there— How little locomotive now

look the boats whose painted sterns I

just detect where they are half filled

with ice & almost completely buried in

snow—so neglected by their improvident

some frozen in—the ice opening their seams—

OWNERS. some drawn up on the bank

¹"broad" possibly altered from "round"

very
already ^ severe to face—& the snow comes
finer more white & powdery—

 this is
Who knows but ^ the original form
of all snow flakes—but that when
I observe these crystal stars falling
around me they are but just generated in
the low mist next the earth. I am nearer
to the source of the snow—its primal—auroral
and golden hour—or infancy— But commonly
the flakes reach us travel-worn & ag-
glomerated—comparatively¹ without order
or beauty, far down in their fall.

like men in their advanced age—
As for the circumstances under which
this phenomenon occurs—It is quite cold

 V. Mar
& the driving storm is bitter to face{—} {—} 19th
though very little snow is falling. It
comes almost horizontally from the north.

 Methinks this kind of snow never falls

 Yes it does
in any quantity. ^ A divinity must have
stirred within them before the crystals
did thus shoot & set. Wheels of the
storm chariots— The same law that

 earth
shapes the ^ star² shapes the (snow flake—
Call it rather) snow-star— As surely
as the petals of a flower—are fixed each
of these countless snow stars comes whirling

 thus
to earth ~~with~~ pronouncing ^ with emphasis
the number 6. Order—λοσμος

 This was the beginning of a storm which reached far & wide & else-
where was more severe than here—

¹"com" written over "with"

²"earth-star" is a fungus or toadstool that opens into a star shape around the center

On the Saskatchewan¹ when no man
of science is there to behold still down they
come, & not the less fulfill their destiny,
perchance melt at once on the In-
dian's face— What a world we live in!
where myriads of these little disks
the
so beautiful to ^ most prying eye—are whirled
down on every traveller's coat—the observant
& the unobservant—and on the restless
fur
squirrel's coat—& on the far stretchings
fields & forests—the wooded dells—&
the mt tops—far, far away from the
haunts of man they roll down some little
fall over &
slope—² come to their bearings & melt or lose
their beauty in the mass—ready anon
to swell some little rill with their
contribution—& so at last the
universal ocean—from which they came—
There they lie like the wreck of chariot
wheels after a battle in the skies.

Meanwhile the meadow mouse shoves
them aside in his gallery—the school
boy casts them in his snow ball—or
the woodman's sled glides smoothly over
them—these glorious spangles—the
sweeping of heaven's floor. And they all
sing—melting as they sing—of the mysteries
of the number 6—six—six—six.
He takes up the water of the sea in

¹"S" written over "s"

²Carat written below dash

Jan 6th

// High wind & howling & driving snow storm
all night—now much drifted— There
is a great drift in the front entry &
at the crack of every door—& on the window
sills. Great drifts on the S of walls—

Clears up at noon—when no {sta} vehi-
cle had¹ passed the house—

Frank Morton has brought home & I
opened that pickerel of the 4th ult— It is
with smaller between
frozen solid— Yellow spawn as big as a pin head ^
enwraps its insides the whole length—1/2 an
inch thick— It must spawn very early then.

or maw
I find in its gullet or paunch—^ (the
long white bag) 3 young perch, one of
them 6 inches long—& the tail of a 4th—

& yet it was caught in endeavoring to

2 large
swallow another ^ minnow! Its belly was

1 considerably puffed out. 2 of the perch
lay parrallel side by side—of course head
downward, in its gullet—(?)² The upper & largest
perch was so high that he was cut in
two in the middle in cutting off the head.

This is what you may call voracity.

P. m. to Drifting Cut.

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

While I am making a path to the pump

I hear hurried rippling notes of birds,³ look

// up & see quite a flock of snow buntings
coming to alight amid the currant tops

¹"had" possibly altered from "has"

²"(?)" written above dash

³," poss ";" or "-"

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

I am come forth to observe the drifts.

inches

Perhaps six more ^ on a level has fallen, or more

It has not lodged on the trees

They are as usual on the S side of the
walls & fences—and judging from the direction
of their ridges the ~~snow~~ wind was due north.

Behind Monroe's tight board fence it is
a regularly swelled ~~but~~ unbroken bank—
but behind the wall this side carved

scallops

into countless ^ perforations—scrolls—& copings

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

Now at 4 1/4 the blue shadows are
very distinct on the snow banks—

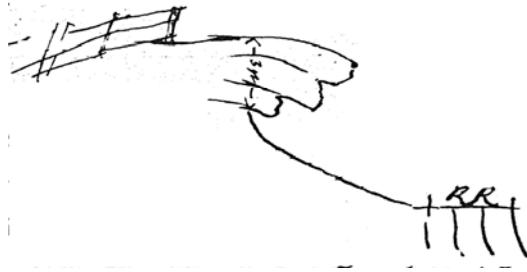
On the N. side of the Cut above the
crossing—the jutting edges of the drift
are quite handsome upon the bank—the
snow is raised 12 feet above the track
& it is all scolloped with projecting
eaves or copings{—}like turtle shells



They

project from 3 to 5 feet & I
can stand under them. They are
in 3 or 4 great layers one lapping

over another like the coarse edge of
 a shell—looking along it they appear
 somewhat thus
 coping has broken
 & great blocks have
 bank—like smoothed



Often this
 by its own weight
 fallen down the
 blocks of white marble.

The exquisite purity of the snow & the
 gracefulness of its curves are remarkable.
 Around some houses there is not a single track—
 Neither man woman nor child—dog nor cat nor
 fowl has stirred out today.— There has been
 no meeting. Yet this afternoon since the storm
 it has not been very bad travelling.

Jan 7

They say there was yet more snow at Boston 2 feet even
 At breakfastime the thermometer stood at 12°⁻¹

Smith's was

// earlier it was probably much lower— at 24°⁻²
 early this morning. The latches are white with frost at noon

They tell how I swung on a gown on
 the stair way when I was at chelmsford—
 the gown gave way I
 fell & fainted & it took 2 pails of water
 to bring me to—for I was remarkable
 for holding my breath—in those cases—

Aunt L. tells how (a 4th of July?) I stood
 at the window there & exclaimed—the bells
 ring, & the guns fire, & the pee-pe you")

Mother tried to milk the cow which
 took
 father ~~brought~~ on trial—but she kicked
 at her & spilt the milk³ (They say a
 dog had bitten her teats) Proctor laughed
 at her as a city girl & then he tried

¹This is a minus sign

²This is a minus sign

³"milk" altered from "milks"

but the cow kicked him over—& he finished
by beating her with his¹ cow-hide shoe—
Capt. Richardson milked her warily—standing
up. Father came home—& thought he would
for she needed much to be milked
"brustle right up to her" ^ but suddenly she
lifted he{r} leg & "struck him" fair & square
right in the muns²—knocked him flat
& broke the bridge of his nouse—which
He distinctly heard her hoof rattle on his nose
shows it yet. ^ This "started the claret" &
without staunching the blood he at once
drove her home to the man he had her of—
She ran at some young women by the way—
who saved themselves by getting over the wall
in haste.

Father complained of the powder in the
M. H. garret. At³ Town meeting but it
did not get moved while we lived there

Here he painted over his old signs for
guide boards—& got a fall when
painting Hale's⁴ (?) factory.

Here the bladder John was playing with
burst on the hearth— The cow came into the
entry after pumpkins— I cut my toe—&
was knocked over by a hen with chickens
&c &c.

Mother tells how at the Brick House
~~I can~~ we each had a little garden a few
feet square—& I came in one day having
found a potatoe just sprouted which by her
advice I planted in my garden— Ere long

¹Possibly altered from "her"

²"the jaws, the jowls, the face" (*OED* on line)

³Possibly "at" or possibly altered from "at"

⁴"H" written over "h"

John came in with a potatoe which he had planted-& had it planted in his garden- "O mother I have found a potatoe all sprouted. I mean to put it in my garden." &c Even Helen is said to have found one- But next I came crying-that some body had got my potatoe-&c &c-but it was restored to me as the youngest & original discoverer if not inventor of the potatoe-& it grew in my garden-& finally its crop was dug by myself & yielded a dinner for the family.

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

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

Pm. up river

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

them cawing amid the houses. I noticed
yesterday—from 3¹ to 6 feet behind
or N. W. of a small elm a curve
in a drift answering to the tree—showing
how large an eddy it had produced—



The whole surface of
the snow on fields & river is
little

composed now of flat rough ^ drifts—
like the surface of some rough slaty rocks.

Hardly anywhere is the ice visible now— //

It is completely frozen at the Hub. bath.
bend now—a small strip of dark ice
thickly sprinkled with those rosettes of
crystals 2 or 3 inches in diameter— This
surround by a broad border of yellowish
spew. The water has oozed out from the
thinnest part of the black ice & I see a
vapor curling up from it. There is
also much vapor in the air looking
toward the woods— I go along the
edge of the Hub. meadow woods—the N
side where the snow is gathered, light
& up to my middle—shaking down
birds nests— Returning just before
sunset, the few little patches of ice
look green as I go from the sun—
(which is in clouds)— It is prob. a
constant phenomenon—in cold
weather when the ground is covered

¹"3" written over "2"

with snow & the sun is low—morning
or evening—& you are looking from it.

I see birch scales (bird-like) on the snow
on the river more than 20 rods S of
the nearest and only birch—& trace them
north to it.

Jan 8th '56

P. m. to Walden—

The snow is about a foot or prob.
a little more—deep on a level—& consid-
erably drifted—but on the pond it¹ is

v 12th inst.

not more than 5 ^ inches deep on an average,
being partly turned into snow ice² by the sink-
ing of the ice—& perhaps partly blown off—

Many catbird nests about the pond
in³ ap. one I see a snake's slough in-
terwoven. The leaves of red oak shrubs

All

are still quite bloody colored— ~~Most~~

that I see, but one, V 22nd inst

of the p— pine cones ^ are open—^ I see
prying into the black fruit of the alder—
along the pond-side a single prob.

// lesser-redpoll—(4?) yellowish breast—& distinct
white bar on wing. Monroe is fishing
there. As usual a great pickerel
had bitten & ran off—& was lost, he
supposed, among the brush by the
shore. He tells of an eel up the
N. Branch—that weighed 7 lbs—also
that Geo Melvin spearing one night

¹"it" altered from "is"

²poss "snow-ice"

³Possibly "& in"

⁴Paren written over dash

–speared a large owl (prob. cat owl) that sat near by.

For a couple of days the cars have been very much delayed by the snow–& it is now drifting somewhat. The fine dry snow is driving over the fields like steam, if you look toward the sun, giving a new form to the surface–spoiling the labor of the track-repairers–gradually burying the rails– The surface of the snow on the pond is finely scored in many places by the oak leaves which have been blow across it– They have furrowed deeper than a mouse's track–& might puzzle a citizen. They are more frisky than a squirrel.

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

Jan. 9th '56

Clear Cold morning. Smiths thermometer ¹⁶~~24~~⁰–¹ //
ours 14⁰–² at breakfasttime–6⁰–³ at 9 Am.

3⁴ Pm to Beck Stows The thermometer at 2⁰+ when I return at 4⁵ 1/2 it is at 2–⁶ prob. it has been below zero for the greater part of the day. I meet choppers ap. coming home early on ac.

¹This is a minus sign

²This is a minus sign

³This is a minus sign

⁴"3" poss written over "P" or unfinished "2"

⁵"4" altered from "3"

⁶This is a minus sign

of the cold. I wade through the swamp

2 feet V Jan 12th

where the snow lies light 18¹ inches deep

a few leaves of andromeda &c peeping out— I am a birds nesting.

on a level—^ The mice have been out

& run over it. I see one large bush

of winter-berries—still quite showy though

somewhat discolored by the cold. The rabbits

have run in paths about the swamp.

Go now anywhere in the swamp & fear

The fisherman whom I saw on Walden last night will find his
no water. lines well frozen in this morning.

In passing through the deep cut on²

the New Bedford road—that a little

sand, which was pretty coarse, almost

gravel, had fallen from the bank—&

was blown over the snow, here & there— The

surface of the snow was diversified

by those slight drifts, or perhaps cliffs

which are left a few inches high, (like

the fracture of slate rocks)—with a

waved outline—

was

lines

of these little drifts in ridges may be

1/8 of an inch high— This may help decide

how those drifts (?)³ or cliffs (?) are formed.

Yet when it blows & drifts again it presents a similar appearance.

// It has not been so cold throughout

the day before—this winter. I hear the

boots of passing traveller's squeak.



& all the sand

collected in waving

just on the edge

¹"18" cancelled in pencil

²blotch after word

³"(?)" possibly inserted

Jan 10

The weather has consid. moderated 2°⁻¹ at break-
fast time—(It was 8°⁻² at 7 last evening)
but this has been the coldest night probably. //

You lie with your feet or legs curled
the sheets shining with frost about your mouth
up—waiting for morning [^]. Water³ left by
the stove is frozen thickly—& what you
sprinkle in bathing falls on the floor ice—

The house plants are all frozen—& soon
droop & turn black. I look out on the roof of
a cottage covered a foot deep with snow,
& wondering how the poor children in its
garret—with their few rags—contrive to keep

I mark the white smoke from its chimney whose contracted wreathes are soon dissipated in this
stinging air—& think of the size of their wood pile

their toes warm— [^] And again I try to realize
how they panted for a breath of cool air
those sultry nights last summer— Realize
it⁴ now if you can. Recall the hum of the
mosquitoe{.}

It seems that the snow storm of Saturday
night was a remarkabl one reaching
many hundred miles along the coast.

It is said that some thousands passed the
night in cars—

The kitchen windows were magnificent
last night with their frost sheaves—sur-
passing any cut or ground glass.

Remembering the walk of yesterday

I love to wade & flounder through
the swamp now—these bitter cold days when
the snow lies deep on the ground— And

¹This is a minus sign

²This is a minus sign

³"W" written over "I" or "In"

⁴"it" altered from "if"

I need travel but little way from the town
to get to a Nova Zembla Solitude—to wade through
the swamps—all snowed up—untracked by
man—into which the fine dry snow is
still drifting till it is even with the tops
of the water andromeda & half way up
the high blueberry bushes— I penetrate
to islets inaccessible in summer—my
feet slumping to the sphagnum far
out of sight beneath—where the
alder-berry glows yet—& the azalea
buds—& perchance a single tree-
sparrow or a chickadee lisps by my side—
Where there¹ are few tracks even of wild
animals—perhaps only a mouse or
two have burrowed up by the side of
some twig & hopped away in straight
lines on the surface of the light deep
snow—as if too timid to delay—to another
hole by the side of another bush— And
a few rabbits have run in a path amid
the blueberries & alders about the edge of
the swamp— This is instead of a polar
sea expedition & going after Franklin.
There is but little life & but² few objects
it is true— We are reduced to admire
buds even like the partridges—&
bark like the rabbits & mice.—the
great yellow & red forward looking

¹"there" altered from "they"

²"but" altered from "few"

buds of the azalea—the plump red ones
of the blueberry—& the fine sharp red
ones of the pan. andromeda—sleeping along
its stem— The speckled ~~alder~~ black alder—
the rapid growing dog-wood—the pale
brown & cracked blueberry—&c Even a
little shining bud which lies sleeping behind
its twig & dreaming of spring—perhaps half
concealed by ice, is object enough— I feel my-
self upborne on the andromeda bushes be-
neath the snow—as on a springy basket
work—then down I go up to my middle
in the deep but silent snow—which has
no sympathy with my mishap— Beneath
the level of this snow how many sweet ber-
ries will be hanging next August!¹

This for yesterday—the coldest day yet

This freezing weather I see the pumps
dressed in mats & old clothes—or bundled
up in straw— Fortunate he who has placed
his cottage on the south side of some
high hill or some dense wood—&
not on the middle of the Great Fields where
there is no hill nor tree to shelter it—
There the winds have full sweep—& such
a day as yesterday—the house is but a
fence to stay the drifting snow— Such
is the piercing wind—no man loiters between
his house & barn— The road track
is soon obliterated & the path ~~to the~~

¹"A" written over "a"

which leads round to the back of the house
~~front-door~~ ^ ~~which was~~¹ dug this morning
is filled up again—& you can no
longer see the tracks of the master
of the house who only an hour ago

half

took refuge in some subterranean apart
ment there. You know only by an
occasional white weath of smoke from
his chimney—which is at once snapped
up by the hungry air that he sits warm-

Studying the almanac to learn how long it is before Spring.
ing his wits there within—^ But his
neighbor who only half a mile off
has placed his house in the shelter of a
wood—is digging out of a drift his pile
of roots & stumps, hauled from the swamp,
at which he regularly dulls his axe & saw,
reducing them to billets that will fit his stove.
With comparative safety & even comfort he labors
at this mine.

As for the other—the windows give no sign
of inhabitants—for they are frosted over
as if they were ground glass—& the curtains
are down beside— The path is snowed up
& all tracks to & fro—no sound issues
from within. It remains only² to examine the
chimney's nostrils—I look long & sharp at
it & fancy that I see some smoke
against sky there—but this deceptive—
for as we are accustomed to walk up
to an empty fire-place & imagine

¹"which was" cancelled in pencil

²large blotch obscures part of "only" and part of "look" on line below

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

~~Jan 11th~~ 10th still

P. m. Worked on flower-press.

Jan 11^{2th} '56

P. m. to Walden.

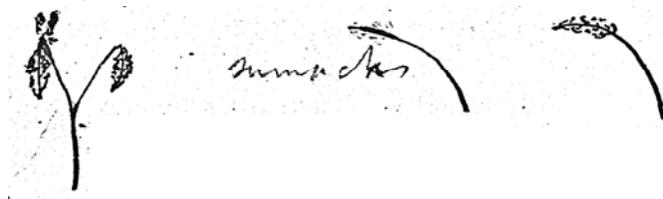
Cold as the weather has been for some
days—it melting a little on the S side
of houses today for the first time for
quite a number of days—though the
9th ult was the coldest day thus
far—the therm. hardly going below zero
during the day— Yet whenever I have
been to Walden—as Jan 4th-8th & to
day—I have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

there is but about 5 inches both snow
 & water above the ice. Jan 4th was
 the coldest day that I have been there—
 & yet I slumped through the snow into
 water—which evidently was prevented from
 freezing at once by the snow— I think
 that you may find water on the ice
 thus at any time—however cold—&

Prob. some of the overflow I noticed on the river
 a few days ago was owing to the
however soon it may freeze— weight of the snow as there
 has been no thaw.

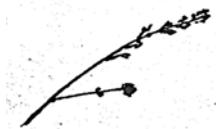
Observed that the smooth sumachs about
 the N side of the Wyman Meadow

a great
 had been visited by partridges & ^ many of
 still crimson The same next day on the other side the pond.
 the ^ berries were strown on the snow ^— There
 they had eaten them perched on the twigs.
 Elsewhere they had tracked the snow
 from bush to bush—visiting almost every
 bush & leaving their traces— The mice
 also had run from the base of one sumac
 to that of another on all sides—though there
 was no entrance to the ground there—prob—
 they had climbed the stems for berries—
 Most of the bunches now hang¹ half broken
 off by time &c—



See Jan 30th

The lespedeza now a very
 pale brown looks thus



¹"hang" altered from "hand"

The sunsets I think are now particularly interesting— The colors of the west seem more than usually wan, perhaps by contrast with this simple snow clad earth over which we look & the clear cold sky—a sober but extensive redness—almost every night passing into a¹ dun— There is nothing to distract our attention from it.

Monroe who left his² lines in Walden on the 8th cut them out today—but he got no fish—though all his bait were gone.

The January Sunsets.

To-day I burn the first stick of the wood which I bought & did not get from the river— What I have still left of

wood

the river ~~^ would~~—added to what of it I reserve for other uses, would last me a week longer.

Animals that live on such cheap food as buds & leaves & bark and wood—like partridge{s} & rabbits & wild mice, never need apprehend a famine.

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

¹"a" altered from "-"

²"his" altered from "in"

out of this small pond— One year would
require 365.000!¹—not distinguishing frogs—
Can it be so? The fishermen tell me
that when they catch the most, the fish are
fullest.

Mother reminds me that when we
lived at the Parkman House she lost
a ruff 1 1/2 yards long & with an edging
3 yards long to it which she had laid on
the grass to whiten—& looking for
it she saw a robin tugging at the
tape string of a stay on the line. He would
repeatedly get it in its mouth—fly off &
be brought up when it got to the end of its
tether— Miss Ward thereupon tore a
linen handkerchief into strips & threw them
out—& the robin carried them all off. She
had no doubt that he took the ruff.

It is commonly said that fishes are
long lived on ac. of the equable tempera-
ture of their element— The temperature of the
body of Walden may perhaps range from

perhaps at bottom much less. or 53°

85°+ ^ down to 32°+ ^ While that of the air
~~about~~ {—} it ranges from 100°+ down to
28°-²—or 128° more than 2^{ce} as much.

Yet how large a portion of animal
life becomes dormant or emigrates in the
winter—& on those that remain with us
there is an increase of fur & prob. of

¹Exclamation mark written above and below dash

²This is a minus sign

down—corresponding to the increased cold—
If there is no corresponding thickening
of the integument or scales of fishes on
the approach of winter—they could seem
to enjoy no advantage over¹ land animals.

most land animals

Beside their thick coats ~~the rabbits &
partridges (?)~~ seek some comparatively warm
& sheltered place in which to sleep—but
where do the fishes resort— They may sink
to the bottom—but it is scarcely so warm
there as at the bottom of a grey rabbit's or
a fox's burrow. Yet the fish is a
tender animal in respect to cold— Pull²
him out in the coldest weather—& he at
once becomes encased in ice & as stiff as
a stake—and a fox (?) stands at his ease on the

Frogs which perchance are equally tender, and must (?)³ come to the air occasionally, are therefore
ice devouring him. ^ They may be said to live

compelled go into⁴ the mud & become dormant.

then in a southern climate— Even the
tough mud turtle possesses a southern constitution.
— He would snap in vain—& soon cease snapping
at the N. W. wind when the thermometer is
at 25° below zero— Wild mice & spiders
& snow fleas would be his superiors

Jan 12^{th5} 12th

Moderating though at zero at 9 Am

Pm to Andromeda swamps

Measuring snow— It is ~~about~~ a fortnight
since we had about a foot of snow fall
on 2 or 3 inches which was firmly crusted—

¹"over" altered from "of"

²"P" written over "p"

³"(?)" possibly inserted

⁴"go into" altered from "going"

⁵"12" altered from "13"

Then Sproutland between
RR & Andromeda Pond
down hill toward the W.

15	The 1 st Andromeda Swamp	Wheeler's
11	from E to W	Squirrel
20	24 The result of	Wood
17	16 34 measures in	N of R
17	20 Walden— <u>8 or 10</u>	W of RR
13	26 acres of which did not	measuring
14	29 freeze till <u>during¹ the</u>	from S
16	26 <u>snow of a fortnight</u>	to N par
15	16 ago—gave 5 1/6	with RR
17	19	12
15	27	9
<u>17</u>	27	10
12) 187 (say 15 1/2	24	12
17 1/2	21	10
	27	10
	22	12
	16	12
	17	8
	28	9
	33	11
	28	7
	<u>30</u>	7
	20) 476 (say 23 4/5	12
	25 4/5	12
	The snow in the swamp was	8
	within about 3 inches of the top	7
	of the <u>highest</u> andromeda	12
	bushes—& was swelled about	<u>12</u>
	3 or 4 inches higher there than	19) 192 (
	between such— Foxes had	say 10 (or 12
	sunk from 1 to 4 inches in it.	an av. mixed
		pine & oak wood
		not very level—say
		75 years old ²

¹"during" altered from "the"

²For an image of this MS page, see Appendix, p. 278.

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

In the swamp the dull red leaves of the andromeda were just peeping out—the snow lying not quite level but with gentle swells about the highest clumps of bushes—

Deep as the snow was, it was no harder but perhaps easier walking there—than in summer. It would not much impede a mouse running about below.

Though the snow is only 10 inches deep on a level farmers affirm that it is 2 feet deep—confidently—

Jan 13th

Sunrise—a heavy lodging snow almost rain—has been falling how long—coming from the eastward— The weather comparatively warm but windy— It will prob. turn to rain.

say 4 or 5 inches deep

It sticks to the sides of the houses.

Took to pieces a pensile nest which I found the 11th ult on the south shore of Walden on an oak sapling (red or black) about 15 feet from the ground. Though small it measures 3 inches by 3 in the extreme & was hung between horizontal two ^ twigs or in a fork forming about a right angle—the 3^d side being regularly rounded without any very stiff material. The twigs extended 2 or 3 inches beyond the nest—

¹"3" written over "2"

In our workshops we pride ourselves
on discovering a use for what had
previously been¹ regarded as waste— But
how partial & accidental our economy
compared with Nature's. In nature nothing
is wasted—every decayed leaf & twig &
fibre is only the better fitted to serve in
some other department—& all at
last are gathered in her compost heap—
What a wonderful genius it is that
leads the vireo to select the tough fibres
of the inner bark—instead of the more brittle
grasses for its basket—the elastic

the

pine needles & ^ twigs curved as they
dried to give it form—and as I suppose

&c &c

the silk of cocoons to bind it together with.

I suspect that extensive use is made
of these abandoned cocoons by the birds—
& they if anybody—know where to find

at least

them. There were ^ 7 materials used
in constructing this nest & the bird visited
as many distinct localities many times—
always with the purpose or design to find
some particular one of these materials
—as much as if it had said to itself—now
I will go & get some old hornet's nest
from one of those that I saw last fall
down in the maple swamp (—perhaps
thrust my bill into them)—or some silk

¹"been" possibly inserted

from those cocoons I saw this morning.

It turned to rain before noon
4 or 5 inches of very moist snow or sleet //
having fallen—

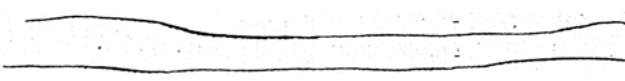
Jan 14th Sunrise— Snows again
I think that you can best tell from what
side the storm came by observing on which
side of the trees the snow is plastered.

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

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

crust Jan 15

A fine clear winter day—

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

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

at a level a foot or more above
the usual one— Seeing the tracks where
a leaf had blown along & then tacked
& finally doubled & returned on its trail
I thought it must be the track of some
creature new to me—
I find under the hemlocks in & upon the snow, ap.
—brought down by the storm, an abundance of those
little dead hemlock twigs described on the 13th ult—
They are remarkably slender & without stiffness like
the fir (& I think spruce) twigs—& this gives the
hemlock its peculiar grace— These are not yet curved
much—& perhaps they got that form from being
placed in the nest.

Jan 16th {}56

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

In yard 5 measures
gave 15+ inches

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

W. of RR					E of RR					
15	11	8	13	34)	416	(16	13	13	or av. of open fields
8	11	9	13				17	14	17	^{15 6/10} <u>13 6/10</u> —or perhaps ¹
9	11	10	13	say			16	15	19	V. Feb 12 th 14 since I
8	13	8	15				13	21	11	measured most on
10	15	13	13	<u>12 1/4</u>			13	11		the W {av of 16}
10	17	12	15				13	9	23	It being {so} much the
11							21		say	deepest on the side of
11	31	11	13				21	12	<u>25</u> <u>15 5/8</u>	the RR from which
9	8	13	12				13	14	23)	360 (the storm came. ²
			17							

¹"or perhaps" possibly in pencil (need better copy)

²For an image of this MS page, see Appendix, p. 279.

Geo. Prescott guessed it was 2 1/2 feet on an av.!!

Trillium Woods

through mid. as before

18 Between woods & RR—N. W. the av. of

18 12 measures was 18 1/2+

12 Why so much (5 1/2 inches) more

18 now in the woods than on the 12th—

17 as comp. with open fields? Was the

20 driving snow caught in a small wood?

19 or did it settle less in the rain there?

13 or since the snow on¹ account of bushes?

20

15

13

17

18

19

15

18

21

I hear flying over—(& see)

17) 291 (say 17

a snow bunting—a clear loud

tcheep or tcheop, sometimes rapidly

trilled or quavered, calling its mates.

With this snow the fences are scarcely an obstruction to the traveller—he easily steps over them.

Often they are buried. I suspect it is 2 1/2 feet deep in Andromeda swamp now.

The snow is much deeper in yards—roads & all small enclosures—than in broad fields.

Jan 17th

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

¹"on" written over"?"

²For an image of this MS page, see Appendix, p. 280.

Jan 18th '56

J. B. Moore—says that he has caught
20 lbs of pickerel in Walden in one winter
&—and had had nearly as good luck 5 or
6 times the same winter there; not less than
10 lbs at one time— Suppose then¹ that
he has caught 50 pickerel there in
one winter—& all others the same winter
150—you have 200² caught in one
winter. I suspect there are as many as 2000

5 men caught 333 lbs in a pond in Eastham in
that will weigh a pound. one day this winter say the papers—largest
5 1/2 lbs

Analysed a nest which I found Jan 7th
in an upright fork of a red maple sapling
on the edge of Hub's swamp wood N side near—
the deep grooves made by the twigs on each side
river—about 8 feet from the ground ^— It may
be a yellowbird's—
Extreme breadth outside 3 inches—inside 1 1/2. Extreme
height outside 3 inches—inside 1 5/8 sides 3/4 inch thick.

It is composed of 7—principal materials—
I name the most abundant 1st—I mean most abundant when
compressed.)

- 1 Small compact lengths of ^ pappus about 7/8 inch long,
perhaps of erechthites), 1/2 inch deep & nearly pure, a very
warm bed—chiefly concealed, just beneath the lining in-
side.
- 2 Slender catkins, often with the buds & twig ends (of perhaps
hazel) throughout the whole bottom & sides—making
it thick but open & light, mixed with ~~ap~~.
- 3 ~~Ap~~. milkweed silk i.e. fibres like flax, but white, ^ also
in sides & rim—some of it almost thread like—white with
some of the dark epidermis— From the pods? No, I am
about certain, from comparison, that it is the fibres of the bark of
the stem—V 19th inst.

¹Altered from "than"
²Altered from "150"

& narrow

- 4 Thin ^ strips of grape vine bark—chiefly in the rim & sides for 3/4 inch down—& here & there throughout—
- 5 Wads of ap brown fern wool mixed with the last
- 3
- 6 Some finer pale brown & thinner shreds of bark ~~directly~~ within the walls & bottom underneath pappus, (mixed with some short shreds of grape bark) ap. not grape— If this were added to the grape—These 5 materials would be not far from equally abundant.
- 7 Some very fine pale brown wiry fibres for a lining just above the pappus & somewhat mixed with it. Perhaps for coolness being springy.

Directly beneath the pappus was considerable {other} shreds of grape & the other Bark—short & broken— In the rim & sides some cotton ravelings—& some short shreds of fish line or crow fence— A red maple leaf within the bottom—a kernel of corn just under the lining of fibres—(perhaps dropt by a crow or black-bird or jay—or squirrel while the nest was building.) A few short length of stubble or weed stems in the bottom & sides A very little brown wool¹ like ap. that in the nest last described—which may be brown fern wool. The milkweed—& fern wool conspicuous without the rim & about the twigs. I was most struck by that mass of pure pappus under the inside lining.

Pm. to Walden—

to learn the temperature of the water— The snow is so deep at present in the streets that it is very difficult turning out, & there are cradle holes between this & the P.² O. The side walks being

¹"wool" possibly altered from "wood"

²"P" written over "p"

blotted out—the street like a woodmans path
—looks like a hundred miles up country.

I see where children have for some
days come to school across the fields
on the crust—from Abiel Wheeler's¹ to
the RR crossing. I see their tracks in
the slight snow upon the crust which fell
the 14th ult. They save a great distance &
enjoy the novelty.

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

of

What if the substance were ^ as ethereal
a nature. Our very shadows are no
longer black—but a celestial blue,
This has nothing to do with cold methinks,
but the sun must not be too low.

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

¹"W" written over "w"

which was about 7 inches thick only
the first 4 inches perhaps—snow ice the other
3 clear. The moment I reached the water
it gushed up & overflowed the ice driving
in the snow
me out this yard¹ where it stood at
last 2 1/2 inches deep above the ice—

The thermometer indicated 33 1/2° at top
& 34 2/3 when drawn up rapidly from 30 feet
beneath. So ap.² it is not much warmer
beneath.

Goodwin was fishing there— He says
he once caught 50 lbs of pickerel
here in 2 days—he³ thought 25 or 30
fishes. Thought that there were many
hundred caught here in a winter—
that nearly all were females.

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

Jan 19th '56

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

¹Carat written below dash

²"ap" is triple underlined

³"he" altered from "so"

The only open place in the river between

Hubbard bridge & I have no doubt Lee's bridge, as I learned in my walks the next day.
Hunts bridge & the ^ RR bridge is a
small space against Merricks pasture just

As usual just below a curve in shallow water, with
below the Rock. the added force of the assabet.

The willow osiers of last years growth—
on the pollards in Shattuck's row—Merrick's
Pasture—from 4 to 7 feet long—are
perhaps as bright as in the spring—
the lower half yellow the upper red.
but they are a little shrivelled in the bark.

Measured again the great elm
in front of Charles Davis' on the Boston
road—which he is having cut down—¹
The chopper White has taken off most

tried his axe
of the limbs & just begun ^ on the foot
of the tree— He will prob. fall it on
Monday, or the 21st. At the smallest
place between the ground and the
limbs 7 feet from the ground, it
is 15 ft & 2 inches in circumference
at 1 foot from the ground on the lowest
side—23 9/12. White is to have
10 dollars for taking off the necessary
limbs & cutting it down merely—
help being found him. He began on
Wednesday— Davis & the neighbors
were much alarmed by the creaking
in the late storms—for fear it would
fall on their roofs. It stands 2 or 3 feet
into Davis' yard.

¹note from Lorna Mack: This may be the elm T replaced with the existing elm in front of the Art Assoc.
(Legend has it)

As I came home through the village
at 8 1/4 Pm by¹ a bright moon-
light—the moon nearly full & not more
than 18° from the zenith—~~I saw the~~
The wind NW but not strong & the
air pretty cold— I saw the melon rind
arrangement of the clouds on a
larger scale & more distinct than
ever before. There were 8 or 10 courses
of clouds—so broad that with equal
intervals of blue sky they occupied the
whole width of the heavens—broad
white scirrho-stratus in perfectly regular
curves from west to east across
the whole sky— The 4 middle ones oc-
cupying the greater part of the visible
cope were particularly distinct.
They were all as regularly arranged
as the lines on a melon & with
much straighter sides as if cut with
a knife— I hear that it attracted
the attention of² those who were abroad
at 7 Pm & now at 9 Pm it is
scarcely less remarkable— On one

N or S

side of the heavens ^ the intervals of blue
look almost black by contrast— There
is now, at 9, a strong wind from the
N. W. Why do these bars
extend E & W— Is it the influence of

¹"by" altered from "a"

²"of" possibly altered from "at"

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

In Oliver N. Bacon's Hist. of Natick p 235
it is said that of Phaenogamos plants "Up-
wards of 800 species were collected from Natick
soil in 3 years' time, by a single individual."

I suspect it was Bacon the Surveyor. There is
given a list of those which are rare in
that vicinity—among them are the
following which I do not know to grow

found since here— Actaea rubra¹ prob here W²—Asclepias tuberosa—
found since

~~Alopecurus pratensis³—Corallorhiza odontorhiza (?)~~

found since
Nutt.—Drosera filiformis Nutt.—Ledum lati-
folium⁴—Malaxis Lilifolia W. (What in Grey?)—
found since

~~Sagina procumbens⁵.~~

Among those rare there but common here are—
Calla Virginica—Glechoma Hederacea—Iris
prismatica—Lycopus Virginicus—Mikania Scandens
Prunus borealis—Rhodora Canadensis—Xyris
aquatica—Zizania aquatica.

They, as well as we, have Equisetum
hyemale—Kalmia glauca—Liatris scariosa
—Ulmus fulva—Linnaea Borealis &c &c Pyrola
maculata.

Bacon quotes White who quotes Old⁶ Col. memorial—ac-
of man. & customs &c of our ancestors.

¹"Actaea rubra" cancelled in pencil

²"W" possibly cancelled in pencil

³"Alopecurus pratensis" cancelled in pencil

⁴"Ledum latifolium" cancelled in pencil

⁵"Sagina procumbens" cancelled in pencil

⁶"O" possibly written over "o"

Bacon says that the finest elm
in Natick—stands in front of Thomas
F Hammond's house & was set out "about
the year 1760."— "The trunk, 5 feet from the
ground, measures 15 1/2 feet."
G. Emerson gives a dif. account. q.v.

Observed within the material of a robins
nest this pm a cherry stone.

Gathered some¹ dry water milkweed
stems to compare with the materials of the birds nest
of the 18th ult. The bird used—I am almost

not the pods
certain—the fibres of the bark of the stem ^, just
beneath the epidermis—only the bird's is older
& more ~~fuogy~~ fuzzy & finer like worne twine or string
The fibres & bark have otherwise the same ap-
pearance under the microscope— I stripped
off some bark about 1/16 of an inch wide &

or 12
6 inches long—& separating 8-~~or~~ 10 ^ fibres from
the epidermis rolled it in my fingers making
a thread about the ordinary size. This I could
not break by direct pulling & no man could.
I doubt if a thread of flax or hemp of the same
size could be made so strong. What an
admirable material for the Ind. fish line!

I can easily get much longer fibres—I
hold a piece of the dead weed in my hands—
strip off a narrow shred of the bark before

10 or 12
my neighbor's eyes & separate a few fibres as
fine as a hair roll them in my fingers
& offer him the thread—to try its strength.
He is surprised & mortified to find that

¹"some" possibly altered from "a"

he cannot break it. Prob. both the Ind.
& the bird discovered for themselves this same
(so to call it) wild hemp—

The corresponding fibres of the mikania—
seem not so divisible—become not so fine
& {frozy}—Though somewhat similar—are not
nearly so strong. I have a hang-bird's nest
from the river side made almost entirely of
this in narrow shreds or strips with the epidermis
on wound round & round the twigs & woven
into a basket— That is this bird has used per-
haps the strongest fiber which the¹ fields afforded—
& which most civilized men have not detected.

Knocked down the bottom of that sum-
mer yel— bird's nest (made on the oak at
the island last summer)—it is chiefly of fern

some
wool & also ap ^ sheeps wool (?) with a fine green
moss (ap that which grows on button bushes)
& some milkweed fibre
in mixed ^ & all very firmly agglutinated together—
Some shreds of grape vine bark about it.

Do not know what portion of the whole nest
it is.

Jan 20th 56

In my experience I have found nothing
so truly impoverishing as what is called
wealth—i.e. the command of greater
means than you had before—possessed—
—though comparitively few & slight still—
for you thus inevitably acquire a
more expensive habit of living—& even

¹"the" possibly altered from "he"

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

P. m. Up river to Hollowell Place—
I see the blue between the cakes of snow
cast out in making a path, in the
triangular recesses , though
it is pretty cold—but the sky is complete-
ly overcast. It is now good walking
on the River—for though there has
been no thaw since the snow came—a great
part of it has been converted into snow
ice by sinking the old ice beneath the water—
& the crust of the rest is stronger than
in the fields because the snow is so shallow
& has been so moist. The river is thus
an advantage as a highway not only in
summer—& when the ice is bare in the
winter—but even when the snow lies
very deep in the fields. It is invaluable
to the walker—being now, not only the
most interesting, but excepting the
narrow & unpleasant track in the high-
ways, the only practicable route. The
snow never lies so deep over it as else-
where—& if deep it sinks the ice & is soon
converted into snow ice to a great extent
beside being blown out of the river valley.
Neither is it drifted here. Here where
you cannot walk at all in the summer
is better walking than elsewhere in
the winter— But what a different

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

Nut Meadow Brook is open on the river
meadow—but not into the river— It is
short in the middle
remarkable that—the ^ strip ^ below the
Island—(v. yesterday) should be the only
open place between Hunt's Bridge & Hubbards
at least—prob as far as Lee's— The river
has been frozen solidly ever since the 7th
ult—& that small open strip of yesterday
& in middle
(about 1 rod wide ^) was prob. not more
than a day or 2 old. It is very rarely
closed I suspect—in all places more than
{—}

2 weeks² at a time. Ere long it wears its way
up to the light & its blue artery again

here & there
appears ^. In one place close to the river
Where the forgetmenot grows, that
springy place under the bank just above
the RR bridge the snow is quite melted &
the bare ground & flattened weeds exposed
for 4 or 5 feet.

Broke open a frozen nest of mud & stubble in
a black willow—prob. a robin's—in which

¹!" altered from "-"

²"2 weeks" altered from "a week"

were a snail (?) shell  & a
skunk cabbage seed? Were they not left¹
there by a mouse—? or could they have been
taken up with the mud— They were somewhat

A downy woodpecker—without red on head—the
in the mud. only bird seen in this nook—I stand within 12 feet—

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

A prob. kingbird's nest—on a small horizontal
branch of a young Swamp white oak—amid the
twigs about 10 feet from ground— (This tree is very
scraggy—has numerous short twigs at various angles
with the branches—making it unpleasant to climb—
& affording support to bird's nests—)— The nest
is round running to rather a sharp point on one side
beneath— Extreme diam. outside 4 1/2 to 5 inch
within 3 inch—depth within 2 inch without 4 or
more. The principal materials are 10— In the
order of their abundance thus

1st reddish & grey twigs some a foot & more in length
which are cranberry vines—with now & then a leaf on
prob— such as were torn up by the rakers—some are
as big round as a knitting needle—& would be
taken for a larger bush— These make the stiff
mass of the outside above & the rim.

2nd Woody roots rather coarser intermixed from
water side shrubs prob. some are from cranberry vines—
These are mixed with the last & with the bottom.

3^d Softer & rather smaller roots & root fibres of herbaceous
plants—mixed with the last & a little further inward.

¹"left" possibly altered from "cast"

For the harshest are always most external.

4th (Still to confine myself to the order of abundance)
Withered floweres & shoots bits of the gray downy
stems of the fragrant everlasting– These more
or less compacted & ap agglutinated from the
mass of the solid bottom–& more loose with the
stems run down to a point on one side the bottom.

5 What I think is the fibrous growth of a willow
dark-colored
moss-like with a wiry ^ hair-like



stem (possibly it is a moss) This with or without
the tuft is the lining & lies contiguous in the sides & bottom.

6 What looks like brown decayed leaves & confervae from
the dried bottom of the river side–mixed with the–everlasting
tops internally in the solid bottom.

7 Some finer brown root fibres chiefly bet the lining of
no 6 & hair & the coarser fibres of no 3–

8 A dozen whitish cocoons mixed with the everlasting
tops & dangling about the bottom peak externally–
also 8 or 10 very minute cocoons mixed
a few within the solid bottom. with these–attached in a cluster to the top of
an everlasting

9 A few black much branched roots (?)¹ (perhaps? of some
utricularia from the dried bottom of river) mixed with
nos 2 & 3.

white & black
10 Some horse hair–^ together with no 5, forming the
lining.

There are also with the cocoons & everlasting
tops externally one or 2 cotton grass heads–one
small white feather–& a little greenish fuscous
moss from the button bush–& in the bottom a small
shred of grape vine bark.

¹"(?)" possibly inserted

Jan 21st 56

4 men, cutting at once, began to fell the
(v 19th ult)

big elm ^ at 10 Am—went to dinner at
12, & got through at 2 1/2 Pm.

They used a block¹ & tackle with 5 falls

drawn by

fastened to the base of a buttonwood², & ^ a
horse, to pull it over the right way—

one said he pulled 20 turns

So it fell without harm down the
road. I measured it at 3 pm just
after the top had been cut off—

It was 15 feet to the first crotch. At³

the most up right & prob. highest limb

75 feet it ^ was cut off, & measured 27⁴ inches
in circumference— As near as⁵ I could
tell from the twigs on the snow, & what
the choppers said who had just removed the
top—it was about 108 feet high.

At 15 feet from the stump it
divided into 2 parts, about an equal size
One was decayed and broken in the

also

(which ^ proved hollow)

fall, being undermost, the other ^

at its origin was 11 4/12 ft in circum-

(The whole tree directly beneath this crotch was 19 3/12 round)
ference ^. This same limb branched again

at 36 8/12 from the stump—& these measured just
beneath the crotch 14 10/12 in circ.

At the ground the stump measured 8 4/12
one way—8 3/12 another—7 1/2 another.

It was solid quite through at but—

(excepting 3 inches in middle) though some-
what decayed within—& I could count

¹"block" altered from "black"

²"wood" possibly added to "button"

³"At" possibly altered from "at"

⁴"27" possibly altered from "17"

⁵"as" altered from "I"

This is wrong

pretty well 105 rings to which add 10 more
for the hollow & you have 115. / V. 26 inst

I could not count the decayed part there well⁻¹ op. the

There was a current bush at the first

t²

crotch-[^] and in a large hole at that

making 3 there

height-where prob. a limb once broke off [^]

& also

-[^] a great many stones bigger than a

hen's egg-prob cast in by the boys.

part of

There was also [^] an old brick with some clay

30 or 40 years within the tree at the

stump completely over grown & cut through

by the axe. I judged that there were

supposing one main limb sound

at least 7 cords then in the road [^]-&

Davis thought that the pile in the yard

from³ the limbs taken off last week contained

4 more- He said that there were

some flying squirrels within & upon

it when they were taking off the limbs.

There was scarcely any hollowness

to be discovered. It had grown

very rapidly the first 50 years or

could

so. You [^] see where there had once

been deep clefts between different portions

of the trunk at the stump-but the

tree had afterward united & over grown

them leaving some bark within the wood.

In some places the trunk as it lay on

the ground-(though flatwise) was

as

a

as higher ~~than the tallest~~ man's head.

This tree stood directly under the hill

¹Dash is possibly underlining for "have"

²"t" interlined above "t" in "crotch" on the line, perhaps for clarification

³"from" possibly altered from "out"

which is some 60 feet high—the old burying hill continued—S of where the Flag staff was planted when the British marched into town— This tree must have been some 50

25 yrs old & quite sizeable then. White, when taking off the limbs—said that he could see all over Sleepy¹ Hollow. beyond the hill. There were several great wens on the trunk—a foot in diameter & nearly as much in height. The tree was so sound I think it might have lived 50 yrs longer— But Mrs Davis said that she would not like to spend another such a week as the last before it was cut down.

They heard it creak in the storm—one of the great limbs which The 2 main limbs proved hollow. reached over the house was cracked.

Jan 22nd 56

Pm. to Walden

Tracks & inferences—this & the next day—

The Walden road² is nearly full of snow still to the top of the wall on the N side— though there has been no snow falling since the 14th ult— The snow lies particularly solid. Looking toward the sun the surface consists of great patches of shining crust & dry driving snow— giving it a watered appearance

Miss Minot talks of cutting down the oaks about her house for fuel because she cannot get her wood ~~teamed~~ sledged home on

¹"S" written over "s"

²"road" possibly altered from "pond"

account of the depth of the snow—though
it lies all cut there— James at
R. W. E's waters his cows at the door
because the brook is frozen—

If you wish to know whether a tree is
hollow—or has a hole in it, ask the
squirrels— They know as well as whether
they have a home or not. Yet a
man lives under it all his life without
knowing & the chopper must fairly
cut it up before he can tell. If there
is a cleft in it he is pretty sure to
find some nut shell or materials of
a birds nest left in it.

At Bristers Spring I see where a squirrel
has been to the spring & ^{also¹} sat on a low
alder limb & eaten a hazel-nut— Where
does he find a sound hazel nut now—? Has
them in a hollow tree.

See tracks of fishermen & pickerel v. forward—

At Walden, near my old residence, I
find that since I was here on the 11th ult—
apparently within a day or two some
gray or red squirrel or squirrels—
have been {fe}eding on the p— pine
cones extensively. The snow under one
young pine is covered quite thick
with the scales they have dropt while
{~~other~~} feeding over-head— I count the
cores of 34 cones on the snow there

¹"also" inserted with a caret

& that is not all— Under another pine there are more than 20—& a well worn track from this to a fence post 3 rods distant under which are the cores of 8 cones and a corresponding {amount} of scales. The track is like a very small rabbit. ⁰⁰ —going up the page. They have gnawed off the¹ cones which were perfectly closed. I see where one has taken one of a pair & left the other partly off— He had first sheared off the needles that were in the way & then gnawed off the sides or cheeks of the twig to come at the stem of the cone—which, as usual was cut by successive cuts as with a knife while bending it. One or

prob died last summer when little over a year old two small perhaps dead—^ certainly {—} unripe ones were taken off & left unopened.

I find that many of those young pines are now full of unopened cones

ap

which ^ will be two years old next summer— & these the squirrel now eats. There are



also some of them open, perhaps on the most thrifty twigs.

2

³ F. Morton hears today from Plymouth that 3 men have just caught {t} in Sandy Pond in Plymouth about 200

¹"the" possibly written over "these"

²T's caption reads "cones big as filberts"

³T's caption reads "cones full grown eaten by squirrels"

lbs of pickerel in 2 days.

Some body has been fishing in the pond this morning and the water in the holes is beginning to freeze—I see the track of a crow

V. 24 inst

 the toes as usual less spread—& the middle one making a more curved ~~line~~ furrow in the snow than the partridge—as if they

The inner (?) toe a little the nearest to the mid. one— v Feb 1st moved more unstably recovering their

feeble on their feet

balance. ^ This track goes to every hole but one or 2 out of a dozen

(directly from hole to hole sometimes flying a little)

^ & also to an apple core on the snow—

I am pretty sure that this bird was after the bait which is usually dropt

E. Garfield says they come reg. to his holes for bait as soon as he has left on the ice or in the hole ^— So if the pickerel are not fed it is— It had even visited, on the wing, a hole now frozen & snowed up which I made far from this in the middle of the pond several days since—as I discovered by its droppings— The same kind that it had left about the first holes—

I was surprised on breaking with
pickerel

my foot the ice in a ^ hole near the shore—evidently frozen only last night to see the water rise at once 1/2 inch above it. Why should the ice be still sinking— Is it growing more solid & heavier?

Most were not aware of the size of the great elm till it was cut down— I surprised some a few days ago by saying that when its trunk should lie prostrate it would be higher than the head of the tallest man in the town—& that 2 such trunks could

chamber

not stand in the ~~room~~ ^ we were then in

there would be ample
room for

—which was 15 feet across—that ^ ~~that~~

double bed-stead on the trunk—nay

that ~~our whole~~ the very dinner table we

at

we were sitting ^ with our whole party of

7, 8 chairs & all around it might be

ca

set there. (In the de^yayed part of

the but end there were curious fine

black lines, giving it a geographical

look here & there—



dozen inches long—

half a

sometimes following

the line of the rings—the boundary of

a part which had reached a certain stage of

decay. The force on the pullies broke off

more than a foot in width in the middle

of the tree—much decayed.

I have attended the felling & so to speak

the funeral of this old citizen of the town—

I who commonly do not attend funerals

—as it became me to do—I was the chief

if not the only mourner there— I have

taken the measure of its grandeur—

have spoken a few words of eulogy at

his grave—~~but there~~ remembering the

nil

maxim ~~nil~~—de mortuis ^ nisi bonum—

(in this case (magnum)

^ but there were only the choppers & the passers by to hear me— Further the town was not represented—the Fathers of the town—the select men—the clergy were not there—but I have not known a fitter occasion for a sermon of late.

Travellers whose journey was for a short time

pay

delayed by its prostrate body were forced to ~~give~~

it some attention & respect— But the axe-boys had climbed upon it like ants & commenced chipping at it before it had

There was a man already bargaining for some part fairly ceased groaning ^. How have the mighty fallen! Its history extends back over more than half the whole history of the town. Since its kindred could not conveniently attend—I attended. Methinks its fall marks an epoch in the History¹ of the town— It has passed away together with the clergy of the old school—& the

which used to rattle beneath it

stage-coach—^ Its virtue was that it steadily grew & expanded from year to year

about

to the very last. ~~On an average ^ 5/7 of an inch in a year—(near the ground)~~

How much of old Concord falls with it. The town-clerk will not chronicle its fall—I will—for it is of greater moment to the town than² that of many

¹"H" written over "h"

²"than" altered from "that"

a human inhabitant would be— Another

Instead of erecting a monument to it—we take all possible pains
link that bound us to the past is broken.

to obliterate its stump—the only monument of a tree which is commonly allowed to
How much of Old Concord was cut away

stand

with it! A few such elms would alone¹
constitute a town ship— They might claim
to send a representative to² the General Court
to look after their interests—if a fit one
could be found—a native American³ one
in a true & worthy sense—with Catholic
principles. Our town has lost some of its
venerableness— No longer will our eyes

like a vast corinthian column by the way-side
rest on its massive grey trunk ^—no longer
shall we walk in the shade of its lofty
spreading dome— It is as if you had laid
the axe at the feet of some venerable
Buckley or Ripley— You have laid the
axe—you have made fast your tackle
to one of the king-posts of the town.

I feel the whole building wracked by it.

Is it not sacrilege to cut down the tree which
has so long looked⁴ over Concord beneficently?

Supposing the first 15 feet to average 6 feet
in Diameter—They would contain more than 3
of wood⁵

cords & a foot ^; but prob.—not more than 3 cords.

With what feelings should not the citizens
hear that the biggest tree in the town has
fallen? A traveller passed⁶ through the town
& saw the inhabitants cutting it up—

without regret

The tracks of the partridges by the sumachs
made before the 11th are perhaps more prominent

¹"alone" altered from "along" in pencil

²"to" altered from "—"

³"A" written over "a"

⁴"looked" possibly altered from "& so"

⁵"wood;" altered from "wood—"

⁶"passed" altered from "past"

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

I brought home & examined some of the droppings

They were brown & dry though partly frozen 
of the crow mentioned 4 ps back_^¹ After long
with a microscope
study ^ I discovered that they consisted of the

other ges
seeds & skins & ^ indi ^ stible² parts of red-cedar

I detected the imbricated scale like leaves of a
some berry stem & then the seeds—{and} the now
berries and ^ barberries—^ & perhaps something more—
black skins of the cedar berries—but easily the large seeds of the barberries
& I knew whence it had probably come
—i.e. from the cedar woods & barbaerry³
bushes by Flints Pond. These then make
part of the food of crows in severe weather
when the snow is deep as at present.

===== Jan 23^d =====

Brown is filling his ice house //
The clear ice is only from 1 1/2 to 4 inches—
nearly
thick—all the rest or ~~more than~~⁴ a foot

the snow
is snow ice—formed by ^ sinking the first
under the water—& freezing with the water.
The same is the case at Walden.

or transparent
To get ice at all clear ^ you must
scrape
keep the snow off—after each fall.
Very little ice is formed by addition below
such a snowy winter as this.

yesterday
There was a white birch scale ^ in the
which I made
~~snowded up~~ snowed up hole ^ in the very
middle of Walden⁵. I have no doubt they
blow across the widest part of the
pond.

¹Caret written below dash

²Check MS for this word to see what's interlined: is it "ge" or "ges"? EM says "ges". If "ges", decide whether the character in ink preceding "t" is an "s" or a flourish (BW 1/15/07)

³T first wrote "barbary"; he then wrote "erry" over "ry" but did not cancel "a" of "ary"

⁴"more than" cancelled in pencil (need better image to confirm that "nearly" is in ink and cancel line is in pencil)

⁵"W" written over "w"

When approaching the pond yesterday
 through my beanfield I saw where
 some fishermen had¹ come away & the
 tails of their string of pickerel had trailed
 on the deep snow when they sank in it—

I afterward saw where they had been fish-
 the water just beginning to freeze
 ing that forenoon—[^] & also where some
 had fished the day before with red fin-
 ned minnows which were frozen into an
 That these men had chewed tobacco
 inch of ice— & ate apples—

All this I knew though I saw neither
 nor squirrel
 man—[^] nor pickerel—nor crow—

snow in the²
 Measured this Pm the [^] same fields
 which I measured just a week ago, to
 see how it had settled— It has been uni-
 formly fair weather of average winter cold-

Add 2 for ice at bottom V. Feb. 12th

ness, without any thaw—

W of³ RR
 it averages
11 1/3+

E of RR
 14 inches

or
 av.
 of both
12 1/3+
 say 12 1/2

Trillium Woods

13 1/4+ 15 1/4+

14 1/3+

16th it was 17–19

Has settled 3 3/4—

It seems then that
 as it lies light in the
 wood at first it

settles much faster there
 so that, though it was

nearly 3 1/2 inches the deepest
 there a week ago—it is less
 than 1 inch the deepest there
 now.⁵

on the 16th it was 12 1/4 | 16— 15 5/8 |
 It has settled therefore in open fields
 1 1/10 inches—Showing how very solid, it is,
 as many have remarked. Not allowing
 of the light snow above the crust
 for what [^] may have drifted against the
 RR embankment—(though⁴ I measured on
 both sides of it.) The drifting of light surface
 snow may have produced nearly all the
 change.

¹"had"altered from "&"

²Illegible word in pencil above "the" (need better image)

³"of" possibly altered from "on"

⁴Check marks across "t" of "though" to confirm open paren is not cancelled (need better image)

⁵For an image of this MS page, see Appendix, p. 281.

Jan 24th 56

A journal is a record of experiences & growth—not a preserve of things well done or said. I am occasionally reminded of a¹ statement² which I have made in conversation & immediately forgotten—which would read much better than what I put in my journal. It is a ripe dry fruit of long past experience which falls from me easily without giving pain or pleasure— The charm of the journal must consist in a certain greenness—though freshness—& not in maturity. Here I cannot afford to be remembering what I said or did—my scurf cast off—but what I am & aspire to become.

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

¹"a" altered from "an"

²"statement" altered from "statement,"

15-5 at 6

16 at 7 1/2 or spike on W side

At the smallest place bet. the ground & branches
this is a little bigger than the Davis¹

or near

elm—but it is not so big at ^ the
ground nor is it so high to the branching—
—about 12 feet—nor are the branches
so big—but it is much rounder & its
top broader fuller & handsomer— This
has an uncommonly straight sided & solid
looking trunk—Measuring only 2 feet
less at 6 feet from the ground than at 2².

Pm. up Assabet

Even the patches of shining snow crust
between those of dry white surface snow—are
slightly blue like ice & water—

You may walk anywhere on the
river now— Even the open space against
Merricks³ below the Rock has⁴ been
closed again—and there is only 6 feet of
water there now. I walk with a peculiar
sense of freedom over the snow-covered
ice—not⁵ fearing that I shall
break through I have not been
able to find any tracts of muskrats
this winter— I suspect that they very rarely
venture out in winter with their wet
coats. I see squirrel tracks about
the hemlocks— They are much
like rabbits' only the toes are

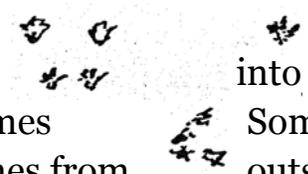
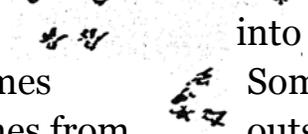
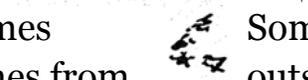
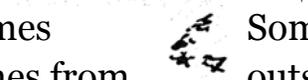
¹"Davis" altered from "davis"

²"2" possibly altered from "1"

³"Merricks" altered from "merricks"

⁴"has" possibly altered from "was"

⁵"not" possibly altered from "that"

very distinct.  From this
 they pass  into a semicircular
 figure sometimes  Some of¹ the
 first are 6 inches from  outside to outside
 length wise—with 1 to 2 feet of interval—

Are these the grey or red?

A great many hemlock cones
 have fallen on the snow & rolled
 down the hill—

Higher up against² the Wheeler Swamp
 I see where many squirrels—perhaps
 red—for the tracks appear smaller—
 have fed on the alder cones on the
 twigs which are low or frozen into the
 ice—stripping them to the core just as
 they do the pine cones.

Here are the tracks of a crow like those
 of the 22^d ult—with a long hind toe
 nearly 2 inches— The 2 feet are also
 nearly 2 inches apart— I see where
 the bird alighted descending with an
 impetus & breaking through the slight

planting
 crust with its feet side by side.

How different this partridge track
 with its slight hind toe—open & wide
 spread toes on each side—both feet
 forming one straight line, exactly thus

 The middle
 5 inches from centre to centre—
 toe alternately curved to the right & to the left—

¹"of" possibly altered from "on"

²"against" possibly altered from "in"

and, what is apparently the outer toe, in each case shorter than the inner one—

I see under a great many trees— black willow & swamp Wht oak—the bark scattered over the snow—some pieces 6 inches long—& above see the hole which a woodpecker has bored.

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

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

I do not find a foot of open water even on this North¹ Branch as far as I go—i.e. to J. Hosmers lot. The river has been frozen unusually long & solidly. They have been sledding wood along the river for a quarter of a mile in front of Merriams & past the mouth of Sam Barrett's Brook—

¹"N" written over "n"

where it is bare of snow hard glare
ice on which there is scarcely a trace
 or oxen
of the sled—^ They have sledded home
a large oak which was cut down on
the bank— Yet this is one of the rockiest
& swiftest parts of the stream.—Where
I have so often stemmed the swift current—
dodging the rocks—with my paddle— There
the heavy slow paced oxen with their ponder{-}
ous squeaking load have {plodd} while
the teamster walked musing beside it.

That Wheeler swamp is a great place
for squirrels— I observe many of their
tracks along the river side there— The
nests are of leaves & ap. of the gray species.

There is much of the water-milk-
weed on the little island just above
Dove Rock—it rises above the deep snow
there.

It is remarkable how much the river
has been tracked by dogs the week past—
not accompanied by their masters. They hunt
perchance in the night more than is
supposed—for I very rarely see one
alone by day.

The river is pretty low & has falling within
a month for there has been no thaw—
The ice has broken & settled around
the rocks which look as if they had

burst up through it— Some maple limbs which were early frozen in have been broken & stripped down by this irresistible weight.

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

I walk along the sides of the stream admiring the rich mulberry catkins of the alders which look almost edible— They attract us because they have so much of spring in them. The clear red osiers too along the river side in front of Merriam's on Wheeler's side..

I have seen many a collection of stately elms—which better deserved to be represented at the General¹ Court than the

than the
mannikins beneath— ~~Perhaps they shaded~~
a barroom & a victualling cellar & groceries
they overshadowed

When I see their magnificent domes miles away in the horizon—over intervening vallies & forests—they suggest a village a community there— But² after all, it is a secondary consideration whether there are human dwellings beneath them—these may have long since passed away— I find that into my idea of the village has entered more of the elm than of the human being.

¹"G" possibly written over "g"

²"But" possibly altered from "but"

They are worth many a political borough

They constitute a borough

The poor human representative of his party sent out from beneath their shade will not suggest a tithe of the dignity—the true nobleness & comprehensiveness of view—the sturdiness & independence—and the serene beneficence that they do— They look from town-ship to township— A fragment of their bark is worth the backs of all the politicians in the union. They are

their own

free soilers in (a peculiar but) broad sense—
— They send their roots north & south & east & west—~~& many times~~ into many a conservatives' Kansas¹ & Carolina—

such

who does not suspect their² underground

they improve the subsoil he has never disturbed

railroads—[^] & many times their length

of their principles

if the support [^] requires it. They battle with the tempests of a century—see what scars they bear what limbs they lost before we were born— Yet they never adjourn— they steadily vote for their principles & send their roots further & wider from the same centre. They die at their posts & they leave a tough but for the choppers to exercise themselves about—and a stump which serves for their monument.

They attend no caucus—they make no compromise—they use no policy— Their one principle is growth—they combine a true

¹"K" written over "C"

²"their" cancelled in pencil

radicalism with a true conservatism
–their radicalism is not a cutting
away of roots–but an infinite multi-
plication & extension of them under all
surrounding institutions. For every inch¹

that they ^{may} rise ^{higher into} toward² the heavens they take
a firmer hold on the earth–[^] Their con-
servative heartwood–in which no sap longer
flows–does not impoverish their growth,
but is a firm column to support it–& when
their expanding trunks³ no longer require
it–it utterly decays– Their conservatism
is a dead but solid heartwood which is the
pivot & firm column of support to all this
growth–appropriating⁴ nothing to itself–

but forever by its support ^{assisting to extend} [^] extending the
^{their}
area of [^] radicalism. Half a century after
they are dead at the core, they are preserved
by radical reforms– They do not, like
men, from radicals turn conservative–
Their conservative part dies out first
–their radical & growing part survives.
They acquire new states & territories while
^{become}
the old dominions decay–and [^] are the
habitation of bears & owls & coons.

Jan. 25th 56

P. m. up river

The hardest day to bear that we have
had–for beside being 5^o–⁵ at M. & at
4 P. m. there is a strong N. W. wind–

¹"For every inch" cancelled in pencil

²"toward" cancelled in pencil

³"s" added to "trunk"

⁴Altered from "appropriated"

⁵This is a minus sign

It is worse than when the thermometer
was at zero all day— Pierce says
it is the first day that he has not
been able to work out doors in the sun—
The snow is now very dry & powdery
& though so hard packed drifts some-
what— The travellers I meet have red-
faces. Their ears covered— Pity those
who have not thick mittens— No man
could stand it to travel far toward this
wind. It stiffens the whole face—& you
feel a tingling sensation in your fore-head
— . Much worse to bear than a still cold.
I see no life abroad no bird nor beast.
What a stern bleak inhospitable as-

(I am off Clam shell hill)

pect nature now wears—! ^ Where
a few months since was a fertilizing
river—reflecting the sunset—& luxuriant
meadows resounding with the hum of
insects, is now a uniform crusted snow
with dry powdery snow drifting over it
& confounding river & meadow— I make
haste away covering my ears, before I freeze
there. The snow in the road has frozen dry
—as dry as bran.

A closed P. pine cone gathered Jan 22nd
opened last night in my chamber— If
you would be convinced how differently
armed the squirrel is naturally for

dealing with p. pine cones—just try to get
one off with your teeth. He who extracts
with the aid of a knife
the seeds from a single closed cone ^ will
be constrained to confess that the squirrel earns
It is a rugged customer & will make your fingers bleed.
his dinner. ^ But the squirrel has the key to
conical & spiny
this ^ chest of many apartments— He sits on
a post vibrating his tail & twirls it as a
plaything.

But so is a man commonly a locked up
open
chest to us—to ^ whom; unless we have the key
of sympathy—will make our hearts bleed.

The elms—they adjourn not night
nor day—they pair not off— They stand
for magnificence—they take the brunt of
the tempest¹—they attract the lightning that
leaving only a few rotten members
would smite our roofs. scattered over the highway.
The one by Holbrooks is particularly regular—
& lofty for its girth—a perfect sheaf—but
thin leaved—ap. a slow grower—It bore a
tavern sign for many a year— Call² it the
Bond (?) elm

Jan. 26 '56

When I took the ether my consciousness
amounted to this—I put my finger on
myself in order to keep the place, other-
wise I should never have returned to this³
world.

They have cut & sawed off the but of
the great elm at 9 1/2 feet from the

¹"tempest" altered from "storm"

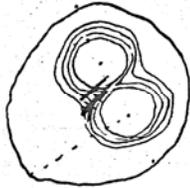
²"C" poss written over "c"

³"this" altered from "my"

ground—and I counted the annual rings there with the greatest ease & accuracy—indeed I never saw them so distinct on a large but. The tree was quite sound there.—not the least hollow even at the pith. There were 127 rings. Supposing the tree to have been 5 years old when 9 1/2 feet high, then it was 132 years old—or came up in the year—1724, just before Lovewell's Fight¹.

There were 2 centers fourteen (14) inches apart.

will
of it.
tinct
center—



The ac. coarse sketch give a general idea There were 13 dis-rings about each before they united &

one ring enclosed both. Then there was a piece of bark—which may be rudely represented by the upper black mark—say 6 or 8 inches long. This was not over-

but by grown ^ ~~til~~ the 24th ring. These 2 centers of growth corresponded in

6² feet

position to the 2 main branches ^ above— & I inferred that when the tree was about 18 years old, the fork commenced at 9 1/2 feet from the ground{.}—but as it increased in diameter, it united higher & higher up. I remember that the bark was considerably nearer

¹"Lovewell's Fight" altered from "lovewell's fight"
²"6" possibly altered from "5"

one center than the other. (There was bark in several places completely overgrown & included on the extreme but end where cut off—having ap. overgrown its own furrows.)

Its diameter, where I counted the rings, was one way, as near as I could measure in spite of the cal, $4^f \frac{3}{12}$ another $4 \frac{8}{12}$ —& 4 5 feet. On the line by which I counted, which was the long way of the tree, it had grown in the first 50 years 20 inches or $\frac{2}{5}$ inch a year or about $\frac{1}{9}$ of an inch a year. ^ the last 50— $5 \frac{3}{4}$ inches ^—& there was a space of about 5 inches between the two—or

At this height it had grown on an average annually nearly $\frac{24}{100}$ of an inch from the center for the intermediate 27 years. on one side. ~~Or counting both sides had made nearly $\frac{1}{3}$ an inch growth.~~

The white or sap wood averaged about 2 inches thick. The bark was from 1 to 2 inches thick and in the last case I could ~~dis~~ distinct count: from 12 to 15 ^ rings in it—as if it were regularly shed after that period.



The Court House Elm measured at 6 feet from the ground on the W side—12 feet $1 \frac{1}{2}$ inches in circ. The Willow by the Jim Jones house—14 feet at about 18 inches from ground—13— $\frac{8}{12}$ " " 6 " " & it bulged out much larger above this.

P. m.

Walked—down the river as far as
the S bend behind Abner Buttricks. I also
know its condition as far as the Hub.
Bridge in the other direction. There is
not a square foot open between these
extremes—& judging from what I know
of the river beyond these limits—I may safely
say that it¹ is not open—(2^{the}3 main stream
I mean)—anywhere in the town— Of the
the goose ground—say
North Branch—above the bath place ^—I
to the Stone bridge v. 27th inst.
cannot speak confidently. The same must
have been the case yesterday since it was colder.
Prob. the same has been true of the river—excepting
the small space against Merricks below
(when it closed at the Hub. Bath)
the Rock⁴ (now closed) since Jan 7th ^ or
nearly 3 weeks—a long time methinks
for it to be frozen so solidly. A sleigh might
safely be driven now from Carlisle Bridge⁵ to the
Sudbury⁶ meadows on the river. Methinks
it⁷ is a remarkable cold, as well as snowy,
January—for we have had good sleighing ever—
since the 26th of December—& no thaw.

Walked as far as Flint's Bridge with Abel
Hunt—where I took to the river— I told him
I had come to walk on the river as the best
place—for the snow had drifted somewhat in
the road—while it was converted into ice
almost entirely on the river—but asked

¹"it" written over "this"

²Paren written over dash

³"the" altered from "one"

⁴"R" altered from "r"

⁵"B" written over "to"

⁶"S" altered from "s"

⁷"it" altered from "is"

he—are you not afraid that you will get—
in? Oh no it will bear a load of wood from
one end to the other— But then there may

some 70

be some weak places— Yet he is 70¹ yrs
old & was born & bred immediately on its banks.
Truely one half the world does not know how
the other half lives.

Men have been talking now for a week at

elm

the P. O. about the age of the great ^—as
a matter interesting—but impossible to be
determined— The very choppers & travellers
have stood upon its prostrate trunk & specu-
lated upon its age— As if it were a pro-
found mystery. I stooped & read its years

(127 at 9 1/2 feet)

to them—^ but they heard me as the wind
that once sighed through its branches—
they still surmised that it might be 200
yrs old—but they never stooped to read the
inscription— Truly they love darkness rather
than light. One said it was probably 150
—for he had heard somebody say—that for
50 yrs the elm grew—for 50 it stood still—

(wonder what portion of his career he stood still!)

& for 50 it was dying. ^ Truly all men are
not men of science. They dwell within
an integument of prejudice thicker than
the bark of the cork tree—but it is
valuable chiefly to stop bottles with—tied
to their buoyant prejudices they keep them-
selves afloat when honest swimmers
sink.

¹"7" written over "6"

Talking with Miss Mary Emerson
this evening—she said—"It was not
the fashion to be so original when I
was young." she is readier to take my view—look through my
eyes for the time than any young person that I
know in the town.

The white maple {muds} look large with
bursting downy scales as in spring.

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

Jan 27 '56

I have just sawed a wheel $1 \frac{3}{4}$ inches thick
off the end of ap. a stick of red oak in
my pile. I count 29 rings—And¹ about
of rings or divisions of some kind
the same number ^ with more or less distinctness
in the bark which is about $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch
thick. Is not the whole number of rings con-
tained in the bark of all trees {where} a bark
externally smooth? This stick has 2
centers of growth, each a little one side
of the middle. I trace one easily to a
limb which was cut off close to the tree about
 $3 \frac{1}{2}$ inches above the lower side of the section.
The 2 centres are 1 inch apart on the
lower side, 2 inches & $\frac{5}{8}$ on the upper side
the main one
There are 3 complete circles to each

¹"And" written over "the"

on the lower side—& 10 on¹ the upper side—before they coalesce—hence it was 7 years closing up through 1 3/4 inches of height.



There is a rough ridge confined to the bark only & about 1/4 of an inch high extending from the crotch diagonally down the tree ap. to a point over the true center of growth.

Pm. Walked on the river from the Old Stone to Derby's Bridge— It is open a couple of rods under the Stone bridge but not a rod below it
^ & also for 40 rods below the mouth of
along the W. side

Loring's Brook—^ prob. because this is a mill stream. The only other open places ^{within²} the limits mentioned yesterday—are in one or 2 places close under the bank, and concealed by it, where

The river after freezing having shrunk warm springs issue. & the ice settled a foot or 18 inches there so that you can see water over its edge—

The White maple at Derby's Bridge measures including ap. a very large sucker 15 feet in circ. at ground ^—& 10 ft 5 inches at not including sucker, there free 4 feet above the ground. ^ ~~The~~

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



The fruit stems of the dog wood still hold on & a little fruit—

Of course the limbs should be smoother. The outline much like a peach tree—but it is without the numerous small limbs. or twigs

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

¹"on" written over other characters
²"with" added to "in"

January 28th 56

Snowed all day—about 2 inches falling.

They say it snowed about the same all yesterday in N. York. Cleared up at night

Jan 29th 56

P. m. Measured the snow in the same places measured the 16 & 23^d—having had except yesterday—fair weather & no. thaw—

W of RR—	av. 11 1/2+	E of RR 17—	av. of both sides.
on the 23 ^d it was	11 1/3	14	13 3/4 ⁻¹ 15 3/4
			12 1/3 ⁺² 14 1/3+
16 th " "	12 1/4	15 5/8	13 6/10 15 6/10

add 2 for ice at bottom—V. Feb 12th

Trillium Woods today	14 6/10 ³	16 6/10
the 23 ^d	13 1/4 ⁺⁴	15 1/4+
	16	17 ⁵ 19

As I measured oftener W than E of RR—the snow is prob. about 14 on a level in open fields now—or quite as deep as at any time this winter— Yet it has ap. been settling a little the last 6 days—

In the woods it is not proportionally deep ap. it has also been settling—but it is not so deep there as on the 16th because it settled rapidly soon after that date.

It is deeper E of RR—evidently because it lies behind it like a wall—though I measure from—6 to 10 or 12 rods off on that

side. Since the 13th ult there has been at no time less than 1 foot on a level in open fields.⁶

¹"13 3/4" cancelled in pencil

²"12" cancelled in pencil

³"14" cancelled in pencil

⁴"13 1/4+" may be cancelled in pencil; need better image

⁵"17" cancelled in pencil

⁶For an image of this MS page, see Appendix, p. 282.

It is interesting to see near the sources
small
even of ^ streams or brooks which now
flow through an open country—perhaps
shrunk in their volume—the traces
of ancient mills—which have devoured
the primitive forest—the earthen dams
& old sluice ways—& ditches and banks
for obtaining a supply of water—

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

It is observable that not only
the Moose & the wolf disappear before
the civilized man—but even many species
of insects—such as the black-fly—
& the almost microscopic 'no-see-em'
How imperfect a notion have we commonly
of what was the actual condition of
the place where we dwell—3 centuries ago.

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

cuts the legs of the cattle—& the occasional drifts are impassable. Sometimes with 2 yoke of oxen and a horse attached to the sled—the farmer attempts to break his way into his lot—one driving while another walks before with a shovel—treading & making a path for the horse—but they must take off the cattle at last & turn the sled with their hands.

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

Jan 30th 56

8 Am It has just begun to snow—those
dry
little round ^ pellets like shot.

Geo. Minott says that he was standing with Bowers (?)¹ & Joe Barrett near Dr Heywood's barn in the September gale—& saw an elm—2^{ce} as big as that which broke off before his house—break off 10 feet from the ground—splinter all up—& the barn bent & gave so that he thought it was time to be moving. He saw stones "as big as that [air tight] stove, blown right out of the wall—" so by bending

¹"(?)" possibly inserted

to the blast he made his way home.
All the small buildings on the Walden
road across the brook were blown back
toward the brook— Minot lost the
roof of his shed. The wind was southerly.

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

Stopped {ff} snowing before noon—not having
amounted to anything.

P. m. measured to see what difference
there was in the depth of the snow in
dif adjacent fields as nearly as possible¹
alike—& similarly situated. Commenced
15 or 20 rods E of the RR—& measured
across Hubbards (?) Stows & Collier's
fields toward a point on the S side
of the last 25 rds E of Trillium Woods.
These 3 fields were nearly level—some-
what meadowy, especially the 2nd, & at
least 25 rods from the nearest dis-
turbing influence—such as the RR

¹"possible" altered from "possibly"

embankment—or a wood—

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

The walls no doubt gave the 1st & 3^d fields somewhat more snow— Yet I am inclined to think that in this trial the snow is shallower very nearly as the fields are more moist. It is 3 inches shallower here than nearer showing the effect of that bank very clearly—6 to 15 rods off the RR where I measured yesterday. ^ but the av. is the same obtained yesterday for open fields E & W of RR—& proves the truth of that measuring.

The snow in the 1st field measured 2 inches more than that in the 2nd!

NB The andromeda swamp gave $26 \frac{1}{2} +$ ^ (on the $+ 2 = 28 \frac{1}{2} +$ more than $+ 2 = 25 \frac{4}{5}$ ^) It has prob. been about² 12th ult it was $23 \frac{4}{5}$ ^) feet
 $2 \frac{1}{2}$ say on the 16th The andromeda calyculata is now quite covered & I walk on the crust over an almost uninterrupted plain there. Only a few blueberries & Andromeda paniculatas rise above it. Near the last I break through. It is so light beneath that the crust breaks there in great cakes under my feet &

¹See image, Appendix, p. 283, for vertical row of dots between horizontal lines marked "A" through "D" that can't be reproduced in transcript.
²"about" cancelled in pencil

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

NB In Wheelers squirrel wood which on the 12th

+ 2 = 12

+ 2 = 17

gave 10 ^ inches of snow now gives 15 ^ which is what I should have judged from the changes in Trillium wood. They are affected alike.

The sproutland just South of this wood

+ 2 = 23 4/10

NB gives as average of 14 measurements 21 4/10 ^ which I suspect is too much—it is so sheltered a place.

By the RR{.} against Walden I heard the lisp of a chickadee & saw it on a sumach— It repeatedly hopped to a bunch of berries—took one—& hopping to a more horizontal twig—place it under one foot & hammed at it with its bill. The snow was strewn with the berries under its foot, but¹ I could see no shells of the fruit— Perhaps it clears off the crimson only.

Some of the bunches are very large & quite upright there still.

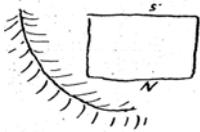


sumachs

¹"but" written over "by"

Again I suspect that on meadows
the snow is not so deep & has a firmer
crust. In an ordinary storm the
depth of the snow will be affected by a
wood 20 or more rods distant—or
as far as the wood is a fence—
The snow is so light in the swamps under
the crust amid the andromeda that
a cat could almost run there. There
are but few tracks of mice—now the
snow is so deep— They run underneath.

The drift about Lynch's House is
like this



wind

There is a strong
this P. m. from¹ NW

& the snow of the 28th is driving like
steam over the fields—drifting into the roads—
On the RR causeway—it lies in perfectly
straight & regular ridges a few feet
apart NW &² SE It is dry & scaly.
like coarse bran. 
Now that there is so much snow
it slopes up to the tops of the walks on both
sides. 

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

¹"from" altered from "&" (need better image to confirm this AL, which bears on reading "NW &" as added)

²"&" possibly written over "S"

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

Jan 31st

P. m. up North Branch

There are a few inches of light snow on top
of the little hard and crusted that I walked
on¹ here last—above the snow ice— The old
tracks are blotted out & new & fresher ones
are to be discerned— It is a tabula rasa—
These fresh falls of snow are like turn-
ing over a new leaf of Nature's Album.

At first you detect no track of beast
or bird & Nature² looks more than
commonly silent & blank— You doubt
if anything has been abroad—though
the snow fell 3 days ago—but ere
long the track of a squirrel is seen

to or

making ^ from the base of a tree—
or³ the hole where he dug for acorns
& the shells he dropped on the snow
around that stump.

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

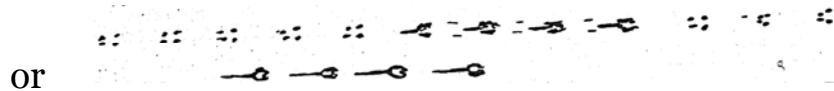
¹Possibly "in" or possibly altered from "in"

²"Nature" altered from "nature"

³"or" altered from "&"

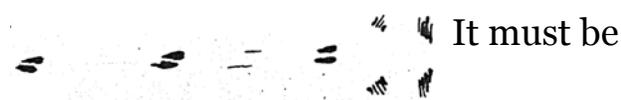
in many places, though few can be traced to their lairs. More hemlock cones also have fallen & rolled down the bank. The fall of these withered leaves after each ruder blast—so clear & dry that they do not soil the snow is a phenomenon quite in harmony with the winter.

Perhaps the tracks of the mice are the most amusing of any—they take such various forms—and though¹ small are so distinct. Here is where one has come down the bank—& hopped meanderingly across the river—



or
1 1/4 inches wide by 5 6 or 7 apart from center to center—

But what track is this just under the bank



It must be a bird, which at last struck the snow with its wings and took to flight—there were but 4 hops in all—& then it ended as above though there was nothing near enough for it to hop upon from the snow— The form of the track foot was some what like that of a squirrel

¹"and though" written over other words

though only the outline was distinguished—

The foot was about 2 inches long & it was about 2 inches from outside of one foot to outside of thother. 16 inches from the rest in proportion

hop to hop—^ Looking¹ narrowly I saw where one wing struck the bank ten feet ahead, thus  as it passed—
occurred

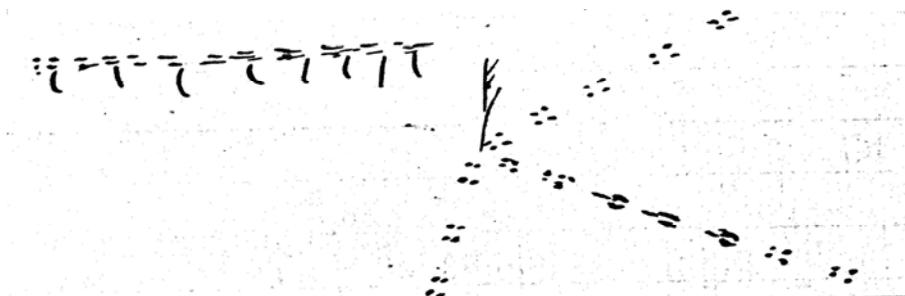
1/4 of a mile down stream it ^ looked

again thus  and near by still less of a track  but² marks as if it had pecked in the snow.

Could it be the track of a crow with its toes unusually close together? or was it an owl? Prob a crow V. Feb. 1st
hardly a doubt of it—

Some creature has been eating elm blossom buds & dropping them over the snow.

The tracks of the mice suggest extensive hopping in the night & going a gadding— They commence & terminate in the most insignificant little holes by the side of a twig or tuft— & occassionally they give us the type of their tails very distinctly—even side-wise to the course on a bank side—thus



¹"Looking" altered from "looking"
²"but" altered from "as"

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

Feb 1st '56

2/3 grown

Our kitten Min ^ this morning was playing
with Sophia's broom this morning, as she
was sweeping the parlor, when she sud-
denly went into a fit, dashed round the
room-& the door being opened, rushed up
2 flights of stairs & leaped from the
attic window to the ice & snow by the
side of the door step-a descent of
a little more than 20 feet-passed round
the house & was lost- But she made
her appearance again-about noon
at the window quite well & sound in
every joint-even playful & frisky.

Pm. Up river

What gives to the excrements of the fox
that clay color often, even at this sea-
son? Left on our eminence-
I scented a fox's trail this p. m. (and
have done so several times before) where
he crossed the river-just 3 rods distant-
looked sharp & discovered where it had stopped
by a prominence- Yet he could not have
passed since last night-or 12 hours before
-it being near the village. How widely
they range these nights! I hear

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

The snow is somewhat banked toward the
sides of the river—but shows darker yellowish
or icy in the middle— Lichens blown from the
black willows lie here & there on the snow.
Nut Meadow Brook open for some distance
in the meadow— I was affected by the sight
of some green polygonum leaves there— Some
kind of minnow darted off— I see where
a crow has walked along its side. In
one place it hopped—& its feet were side
by side as in the track of yesterday—though
a little more spread the toes— I have but
little doubt that yesterday's track was a crows—

✎ The 2 inner toes are near together—the
middle more or less curved often.

I see a gray rabbit amid the young oaks—

in Hubs river-side grove

^ curled & shrunk up—squatting on the

& begin to sketch it when

snow— I advance ^ & it plunges into a little

by its side

hole in the snow ^—the entrance to its burrow

3 inches wide by a little more in length *o* .

The track of its foot is about 1 inch wide.

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

The Sheldon¹ House in Deer field pulled
down about 8 yrs since—represented in

& in Barber

Gleasons pictorial for '51 ^—is in the
style of the Hunt House—except that
there is but one window on each side of

& the Meeting house alone of those within the fort
the door. It ^ survived the assault of ~~1675~~ 1704²
& the door through which a hole was cut
& a woman shot is still preserved—

This has been a memorable January
for snow & cold— It has been excellent
sleighting ever since the 26th of Dec.

not since
—very little³ less than a foot at any time before
Jan 6th

~~the 13th & not less than a foot⁴ since ^ on a~~
level in open fields ^—in swamps much more.
Cars have been detained—the woodlots for
the most part inaccessible— The river has
been closed up from end to end—with the
exception of one or 2 insignificant openings
on a few days. No bare ice. The crows
have been remarkably bold coming to
eat the scraps {cast} out behind the
houses. They alight in our yard. I
think I have not noticed a tree sparrow
during the month. Blue jays & chicadees
also common in the village—more than
usual. We have completely forgotten
the summer— There has been no Jan.
thaw—though one prophesied it a fort-
night ago because he saw snow fleas

¹"Sheldon" altered from "sheldon"

²"1675" may be cancelled in pencil; "1704" may be written in pencil

³"very little" cancelled in pencil

⁴"before . . . foot" cancelled in pencil

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

Feb 2^d

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

Feb 3^d

Analysed the crow b. bird's nest from which
I took an egg last summer—8 or 10 feet up a
white maple by river op— Island. Large of an irreg-
ular form appearing as if wedged in between a
twig & 2 large contiguous trunks. From outside
to outside it measures from 6 to eight inches—
inside 4—depth 2—height 6— The

strips of
foundation is a loose mass of coarse ^ grape
chiefly {&}
vine bark ^—some 18 inches long by 5/8 inch
also
wide—^ slender grass & weed stems—mikania
stems—a few cellular river weeds as rushes—sparganium
—pipe grass—& some soft coarse fibrous roots—

The same coarse grapevine bark
& grass & weed stems—together with some harder
wiry stems—form the sides & rim—the bark
being passed around the twig—

The nest is lined with the finer grass &
weed stems &c—

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

with grass stems &c—& some grape bark—
being 1 1/2 inches thick at bottom—

Pulled apart & lying loose it makes
a great mass of material.

This like similar nests, is now a great
haunt for spiders.

Pm up North Branch—

A strong N. W. wind (& Therm. 11°—) driving
the surface snow like steam—about 5 inches
of soft snow now on ice. See many seeds
of the hemlock on the snow still. & cones
which have freshly rolled down the bank.

Tracked some mice to a black willow by
river side, just above spring—against the
open swamp—and about 3 feet high in ap.
an old woodpeckers hole—was prob. the
mouse nest—a double handful—

inner bark

consisting 4/9 of fine fibres or shreds of ^ perhaps
willow or maple 3/9 the greenish moss ap. of
buttonbush—2/9 the gray slate fur ap of
rabbits or mice. Half a dozen hogs bristles
might have been brought by some bird to its nest
there. These made a very warm & soft
nest.

// Got some kind of vireo's nest from a maple
far up the stream a dozen feet high—pensile—

almost

within ^ wholly rather coarse grape vine shreds
without the same & bark covered with the delicate
white spider-nests (?) birch bark shreds & brown

cocoon silk.

Returning saw near the Island¹ a shrike //
glide by, cold & blustering as it was—
with a remarkably even & steady sail
or gliding motion 8 or 10 feet above the ground
^ like a hawk—^ & alight on a tree from which
at the same instant a small bird—perhaps
a creeper or nuthatch flitted timidly away—
The shrike was ap. in pursuit.

We go wading through snows now
up the bleak river—in the face of
a cutting N. W. wind & driving snow storm—
turning now this ear then that to the

& our gloved hands in our bosoms or pockets
wind—^ Our tracks are obliterated before
we come back. How different this
from sailing or paddling up the
stream here in July—or poling amid

Yet still, in one square rod where they have got out ice & a
the rocks! thin transparent ice has formed, I can see the pebbly
bottom the same as in summer.

It is a cold & windy Sunday—the

whistles round the N. W. corner of the house &
wind ^ penetrates every crevice ~~of the~~
~~house~~ & consumes the wood in
the stoves—soon blows it all away.

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

An arm-ful goes but little way— Such

off with all the heat before we have begun to
a day makes a great hole in the
feel it.

wood-pile.

but a few inches deep

Some of the low drifts_^²made by the
surface snow blowing—over the river espe-
cially, are of a fine pure snow so
densely packed that our feet make hardly
any impression on them

River still tight at Merricks. //

¹"I" written over "i"

²Caret written below dash

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

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

Mr Emerson who returned last week
from lecturing on the Mississippi—
where having been gone but a month—
tells me that he saw boys skating
on the Mississippi—& on Lake Erie—&
has made on the Hudson—& has no
doubt they are skating on Lake Superior—
& prob— at Boston he saw them skating on
the Atlantic.

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

p 476

In Barber's His't Coll—^ there is a letter by
Cotton Mather dated "Boston, 10th Dec. 1717."
describing the great snow of the previous February.
from which I quote—

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

made a thicker mantle for our mother than what was usual: And the storm with it was, for the following day, so violent as to make all communication between the neighbors every where to cease. People, for some hours, could not pass from one side of a street unto another,"—
— — — — — "On the 24th day of the month, comes Pelion upon Ossa: Another snow came on which almost buried the memory of the former, with a storm so famous that Heaven laid an interdict on the religious assemblies throughout the country, on this Lord's¹ day, the like whereunto had never been seen before. The Indians near an hundred years old affirm that their fathers never told them of any thing that equalled it. Vast numbers of cattle were destroyed in this calamity. Whereof some there were, of the stranger^{} [stronger? mine] sort, were found standing dead on their legs, as if they had been alive many weeks after, when the snow melted away. And others had their eyes glazed over with eyes at such a rate, that being not far from the sea, their mistake of their way drowned them there. One gentleman, on Whose farms were now lost above 1100 sheep, which with other cattle, were interred (shall I say) or innived, in the snow, writes me word that there were two sheep very singularly circumstanced. For no less than 8 & 20 days after the storm, the people pulling out

¹"L" written over "I"

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

– – "A man had a couple of young hogs, which he gave over for dead, but on the 27th day after their burial, they made their way out of a snow-bank, at the bottom of which they had found a little tansy to feed upon." –
– "Hens were found alive after 7 days; Turkeys were found alive after 5 & 20 days, buried in the snow, & at a distance from the ground, & altogether destitute of anything to feed them." – –

– "The wild creatures of the woods, the outgoings of the evening, made their descent as well as they could in this time of scarcity for them towards the sea-side. A vast multitude of deer, for the same cause, taking the same course, & the deep snow spoiling them of their only defence, which is to run, they became such a prey to these devourers, that it is thought not one in 20 escaped."

– – – "It is incredible how much damage is done to the orchards, for

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

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

Feb. 4th

Pm to Walden—

I go to walk—at 3 Pm thermometer—18°—
& 22°—

It has been about this at this hour—for a week or 2— All the light snow, some 5 inches above the crust, is adrift these days—& driving over the fields like steam—or like the foam streaks on a flooded meadow—from NW to SE. The surface of the fields is rough—like a lake agitated by the wind.

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

At tanager glade I see where

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

I have often wondered how red cedar
could have sprung up in some pastures
which I knew to be miles distant from
the nearest fruit-bearing cedar–but it
& barberries &c
now occurs to me that these¹ ^ may be
planted by the crows–and prob. other birds.
– The oak leaves which have blown
over the snow are collected in dense
heaps on the still side of the bays at Walden
–where I suspect they make warm beds
for the rabbits to squat on.

Feb 5th

The weather is still clear–cold–& un-
relenting– I have walked much on
the river this winter–but, ever since it
froze over–it has been on a snow
clad river–or pond– They have been
river walks–because the snow was
shallowest there– Even² the meadows on–
ac. of the firmer crust, have been more
passable than the uplands– In the
afternoons I have walked off freely

¹"these" written over "they"

²"E" written over "e"

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

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

I should the average cold was about 8°+
at 8¹ Am & 18° or 20°+ at 3 Pm.

Feb 6th '56

Pm to Walden— The down is just peeping //
out from some of the aspen buds— Cut a
cake of ice out of the middle of Walden, within
3 rods of where I cut on the 18th of Jan. The
snow was about an inch deep only—so fast
has it been converted into snow ice. I was obliged
to make a hole about 4 feet square
in order to get out a cake, & with² great
care to approach the water evenly on all sides
so that I might have the less chopping
to do after the water began to rush in, which
would wet me through. It was surprising
with what violence the water rushed in

¹"8" possibly written over "6"

²"with" possibly written over "the"

as soon as a hole was made—under the pressure of that body of ice. On the 18th of Jan. the ice had been about 7 inches thick here—about 4 being snow ice & about 3 water ice— It was // now 19 inches thick 11 1/2⁻¹ being snow ice & 7 1/2⁺ water ice. Supposing it an inch thick only here when the snow began to fall on it (for it began to fall almost immediately) it had increased it since that time 6 1/2⁺ inches downward & 11 1/2⁻² upward— Since the 18th of Jan—,³ when there was 10 inches of snow on it it had increased about 4 1/2 downward— & about 7 1/2 upward. I was not prepared to find that any ice had formed on the underside since the 18th. The water ice was very crystalline. This ice was thicker than the snow has been in open fields any time this winter— Yet this winter has been remarkable for the abundance of snow. I also cut through & measured in the Ice Heap Cove— The snow ice was 12 1/4 & the water ice about 6—but perhaps a little was broken off in cutting through the last— In all about 18 1/4 inch. I was not prepared to find it thickest in the middle. Earlier⁴ in the winter—or on the 18th Jan. it was thickest near the shore.

¹This is a minus sign

²This is a minus sign

³Comma possibly a pencilled caret

⁴"Earlier" altered from "Early"

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

Feb 7th

Began to snow at 8 Am—turned to rain //
at noon & cleared off or rather ceased raining
at night—with some glaze on the trees.

though slight

This the first thawing ^ since the 25th (?) of Decemem{-}
ber— During the rain the air was thick—
the distant woods—bluish—and the single
trees &c on the hill under the dull mist
covered sky remarkably distinct & black—

Feb 8th

9 Am to Fair Haven Pond—

A clear & a pleasanter & warmer day
than we have had for a long time. The

(at noon)

snow begins ^ to soften somewhat in the road.

For 2 or 3 weeks successive light &
dry snows have fallen on the old crust
& been drifting about on it—leaving
it at last 3/4 bare & forming drifts
against the fences &c or here & there
low slaty.—fractured ones in mid field

or pure white hard-packed ones. These drifts
on the crust are commonly quite low
& flat. But yesterdays snow turning
to rain which froze as it fell—there

giving them a hoary look

// is now a glaze on the trees—¹icicles
like rakes' teeth on the rails—and
a thin crust over all the snow— At
this hour the crust sparkles with a
myriad brilliant points or mirrors—one
to every 6 inches at least— This crust is
cracked like ice into irregular figures a foot
or two square. Perhaps the snow has
settled considerably—for the track in the
roads is the highest part. Some heard
a loud cracking in the ground or ice
last night.

I cut through—5 or 6 rods from the E shore
of Fair Haven—& find 7 inches of snow—9 inches

// of snow ice & 8 of water ice—17 of both.

The water rises to within 1/2 inch of the top of
the ice.

Isaac Garfield has cut a dozen holes on
the west side— The ice there averages

// 19 inches in thickness— Half the holes
are 5 or 6 rods from the shore—& the
rest 9 or 10—the water from 3 to 7 feet

In some places more than half the whole depth is ice
deep— ^ The thinnest ice is 17 inches
the thickest 20+. The inner row

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

¹Caret written below dash

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

Edward & Issac Garfield were fishing
there—& Puffer came along—& afterward

He cannot get near the

Lewis Miner with his gun. partridges on ac. of the cracklings
of the crust.

I saw the last 2 approaching with my glass

The fishermen agree in saying that the pickerel
have generally been eating, & are full, when they bite.
Puffer thinks they eat a good deal, but seldom.
Some think it best to cut the holes the day—
before—~~that~~ because the noise frightens them.
& the crackling of the crust today—was thought
to frighten them— E. Garfield says that
his uncle Daniel was once scaling a
pickerel when he pricked his finger against
the horn of a pout which the pickerel
had swallowed. He himself killed a pickerel
with a paddle in the act of swallowing
a large perch— Puffer had taken
a striped snake out of one.

They send to Lowell¹ for their bait, &
fishermen send thither from far & wide, so
that there is not a sufficient supply for them.

I. Garfield once caught an eel there
with his pickerel bait—through the ice—
also speared a trout that weighed ~~2-0r~~
3 1/2 lbs—he says—off Well meadow—

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

¹"L" written over "I"

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

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

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

E. Garfield says there were many quails
here last fall—but that they are suffering
now—
One night as he was spearing in Conant's Cran-
berry meadow, just north the pond—his dog
caught a shelldrake in the water by the
shore.

Some days ago he saw what he thought
a hawk as white as snow fly over the pond—

Was it a {guy-}falcon

but it—may have been a white owl—(which
nest he never saw—) He some times sees a
hen hawk in the winter—but never a partridge
or other small hawk at this season—

Speaks again of that large speckled hawk he killed once—which
some called a "Cape Eagle"

Had a hum— bird's nest behind their
house last summer—& was amused to see
the bird drive off other birds—would
pursue a robin & alight on his back—
—let none come near— I Garfield saw
ones nest on a horizontal branch of
a white-pine near the Charles Miles house
about 7 feet from ground.

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

Puffer saw a couple of foxes cross the pond a few days ago— The Wheelwright in the corner saw 4 at once about the same time.

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

E. Garfield says the Chip squirrels come out this month—.

Puffer saw a star-nosed mole yesterday in the road its track was  dog-like

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

as not for many weeks.

Therm. at 3 1/2 Pm 31°+

Puffer once found the nest of what he calls the deer mouse (prob. jumping) in pile of wood at what is now R. Rice's place in Sudbury—& the old one carried off 9 young clinging to her teats. These men do not chop now—they say because the

snow is so deep & the crust cuts their legs.

Mr Pritchard tells me that he remembers a 6 weeks of more uninterruptedly severe cold than we have just & that was in '31 ending the middle of January—the eaves on the S side of his huse did not once run during that period—but they have run or dripped a trifle on several days during the past 6 weeks.

Daniel (?)

Puffer says that he and ^ Haynes set lines once when there was good skating in all the bays from the Long cause-way in Sudbury down to the RR. bridge—but caught only 2 or 3 perch.

Feb 9th 56.

How much the NW. wind prevails in the winter—almost all our storms come from that quarter & the ridges of snow drifts run that way— If the Ind. placed their heaven in the SW—on ac. of the warmth of the SW wind—they might have made a stern winter god of the N. W. wind.

Pm up Assabet

3 1/2 Pm. Therm. 30°+ This & yesterday comparatively warm weather—1/2 inch of snow fell this fore noon—but now it has //

cleared up. I see a few squirrel tracks
but no mice tracks for no night
has intervened since the snow. It is
only where the river washes a wooded bank
that I see mice or even squirrel tracks
{-}elsewhere only where dogs & foxes have traversed
it- E.G. there are no tracks on the side
of the river against Hosmers & Emerson's land
though many alders &c there-but many
tracks commonly on the opposite wooded side.

In the swamp west of pigeon rock-I see
where the rabbits have bitten off the Swamp-
white oak sprouts-where they have sprung
up tender looking like poplar-from stocks
broken by the ice last winter. I hear a

// pheobe note from a chicadee

// Saw a pensile nest 18 feet high within
a lichen clad red maple on the edge

pink

of the Assabet Spring or ^ azalea swamp-
It looked very much like a bunch of the
lichens dangling-& I was not sure it was
not till I climbed up to it. Without it
was chiefly the coarse greenish lichens of
the maple-bound with coarse bits of
bark-& perhaps bleached milkweed bark (??)
& brown cocoon silk-& within a thin lin-
ing of pine needles hemlock twigs & the like.
Was it a Yel- throat vireo's-? It
was not shaped like the red eye's-bu

side wise  thus— looking down on it thus
—  On a side twig to one of the

limbs & about a foot from the end of the twig.

Feb— 10th 56

Speaking about the weather & the
fishing—with E & I— Garfield on the
8th ult I was amused to hear these 2
young farmers suddenly disputing as to
whether the¹ moon (?)², if that be it, was in
the Feet—or the Head or elsewhere. Though
I know far more of astronomy than they,
I should not know how at once to find
out this nonsense in an almanac— Yet
they talk very glibly about it, & go a fishing
accordingly. Again in the evening of
the same day I overtook Mr Pritchard & ob-
served that it was time for a thaw—but said
he—"That does not look like it—

in the west{-}

(pointing to the ~~new~~ moon ^) in the You
you could hang a powder horn upon
that pretty well—"

Pm

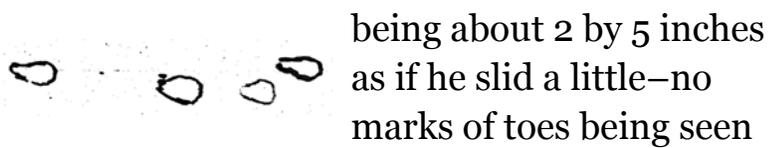
To Walden— Returning I saw a
fox on the railroad at the crossing
below the shanty-site—8 or 9 rods from
me. He looked of a dirty yellow & lean.
I did not notice the white tip to his tail—
Seeing me he pricked up his ears—& at
first ran up & along the E bank

¹"the" possibly inserted

²"(?)" possibly inserted

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

I followed examining his tracks— There was about a quarter of an inch of recent snow above the crust—but for the most part he broke in 2 or 3 inches— I slumped from 1 to 3 feet. His tracks when running, as I have described, were like this—

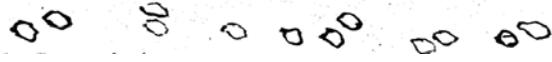


in that shallow snow—the greatest interval above—1 foot— Soon after thus

The greatest interval sometimes 4 feet even. Sometimes the 3 tracks merged together where the crust broke—



When walking at ease before he
saw me his tracks were more round—and
nearer together—(about 2 inch x 2 1/2)
thus



Sometimes I thought his tail had scraped
the snow—

He went off at an easy gliding pace
such as he might keep up for a long
time—pretty direct after his first turning.

Feb 11th

Pm to Fair Haven Pond by River¹

Israel Rice says that he does not
know that he can remember a winter
when we had as much snow as we

Eb. Conant says as much excepting the
have had this winter. year when he was 25—about 1803.

It is now fairly thawing—the eaves //
running & puddles stand in some places—
The boys can make snow balls—& the
horses begin to slump occassionally.

Saw a partridge by the river side
opposite F. H. Hill which at first
I mistook for the top of a fence post
above the snow—amid some alders—I
4 rods off
shouted & waved my hand ^ to see if it was
one—but there was no motion & I
thought surely it must be a post—
Nevertheless I resolved to investigate—
Within 3 rods I saw it to be indeed a
partridge to my surpriseS—standing perfectly
still with its head erect & neck out

¹"Pm . . . River" poss. added

stretched upward— It was as complete a deception as if it had designedly placed itself on the high line of the fence & in the proper place for a post. It finally stepped off daintily with a tetering gait & head up—& took to wing.

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

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

Feb. 12 56

Thawed all day yesterday—& rained some-
// what last night, clearing off this morning.

Heard the eaves drop all night

The Thermometer at 8 1/2 Am—42°+

or crust

The snow ^ & cold weather began Dec 26th—
& not till Feb 7th was there any considerable
relenting when it rained a little—i.e.
43 days of uninterrupted cold weather—
& no serious thaw till the 11th or yesterday.
How different the sun light over
thawing snow—from the same over dry
frozen snow. The former excites me
strangely & I experience a spring-like

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

I find on shovelling away the snow that there is about 2 inches of solid ice at the bottom—that thin crusted snow of Dec 26th These 2 inches must // be added then to my measures of Jan 12th—16th—23^d—29th—& 30

To day I find it has settled since the 29th, owing of course mainly to the rain of the 7th ult & espically of last night, about 2 inches in open land—& 1 1/2 inches in Trillium woods—

Thus W of RR	E of RR	Trill. Woods
$11 \frac{1}{4} (+ 2 = 12 \frac{1}{4}$	$13 \frac{1}{5} (+ 2 = 15 \frac{1}{5}$	$13 - (1 + 2 = 15$
average		
$12 (+ 2 =$		
14		

There has been scarcely any loss on the W side of RR—but 3 3/4 on the E side— It may be owing to the drifting since the 29th From Jan 6th to Jan 13 not less than a foot of snow on a level in open land—

V forward Mar. 19

& from Jan 13th to Feb 7th ^ not less than 16 inches on a level at any one time in open land—& still there is 14 on a level. That is for 25 days the snow was 16 inches deep in open land!!

¹Paren written over dash or stray mark

Feb 13th

Grew cold again last night—with high wind— The wind began about mid-day— I think a high wind commonly follows rain or a thaw in winter— The thermometer at 8 1/2 Am is

// at zero. (at 1 Pm 8°+)

This fall of 42° from 8 1/2 Am yesterday to the same time to day—has produced not

thin & very uneven

// a ^ smooth, but a ^ firm & thick ^ crust on which I go in any direction across the fields stepping over the fences— Yet there is some slosh at the bottom of this snow, above the icy foundation.

Now no doubt many sportsmen are out with their dogs—who have been imprisoned by the depth of the snow. In the woods where there are bushes beneath you still slump more or less—

The crust is quite green with the needles of pitch pines—sometimes whole plumes which have recently fallen— Are these chiefly last years needles brought down by the glaze—or those of the previous year which had not fallen before?

I suspect they are chiefly the former—but may be some of the latter. V. Feb 14th

Feb 14

Still colder this morning 7°⁻¹ at 8 1/2 Am.

¹This is a minus sign

Pm to Walden—

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

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

But in the woods—& even in wood
paths—I slump at every other step.

In all the little valleys in the
woods & sproutlands & on the S. E.
sides of hills—the oak¹ leaves which
have blown over the crust are gathered
in dry & warm looking beds often
5 or 6 feet in diameter about the

base of the shrub oaks. So clean & ^{crisply} dry
& warm above the cold white crust—
they are singularly inviting to my eye—

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

¹Possibly "Oak"

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

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

I was struck today by the size & continuousness
of the naturally willow hedge on the
E side of the RR. causeway at the
foot of the embankment—next to the fence

12

Some ~~10~~¹ years ago when that cause-
way was built through the meadows
was built there were no willows there
or near there—but now just at the foot
of the sand bank—where it meets the meadow
& on the line of the fence—quite a dense
willow hedge has planted itself. I used
to think that the seeds were brought
with the sand from the deep cut in

but there is no golden willow there ~~nor indeed in~~
the woods—^ but now I think that
the seeds have been blown hither from²
~~lodge~~d a ~~great~~ distance & lodged against
the foot of the bank—just as the
snow drift accumulates there—
for I see several ash trees among

¹"10" cancelled in pencil

²"from" altered from "&"

them which have come from an ash 10
rods east in the meadow—though none

There are also a few alder elms birch—poplars & some elder—
has sprung up elsewhere. ^ For years a willow
might not have been persuaded to take root
in that meadow— But run a barrier
like this through it & in a few years
it is lined with them. They plant themselves
here solely & not in the open meadow—as
exclusively as along the shores of a river—

The sand bank is a shore to them & the
meadow a lake. How impatient, how
rampant—how precocious these Osiers—!¹
They have hardly made 2 shoots from
the sand in as many springs—when silvery
catkins burst out along them—& anon
golden blossoms—& downy seeds—spreading
their race with incredible rapidity— Thus
they multiply & clan together. Thus
they take advantage even of the RR—
which elsewhere disturbs & invades their
domains. May I ever be in as good

v n p How tenacious
spirits as a willow. ^ They never despair—
Is there no moisture longer in Nature which
they can transmute into sap. They are emblems
of youth—joy & everlasting life. Scarcely
is their growth restrained by winter
but their silvery down peeps forth
in the warmest days in January (?)

¹!" written above and below dash

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

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

Feb 16th '56

Pm to Walden—

It has been trying to snow for 2 days—
// about 1 inch fell last night but it
clears up at noon & sun comes out very
warm & bright. Wild says it is the warmest
day at 12 M since the 22nd of Dec. when
the therm. stood at 50°+ today it is at
44. I hear the eaves running before
I come out—& our thermometer at 2 Pm is
38°+. The sun is most pleasantly warm on
my cheek—the melting snow shines in the
ruts—the cocks crow more than usual
in barns—my great coat is an
incumbrance— There is¹ no down visible on
// the shallows when I descend the E side

¹"is" written over "no"

of the RR—unless a scale has come off.

Where I measured the ice in the mid—
of Walden on the 6th ult I now measure
again, or close by it, though without cutting
[prob about same as the 6th when called 7 11 1/2-¹]
out the cake— I find about 11 1/4 ^ of snow-ice //
& 21 1/2 in all—leaving 10 1/4 clear ice.
which would make the ice to have increased
beneath through all this thickness & in spite
of the thaws 2 3/4-² inches
Near the shore in one place it was 22 inches

Feb 17th

Some 3 or 4 inches of snow fallen in the night //
& now blowing—

At noon begins to snow again—as well as
{blow}— Several more inches fall—

Feb 18

Yesterday's snow drifting— No cars
from above or below till 1. Pm.

Feb 19th

Measure snow again—on ac. of what
fell on 17th— //

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

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

¹This is a minus sign

²This is a minus sign

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

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

Feb 20th '56

P. m. Up Assabet—

See a broad and distinct otter trail made last night or yesterday— It came out to the river through the low woods N of Pinxter swamp—making a very conspicuous trail from 7 to 9 or 10

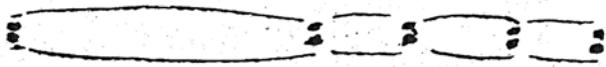
or 4

inches wide & 3 ^ deep—with sometimes singularly upright sides—as if a square



timber had been drawn along ^—but commonly rounded—  It made some short turns & zig-zags—passed under limbs which were only 5 inches above the snow—not over them—had ap. slid down all banks and declivities—making a uniform broad hollow trail there without any mark of its feet— On reaching the river it had come along under the bank—from time to time looking into the crevices where it might get under the ice there—some times ascending the bank and sliding back— On level ground its trail had this

appearance—



Commonly 7 to 9 or 10 inches wide & tracks of feet 20 to 24 apart—but sometimes there was no track of the feet for 25 feet—frequently for 6— In the last case swelled in the outline as above.

op.

Having come down as far as ^ the Great white on the hill—it returned on its track & entered a hole under the ice at Assabet spring from which it has not issued.

Feb 22^d{nd}

Pm to Assabet Stone bridge & home on river — It is a pleasant & warm P. m. & the snow is melting— Yet the river is still perfectly closed—(as it has been for many weeks) both against Merricks & in the Assabet—ex-
directly
cepting ^ under this upper Stone bridge—& prob at mouth of Loring's Brook¹. I am surprised that the warm weather within 10 days has not caused the river to open at Merricks—but it was too thick to be melted

Now first—the snow melting & the ice begining
greyish
to soften— I see those slender ^ winged

with closed wings snow clad insects creeping ^ over the ^ ice  Perla (?) //

from 1/3 of an inch to an inch long

On all parts of the river of various sizes &c—& every warm day afterward—

Have seen none before—this winter.

Have in fact 4 wings / V. Mar. 22

¹"B" written over "b"

Just below this bridge begins an
 otter track several days old—yet
 very distinct which I trace half a
 mile down the river— In the snow
 less than an inch deep on the ice
 each foot makes a track 3 inches
 wide—ap enlarged in melting—& the
 whole 4 appear thus— The clear
 interval 16 inches —the length
 occupied by the 4  feet = 14 inch.
 It looks as if some one had dragg{eg}
 a round timber down the middle of the
 river a day or or two since—which bounced
 as it went.

There is now a crack running down
 the middle of the river & it is slightly
 elevated there owing prob to the increasi{n}g
 temperature.

Feb 23^d

9 Am to F. H. Pond up river—
 A still warmer day— The snow is so solid
 that it still bears me—though we have
 had several warm suns on it. It is melting
 gradually under the sun. In the morning
 I make but little impression in it.
 As it melts it acquires a rough but
 regularly waved surface. It is inspiriting
 to feel the increased heat of the sun reflected
 from the snow— There is a slight
 mist above the fields—through

which the crowing of cocks sounds spring-like.

I sit by a maple on a maple— It wears the same shaggy coat of lichens summer & winter.

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

I read in the papers that the ocean
/ not to bear or walk on/safely
is frozen—^ or has been lately—on the bank-side of Cape Cod—at the Highland Light one mile out from the shore— A phenomenon which, it is said, the oldest have not witnessed before— {—}

Feb 24th

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

Feb 25th

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

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

They have just been cutting wood
at Bittern Cliff—the sweet syrup is
out on the ends of the hickory logs
there.

Gathered some facts from
Henry Bond's Genealogies of the Families of
Watertown &c—

My mother's mother was Mary Jones,
only daughter of—"Col. Elisha Jones, Esq.,
of Weston. A Boston newspaper, of Feb. 15th
1775, says: 'On Monday last, died, in this
town, in the 66th year of his age, Elisha Jones
Esq., late of Weston, for many years a magis-
trate, Col. of a regiment of Militia, and mem-
ber of the General Assembly. In the many de-
partments in which he acted, he eminently shewed¹
the man of principle, virtue,' &c. He married,
Jan 24, 1733-4, Mary Allen, and occupied his
father's homestead." [Mary Allen was the
dr. of Abel Allen—who was the son of Lewis
Allen of Watertown Farms who died 1707-8]

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

¹Possibly "showed"

b. 1748

5 Daniel 6 Elias 7 Josiah 8 Silas—9 Mary ^
10 Ephraim 11 Simon (or Simeon) 12 Stephen 13 Jonas
14 Phillemore 15 Charles.

born 1710

Col. Elisha Jones was ^ the son of Capt Josiah Jones (born 1670 in Weston) & Abigail Barnes
Capt. Josiah Jones was the son of Josiah Jones of Watertown Farms (born 1643) and Lydia Treadway (dr of Nathaniel Treadway & ~~Suf~~ who died in Watertown 1689)

Josiah Jones was son of Lewis Jones (who appears to have moved from Roxbury to Watertown about 1650) & died 1684) and Anna (perhaps Stone?) This Josiah
born in England.

Jones in 1666 bought "of John Stone & Wife Sarah, of Wat., a farm of 124 acres on the N side of Sudbury highway, about 2 miles from Sud.",—

Feb 26th

Pm to Hubb's Close—

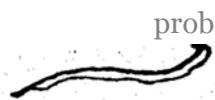
I see at bottom of the Millbrook—below Emersons—2 dead frogs—the brook has part way yet a snowy bridge over it—
Were they left by a mink or killed by cold & ice? In Hubbard's maple swamp beyond I see the snow within a few days sprinkled with the saw dust like bits of wood under a dead maple where a woodpecker has drilled a handsome round hole—
Excepting the carrying it downward within it is ready for a nest— May they not have a view to this use even now?

Wednesday Feb 27th '56

Pm– Up Assabet–

Am surprised to see how the ice lasts on
// the river– It but just begins to be open
for a foot or 2 at Merrick's–&
you see the motion of the stream–
&¹ ~~but~~ it has overflowed the ice for many
rods a few feet in width– It has been
tight even there (and of course every where else
on the main stream–& on N. Branch except
at Loring's Brook & under Stone bridge) since
Jan 25th, and elsewhere on the main stream
since Jan 7th–as it still is. That is we
may say that the river has been
frozen solidly for 7 weeks– On the
25th ult I saw a load of wood
drawn by 4 horses up the middle of
the river above Fair Haven Pond.
On that day–the 25th–they were cutting
the last of Baker's woodlot on the S side
of Fair Haven– They cut the greater part
of it last winter–& this was the wood
they were hauling off.

I see many birch scales freshly blown over
the snow– They are falling all winter–
What is that narrow twisted yellowish
brown scale–which is seen on the snow all
winter near woods? shaped like this



prob. pine stipule

^ Found in the snow in E. Hosmer's

¹"&" possibly cancelled

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

The papers are talking about the prospect of a war between England & America—neither side sees how its country can avoid a long & fratricidal war without sacrificing its honor— Both nations are ready to take a desperate step—to forget the interests of civilization & christianity & their commercial prosperity—& fly at each other's throats. When I see an individual thus beside himself—thus desperate—ready to shoot or be shot—like a black leg—who has little to lose—no serene aims to accomplish—I think he is a candidate for bedlam— What asylum is there for nations to go to?

Nations are thus ready to talk of wars

Will it not be thought {disreputable} at length {as duelling between individuals} & challenge one another—because they
now is?

are made up to such an extent of poor low-spirited despairing men—in whose eyes the chance of shooting somebody else without being shot themselves exceeds their actual good fortune. Who in fact will be the first to enlist but the most desperate class—they who have lost all hope— & they may at last infect the rest.

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

Feb 28th '56

Pm to Nut Meadow—

Mother says that the cat lay on her bread one night & caused it to rise finely all around her

I go on the crust which we have had since the 13th—i.e. on the solid frozen snow which settles very gradually in the sun—across the fields & brooks.

The very beginning of the river's breaking up—appears to be the oozing of water through cracks in the thinnest places & standing in the shallow puddles there on the ice—which freeze solid at night.

The river & brooks are quite shrunken.

— The brooks flow far under the
a foot thick

hollow ice & snow crust ^—which here and there has fallen in showing the shrunken stream far below— The surface of the snow melts into a regular waved form—like raised scales.

Miles is repairing the damage done at his new Mill by the dam giving way.

He is shovelling out the flume which was half filled with sand—standing in the water. His saw-mill built of slabs reminds me of a new country.

He has lost a head of water equal to 2 feet by this accident— Yet

he sets his mill a-going to show me how
it works— What a smell as of gun-
wash when he raised the gate—
He calls it the sulphur from the
pond—. It must be the carburetted hy-
drogen gass from the bottom of the
pond under the ice. It powerfully
 a powerful smelling bottle
scents the whole mill. ^ How pleasant
are the surroundings of a mill!
Here are the logs (pail-stuff) already
drawn to the door from a neighboring hill before
the mill is in operation— The dammed up
meadow the meadow—the melted snow
—and welling springs—are the serfs he
compells to do his work— He is unruly as
yet—has lately broke loose—filled
up the flume & flooded the fields below
He uses the dam of an old mill ~~built~~
which stood here a hundred years ago—
which now nobody knows anything about.

The mill is built of slabs—of the
eaten sap-wood. The old dam had prob-
been undermined by muskrats— It would
have been most prudent to have built
a new one. Rude forces—rude men—
& rude appliances—
Martial Miles who is there—says that
there are many trout in this brook—
He sees them running down just before
winter—& at that time Charles Snow

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

Coombs came along with his dog &
gun on his way to shoot partridges
which will come out to bud this evening
on certain young apple trees— He
has got 4 or 5 for several nights in
succession—& sees foxes there running about on
the crust.

Francis Wheeler says he sold two young fox-
skins to a tin peddler today for a dollar
— Coombs says they got a silver-gray fox
in Lincoln this winter & sold its skin for
16 dollars!! He says that he
// killed a shelldrake a month or
6 weeks ago in a small open place
beneath the falls at the Factory.
This shows what hardy birds they are.

Last summer—he found

a black ducks nest on one of the islands
in Lorings Pond¹– He saw the duck hide
in the grass– Came up & put his hand
on a parcel of feathers & raising a
handful was surprised to find the eggs
under them.

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

How much more game he will see
who carries a gun–i.e. who goes to see it!
Though you roam {the} woods all your
days–you never will see by chance–what
he sees who goes on purpose to see it.
One gets his living by shooting wood cocks–
most never see one in their lives–

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

Our young Maltese cat Min–which
cold
has been absent 5 ^ nights–the ground
covered deep with crusted snow–her first
absence–and given up for dead–has
at length returned at day light–awakening
the whole house with her mewing
& afraid of the strange girl we have got in the meanwhile

¹"P" written over "p"

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

Various are the conjectures as to her
adventures–whether she has had a
fit–been shut up somewhere or lost–
torn¹ in pieces by a certain terrier or frozen to death.

In the mean while she is fed with the best
saucers of
that the house affords–minced meats & ^
warmed milk–& with the aid of unstinted
sleep in all laps in succession is fast

He
picking up her crumbs. She has already
found her old place under the stove–and

his
is preparing to make a stew of her brains
there.

That strong gun-wash scent from the
mill pond water was very encouraging.

I who never partake of the sacrament make the more of it.

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

Returning on the crust over
Puffer's place–I saw a fine plump

¹Possibly "Torn"

hen hanging from an apple tree & a
crow from another—prob. poisoned to
kill foxes with— A hen which prob. a fox
had killed.

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

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

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

Feb 29th 56

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

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

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

He loves to recall his hunting
days & adventures— And I willingly
listen to the stories he has told me half
a dozen times already. One day he saw
about 20 black ducks on Goose Pond
& stole down on them thinking to get
a shot—but it chanced that a stray
dog scared them up before he was
ready. He stood on the point of the
neck of land between the ponds & watched
them as they flew high toward Flint's
Pond. As he looked he saw one separate
from the flock when they had got
half way to Flint's Pond—or half a mile—
& return straight toward Goose Pond
again. He thought he would await
him & give him a shot if he came
near enough— As he flew pretty near
rather
& ^ low—he fired—whereupon the
duck rose right up high into the
air, & he saw by his motions that
he was wounded— Suddenly he

dropped like a stone¹—by a slanting
fall into the point of a thick pine
wood—& he heard him plainly strike the
ground like a stone. He went there &
searched for long time—& was about
giving it up—when at length he saw
the duck—standing still alive & bleeding
by the side of a stump—& made out
before he could
to kill him with a stick. reach the water.

He said he saw Emerson come home from
lecturing the other day with his knitting
bag (lecture bag) in his hand. He asked
him if the lecturing business was as good
as it used—to be— Emerson said he didn't
see but it was as good as ever—
guessed the people would want lectures
"as long as he or I lived."

Told again of the partridge hawk
striking down a partridge which rose
before him & flew across the run in
the beech woods.—how suddenly he did
it—& he hearing the fluttering of the
partridge came up & Secured² it while
the hawk kept out of gun shot.

March 1st '56

9 Am to Flints Pond via Walden—
by RR—& the crust.

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

¹"like a stone" cancelled in pencil

²Possibly "secured" with "s" reformed, or possibly "S" written over "s")

// The catkins of the willow by the causeway
& of the aspens—ap to have pushed out
a little further than a month ago.
I see the down of half a dozen on that
willow by the causeway— On the aspens pretty
generally. As I go through
the cut—it is still, warm, & more
spring like
or less sunny—^ (about 40°+) & the sand
& reddish subsoil is bare for about
a rod in width—on the RR—I hear

// several times the fine drawn phe-be
note of the chickadee—which I heard only
once during the winter— Singular that I
should hear this on the first spring day.

I see a pitch pine seed with its wing
far out on Walden— Going down the
hill to Goose Pond I slump now & then.
Those dense dry beds of leaves are gathered
especially about the leafy tops of young oaks
which are bent over & held down by the snow—
They lie up particularly light & crisp.

The birch stubs stand around Goose-
pond—killed by the water a year or 2 ago
5 or 6 feet high & thickly—as if they were
an irregular stake fence a rod out.

Going up the hill again I slump in up
to my middle.

At Flints I find haf a dozen fishing
The pond cracks a very little while I am

there say at half past 10. I think I never saw the ice so thick—it measures just 2 feet thick in¹ shallow water 20 rods from shore.

//

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

Haynes of Sudbury brought some axe helves which he had been making to Smith's shop to sell today— Those made by hand are considered stronger than those which are turned because their ~~forms~~ outline conforms to the grain. They told him they had not sold any² of the last yet— "Well", said he, "you may depend on it you will. They've got to come after them yet—for they haven't been able to get into the woods this winter on account of the snow—& they'll have to do all their chopping this month."

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

It is remarkable, that though I have not been able to find any open place in the river almost all winter—except under the further Stone Bridge & at Loring's Brook—this winter winter so remarkable for ice & snow—that Coombs should (as he says) have killed 2 shell drakes at the falls by the factory—a place

¹"in" altered from "at"

²"any" altered from "and" in pencil

which I had forgotten—some 4 or 6 weeks ago— Singular that this hardy bird should
found
have ^ this small opening, which I had forgotten, while the ice every where else was from 1 to 2 feet thick— & the snow 16 inches on a level— If there is a crack—amid the rocks of some water fall this bright diver is sure to know it. Ask the shell-drake if whether the rivers are completely sealed up—

Mar. 2nd 56

// Has snowed 3 or 4 inches—very damp snow in the night—stop about 9 Am. This will prob help carry off the old snow so solid & deep—
P. m. Walking up the river by Prichards am surprised to see on the snow over the river a great many seeds and scales of birches—though the snow had so recently fallen, there had been but little wind, & it was already spring. There was one seed or scale to a square foot—yet the nearest birches were about 15 of them along the wall 30 rods east. As I advanced toward them the seeds became thicker & thicker till they quite discolored the snow half a dozen rods distant. —while east of the birches there was not

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

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

//

I can hardly believe that henhawks
may be beginning to build their nests
now—yet their¹ young were a fortnight
old the last of April last year—

//

Mar 3^{d2} To Cambridge

Mar 4^{th3}— To Carlisle— Surveying.

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

¹"their" poss written over "I p"

²"3" written over "4"

³"4" written over "5"

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

Mar 6th

P. m. Up Assabet—

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

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

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

Also a squirrel's track—on the snow over Lee's Hill¹. The outside toe on the fore feet is nearly at right angles with the others. This also distinguishes it from a rabbit's track. It visits each apple tree—

¹"H" written over "h"

digs up frozen apples & sometimes filberts—& when it starts again aims for an apple tree {^}—though 15 rods distant.

Mar. 7th. 56

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

	W of RR	E of RR	Av. say	Trill. Wood ¹
	16+			21

// ~~15~~¹⁶⁺ 1/2 16 16+

Prob. quite as deep as any time before, this year— There are still 2 or more inches of ice next the ground in open land—

// I may say that there has not been less than 16 inches of snow on a level in open land—since Jan. 13th—~~unless there² was a little less just before the snow of the 2nd ult—certainly not less than 15 inches.~~

in some cases

? My stick entered the earth & ~~for the most part~~ in the wood as it has not done before. There has been some thawing under the snow

Mar 9th

! Thermometer at 2 pm 15+^o 16 inches
hard & dry

of snow on a level in open fields ^—ice in Flint's Pond 2 feet thick—and the aspect of the earth is that of the middle of January in a severe winter. Yet this is about the date that

A Pail of water froze nearly 1/2 inch
blue-birds arrive commonly. thick in my chamber
with fire raked up.

The train which should have got down last night did not arrive till³ this Pm. (Sunday) having stuck in a drift

Mar 10th

// Thermometer at 7 Am 6^o below zero.

Dr Bartlett's between 6⁴ 1/2 & 7 Am was at 13^o—⁵
Smith's at 13 or 14^o—⁶ at 6 Am.

Pm up river to Hubbard Bridge
Thermometer 9^o+ at 3 1/2 pm (the same when

¹"Wood" altered from "wood"

²"there" possibly altered from "it"

³"till" possibly altered from "this"

⁴"6" altered from "5"

⁵This is a minus sign

⁶This is a minus sign

I return at 5) The snow hard & dry–squeak-
ing under the feet–excellent sleighing– A
biting NW wind compells to cover the ears– It
is one of the hardest days of the year to bear–

Truly a memorable 10th of March– There
is no opening yet in the main stream at
Prichards–Hub Bath–or the Clam Shell //

or
{nor} prob. anywhere but at Merrick's–&
that a dozen rods long by 10 feet.

And it is tight & strong under the bridges
A blue bird would look as much out
of place now as the 10th of January.

I suspect that in speaking of the
springing of plants in previous years
I have been inclined to make them start
too early generally.

The ice on Ponds is as solid as ever–
There has been no softening of it– Now
is a good time to begin to cut–only its
great thickness would hinder you.

The blue shadows on snow are as fine as ever.

It is hard to believe the records of pre-
vious years–

I have not seen a tree-sparrow methinks
since January– Probably the woods have
been so generally buried by the snow this
winter, that they have migrated further
south. There has not been one in the
yard the past winter–nor a red-poll.

I saw perhaps one red-poll in the town //
that is all.

pinched

The ^ crows are feeding in the road today in
front of the house–& alighting on

"nor" poss altered from "wood"

& blue jays also
the elms ^ as as in the middle of
the hardest winter—for such is
this weather— The blue jays hop about in yards—

The past has been a winter of such
unmitigated severity that I have not
chanced to notice a snow-flea—which
{are so} coming in thawing days.¹

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

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

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

Think of the art of printing what
miracles it has accomplished²—covered
the very waste paper which flutters
under our feet like leaves & is almost
as cheap—a stuff now commonly put
to the most trivial uses—with
thoughts & poetry. The wood chopper
reads the wisdom of ages recorded
on the paper that holds his dinner—
then lights his pipe with it— When
we ask for a scrap of paper

²"ac" of "accomplished" possibly added

for the most trivial use it may
have the confessions of Augustine or
the sonnets of Shakespeare—& we won't
observe it— The student kindles his
fire, the editor packs his trunk, the
sportsman loads his gun—the traveller
wraps his dinner—the Irishman papers
his shanty—the school boy ~~daub~~ peppers
the belle pins up her hair
the plastering ^—with the printed
thoughts¹ of men— Surely he who can
see so large a portion of earth's surface
{~~found~~} thus darkened with the record of
human thought & experience—& feel no
desire to learn to read it²—is without
curiosity. He who cannot read—is yet
worse than deaf & blind—is yet but
half alive—is still born.

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

10 Pm Therm. at zero //
I read, when last at Cambridge, in the
Philad. Phil. trans. that in the cold winter

¹Newspaper clipping, "City Matters. / Meteorological.", waxed on page in margin beside "thoughts"; above "Meteorological." T added in pencil "Boston Traveller Mar. 10th '56." For images of the clipping in place, see Appendix, pp. 284-285.

²"it" written over "the"

insects

of 1780—many shell-fish—frogs—[^] &c as well
as birds & plants perished.

Mar 11th 56

// Thermometer at 7 Am 6^o+ Yet the
fire going out Sophia's plants are frozen

Dr Bartlett's was 4^o-¹

again

When it is proposed to me to go abroad
—rub off some rust—& better my-con-
dition in a worldly sense—I fear lest
my life will lose some of its homeliness.

If these fields & streams & woods—
the phenomena of nature here— —& the
simple occupations of the inhabitants
should cease to interest & inspire me—
no culture or wealth would atone for
the loss. I fear the dissipation that travelling
—going into society even the best—the en-
joyment of intellectual luxuries—imply.

If Paris is much in your mind—if it is
more & more to you—Concord is less &² less
& yet it would be a wretched bargain
to accept the proudest Paris³ in exchange
for my native village. At best
Paris could only be a {shool} in which
to learn to live here—a stepping stone
to Concord—a school in which to fit
for this University.

I wish so to live ever as to derive my satis-
factions & inspirations from the commonest
events—everyday phenomena—so that
what my senses hourly perceive—my
daily walk—the conversation of my

¹This is a minus sign

²"&" possibly altered from "-"

³"P" altered from "p"

neighbors may inspire me—& I may
dream of no heaven but that which
lies about me. A man may ac-
quire a taste for wine or brandy—&¹ so
lose his love for water—but should we
not pity him?

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

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

Only² that travelling is good which
reveals to me the value of home & enables
me to enjoy it better. That man is
the richest, whose pleasures are the cheap-
est.

It is strange that³ men are in such haste
to get fame as teachers—rather than
knowledge as learners.

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

P. m. 3 1/2 Therm. 24°+

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

¹"&" altered from "so"

²newspaper clipping, "Effects of the Cold Weather.", waxed on page in margin beside "Only"; T added vertically in left margin of clipping, in pencil, "Daily Evening Traveller / Boston Mar. 10th 56." For images of the clipping in place, see Appendix, pp. 286-287.

³"that" altered from "than"

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

Snow and ice together make a curtain 28 inches thick now drawn over the pond.¹ Such is the prospect of the fishes?²

Mar 12th

The last 4 cold days have closed // the river again against Merricks³—& few small prob— all the ^ other ^ places which may have opened—in the town—at the mouth of one or 2 brooks.

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

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

¹"pond." possibly altered from "pond—"

²possibly "fishes!"

³"Merricks" altered from "merricks"

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

Rufus Hosmer says he has known¹ the
ground here to be frozen 4 feet deep

I never saw such solid mountains
of snow in the roads— You travel along

excellent

for many rods² over ^ dry solid sleighing
where the road is perfectly level not
thinking but you are within a foot
of the ground—then suddenly descend
4 or 5 feet—and find to your surprise
that you had been traversing the broad
back of a drift.

The crow has been a common bird
in our street & about our house the
past winter—

One large limb of the great elm
at Davis—sawed off presented this
outline  a perfect harp—

Mar 13th

Pm to Flints Pond

Much warmer at last— On Flint's
Pond—I cut a hole & measured the
ice at 22 rods from the shore nearest
to Walden—where the water was 9 feet
deep—(3measuring from its surface in the hole)

The ice was 26 inches thick //

¹"known" possibly altered from "seen"

²"rods" altered from "roads"

³Paren written over dash

13 1/2 of it being snow ice—& the
ice rose above the water 2 inches—
This ice is as solid as at any time
in the winter—3 inches of Snow
above— It was so much work
to cut this hole with a dull
axe—that I did not try any other
place where it may have been thicker.
Perhaps it was thicker in the middle

Prob. not. judging from Walden—V 19th proximo.
as in '47.

Friday Mar 14th 56

quite warm. Therm. 46°+

3^d Pm up Assabet—

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

I think it remarkable that cold as
it was—I should not have supposed from
my sensations that it was nearly so cold
as the thermometer indicated.

// Tapped several White maples with
my knife—but find no sap flowing.

but just above Pinxter¹ Swamp²—one red
maple-limb was moistened by sap trickling //
along the bark—Tapping this I was surprised to
find it flow freely. Where the sap had dried
on the bark—shining and sticky it tasted quite
sweet— Yet Anthony³ Wright tells me
that he attempted to trim some apple trees
on the 11th ult—but was obliged to give up
it was so cold— They were frozen solid.

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

As I return by the old Merrick bath Place—
on the river—for I still travel every where
on the middle of the river—the⁴ setting
sun falls on the osier row toward the road—
and attracts my attention. They certainly look
brighter now & from this point, than I have
noticed them before this year—greenish &
yellowish below & reddish above—& I fancy
the sap fast flowing in their pores— Yet
I think that on a close inspection I
should find no change. Never the less,
it is on the whole perhaps the most

V 2 ps forward

springlike sight I have seen.

Mar 15th

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

¹"Pinxter" altered from "pinxter"

²marks, possibly from copying a creased page, on upper right corner of pp. 407 and 409 and on upper left corner of pp. 408 and 410

³"Anthony" possibly altered from "anthony"

⁴"the" written over "I"

miles dist. in N.H. speaks of the snow fleas
as a spring phenomenon—(prob. because the
winter is more uniformly cold¹ there)—& says that
they think it time to stop making maple sugar
when they observe them. They get into the
by myriads
sap ^ & trouble them much.

Mar 16th

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

These few rather warmer days have made
a rough snowy
a little impression on the river— It² shows ^ ice in
many places—suggesting³ that there is a river

²
beneath—the snow having probably—blown

³ & melted off there—or the water oozed up—
(Put the last cause first)

A rough softening snowy ice—with some
darker spots where you suspect weakness—
though it is still thick enough—

2 Pm The red maple is now
about 1 inch deep in a quart
pail—nearly⁴ all caught since morning—
It now flows at the rate of about
6 drops in a minute— Has probably
flown faster this forenoon— It is
perfectly clear like—water— Going

throwing the pail over my head to save myself
home slipped on the ice ^ & spilt
all but a pint. So it was lost on
the ice of the river— When the river breaks
up it will go down the Concord into
the Merrimack—& down the Merri-

¹"cold" altered from "y")

²"It" possibly altered from "the" or other letters

³"suggesting" poss written over "the"

⁴"nearly" possibly altered from "all"

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

There is at any rate such a phe-
nomenon as the willows shining in the
spring sun—however it is to be accounted¹
for.

Mar. 17th Monday

Snow going off very gradually under the
sun alone— Going begins to be bad—horses
slump—{hard} turning out. see where the
cattle which have
stepped a few inches
one side the sled track have {slumed} 2 feet or more leaving great holes.

Mar 18

P. m. Up River—

It is still quite tight up Hub's Bath-
Bend—and at Clam Shell—though I
hesitate a little to cross at these places—
There are dark spots in the soft white
ice—which will be soon worn through.

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

Nut Meadow Brook is open for a

¹"accounted" altered from "accounts"

dozen rods from its mouth—& for a
rod into the river— Higher up it
is still concealed by a snowy bridge.

2 feet thick

// ^ I see the ripples made by some fishes,
which were in the small opening at its
mouth—making haste to hide them
selves¹ in the ice covered river. This
square rod & one or 2 others like it
in the town, are the only places where

Thus early they appear ready to be the prey of the fishhawk
I could see this phenomenon now ^— Within

// the brook I see quite a school of

or over

little minnows an inch long amid ^ the
bare dead stems of Polygonums—and one

// or little water-bugs. (apple-seeds).

The last also in the broad ditch on the Corner-road in Wheelers Meadow{.}
Notwithstanding the backwardness of the season
all the town still under deep snow & ice—
here they are in the first open & smooth
water—governed by the altitude of the sun.

// —I see many small furrows freshly
made in the sand at the bottom of
the brook—from 1/2 an inch to 3/4 wide—
which I suspect are made by some small
shell-fish—already moving. Perhaps Paludina

V. 20th prox.

Mar. 19th

Pm. To Walden—²

Measured the snow again

// W of RR	E of RR	av	Trillium Woods
15	11 4/5	13 2/5	16 ³ 3/4

The last measurement was on the 7th

¹"selves" altered from "self"

²T attached a newspaper clipping, "Ice.", to the right of the date and location lines. The clipping is folded, concealing a portion of each printed line. Visible lines read, "The Messers. McFarland had a {fold} r- / ice, 11 inches thick, which was the fifth {fold} e / the various thicknesses taken from th {fold} ne / part of the river amounting to 57 {fold} n / [Lowell Courier, 18th." Following "18th." T wrote "{March }" in pencil. For an image of the clipping in place, see Appendix, p. 288.

³"16" written over "15"

ult. when it av. about 16¹ inches in
the open land— This depth it must have
preserved owing to the remarkably cold weather
till the 13th at least. So² it chances
that the snow was constantly 16 inches

at least

deep ^ on a level in open land from Jan 13 //
to Mar. 13th

It is remarkable how rapidly it has

E

settled on the W. of the RR as compared
with the W, since the 7th ult (or I may say
rather the 13th) The whole av. settling, in open
land, since say the 13th is a little less than 3
inches.

The thickness of the ice on Walden in the
long cove on the S. side about 5 rods
from shore—where the water is 19 1/2 feet
deep is just 26 inches. about 1 foot //
being snow ice. In the middle it
was 24 1/4 on the 11th ult— It is the //
same there now—and undoubtedly—it

Prob. got to be thickest on this side

was then 26 in the long cove. ^ Since the
warmer weather which began on the
13th the snow which was 3 or 4 inches deep
is about half melted on the ice under
the influence of the sun alone—& the

within the last 5 days //

ice is considerably softened ^—thus suddenly ^
quite through it, being easier to cut
& more—moist—quite fine³ & white like

The dust not at all hard dry & crystalline sticking together as damp
snow when I shovel it out
snow in the ~~hole~~ hole. on my axe.

Ap. then Walden is as thickly frozen about shore as Flint's.

¹"16" possibly altered from "11"

²"So" possibly altered from "so"

³"fine" altered from "&"

While I am measuring, though it
is quite warm,—the air is filled with
large moist snow flakes—of the star
form—which are rapidly concealing¹
the very few bare spots on the R. R. em-
// bankment. It is indeed a new snow
storm

// Another old red maple bleeds² now on
the warm S edge of Trillium Wood. The
1st maple was old & in a warm position.

What befel³ at Mrs. Brooks'

On the morning of the
17th ult—Mrs Brooks Irish girl
Joan, fell down the cellar stairs

by her mistress

& was found ^ ap. lifeless|lying at the
bottom— Mrs Brooks ran to the street
door for aid to get her up—& asked
a Miss Farmer who was passing

near by

to call the blacksmith ^— The⁴
latter lady turned instantly and making
haste across the road on this errand
fell flat in a puddle of melted
snow—& came back to Mrs Brook's
bruised & dripping & asking for opo-
deldoc. Mrs Brooks again ran
to the door & called to Geo. Big-
elow to complete the unfinished
errand— He ran nimbly about

¹"concealing" altered from "concealed"

²"bleeds" possibly altered from "on"

³Possibly "befel" (that is, possibly underlined)

⁴"The" altered from "the"

it & fell flat in another puddle
near the former—but his joints being
limber—got along without opodel-
doc & raised the blacksmith¹— He
also notified James Burke who
was passing—& he rushing in to rend-
er aid—fell off one side of the

in the dark

cellar stairs—^ They no sooner got
the girl upstairs then she came to
& went raving— Then had a fit.

Haste makes waste— It never
rains but it pours— I have this from
those who have heard Mrs Brooks' story—seen
the girl—& the stairs—& the puddles.

No sooner is some opening made
in the river—a square rod in area—where
some brook or rill empties in than the

ap. begin to

fishes ^ seek it for light & warmth—and
thus early perchance may become the
prey of the fish hawk— They are seen
to ripple the water darting out as you
approach.

I noticed on the 18th ult. that springy
spot on the shore just above the RR bridge
by the ash—which for a month has been bare
for 2 or 3 feet now enlarged to 8 or 10 feet
in diameter— And in a few other places on
the meadowy shore—(e.g just above mouth
of Nut meadow) I see great dimples

¹blacksmith: "smith" possibly underlined

8 or 10 feet over

in the deep snow ^ betraying ~~great~~ springs

There the pads (Nuphar) & cress already spring & shells are left by the rat

At¹ the broad ditch on the corner road
opposite Bare Garden—the snowy crust
had slumped or fallen in here & there
& where the bridge was perfect I saw it

smooth

quite 2 feet thick— In the ~~still~~ open water
there—small water-bugs were gyrating.
singly—not enough to play the game.

I am surprised at the sudden change
in the Walden² ice within 5 days— In cut-
ting a hole now—instead of hard dry trans-
parent chips of ice—you make a fine
white snow very damp & adhering together
with but few chips in it. The ice has been
affected throughout its 26 inches—
though most I should say above— Hard to say
exactly where the ice begins under the 2 inches of snow.

Mar 20th 56

// It snowed 3 or 4 inches of damp snow

to

last Pm & night—now thickly adhering
the twigs & branches— Prob. it will
soon melt & help carry off the snow.

Pm. to Trill. Wood & to Nut mead.

to tap a maple—see paludina & get elder & sumach spouts

Brook. Slumping in the deep snow—

It is now so softened that I slump at every
3^d step. The sap of red maples in low &

// warm position now generally flows—but
not in high & exposed ones.

Where I saw those furrows in the
sand in Nut meadow Brook the other
day—I now explore—& find within

¹"At" altered from "In"

²"Walden" altered from "walden"

~~2-squ-foot or 2~~ a square foot or 2-half a dozen
of Paludina decisa with their feet out //
within an inch of the surface—so I have
scarcely a doubt that they made them.
I suppose that they do not furrow the bottom
thus under the ice—but as soon as the
spring sun has thawed it, they come to the
surface, perhaps at night only,—where
there is some little sand & furrow it

may be it is the love season

thus by their motions—[^]Perhaps then
make part of the food of the crows
which visit this brook—& whose tracks
I now see on the edge—& have all winter.
Prob. they also pick up some dead frogs.

Feather read in a paper to-day of
of 740 & odd apple² tree buds recently taken
out of the crop of a partridge.

Last nights snow—which is melting very
fast is evidently helping to rot the
ice very fast—in the absence of rain
by settling into it—as did the older snow

May be it will thaw the ground in the same way & thick
indeed. ^ Considering how solid ^ the river
was a week ago I am surprised to
find how cautious I have grown about
crossing it in many places now.

For two or three days I have heard //
the gobbling of turkies the first spring

chicadees &

sound—after the ^ hens—that I think of
The river has just begun to open at //

has been

Hub's Bend— It ^ closed there since Jan.
7th—i.e. 10 weeks & a half

¹Pencilled caret written below dash

²apple: first "p" possibly inserted

Set a pail—before coming here—to catch
red-maple sap at Trill. Wood— I am now
looking after elder & sumach for spouts.
I find the latter best—for though the
former has as large a pith—(larger in prop.

commonly

to its size) its wood ^ being less it does not

Yet there is some by A. Barrett's ditch 2+ inches in diameter—~~but its~~ very

fill so large a hole—nor is it so strong. ^

strong—but its pith small. smooth

The pith &c of the ^ smells to me like weak
tobacco. What other shrubs have a large

Only those plants which have a great growth

pith? the first year can have much pith—since ap. this does not
increase afterward. V. Ap 22nd for mt sumach

Got my smooth sumach on the S side
of Nawshawtuct— I know of no shrubs here
abouts¹—except alders² & the sumachs which
have a suitable pith & wood for such a

smooth

purpose— The pith of the ^ sumach is a
light brown like yellow snuff—the ring
of old wood next to it is a decayed looking
greenish yellow—the sap wood is white.

When cut or broken it has a singularly

there being often but a small proportion of sap wood

particolored & decayed look—^ A white
sticky juice oozes out of the edge of the
bark where cut—& soon turns yellow
& {ap} hard. in drops like pitch or hickory sap.

~~only harder~~. This pith does not come

quite

out ^ so entire & smoothly as elder—

being drier now, at least

you can shove it past the axils of

The old wood of the ivy is also yellow like this—but there

twigs. is more & harder sap wood—& the pith is quite small.

The pith of the poison sumach or dogwood is considerably smaller.—but I think it has x³

the same scent with the smooth—

Mar 21st

Geo Brooks of the North Quarter—
tells me that he went a fishing
at Nagog Pond on the 18th ult.

x Another poison dog wood has a very large pith, & I am not sure about the
scent. The juice of the bark is not white.⁴

¹"s" added to "about"

²"alders" altered from "elders" (or "a" possibly written over "w"?); need better copy

³"x" functions to connect "smooth—" to text written vertically in left margin. See next note.

⁴"x Another . . . white." written vertically in left margin

and found the ice from 30 to 37 inches //
thick—(the greater part or all but about
a foot snow ice)—the snow having blown
on to the ice there. He measured it with
a rule & a hooked stick—(But at
Walden where I measured there was no drift=

It may have been no thicker at Nagog on an average
ing of the snow¹.—) ^ He says that

both the grey squirrel & the red eat pine-seed

former

but not in company. The² ^ have been quite
common about his house the past winter—& his
neighbor caught two in his yard.

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

4 1/2 pints in all

This sap is an agreeable drink like

(by chance) but slight

iced³ water ^ with a pleasant ^ sweetish taste.

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

¹"drift ... snow" underlined in pencil

²"The" altered from "They"

³"d" added to "ice" in pencil

It is worth the while to know that
there is all this sugar in our woods
much of
^ which might be obtained by ~~boiling~~ using
the refuse wood lying about—without
damage to the proposition¹ who use neither
the sugar nor the wood.

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

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

While collecting sap the little of yesterdays
lodging snow that was left dropping from
the high pines in Trill. Wood—& striking the brittle
twigs in its descent—makes me think that
the squirrels are running there.

I noticed that my fingers were purpled
evidently from the sap on my auger.
Had a dispute with father about the
use of my {—} making this sugar when I
knew it could be done—& might have bought
sugar² cheaper at Holden's. He said it

I made it my study

took me from my studies. I said ^ I felt as
if I had been to a university.

It dropped³ f from each tube about as
fast as my pulse beat—& as there were
3 tubes directed to each vessel—it flowed

¹Possibly "proprietor"; or possibly "proposition" altered from "proprietor" or vice versa
²"sugar" altered from "it"

³Possibly altered from "dropped"

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

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

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

Sat. Mar. 22nd 56

Pm. to White Maples & up Assabet.

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

I walk up the middle of the Assabet & most of the way on mid. of S branch—
in snow

//

Many tracks of crows ^ along the edge of the open water against Merricks at Island— They thus visit the edge of water—(this & brooks—) before any ground is exposed. Is it for small shell fish? The snow now no longer bears you It has become very coarse grained under the sun—& I hear it sink¹ around me as I walk.

Part of the white maples now begin

¹"sink" altered from "sing"

some perhaps 2 or 3 days
to flow ^-prob. in equally warm positions
they would have begun to flow as early as
those red ones which I have tapped.

ap.

// Their buds—and ^ some of the red ones—are

This prob. follows directly on the flowing of the sap
visibly swollen. ^ In 3 instances I cut
off a twig & sap flowed & dripped from
the part attached to the tree, but in
no case would any sap flow from
the part cut off—(I mean where I first
had cut it) which appears to show

Yet the next day at Walden it flowed from
that the sap is now running up. I
both parts—though considerably more from the end attached to the tree.
also cut a notch in a branch 2 inches

It will also drip from the upper carf of a woodchopper—
in diameter, & the upper side of the cut
remained dry—while sap flowed from the
lower side—but in another instance both
sides were wet at once & equally.

// The sap then is now generally flowing
upward in red & white maples in warm

See it flowing from maple twigs which were gnawed

positions{-} off by rabbits in the winter—

The down of willow¹ catkins in very warm

// places has in almost every case peeped out
1/8 of an inch—generally over the whole willow

On water standing above the ice under

// a white maple are many of these Perla (?)
insects with 4 wings drowned—though
it is all ice & snow around the country

Do not see any flying—nor before this.

over.

The wood choppers—who are cutting
the wood at Assabet spring—now at last
go to their work up the middle of the

but one got in yesterday one leg the whole length.
river. ^ At the red maple which

It is rotted through in many places behind Pritchard's.

¹"willow" altered from "willows"

I first tapped I see the sap still running
& wetting the whole side of the tree. It
has also oozed out from the twigs—especially
those that are a little drooping & run
down a foot or two bathing them some
times all around—both twigs & buds some-
times—or collected in ~~little~~ drops on the
under sides of the twigs—& all evapora-
ted to molasses—which is for the most

or ink

part as black as blacking ^ having
probably caught the dust &c even over
all this snow— Yet it is as sweet & thick
as molasses—& the twigs & buds look
as if blacked & polished. Black drops of

thick

this ^ ~~congealed~~ sweet syrup spot the under
sides of the twigs— No doubt the bees &
other insects frequent the maples now—
I thought I heard the hum of a bee
but perhaps it was a R. R. whistle. //

on the Lowell RR See a fuzzy gnat on it.

^ It is as thick as molasses— It is especially
apt to collect about¹ the bases of the

is delayed

twigs where the stream ~~stops~~— Where the
sap is flowing—the red maple being cut

inner

the ^ bark turns crimson. I see many
snow fleas on the moist maple chips.

Saw a pigeon woodpecker under //
the swamp wht oak in Merricks Pasture—
where ther is a small patch of bare ground.

Prob. Minot saw one in his door yard in

¹"about" possibly altered from "at"

mid winter.

Mar. 23^d '56

I spend a considerable portion of my time observing the habits of the wild animals my brute neighbors— By their various movements & migrations they fetch the year about to me— Very significant are the flight of geese & the migration of suckers &c &c— But when I consider that the nobler animals have been exterminated here—the cougar—panther—lynx—wolverine wolf—bear
the beaver, the turkey
moose—deer ^ &c &c—I cannot but feel as if I lived in a tamed &, as it were, emasculated country— Would not the motions of those larger & wilder animals have been more significant still— Is it not a maimed & imperfect nature that I am conversant with?¹
As if I were to study a tribe of Indians that had lost all its warriors. Do not the forest & the meadow now lack expression—²now that I never see nor think of the moose with a lesser forest on his head—in the one—nor of the beaver in the other? When I think what were the various sounds & notes—the migrations & works & changes of fur & plumage which ushered in the spring & marked the other seasons of the year—I am reminded that this my life in Nature—this particular round of natural phe-

¹"?" altered from "-"

²"—" altered from "?"

nomena which I call a year—is lamentably incomplete— I listen to concert—in which so many parts are wanting. The whole civilized country is to some extent turned into a city. Many

& I am that citizen, whom I pity.

^ of those animal migrations & other phenomena by which the Indians marked the season—are no longer to be observed.

I seek acquaintance with nature—to know her moods & manners— Primitive Nature¹ is the most interesting to me. I take infinite pains to know all the phenomena of the spring, for instance—thinking that I have here the entire poem—& then to my chagrin I learn that it is but an imperfect copy that I possess & have read—that my ancestors have torn out many of the first leaves & grandest passages—& mutilated it in many places.

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

All the great trees—& beasts—fishes & fowl are gone—the streams perchance are somewhat shrunk.

I see that a shop keeper advertises among his perfumes for handkerchiefs "meadow flowers"—& "New mown hay".

Pm to Walden

The sug. maple sap flows—& for aught I know is as early as the red. //

¹"Nature" altered from "nature"

I think I may say that the snow
// has been not less than a foot deep on
a level in open land—until today—since

about 11 weeks

Jan 6th. {th} ^ It prob— begins to be less about
this date. The bare ground begins to appear
where the snow is worn in the street— It has
been steadily melting since Mar. 13th the
therm. rising daily to 40 & 45 at noon—but
no rain.

The E. side of the Deep Cut is nearly bare—
as is the RR itself—and on the driest parts
of the sandy slope I go looking for
Cicindela—to see it run or fly amid the
sere blackberry vines—some life which
the warmth of the dry sand under the
spring sun has called forth— But I see
none. I am reassured & reminded that
I am the heir of eternal inheritances—
which are inalienable—when I feel the
warmth reflected from this sunny bank—
& see the yellow sand & the reddish sub-soil—
& the trickling of melting snow in some sluiceway
& hear some dried leaves rustle ^. The eternity
which I detect in Nature¹ I predicate of my-
self also. How many springs I have
had this same experience! I am encouraged
for I recognize this steady persistency & re-
covery of nature as a quality of myself.

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

¹"Nature" altered from "nature"

there is less snow there—on ac. of eddy—& ap. the tree absorbs heat

Also under some trees in a meadow ^—or a ridge in the same place— Almost the whole of the steep hill side on the S N of Walden is now bare & dry & warm—though fenced in with ice & snow— It has attracted partridges 4 of which whirr away on my approach—

There the early sedge is exposed—(& looking closer I observe that it has been sheared off¹ close down when green far & wide—& the fallen

by their sides

withered top are little handfuls of hay ^ which have been covered by the snow—& sometimes look as if they had sere^d as nests for the mice—for

Yet not such plain nests as in the grain field last spring

Prob. the *Mus. leucopus*.

their green droppings are left in them abundantly. ^ and the winter-green

^ and the sere penny royal still retains some fragrance—

As I was returning on the RR—at the crossing

hearing a rustling I

beyond the shanty—^ saw a striped squirrel //

E

amid the sedge on the bare ^ bank—ap 20 feet distant— After observing me a few moments

between the rails

as I stood perfectly still—^ he ran straight up to within 3 feet of me out of curiosity—then after a moments pause & looking up to my face—turned back—& finally crossed the RR— All the red was on {—} his rump & hind quarters. When running he carried his tail erect—as he scratched up the snowy bank.

Now then the steep south hill sides begin to be bare—~~exposing~~ & the early sedge & sere but still fragrant penny royal

¹"off" poss. altered from "of"

fast generally at first—or 9 Am—not till
about 10. Yet last year I paddled my boat
to F. H. Pond on the 19th of March—!
Before noon I slump 2 feet in the snow—
You bore a little¹ whole with your knife &
presently the wounded sap wood begins to
glisten with moisture—& anon a clear crystalline
tear-like drop flows out & fall run's down

or drops at once to the snow—

the bark—^ This is the sap of which the far

That's the sweet liquor which the Ind. boiled a thousand years ago.
famed maple-sugar is made—

Cut a piece of Rhus Toxicodendron resting on
at rock—at Egg Rock—5/8 of an inch in diam-
eter—which had 19 rings of annual growth.
It is quite hard & stiff.

My sugar making was spoiled by putting
in much soda instead of saleratus—by² accident.

I suspect it would have made more sugar
black
than the red—did. It proved only brittle ^ candy

This sap flowed just about as fast as that
of the red maple—

It is said that a great deal of sap will
run from the yellow-birch.

{B} The River begins to open generally at
the bends—for 10 or 20 rods & I see the
dark ice alternating with dark water there
while the rest of the river is still covered with
snow—

Mar 25th

P. m. to Walden. The willow &
aspen catkins have pushed out considerably

¹First "l" in "little" mistakenly crossed

²"by" possibly cancelling dash

since the 1st of Feb in warm places—
I have frequently seen the sap of maples flow
in warm days in the winter—in warm lo-
calities— This was in twigs— Would¹ it in the
trunks of large trees?—& if not, is not this
an evidence that this sap did not come
up from the roots?

The meadow E. of the RR causeway is
bare in many spots—while that on
the W. is completely & deeply covered—
Yet a few weeks ago it was deepest
on the east— I think of no reason for
this—except that the causeway may
keep off the cold N. W. winds from the
former meadow—for 30 rods² distant there
are no bare spots. Why is the eastern
slope—now, as every spring (almost completely)
bare—long before the western? The road
runs N & S & the sun lies on the one side
as long as on the other Is it more favor-
able that the frozen snow be acted on by
the warmed air before the sun reaches
it—than after it has left it? Another

& 2nd

^ reason is prob. that there is less snow
on that side—or on the W slope of
a hill than on the Eastern— Snow drifting
from the N. W. lodges under the
West bank. So I observe today—that

(& this seems to give weight to the 2^d reason urged above)
the hills rising from the N & west ^ sides
of Walden are partially bare—While those
on the south and east are deeply & com-
pletely covered with snow.

his house

Mr. Bull tells me that his grapes grow faster & riper
sooner on the W than the E side of ^

¹"Would" possibly altered from "Could"
²"rods" possibly altered from "rots"

There have been few if any small migratory
have
birds the past winter. I ~~did~~ not seen¹ a tree-
sparrow–nuthatch–creeper–nor more than
one red-poll since christmass– They probably
went further south.

I now slump from 2 to four inches into Walden–
though² there has been no rain since I can
remember– I cannot cut through
on ac– of the water in the softened ice flowing
into the hole. At last in a drier place
I was not troubled with water–till I had
cut about a foot on through the snow
ice–when 2 or 3 streams of water 1/2 inch
or more in diameter spurted up through

partly honey-comed
holes in the disorganized ^ clear ice– So
Prob. the clear ice is thus riddled all over the pond–for this
was a drier place than usual.

I failed to get through–^ The whole mass
Is it the effect of the melted snow & surface working down?–or partly of water
in the middle is about 24 inches thick
pressing up?

but I scrape away about 2 inches of the
surface with my foot–leaving 22 inches. //
For About a rod from the shore–on the N
& W sides–(I did not examine the others)
it is comparatively firm & dry–then for
2 rods you slump 4 inches or more–then

belt
& generally only about 2– Is that ^ the
effect of reflection from the hills?³

Hear the hurried & seemingly frightened
notes of a robin–& see it flying over //
& afterwards its tut tut at a distance
the {R} RR lengthwise ^– This & the
birds of yesterday have come⁴ though the

¹"seen" altered from "see"

²"though" altered from "–"

³"?" altered from period in pencil

⁴"come" altered from "came"

ground generally is covered deep with snow— They will not only stay with us through a storm, but come when there are but resting places for them. It must be hard for them to get their living now.

water

// The tallest ^ andromedas now rise 6 or 8 inches above the snow in the swamp.

Mar. 26th '56

to Cambridge—

I hear that Humphrey Buttrick found a whole (He tells me that his dog found 4 in the winter &—as other coveys are missing thinks they have starved) covey ^ of quails dead ~~under the snow~~— At Philadelphia a month or 2 since they offered more than market price a reward for live ones—¹to preserve them. We² have heard of an unusual quantity of ice in the course of the Liverpool packets this winter— Perhaps the Pacific has been {sunk} by one, as we hear that some other vessels have been— Yet the papers say it has been warmer about Lake Superior than in Kansas—& that the Lake will break up earlier than usual.

// They are just beginning to use ~~snow~~ wheels in Concord³—but only in the middle of the town—where the snow is at length worn & melted down to bare ground in the middle of the {gro} road from 2 to 10 feet wide— Sleighs are far the most common even here

// In Cambridge there is no sleighing

¹Caret written below dash

²"We" altered from "Who"

³"in C" written over "but o"

–for the most part the middle of

bare & even

the road from Porters to the College is dusty
for 20 to 30 feet in width—the College Yard is
one half bare— So if they have had more
snow than { } we, as some say, it has melted much
faster— There is also less in the towns between
us & Cam. than in Concord. The snow lies
longer on the low level plain surrounded
by hills—in which Concord is situated. I am
struck by the more wintry aspect—almost
entirely uninterrupted snow fields—on coming
into Concord in the cars.

The Romans introduced husbandry into
England, where but little was practiced before—
& the English have introduced it into America—
so we may well read the Roman¹ Authors
for a history of this art as practiced by us.

I am sometimes affected by the

man

consideration that a ^ may spend
the whole of his life after boyhood in

m

accomplishing a particular design—as
if he were put to a petty & special use
—without taking time to look around
him & appreciate the phenomenon
of his existence— If so many purposes
are thus necessarily left unaccomplished
—perhaps unthought of—we are
reminded of the transient interest we
have in this life— Our interest in our

¹"Roman" altered from "Romans"

in the spread of liberty &c
country ^ strong & as it were innate as it
is—cannot {—a} be as transient as our
present existence here. It cannot be that
all those patriots who die in the
midst of their career have no further
connexion with the career of their country.

Mar. 27th '56

Uncle Charles died this morning about midnight—aged 76

The frost is now entirely out in some
// parts of the New Burying Ground—the
sexton tells me—half way up the hill
which slopes to the S. unless it is bare of
snow—he says—

In our garden where it chances to be
bare—2 or more rods from the house I was
// able to dig through the slight frost— In¹
another place near by I could not.

The river is now open in reaches
ice
// of 20 or 30 rods—where the² ^ has dis-
appeared by melting.

about 70

Elijah Wood Sen. ^ tells me he does
not remember that the river was ever
frozen so long—nor that so much
snow laid on the ground so long.

People do not remember when there
// was so much old snow on the ground at
this date.

Mar 28th

Uncle Charles buried. He was born in Feb. 1780—the winter

// Cold & the earth stiff again after
of the great Snow—& he dies in the winter of another great snow—
a life bounded by great snows.

15 days of steady warm & for the most
part sunny days (without rain) in which

¹"In" altered from "in"

²"the" altered from "it"

the snow & ice have rapidly melted.

Sam. Barrett tells me that a boy caught a crow in his neighborhood the other day in a trap set for mink. Its leg was broken. He brought it home under its arm & laid it down in a shop thinking to keep it there alive. It looked up sidewise¹ ~~from~~ as it lay seemingly helpless on the floor—but the door being open—all at once to their surprise it lifted itself on its wings & flitted out & away without the least trouble.

Many crows have been caught in mink traps the past winter, they have been compelled to

^{the few openings in brooks &c}
visit ~~the water sides~~ ^ so much for food—
Barrett has suffered all winter for want of water.

I think to say to my friend—There is but one interval between us. You are on one side of it—I on the other— You know as much about it as I—how wide—how impassable it is. I will endeavor not to blame you— Do not blame me— There is nothing to be said about it. Recognize

^{pass over}
the truth—& ^ ~~eross~~ the intervals that are bridged.

Fare well my friends— My path inclines to this side the mts—your's to that For a long time you have appeared further & further off to me. I see that you will at length disappear altogether— For a season my path

¹"sidewise" altered from "sidewize"

seems lonely without you— The meadows
are like barren ground— The memory of
me is steadily passing away from you
My path grows narrower & steeper &
the night is approaching— Yet I have

in the infinite future

faith that ^ new suns will rise & new plains
expand¹ before me—and I trust that I shall
therein encounter pilgrims who bear that
sane virtue that I recognized in you.

will be very

who ~~indeed~~ are that ^ virtue that was you
I accept the everlasting & salutary law.
which was promulgated as much that
spring that I first knew you, as this that
I seem to lose² you.

former

My ^ friends, I visit you—as one walks
amid the columns of a ruined temple
You belong to an era—a civilization & glory long past.
I recognize still your fair proportions—

which we

notwithstanding the convulsions ^ you³—
have felt & the weeds & jackals
that have sprung up around.

I come here to be reminded of the past—
—to read your inscriptions—the hiero-
glyphics the sacred writings

We are no longer the repre-
sentatives of our former selves.

Love is a thirst that is never slaked.
Under the coarsest rind the sweetest meat.
If you would read a friend aright—you
must be able to read through something
thicker ~~the~~ & opaquer than horn.

If you can read a friend—all languages

will be easy to you. {Enemies publish themselves—They de-
clare war— The friend here declares his love}

¹"expand" possibly altered from "on"

²"lose" altered from "leave"

³"you" cancelled in pencil

Mar. 29th 56

Another cold day— Scarcely melts at all. //

Water skimmed over in chamber—with fire

March 30th 56

Pm to Walden & Fair Haven.

Still cold & blustering. I came out to see
the sand & rich soil in the deep cut, as I
would to see a spring flower—some redness
in the cheek of earth. These cold days have
made the ice of Walden dry and pretty hard
again at top. It is just 24 inches thick in //

about 11 inch of snow ice

the middle—^ It has lost but a trifle on the
surface. The inside is quite moist— The clear ice
very crystalline & leaky—letting the water
up from below so as to hinder my cutting.
It¹ seems to be more porous & brittle than
the snow ice.

I go to Fair Haven via the Andromeda Swamps—
The snow is a foot & more in depth there{—}
still. There is a little bare ground in &

swampy

next to the ^ woods at the head of Well
Meadow—where the springs & little black
rills are flowing. I see already one
blade 3 or 4 inches long of that purple or //

lake grass lying flat on some water—between
the first leaf with a rich bloom on it
snow-Clad banks—^ How silent are the
footsteps of Spring! There too, where
there is a fraction of the meadow 2 rods
over—quite bare under the bank—
in this warm recess at the head of the

¹"It" possibly "it"

meadow—though the rest of the
meadow is covered with snow a
foot or more in depth—I am surprised
to see the skunk-cabbage with its great
? spear heads open—& ready to blossom (i.e. shed—
pollen in a day or 2—) and a¹ caltha palustris
bud which shows yellowish—& the golden sax-

also there are many fresh tender leaves of ap the gold-thread [?] in open meadow there
prob. not

ifrage—green & abundant—^ all surrounded
& hemmed in by snow which covered the
ground since Christmas—& stretches as
far as you can see on every side.

and there are as intense blue shadows on the snow as I ever saw.

The spring advances in spite of snow & ice
& cold even— The ground under the snow
has long since felt the influence of the
spring sun—whose rays fall at a more
favorable angle. The tufts or tussocks
next the edge of the snow were crowned
with dense phalanxes of stiff spears
of the stiff triangularish sedge grass

of any plant

// 5 inches high but quite/yellow

This is the greatest growth ^ I have seen—I had not suspected any
with a very slight greenness at the

I can just see a little greening on the bare & dry south bank.
tip—showing that they pushed up
through the snow which melting
they had not yet acquired color.

& clefts

In warm recesses ^ in meadows & rocks in
the midst of ice & snow—nay even
under the snow vegetation commences
& steadily advances.

// I find Fair Haven Pond & the river
lifted up a foot or more—the result

"a" altered from "the"

Mar. 31st '56

Pm to Peters via Winter {Strt}

I see the scarlet tops of white maples
nearly a mile off down the river—the
lusty shoots of last year— Those of the red
maple do not show thus.

I see many little holes in this old
& solid snow where leaves have sunk
down gradually—& perpendicularly
11 or 12 inches— The hole no larger at
the top than at the bottom—nay often partly
closed at top by the drifting—and exactly
the form & size of the leaf— It is as
if the sun had driven this thin shield
like a bullet thus deep into the solid

It is remarkable how deep the leaves settle into an old snow like this.

V n p. b. 2

// snow— See a small¹ ant running
about over a piece of meadow turf.

// The celandine begins to be conspicuous springing under Brown's
fence

April 1st 56

P.m. Down RR—measuring snow & to F. H.
Hill—

// W. of RR	E of RR	av.	Trill. Wood.
2 5 12	0	5 1/2—inch	22
0 5 17	0		11
3 3 11	0		11
5 3 11	0		7
4 9 15	0		8
4 7 15	10		12
4 11 _____	8		11
5 13 40) 344 (8 1/2	0		11
3 13	0		11
5 12	0		6
5 13	0		9
7 14	0		14
8 13	0		11
14 15	0		10
9 16	0		10
7 13	0		11
3	0		8
10	0		8
	3		6
	9		3
	6		_____

"a small" altered from "an a"

$$\begin{array}{r} 0 \\ 1 \\ 20 \\ \hline 24) 57 (2 \frac{1}{3}^1 \end{array}$$

20) 200 (10 inch

¹For an image of this MS page, see Appendix, p. 289.

It appears from the above how rapidly the snow has melted on the E side of the RR-causeway—though 8 to 12 rods from it—being sheltered by it from the N. W.

v ap.11

wind. ^ It is for the most part bare ground there

Adhering to these localities the average depth in open land is 5 1/2 inches—but the E side of RR—is a peculiarly sheltered place and hence bare—while the earth generally is covered— It is prob. about 7 inches //
deep on a level generally in open land.
It has melted at about the same rate W. of RR—& in Trill. Woods since //
the 19th. It is a question whether it is better sleighing or wheeling now taking all our roads together. At any rate we may say the sleighing lasted till april. In some places it still fills the roads level with the walls— & bears me up still in the middle of the day. It grows more & more solid —ap. freezing at night quite through W^m Wheeler (of the Corner Road) tells me that it was more solid this morning than any time in the winter— & he was surprised to find that it would bear his oxen where 3 or 4 feet deep behind his house— On some roads you walk in a path

recently shovelled out with upright
walls of snow 3 or 4 feet high on
each side &¹ a foot of snow beneath
for 20 or 30 rods

you ^-& this is old snow. We have
had none since Mar. 20-& that was
very moist & soon melted. The drifts
on the E side of the Depot—which
have lain there a great part of the
winter—still reach up to the top of the
first pane of glass.

But generally speaking we slump so much
—especially in the woods—except in the
morning—~~that~~ & the snow is so deep
that we are confined to the roads

// or the river still. Choppers can not

& teams cannot get in for
work in the woods yet— wood yet

A new snow of this depth would soon
go off; but this old snow is solid and

It seems to be gradually turning to ice

icy & wastes very slowly. ^ I observe that
while the snow has melted unevenly
in waves & ridges—there is a transparent
icy glaze about 1/16 of an inch thick
but as full of holes as a riddle—spread
level

like gauze ^ over all—resting on the
prominent parts of the snow—leaving
hollows beneath from 1 inch to 6 or
more inches in depth— I often see
the spiders running under neath
this. This is the surface which has
melted & formed an icy crust—& being
transparent— it has transmitted the
heat to the snow beneath—& has out-

¹"&" possibly written over "-"

lasted that— This crashes & rattles under your feet.

The bare places now—are the steep south & W. or S. W. sides of hills—& cliffs—& also next to woods & houses on the same sides— / The ridges & brows of hills—& slighter ridges & prominences in the fields— /¹ Low open ground protected from the N. W. wind— / Under trees &c.

I might have put the roads—2nd.

Going by the path to the Springs—I find
oak
great beds of ^ leaves—sometimes a foot thick—
very dry & crisp—& filling the path on one
side of it in the woods—for 1/4 of a
inviting one to lie down
mile—^ They have absorbed the heat & settled
like the single ones seen yesterday
^ in mass a foot or more—making a
path to that depth— Yet when they are
unusually thick they preserve the snow
beneath—& are found to cover an almost
icy mound.

Apr. 2nd 56

8 Am. to Lee's Cliff—via. RR.

Andromeda Ponds—& Well Meadow—
I go early while the crust is hard. I hear
a few songsparrows tinkle on the alders
they skulk & flit along below the level of the ground in the ice filled ditches
by the RR ^—& blue birds warble over the
A foot or more of snow in Andromeda
Deep-Cut. ponds.

In the warm recess at the head of Well-
meadow—which makes up on the N. E side
of F. Haven—I find many evidences of

¹Slash written over dash

Pushed up through the dead leaves—yet flattened by the snow & ice which was just melted
here behold

// spring. ^ {&} The skunk cabbage has been
in bloom—i.e. has shed pollen some time

here

all that now sheds pollen ^ has been frost bitten
and been¹ ~~now~~ frost bitten & decayed. ^— Others
are ready to shed it in a day or 2— I find no
other flower nearly so forward as this—
The Cowslip appears to be coming next to
it— Its buds are quite yellowish & half
an inch, almost, in diameter— The alder
scales do not even appear relaxed yet—
This year at least—the cabbage is the

It may possibly be a little

first flower—& perhaps it is always² earlier
than I have thought; if you seek it in

V. the 4th inst.

a favorable place. The springy soil
in which it grows melts the snows
early—& if beside it is under the
south side of a hill in an open

in a recess

oozy alder swamp ^—sheltered from
cold³ winds like—this— It may commonly

doubtful.

be⁴ the first flower ^— It will take
you half a life time to find out where
to look for the earliest flower—
I have hitherto found my earliest at

V. 4th prox.

Clam shell—a much more exposed place—⁵
Look for some narrow meadowy bay
running north into a hill—& protected
by the hill on 3-sides the north &
partly on the E & W— At the head
of this meadow, where many⁶ springs
ooze out from under the hill
& saturate all the ground—

¹"been" possibly altered from "is"

²"&...always" cancelled in pencil

³"cold" possibly added in margin

⁴"be" altered from "by"

⁵Pencilled caret written below dash

⁶"many" altered from "my"

dissolving the snow early in the spring—
or on the edge
in the midst ^ of a narrow¹ open alder swamp—
there look for the earliest skunk-
cabbage—& cowslip—Where some little
black rills are seen to meander or heard
to tinkle in the middle of the coldest
winter— There appear the great spear-
heads of the skunk cabbage—yellow—
& red—or uniform mahogany color—
with ample hoods sheltering their purple
spadixes. The plaited buds of the hellebore
are 4 or 5 inches high— There are buds //
of fresh green moss in the midst of
the shallow water— What is that
coarse sedge like—grass—rather broadly
triangularish—2 inches high in the water—
This and the cress have been eaten
prob. by the rabbits whose droppings
are abundant— I see where they have
gnawed & chipped off the willow osiers.
Common grass is quite green.

Here where I come for the earliest flowers
I might also come for the earliest birds—
They seek the same warmth & vegetation.
& so prob. with quadrupeds—rabbits
skunks—mice &c. I hear now as I stand
over the first skun cabbage—the notes
first
of the ^ red-wings—like the squeaking² of //
or grackles?
a sign—^ over amid the maples yonder—

¹"a narrow" altered from "an"

²"squeaking" underlined in pencil

Robins are peeping & flitting about
Am surprised to hear one sing regularly
their morning strain—7 or 8 rods off—
& smothered
yet so low ^ with its ventriloquism that
you would say it was half a mile
off— It seems to be wooing its mate
that sits within a foot of it.
There are many holes in the surface
of the bare springy ground amid
the rills—made by the skunks or
mice—& now their edges are bristling
leaf feather like
with ^ frost-work—as if they were
the breathing-holes or nostrils of the
earth.

That grass which had grown 5
inches on the 30th is ap. the cut grass
of the meadows. The withered blades
which are drooping about the tufts
are 2 feet long. I break the solid
snow bank with my feet—& raise its
edge—& find the stiff but tender
yellow ~~blades~~ or shoots beneath it.
They seem not to have pierced it but
are prostrate beneath it. They have
actually grown beneath it—but
not directly up into it to¹ any extent
rather flattened out beneath it—

Cross F. H. P. to Lee's Cliff— The
Crowfoot & saxifrage seem remarkably
backward—no growth as yet—
But the Catnep has grown even² 6

¹"to" altered from "-"

²"even" possibly cancelled in pencil

inches—& perfumes the hill-side when bruised—
The columbine with its purple leaves
has grown 5 inches¹—& one is flower bud-
ded—ap. nearer to flower than any thing
there— *Turritis stricta* very forward 4 inches
high—

It is evident that it depends on the
character of the season whether this
flower or that is the most forward—
— Whether there is more or less snow—or cold
or rain &c. I am tempted to stretch
myself on the bare ground above the
cliff—to feel its warmth in my back—
& smell the earth & the dry leaves.

—I see and hear flies & bees about—

A large buff-edged butter-fly—flutters by //

along the edge of the cliff—*V. antiopa*
Though so little of the earth is bared—
this frail creature has been warmed to
life again. Here is the broken shell

of one of those large white snails—
Helix albolabris on the top of the Cliff—

It is like a horn with ample mouth
wound on itself. I am rejoiced to find
anything so pretty— I cannot but think
it nobler, as it is rarer—to appreciate
some beauty than² it to feel much sym-
pathy with misfortune. The Powers³ are
kinder to me when they permit me to en-

¹Possibly pencil line through "inches" and words below on next line or two (need better copy)

²"than" altered from "in" or another word

³"Powers" altered from "powers"

joy this beauty—than if they were to express
any amount of compassion for me— I
could never excuse them that.

A wood¹-chuck has been out under
the cliff—& patted the sand—cleared out
the entrance to his burrow.

Muskrat houses have been very scarce
indeed the past winter— If they {wered} not
killed off—I cannot but think that
their instinct fore saw that the river

The river has been at summer

// would not rise. level through the winter up² to April!!

I returned down the middle of the
river to near the Hub. bridge without{t} seeing

// any opening

Some of the earliest plants are now
not started because covered with snow—as
the stellaria & shepherd's purse—
Others like the Carex-Penn.—the crowfoot—
saxifrage—Callitriche—are either covered

I think it must be partly owing to the want of rain & not wholly to the snow that
the first 3 are so backward

or recently uncovered— ^

The white maples—& hazles—and for the
most part the alders still stand in snow—
alders on the bare place

Yet those ^ by the skunk cabbage, above
named, appear to be no more forward!
Maybe, trees rising so high are more affected
by cold winds than herbaceous plants.

April 3^d '56

When I awoke this morning—I heard
the almost forgotten sound of rain
on the roof— I think there has not been
any of any consequence since Christmas
day— Looking out I see the air

¹"wood" reformed or possibly altered from "world" ("o" written over "r" and "l" cancelled)
²"up" possibly altered from "to"

that
full of fog & ^ the snow has gone off
wonderfully during the night—the drifts
have settled & the patches of bare ground
extended themselves—&¹ the river is fast spread
ing over the meadows. The pattering
of the rain is a soothing slumberous
sound which tempts me to lie late— Yet
there is more fog than rain.

Here then at last is the end of the
sleighting—which began the 25th of //
December— Not including that date &
today it has lasted 99 days— I hear that

will
Young Desmond of the Factory ^ have² come
into town 100 times in his sleigh the³ he
past winter, if he comes today—having
come probably once in a day.

Pm to Hunt's Bridge—

It is surprising how the earth on bare
south banks begins⁴ to show some green- //5
ness in its russet cheeks in this rain
& fog— A precious emerald green tinge—
—almost like a green mildew, the growth
of the night—a green blush suffusing
her cheek—heralded by twittering birds—
This sight is no less interesting than
the corresponding bloom & ripe blush
of the fall. How encouraging to per-
ceive again that faint tinge of green—
spreading amid the russet on earth's

¹"&" touching or written over dash, possibly cancelling it

²"have" altered from "has"

³"the" altered from "if"

⁴Pencil line through "begins" (need better copy)

⁵"/" written over hyphen following "green" for lack of space, most likely not cancelling the hyphen

cheeks! I revive with nature—her
victory is mine. This is my jewelry.
It rains very little, but a dense fog—
15 or 20 feet high, rests on the earth
all day spiriting away the snow— Behind
which the cockerels crow & a few birds
sing or twitter. The Osiers look light
& fresh in the rain & fog—like the

Close at hand they are seen to be beaded with drops from the fog
grass ^— There seems to be a little life in
the bark now & it strips somewhat more
freely than in winter. What a lusty growth
have these yellow osiers 6 feet is com-
mon—the last year—chiefly from
the summit of the pollards—(but
also from the sides of the trunk) filling
a quadrant densely with their yellow
rays—¹ The white maple buds on the
s side of some trees—have slightly opened
so that I can peep in to their cavities &

This happened in Feb (!) 57

// detect the stamens ^— They will prob. come
next to the skunk cabbage this year—
if the cowslip does not— Yet the trees
stand in the midst of the old snow—
I see small flocks of robins sunning
on the bared portions of the meadow—
hear the sprayey tinkle of the song-sparrow
along the hedges— Hear also the
squeaking notes of an advancing flock

? or grackles?—am uncertain which makes that squeak?

of red-wings ^ some where high in the sky—
At length detect them high over head
advancing N. E. in loose array with

¹—] + in MS

a broad extended front—competing
with each other  winging their way
to some northern meadow which
they remember. The note of some
is like the squeaking of many signs,
while others accompany them with a
dry

steady ^ tchuck-tchuck

Hosmer is overhauling a vast heap of
manure in the rear of his barn turning
the ice within it up to the sun\light— Yet
he asks despairingly what life is for—&
says he does not expect to stay here long.
But I have just come from reading Columella
who describes the same kind of spring work—
in that to him new spring of the world—with
hope—& I suggest to be brave & hope-
ful with nature. Human life may be
transitory & full of trouble but the per-
ennial mind whose survey¹ extends from
that spring to this—from Columella
to Hosmer—is superior to change.
I will identify myself with that which
did not die with Columella² & will not
die with Hosmer—
Coming home along the causeway a
robin sings, though faintly as in may—
The road is a path—here and there
shovelled through drifts which are con-
siderably higher than a mans head on each
side.

¹"whose survey" altered from "which if"

²"Columella" altered from "columella"

People are talking about
my Uncle Charles— Minott tells how
he heard Tilly Brown once asking him

(inside?

to show him a peculiar ^ lock in
wrestling— "Now dont hurt me—dont
throw me hard"— He struck his antago-
nist in side his knees with his feet
& so deprived him of his legs.

Hosmer remembers his tricks in the
barroom—shuffling cards &c he could
do any thing with cards— Yet he did
not gamble— He would toss up his
hat twirling it over & over & catch it
on his head invariably. Once wanted
to live at Hosmers—but the latter
was afraid of him— "Cant we study
up something?" he asked— H. asked him
into the house—& brought out apples
& cider—& Charles—talked— "You!"
said he "I burst the bully of Lowell"
(or Haverhill?) He wanted to wrestle—
would not be put off— Well we wont
wrestle in the house— So they went out to
the yard & a crowd got round. "Come
spread some straw here" said C. "I do'nt
want to hurt him." He threw him at

he told them to spread more straw
once— They tried again ^ & he "burst" him

He had a strong head—& never got
drunk—would drink gin sometimes
but not to excess— Did not use tobacco
except snuff out of another's box

sometimes—was very neat in his person—
Was not profane—though vulgar.

Very few men take a wide survey—their
knowledge is very limited & particular— I
talked with an old man the other day about
the snow—hoping he could give me some
information about past winters. I said
I guess you dont remember so much
old snow on the ground at this season—
He answered— "I never saw the snow

The same man in summer of 59—said he never saw the river so low!! Of what use to be old?
so deep between my ^ house & John's."

It wasnt a stones through

Uncle Charles used to say that he
hadn't a single tooth in his head— The fact
was they were all double—& I have heard
that he lost about all of them by the
time he was 21— Ever since I knew him
he could swallow his nose—

The river is {—} now generally & rapidly breaking
up— It is surprising what progress has been //
made since yesterday. It is now generally
open about the town. It has gradually worn
& melted away at the bends where it is shallow
& swift & now small pieces are breaking
off around the edges & floating down
these reaches— It is not generally floated
off but dissolved & melted where it is—
for the open reaches gradually extend—
themselves till they meet—& there is no
space or escape for floating ice

in any quantity until the ice is all gone.
from the channel– I think that
what I have seen floating in former
years is commonly such as had risen
up afterward from the bottom of
of flooded meadows. Sometimes however
you observe great masses of floating
ice–consisting of that which is later
to break up–the thicker & more lasting
ice from the broad bays or between bridges.

There is now an open water passage
on each side of the broad field of ice
in the bay above the R. R. The
// water which is rapidly rising has over-
flowed the icy snow on the meadows
which is seen a couple of feet beneath
it–for there is no true ice there–
It is this rising of the water that breaks
up the ice more than any thing.

The Mill brook has risen much higher
comparatively than the river.

Apr 4th '56

// Pm to Clam Shell &c–
The alder scales S of the R. R. beyond
the bridge are loosened– This corresponds
to the opening (not merely expansion showing
the fuzziness) of the Wht maple buds–

There is still but little rain–but
the fog of yesterday still rests on

the earth— My neighbor says it is the
frost coming out of the ground. This per-
haps is not the best description of it.
It is rather the moisture in this warm
air—condensed by contact with the snow
& ice & frozen ground. Where the fields
are bare I slump now 3 or 4 inches into
the oozy surface. Also on the bare
brows of hills clad with cladonias— These
are as full of water as a sponge—
The muskrats no doubt are now being
driven out of the banks. I hear as
I walk along the shore the dull sound
of guns—prob. most of them fired at musk-
rats—borne along the river from dif-
ferent parts of the town—one every two
or 3 minutes—

//

Already I hear of a small fire in the woods in Emerson's lot
set by the Engine—the leaves that are bare are so dry

//

I find many sound cabbages shedding
their pollen under Clam Shell¹ Hill.

They² are even more forward generally
here than at Well Meadow— Probably
now dead

2 or 3 only ^ among the alders at the last
place, were earlier. This is simply the ear-
liest flower such a season as this—
i.e. when the ground continues covered
with snow till very late in the spring.
For this plant occupies ground which
is the earliest to be laid bare—those
great dimples in the snow about a

¹"Clam Shell" altered from "clam shell"

²"They" altered from "There"

springy place in the meadow—
5 or 10 feet over—where the sun & light
have access to the earth—a month
before it is generally bare— In such
localities then they will enjoy an advantage
over most other plants—for they will
not have to contend with abundance
of snow—but only with the cold air—
which may be no severer than usual.
Cowslips & a few other plants sometimes
enjoy the same advantage. Sometimes
apparently the original—now outer
spathe has been frostbitten & is decayed
& a fresh one is pushing up— I see
some of these in full bloom though
the opening to their tents is not more
effectually protected
than 1/2 inch wide—^ they are lapped
like tent doors— Methinks most
of these hoods open to the south.
It is remarkable how completely the
spadix is protected from the weather
—first by the ample hood whose walls are
distant from it—next by the narrow
tent-like door way admitting air & light
& sun—generally I think on the S side—
and also by its pointed top curved
downward protectingly over it— It
with powdered
looks like a monk in his crypt— head.
The sides of the door way are {lapped} or
folded & one is considerably in ad-

vance of the other. It is contrived best to catch the vernal warmth & exclude the winters cold. Notwithstanding all the snow the Cabbage is earlier than last year—when it was also the earliest flower—& blossomed on the 5th of April— It is perhaps owing to the long continued warm weather from Mar 13th to 28th

Yet it has been a hard winter for many plants—on dry exposed hills— I am surprised to see the Clover cinquefoil &c &c—on the top of the bank at Clam Shell—completely— withered & straw-colored— Prob. from the snow resting on it so long & incessantly.

And plants that grow on high land are more back ward than last year.

The ground no sooner begins to be bare to a considerable extent than I see a marsh-hawk or harrier. //

The sap of the white birch at Clam shell begins to flow— //

Ap. 5

The April weather still continues— It looks repeatedly as if the sun would shine—& it rains in 5 minutes after. I look out to see how much the river has risen

Last night there were a great many

portions or islets visible—now ^{they are engulfed &} it is a smooth expanse of water & icy snow— The water has been steadily deepening on Concord meadows all night—rising with a dimple about every stem & bush. //

Pm to North River at Tarbell's— Fair weather again. Saw half a //

dozen black-birds uttering that sign
like note on the top of Cheney's elm—
but noticed¹ no red at this distance—

Hear² after—some red-wings
// were they grackles—? sing boby-lee. Do these ever make
the sign-like note? is not their's
a fine shrill whistle?

The ice from the sides of the rivers³ has
wheeled round in great cakes & lodged
against each of the RR. bridges (i.e.
over each stream)— Near the town
there is the firmest body of ice (in the
river proper above Hubbards bridge.

A warm & pleasant afternoon. The
river not yet so high by 4 or⁴ 5 feet as last
winter. Hear on all sunny hill sides
—where the snow is melted—the chink-
clicking notes of the F. hiemalis flitting
before me— I am sitting on the dried grass
on the S. hill side behind Tarbell's house—
on the way to Brown's— These birds know
where there is a warm hill side as well
as we. The warble of the blue-bird is
in the air— From Tarbell's bank
we had look over the bright moving
flood—of the Assabet⁵ with many
maples standing in it—the purling
& eddying stream—with a hundred
rills of snow water tinkling into it.

Further toward J. P. Browns saw
2 large ant hills—(red before black
// abdomens) quite covered on all the
sunny portion with Ants which
appeared to have come forth quite—

¹"noticed" altered from "saw"

²"Hear" altered from "Do"

³"rivers" poss. "river"

⁴Pencil line through "or"

⁵"Assabet" altered from "assabet"

recently—& were removing obstructions from their portals. Probably the frost is quite out there. Their black abdomens glistened in the sun— Each was bringing up some rubbish from beneath.

The outlines of one of these hills was a very regular cone—  both were graceful curves— Came out upon the high terrace behind Hosmer's—where we overlooked the bright blue flood alternating with fields of ice—(we being on the same side with the sun.) The first sight of the blue water in the spring is exhilarating— Saw half a dozen white shell drakes in the meadow—where Nut. Mead. Brook was covered with the flood. There were 2 or 3 females with them. These ducks would all swim together first a little way to the right—then suddenly turn together & swim to the left—from time to time making the water fly in a white spray—up with a wing. Nearly half a mile off I could see their green crests in the sun— They were partly concealed by some floating pieces of ice & snow which they resembled— On the hill beyond¹ Clam-shell scared up 2 ~~ap~~. Turtle-doves—

//

//

¹"beyond" altered from "behind"

It is that walking when we must pick the
hardest & highest ground or ice—for
we commonly sink several inches in the
oozy surface—

Ap 6th '56

i.e. Lily

7 Am To¹ Willow Bay— The meadow
has frozen over—skimmed over in the night—
the ducks must have had a cold night of it

// ? I thought heard white-bellied swallows over
prob. for they surely came next morn.

the house before I arose. ^ The hedges

They twitter over the house only in the morn. at first
resound with the song of the song-sparrow—
He sits high on a spray singing—while I stand
near—but suddenly becoming alarmed
drops down & skulks behind the bushes close
to the ground—gradually removing

? far to one side. I am not certain

but I have seen the grass bird—as
well as song-spar this year—(on the 2nd

no—prob not for it has no dark splashes on throat—v 7th prox.)
ult—^) a sparrow with a light breast

& less brown about the cheeks & head—

The song sparrow I see now has a very
brown breast. What a sly skulking

fellow— I have a glimpse of him skulking
behind a stone—or a bush next to the

ground—or perhaps he drops into a ditch
just before me—& when I run forward he²

is not to {to} be seen in it—having flitted
down it 4 or 5 rods to where it intersected

with another—& then up that—all
beneath the level of the surface—till

he is in the rear of me.

Just beyond Wood's³ Bridge—I hear

// the Pewee. With⁴ what confidence

¹"To" altered from "The"

²"he" altered from "&"

³"Wood's" altered from "wood's"

⁴"With" possibly written over "what"

after the lapse of many months, I come
out to this water side—some warm & pleasant
spring morning—& listening—hear from farther
or nearer—through the still concave of the
air—the note of the first pewee. If there
is one within half a mile—it will be here—&¹
I shall be sure to hear to hear its simple notes
from those trees—borne over the water. It is
remarkable how large a mansion of the
air you can explore with your ears in the
still morning by the water side.

I can dig in the garden now where the snow is
gone. And even under 6 inches of snow & ice
I make out to get through the frost with
a spade— The frost will all be out about
as soon as last year—for the melting of the
snow has been taking it out— It is re-
markable how rapidly the ground dries—
for where the frost is out—the water does
not stand but is soaked up.

//

There has been no skating the last winter
the snow having covered the ice immediately

& not melting

after it formed—^ & the river not rising till
april—when it was too warm to freeze thick
enough—

As we sat yesterday under the warm dry
hillside amid the *F. hiemalis*—by Tarbell's
I notice the first² bluish haze—a small
patch of it over the true Nut³ meadow

blue pine

seen against the further ^ forest—over

low

the near ^ yellow one. This was of course the

¹"&" possibly written over "I"

²Pencil line through "first"

³"Nut" altered from "nut"

subtile vapor which the warmth of
the day raised from Nut Meadow—
This, while a large part of the landscape
was covered with snow—an affecting an-
nouncement of the approach of summer—
The one wood seemed but an underwood on
the edge of the other—yet all nut meadow's
varied surface—intervened—with its brook—
& its cranberries—its sweet-gale, alder, & willow—
& this was its blue feather—!

P. m. To Hubbard's 2nd Grove¹ by River,—
At Ivy tree—hear the fine tseep

// of a sparrow—& detect the fox colored
sparrow—on the lower twigs of the willows
& from time to time scratching the ground
beneath— It is quite tame—a single
one with its ashy head & mottled breast.
It is a still & warm—overcast afternoon
and I am come forth to look for ducks
on the smooth reflecting water which
has suddenly surrounded the village—
water half covered with ice or icy snow—
On the 2^d ult it was a winter landscape
—a narrow river & ~~only~~ covered thick with
ice for the most part—& only snow on
the meadows— In 3 or 4 days the scene
is changed to these vernal lakes—& the
ground more than half bare. The
reflecting water alternating with un-
reflecting ice.
Apparently song sparrows may have the
dark splash on each side of the throat

¹"Grove" altered from "grove"

but be more often brown on the breast
& head—some are quite light some quite
dark— Here is one of the light headed on
the top of an apple tree—sings unweariedly
at regular intervals—something like

faster & faster

tchulp / chilt chilt, chilt chilt, chilt
chilt, chilt chilt / tuller tchay ter
splay-ee / The last or 3^d bar I am not
sure about— It flew too soon for me. I only
remember that the last part was sprinkled
on the air—like drops from a rill—as
if its strain were moulded by the ~~strain~~
spray it sat upon— Now see considerable
flocks of robins hopping & running in the
meadows—crows next the water edge
on small isles in the meadow.

As I am going along the Corner road by

hear &

the meadow mouse brook—^ see a quarter
of a mile NW—on those conspicuous
white oaks near the river in Hubbs 2nd
grove—the crows buffetting some intruder—
The crows had betrayed to me some large
bird of the hawk kind which they were buffet
ting— I suspected it before I looked carefully.
I saw several crows on the oaks & also
what looked to my naked eye like a
cluster of the palest & most withered
oak leaves with a black base about
as big as a crow— Looking with

so much black as a crow in its talons
might— Was it not the White headed eagle
in the state when it is called the sea eagle?

neck feathers

Perhaps its ~~erest~~ were¹ erected.

I went to the oaks—heard there a Nuthatch's²
faint vibrating tut-tut—somewhat even like
croaking of frogs— —as it made its way up the
oak bark—& turned head down to peck. Anon
it answered its mate with a gnah gnah

//

Smelt a skunk on my return at Hubbards
blue berry swamp—which some dogs that had
been barking there for half an hour had probably
worried—for I did not smell it when I went along
first. I smelt this all the way thence home
the wind being S. W. & it was quite as perceptible
in our yard as at the swamp— The family
had already noticed it—& you might have
supposed that there was a skunk in the
yard—yet it was 3/4 of a mile off at least.

April 7 Monday—

Launched my boat. through ~~2- or~~ 3 rods
of ice on the river side—half of which froze last
night. The meadow is skimmed over—but by
mid-forenoon it is melted.

//

Pm— Up river in boat—

The first boats I have seen are out
today—after muskrats &c— Saw one this
morning breaking its way far through
the meadow in the ice that had
formed in the night. How independent
they look who have come forth³ for a

¹"were" altered from "was"

²"Nuthatch" possibly altered from "nuthatch"

³"forth" altered from "for"

day's excursion— Melvin is out—
& Goodwin—& another boat still.
They can just row through the thinnest
of the ice— The first boat on the mead
ows is exciting as the first flower or swallow
It is seen stealing along in the sun under
the meadow's edge— One breaks the ice
before it with a paddle while the other
pushes or paddles—& it grates¹ & wears
against the bows.

// We see Goodwin skinning the muskrats
he killed this forenoon on bank at Lee's Hill
& mutilated

leaving their red ^ carcasses behind. He says

// he saw a few geese go over the Great
meadows on the 6th ult— The half of
the meadows next the river or more is covered
with snow ice at the bottom—which
from time to time rises up & floats—off
—there & more solid cakes from over
the river—clog the stream where it is
least broken up—bridging it quite over—
Great cakes rest against every bridge.
We were but just able to get under
the stone arches by lying flat & pressing
our boat down—after breaking up
a large cake of ice which had lodged
against the upper side. Before
we get to clam shell—see Melvin ahead

// scare up 2 black ducks—which
make a wide circuit to avoid
both him & us— Shell drakes pass

¹"grates" altered from "greats"

also with their heavy bodies— See the
red & black bodies of more muskrats
left on the bank at Clam shell—which
the crows have already attacked— Their hind
legs are half-webbed—the fore legs not at all.
Their paunches are full ap. of chewed
roots—yellowish—& bluish— Goodwin says

perhaps

they are fatter than usual—^—because they have
not been driven out of their holes heretofore.

The open channel is now either over¹ the river
or on the upper side of the meadows—next
the woods—& hills— Melvin² floats slowly &
quietly along the willows watching for rats
resting there—his white hound sitting still &
grave in the prow—& every little while we hear
his gun announcing the death of a rat or 2.

The dog looks on understandingly & makes no
motion. At the Hubbard bridge we hear
the incessant note of the Phoebe— Pevet-

-pe-e-vet—pevé Its innocent some-

what impatient call. Surprised to find

the river not broken up just above this //

bridge & as far as we can see—prob through

F. H. Pond—prob. in some places you can

cross the river still on the ice. Yet we make

very narrow

our way with some difficulty—through a ^ channel

over the meadow & drawing our boat over

the ice on the river—as far at foot of Fair

Haven.— See clams fresh opened—

& roots & leaf³ buds left by rats on

the edge of the ice & see the rats there

¹"over" altered from "in"

²"Melvin" written over "melvin"

³"leaf" altered from "leave"

By rocking our boat & using our paddles
can make our way through the softened
ice 6 inches or more in thickness.

The tops of young young white birches
now have a red-pink color– Leave
boat there–

// See a yel. spot tortoise in a ditch

// & a bay-wing sparrow– It has no dark
splash on throat.–& has a light or grey head.

Ap. 8th '56

1 Pm to boat–at Cardinal Shore–& thence
to Well Meadow & back to Port–

Another very pleasant & warm day– The
White-bellied swallows have paid us
twittering visits the last 3 mornings
You must rush out quickly to see them
for they are at once gone again.

// Warm enough to do without great
coat today & yesterday though I carry it
& put it on when I leave the boat.

Hear the crack of Goodwin's piece
close by just as I reach my boat–

Asks if I am bound up stream– Yes to Well Meadow
He has killed another rat– ^ Says I can't
get above the hay path 1/4 of a mile
above on ac. of ice–if he could he'd
a been at Well-Meadow before now.

But I think I will try–~~may-be~~ & he
thinks if I succeed he will try it–¹ By
standing on oars which sink several inches
& hauling over one cake of ice I manage
to break my way into an open canal
above–where I soon see 3 rats
swimming– Goodwin says that

¹Possibly "it." or possibly "it–" altered from "it."

he got 24 minks last winter—more
than ever before in one season—trapped most
shot only 2 or 3— From opposite Bittern Cliff
to Well meadow brook I pushed along with more
or less difficulty to Well meadow Brook— There

10 feet wide

was a water passage—^ where the river had
risen beyond the edge of the ice—but not
more than 4 or 5 feet was clear of the
bushes & trees— By the side of fair Haven
Pond—it was particularly narrow— I shaved
the ice on the one hand & the bushes & trees
on the other all the way— Nor was the
passage much wider below as far back
as where I had taken my boat. For all

this distance the river for the most part, as
well as the Pond—was an unbroken

//

field of ice. I went winding my way & scraping
between the maples— Half a dozen rods off
on the ice you would not have supposed
~~a boat~~ that there was room for a boat
there— In some places you could have got
on to the ice from the shore without much
difficulty— But all of well meadow

paddled

was free of ice—& I sailed up to within a
rod or 2 of where I found the cowslips
so forward on the 2nd ult. It is difficult
pushing a boat over the meadows now—
for even where the bottom is not covered
with slippery snow ice which affords no

hold—to the paddle—the meadow is frozen
& icy hard—for it thaws slowly under water.
This meadow is compleley open because none
of the snow ice has risen up— Sometimes
you see a small piece that has been
released come up suddenly with such force
as to lift it partly out of water—but sinking
again at once—it looks like a shelldrake
which has/~~dived~~ at a distance—
There in that slow muddy brook near
the head of Well Meadow—within a few
rods of its souce—where it winds amid
the alders—which shelter the plants
somewhat—while they are open enough
now to admit the sun—I find 2

// cowslips¹ in full bloom—shedding pollen
& they may have opened 2 or 3 days ago;
for² I saw many conspicuous buds here
on the 2nd which now I do not see—
~~They seem to not~~³ been eaten off?⁴ Do we
Have they not
not often lose the earliest flowers thus?
A little more—or if the river had risen
as high as frequently—they would have been
submerged— What an arctic voyage
was this in which to find cowslips—
the Pond & river still frozen over for
the most part as far down as Car-
dinal Shore!

Saw 2 marsh hawks this pm cir-
cling low over the meadows—
along the water's edge—this shows that—frogs must be out
Goodwin & Puffer both fired at one
from W^m Wheeler's shore— The
They say they made him duck & disturbed his feathers some.

¹"c" written over "2"

²"f" possibly altered from "F"

³"not" altered from "have"

⁴"?" altered from "-"

muskrats are now very fat— They are reddish
brown beneath—& dark brown above. I see
not a duck in all this¹ voyage—perhaps
they are moving forward this bright &
warm day. Was obliged to come down as
far as Nut meadow—(being on the west
side—) before I could clear the ice—&
setting my sail tack across the meadow
for home— The wind N westerly— The
river is still higher² than yesterday.

—About 8 1/2 Pm—hear geese passing
—quite low over the river— //
Found beneath the surface in the sphagnum
near the cowslips a collection of little hard nuts—
with wrinkled shells a little like nutmegs—perhaps
bass nuts—collected after a freshet by mice!
I noticed that the fibres of the alder roots in
the same place were thickly with little yellow
knubby fruit— Was not that clear light
brown snail in that sphagnum a diff. //
species from the common one in brooks?

See a few cranberries & smell muskrats—

On the F. H. Cliff crowfoot & saxifrage
are very backward— That dense growing
moss on the rocks—shows now a level surface
of pretty crimson cups.

Noticed returning this P. m. a muskrat sitting
near a small hole
on the ice ^ in Willow³ Bay— So motionless &
withal round & featureless—of so uniform
a color—that half a dozen rods off

¹"this" altered from "the"

²poss pencil line through "higher"

³"W" possibly altered from "w" (or reformed)

I should not have detected him—if not accustomed to observing them— Saw the same thing yesterday,¹ It reminds me of the truth of the Indians name for it "That sits ~~with~~ in a round form on the ice—" You would think it was a particularly round clod of meadow mud rising above the ice— But while you look it concludes its meditations—or perchance its meal & deliberately takes itself off off through a hole at its feet—& you see no more of him. I noticed 5 muskrats this Pm without looking for them very carefully—4 were swimming in the usual manner—showing the vertical tail—& plunging with a half summer set suddenly before my boat— While you are looking these brown clods slide off the edge of the ice & it is left bare— You would think that so large an animal sitting right out upon the ice would be sure to be seen—or detected—but not so— A citizen might paddle within 2 rods & not suspect them— Most countrymen might paddle 5 miles along the river now & not see one muskrat—

1/4 of a mile before or

While a sportsman ^ behind would be shooting one or more every 5 minutes— The other left to himself might not be able to guess what he was firing at.

¹Possibly "yesterday."

The marsh-hawks flew in their usual irregular
low tacking–wheeling & circling flight–leisurely
flapping & beating now rising now falling
in conformity with the contour of the ground.

The last I think I have seen on the same
beat in former years–he & his race must
be well acquainted with the Musketcook
& its meadows. No sooner is the snow off
than he is back to his old haunts–scanning
that part of the meadows that is bare
while the rest is melting– If he returns
from so far–to these meadows–shall the

River had risen so since yesterday I could not get under the bridge
sons of Concord be leaving them at this
but was obliged to find a round stick & roll my boat over the road.
season–for slight cause?

Wednesday April 9th

Another fine day–7 Am to Trillium woods–
air full of birds– The line I have measured
W of RR is now just bare of snow–though //
a broad & deep bank of it lies between that
line & the RR– E of RR has been bare some
time. The line in Trillium woods is ap. just
bare also. There is just about as much
snow in these woods now as in the meadows
and fields around generally–i.e. it is con-

There is not so much as on the E side of Lee's Hill
fined to the coldest sides–as in them. ^ It
is toward¹ the N & E sides of the wood.
Hence–ap. in a level wood of this character
the snow lies no longer than in adjacent
fields divided by fences &c–or even without
them.

¹"toward" possibly altered from "on a si"

The air is full of birds and as I go down
// the cause way I distinguish the seringo
note— You have only to come forth each
morning to be surely advertised of each new
commer into these broad meadows— Many¹ a
larger animal might lie concealed, but
a cunning ear detects the arrival of
each new species of bird— These birds
give evidence that they prefer the fields of
New England to all other climes—deserting
for them the warm & fertile south—here
is their paradise— It is here they express the
most happiness by song & action— Though
these spring mornings may often be
frosty & rude—they are exactly tempered
to their constitutions—& call forth their
sweetest strains— The yellow birch sap
// has flowed abundantly—prob before the
white birch.

{Muhlenbergii}

8 Am—by boat to V. Palmata²

Swamp—for White³ birch sap.

// Leave behind great coat— The waters
have stolen higher still in the night
around the village—bathing higher its
dry
fences & its ^ withered grass stems with
a dimple— See that broad smooth vernal
lake—like a painted lake—not a breath
disturbing it— The sun & warmth &
smooth water & birds make it a
carnival of nature's— I am surprised

¹"Many" altered from "A" or from "many"

²"Palmata" cancelled in pencil

³"W" altered from "B"

when I perceive men going about their
ordinary occupations— I presume that before
10 o'clock at least all the villagers will have
come down to the bank & looked over this
bright & placid flood—the child &
the man—the house-keeper & the invalide—
Even as the village beholds itself re-
flected in it— How much would be
subtracted from the day if the water was
taken away. This liquid transparency—of melted
snows partially warmed—spread over the
russet surface of the earth! It is certainly
important that there be some priests—some
worshippers of nature— I do not imagine
any thing going on today away from & out
of sight of the water side.

Early aspen catkins have curved downward an //
inch—& began to shed pollen ap yesterday X White //
maples also the sunny sides of clusters & sunny sides //
of trees in favorable localities shed pollen today X

I hear the note of a lark amid the other //
birds on the meadow— For two or three days
have heard delivered oftener & with greater
emphasis the loud clear sweet phoebe¹
note of the chicadee—elicited by the warmth. //
Cut across Hosmer's mead from Island to
still rising
black oak creek—where the river ^ is breaking
over with a rush & a rippling— Paddled quite
to the head of Pinxter swamp where were 2 black

¹Possibly "phebe"

ducks amid the maples—which went off
with a hoarse quacking—leaving a feather
on the smooth dark water amid the fallen
tree tops & over the bottom of red leaves.

Set 2 sumach spouts in a large white
Southward

birch in the ^ swamp—& hung a tin pail to them—
& set off to find a yel— birch— Wandering over
that high huckleberry pasture I hear—the
// sweet jingle of the F. juncorum— In a
leafy pool in the low wood toward the
river see hear a rustling—& see yel spot
tortoises dropping off an islet—& into the
dark stagnant water—& 4 or 5 more lying
motionless on the dry leaves of the shore & of
islets about. Their spots are not very
conspicuous out of water—and in most danger—
The warmth of the day has penetrated into
these low swampy woods on the NW of
the hill—& awakened the tortoises from their
winter sleep. These are the only kind of tortoise

Probably

I have seen this year. Perhaps Because¹ the
river did not rise earlier & the brooks break
& thaw them out. When I looked about
I saw the shining black backs of 4 or 5
still left—& when I threw snow balls at
them they would not move— Yet from
time to time I walk 4 or 5 rods over
deep snow banks—slumping in on the N
& E sides of hills & woods'— Ap. they love
to feel the sun on their shells— As I walk
in woods where the dry leaves are just laid
bare—I see the bright red berries of the
solomon seal still here & there above the leaves.
—affording food no doubt for some
creature. Not finding other birches

¹"B" written over "b"

I returned to the 1st swamp & tapped 2
more white birches. They flow generally faster
than the red or white maples when I tried them.
I sit on a rock in the warm sunny swamp—
where the ground is bare—& wait for my vessels
to be filled— It¹ is perfectly warm & perhaps drier there
than even here— The great butterflies—black with
buff-edged wings are fluttering about—& flies
are hovering over this rock— the spathes of
the skunk cabbage stand thickly amid the

obvious

dead leaves—~~almost~~ the only ^ sign of vegetable
life. A few rods off I hear some sparrows
busily scratching the floor of the swamp—uttering
a faint streep streep—& from time to time a
sweet strain— It is prob. the fox-col. sparrow—

woody

These always feed thus I think in ^ swamps. a
flock of them rapidly advancing—flying before
one another through the swamp— A robin peeping
at a distance is mistaken for a hyla— A gun
fired at a muskrat on the other side of
the island towards the village—sounds like
planks thrown down from a scaffold—borne over

Meanwhile I hear the sap dropping into my pail—
the water— ^ The birch sap flows thus copiously
other

before there is any ^ sign of life in the tree—
the buds not visibly swollen— Yet the aspen
though in bloom shows no sap when I
cut it nor does the alder. Will their
sap flow later? Prob. this birch sap like the
maple flows little if any at night.

¹"It" altered from "The"

It is remarkable that this dead looking
trunk should observe such seasons¹
distinguish between day & night—

When I return to my boat I see the
snow fleas like powder in patches on
the surface of the smooth water amid
the twigs & leaves— I had paddled far
into the swamp amid the willows &
maples— The flood has reached & upset
& is floating off the choppers corded
wood— Little did he think of this thief.
It is quite hazy today— The red-wing's
o'gurgle-ee-e—is in singular harmony with
the sound & impression of the lapsing stream
or the smooth swelling flood beneath his
perch— He gives expression to the flood. The
water reaches far in amid the trees on which
he sits—& they seem like a water organ
played on by the flood—the sound rises up
through their pipes.

There was no wind & the water was perfectly
smooth—a sabbath stillness till 11 A. m.

// We have had scarcely any wind for a month.

Now look out for fires in the woods
for the leaves are never so dry & ready to
burn as now— The snow is no sooner
gone—nay it may still cover the N
& E sides of hills—when a day or 2's
sun² & wind—will prepare the leaves to
catch at the last spark— Indeed there
are such leaves as have never yet been
wet—as have blown about & collected

¹Caret written below dash
²"sun" altered from "wind"

in heaps on the snow & they would burn there in mid-winter, though the fire could not spread much—

If the ground were covered with snow would any degree of warmth produce a blue haze like this?

— But such a fire can only run up the S & SW sides of hills—at this season— It will stop at the summit & not advance forward far nor descend at all toward the N & E.

Pm Up RR—

A very warm day

The Alnus incana ~~by the causeway~~ but especially //
by the RR op. the oaks sheds pollen X At //
the 1st named alder—saw a striped snake, which //
prob I had scared into the water from the
warm RR-bank—, its head erect as it
lay on the bottom & swaying back & forth
with the waves which were quite high—
though considerably above it. I stood there 5
minutes at least—& prob. it could remain—
there an indefinite period.

The wind has now risen a warm, but pretty
strong southerly wind—& is breaking up those
parts of the river which are yet closed— The great
mass of ice at Willow Bay has drifted down
against the RR bridge. I see no ducks—& it
is too windy for muskrat shooters— In a leafy
pool by RR which will soon dry up I see large
skater insects—where the snow is not all melted. //
The willow catkins there near the oaks show
the red of their scales at the base of the catkins

crimson

dimly through their down—a warm ^ glow
or blush— They are an inch long—others
about as much advanced but rounded—

? They will perhaps blossom by day after tomorrow—
? & the hazels on the hill side beyond as soon at
least if not sooner— They are loose & begin to

The stigmata already peep out minute crimson stars—Mars.
dangle. ^ The skaters are as forward to play
on the first smooth & melted pool—as boys
on the first piece of ice in the winter. It must
be cold to their feet. I go off a little to the right
of the RR & sit on the edge of that sand
crater near the spring by the RR— Sitting

there on the warm ^{curled} bank—above the broad
of ^ early sedge grass showing a little green
amid russet banks ^ & dry leaves at base
shallow crystalline pool on the sand ^—I

// hear one hyla peep faintly several times.

This is then a degree of warmth sufficient for
the hyla— He is the first of his race to awaken
to the new year—& pierce the solitude with his voice.
He shall wear the medal for this year.

You hear him but you will never find him. He¹
is somewhere down amid the withered sedge & alder
bushes there by the water's edge—but where?
From that quarter his shrill blast sounded—
but he is silent ~~again~~ ~~for {th—}~~ & a ~~{eould}~~
kingdom will not buy it again

The communications from the gods to us are
still deep & sweet indeed—but scanty & transient
—enough only to keep alive the memory of the
past. I remarked how many old people
died off on the approach of the present

It is said that when the sap begins to flow in the trees our diseases become
more violent

spring. ^ It is now advancing toward
summer apace & we seem to be reserved
to taste² its sweetness—but to perform
what Great³ deeds? Do we detect

¹"He" possibly altered from "His"

²"taste" possibly altered from "haste"

³"Great" altered from "great"

also

the reason why we ^ did not die on the approach of Spring.

I measured a white oak stump just sawed off by the RR there averagin just 2 feet in diameter with 142 rings—another near by 1 1/2 inches broader had but 105 rings.

While I am looking at the hazel I hear from the old locality—the edge of the great pines & oaks in the swamp by the RR—the note of the Pine warbler // it sounds far off & faint—but coming out

iron

& sitting on the ^ rail— I am surprised to see it within 3 or 4 rods on the upper part of a white oak—where it is busily catching insects—hopping along toward the extremities of the limbs & looking off on all side—2^{ce} darting off like a wood pewee 2 rods over the RR—after an insect & returning to the oak—& from time to time uttering its simple rapidly iterated cool sounding notes— When heard a little within the wood they as he hops to that side the oak—they sound particularly cool & inspiring like a part of the ever-green forest itself— —the trickling of the sap— Its bright yellow or golden throat & breast &c are conspicuous—at this season—a greenish yellow above—with 2 white bars on its bluish brown wings— It sits often with loose hung wings. & forked tail.

Meanwhile a bluebird sits on the same oak 3 rods off pluming its wings— I hear faintly the warbling of one¹ ap. 1/4 a mile off & very slow to detect that it is even this one before

¹"one" altered from "a"

me which in the intervals of pluming itself is apparently practising in an incredibly low voice.

The water on the meadows now, looking with the sun is a far deeper & more exciting blue than the heavens

The thermometer at 5 pm is 66+° and it has prob. been 70° or more & the last 2 days have been nearly as warm.

This degree of heat then brings the F. juncorum & Pine warbler—& awakes the hyla.

Thursday Ap 10th

Fast day— Some fields are dried sufficiently for the games of ball—with which this season is commonly ushered in. I associate this day, when I can remember it, with games of base-ball played over behind the hills in the russet fields toward Sleepy Hollow where the snow was just melted & dried up.

—& also with the uncertainty I always experienced whether the shops would be shut —whether we should have an ordinary dinner an extraordinary one—or none at all—and whether there would be more than one service at the meeting house—this last uncertainty old folks share with

// me.— This is a windy day drying up the fields—the first we have had for a long time

Therien describes to me the diagonal notch he used to cut in maples & birches (not having heard of boring) & the half

round spout cut out of chestnut or other straight grained wood—with a half round chisel sharpened and driven into a new-moon cut made by the

partly side wise to the tree

same tool. ^ This evidently injured the trees more than the auger. He says they used to boil the birch down to a syrup—& he thought that the black birch would run more than any tree.

P.M. I set out to sail—the wind N. W. but it is so strong—& I so feeble—that I gave it up— The waves dashed over into the boat & with their sprinkling wet me half through in a few moments. Our meadow-sea looks as angry now as it ever can— I reach my port—& go to Trillium Wood to get Yellow Birch sap.

The deep cut is full of {sat} dust— This wind unlike yesterdays has a decidedly cold vein in it. The ditch by Trillium wood is strewn with yellowish hemlock leaves—which are still falling. In the still warmer & broader continuation of this ditch south of the wood, in the SW recess—I see 3 or four frogs // jump in some prob. large *R. palustris* others quite small— They are in before I see them plainly & bury themselves in the mud before I can distinguish them clearly— They were evidently sitting in the sun by that leafy ditch in that still & warm nook— Let them beware of marsh-hawks— I saw also 4 yel— spot tortoises paddling about under the leaves on the bottom

there. Once they were all together. This ditch
is commonly dry in the summer—

I set 3 spouts in a tree 1 foot in diameter—& hung on a quart pail

The yellow birch sap runs very fast— ^ While
then went to

~~I was going & returning from~~ looking at the
golden Saxifrage in Hubbard's close—when
I came back the pail was running over— This
was about 3 Pm— Each spout dripped
about as fast as my pulse—but when I
left at 4 Pm it was not dropping so fast.

// The red maples here do not run at all
now—nor did they yesterday— Yet one
up the Assabet did yesterday. Apparently
the early maples—have ceased to run.

We may now say that the ground

// is bare—though we still see a few
patches—or banks of snow on the
especially on the N. E. sides of hills

hill sides at a distance ^ You see
much more snow looking west—
than looking east. Thus does this
memorable winter disappear at last.

Here & there its veteran snow banks spot
the russet landscape. In the shade of
walls & north hill sides—& cool hollows in
the woods it is panting its life away. I
look with more than usual respect—if not
with regret—on its last dissolving traces.

Is not that a jungermannia which
so adorns the golden epidermis of the yellow
birch with its fine fingers?

I boil down about 2 quarts of this
yel. birch sap to—2 teaspoonfuls of
a smart tasting syrup— I stopped there

else should have boiled it all away. A slightly medicinal taste—yet not disagreeable to me— It yields but little sugar then.

Ap. 11th

8 1/2 Am. To Tarbells—to get Black- & Canoe-birch sap—

Going up the RR I see a male & female ^{rusty} ^ grackle //
alight on an oak near me—the latter apparently a flaxen brown—with a black tail— She looks like a different species of bird— Wilson had heard only a tchuk from the grackle—but this male who was courting his mate—broke into incipient warbles—like a bubble burst as soon as it came to the surface—it was so aerated— Its air would not be fixed long enough. Set 2 spouts in a canoe-birch 15 inch diameter—& 2 in a black birch 2^{ft+} in diameter. Saw a king fisher on //
does not its arrival mark some new movement—in its finny prey? he¹ the bright buoy that betrays it!
a tree over the water. ^ & hear in the old place the pitch pine grove on the bank by the river—the pleasant singing note of the pine warbler—its a-che, vitter vitter, vitter vitter, vitter vitter, vitter vitter, vét. rings through the open pine grove—very rapidly.
— I also heard it—at the old place by the RR—as I came along. It is remarkable that I have so often heard it first in these 2 localities—i.e. Where the RR. skirts the N. edge of a small swamp—densely filled with
old
tall ^ white pines & a few white oaks— And

"the" altered from "that"

all ^ acquired a slight brown tinge. birch was the most brown

They¹ were at first colorless

On the whole I have not observed so much difference in the amount of sap flowing from the 6 kinds of trees which I have tapped—as I have observed between dif. trees of the same kind—depending on position & size. &c This flowing of the sap under the dull rinds of the trees is a tide which few suspect.

Though the snow melted so much sooner on the E side of the RR. causeway than on the W— I notice that it still lies in a broad deep bank on the E side of Cheneys row of Arbor-vitae—while the ground is quite bare on the west— Whence this difference?

A few more hylas peep today though it is not so warm as the 9th—

//

These warm & pleasant days I see very few ducks about though the river is high.

The current of the Assabet is so much swifter—& its channel so much steeper than that of the main stream—that while a stranger² frequently cannot tell which way the latter flows by his eye—you can perceive the declination of the channel of the latter within a very short distance—even between one side of a tree & another— You perceive the waters heaped on³ the upper side of rocks

¹"They" possibly altered from "These"

²"stranger" altered from "strange {f}"

³"on" altered from "one"

& trees—& even twigs that trail in
the stream.

Saw a pickerel washed up—with
a wound near its tail—dead a week
at least— Was it killed by a fish-hawk?

the

Its oil when disturbed smoothed ^ surface
of the water with splendid colors— Thus close
ever is the fair to the foul— The iridescent
oily surface— The same object is ugly or
beautiful according to the angle from
which you view it. Here also in the
river wreck is the never failing teazle
telling of the factory above—& saw-dust

The teased river! These I do not notice on the S branch.
from the mill. ^{.}

// I hear of one field plowed & harrowed. Geo.

Heywood's— Frost out there earlier than last year.

You thread your way amid the
rustling oak leaves on some warm hill
side—sloping to the south—detecting no
growth as yet—unless the flower-buds
of the amelanchier are somewhat expanded
when glancing along the dry stems—in
the midst of all this dryness—you detect
the crimson stigmas of the hazel—like little
stars peeping forth—& perchance a few
catkins are dangling loosely in the
zephyr & sprinkling their pollen on the
dry leaves beneath—

You take your way along the edge
of some swamp that has been cleared
at the base of some south hill-side
where there is sufficient light & air

& warmth—but the cold northerly winds are
fended off—& there behold the silvery catkins
of the sallows—which have already crept
along their lusty osiers more than an inch
in length—till they look like silvery wands—
though some are more rounded like bullets
— The lower part of some catkins which
have lost their bud scales—emit a
tempered crimson blush through their down
from the small scales within— The catkins
grow longer & larger as you advance into
the warmest localities—till at last you
discover one catkin in which the reddish anthers
near the end
are beginning to push from one side¹& you
know that a little yellow flame will have
burst out there by tomorrow—if the day is fair.

I might say on the 8th—Behold that
little hemisphere of green in the black & sluggish
amid the open alders
brook²sheltered under a russett tussuck— It is
the cowslip's forward green— Look narrowly explore
the warmest nooks—here are buds larger yet
showing more yellow—& yonder see 2 full
blown yellow disks close to the waters edge—
Methinks they dip into it when the frosty
nights come. Have not these been mistaken
for dandelions?

Or on the 9th—This still warm morning paddle
your boat into yonder smooth cove
close up under the south edge of that

¹Caret written below dash

²Caret written below dash

of that wood which the april flood is
bathing—& observe the great mulberry like
catkins of yonder aspen curving over & downward
—some already an inch or more in length—
like great ~~erimson~~ reddish caterpillars covered
thickly with down—forced out by heat—& already

loose & of

the sides & ends of some are ^ a pale straw color
shedding their pollen— These for their for-
wardness are indebted to the warmth of
their position—

Now for the White-maple the same day
paddle under yonder graceful tree
which marks where is the bank
of the river—though now it stands
in the midst of a flood a quarter
of a mile from land—hold fast
by one of its trailing twigs—for the
stream runs swiftly here— See how
the tree is covered with great globular
clusters of buds— Are there no anthers
nor stigmas to be seen—? Look up-
ward to the sunniest side—steady—when
the boat has ceased its swaying—do
you not see 2 or 3 stamens glisten like
spears advanced on the sunny side of
a cluster?— Depend on it the bees will
find it out before noon far over the
flood as it is.

Seek out some young & lusty growing
alder (as on the 9th) with clear shining
& speckled bark—in the warmest possible

position—perchance where the heat is reflected
from ~~south~~ some bank or hill side & the water

The scales of the catkins generally are loosened but
bathes its foot— ^ On the sunniest cheek
of the clump behold one or 2 far more con-
siderably loosened—wholly or partially dangling
& showing their golden insides— Give the most
forward of these a chuck & you will get a
few grains of its yellow dust in your hand.
Some will be in full bloom above while their
extremities are comparatively dead as if struck
with a palsey in the winter. Soon will come
a rude wind & shake their pollen copiously
over the water. Ap. 12th '56

There is still a little snow ice on the N side
of our house 2 feet broad—a¹ relic of //
the 25th of December— This is all there is on
our premises.

Ac. To Rees Cyclopedia the sap of
the birches is fermentable in its natural
state—also "Ratray, the learned Scot, affirms,
that he has found by experiment, that the liquor
which may be drawn from the birch tree in
the spring time is equal to the whole weight
of the tree, branches, roots, & all together".

I think on the whole that of the particular
trees which I tapped—the yellow & canoe birches
flowed the fastest.

Hazy all day with wind from the west— //
threatening rain—haze gets to be very thick
& perhaps smoky in the P. m—conceal-

"a" altered from "the"

ing distinct forms of clouds—if there
are any. Can it have anything to
do with fires in woods West & SW?
yet it is warm.

5 Pm Sail on the meadow— There
suddenly flits before me & alights on
a small apple tree in Mackay's
field as I go to my boat—a splendid
// purple-finch— Its glowing redness is re-
vealed when it lifts its wings—as when
the ashes is blown from a coal of fire— Just
as the oriole displays its gold.

// The river is going down—& leaving the
line of its wrack on the meadow—

It was at its height when the snow generally was quite melted here—ie. yesterday.

Rains considerably in the evening.

Perhaps this will raise the river again. No—

Sunday Ap. 13th '56

8 Am. Up RR— Cold—& froze¹ in the
// night. The Sallow will not open
till some time today.

I hear a bay wing on the RR. fence sing
the rythm—somewhat like— {—}

or here here fast

char char, che che, chip chip chip,

very fast & jingling jinglingly

chitter chitter chitter chit, tchea tchea.

It has another strain considerably different but
a 2nd also sings the above—2 on different posts are
steadily singing the same—as if² contending with each
other—notwithstanding the cold wind.

¹Line through "o" of "froze"

²"if" altered from "is"

P. m. to Walden—& F. H. Ponds—

Still cold & windy

The early gooseberry leafbuds—in garden have¹ //
burst—now like small green frilled horns.— Also
the Amelanchier flower buds are bursting. //

As I go down the R. R.-causeway—I see a flock
of 8 or 10 bay-wing sparrows' fitting along the
fence & alighting on the apple tree— There
are many robins about also— Do they not
incline more to fly in flocks a cold & windy day
like this?

& melted

The snow ice is now all washed ^ off of //
Walden—down to the dark green clear ice
which appears to be 7 or 8 inches thick & is
quite hard still— At a little distance
you would mistake it for {water}—
further off still as² from F. H. Hill—it is
blue as in summer— You can still get
on to it from the southerly side—but
elsewhere there is a narrow canal 2 or 3 to
12 feet wide next the shore— It may
last 4 or 5 days longer, even if the
weather is warm—

As I go by the andromeda ponds I hear
the tut tut of a few croaking frogs. //
and at Well meadow I hear once or
twice a prolonged stertorous sound—as from //
river meadows a little later usually—which
is undoubtedly made by a dif. frog from
the first—

Fair. Haven Pond to my surprise is com- //

¹"have" altered from "has"
²"as" written over "is"

pletely open— It was so entirely frozen
over on the 8th ult— that I think
the finishing stroke must have been given
to it—but by last nights rain. Say then
Ap. 13th (?)

Return over the shrub oak plain
& the Cliffs. Still no cowslip—nor saxifrage
There were alders out at Well meadow
head—as large bushes as any—can they
? be *A. serrulata*— *V.* leaves by & by.
Standing on the Cliffs I see most snow
when I look s. w.—indeed scarcely a
far or near
particle in any other direction—^ from
which & from other observations—I
infer that there is most snow now
under the N. E. sides of the hills—especially
in ravines there.

At the entrance to the Boiling spring wood
just beyond the Orchard—(¹of Haden) the N. E.
angle of the wood—there is still a snow
// drift as high as the wall—or 3 1/2 feet

quite
deep—stretching ^ across the road at that
height—& the snow reaches 6 rods down
the road. I doubt if there is as much
in the road anywhere else in the town—
It is quite impassable there still to a
horse—as it has been ~~since December~~
all winter.— This is the heel of the winter

Scare up 2 turtle doves in the
dry stubble in Wheelers² hill field
by the RR— I saw two together once before

¹Paren written over dash

²"W" possibly altered from "w"

this year—probably they have paired.

Monday Ap. 14th '56

A raw over-cast morning

8 Am. Up Assabet— See one striped squirrel chasing another round & round the Island—with a faint squeak from time to time—& a rustling of the dry leaves— They run quite near to the water.

Hear the Flickers cackle on the Old aspen & his tapping sounds afar øf over the water. Their tapping resounds this far—with this peculiar ring & distinctness because it is a hollow tree they select—to play on—as a drum or tambour. It is a hollow sound which rings {ehang} & distinct—to a great distance—especially over water.

I still find small turtles eggs on the surface entire—while looking for arrowheads by the Island.

See from my window—a fish-hawk flying high //
W of the house—cutting off the bend between Willow Bay & the meadow in front of the house —between one vernal lake & another—he suddenly

straightening out his long narrow wings
high

wheels & ^ makes one circle ^ above the last meadow as if he had caught a glimpse of a fish beneath—& then continues his course down the river.

P. M.

Sail to Hill by Bedford line

Wind S. W. & pretty strong—sky overcast weather cool— Start up a fish-hawk from near the swamp white oaks SW

undoubtedly the one of the morning
of the Island. ^ I now see that this
is a much darker bird both above
& beneath—than that bird of
the 6th ult. It flies quite low, ~~in~~
surveying the water, in an undulating buoy-
ant manner—like a marsh hawk
or still more a Night hawk—with its
long curved wings. He flies so low west-
ward that I lose sight of him against
the dark hill-side & trees—
The river is going down rapidly—yet the
Hunts Bridge causeway is but just bare—
The S side of Ponkawtasset looks
much greener & more forward than
any part of the town I have noticed.
It is almost like another season there—
They are already plowing there.

I steer down straight through the
Great Meadows—with the wind almost
directly aft—feeling it more & more
the farther I advance with them. They
make a noble lake now— The boat
tossed up by the rolling billows keeps
falling again on the waves with a
chucking sound which is inspiriting.
There go a couple of ducks which
probably I have started—now scaling
far away on motionless pinions with
a straight descent in their low flight
toward some new cove— Anon

I scare up 2 black ducks which make
one circle around me reconnoitering—& rising
higher & higher—then go down the river.
Is it they that so commonly practice this
maneuvre— Peters is now far behind—
on a forgotten shore— The boat moored beneath
his hill is no longer visible—& the red russet
hill which is my goal rises before me—
I moore my boat to a tree at¹ the base of
this hill— The waves are breaking with
as on a sea-beach
violence on this shore—^ & here is the first
painted tortoise just cast up by them—& //
lying on his back amid the stones—in
the most favorable position to display his bright
vermillion marks—as the waves still break—
over him. He makes no effort to turn
himself back—probably being weary con-
tending with the waves— A little further
is another—also at the mercy of the
waves—which greatly interfere with its staid
helplessly
& measured ways—its head ^ wagging
with every billow— Their scales are very
clean & bright now— The only yellow I
notice is about the head & upper part of the
tail. The scales of the back are separated
or bordered with a narrow greenish yellow
~~band~~ edging. Looking back over
the meadow from the top of this hill
I see it regularly watered with foam-

¹"at" altered from "on"

streaks from 5 to 10 feet apart–
extending quite across it in the direction
of the wind– Washed up against
// this shore I see the first dead sucker–

You see now adays on every side on
the meadow bottom–the miserable carcasses
of the musquash stripped of their pelts.
I saw one plunge from beneath the monument.

There is much lumber–fencing stuff &c
to be gathered now–by those inclined–

I see an elm top at the Battle ground
covered–uttering their squeaks & split
whistles–as if they¹ had not got their
voice yet–and a course rasping tchuck
or char–not in this case from a crow–
b. bird.

Again I see the Fish hawk near
the old place– He alights on the
ground where there is a ridge covered
with bushes surrounded by water–but
I scare him again–& he finally
goes off N. E flying high.

He had ap. stayed about that place
all day fishing.

April 15th '56

6 1/2 Am to Hill.

It is warmer & quite still–somewhat
cloudy in the east– The water quite
smooth– April smooth waters–
I hear very distinctly Barrett's saw

¹"they" altered from "their"

mill at my landing-. The purple finch
 is singing on the elms about the house
 together with the robins-whose strain its resem-
 bles ending with a loud shrill ringing
chilt chilt chilt chilt- I push across the
 meadow & ascend the hill. The white bellied
 swallows are circling about & twittering above
 the apple trees & walnuts-on the hill-side. Not
 till I gain the hill-top do I hear the note
 of the (F. junco) huckleberry bird from the
 plains beyond- Returned again toward
 my boat I hear the rich-watery note of
 the martin making haste over the edge //
 of the flood- A warm morning over smooth
 water before the wind rises is the time to hear
 it- Near the water are many recent skunk
 probings-as if a drove of pigs had passed along //
 last night-death to many beetles & grubs-
 From amid the willows and alders along
 the wall there I hear a bird sing-
 thus, to make it rapid
a-chitter chitter chitter chitter chitter chitter
-che che che che, with increasing intensity
 & rapidity-& the yellow red-poll hops in //
 sight- A grackle goes over (with 2 females)
 & I hear from him a sound like a watch-man's
 rattle-but little more musical.
 What I think the *Alnus serrulata*?-all¹
 Is that one at Bristers spring?
 shed pollen to-day X-on the edge of Cat- //
 & at Depot brook crossing?
 bird meadow- Also grows on the W. edge of
 Trillium Wood.

¹"all" possibly altered from "is"

Coming up from the river side I see
hear the harsh rasping char-r char-r
// of the crow black bird—like a very coarsely
vibrating metal, & looking up see 3
flying over—

Some of the early willow catkins have opened
in my window— As they open they curve backwards
exposing their head to the light.

By 9 Am the wind has risen—the water
is ruffled—the sun seems more perma-
nently obscured—& the character of the

First Salmon & Shad at Haverhill today

day is changed.

It continues more or less cloudy &
rain-threatening all day.

// Ed. Emerson saw a toad in his garden
today—& coming home from his house

rather

at 11 P. m. a still & ^ warm night

I am surprised to hear the first loud clear
prolonged

// ^ ring of a toad—when I am near
Charles Davis' house. The same, or
another—rings again on a different
key— I hear not more than 2—perhaps
only one— I had only thought of them
as commencing in the warmest part
of some day—but it would seem that
may first be heard in the night— Or
perhaps this one may have piped
in the day & his voice been drowned by
day's sounds— Yet I think that

this night is warmer than the day has
 been— While all the hill side else per-
 haps is asleep this toad has just awaked
 to a new year— It was a rather warm
 moist night—the moon partially obscured
 by misty clouds—all the village asleep—
 only a few lights to be seen in some windows
 when as I passed along under the
 warm hill side I heard a clear shrill
 prolonged ringing note from a toad
 the first toad of the year—sufficiently coun-
 tenanced¹ by its Maker in the night & the
 solitude—& then again I hear it² (before
 I am out of hearing—i.e.—it is deadened
 by intervening buildings) on a little higher
 key. At the same time I hear a
 part of the hovering note of my first
 snipe circling over some distant meadow //
 a mere waif—& all is still again.
 —a-lulling the watery meadows— Fan-
 ning the air like a spirit over some far
 meadows' bay.— And now ~~there~~
 far vernal sounds there is only the
 low sound of my feet on the mill dam
 side walks.

Ap 16 '56

I have not seen a tree sparrow, I //
 think since December—
 5/2 Am. To Pinxter swamp over
 hill— A little sunshine at the rising—

¹newspaper clipping, "Fishy," waxed on page in margin beside "tenanced" and across from "First Salmon & Shad at Haverhill today" added in pencil on preceding page. For images of the clipping in place, see Appendix, pp. 292-293.

²"it" possibly inserted

I standing by the river see it first reflected
 from E. wood's windows—before I can
 see the sun— Standing there—I hear
 that same stertorous note of a frog
 as was heard the 13th ult
 or two—ap. from quite across all this
 flood—& which I have so often observed
 before—what kind is it? It seems
 to come from the edge of the meadow
 which has been recently left bare— Apparently
 this low sound can be heard very far over
 the water— The robins sing with a will
 now—what a burst of melody—!¹ It gurgles
 out of all conduits now—they are
 choaked with it— There is such a tide
 & rush of song as when a river is
 straightened between two rocky walls— It
 seems as if the mornings throat
 were not large enough to emit all
 this sound. The robin sings most
 before 6 o'clock now— I note where
 some suddenly cease their song—making
 a quite remarkable vacuum.
 As I walk along² the bank of the Assabet
 I hear the yeep yeep yeep yeeep
yeep yeep or perhaps peop of
 a fish hawk—repeated quite fast
 & whistling
 but not so shrill ^ as I think I
 \\ have heard it—& directly I see his

¹!" written above and below "-"

²"along" poss altered from "of"

his long curved wings undulating over
Pinxter swamp—now flooded—
From the hill top I see bare ground ap-
pearing in ridges here & there in the¹ Assa-
bet Meadow—

A grass bird—with a sort of spot on its
breast sings here here hé, che che che,
chit chit chit, t'chip chip chip chip chip—

The latter part especially fast—
The F juncorum says phe phe phe phe ph
ph-p p p p p p p-p p faster & faster
flies as I advance but is heard distinctly still
further off—

A moist misty rain-threatening April //
day—about noon it does mizzle a little. //
The robin sings throughout it. It
is rather raw—tooth-achy weather.

Pm round Walden—

media

The stellaria ^ is abundantly out— //
I did not look for it early it was so
snowy— It evidently blossomed as soon
after the 2nd of April when I may say the
began to go off in earnest—as possible.

The Shepherds purse too is well out— //
3 or 4 inches high—& may have been
some days at least—

Cheney's elm shows stamens on the warm //
side pretty numerously.— Prob that at Lee's Cliff a little
earlier

Plowing & planting are now going //

¹poss. vertical pencil line through "the" (need better copy)

on commonly— As I go down the RR—
I see 2 or 3 teams in the fields. Frost
// appears to be out of most soil. I see
much
a {pine}-warbler ^ less yellow than the last
searching about the needles of the p. &
white pine. Its note is some what
shorter—a very rapid & continuous
trill or jingle which I remind my-
self of by—vetter vetter vetter vetter
vét—emphasizing the last sylla-
ble. Walden is still covered
with ice—which still darker green
& more like water than before—
A large tract in the middle is of
a darker shade & particularly like water.
Mr Emerson told me yesterday that
there was a large tract of water in the
middle! This ice trembles like a
batter for a rod around whe I throw
a stone on to it— One as big as my
fist thrown high goes through—
It appears to be 3 or 4 inches thick.
It extends quite to the shore on the
N side—& is there met by snow.
The needles of the pines still show
where they were pressed down by the
great burden of snow last winter—
I see a maple twig eaten off
by a rabbit 4 1/4 feet from

the ground—showing how high the snow
was there— Golden Saxifrage X at //
Hubbard's Close— Frogs sit round round
Callitriche pool—where the tin is cast—
We have waste places—pools—& brooks—
&c where to cast tin—iron—slag—crockery
No doubt the Romans & Ninevites had such places
&c— To what a perfect system this world
is reduced—a place for every thing &
everything in its place!

Ap. 17

Was awakened in the night by a thunder //
& lightning
^ shower & hail storm. the old familiar burst
as if it had been rumbling somewhere else ever since I heard it last & had not lost
the knack.

& rumble ^ I heard a thousand hail stones
strike & bounce on the roof at once—what a
clattering— Yet it did not last long, & the hail
took a breathing space once or twice.
I did not know at first but we should
lose our windows the blinds being away at the
These sounds lulled me into a deeper slumber than before.
painters. ^ Hail storms are milked out of
the first summer like warmth—they belong
to lingering cool veins in the air which thus
burst & come down— The thunder too {—} sounds
like the final {rending} & breaking up. of winter
thus precipitous is its edge— The first one
is a skirmish between the cool rear guard
of winter & the warm & earnest van-guard
of summer. ~~Winter~~ Advancing summer
strikes on the edge of winter which does not
drift fast enough away—& fire is elicited.

Electricity is engendered by the early heats.
I love to hear the voice of the first thunder—
as of the toad—(though it¹ returns irregularly like pigeons{.}) far away in his moist meadow—where he is warmed to life—
& see the flash of his eye—

// Hear a chip bird—high on an elm
(this morning—& prob. that was one I
heard on the 15th ult— You would not
be apt to distinguish the note of the earliest

// I still see quite a snow bank from
my window on the hill side at the
N. E. end of Clam shell—Say a NE—ex-
posure— This is on the surface—but the
snow lies there in still greater quantity—
in two hollows where sand has been dug

though

for the meadow—on the hill side ^ sloping
to the SE—where it is quite below the general
surface— — We have had scarcely any
rain this spring & the snow has been melting
very gradually in the sun.

P. m. Start for Conantum—in boat

I can hide my oars & sail up there & come back another day.

wind SW— A moist muggy after noon
rain threatening— True april weather—
after a particularly warm & pleasant fore-
noon— The meadows are still well covered
& I cut off the bends— The red-wing
goes over with his che-e-e che-e-e
chatter chatter chatter— On Hubbards
great meadow I hear the sound of
some fowl perhaps a loon rushing

¹"it" altered from "is"

through the water—Over¹ by Dennis Hill² &
push for it— Mean while it grows more &
more rain threatening— All³ the air moist &
muggy—a great ill defined cloud darken-
ing all the west—but I push on till I feel
the first drops knowing that the wind will
take me back again— Now I hear ducks
rise & know by their hoarse quacking
that they are black one—& see 2 going
off as if with one mind along the edge
of the wood— Now comes the rain with a
rush— In haste I put my boat about
raise my sail & cowering und my umbrella
in the stern⁴ with the steering oar in
my hand—begin to move home-ward— The
rain soon fulls up my sail & it catches

little From under the umbrella I look out on the scene
all the ^ wind. ^ The big drops pepper the
watery plain—the aequor on every side—
it is not a hard dry pattering as on a
roof—but a softer liquid pattering—which makes
the impression of a double wateriness— You
do not observe the drops decending—but where
batter &
they strike—for there they ^ indent the surface deeply
else
like buck shot—& they or ^ other drops which they
creat—rebound or hop up an inch or two & these
last you see—& also when they fall back
broken into small shot & roll on the surface—
Around each shot mark are countless circling
dimples runing into & breaking one another—

¹"Over" altered from "&"

²"Dennis Hill" altered from "dennis hill"

³"All" possibly altered from "all"

⁴"stern" altered from "steering"

& very often a bubble is formed by the
 force of the shot which floats entire
 for half a minute— These¹ big shot
 are battering the surface every three inches
 or thicker— I make haste to take down
 my sail at the bridges—but at the
 stone arches—forgot my umbrella—which
 was unavoidably crushed in part— Even
 in the midst of this rain I am struck
 by the variegated surface of the water—
 different portions reflecting the light
 differently—giving what is called a watered
 appearance—broad streams of light
 water stretch away—between streams of
 as if they were different kinds of water unwilling to mingle
 dark—^ though all are equally dimpled
 by the rain—& you detect no difference
 in their condition—As if Nature loved
 variety for its own sake— — It is a
 // true April shower—or rain— I think the
 first. It rains so easy—has a genius for it
 —and infinite capacity for—many showers
 will not exhaust the moisture of April.
 When I get home & look out the window
 I am surprised to see how it has greened²
 the grass—it springs up erect like a green
 flame in the ditches on each side
 the road—where we had not noticed it
 before. Grass is born— There is a
 // quite distinct tinge³ of green on the
 hill side seen from my window now.
 I did not look for the very first.

¹"These" altered from "This"

²pencil line through "greened" (need better copy)

³pencil line through "tinge" (need better copy)

I learn from the papers that an unusual number of fruit trees have been girdled by the mice under the deep snow of the past winter—immense damage has been done to nurseries & orchards— I saw where a prostrate maple in the Great meadows had been gnawed nearly bare.

Our river was generally breaking up on the 3^d of April—though¹ some parts were frozen till the 12th

I see by the papers—That the ice had left Lake St. Peter (St Lawrence) the 12th ult—

? another paper (of the 11th) has heard that the St. Lawrence was open from Quebec to Three Rivers—or before the Hudson

The ice on Lake Champlain was broken up on the 12th

~~The ice moved~~ Fair Haven Pond was quite open the 13th

The ice moved down the Penobscot & the river opened the 15th

Lake Ontario was free of ice the 16th

The Kenebeck is expected to² open this week today is Thursday—

There is still ice in Walden (opens 18th)

Ap 18th '56

Pm— — to Lee's Cliff by boat.

A strong N. W. wind—the waves were highest off Hubbard's 2nd Grove—where they had acquired their greatest impetus & felt the full force of the wind—

Their accumulated volume was less

¹Two vertical pencil lines through "though" (need better copy)
²"to" altered from "this"

beyond on ac. of the turn in the river
 The greatest undulation is at the
 lee-ward end of the longest broad reach
 in the direction of the wind. I was steering
 there diagonally across the black billows
 my boat inclined so as almost to drink
 water. Scare up the same 2 black-
 ducks—(& twice again) The¹ under
 sides of their wings show quite light &
 silvery as they rise in the light.
 Red maple stamens in some places pro-
 // ject considerably—& it will prob. blossom
 to-morrow if it is pleasant. V 23 prox—
 The farmer neglects his team to watch my
 with its round rusty wooly buds & pale brown ashy
 // sail. The slippery elm X ^ That pretty
 — — — —twigs
now brown stemmed moss with green oval
 fruit—Common Saxifrage & also early
 sedge—I am surprised to find abundantly
 out—both—considering their backwardness
 // Ap. 2nd Both must have been out some
 ie 4 or 5 days half way down the face
 // of the ledge— Crowfoot ap. 2 or 3 days—
 Antennaria at end of cliff as you descend—
 // say yesterday X Turritis Stricta X
 Columbine XXX & already eaten by bees—
 some with a hole in the side. It is worth
 the while to go there to smell the catnep.
 I always bring some home for the
 cat at this season.
 // See those great chocolate puff-balls

¹"T" altered from "t"

burst & diffusing their dust—on the side of the
hill— At the sandy place where I moored
my boat just this side this¹ Cliff the selagi-

& on Conantum shore near
nella apus is abundant— elms 30 or 40 rods below ?
left boat—op. Bittern Cliff.

Bear berry grows by path from river of 7 rods
beyond last pine S side—now strongly flower budded. ?

Observed a large mass of White lily root
wooly

with the mud washed up—the ^ steel blue
root—with singular knobs for off shoots

 & long large succulent white roots
from all sides the leaf buds yellow
& lightly rolled up on each side—

Small sallow next above tristis 3 feet high //
in path to Walden² X

Walden is open entirely to-day for first //
—owing the the rain of yesterday & eve
time. ^ I have observed its breaking up
of different years commencing in '45—&
the av. date has been Ap. 4th

This evening I hear the snipes generally
& peeping of hylas from the door. //

A small brown wasp's (?) nest (last years of
course) hung to a barberry bush on edge of Lee's
Cliff.

Ap. 19th 56

Was awakened in the night to a strain
of music dying away—passing travellers
singing— My being was so ~~inf~~ expanded & in-
finitely & divinely related for a brief
season—that I saw how unexhausted

¹"this" altered from "the"

²"Walden" altered from "walden"

how almost wholly unimproved was
man's capacity for a divine life.

When I remembered what a narrow & finite
life I should anon awake to!

Thoug with respect to our channels, our
valleys & the country we are fitted to drain
we are Amazons¹, we ordinarily live with
dry channels.

// The Arbor-vitae by river side behind Mon-
roes—appears to be just now fairly in blossom.

X I notice acorns sprouted. My birch
wine now after a week or more has been
pretty clear & colorless again the brown
part having settled & now coating the
glass.

Helped Mr Emerson set out in Sleepy
Holly 2 over-cup Oaks—1 beech² & 2 Arbor-
vitaes³

As dryness will open the pitch pine cone—so
moisture closes it up again— I put one
which had been open all winter into water
and in an⁴ hour or 2 it shut up nearly as
tight as at first.

Ap. 20th '56

// Rain, Rain, rain⁵—a N. E. storm

I see that it is raising the river some-
what again. some little islets which
had appeared on the meadow ~~just~~ N. W of
Dodd's are now fast being submerged again.

¹"Amazons" altered from "amazons"

²"beech" possibly altered from "beach"

³"vitaes" altered from "vitae—"

⁴"an" altered from "the"

⁵Pencil line through "rain" (need better copy)

Columella book 1 p 163 (p 15 of the Eng. Trans 1745) says—I quote the trans—"there is a great multitude of Greeks, who lay down rules & precepts for husbandry; of whom the chief, that most celebrated Poet Hesiod the Boeotian [note of trans says 'Pliny says his book of Husbandry¹ was lost in his time, & that he was the first who gave precepts upon that subject?'] has contributed not a little to our profession. Afterwards, Democritus the Abderite, Xenophon a follower of Socrates, Architas the Tarentinian, and those 2 Peripatetics², the master and the scholar, Aristotle & Theophrastus, who all sprung from the fountains of wisdom, gave further assistance to it."

¶ "The Sicilians also have prosecuted this business with no ordinary care, Hieron, and Epicharmus his scholar, [note says 'he wrote carefully of medicines proper for cattle' ac to Columella] Philometor, and Attalus. [note—'Varro . . . seems to say that Philometor was only the surname of Attalus'—] Athens also has produced a great number of writers, of which the most approved authors are Cháereas, Aristandros, Amphilschus, Euphron; Chrestus the son of Euphron, not as many think the Amphipolitan, who himself is also esteemed an excellent husbandman, but he who was a native

¹"Husbandry" altered from "husbandry"

²"Peripatetics" altered from "peripatetics"

of Attica."

¶ "The Islands also greatly cultivated this study, and had it in great estimation; as witness Epigenes of Rhodes, Agathocles of Scio, Euagon and Anaxipolis of Thasus. Menander & Diodorus, also, who were of the same country with Bias, one of the seven wise men, laid claim among the first, to the knowledge of Agriculture. Nor did Bacchius and Mnasseas of Milesium, Antigonus of Cyme, Apollonius of Pergamus, Dion of Colophon, Hegesias of Marogna, [note—referred to by Vitruvius 'as having, with infinite study & care, explained the properties of places, and the virtues of waters?'] yield to these. For, ?? indeed, Diophanes the Bithynian, abridged & reduced into six books the entire works of Dionysius of Utica, who, in many volumes, had, in a very diffuse manner, interpreted Mago¹ the Carthaginian; and other, notwithstanding more obscure authors, whose countries we have not been informed of, have contributed something to our study.

n²

They are those following: Androtion, Aeschrion, Aristomenes, Ãthenagoras, Crates, Dadis,

¹"Mago" altered from "Mago" (underlining cancelled)

²"n" repeated above poorly formed "n" on the line (first "n" in the word)

Dyionysius, Euphyton, Euphorion. [Varro says of these last that most of their writings were lost in his time] Nor with less fidelity have Lysimachus, & Cleobulus, Menestratus, Pleutiphanes, Persis, Theophilus, to the utmost of their power, brought in tribute to us."

¶ "And that we may now at length bestow the freedom of the city of Rome upon Husbandry, (for as yet, by these authors, she was only of the Greek nation) let us now make mention of the famous Marcus Cato the Censor, [ac. to Pliny the best husbandman of his age] who taught her first to speak Latin¹; after him, of the Sasersanas, the father & son, ['Pliny{,} says, that they were the most antient, and the most celebrated husbandmen after Cato'] who instructed her more carefully; and, next, of Scrofa Tremellius ['contemporary with Varro'] who made it eloquent; and of Marcus Terentio, [Varro—'Beside his books de re rustica, & de lingua Latina, which, though incorrect, are still extant,'—wrote many more which are lost.] who exactly polished & perfected her; and afterwards, of Virgil, who made her also mighty & powerful in verse. Nor, lastly, let us think it below us, to make mention of Hyginus, who was, as it were, a pedagogue to her. Nevertheless, above all, let us pay the greatest veneration & respect to Mago the Carthaginian, the

¹"Latin" possibly altered from "latin"

father of Husbandry. ['wrote 28 books on this subject in the Carthaginian language'] For those 28 memorable volumes of his were, by a decree of the Senate, translated into the Latin tongue. Nevertheless, men of our own times, Cornelius Celsus, & Julius Atticus, have deserved no less commendation. For Cornelius comprised the whole body of this art in five books, and Julius Atticus published one single book, of one species of culture relating to vines; whose disciple, as it were, Julius Graecinus, took care that 2 volumes of the like precepts concerning vineyards, which he had composed in a more facetious & learned style, should be transmitted to posterity."

Here are 55 writers on Husbandry named.

168 "But if fortune shall have favored our wishes, we shall have land (agrum) under a salubrious sky, (salubri caelo) with a rich soil, partly champaign, partly hills (collibus) gently sloping to the east or south, with some parts (terrenis) cultivated, & others woody & rough, nor far from the sea or a navigable river, by which the fruits can be exported & commodities (merces) imported. Let the champaign, divided
or grass ground
into mowing & arable (prata et arva) & willow & reed ~~yards~~ groves, lie below the house. Let some hills be bare of trees that they may serve for corn alone¹ (segetibus—or grain crops) which yet thrives better on moderately dry & ~~flat~~ rich (pinguibus campis) plains than on steep

¹"a" written over "("

places— Therefore even the higher corn-lands ought to have some level places, and to be as gently sloping as possible, & very similar to a champaign position. Then let other hills be clothed with olive-yards, and vineyards, and their future props (—pedamentis); and be able to afford wood (materiam) & stone, if necessity obliges you to build; nor less pasture (pascua{ }) for cattle. Then let living waters springing forth (salientes) send down rivulets flowing down (decurrentes) to the grass ground (prata) & gardens & willow groves; nor let there be wanting herds & flocks of cattle & the other quadrupeds feeding on the cultivated ground and the thickets."

168 Columella says that Cato said that in buying a farm 2 things were chiefly to be considered "the salubrity of the air, and the fertility of the soil".—after these "the road, the water, & the neighborhood".— — — "To the other precepts we add this, which one of the 7 wise men delivered to posterity for ever, {—} {μέτρον ἀρίστον}, measure is best.— — — — — — —" and he quotes Virgil's *Laudato ingentia rura, Exiguum colito*— — — — & also says that "it is worthy of that most acute people the Cathaginians to have said that 'The land (agrum) ought to be weaker than the husbandman';
wrestle
since when he must strive with it, if the farm
farmer
prevail the owner¹ must be crushed." (Quoniam

¹"owner" cancelled in pencil

cum sit collectandum cum es, si fundus prae-
valeat, allidi dominum.)

Ap. 22nd '56

// It has rained 2 days & nights-& now
the sun breaks out-but the wind
is still Easterly-& the storm probably¹
is not over- In a few minutes the air
is full of mizzling rain again-
8 Am- Go to my boat op. Bittern Cliff
// Monroe's larches by river will ap shed pollen
soon- The staminate flowers look forward-
but the pistillate scarcely show any red-
// There is snow still (of the winter) in the hollows
where sand has been dug on the hill side E
of Clam shell- Going through Hubbard's
root-fence field-see a pigeon woodpecker
on a fence post-he shows his lighter back
between his wings cassock-like & like the
smaller wood peckers-joins his mate on
a tree & utters the wooing note o-week
o-week &c-

The seringo also sits on a post-with
a very distinct yellow line over² the eye-
rhythm
& the ~~burden~~ of its strain is Ker chick /
Ker che / Ker-char-r-r-r-r / chick-
the last 2 bars being the part chiefly
heard. The huckleberry³ buds are
much swollen- I see the tracks of
some animal which has passed

¹"probably" altered from "is"

²"over" possibly altered from "of"

³Pencil line through word (need better copy)

perhaps a skunk
over Potter's sand ^– they are quite distinct–
the ground being smoothed and softened by rain.

The tracks of all animals are much more
distinct at such a time. By the path &
in the sandy field beyond are many of those
star-fingered puffballs– I think they must be
those which are so white like pigeon's eggs

leathery
in the fall–the thick ^ rind bursting into 8
like those of a boys batting-ball
to 11 segments ^ & curving back– They are
very pretty & remarkable now sprinkled over
the sand–~~perhaps more~~ smooth & plump
on ac. of the rain. (I find some beyond at mt
sumach Knoll–smaller with a very ~~short~~ thin
rind & more turned back–a diff species plainly.)

The inside of the rind, which is uppermost, ap-
proaches a chocolate color–the puff ball is

rough
a ^ dirty or brownish white–the dust which does not
not fly now at any rate is chocolate colored.

Seeing these thus open I should know there had been wet weather– V 2 ps forward

The mt sumack berries¹ have no redness
now–though the smooth sumac berries have–
Its twigs are ~~peculiarly~~ slender & so have
a small pith–its heartwood is not yellow,
like the smooth & the dogwood, but green.
Its bark is more gray than that of the smooth–
which last when wet is slightly reddish. Its bark
sap or juice is not yellow like that of the smooth–& is slower to harden.

Some Hellebore leaves are² opened in the Cliff //
brook swamp My boat is half full of
water– There are myriads of snow fleas³ on the
water now amid the bushes–ap. washed out of

¹Pencil line through "berries" (need better copy)

²Pencil line through "are"(need better copy)

³"fleas" altered from "flea"

// the bark by the rain & rise of river–

I push up stream to Lee's Cliff–behind Goodwin who is after musquash– Many suckers & one perch have washed up on the Conantum shore the wind being SEasterly– I do not de-

(It would be worth while to see how long before this happens–)

tect any wound– Their eyes are white ^ & they appear to have been dead some time– Their fins

& they are slimy

are worn–^ I cut open a sucker & it looked rather yellow within– I also see sometimes their bladders washed up. They float on their backs. When cut open they sink–

double

but the ^ bladder is uppermost & protruded as far as possible. Saw some pieces of a sucker recently dropped by some bird or beast 8 or 10 rods from the shore– Much root & leaf bud washed

Very perfect & handsome clamshells recently opened–by the musquash–ie

// up– A gull– I buy a male musk-

during the storm–lie on the meadow & the hill side just above rat of Goodwin just killed– He some-

water-mark– They are especially handsome because wet by the times baits his mink traps with muskrat– rain.

always with some animal food– The muskquash does not eat this–though he sometimes treads on the trap & is caught– It rains hard & steadily again & I sail before it. Now

I see many more ducks than in all

// that fair weather–shell drakes &c

A marsh-hawk in the midst of the rain is skimming along the shore of the meadow close to the ground–& though not more than 30 rods off I repeatedly lose sight

of it—it¹ is so nearly the color of the hill side
beyond— It is looking for frogs.

The small slate colored hawk which I have
called pigeonhawk—darts away from a //
bushy island in the meadow.

The muskrat which I bought for 12 cents—
weighs 3 lbs 6 oz. Goodwin thought that
some would weigh 1/2 to 3/4 of a lb. more

I think a lb more
than this. ^ Thought this was a young one of
judged by the tail—
last year—^ & that they hardly come to their growth
in one year— Extreme length 23 inches—length
of bare tail nine inches—breadth of tail 7/8
of an inch—breadth of body &c as it lies 6 1/2
An oval body—dark brown above (black in
some lights the coarse wind hairs aft) reddish

Thus far the color of the hair—the fur within slate color
brown beneath— ^ tail black—feet a delicate
glossy dark slate? with white nails— The hind feet
half webbed—& their sides & toes fringed thickly
with stiff hair ap— to catch water—ears

partly
apparently (for the head is wet & bruised) ^ concealed
in the fur—short & round—long black mus-
tachial bristles— Forelegs quite short more
like hands, hind ones about 3 inches without
the line of the body's fur & hair— Tail on the
skin is a little curved downwards.

The star-fungi—as they dried in my cham-
ber in the course of 2 or 3 hours—drew
in the fingers—the different segments curled
back tightly upon the central puff— The

¹"it" altered from "is"

points being strongly curled downward in to the middle—dimple-wise. It requires wet weather then to expand & display them to advantage— They are hygrometers—

 Their coat seems to be composed of 2 thicknesses—of different material & quality— & I should guess that the inside chocolate colored had a great affinity for moisture & being saturated with it swelled & so necessarily burst off & turned back— —& perchance the outside dirty white or pale grown one expands with dryness—

 A single male shell-drake rose from amid the alders against Holden swamp woods as I was sailing down in the rain
 with outstretched neck—

& flew ^ at right angles across my course only 4 or 5 rods from me—& a foot or 2 above the water—finally circling round into my rear—

Soon after I turned about in Fair Haven Pond—it began to rain hard— The wind was but little S of E—& there fore not very favorable for my voyage. I raised my sail—& cowering under my umbrellla in the stern—wearing the umbrella like a cap & holding the handle between my knees I steered & paddled—almost perfectly sheltered from the heavy rain— Yet my legs & arms were a little

exposed sometimes in my endeavors to
keep well to windward so as to double
certain capes ahead— For the wind oc-
casionally drove me on to the western shore
From time to time from under my umbrella
I could see the ducks spinning away before
me like great bees— For when they are

you

flying low directly from you, ^ see hardly any-
thing but their vanishing dark bodies—while
the rapidly moving wings of paddles seen¹
edgewise are almost invisible. At length,
when the river turned more easterly—I was
obliged to take down my sail—& paddle
slowly in the face of the rain, for the most
part not seeing my course with the brella
slanted before me— But though my pro-
gress was slow & laborious—& at length
I began to gett a little wet—I enjoyed the
adventure—because it combined to some
extent the advantage of being at home
in my chamber & abroad in the storm
at the same time.

It is highly important to invent a dress which
will enable us to be abroad with impunity
in the severest storms— We cannot be

fully

said to have ^ invented clothing yet.

In the meanwhile the rain water collects in
the boat & you must sit with you feet
curled up on a paddle—& you expose your-

¹"seen" possibly altered from "are"

self in taking down your mast & raising
 it again at the bridges. These rain
 storms—(this is the 3^d day of one) charac-
 terize the season—& belong rather to winter
 than to summer— Flowers delay their blossoming
 —birds tarry in their migrations &c &c—
 It is surprising how so many tender organizations
 of flowers & insects survive them uninjured.
 The muskrat must do its swimming chiefly
 with its hind feet— They are similar in form & position
 to those of the shelldrake— Its broad oval¹ &
 flattish body too must help keep it up—

Those star-puff-balls which had closed up
 in my chamber put into water opened again
 in a few hours.

What is that little bodkin shaped bulb which
 I found washed up on the edge of the meadow

Ludwigia palustris



White with a few small greenish
 rounded leaflets?

a fac simile.

On the 19th ult when setting out one of those
 over-cup oaks in sleepy Hollow—digging
 at the decayed stump of an apple tree we disturbed—
 ? dug up—a toad which prob. had buried itself
 there last fall & had not yet come out.

Columella—De positione villae—p 172
 tells us—that that the villa was
 divided in to 3 parts the urban—
 rustic—& fructuary (fructuaria)—
 the first for the 1st for the Pater-
 familiae & his family—2^d rustic for

This whole chapter is important—De positione &c

¹"oval" altered from "&"

the laborers hired & free slaves & for the
cattle &c—the 3^d for the barns cellars &c
for fruits—of all kinds—hay—wine & oil presses
& ellans &c— The baliff (or villicus) was to have
his habitation close by the gate of the villa,
that he might have a view of those going in
& coming-out, & the Procurator (steward?
says Trans) over the gate for the same purpose.

Says it is important that the dung
hills be kept moist & strong enough to kill
the seeds of thorns & grasses conveyed to it in
litter & chaff—nec in agrum exportata [i.e.
semina) segetes herbidas reddant.—nor carried
in to the field produce weedy crops.

180 "For a herdsman (bubulco) a
natural aptitude of mind (indoles mentis)
though necessary is not enough,¹ unless a
great volume of voice (vastitas vocis) and
constitution (habitus) make him to be feared
by the cattle. But let clemency temper his strength;
for he ought to be more terrible than cruel,
so that the cattle may both obey his com-
mands—, & not worne out by the vexation
of labor & blows at the same time, last
longer (diutius perennent)."

Advises to make the tallest slaves plough-
men—both for the above reasons & because
the tall are not so little fatigued by any
labor, not having to stoop to it— — — —
"Vineyards demand not so much tall, as

¹"enough," possibly altered from "enough—"

broad & brawny? (lacertosos) men," army, or perhaps with long & strong arms.

Columella thus describes well enough the condition of much of our exhausted Concord soil—especially—old rye-fields—which have been cultivated many years in succession

They are not weary with labor—but without manure— exhausted for want of nourishment.

182 At cum perruptae rastris et aratris radices herbarum, ferroque succisa nemora frondibus suis desierunt alere matrem, quaeque temporibus autumnii frutetis et arboribus delapsa folia superjaciebantur, mox conversa vomeribus, et inferiori solo, quod plerunque est exilius, permista, atque absumpta sunt, sequitur, ut destituta pristinis alimentis macrescat humus."

But when the roots of plants being broken through with rakes (or hoes?) & ploughs, and the forests cut down with the axe, have ceased to nourish their mother with their leaves, and whatever leaves falling from the shrubs & trees in autumn were cast upon her were presently turned in with plow-shares, and mixed with the {~~lower~~} sub-soil, which for the most part is the leaner, and were {~~common~~} wasted, it follows that the soil earth destitute of its pristine nourishment, grows lean."

183 "Those most skilled in rustic affairs say that there are 3 kinds of land (or soil?)¹ terreni): Campestre, collinum, montanum— Champaign, hilly, & mountainous."

¹Paren cancelled in pencil

Speaking of clearing wild land p 184

Let Incultum igitur locum consideremus, siccus an humidus; nemorosus arboribus, an lapidibus confragosus; juncone sit, an gramine vestitus, ac filictis aliisve frutetis impeditus; si humidus erit, abundantia uliginis ante siccetur fossis. Earum duo genera cognovimus, caecarum et patentium;—"

Let us therefore consider an uncultivated place, whether it is dry or moist; woody with trees, or rugged with stones; clothed with rushes or with grass, and encumbered with fern groves or shrubby

other ^ nurseries. If it is moist let the abundance of moisture be first dried up by ditches.

We have known 2 kinds of these, blind & open;—" This reminds me of many a wild Concord pasture—& so of the following

At saxosum facile est expidire lectione padidum, quorum si magna est abundantia, velut quibusdam substructionibus partes agri sunt occupandae, ut reliquae emundentur; vel in altitudinem sulco depresso lapides obruendi. But it is easy to clear stony ground by picking up the stones. if there is a great abundance of them parts of the field are to be occupied as it were by certain piles built up, that the rest may be clear; or the stones are to be buried in a

But this (ap— both) is to be done only when labor is very cheap—si suadebit operarum vilitas—

When stones & gravel are wanting

184 a blind ditch is to be filled with "a rope
of sprays tied together" (Trans) and cypress
or pine boughs or others trodden upon it¹–
& then covered with earth. (Sarmentis connexus velut
funis informabitur)

Ap 23^d '56

To–White Cedars.

Pm up Assabet– The river risen

// again on ac. of the rain of the last 3
days to nearly as high as on the 11th ult–
I can just get over Hosmer's meadow–
// The red maple did not shed pollen on the
19th & could not on the 20th–21st–or 22nd on
ac. of rain so this must be the first
day–the 23^d X²–though I see none quite so
forward by the river– The wind is now
westerly–& pretty strong– No sap to be
// seen in the bass– The White birch sap flows
yet from a stump cut last fall–& a few
small bees–flies &c are attracted by it.

Along the shore by Dove Rock I hear

like a fox-col– sparrow–

a faint tseep ^ & looking sharp detect

// upon a maple a White-throated sparrow.
I soon flies to the ground amid the birches
2 or 3 rods distant–a³ plump looking
bright
bird & with its ^ white & yellow marks on
the head–distinctly separated from the
slate-color–methinks the most brilliant
of the sparrows– Those bright colors how-
ever are not commonly observed–
The white cedar swamp consists of
humocks–now surrounded by water–

V. n 21

¹"it" altered from "at" or "is"

²"X" possibly inserted

³"a" altered from "&"

notice bird's nests
Stop

Andrews Lat. Dict.

Adoreum (from ador) relating to spelt

Faba—more properly perhaps our hog's bean or horse-bean

Phasolus A kind of bean with an edible pod,
French beans, Kidney beans, phasel;—

Cicer The chick-pea

Cicera pulse similar to the chickpea, chick-ling vetch

Panicum Italian panic grass

Ptisana Barley washed & cleaned from the hulls, barley groats, pearl-barley, (also) a drink made from barley groats, barley-water, ptisan.

Medica an excellent kind of clover introduced from Media, Burgundy clover, lucern

Ervum a kind of pulse, the bitter vetch

Farrago Mixed fodder for cattle, mash.

Far, a sort of grain, spelt, Gr. ξέα, Triticum spelta L. The earliest food of the Romans, both roasted & ground into meal.

Avena oats 2 kinds common & wild

V. Smiths' Class. Dict.

I find a jugerum to be about 99 rods

Observe snail furrows in brooks in winter

if there are any V March 20

Note of grackles & how early

Bay-wing how early—

When turpentine of wht pine bark beg to flow—before Ap. 10

Is that an *A. serrulata* at Brister's spring? no?

Observe if latent leaves of *S. borealis* are often reduced to {bracts}

& compare with *S. longifolia*

Is that a *V. fuscatum* with string 1 rod E of {bend} at Clam Shell

has reddish young leaves Yes

Is that *P. Erythrocarpum* with string 2 feet W of swamp & {1 rd} W
so N of entrance to Hub swamp?

~~V Chewinks nest of June 1st~~

~~V Choke berry by E Walden sand & N end Emerson Cliff {—}~~

~~{—} \ both {one block away} 23^d~~

~~(of June 5~~

~~V. Chickadee nest of June 3^d & Cuckoo & thrushes~~

~~V. King bird nest by stone heap~~

~~Yellow-browed sparrow {Nut Oak} meadow~~

~~V. chewink nest Linnaea {bot of rd} N of path N of pine~~

~~June 10 bet 2 {broken} top young white oaks~~

~~V. Paint. turtle eggs {1 rod+} S marlboro {pond}~~

~~(of June 10) & about 2 feet from eds of sand~~

~~V. small pewee? nest of June 12 Conantum~~

Get a Downy peckers nest

Asclepias pods up RR 2 kinds of July 5th

¹Pencil line from this point through line beginning with "Get-Downy..." (need better copy)

Appendix: Images of MS pages

The images that follow show two kinds of features in the MS that can't be adequately represented in the transcript.

Newspaper clippings attached to pages.

<i>Transcript page no. (upper left corner)</i>	<i>Appendix page no. (lower left corner)</i>	<i>Title of clipping</i>
144-145	284-285	"City Matters. / Meteorological."
146-147	286-287	"Effects of the Cold Weather."
154	288	"Ice."
207-208	290-291	"Snow Storms the Past Winter."
243-244	292-293	"Fishy"

Thoreau's measurements of snow depth.

Thoreau's experience with and observations of snow make up a major part of this MS volume; after he completed it he titled it, "The Long Snowy Winter." In addition to many descriptive passages, the volume contains a series of calculations Thoreau made in order to determine how much snow had fallen in January, February, and March.

His interest in measuring snow had surfaced in the Journal two years earlier, when a massive storm that began December 29, 1854, paralyzed Concord. Thoreau was intrigued by the wide variance in "the usual estimates of the depth of snow" dropped by this storm. He wrote in a January 2, 1854, Journal entry, "I have heard different men set this snow at 6–15–18–24–36–& 48 inches," and he spent that day gathering evidence for an empirically-based judgment. He walked a line more than a quarter of a mile long through a pitch pine wood and across an open field, measuring and recording the snow depth every ten paces. He made 65 measurements, added them, divided his total by that number, and found the average depth to be 19 inches. He was not satisfied with his conclusion, however, because he thought his sample size was too small: he wrote, "I think that one would have to pace a mile on a N & S line up & down hill—through woods & fields—to get a quite reliable result" (*Journal 7: 1853-1854*, ed. Nancy Craig Simmons and Ron Thomas [Princeton UP, 2009], p. 222).

The winter of 1856 offered Thoreau an opportunity to repeat his investigation with more observations of snow depth. On ten days, from January until April 1856, he carried out his experiment again and recorded the measurements in his Journal. Some of these tables are brief and easily represented in type: see pp. 113, 119, 142, and 154. In other cases the transcription process isn't flexible enough to represent accurately the spatial relationships among all the features of the tables. In those cases, the following images are presented here as a supplement to the transcripts.

<i>Transcript page no. (upper left corner)</i>	<i>Appendix page no. (lower left corner)</i>	<i>Date</i>
28	277	January 12
29	278	January 12
34	279	January 16
35	280	January 16
60	281	January 23
78	282	January 29
82	283	January 30
182-183	289	April 1

... since about 6 inches, bore upon
 the last. I guess at these depths -
 we have had very cold weather ever since
 I carry a 4 foot stake marked in inches -
 sticking it down as far as it
 will go at every 10 ft. step -

beginning in the first field east of the
 RR curve way 400 rods from the RR -
 & walking parallel with the RR - ^{Open fields}

19	145	309	10	11	Then Trillium
11	8	10	8	8	A thick chiefly Pine
14	9	12	8	10	wood - 75% old.
10	9	11	8	13	8 N55
9	14	6	12	9	12
12	15	8	8	10	8
9	13	7	12	13	11
7	22	9	14 (fence)	10	11
7	wall	10	9	wall -	9
at tree	7	11	7	20	8
7	6	9	7	16	9
9	7	11	10	598	10
9	7	9	10	73) 728	10
10	8	422	10	Average	7
10	10	Then cross	7	20y 10 R12	10
9	12	to the RR	9	or 9 1/2 + W R12	12
9	9	6 rods off	14	3 10 1/2 +	8
		in stone	9	" "	9
		meadow	11	" "	10
			422		11
			598		
145	309				

19) 182 (20y 9 1/2" 11 1/2")

Other things being equal
 the snow should be better
 in woods than in open fields
 because the trunks of trees
 take up more than - but this
 may be more than balanced by
 what is deposited on the ground.

add 2 for ice at bottom
 A note the depth of snow to Feb 12 q.r.

Then Spoutland between
R.R. & Andromeda Pond
down hill toward the W.

15
11
20
17
17
13
14
16
15
17
15
17

12) 184 (20y 15 1/2
17 1/2

The 1st Andromeda Swamp
from E SW
24
16
20
26
29
26
16
19
27
27
24
21
27
22
16
17
28
33
28
30

The result of
34 measurements on
Walden - 8 or 10
acres of which did not
include the thinning tree
snow of a foot high
avg - gave 5 1/8

Wheeler's
Squirrel
wood
~~top~~
W of R.R.
measuring
from S
to N par
with R.R.
12
9
10
12
10
10
12
12
8
9
11
7
7
12
12
8
7
12

20) 496 (20y 23 4/5
25 4/5

The snow in the swamp was
with about 3 inches of the top
of the highest Andromeda
bushes - it was melted about
3 or 4 inches higher than them
between such - Foxes had
mud from 1 to 4 inches in it.

19) 12
192 (20y 10 1/2
av. mixed
pine & oak wood
not very level - say
75 years old

at a level a foot or more above
 the usual one - Seeing the tracks where
 a leaf had blown along & then tracked
 & finally doubled & returned on its tail
 I thought it must be the tracks of some
 creature new to me -

I find under the hemlocks in & upon the snow, sp.
 - brought down by the storm, an abundance of these
 little dead hemlock twigs described on the 13th ult.
 They are remarkably slender & without stiffness like
 the fir (I think spruce) twigs - & thus give the
 hemlock its peculiar grace. There are all right enough
 much - & perhaps they got their form from being
 placed in the nest.

Jan 16th '56

I Am down RR. measuring snow -
 having had one bright day since the last flakes
 fell - but as there was a crust which could
 bear yesterday - (as today) it cannot have settled
 much. The last storms have been easterly
 & north easterly.

In yard 5 measures
 gave 15+ inches

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

W. of RR				
15	11	8	13 ³⁴	406
8	11	9	13	
9	11	10	13	say
8	13	8	15	
10	15	13	13	12 1/4
10	17	12	15	
11	31	11	13	
11	8	13	12	
9			17	

279

E of RR		
16	13	13
17	14	17
16	15	19
13	21	18
13	11	18
13	9	23
21		say
21	12	25
13	14	23

15⁶/10
 V. 12¹¹

or av. of open fields
 13 6/10 - or perhaps
 12 1/2
 measured with
 the W. of RR
 When no wind the
 deepest on the side of
 the RR from which
 the storm came.

15 5/8
 360

Cyc. Prescott guessed it was 2 1/2 feet or an av. !!

Trillium woods
through mid. as before

- 18
- 18
- 12
- 18
- 17
- 20
- 19
- 13
- 20
- 15
- 13
- 17
- 18
- 19
- 15
- 18
- 21

Between woods & RR - N.W. The av. of
12 measures was 18 1/2 +

Why so much (5 1/2 inches) more
was in the woods than on the 12" -
as comp. with open fields? Was the
driving snow caught in a small wood?
or did it settle less in the rain there?
or vice the snow for account of better?

17/29/16 say 17

I hear flying over (8 see)
a snow bunting - a clear loud
teheep or teheop, sometimes rapidly
trilled or quavered, calling its mates.

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

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

Jan 17th

Henry Shattuck tells me that the
quails come about every day & get some raba
beans within 2 or 3 rods of his house. Some
which he neglected to gather. Prob. the deep
snow drives them wit.

When approaching the point yesterday through my heart felt I saw where some fishermen had come away & the tails of their string of pickers had trailed on the deep snow when they sank in it.

I afterwards saw where the rather picky ^{the water just beginning to freeze} had picked the day before with red pine & fir snow which had been with an inch of ice - ^{that these men had checked to trace} etc. etc.

All this I knew though I saw neither man - nor picker - nor crow -

Measured this ^{now in the} ~~pen~~ ^{the} same fields which I measured just a week ago, to see how it had settled - It has been uniformly fair weather of average winter coldness, without any ^{had 2 for ice at bottom V. Feb 12th} thaw.

W of RR	E of RR	Trillion woods
11 1/3 +	14 inches	13 1/4 + 15 1/4 +
		14 1/3 +
		16" snow 17 - 19
		has settled 3 3/4 -
on the 16" it was 12 1/4	16 - 15 5/8	

It has settled therefore in open fields 1 1/10 inches - showing how very solid it is, as many have remarked. Not allowing for ^{of the light snow above the snow} what may have drifted against the RR embankment (though I measured on both sides of it) the drifting of light snow may have produced nearly all the change.

It seems then that as it lies light in the woods at first it settles much faster than so that though it was nearly 3 1/2 inches the deepest then a week ago - it is less than 1 inch the deepest then now.

embankment - on a road -					average
<u>N small & ridens</u>	AB	BC	21		
	22	20	12		
av. 14 5/8	19	27	13		all 3 14-
	14	12	8		add 2 for
	13	9	14		least 15 from
<u>i. rail fence</u>	13	8	15		= 16-
	17	10	14		VT 12
av. 12 1/2	13	10	10		
	10	9	14		
	21	8	15		
<u>i. rail fence</u>	13	15	15		
<u>i. ditch</u>	13		16		
	12		10		
av. 14	11		14		
	14		21		
<u>i. wall & ridens</u>	12				
	17				
5	16) 234 (14 5/8		17) 239 (14		

The walls, no doubt gave the 1st & 3rd fields some-
 what more snow - yet I am inclined to think
 that in this that the snow is shallower
 very nearly as the fields are more moist.
 It is 3 inches shallower here than near
 the RR when I measured yesterday. ^{showing the effect of that bank very deep - 6 to 15 rods off}
 The av. is the same obtained yesterday
 for open fields E & W of RR - & proves
 the truth of that measuring.

The snow in the 1st field I measured 2 inches
 more than that in the 2nd!

NB The andromeda wasp gave 26 1/2" ^{+ 2 = 28 1/2" +} (on the
 12th alt it was 23 4/5" ^{+ 2 = 25 4/5"} It has prob. been about
 2 1/2" ^{but} on the 16th. The andromeda calyculate
 is quite covered & I walk on the crust
 over an almost uninterrupted plain there.
 only a few blueberries & andromeda paniculata
 are about. Near the last of break through.
 It is so light beneath that the crust breaks
 there in great cakes under my feet &

The clouds are in the middle of
 the winter winter - for such is
 the weather - The blue jays help about in
 The past has been a winter of such
 unmitigated severity that I have not
 dared to notice a snow-flea - which
 we see coming in thawing days.

I go over the fields now in my di-
 rection entering but an inch or two of the
 old solid snow of the winter.

In the road you see a level
 with the fences - and often consider-
 ably higher - but sometimes then
 it is a level canopy in summer
 you climb up & coast down great
 mounds of hard frozen snow - much
 higher than the fences -

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

Think of the art of printing what
 minutely it has accomplished - covered
 the very waste paper which flutters
 under our feet like leaves in a storm
 or snow - a sheet was commonly put
 at the most trivial uses - with
 through a pretty The wind chaffer
 sends the wisdom of eyes recorded
 on the paper that holds his dinner -
 then lights his pipe with it. When
 we ask for a scrap of paper

CITY MATTERS.

Boston Meteorological.
 The thermometer stood on Saturday last, March 8th,
 at 2 P. M., at 42; 10 P. M., 15½; on Sunday, at sun-
 rise, 6½; 2 P. M. (highest) at 19; 10 P. M., 11½; on
 this (Monday) morning, at sunrise, at 1½; 11 o'clock,
 at 12.

Barometer, on Saturday, when lowest, (2 P. M.) at
 29.75; throughout Sunday it appeared to be stationary
 at 30.08; this morning, at sunrise, its altitude was
 29.98.

The wind, on Saturday forenoon, was light from
 S.W.; in the afternoon from W.S.W.; in the evening
 and night it was rather strong from W. On Sunday
 forenoon there was a good breeze from W.N.W. to
 W.; in the afternoon the wind was light from W. to
 W.S.W., but late in the evening it was again a good
 breeze from W.N.W., and this morning from N.W.

The weather, on Saturday, became clear soon after
 10 A. M. and for several hours was very mild and fine.
 In the evening the strong west wind cooled the air so
 fast, that at sunrise on Sunday the thermometer was
 36½ degrees lower than fourteen hours before, and it
 did not rise higher than 19, so that yesterday, although
 clear, was one of the most uncomfortable days this
 winter.

Late in the afternoon, the sky became cloudy, and
 there were strong indications of snow, (which fell be-
 tween Washington and New York,) but at 10 P. M. the
 clouds disappeared, the air again cooled rapidly, al-
 though the barometer was declining, and this morning
 at sunrise the thermometer indicated only a degree and
 a half above zero, or only five degrees higher than on
 January 9th, the coldest morning this winter. On Janu-
 ary 10th it was 1 below, and on February 14th at
 zero. The wind here this morning was north-westerly,
 for the first time it is believed, this winter, on a very
 cold day - having previously on such days uniformly
 been W.S.W.

At Cambridge Observatory the thermometer this
 morning stood at 3 below zero; on January 9th it was
 11 below.

COLD DAYS IN MARCH.—In the course of the last 32
 years, the thermometer has in this city fallen below
 zero in March, on but one morning, viz: to -5, on the
 3d in 1833, by far the coldest that winter; on the 5th
 of the same month it was at 1 above; but since that
 day it has not been quite so low as on this morning.
 On the 4th, in 1837, it was here very clear with the
 thermometer down to 2, whilst in Savannah a foot of
 snow fell. On the 4th, in 1833, at sunrise, the thermom-
 eter was at 5; in 1848, on the 15th, 16th and 17th, at 9,
 8½ and 12 degrees, and ice formed in Fresh Pond in
 the three days, 10 inches thick. But in Deerfield, near
 Utica, N. Y., the thermometer on the 16th was said to
 have fallen to 17 below zero, and to 11 below on the 1st
 of April, 1847.

The least altitude here in March 1855, was 16 on the
 1st. In the very early spring of 1342 the thermometer
 on the 4th rose to 71, and the Dutch Crocus in places in
 the city was in full bloom. This year it is probable the
 Crocus and the Hyacinth will bloom together, as has
 once been the case, about the 4th of May.

PROPERTY OF
 THE THOREAU EDITION
 RETURN TO STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
 GENESEE NEW YORK

The clouds are in the middle of
the winter - for such is
the weather - The blue jays help about in woods:

The past has been a winter of such
unmitigated severity that I have not
shamed to notice a snow-plea
me as coming in - throwing

I go over the fields now in
section, entering but an inch or
so of solid snow of the winter.

In the snow you measure
with the fences - and often
ably higher. The snow
is a level canopy in
you climb up & coast
with the fence -

I may say that I have
to climb a fence this week
stepped over them on the

Think of the cost of iron
minerals, it has completed
the very waste paper which
under our feet like leaves
on a heap - a waste of
the most valuable resources

Thoughts of poverty. The world
sees the wisdom of eyes recorded
on the paper that holds his dinner -
then lights his pipe with it. Then
we ask for a scrap of paper

of February was free from ice, and the ice of the sea of Azoff were again at liberty.

MURDER OF A FRENCH DECESS.—
spondent writes, under date of Wednesday, Feb. 20: "A fearful event has occurred in the Champs Elysees. The Duke de Caumont Laforce was murdered at nine o'clock morning at her house in the grand avenue, representative of the Duke Caumont Laforce of one of the best families in France. The is a Senator."

Another evening journal says:—"At Caumont Laforce is said to have been assassinated by a gardener. The man was arrested by the servants of the house at the moment he was trying to escape. It is a singular coincidence that we read in another matter:—"The Duke de Laforce, who sides at Creteil (a chateau near Vincennes, but few miles Paris), had in his service a little grocer between twelve and thirteen years of age, named Joseph D.— Although so very young, he was addicted to drunkenness and gambling, and was often scolded by his master on account of his indulgence in these vices. Some months since the lad tried to shoot himself with a gun, but the cap did not explode, and some people who witnessed the attempt snatched the gun out of his hands. Yesterday morning, B.—, having done something which induced his master to reproach him severely, and to threaten to turn him away from an arm-rack. A housemaid asked what he wanted with the gun, and he replied that he had been ordered to clean it. He added that there was no danger as it was not loaded. Five minutes later a report was heard, and the woman on going into the boy's room found him lying on the floor bathed in blood. The charge had gone through his brain, and he was quite dead."

The next important event to the peace question is that of the accomplishment of the empress, which with due consideration for the forthcoming event, has carefully inspected the apartments prepared for her at the Tuilleries, and is said to have expressed great gratification at the arrangements. The honors to be bestowed upon the imperial infant immediately upon its advent, are said to have assumed great interest in the public mind, and we are told that petitions have been adopted in various parts of France, praying that the child be named, if a prince, King of Algeria. Preparations of the legislative session on March 3. The tribune for the corps diplomatique will be more sumptuously decorated than on any former occasion.

PROGRESS OF FREE TRADE PRINCIPLES IN FRANCE.—A manifestation of public opinion of the importance has just been made at Rangoon.

for the most trivial use it may
have the companions of Augustus on
the summit of the Vesuvius - & we will
obscure it. The student smokes his
pipe, the editor packs his trunk, the
sportsman loads his gun - the tradesman
wraps his dinner - the gentleman prepares
his servant, the school boy packs his
the plastering - with the printed
thoughts of men - Surely he who can
see in large proportion of earth's surface
paved thus darkened with the record of
human thoughts & experience - & feel as
proud to learn to read them is without
curiosity. He who cannot read - is
worse than deaf & blind - is yet but
half alive - is yet unborn.

Still there is little or no shopping
for it with no pay & should the money
any from the towns - unless they are
quite large - & then you must not
stand by it a feet deep - There
is an eddy about the large trees beside
which produces a hollow in the snow
about them but the small ones are every
where.

10^{pm} Therm. at zero
Great when last at the bridge, in the
tribut. Plat. Trans. that in the cold winter

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of 1980 - many shell-fish - ^{insects} ~~insects~~ ^{as birds & plants perished.}

See transcript, pp. 146-147. Mar 11 56

11 Thermometer at 7 AM 6° 2 ft the
ice going out of the plants are frozen
again Dr. Bartlett was 40-
When it is proposed to come to of abroad
- not off some such - & better my con-
dition in a worldly sense - I fear lest
my life will lose some of its homeliness.
If these fields & streams & woods -
the phenomena of nature here - & the
simple occupations of the inhabitants
should cease to interest & inspire me -
as culture or wealth would detract
the loss. I fear the dissipation that travelling
- young into every corner the best - the en-
joyment of intellectual luxuries - imply
of Paris's much in your mind - if it is
more to you - Concord is less than
England would be a wretched hangover
to accept the powder of Paris in exchange
for my native village. At best
Paris could only be a school in which
to learn to live here - a stepping stone
to Concord - a school in which to fit
for the University.
I wish to live, not as to derive my satis-
faction & inspirations from the common
events - everyday phenomena - so that
what my senses broadly perceive - my
daily walks - the conversation of my

Pauly Evening Times
Boston Mar 18 56

EFFECTS OF THE COLD WEATHER.—That we have had some pretty cold weather this winter, our readers are all doubtless aware, but that the cold had been so extreme as was proven by some discoveries of the workmen in the ice-fisheries last week, we did not suppose. Between Sandy Island and the peninsula, where the fishermen were at work, the water was very shallow, not exceeding four feet in depth. While cutting holes in this place for the purpose of letting down their seines, they found ice to the thickness of three feet and a half, or reaching within a few inches of the bottom of the channel. And when the nets were drawn up, they were found to be well filled with fish, all frozen stiff. The intense cold had chilled the few remaining inches of water, so that even fish could not live in it. More than twenty bushels of these dead fish were taken out, when the workmen changed their ground for another furnishing a greater depth of water.—Sandy Register, Ohio.

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See transcript, pp. 146-147.

of 1980 - many shell-fish - ^{insects} ~~insects~~ as birds & plants perished.

Mar 11 56

11 Remembrance at 7 AM 67 2/3 The fine young with Aphasia' plants are from Dr Bartlett, was 40 -

When it is proposed to come to go abroad - not off some rush - & better my condition in a worldly sense - I fear less my life will lose some of its homeliness.

If the field of stream the phenomena of nature simple comparisons of the smallness of interest as culture or wealth were the loss. I fear the thing - young who exist since the joyments of intellectual lux

of Paris is much more than you are more & more to you - Cos Egypt would be a more to accept the proudest plans in exchange for my native village. At best Paris could only be a school in which to learn to live here - a stepping stone to Concord - a school in which to fit for the University.

Quick to to live, ever as to derive my satisfactions & inspirations from the commonest events - everyday phenomena - so that what my senses broadly perceive - my daily walks - the conversation of my

FINELY CARVED and ELEGANT FURNITURE: COVERINGS of every description: Lace and Muslin CURTAINS in great variety: CORNICES, and all kinds of DECORATIVE PAINTINGS, of the newest styles, &c., AT REASONABLE PRICES. June 26

GEORGE A. SAMPSON,
Manufacturer, Wholesale and Retail Dealer in
Cottage, Chamber & Pine Furniture,
of every variety, including suits finished in
LANDSCAPE, FLOWERS, GOLD AND ORNAMENTAL STYLES
-Also-
BUREAUS, BEDSTEADS, WARDROBES, SINKS TABLES, WASHSTANDS, TOILETS, ETC.

GERMISH MARKET HALL,
Corner Sudbury and Friend sts., near Haymarket square.
Grand Entrance on Sudbury st., near Portland st.
December 24 1st

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403 96

neighbors may inquire me - & I may dream of no heaven but that which lies about me. I mean may be yours a taste for wine or brandy - so so love in love for water - but I should not put him? The right of a matter hands in Concord meadows is worth more than the lot of the other into Paris. In this sense - I am not ambitious. I do not wish my material world to become exhausted even out through neglect.

Only that traveling is good which makes some the value of home enables me to enjoy it better. That man is the richest, whose pleasures are the cheapest.

It is strange that men are more eager to get fame as teachers - rather than knowledge as learners.

I hear that Gardiner found one of his traps frozen in where it had been set before the year.

P.M. 3 1/2 Therm. 24°
Cut whole in three in the middle of wooden. It is just 2 1/4 inches thick - 1 1/2 being outside 1 3/4 outside & there is between 3 & 4 inches of crusted snow above this. The water rises to

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dozen rods from its mouth - & for a
rod into the river - maybe up to
5' ^{2 feet thick} ~~was~~ concealed by a snowy bridge.

// I see the ripples made by some fish,
which were in the small opening at its
mouth - making haste to hide them
as they saw the ice coming near. This
quasi rod comes over a stone which
is in the town ^{are the only place where}
I could see this phenomenon now - ^{They appear ready to see the fly of the fish hawk} bottom

// The brook I see quite a school of
little minnows a inch long ^{or over} and
banked stems of Phytolaccas - and one

// or little water-bugs. (apple-seeds)
^{we talk also in the broad ditch for the corner road in Walker's meadow}
both standing the backwardness of the season
all the town still under deep snow & ice -
here they are in the first open & smooth
water - governed by the altitude of the sun.

// I see many small furrows freshly
made in the sand at the bottom of
the brook - from 1/2 an inch to 3/4 wide -
which I suspect are made by some small
shell-fish - steadily moving. Perhaps ^{Paludicola}
V. 20' foot.

Mar. 19th!

Run. To Walden -

ICE. The Messrs. McFarland had a
ice, 11 inches thick, which was the fifth
the various thicknesses taken from three
part of the river amounting to 57' in
[Lowell Courier, 18th.

measured the snow again

Trillion Woods
15 3/4

W of RR 15
E of RR 11 4/5
av 13 2/5

The last measurement was on the 7th

Mar. 31st '56

pen & Peters via winter Mt

I see the scarlet top of white maples nearly a mile W down the river - the last shoots of last year. These of the red maple do not show thus.

I see many little holes in the old & solid snow where leaves have sunk down gradually - & perpendicularly

11 or 12 inches - The hole is larger at the top than at the bottom - way after partly closed at top by the drifting - and exactly the form & size of the leaf - It is as if the sun had driven this thin shield

like a bullet thru deep into the solid snow. It is remarkable how deep the leaves sink into snow when they fall. I have seen them sink 1.2 ft. in snow. All the small ants running

about over a piece of meadow turf. The cloud-like begins of the coniferous springing under trees here April 1st '56

On down R.R. measuring snow G. F. H. Bill - Trill. Wood.

W. of RR	E of RR	Av.	Trill. Wood.
2	5	12	22
3	5	17	11
4	3	11	11
4	3	11	11
4	9	15	11
4	7	15	11
5	11		14
5	13	344 (8 1/2)	11
5	13		11
6	12		11
6	13		11
6	14		11
6	13		11
6	15		11
6	16		11
6	13		11
10			11

289 24757 (21)3 20) 200 (10) 11

It appears from the above how rapidly the snow has melted on the E side of the R.R. - causeway - though 8 & 12 rods from it - being sheltered by it from the N.W. wind. It is for the most part bare ground then. At these localities the average depth in open land is 5 1/2 inches - but the E side of R.R. is a peculiarly sheltered place and hence bare - while the east generally is covered - It is prob. about 7 inches deep on a level generally in open land.

It has melted at about the same rate W. of R.R. & in Trill. woods since the 19th. It is a question whether it is better sleeping or wheeling now taking all our roads together. At any rate we may say the sleeping is best apart. In some places it still fills the roads level with the walls - & bears me up even in the middle of the day. It grows more more solid - of passing at night quite through. It is Wheeler (of the corner road) tells me that it was more solid this morning than anytime in the winter. He was surprised to find that it would bear his oxen where 3 or 4 feet deep behind his house - On some roads you walk in - a path

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SNOW STORMS THE PAST WINTER. To the Editor of the Transcript: I have the pleasure of herewith transmitting you my twelfth annual statement of the number of storms, and quantity of snow that has fallen the past season in Boston. The first snow storm was November 17th, 1855; the succeeding ones were on 21st; December 13th, 25th, 28th, 29th and 30th; January 2d, 1856, 5th, 6th, 7th, 13th, 14th, 17th, 23rd and 30th; February 1st, 7th, 9th, 15th, 16th and 17th; March 1st, 2d, 4th, 6th, 8th and 19th. Total number of storms, 28; depth of snow, 1 foot and 5 inches.

There were in—

Years.	No. Storms.	Depth Snow.
1843-4	44	7 feet 7 inches
1844-5	36	3 " 3 "
1845-6	27	3 " 7 "
1846-7	32	2 " 8 "
1847-8	27	2 " 1 "
1848-9	27	3 " 1 "
1849-50	33	2 " 11 "
1850-51	28	3 " 1 "
1851-52	38	6 " 8 "
1852-53	20	3 " 2 "
1853-54	24	7 " 1 "
1854-55	35	3 " 7 1/2 "
1855-56	28	4 " 5 "

It will be seen by the above table that there has been about an average quantity of snow and number of snow storms in Boston the past season, with about eighty days of excellent sleighing, a circumstance which rarely occurs in the city. C. J. B. M.
Boston, April 7th. 1856.

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 or much black as a crow in its talons
 might be. Was it not the white head of eagle
 in the state - when it is called the sea eagle?
 Perhaps its nest is ^{with feathers} erected.
 I went to the water - heard then a troutcatcher's //
 faint vibrating tut-tut - somewhat as when
 making frogs - as it - made its way up the
 oak bank - & turned head down & jerked. Now
 it seemed to mate with a grah grah
 I smell a skunk on my return at Hubbard's
 blue berry swamp - which some days that had
 been breaking there for half an hour had probably
 worried - for I did not smell it when I went along
 first. I smell this all the way thence home
 the wind being S.W. & it was quite perceptible
 in our yard as well as the swamp. The family
 had already noticed it - & you might have
 supposed that there was a skunk in the
 yard - but it was 3/4 of a mile W. at least.

April 7 Monday.
 Launched my boat. Through & 3 rods //
 deep in the river side - half of which froze last
 night. The meadow is stamped over - but by
 mid-forenoon it is melted.
 P.M. - Up river in boat -
 The first boat I have seen are out
 today - after midnight & - saw one this
 morning breaking its way far through
 the meadow in the ice that had
 formed in the night. Now independent
 they take who have come forth for a

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Coming up from the river side I see
hear the harsh rasping char. char.
|| of the crow black bird - like a very coarsely
vibrating metal, & looking up see 3
flying over -
Some of the early willow catkins have opened
in my window - As they open they curve backward
exposing their heads to the light.
By 9 Am the wind has risen - the water
is ruffled - the sun seems more prominent
recently obscured - the character of the
day is changed.

It continues more or less cloudy &
rain-threatening all day.

|| Ed. Emerson saw a toad in his garden
today - & coming home from his house
at 11 Am. a still & warm night

I am surprised to hear the first loud clear
ring of a toad - when I am near
Charles Davis' house. The same or
another - rings again on a different
day - I hear not more than 2 - perhaps
only one - I had only thought of them
as commencing in the warmest part
of some day - but it would seem that
they may be heard in the night - Or
perhaps this one may have peeped
in the day & his voice been drowned by
day's sounds - Yet I think that

this night is warmer than the day has
been - While all the hill side sleep
perhaps is asleep this toad has just awaked
to a new year - It was a rather warm
month night - the moon partially obscured
by misty clouds - all the village asleep -
only a few lights to be seen in some windows
when as I paced along under the
warm hill side I heard a clear shrill
prolonged ringing note from a toad

FISHY. The first salmon of the season was taken from the Merrimac at Haverhill on the 15th inst; on the same day the first shad was taken, and a Mr. Stimpson caught 500 suckers, weighing 300 lbs. In Middleboro', at the annual town meeting, it was voted to sell herrings at 50 cents per hundred to town's people, and give two hundred to every widow in town.

of the year - sufficiently com-
municated in the night - & then again I heard (before
I am out of hearing - i.e. it is deadened
by intervening buildings) on a little higher
hill. At the same time I hear a
part of the hovering note of my first
snipe circling over some distant meadow
a mere wisp - & all is still again.
- a belling the watery meadows - Fan-
wing the air like a spirit over some far
meadows' bay - And now there
for several rounds there is only the
sound of my feet on the well worn
side walks.

Apr 16 '56

I have not seen a tree toad, I
think since December -
5/2 Am. To Fenster swamp over
hill - A little sunshine at the rising -

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Coming up from the river side I can hear the harsh rasping char-char-r

|| of the crow black bird - like a very coarsely vibrating metal; looking up see 3 flying over -

Some of the early crows cawing have opened in my window - as they open they curve backward exposing their breast to the light.

By 9 Am the wind has risen - the sun is suffled - the sun seems more perfectly obscured - the character of the day is changed.

FOR SALE IN ROXBURY - A very desirable house with over 5000 feet of land, a choice location of trees and shrubs, twenty bearing peaches, kitchen, wash room, etc. on lower floor - 12 chambers on second and two attic chambers - cool farmstead in the city. The situation is one of the most elegant of state st. Enquire at Commercial Insurance Office

It continues more or less cloudy & rain-threatening all day.

|| Ed. Emerson saw a toad in his garden today - & coming home from his house at 11 P.M. a still & warm night I am surprised to hear the first loud clear ring of a toad - when I am near Charles Davis' house. The same or another - rings again on a different key - I hear not more than 2 - perhaps only one - I had not thought of them as commencing in the warmest part of some day - but it would seem that they may first be heard in the night - Or perhaps this one may have piped in the day & his voice been drowned by day's sounds - Yet I think that

497-244 182

this night is warmer than the day has been - While all the hill side the paper is asleep this toad has just awaked for a new year. It was a rather warm moonlight - the moon partially obscured by misty clouds - all the village asleep - only a few lights to be seen in some windows when as I passed along under the warm hill side I heard a clear shrill prolonged ringing note from a toad the first note of the year - sufficiently maintained by its maker in the night to the solitude - & then again I heard (before I am out of hearing - i.e. it is deadened by intervening buildings) on a little higher key. At the same time I hear a part of the hovering note of my first stripe circling over some distant meadow a mere wail - & all is still again - a hilling the watery meadows - Farming the air like a spirit over some far breadow's bay - And now there for several rounds there is only the sound of my feet on the well dam side walks.

Apr 16 '56

I have not seen a tree sparrow, I think since December -

5 1/2 Am - To find the swart over hill - A little sunshine at the rising -

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